A SIMULATION

This thesis investigation focused on how black neighborhoods are pressured to appeal to a white standard. Systemic racism has altered the quality of life for black people. It is also apparent that community developers are focused on financial gain instead of equitable practices. This issue has many dimensions and required exploration through different lenses such as ideological, social, economic, built aspects. For example, studies ranged from understanding the process of introspection and a need for it in all phases of the design process to displaying the versatility of physical space within the black community. These were the guiding questions for this analysis; How can spatial assimilation be avoided as a response to development? How can a conversation be fostered to identify the mental barriers to understand the white standard and how can that conversation later support an alternative way of thinking? What are the strategies to ensure that the essence of a black neighborhood's culture and values are sustained and amplified over time? Overall, this study focused on using qualitative methods, including visual ethnography, installations, photography, and films to understand the cultural experience of black people within their neighborhoods. Research has also referenced existing literature and approaches to the broader issues stated earlier. It is important to understand the value of putting the community at the forefront and altering the traditional design approach. The essence of culture as created by black people cannot be reproduced simply through physical appearance of the built environment. The character of the neighborhood is overshadowed once people are displaced and the pressure to meet the dominant culture standard takes control of the neighborhood's identity. It is a reoccurring scenario that repeats itself in multiple communities and there is an evident need for change. In conclusion, this research added value to the design profession by calling for a change in the built environment profession. It encouraged people to think and design in more profound ways and consider other approaches to ensure black communities thrive and sustain after they are developed.

"WHAT MAKES PEOPLE DESIGN FOR BLACK PEOPLE THE RIGHT WAY?"

UNMASKING THE INVISIBLE STANDARD

ANGEL D. MANGHAM

ANGEL D. MANGHAM

A SIMULATION

UNMASKING THE INVISIBLE STANDARD

Studio Advisor: Enrique Ledesma
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Winter 2024
University of Detroit Mercy
School of Architecture + Community Development

For the little black girl, with a curious mind and isn't scared to question anyone.

PREFACE

I have always felt conflicted.

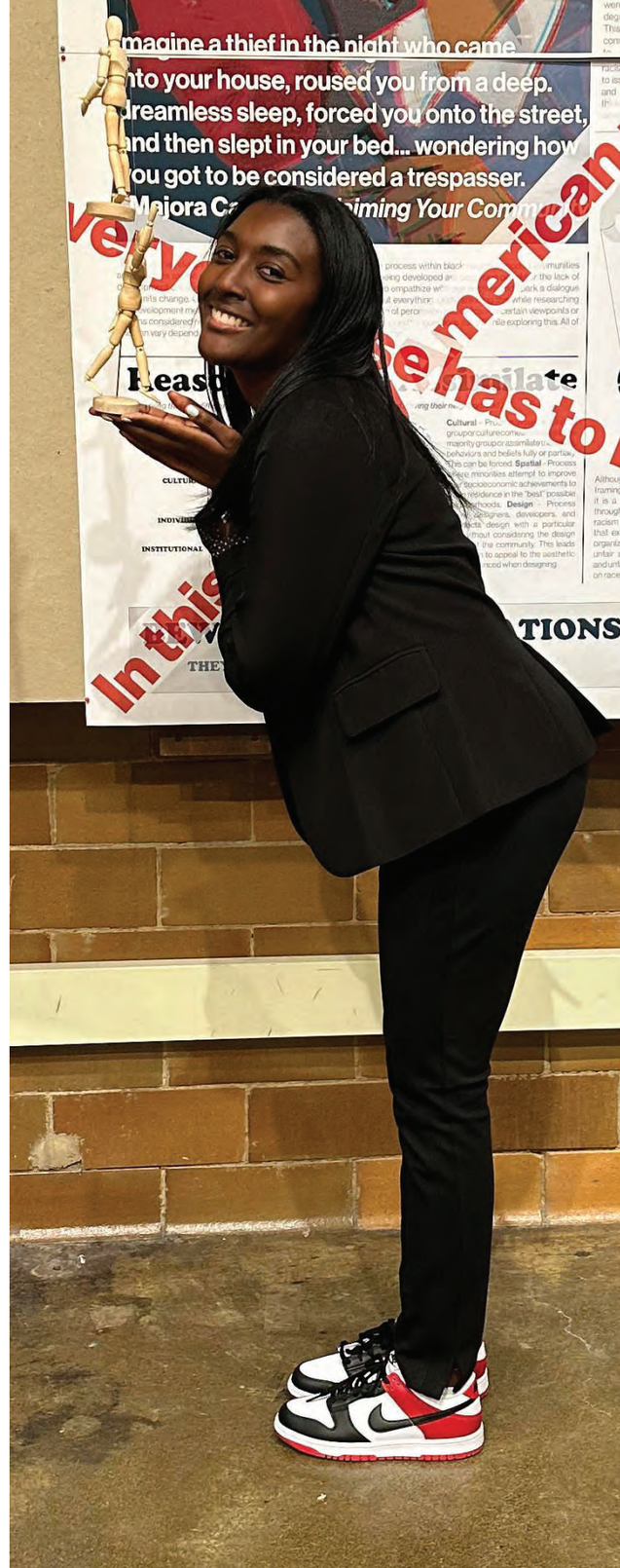
As a child it is a hard pill to swallow to learn about slavery and the civil rights movement. Why did white people dislike me so much? It didn't come up as much in my daily reality because I grew up being surrounded by black people. My only interaction with white people was with my great grandmother and my friend Alex. And if they liked me that means all white people did.

The point of mentioning all of this is to understand the deductive reasoning from a child's perspective. A is the scenario so B must be the case always. It wasn't until I learned what was told to me caould be a lie or a partial truth. Growing up, I took the bus to school and would walk up and down the block. I was a curious child who always questioned life. Slowly I started noticing homes becoming abandoned. Then demolished one by one. My grocery store closed. My schoole closed. We started having to go further for school. No one went to the park anymore. The liquor store was still the same. Church on every corner. Trees getting cut down for whatever reason. All my friends have moved. No one replaced their presence in their homes. It felt weird. The neighborhood was changing before my eyes. My city was changing. My reasoning skills could not make sense of it. Not to mention a water crisis (Odd coincidence I'm writing this on the 10th anniversary of it). Although, it felt weird it became my normal. I thought everyone lived like this. It's interesting when children become aware of physical space and spatial injustice.

As I learned more about history and truth the pill became even harder to swallow. Racism still exists? In ways that aren't even in my face? I thought times were different... Easier. And they are easier, but it is unfortunate to do research and see my community looking like the ones in the history books talking about discriminatory practices.

These realizations led me to desire change. Unlike many, I have always known I wanted to be an architect since I was six years old. I didn't know what it meant fully but I knew I wanted to create a building. Some may call it fate that I chose this profession prior to my "spatial awareness" of my surroundings. It was not only my curiosity that fueled this exploration yet frustration of inequity happening to me in real time. Part of me felt like I was alone and that it was just a "Flint" thing. I was poor. My home did not feel like one. I deserve a quality place to call home, right?

Choosing this journey was not easy. But, I can't wait to see where it takes me.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my village for always supporting me. Architecture was a new journey for all of us and I know you all learned along the way with me too. Thank you for being patient with me and protecting me.

I want to personally thank Nakita Reed and Imman Suleiman for agreeing to take this journey with me. Nakita, your brilliance and expertise was vital to my journey. I am grateful for the talks and the laughs with you. The talks were needed to keep me sane and understand this is just one step in a longer process. Imman your spirit and good energy is irreplaceable. Thank you for your own curious mind into blackness and architecture and what that means. I am so glad I have a new friend in you because of this process. I am so grateful to have two exemplary black women on my team.

To my studio advisor, Enrique Ledesma, thank you for everything. It has been helpful to have someone who knows how I think and learn in my corner. Thank you for giving me grace when i needed it and for hearing my frustration. I appreciate our rant sessions about the investigation because it showed me that you see and hear me. I will always be grateful to you for helping me share my voice with others and choosing the path less traveled with a more theoretical project.

Thank you to my deans Dan and Noah for always cheering me on. There has not been a moment since freshman year that you two have not shown your unwavering support. From student clubs to study abroad to career opportunities and simply just advice. I appreciate it all. Thank you for showing me I have a place in this profession.

I also want to thank the SACD community at University of Detroit Mercy. A family is an understatement when it comes to the program. Faculty and students truly are in it together and I am so thankful I got to experience it during my time in college. I appreciate all the laughs and talks from everyone. Thank you all for caring about me and showing me, I always have a home with you.

Special thanks to numerous people who offered their wisdom, research, and critique onto this investigation. Including, but not limited to, Dr. Mindy Fullilove, Melvin Mitchell, Jack Travis, Ujijji Davis, Michael Ford, Craig Wilkins, Demar Matthews, Bryan C. Lee Jr., Sarida Scott, Majora Carter, and Walter Hood. Among numerous other artists, creatives, and professionals.

Lastly, I want to thank myself. This year was challenging and often lonely. I appreciate you for standing tall in the face of adversity. For keeping a good attitude and still pursuing your other endeavors. Thank you for your kind and authentic spirit. Where would I be if you did not keep it real? I owe it to that little girl in Flint that had a dream and a curious mind. I am thankful for your dedication and pursuit of change and better livelihoods. You always said you were put on this earth to help people and I am here to see it through.

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Figure 1.0 Neighborhood Simulation

01

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

ABSTRACT

There has been an ongoing tension between black and white people because of the history between the two groups. This is known due to slavery, segregation, and discrimination. Black people have had to work harder throughout the years because of many roadblocks put in place by white people in power to hold them back as a group. This also appears in architecture and in design. There are areas that have much lower investment and create an environment where black people were isolated. Many people grew a preconceived notion about neighborhoods with people of color in general. They were viewed as less than and violent. It created an atmosphere where outsiders did not see the beauty in the neighborhoods. A culture was born inside of these neighborhoods just from realizing that black people could depend on each other if not anyone else. Because they were one in the same nothing could stop them. Through all these hardships the black American experience originated and grew to become Black culture. This culture was shaped because of forced displacement and a loss of identity and tradition. Black people in America had to create an identity for themselves in a place they were not welcomed. This constant degradation led to comparison. Throughout time, black people have always been judged based on how close they were to fitting the white ideal.

This thesis aims to uncover connections between approaches to development and systemic racism. The purpose is to bring light to issues but also provide solutions and a more appropriate way to think about culture in neighborhood development. This thesis seeks to ask the question, in what ways has racial bias or fear of diversity impact current development standards?

***Contains strong language and images that may be triggering.**

Figure 2.0 They Cloned Tyrone Kaleidoscope

NOTABLE SCENES

This research began from being inspired by a movie, They Cloned Tyrone. The movie is a science fiction depiction of systemic racism and black exploitation in America. It highlights stereotypes and key issues within the black community through comedy and dramatic scenes. These stereotypes are used as mind control tactics to get the black community to remain complacent in the neighborhood simulations the geneticists created. The end goals were to eventually turn all black people into white people. They targeted predominantly black neighborhoods referred to as ghettos or slums. It is revealed in the end the lead geneticist behind this experiment was a black man choosing to take control over the narrative of what happens to black people. He witnessed his brother's death, and this tragedy led him to say he would rather the community assimilate with whatever his what counterparts wanted as opposed to being annihilated as a community. It is a storyline that causes the viewer to look within themself questioning whether it is better to let others force conformity and choosing to conform to avoid being depleted. This description is a brief overview of the movie, and it is worth a watch to fully understand the themes within it.

To be more specific, Tyrone goes through an eerily similar routine daily. Then, stumbles upon a shocking discovery with friends in a basement lab: the first clone, deceased. Unraveling the mystery, they learn that a mind-controlling seasoning in fried chicken induces uncontrollable laughter and discover surveillance cameras monitoring the neighborhood. Confronting a key figure in the operation, they realize America is an experiment, controlled by codewords. As the community unites to resist, chaos ensues in the lab, revealing the extent of manipulation. In a surreal twist, the protagonist encounters another version of themselves, prompting a realization that life is a simulation, challenging their understanding of reality.

Assimilation is a process of taking in another's culture, this can be forced or voluntary. The movie challenges the idea of choice and autonomy. Toni Morrison famously said, "In this country, America means white. Everyone else has to hyphenate." This quote reinforces the idea of the assimilation culture within America. Along with the themes in the movie it brings awareness that if one chooses not to conform they are not treated as Americans.

The movie used stereotypical black emblems, such as, fried chicken, grape juice, perms, music and church to influence the neighborhood when they wanted. These scenes were chosen as major plot points that shows the ways in which these emblems reinforced this idea of assimilation. The final scene was a literal metaphor of introspection. It was the main character and what appeared to be a clone but was the original "Fontaine". He has a conversation with himself questioning the choices made.

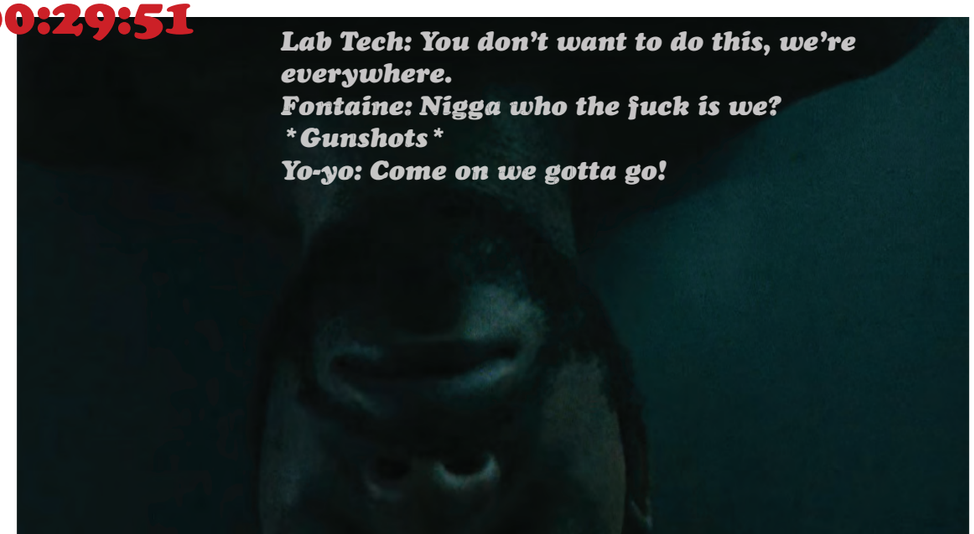
Figure 3.0 Movie Advertisement

00:16:16

Fontaine goes through his usual routine. Rellos. Scratch offs. Gives homeless man outside of the corner store (Frog) some of his drink. Then, Fontaine sees a wounded man walking and notices a mysterious SUV pick him up.

Figure 4.1 Scene One

00:29:51



Yo-yo is playing with the liquids and accidentally drops a beaker. She scares Slick and he accidentally shoots the lab tech. Simultaneously, Fontaine discovers a man with gunshot wounds with his face. The lab alarms go off and they run out of there shocked at the discovery.

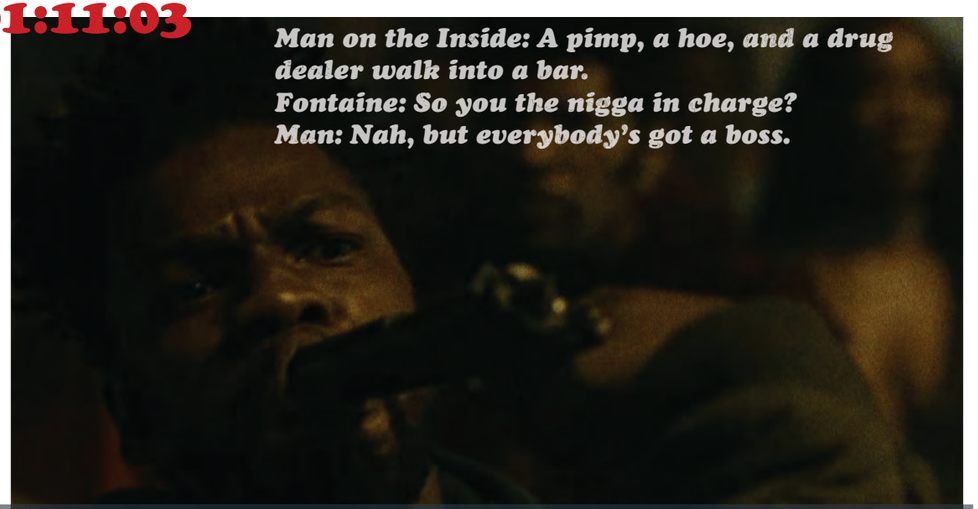
Figure 4.2 Scene Two

00:37:31

The trio goes to get a bite to eat. Fontaine starts laughing hard. Yo-yo is trying to make sense of the events that just happened, but is cracking jokes at the same time. Slick notices the excessive laughing. Realizes something in the chicken tastes like the "cocaine" in the lab. Yo-yo goes to investigate the back of the restaurant and notices the cameras watching the whole neighborhood of Glen.

Figure 4.3 Scene Three

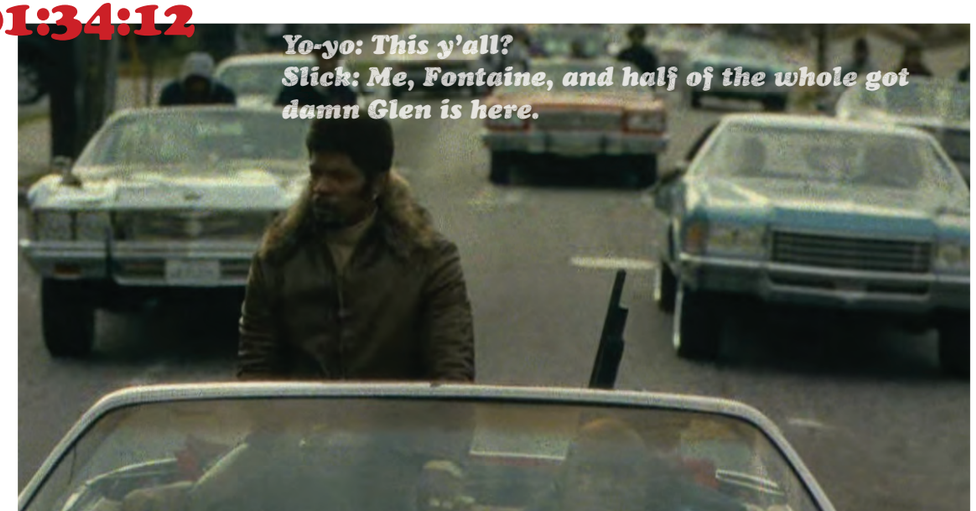
01:11:03



After being chased by a mob, the trio face someone who is in on the operation. Reveals that they all feel like everyone has a part to play in keeping the "peace". Claims America is an experiment. The trio gets upset and attempts to kill the man. He says the phrase "Olympia Black" and starts controlling Fontaine which forces them to comply.

Figure 4.4 Scene Four

01:34:12



After gathering the whole hood, Slick enters the lab causing havoc. At the same time, Yo-yo had her own escape plan. They tried to use perm on her to control her, but she had on a wig. She frees herself. Slick and Yo-yo reunite. They proceed to destroy the labs.

Figure 4.5 Scene Five

01:49:11

All clones were released and its all over the news. Reveals they are targeting black cities and they are all simulations. The trio decides to travel and see the world. In the end, we see another version of Fontaine going through his routine. He starts watching the news and sees a clone of himself.

Figure 4.6 Scene Six

“ASSIMILATION IS BETTER THAN ANNIHILATION”

Fontaine meets the lead geneticist behind the operation. He appears to be another clone of himself, but is actually the original. Fontaine himself is a clone. Reveals that he joined forces with the “invisible” power because of his brother’s death. Trying to “keep the peace” by eventually turning black people into white people. Slowly assimilating the physical traits is a different type of genocide. Fontaine uses the “Chester” version of himself to kill the geneticist (original version of himself).

Figure 4.7 Scene Seven

This investigation focuses on the pressure of adhering to white standards. White is understood as the dominant culture within America and the standards are aligned with ideals related to whiteness. This research also identifies design decisions that impact the livelihood of black people to appeal to this white standard. It illuminates the pathway of assimilation in different mediums.

ARGUMENT

In the context of urban development, there is a systemic problem of tailoring the design of black neighborhoods to align with a white standard. It has far-reaching consequences, contributing to the persistent challenges of displacement and assimilation. This calls for a paradigm shift towards equitable urban planning practices that not only acknowledge but also respect and celebrate the inherent diversity within communities. This thesis aims to delve into the intricate dynamics of this issue by offering a comprehensive examination of the consequences of conforming to a white standard and advocating for an inclusive urban planning approach that safeguards the authenticity and vibrancy of black neighborhoods. It also aims to educate through conversation and diagramming bias and better design decisions.

Figure 5.0 Man with Mask

02

THE ENDS OF THIS RESEARCH

GOALS

Critique: Designer, developers, and architects need to learn how to preserve culture in black neighborhoods. Everyone needs to be aware of their own biases and the systemic thinking that has been placed in their minds, especially if they are designers. This ultimately leads to inefficient design. A design becomes inefficient when it does not meet the needs of the community. Black neighborhoods consistently being compared to a white standard becomes problematic. It limits how far the neighborhood could progress. It also becomes a simulation controlled by whoever is funding and designing the project.

Opposition: Some could say urban development benefits all residents regardless of racial background. This reverts to the general assumption that development starts with intentions that are not negative but are generic. The lens of neighborhood improvement is focused on the economy and the financial benefit. There are major focuses on improvement in infrastructure, safety, amenities, and the condition of buildings. Again, not in a negative way but that those areas are the focus.

Response: Although these areas are important and the focus should not get lost, preserving the existing culture of the people residing in the neighborhood should be a factor when deciding how to design and what to propose for programming. The alternative is a generic approach to neighborhoods. There needs to be improved qualitative research to interfere with the process, so the design is not stale and lacking.

Direction: The direction of this investigation is to educate those who are not aware of this issue. In particular, people in the middle of the issue, meaning not those creating the problem and not those going through it, but the people that are not directly affected by the issue. This exploration

POTENTIAL

The ideas presented here lead to better design by providing a resource to understand the issue and its implications. Development could do better.

This topic is relevant because it challenges the idea of the design process within black neighborhoods. Communities and identities are being lost in terms of design. The neighborhoods being developed are displacing people or the lack of development evokes spatial assimilation.

This analysis encourages the world to empathize with one another and spark a dialogue that emits change. Generally, people have preconceived notions about everything. Understanding this while researching the development methods of black neighborhoods is essential because of perception and ethics. Are certain viewpoints or actions considered right? Does the end justify the means? These are secondary questions asked while exploring this. All of this can vary depending on the person's experiences, background, and story.

urges those to get informed and involved to prevent this cycle from continuing to happen in black neighborhoods.

This book is also within itself a resource for that targeted audience. It can also be for residents, clients or those that control how a space looks (designers, architects, developers etc.) This is not a set of guidelines to follow, but information with examples to educate and inspire. This is an attempt to find a merge between new neighborhood design and creating a set of "rules" addressing the issues. This investigation does not replace how design happens completely. Additionally, it does not create a futuristic design influenced by bias that only represents one version of the black aesthetic. This direction mends the two standpoints. It is not mandatory currently but serves as a resource to help the design process.

What is Missing? The interaction with a potential community to inform the draft of the proposal. This research also needs a set of quantitative data to help inform the decisions and further prove its validity. The initial approach stemmed from qualitative research and the understanding of why the problem exists and how it continues to happen. This research will continue and adopt an analytical approach in addition to collecting qualitative data to help understand an appropriate outcome in the future.

NIKKI-ROSA

childhood remembrances are always a drag
if you're Black
you always remember things like living in Woodlawn
with no inside toilet
and if you become famous or something
they never talk about how happy you were to have
your mother
all to yourself and
how good the water felt when you got your bath
from one of those
big tubs that folk in chicago barbecue in
and somehow when you talk about home
it never gets across how much you
understood their feelings
as the whole family attended meetings about Hollydale
and even though you remember
your biographers never understand
your father's pain as he sells his stock
and another dream goes
And though you're poor it isn't poverty that
concerns you
and though they fought a lot
it isn't your father's drinking that makes any difference
but only that everybody is together and you
and your sister have happy birthdays and very good
Christmases
and I really hope no white person ever has cause
to write about me
because they never understand
Black love is Black wealth and they'll
probably talk about my hard childhood
and never understand that
all the while I was quite happy

Nikki Giovanni

Black neighborhoods within the United States varies, depending on the history and cultural characteristics. The categories of black neighborhood fall into are urban, historic, suburban, rural, transitional and immigrant neighborhoods.

NEIGHBORHOOD TYPES

Urban - These neighborhoods are typically located Areas with a lot of activity and dense populations. They typically have many black residents. They may face challenges such as poverty, crime, and limited access to resources. They can also be vibrant, cultural hubs with strong community ties.

Historic - some black neighborhoods have deep historical roots, dating back to the area of slavery. These communities typically have strong, cultural traditions, landmarks, and institutions that reflect their long-standing presence and contributions to American society. This includes cultural neighborhoods, former sits of black neighborhoods, and freedmen's towns.

Suburban - There are some black Americans who moved to suburban areas after their socioeconomic conditions improve. The suburbs tend to offer better schools for neighborhoods, and meet a higher standard of living, compared to their previous conditions. This type of neighborhood presents its own challenges, like discrimination, racial, profiling, And isolation from resources and community networks. These typically are not mostly black, but there are neighborhoods that exist with a higher socioeconomic status that have majority black residents.

Rural - There are also black neighborhoods that exist within rural communities. These communities may face issues such as limited access to healthcare and transportation, not to mention economic disparities, compared to more dense areas. However, they often have tight-knit communities and strong connections to traditions. They also tend to have generational wealth within the land that they own.

Transitional - There are also many black neighborhoods that have experienced gentrification or are currently in a transition experiencing it now. These neighborhoods are typically undergoing physical and socioeconomic changes to improve the quality of life within the neighborhood. This also attracts new residents and could potentially displace existing residents. This analysis is not suggesting that all black neighborhoods that are transitioning are being gentrified, but for the purpose of this research, those are the types of neighborhoods that is the focus.

Immigrant - there are also black neighborhoods that are home to large populations of immigrants from countries and the Caribbean, Africa, and Latin America. These communities have their own distinct cultural traditions and contribute to the diversity of black identity within the United States. These communities often maintain connections to their homelands while also forging new relationships within America.

Giovanni's poem is a moment to appreciate growing up in a black neighborhood. Calling out outsiders wh assume that one is unhappy in certain conditions. But also calling out people's bias. Growing up black doesn't always mean growing up in hardship.

"AND I REALLY HOPE NO WHITE PERSON EVER HAS CAUSE TO WRITE ABOUT ME"

Nikki Giovanni

Figure 6.0 Nikki Giovanni

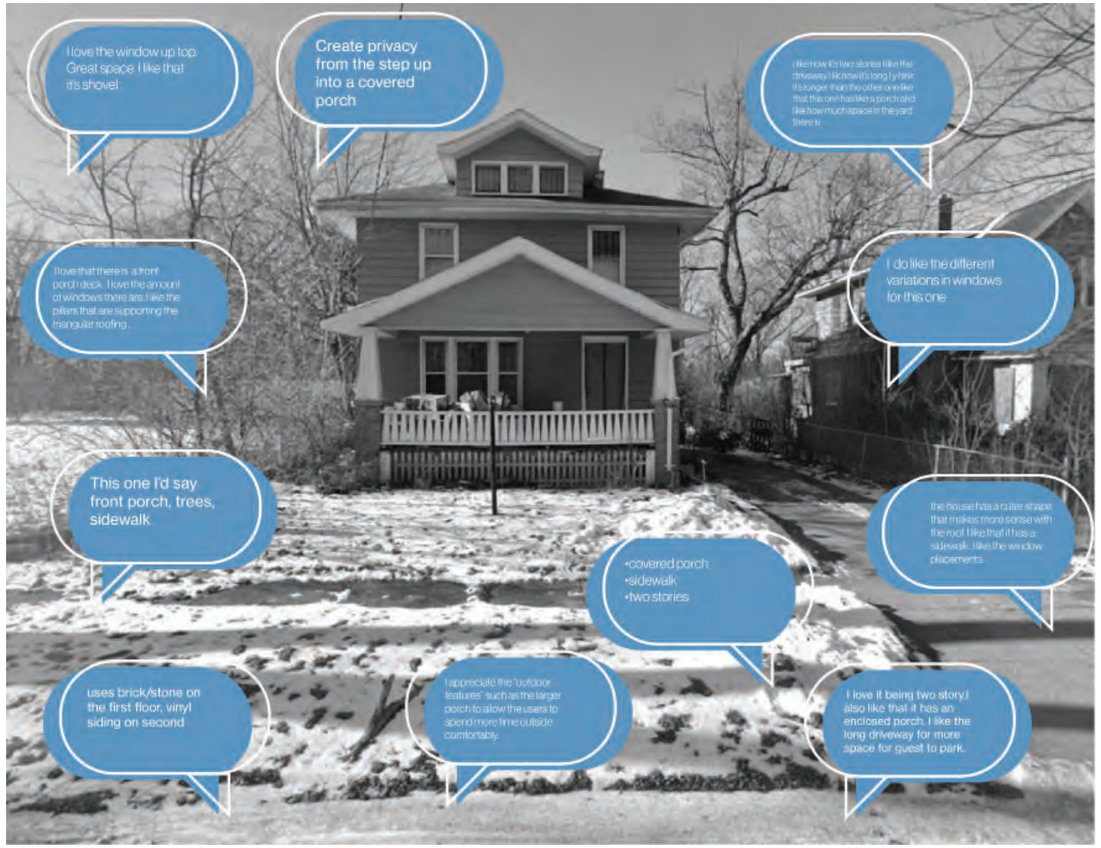


Figure 7.1 Home Critique

Figure 7.2 Home Critique

Figure 7.3 Home Critique

Figure 7.4 Home Critique

BLACK CULTURAL NEIGHBORHOODS

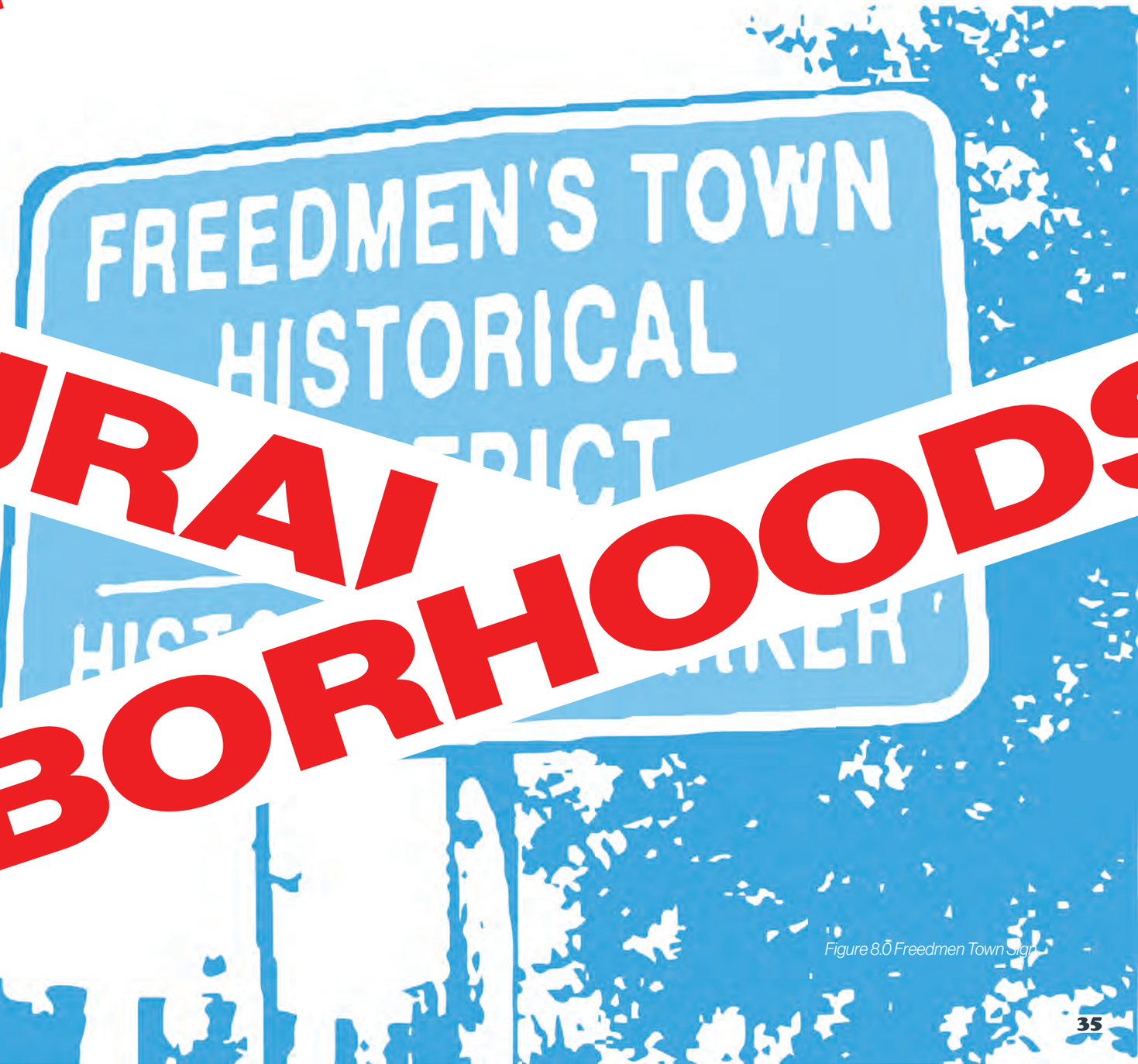


Figure 8.0 Freedmen Town Sign

INTRODUCTION

A neighborhood is an area within a city known for a specific distinct, cultural identity and community heritage. These neighborhoods often have a strong presence of cultural institutions and ethnic businesses that celebrate and preserve that heritage also may be characterize by celebrations and art reflecting the creativity of the residents, these areas serve as important hub for cultural exchange enrich to the cultural landscape of that city.

A black cultural neighborhood is predominantly inhabited by black residents and emphasizes black culture. Black culture encompasses music, literature, visual arts, food, fashion, religion, language, and hair traditions that represent the multifaceted tapestry of the culture.

There is a disconnect between cultural neighborhoods like little Italy, for example, and marginalized groups like black cultural neighborhoods. This disconnect lies in the differential experiences of privilege within society. Cultural neighborhoods serve as fibers that celebrate and preserve cultural heritage, but they often exist within a broader context of social inequity and exclusion, marginalized groups systemic barriers that prevent them from thriving as a cultural hub. Is disconnect highlights the complex economy between cultural identity and structural and equality within America.

HISTORIC

As mentioned before, there is a struggle with black neighborhoods, being sustainable, culturally and economically. In short, this is because of disinvestment, system racism, and cultural erosion.

Common characteristics of historically, black towns focus on self-sufficiency, economic, independence, and community development. These towns often emerge in response to racial segregation, providing black residents with more opportunities that they were not receiving before. Key features of these neighborhoods might include community, owned businesses, educational institutions, and a sense of unity among residents working towards a shared goal. Additionally, these towns often play a crucial role in fostering achievements and advancements within the African American community. These characteristics extracted from these examples can be considered design principles to achieve.

A culturally sustained community amplifies these aspects to ensure their longevity. As previously mentioned, this effort towards this outcome is stopped by discriminatory practices and systemic racism.

EXAMPLES

Black Bottom, Detroit, MI
Black bottom was a historic black neighborhood located on the east side of Detroit, Michigan. It earned its name from the fertile black soil found within the area. Black bottom was one of the cities, oldest and most vibrant black communities known for its bustling commercial district, lively music, and significant cultural contributions. It became a thriving neighborhood after black people migrated to Detroit from the south, looking for employment in the auto industry. The neighborhood played a crucial role in the development of Detroit vibrant music scene with famous musicians like Duke Ellington and Ella Fitzgerald. This neighborhood was thriving with businesses and resources. Unfortunately, the neighborhood met its fate when the construction of the I 75 Highway was constructed through the neighborhood. Like many other black neighborhoods, it was not able to remain in this area after displacement.

Greenwood District, Tulsa, OK
Greenwood District is a place located in Tulsa; Oklahoma known as “Black Wall Street”. It was a prosperous black city in the 1920s. It was known for its thriving businesses, successful entrepreneurship, and a vibrant cultural scene. It included many amenities that added to the economic resilience and self-sufficiency of the place. Unfortunately, a massacre occurred in 1921 due to racism that basically wiped out the area.

Harlem, Manhattan, NY
Harlem was originally a Dutch Village, it developed in the late 19th century as a residential suburb, attracting a diverse population, including European immigrants and African Americans migrating from the south. In the 1920s and 1930s, Harlem became a cultural epicenter during the Harlem Renaissance. The Harlem Renaissance was successful and fostering, a cultural and artistic flourishing within the Harlem neighborhood. The celebrated black art, literature, music, and intellectual pursuits. This contributed significantly to the cultural identity and recognition of black artist and thinkers.

Figure 9.0 Greenwood Design Principles

Figure 10.1 Black Neighborhood Destruction

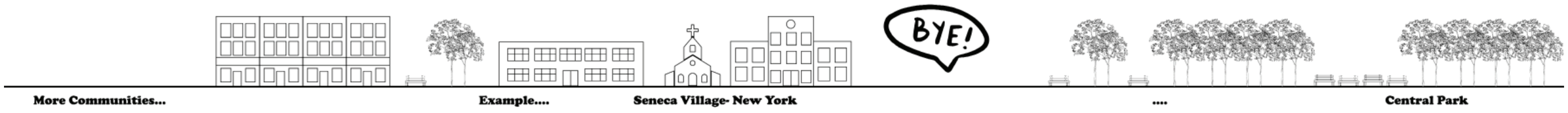


Figure 10.2 Black Neighborhood Destruction

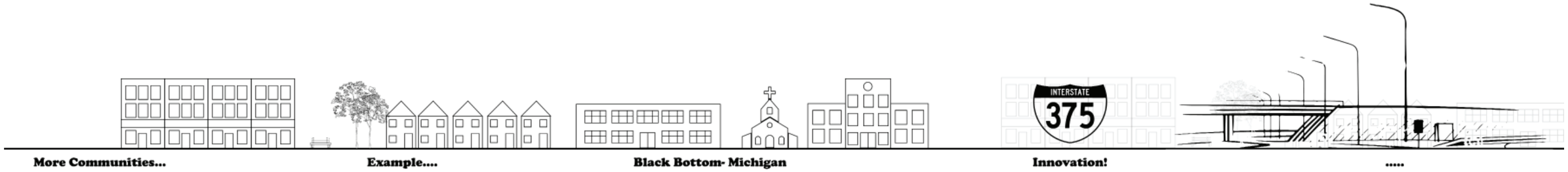


Figure 10.3 Black Neighborhood Destruction

Figure 10.4 Black Neighborhood Destruction

BLURRED LINES

Historically, white neighborhoods enjoyed greater access to resources and investment, while black neighborhoods were often marginalized. His racial dynamics changed over time, some white neighborhoods experience of phenomena called “white flight, “where white resident moved out as black resident moved in, leading to shifts and the racial composition of the neighborhood. The migration of white residents grew rapidly and led to significant economic changes within the neighborhood as they left more suburban areas, they took that same investment and abundance of resources with them. Simultaneously, black people were already facing limited housing options, and found themselves consolidated in these types of areas. If black residents tried to move to these better areas that white people migrated to, they were met with resistance being racial segregation and they’re being a clear inequality in black and white communities. Thus, being left with white people’s leftovers.

Diverse neighborhoods can be good if all cultures are respected. Based on this analysis, black people are not respected once their neighborhood becomes culturally mixed or starts to be developed. There starts to be erasure of culture and there starts to be a blurred line between development of the neighborhood and a neighborhood reset.

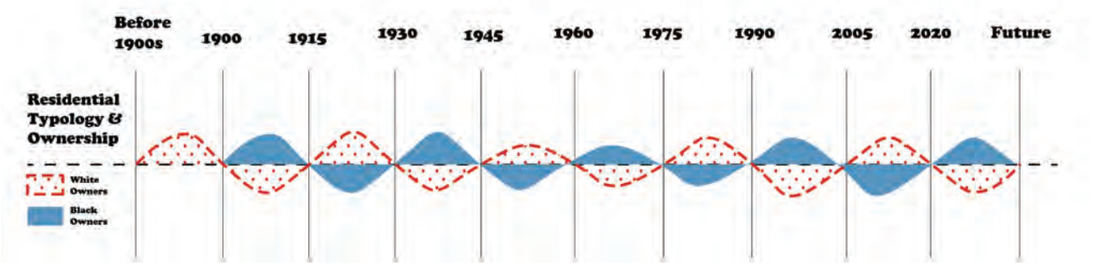


Figure 11.0 Residential Leftovers

Freedmen’s Towns

A Freedmen town is a black community built by former slaves who were emancipated during and after the American Civil War. These towns emerge in many states, most notably Texas and Oklahoma. These towns often faced challenges but also served as a symbol of community strength, with some still standing. This research explored a specific Freedmen town in Houston, Texas and documented the current conditions of the neighborhood. It was clear that development had started to happen within this neighborhood that was historically a black neighborhood had residents from multiple races, but it was clear that the people living in the updated homes were not black. This reiterates the point the research was making about, black people not being respected and culturally, diverse environments. There also seems to be some preservation efforts of existing slut homes that were former owned by slaves, and there is a museum that is being reconstructed.

Treme, New Orleans

Treme is a neighborhood near the French Quarter in New Orleans. It is considered the oldest black neighborhood in America and was established by freedmen who acquired property and built Treme. Unfortunately, like many other black neighborhoods, it is starting to be developed without the community’s interest at heart. According to a resident of the neighborhood who works at the local community center, Treme is on the way to being gentrified. She expressed her conflicted feelings about it because she liked that the neighborhood is getting the proper attention but also didn’t like that it wasn’t what the residents asked for. Yet, appealing to a standard to attract new residents. Treme has a strong neighborhood identity and needs revitalization. Both can be mutually exclusive. Regardless, it is disappointing to see that there are clear shifts in maintenance and character when exploring the neighborhood.

A sense of loss can be experienced by longtime residents who witnessed the transformation of their community. This can also be felt by visitors if they can relate to the condition. It is understandable to welcome improvements like increased investment and new businesses, but it shouldn’t come at the risk of cultural erasure, rising living cost, and displacement. No one should feel alienated and powerless in their own home.

Figures 12.1-12.8 Photos of Houston Freedmen’s Town

Figures 13.1-13.8 Photos of Treme

EXPLORATION

Research Questions: This topic covers many dimensions and requires exploration through different lenses. All of this considered, there are a few questions that guide this research. How can spatial assimilation be avoided as a response to development? How can a conversation be started to identify the mental barriers that encourage the white standard and later influence an alternative (more positive) way of thinking? What are the strategies to ensure the essence of a neighborhood's culture and values are sustained and amplified over time?

Framing Concepts: Blackness encompasses a rich and diverse culmination of cultural traditions, rooted in the African diaspora. It represents resilience, creativity, and community forged in the face of historical oppression and systemic racism. **Culture**, within the context of blackness, embodies a dynamic fusion of music, art, language, and spirituality that has shaped global culture and influenced countless movements for social justice and equality. **Change** and **development** within black communities reflect ongoing struggles for empowerment and liberation, as well as the challenges of navigating shifting socioeconomic landscapes and urban environments. **Conformity**, while sometimes necessary for survival within oppressive systems, can also be a source of resistance and subversion, as black people and their communities assert agency and dominant narratives. **Whiteness**, as a social construct, consists of privilege, power, and the normalization of White cultural norms and standards, perpetuating systems of inequality and exclusion that continue to shape the experiences of the people worldwide.

Figure 14.0 The Truth in Print

03

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

ORIGIN OF THE ISSUE

In the tapestry of American history, the contributions and experiences of Black people contain a narrative that reflects both resilience and struggle. From the force of migration from West Africa to the ongoing struggles for civil rights and equality, the story of black culture in America is one profound historical significance. At the heart of this narrative lies the process of a simulation – the complex interplay between preserve and cultural heritage and adapting to the dominant norms and values of American society. This section delves into the historical Roots of blackness and America, exploring the challenges and tries of assimilation, and the way in which black Americans have shaped and been shaped by this nation. Explore the dichotomy between tradition and change, identity, and belonging, in the continued conflicted culture that shapes the fabric of American culture today.

ASSIMILATION

I, Too

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

Langston Hughes

Understanding this feeling of belonging in America and how minority groups must hide a piece of themselves to fit the ideal American. It brings into question this idea of diversity and what it means to celebrate cultures. Is it just for brief moments in specific social situations? Then back to white as normal?

RELEVANCE

Perspectives are being altered when it comes to black neighborhoods. Constantly these neighborhoods are depicted in a negative context, with a narrative that only emphasizes the “shortcomings”. This perspective is not as bad as it used to be in the past, but it is still not where it needs to be.

Black communities can be “lost” because of this issue. Gentrification often displaces long-time residents as wealthier investors move in, driving up property values and pricing out existing residents. Economic disinvestment further exacerbates these issues, leading to limited access to resources and opportunities. Environmental injustices, such as pollution and toxic waste sites, disproportionately affect black neighborhoods, contributing to adverse health outcomes and community decline. The criminalization of black people and mass incarceration disrupts families and destabilizes communities, while cultural erasure overlooks the rich history and traditions of these neighborhoods. This leads to a loss of language, traditions, customs, and cultural motifs. Additionally, the lack of resources and support systems perpetuates cycles of poverty and marginalization. Sources such as, Reclaiming Your Community, Spatializing Blackness, and Urban Alchemy address these injustices and empower black communities to reclaim their agency and resilience in the face of systemic challenges.

Systemic barriers, such as limited access to quality education, employment discrimination, and unequal access to healthcare, can perpetuate cycles of poverty and hinder opportunities for personal and collective growth. This can lead black people to seek opportunities within white space. Additionally, pervasive stereotypes in media and society can shape perceptions of black identity, often reducing individuals to narrow and often negative caricatures. These factors can contribute to a sense of internalized racism and identity conflict within black communities, as individuals navigate the complexities of self-perception in a society that frequently devalues their worth and contributions. This concept is explained in the book, Black in White Space by Elijah Anderson where he explores the ways in which race shapes experiences and interactions in various social contexts.

TYPES

Cultural - Process where a minority group or culture comes to resemble the majority group or assimilate the values, behaviors and beliefs fully or partially. This can be forced.

Spatial - Process where minorities attempt to improve their socioeconomic achievements to attain residence in the “best” possible neighborhoods.

Design - Process where designers, developers, and architects design with a particular lens without considering the design assets of the community. This leads the design to appeal to the aesthetic they referenced when designing.

INTENT

The positive intention behind assimilation or “the melting pot” concept is often rooted in the desire for unity, harmony, and a shared national identity. The melting pot ideal, particularly prevalent in American culture, suggests that through the blending of different cultures, a stronger, more cohesive society can emerge. Assimilation can also be seen as a pathway to social and economic integration, with the belief that adopting the norms, values, and practices of the dominant culture can lead to greater opportunities for individuals and communities. Advocates argue that by embracing assimilation, immigrants and minority groups can access the resources and benefits of mainstream society, leading to upward mobility and improved quality of life. The American Dream.

Melting pot can be traced back to earlier waves of immigration to the United States, particularly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when millions of immigrants arrived from Europe and other parts of the world seeking economic opportunity and freedom. The phrase can be credited to a play by Israel Zangwill where immigrants come together and blend their traditions. During this period, the notion of the United States as a “melting pot” gained popularity to describe the assimilation of immigrants into American society and the formation of a cohesive national identity.

Henry Ford was not directly associated with the concept of the melting pot. However, his contributions to American industry and society had an indirect influence

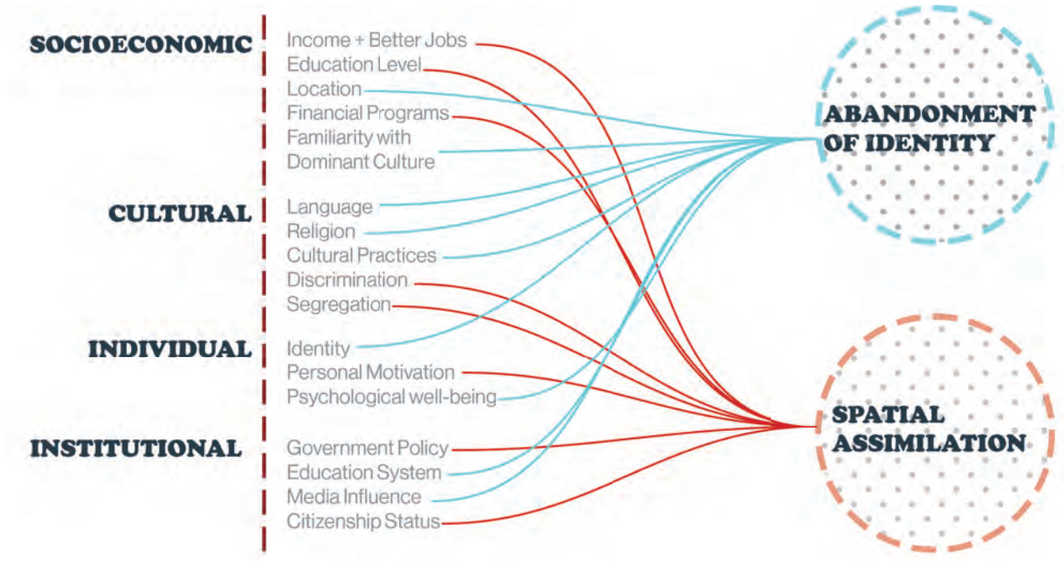


Figure 15.0 Assimilation Reasonings and Comparison

on the idea. His success in industrial innovation and mass production exemplified the idea of America as a land of opportunity, where individuals from diverse backgrounds could contribute to and benefit from economic progress. This also reinforces different aspects of the American culture. For example, consumerism, labor practices, 40-hour week, corporate culture, and entrepreneurship. These types of values pour into the way people desire their communities as well.

There are moments in a neighborhood’s life span when it needs maintenance or renewal. “Imagine a thief in the night who came into your house, roused you from a deep, dreamless sleep, forced you onto the street, and then slept in your bed. And there you are, standing on the sidewalk in the not-fit-to-be-seen-in-public T-Shirt you went to sleep in, staring at your house, and wondering how *you* got to be considered a trespasser”. -Majora Carter, *Reclaiming Your Community* This quote is a clear metaphor describing gentrification.

Typically, once the development is completed, if it does not reflect a culture, it is called gentrification. Gentrification is the process where an urban area that is poor is changed by improving housing and conditions in the area. Gentrification typically begins with economic development efforts in urban areas, leading to rising property values and attracting wealthier residents and investors. This influx of higher-income individuals, including affluent black residents, can result in the displacement of longstanding residents who can no longer afford rising housing costs. This process often brings cultural changes to the neighborhood as businesses cater to the preferences of the incoming residents. Government policies may also play a role in encouraging gentrification. White centering policies such as redlining and the book *Know Your Price* by Andre M. Perry reveals that black neighborhoods are compared to a “White normal.”

REALITY

The reality of assimilation is that the outcome is not as positive as it was intended to be. There is a loss of culture and identity within black neighborhoods that are forced to culturally assimilate. There is a loss of self-identity and community pride for those who choose to spatially assimilate. Lastly, there starts to be a lack of blackness in neighborhoods that are assimilated through design.

“I, TOO AM AMERICA”

-Langston Hughes

Figure 16.0 Langston Hughes

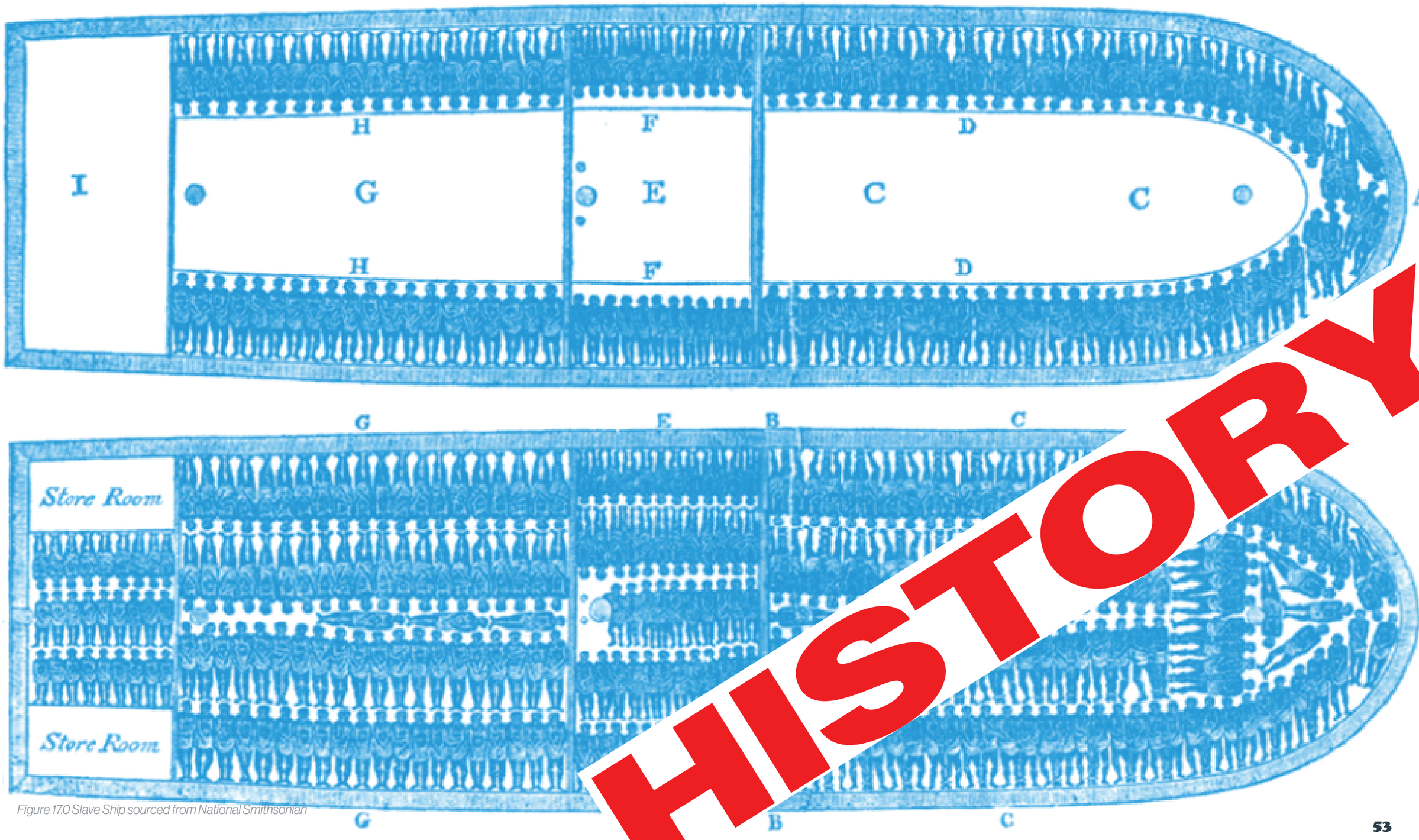


Figure 17.0 Slave Ship sourced from National Smithsonian

HISTORY

SLAVERY

American slavery is the forced labor of Africans during the colonial era until the union soldiers from the Civil War arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced that all enslaved people were free. This effectively ended slavery in the state and overall in America. The first documented arrival of a slave ship, controlled by English colonist, occurred in 1619 with around 20 Africans in Jamestown, Virginia. This event marked the long and tragic history and what became the United States. This voyage would be known as the transatlantic slave trade which brought millions of Africans, mostly from West Africa to the Americas to be sold as laborers.

Initially, these colonists relied on indentured servants, but they realize the demand for labor grew and enslaved Africans. They were considered property, had no rights, forced to work long hours under brutal conditions, underwent physical and emotional abuse, separation from their families, education denial, loss of language and culture, and overall autonomy of their lives. Slavery created a system of racial hierarchy and discrimination that put white people at the top and Black people at the bottom. This system they created still continues to impact American society today.

WEST AFRICA

As mentioned before most American slaves came from West Africa. This region was home to an array of ethnic groups that had its distinct cultural tradition and was able to enter mingle frequently. They are also known for their arts, being vibrant and spiritually significant. Music and dance are also integral parts of West African culture, serving as forms of expression, communication, and social cohesion. This is supported with a variety of instruments and like Afrobeat. They also have a very distinct religion, but also have a variety including Islam and Christianity. The final feature of their culture is foods, including bold flavors, aromatic spices, healthy food, and staple food, like cassava, plantains, jollof, rice, and stews.

Looking more into West African architecture, they prioritize and amplify vernacular architecture. For example, using methods like mud, brick construction, designing their spaces to have flat roofs, courtyards, Veras, and open air spaces. They also put an emphasis on decorative elements that showcase their culture, including carved wooden ornamental detailing to represent their culture and religion. This is just a brief overview of a rich and unique culture that was stripped away once Africans were brought over and enslaved.

ADAPTING

Enslaved Africans were often subjected to force the simulation into European – American culture. They were forbidden from practicing their native language, religions, and cultural traditions. Instead, they were compelled to adopt the religion, Christianity and English language. They also found ways to combat this force of simulation by blending what was remembered from their African culture into these new European and indigenous influences. For example, music, art, food, religious practices, and hair. This helped them form tightening communities within the constraints of slavery, and serve the spaces for resistance and solidarity, which contributed to the development of African-American identities.

Traditions were not completely lost as some were passed down through storytelling, music and other cultural practices. Even after being freed African-Americans, continue to navigate this process, called the simulation while trying to assert their new formed, cultural identity they continue to grapple with issues of belonging and aside society that marginalized them despite ongoing discrimination, black people contributed to the American culture and society and significant ways, which shape the nations cultural landscape.

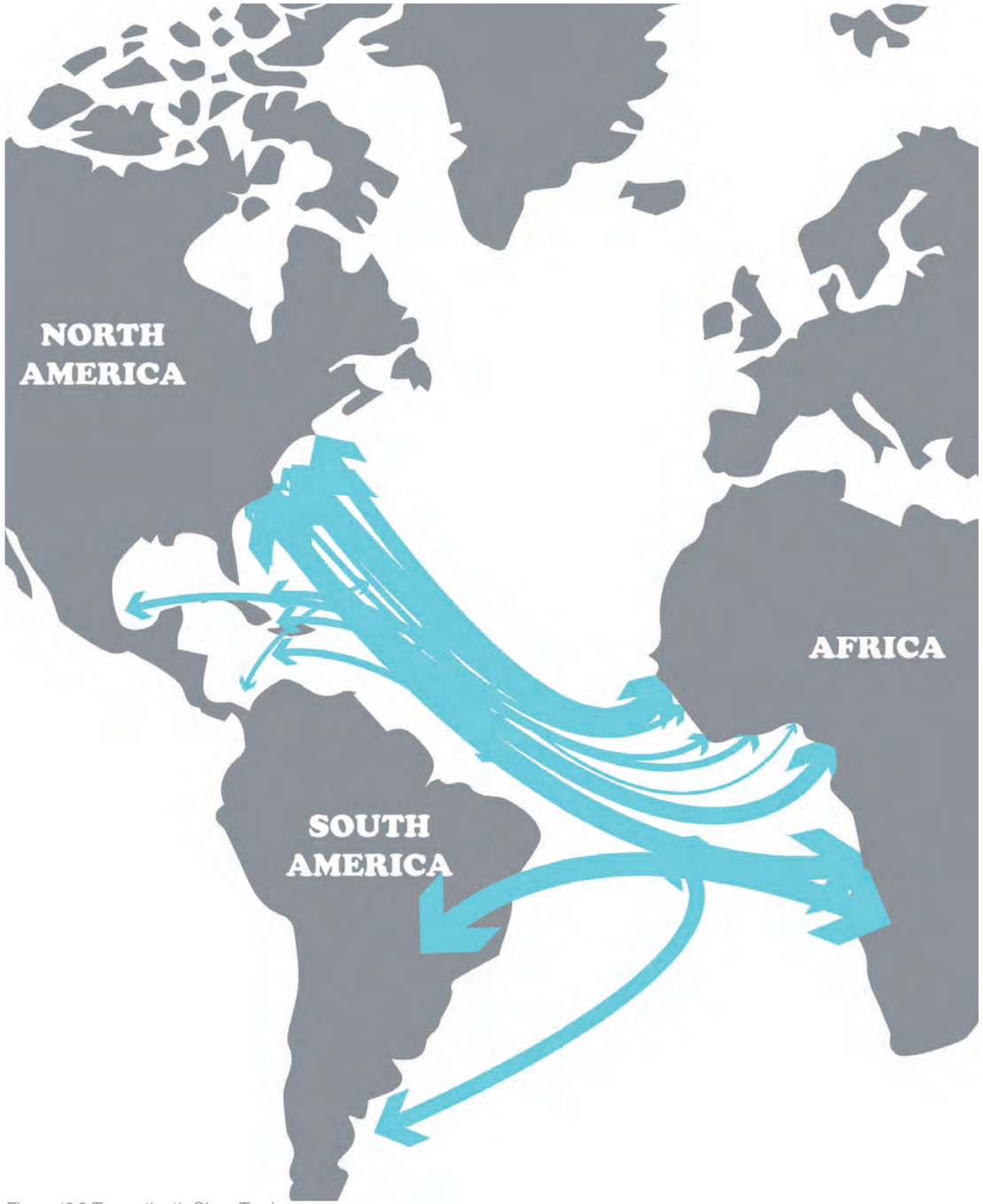


Figure 18.0 Transatlantic Slave Trade

Systemic racism is the policies and practices that exist throughout a society or organization that result in a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair treatment of others based on race.

Figure 19.0 American Flag

WHITENESS

For the purpose of this research, whiteness is defined as the ways white people, their customs, culture, and beliefs operate as the standard by which all other groups are compared, according to the National Museum of African-American Heritage and Culture

In the scope of this thesis investigation, dominant culture is defined as the imposition of values, behaviors, and language onto a subordinate culture through suppression. Dominant culture was influenced by colonialism and systems of oppression. Colonizing powers often imposed, their cultural values and institution on colonized people. For example, slavery. This lead to the dominance of cultural norms and practice within America. Dominant culture is reinforced to processes of education and propaganda individuals within a society are often, taught from a young age to adhere to the norms and values of this culture. All social scenarios. There is also an economic influence that shapes this culture in America. Specifically, there is a capitalist system that emphasizes activities like competition, individualism, and consumerism, this is all embedded in the framework of the United States. Lastly, dominant culture is a concept, derived from cultural homogeny that enforces the idea of all cultures being the same. Even in the cases where people may not belong to the dominant culture Naturally, it becomes typical for this culture to become internalized within people..

This idea of the dominant American culture led derogatory practices to reinforce that white or European ideals should remain at the top of the cultural chain. For example, federal funding disparities, making some communities like resources and attention from the government. This typically happens and communities a color, especially black, brown, and indigenous communities. This neglect, perpetuates cycles of poverty and limited access to resources. Another example of a derogatory practice, is red lining. Red lining is when bank and lending institution systematically, denying services and charge higher rates to residence of certain neighborhoods based on their race or ethnicity. This was a practice started by the homeowners loan corporation, a new deal, agency, in 1933 during the great depression era. They created these red lining maps that categorized neighborhoods based on proceed risk for mortgage lending. They would mark black and immigrant areas as high risk areas. By denying financial resources and investment opportunities it created segregation and intern wealth disparities among marginalized people. These practices limited economic mobility in these communities, and thus created a standard for their neighborhoods to be compared to. This is a parent in the book, *The Color of Law* by Richard Rothstein.

BLACK AND WHITE

It can be understood that there is ongoing tension between white and black Americans in the United States because of the history, including slavery, segregation, discrimination, systemic racism. These tensions were reinforced because of Jim Crow laws, disparities in the criminal justice system, racialized political discourse, affirmative action, voting rights, and disproportionate resources. There were significant moments where violence came to play between the two races.

This violence started in the slavery era as a response to being physically abused and dehumanized. During the Jim Crow era, there were lynchings and race rise targeted towards the black community, and there was a movement to enforce white supremacy and maintain that racial hierarchy. They did this as a tool to intimidate and control black people. Then shortly after this era came the civil rights movement between the 1950s and 60s, and there were numerous black activist trying to advance black people as a whole. However, white supremacist combat this effort as well with bombings, murders and violence against peaceful protesters.

This created unrest within the black community and they decided to fight against these racial justices so they could be treated equally. In recent years, police brutality has been amplified in the media influence the Black Lives Matter movement. Racism did not just stop at violence or direct racism. There was indirect racism, no shown through policies and derogatory practices as mentioned before.

POLICIES

This investigation explored housing policies that continue to hold black people back. Affordable housinng was a complex practice that had detrimental effects affordable housing initially was supposed to be addressing housing insecurity and promoting economic stability. However, due to redlining black americans were denied access to desirable neighborhoods and force them to be consolidated into certain affordable housing that will later be referred to as the projects. Urban renewal projects display residence from their homes cut off those community ties. They may have built within that neighborhood. This is also a process called gentrification.

Additionally, predatory lending practices during the mortgage crisis targeted black homeowners and little widespread foreclosures and loss of generational wealth. This included housing and rental discrimination that led to evictions.

Overall, the rules and regulations created by the government, led to a halt and upward mobility, and made black Americans consider spatial assimilation.

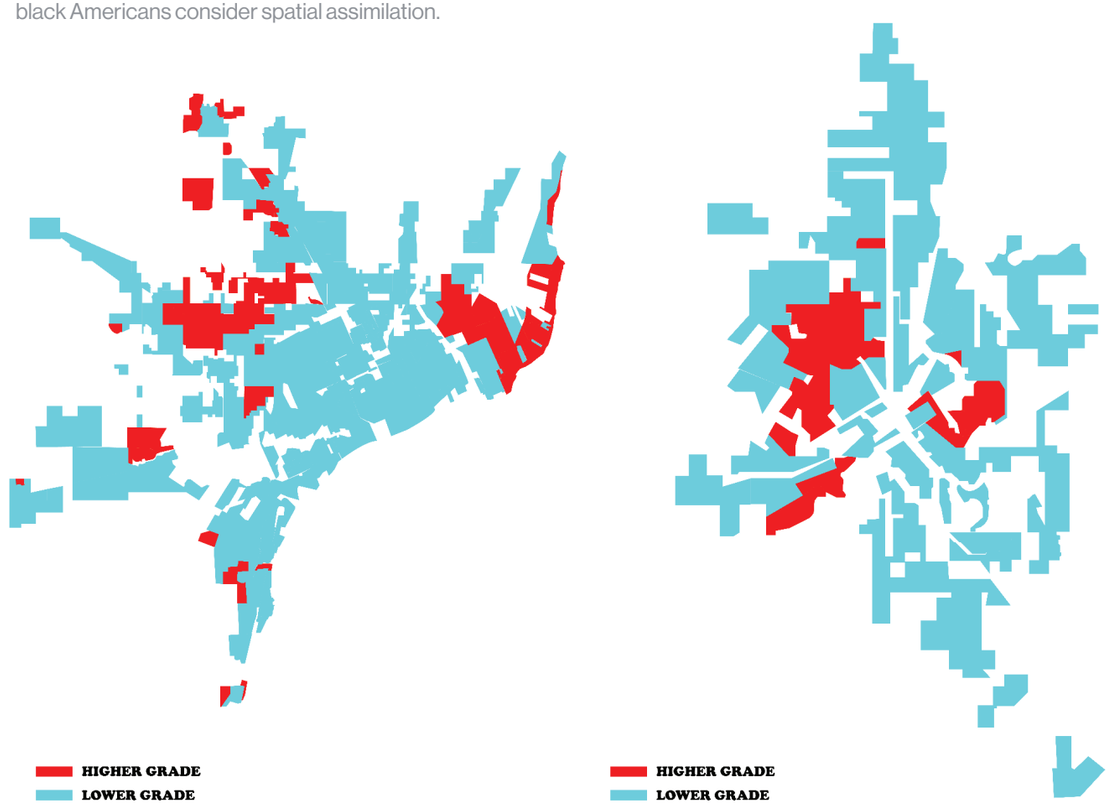


Figure 20.1-20.2 1930s HOLC Maps of Detroit and Flint

There are moments where people in America feel pressure to downplay pieces of their identity to navigate social, professional, and political environments. This idea of being a true American and dominant culture leads to disconnection from one's authentic self. In terms of brace, this is common to just receive the bare minimum of respect and opportunity. Even when people choose to comply or align with the dominant culture, they sell the find themselves conflicted or vulnerable discrepancy.

Figure 21.0 Word Cloud

PREDATORY USA

This is a critique of various aspect of society and policies within the United States. This country has a capitalist economic system, as mentioned before, at least two economic exploitation. There is also a history of imperialism that reflects predatory behavior that prioritize American interest at the expense of other nations sovereignty is also apparent domestically with actions such as environmental degradation, social injustice, and racial profiling. America is influenced by corporate power and wealth and prioritize the entrance of these corporations and elites over the well-being of the general population although this country is democratic these practices clearly show disproportionate society.

GOVERNMENT

Although neighborhoods do not necessarily need the government's approval to exist or function, as they are typically formed, organically through interactions and choices of resident, their oversight is typically required for development, zoning, regulations, land use planning, and infrastructure projects. This is because local governments have the authority to regulate land and development within their jurisdiction in order to promote an appropriate quality of life. Quality of life is defined in this exploration as the level of well-being and contentment experienced by of a community.

STANDARD

Seeking government approval also leads to the desire to align with dominant culture aesthetically. This aesthetic could be considered an American or white aesthetic. This is lined up with more European design moves, including clean lines, simple forms, minimalism, muted tones, and a focus on practicality. This investigation is a suggesting that this is the white aesthetic or the only aesthetic that gets approved by the government. It is just what is more aligned with dominant culture or what is deemed to be more desirable in America. This desire is not fueled by being attracted to this aesthetic, yet an aspiration to be closer to the dominant culture in all aspects of life. If a neighborhood doesn't meet the aesthetic, then typically it does not receive this "approval". Unfortunately, it is easier to be culturally homogenous with this dominant culture in terms of receiving fair treatment and respect.

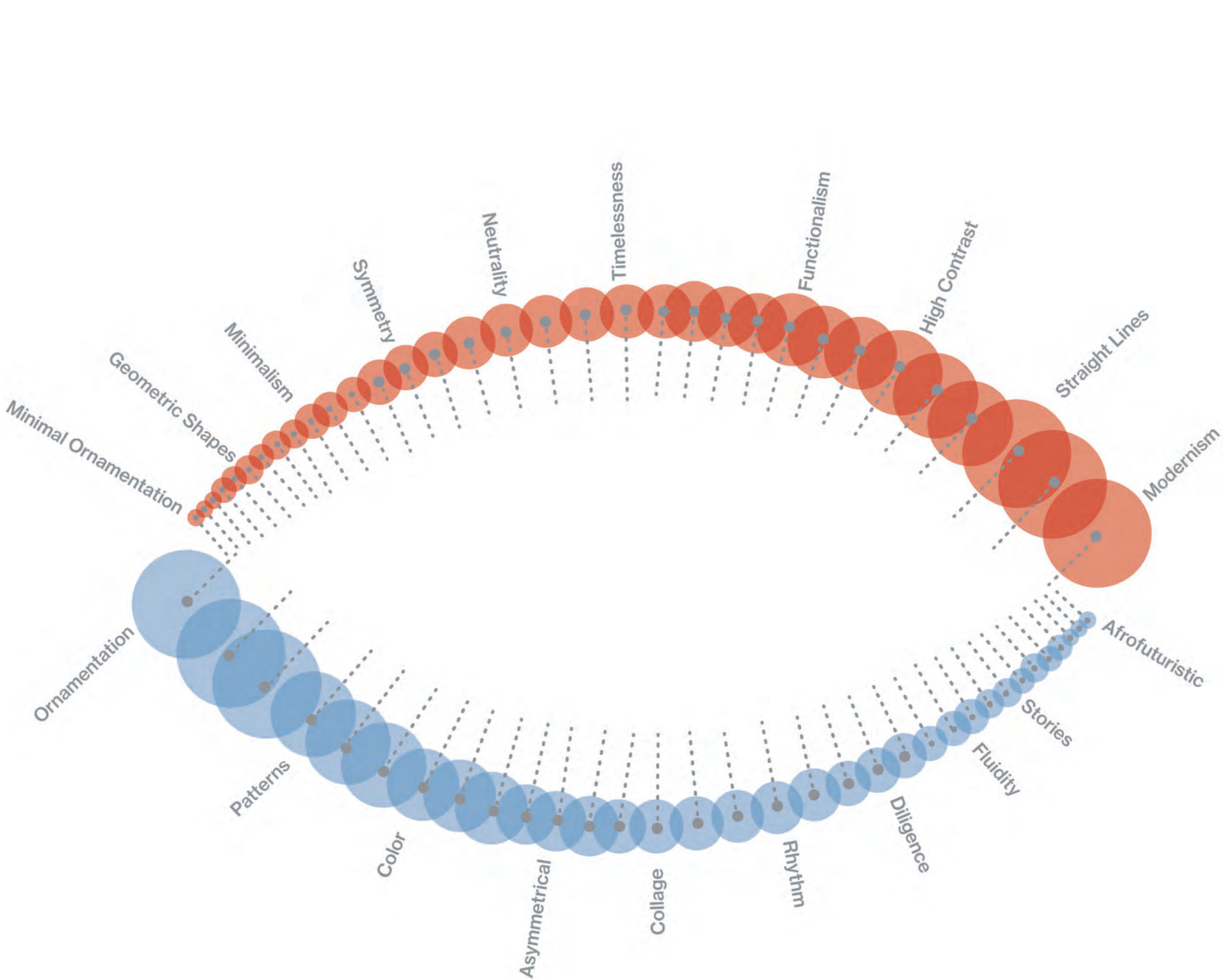


Figure 22.0 Black v. White Aesthetic

Figure 23.1 Live

Figure 23.2 Work

Figure 23.3 Play

Figure 23.4 Learn

Figure 24.0 We've been here

04

CURRENT PRACTICES

ABSTRACT

There are firms and organizations utilizing similar practice described in the literature. Their goals are to shape the design profession to fit the needs of the world better. For example, Black Space, Design as Protest, and NOMA.

The way in which organizations present information was also studied to consider the most effective way to communicate the ideas in this document. For example, The Neighborhood Architects, Colloqate, and Design Core Detroit. The graphic representation each of these organizations chose to pursue was inspiring and helped with the organization of the concepts in this research.

Storytelling is another method that was considered for this research. In black culture that serves as a powerful vessel for preserving history and sharing wisdom. Passed down through generations, these narratives encapsulate the triumphs of black people when collecting data, incorporating storytelling as a resource and riches understanding by providing context, often overlooked and traditional data sets. It offers a holistic view and sheds light on nuanced realities. This method is discussed in *Recovering Black Storytelling in Qualitative Research* by S.R. Toliver.

***Contains strong language and images that may be triggering.**

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are moments where people in America feel pressure to downplay pieces of their identity to navigate social, professional, and political environments. This idea of being a true American and dominant culture leads to disconnection from one's authentic self. In terms of brace, this is common to just receive the bare minimum of respect and opportunity. Even when people choose to comply or align with the dominant culture, they sell the find themselves conflicted or vulnerable discrepancy.

RESEARCH

Know Your Price: Valuing Black Lives and Property in America's Black Cities
Andre M. Perry
This explores the devaluation of black lives and property in cities across America. The book reveals that black neighborhoods are compared to a "white normal. The discussion starts with the historical and contemporary factors that contribute to the systemic undervaluation of black communities, examining issues such as redlining, discriminatory policies, and disinvestment. The book argues that this devaluation has profound consequences on education, housing, and overall quality of life. It advocates for a shift in perspective, encouraging readers to recognize the true value of black lives and assets. The book provides insights into the economic and social challenges faced by black communities, offering a compelling call to action for acknowledging and rectifying the disparities that persist in America's black cities.

Place, Race, and Story
Ned Kaufman
The prologue of Place, Race and Story discusses how professional standards for historic preservation should be critical. More issues should be explored as time goes on because we cannot use outdated rules for new problems. Looking at the current issues allows the social context and relevance to be examined.

Historic Preservation is not about saving or fixing old buildings, but "creating places where people can live well and connect to meaningful narratives about history, culture, and identity." The topics of place, race, and story are unsolved issues within the historic preservation realm. There is a challenge between the direct relationship of story and place. Buildings could be saved based on the story and not the physical condition, or the story is so overwhelming the condition does not matter.

The writing presented questions that made the reader reconsider what historic preservation meant. "How do historical narratives, traditions, and memories define sense of place?" There are many people that do not understand the purpose of historic preservation. It is viewed as an irrelevant subject or potentially harmful to new buildings.

It goes on to make a case about attachment to the place being considered when making public decisions about buildings. There needs to be more empathetic approaches to understand and relate to the users of the space. Stories of place range, including the mind because people remember or retell stories. This is often referred to as traditions and rituals. The writing understands that "Stories live in people's minds. But they also live in places."

It also challenges the reader to view the cityscape as a story scape. Understanding site analysis through stories could reveal uncharted heritage values that have always been there but potentially not remembered. Some people feel as if associations and symbolisms do not equate legitimate reasons and explanations for sense of place. This is an attempt to strip away all the stories and approach the building from looking at it for what it is instead of being defined by stories and culture. As architects and designers, we must look beyond the physicality of the building to fully understand its story. It goes on to look through examples of why a space may or may not be preserved based on the historical and racial context. The negative history must be considered as well to understand why people may want a place to not be preserved. There are also examples that have a tragic past that serve as memorials instead of new building uses.

Recovering Black Storytelling
S. R. Toliver
The process of recovering black storytelling in qualitative research involves a deliberate and conscious effort to center and explore the narratives and experiences of black people. This approach recognizes the historical marginalization and underrepresentation of black voices in research, aiming to rectify this imbalance. Researchers employing this methodology seek to authentically capture and convey the richness and diversity of black stories, perspectives, and lived experiences. By prioritizing and amplifying these narratives, the goal is to contribute to a more inclusive, equitable, and comprehensive understanding of the complexities within the black community. This approach aligns with broader efforts to address historical biases in research methodologies and promotes a more nuanced and culturally sensitive exploration of diverse human experiences.

Two Trains Running
August Wilson
Set in a diner in Pittsburgh's Hill District in 1969, owned by Memphis Lee. The narrative unfolds against the backdrop of urban renewal, as Memphis faces the impending demolition of his diner. The characters frequenting the diner, including Sterling, a job seeker, Risa, a waitress with a troubled past, and Hambone, obsessed with obtaining a ham, represent a cross-section of African American life. The play delves into their personal struggles while addressing broader themes of racial injustice, economic disparity, and the changing dynamics within the African American community during the 1960s. The title metaphorically signifies the simultaneous trains of progress and decay, capturing the characters' efforts to navigate a transforming world and providing a poignant portrayal of their pursuit of dignity amid systemic challenges.

Canon and Archive
Aleida Assmann
Canon and Archive is an excerpt about understanding how memory affects the way people cherish culture, history, and buildings. Culture is examined from the lens of history, art, and religion. It was much easier to have tangible evidence, however, nowadays intangible evidence is heavily relied on when referring to historical buildings. It is almost the most important evidence that is out there because the physical can get damaged. There are different ways to remember and forget.

The passage illustrates the way memory is used today through active and passive methods. It examines the philosophy of the mind and how the way memory influences feelings about the built environment. It is important to understand how culture is translated through time and how this affects meaningful places. A building lasting over many cultural generations will almost need to be treated as a tangible artifact. People's perception of the building based on what is socially and culturally significant will typically determine its feasibility.

The realm of culture has changed meaning over time and does not solely focus on art, religion, and history. The reading needs to acknowledge what has changed and developed through time in terms of culture that is not just based on race but more so place. Where do they live? What do they do here? Traditions? What does culture mean for the community? These questions could help fill in the missing pieces to the writing.

Extending the Role of Architecture in Preserving and Representing Cultures across Communities
Bruce Ahirwe
This project challenges the oversight of architecture in preserving culture and aims to redefine its role in critical spaces like libraries and memorials. The author argues that current architectural designs often miss opportunities for in-depth exploration of cultural representation, proposing a reevaluation of designs for important spaces. The definition of culture is presented as a symbolic system encompassing tangible and intangible heritage, traditions, and values. Using Rwandan culture as a case study, the project introduces the Kalinga Library concept, showcasing how architecture can not only represent culture but also address practical challenges like library deficits. The research underscores the potential for architecture to play a vital role in sustaining and representing cultures, advocating for unique and personalized designs across communities.

Aesthetics of Equity
Craig Wilkins
This explores how the design of spaces and structures can either perpetuate or combat social inequities. It argues that aesthetic decisions and architecture and urban planning can reinforce existing power structures or promote inclusivity injustice. Then, emphasizes the importance of considering the social implications of design choices and advocates for designs that prioritize equity and accessibility for all individuals, regardless of race, class, or other factors. Aesthetics, beyond just a visual appeal, play significant roles in shaping social dynamics within the built environment. It encourages people to recognize their social responsibility inherent in their work actively promote spaces that emulate equity.

They Cloned Tyrone
Netflix Original
This movie is a gripping sci-fi thriller that deals into the enigmatic vanishing of a young man named Tyrone. When Tyrone mysteriously disappears, his friends embark on a journey to reveal the truth. However, their quest takes a shocking turn when they discover evidence suggesting that Tyrone has been cloned. As the plot unfolds, the friends find themselves in tangled in a web of conspiracy, where the boundaries between science and ethics blur. They encounter clandestine organizations and shadowy figures that have their own agendas tied to Tyrone cloning. Along the way, they must confront questions of identity and morality, grappling with the implications of technological advancements that challenged the very essence of what it means to be human. This intricate storyline contains suspenseful twists and keeps the audience captivated as they are deeper into a world where the line between reality infection becomes increasingly unclear. As the characters race against time to uncover the truth, they are forced to confront their own beliefs and perceptions, ultimately leading to a shocking

revelation, that leaves viewers questioning the nature of existence itself.

Black Economics
Jawanza Kunjufu
It explores the systemic barriers and historical injustices that have hindered economic progress within the black community. He emphasizes the need for financial literacy, wealth building strategies, and entrepreneurship as pathways to economic empowerment. The book also highlights the importance of community investment to address economic disparities. Through case studies, data analysis, and advice, the book offers a comprehensive framework for understanding, economic challenges, facing black Americans also inspiring readers to take proactive steps towards economic prosperity.

Dark Space
Mario Gooden
This book presents the relationship between race, architecture, and identity. This exploration, transcends mere physical structures, presenting the ways in which the built-in environment both reflects and perpetuates societal attitudes towards race. Through a combination of approaches the author unveiled the hidden narratives woven into the fabric of architectural spaces, and exposing their role in racial segregation one of the central themes is the notion of spatial justice. The author interrogates the way racialized spaces, whether intentional or intentional, shape and constrain the lived experiences of black communities. The author reveals the legacy of racism and the built environment and calls for a reevaluation of architectural, practice and urban planning to foster more inclusive and equitable spaces. The author also highlights the ways in which black architects and designers have utilized their crafts to challenge dominant narratives.

Urban Alchemy
Dr. Mindy Fullilove
This is a profound exploration of the intricate relationship between cities and the well-being of their residents. Fullilove, a psychiatrist and urban planner, dives into the concept of "urban alchemy". She defines this as the transformative power of communities to heal themselves and their environments. The book examines the social, economic, and spatial factors that contribute to urban distress and disinvestment. A concept of the subject urban alchemy is "root shock." This is the trauma experience by individuals and communities who are uprooted from their homes and neighborhoods due to processes such as urban renewal, gentrification, and displacement. It is argued that root shock not only disrupts social networks and erodes community cohesion, but also has significant implications for individual and collective well-being. Throughout the book it is expressed in different ways how communities can harness their collective agency and resilience to address this distress. For example, grassroots organizing, community-based planning, and participatory decision making. Overall, the book inspires readers to rethink their understanding of cities as dynamic, living organisms, capable of fostering healing, resilience, and social justice.

This literature exposes the systemic undervaluation of black lives and property in American cities, dissecting historical and contemporary factors such as discriminatory policies. A shift in perspective is advocated to recognize a true value of black communities and their assets. Meanwhile, another piece challenges, traditional notions of preservation, emphasizing the importance of understanding, the cultural significance of buildings beyond their physical condition. Prompting readers to consider how stories and memories shape the perception of place and a more empathetic approach to architectural preservation. These works highlight the need to confront historical biases and systemic inequalities and valuing black lives and cultural heritage, urging people to reconsider entrenched norms and advocate for more inclusive and equitable practices and urban planning and design. Additionally, there's a focus on centering black narratives in research to rectify historical marginalization and provide a more comprehensive understanding of black experiences. Similarly, these pieces explore how design choices in architecture and urban planning can perpetuate or combat social inequities and advocate for designs that prioritize accessibility and inclusivity for individuals. Collectively, the works challenge existing power structures and highlight the potential for architecture, development, and research methodologies to contribute to a better society. These sources offer insight into creating spaces that reflect and honor the diversity and richness of black experience.

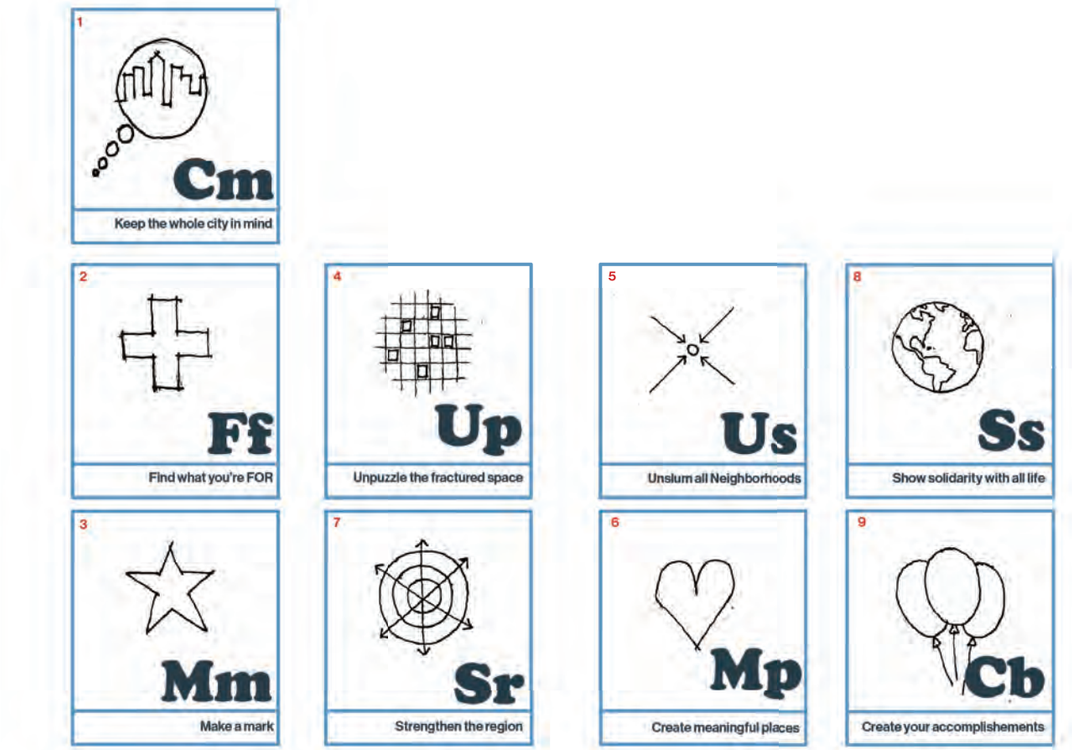


Figure 25.0 Fullilove's Community Devlopment Chart

APPROACH

Figure 26.1 Author Planning

PLANNING

This research also explored alternative mediums such as arts, plays, movies, and documentaries. The sources offered a rich combination of narratives that illuminate the lives of black people. Art can capture the essence of the black experience through visual representation, invoking emotions and shedding lights on societal challenges. Plays have the power to portray lived experiences in a raw and tangible manner, allowing audiences to empathize with the struggles and triumphs of black people. Movies offer a cinematic lens through which to explore complex themes, showcasing the strength of black communities. Documentaries provide a platform for authentic storytelling and highlights determination and overcoming obstacles. Each of these mediums contribute to the understanding and appreciation of the black experience and fosters empathy, awareness, and dialogue.

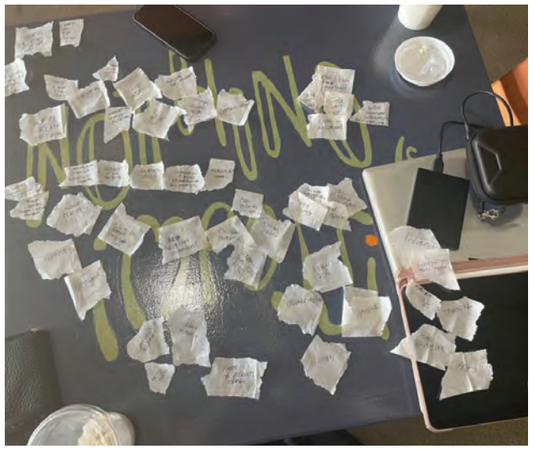


Figure 26.2 Planning Notes

ASSUMPTIONS

There are preconceived notions of black neighborhoods that are negative because of deferred maintenance and activities outside groups are intimidated by like loitering.

Culture should be preserved and celebrated in spaces where cultural group is the majority and calls it home. Regardless if it was historically created for that group.

A lot of developers and designers do not properly research qualitative aspects. The design compares to a white suburban model. Understanding most black neighborhoods were not designed with black people as the image resident.

Systemic Racism affects factors that influence the quality of life of African Americans

Development typically begins with generic intentions. Developed in a way that provides a safe space for residents and only focuses on the physical attributes.

FRAMEWORK

Primary Framework: Intersubjective, Contextual, and **Secondary Framework:** Phenomenological

Framing Concepts
Development- Process of acquiring, planning, financing, constructing, and managing properties for residential, commercial, or industrial purposes (Based on Andre M. Perry, 2020)

Change- The act or instance of making or becoming different (Oxford)

Culture- Symbolic system of objects, traditions, and values acquired by individuals from their community, serving as a social legacy and medium for connecting its members (Bruce Ahirwe, 2020)

Conformity- Adjusting one's beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors to align with the prevailing norms or expectations of a group or society (Based on Elijah Anderson, 2021)

Whiteness- The way white people, their customs, culture, and beliefs operate as the standard by which all other groups are compared (NMAAHC, 2019)

Blackness- Encompasses a complex and multifaceted identity. It uses shared historical experience, cultural heritage, and a sense of community to inform the design. It embraces the cultural expressions reflected throughout the black experience in America and also references the origin place (Africa). (Author)

CONSTRUCTS

Community Development- A neighborhood revitalization initiative led by local residents and community organizations (Based on Majora Carter, 2022)

Quality of Life- The level of well-being and contentment experienced by individuals or communities (Author)

Assimilation- Process where individuals from a minority group adopt characteristics of the dominant culture, leading to a loss of cultural identity (Author)

Community Network- Collaboration between residents of a neighborhood to meet the needs of the community (Mindy Fullilove, 2013)

Dominant Culture- The imposition of dominant culture's values, language, and behavior onto a subordinate culture through suppression (Author)

Aesthetics of Conformity- The appreciation and understanding of beauty, encompassing qualities that contribute to the pleasing appearance of objects, ideas, or experiences. (Based on, Craig Wilkins, 2007)

Figure 27.0 Crowd of People

QUESTION ONE

How can spatial assimilation be avoided as a response to development?

Construct: Community Development and Assimilation

Methodology: Mixed

Method:
- Photos, Videos, and sketches of black neighborhoods
- Diagrams of Neighborhood Evolutions
- Interventions for identified issues

Findings:
- Showing the decay of black neighborhoods and the introduction of assimilation
- Reasons black people assimilate spatially forced or voluntarily.
- Compare it to the white suburban model and identify the area of improvement

QUESTION TWO

How can a conversation be fostered to identify the mental barriers to understand the white standard and how can that conversation later support an alternative way of thinking?

Construct: Dominant Culture and Aesthetics of Conformity

Methodology: Qualitative

Method:
- Narratives of black culture
- Interviews of black residents and developers
- Artistic installations

Findings:
- Understanding the unique way black people make space by using what is given in multiple ways
- Documenting what is happening and starting to understand from a design point of view way could be planned.
- Figuring out one's role in producing or challenging systemic racism from a psychological standpoint

QUESTION THREEE

What are the strategies to ensure that the essence of a black neighborhood's culture and values are sustained and amplified over time?

Construct: Community Network and Quality of Life

Methodology: Mixed

Method:
- Creating a framework for design of future black neighborhoods
- Studying past development methods
- Black neighborhood case studies

Findings:
- There are recycled ideas that could be used and be a temporary use
- Development process is streamlined and focused on money
- This will require further study to develop new ideas
- Common conditions within black neighborhoods that confirm the issue

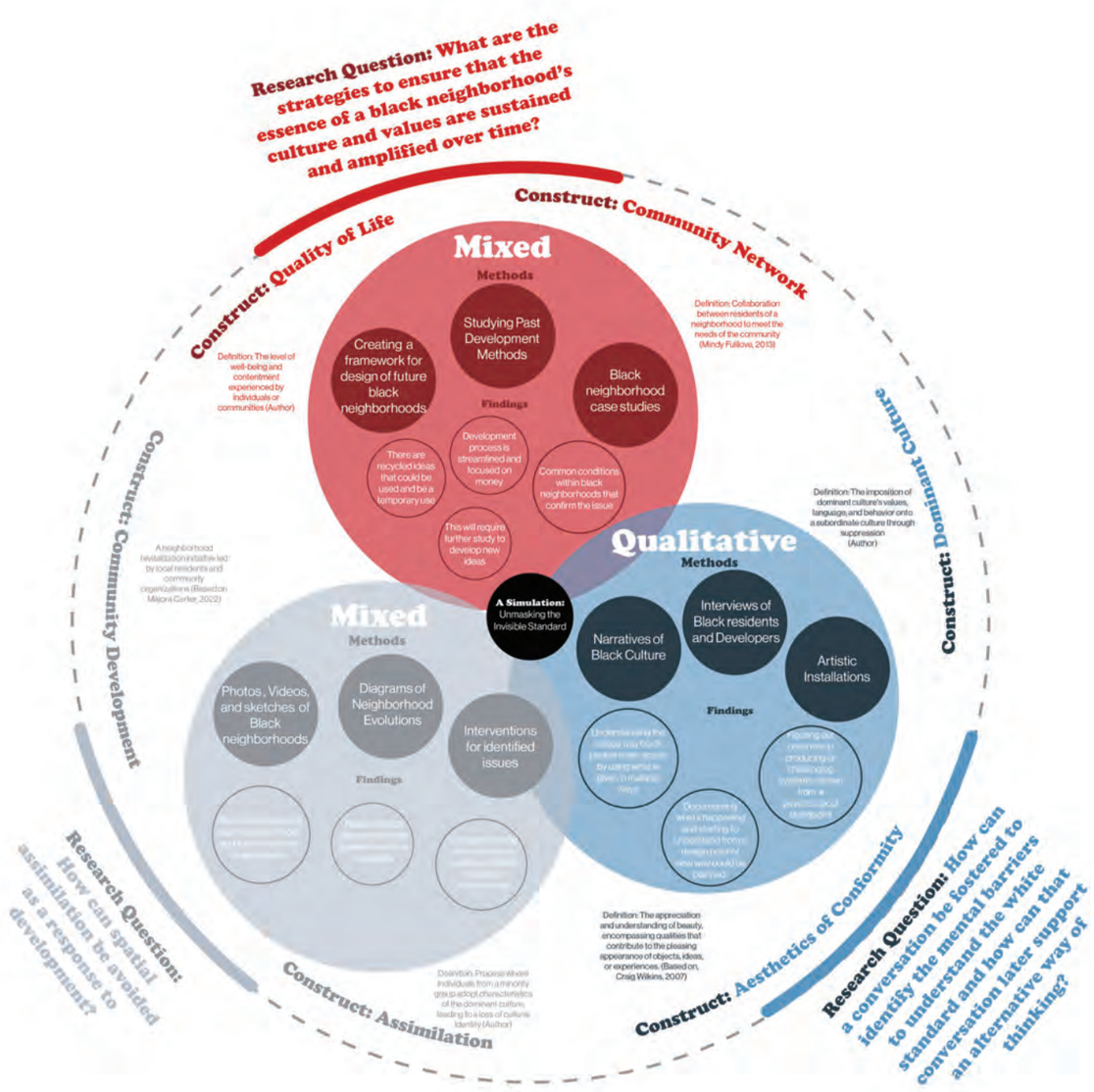


Figure 28.0 Methods Diagram

QUANTITATIVE

The common conditions within black neighborhoods compared to white neighborhoods are blight, lack of greenery, vacancy, predatory businesses and litter. This research is not suggesting this only occurs in black neighborhoods and does not occur in white neighborhoods. It states that this can be found in some black neighborhoods, and those are the focus of this investigation. A further breakdown of the conditions or opportunities is the understanding that the comparison is often what is planned for it as improvement. This research utilizes past research to propose a potential design option for these opportunities.

Blight is defined as “a thing that spoils or damages something” and it is often used as a noun for vacant properties that are in disarray. When it is present in a neighborhood, it is compared to a home that is in use, has updates, and appears to be well kept. Well-kept means no physical damage to the physical property and people living within the space. The area of improvement with blight is it can be a safety issue, bring unwanted pests, promote theft or other illegal activity, and can bring down the value of the area just from being visually unappealing. The approach to address this condition is typically demolition. The suggestion is to try to reuse the space and adapt the use. For example, turning an abandoned home into a community center.

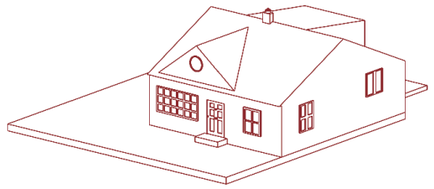
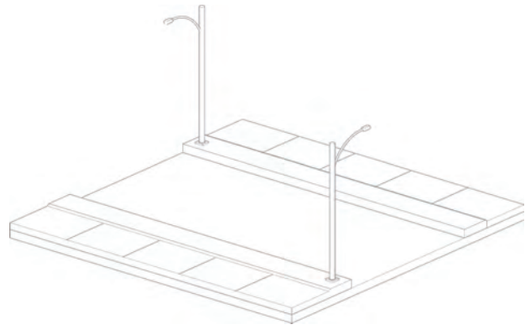
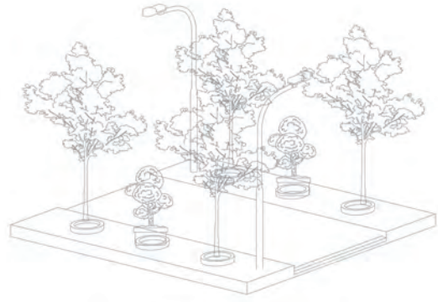


Figure 29.1-29.3 Blight Conditions

Lack of Greenery is a lack of nature’s presence in an area. This includes, but is not limited to, trees, shrubs, flowers, and grass. It is compared to neighborhoods and areas with parks, greenways, trees, gardens, and plants. The area of improvement with a lack of greenery is there can be an excessive amount of concrete that becomes damaged, and this turns into a safety hazard for walkers and bikers. Additionally, the lack of nature can have a depressing effect on people, present an environment without clean air, and be unappealing. Generally planting trees is the solution for this condition. The suggestion is more than planting greenery. The landscape should be rethought. Having adequate lighting with lighted pathways and streetlights. Adding transitional materials when the type of hardscape changes. Also planting gardens to provide healthier options for residents.





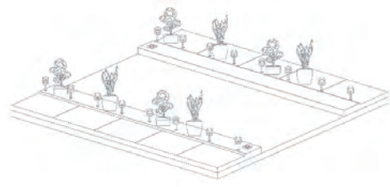
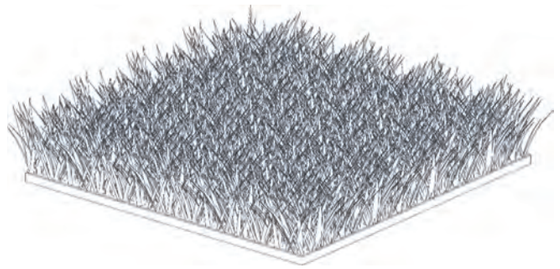


Figure 29.4-29.6 Lack of Greenery Conditions

Vacancy is simply empty space. This can be vacant plots of land, businesses, homes, or the lack of people. This is compared to neighborhoods filled with homes and people. The areas vacancy can improve in are the lack of activity, lack of vegetation that is appealing, the barrier it produces between residents, and the safety hazard it creates from items being within these vacant spaces. Usually, vacancies are prime real estate for new businesses. This is not a terrible approach; still, a simpler one can have a larger impact. The appropriate suggestion is to add places to sit with tree stumps, adding a community grill, or adding a garden again. This space is now reinvented as a park.



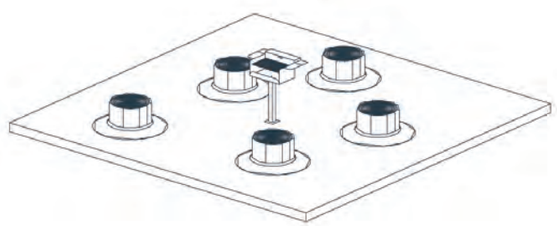
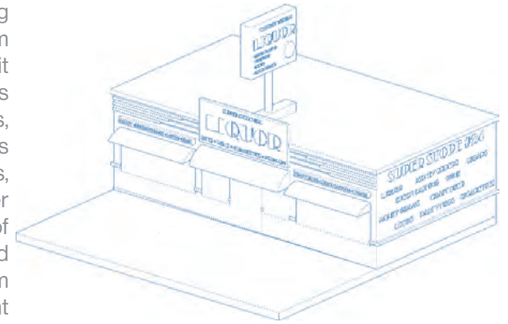


Figure 29.7-29.9 Vacancy Conditions

Predatory businesses are businesses that harm communities more than they benefit them by replacing a more appropriate option and providing bare minimum services at a high cost. These types of business exploit inequalities and economic vulnerabilities. Examples of this can be liquor stores, cash checking places, fast food restaurants, clinics, and dollar stores. This condition is compared to premium grocery stores, banks, restaurants, hospitals, and big box stores. This is a wider variety of types within this condition, but the area of improvement is quite similar. It includes the lack of third spaces, inadequate resources, holds residents back from advancing as a community, signage and advertisement for adult paraphernalia and lackluster service, being unappealing, and lastly just not creating a welcoming environment. Typically, the approach is to get rid of these businesses and bring in places like Starbucks or Whole Foods. Again, the issue with this is the negative affects it could have on the neighborhood. The neighborhood deserves space like these without the repercussions of getting pushed out. A suggestion is to complete a few steps. Minimizing the advertisement, boycotting these businesses, and bringing in small to mid-scale resources that add to the community. For example, the liquor store turns into a crisis center and rehab facility.



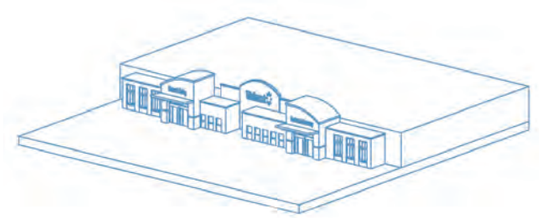
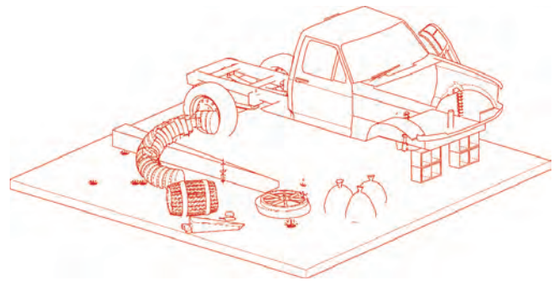
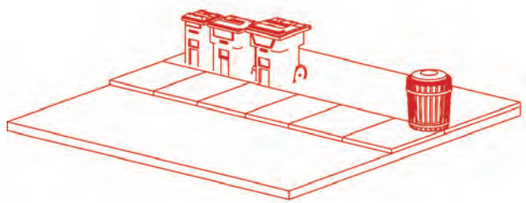


Figure 29.10-29.12 Predatory Business Conditions

Litter is trash that is carelessly dropped in public spaces. This can look like abandoned vehicles, broken glass, and typical garbage. This is compared to neighborhoods with little to no litter, a recycling system, and designated waste cans in various places so there are no excuses. This should improve because it can be hazardous, prevents activity in public space, brings unpleasant odors, attracts pests, people are intimidated to come near, and it is visually unappealing. Generally, litter is cleaned up or thrown away. A suggestion, in addition to cleaning, could be turning it into an art project (if it is not hazardous). Taking what is unappealing and adding life to it is great for community building and beautifying the neighborhood. Examples of this could be using water bottles on the fence, painting abandoned vehicles or making sculptures from the litter.

Design suggestions typically mimic the comparison, but this research suggests that there are alternative approaches to these conditions that represents blackness and still beautify the neighborhood to promote human activity and attract the existing residents. The suggestions are also more attainable with community effort and inexpensive strategies. However, this research expresses that these solutions, although helpful, do not solve the greater issue and more approaches should be discovered and presented.





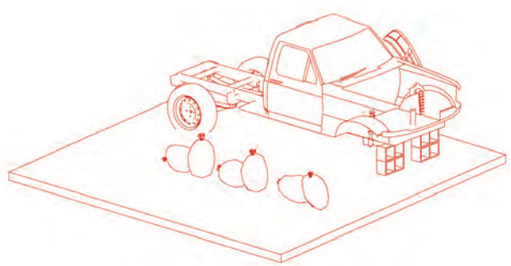
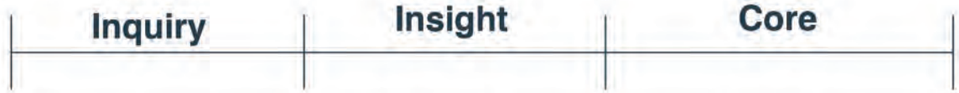


Figure 29.13-29.15 Litter Conditions

QUALITATIVE

This was an installation using videos, fog and space. Introspection involves individuals reflecting on their own beliefs, biases, and experiences related to racial issues. It requires a deep examination of personal attitudes, acknowledging potential prejudices, and understanding one's role in perpetuating or challenging systemic racism. Engaging in introspection before challenging discussions can foster self-awareness, empathy, and a more constructive approach to addressing these complex and sensitive topics. In terms of design, it can be helpful when understanding a position and personal attitudes involving the analysis of history and its impact on marginalized communities. It is a crucial step toward creating meaningful dialogue and promoting positive change when designing equitable solutions. Are blind spots revealed in the embrace of darkness?

Figure30.1 Sketch Problem Interior



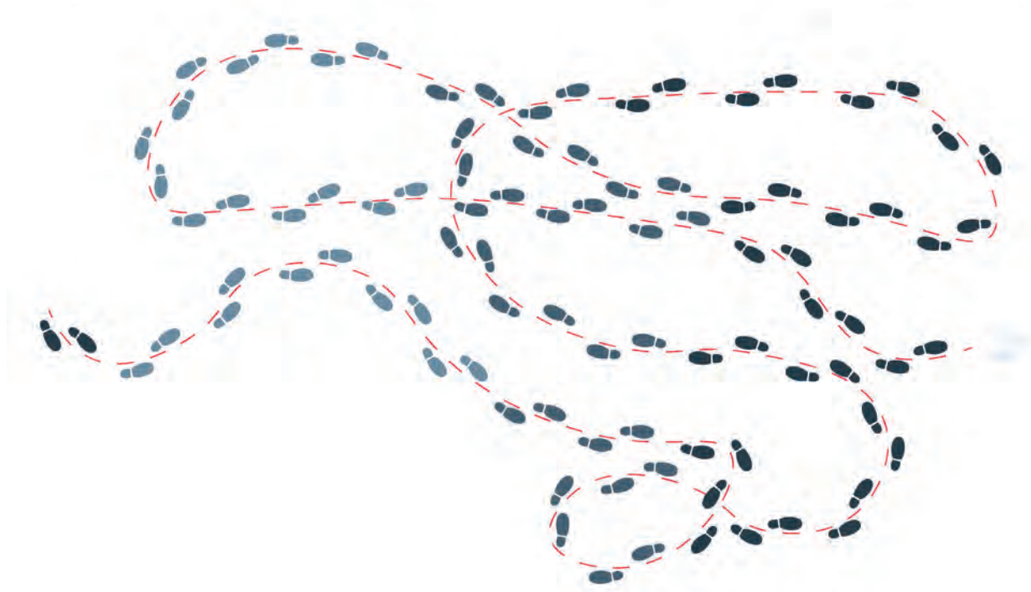


Figure 30.2 Introspection Diagram

ALTERNATIVE

The show is a reboot of a black sitcom that was popular in the 1970s. It relies on black stereotypes and often does not display authentic representations of black experience. It is clearly an interpretation to entertain and make people laugh. Unfortunately, these types of images can be taken literal from outsiders of the community. However, in this particular episode, there was a scene that expressed the uniqueness of resiliency .

The overall, theme of the episode was taking advantage of black people because they could. There were clear power dynamics displayed in the episode. beyond, the humor it is sad how much this scense rings true in other ways of life. That is why it is important to use alternative mediums as a source because this is what is consumed on a day to day basis.

01:34

The family is behind on rent, and their apartment begins to flood. Beverly (mom) saves Reggie (dad) from drowning. Reggie goes out to earn money in his taxi to try to solve the problem.

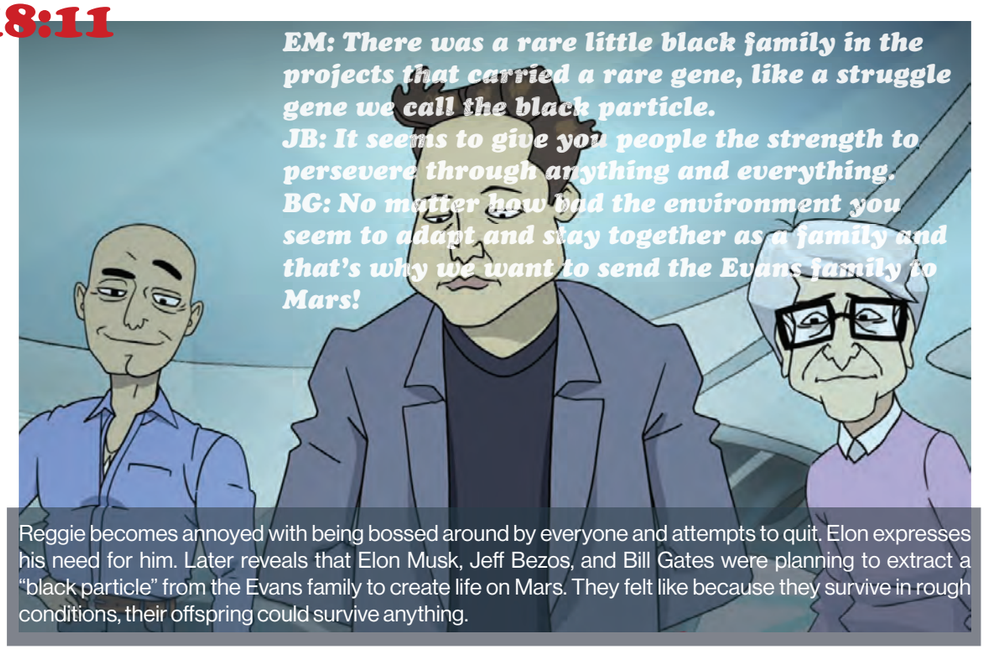
Figure 31.1 Good Times Scene One

09:38

Reggie picks up billionaire Elon Musk and his taxi and Elon offers him a position . Later, he meets the entire family and employs them all and later exploit their skills.

Figure 31.2 Good Times Scene Two

18:11



Reggie becomes annoyed with being bossed around by everyone and attempts to quit. Elon expresses his need for him. Later reveals that Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, and Bill Gates were planning to extract a "black particle" from the Evans family to create life on Mars. They felt like because they survive in rough conditions, their offspring could survive anything.

Figure 31.3 Good Times Scene Three

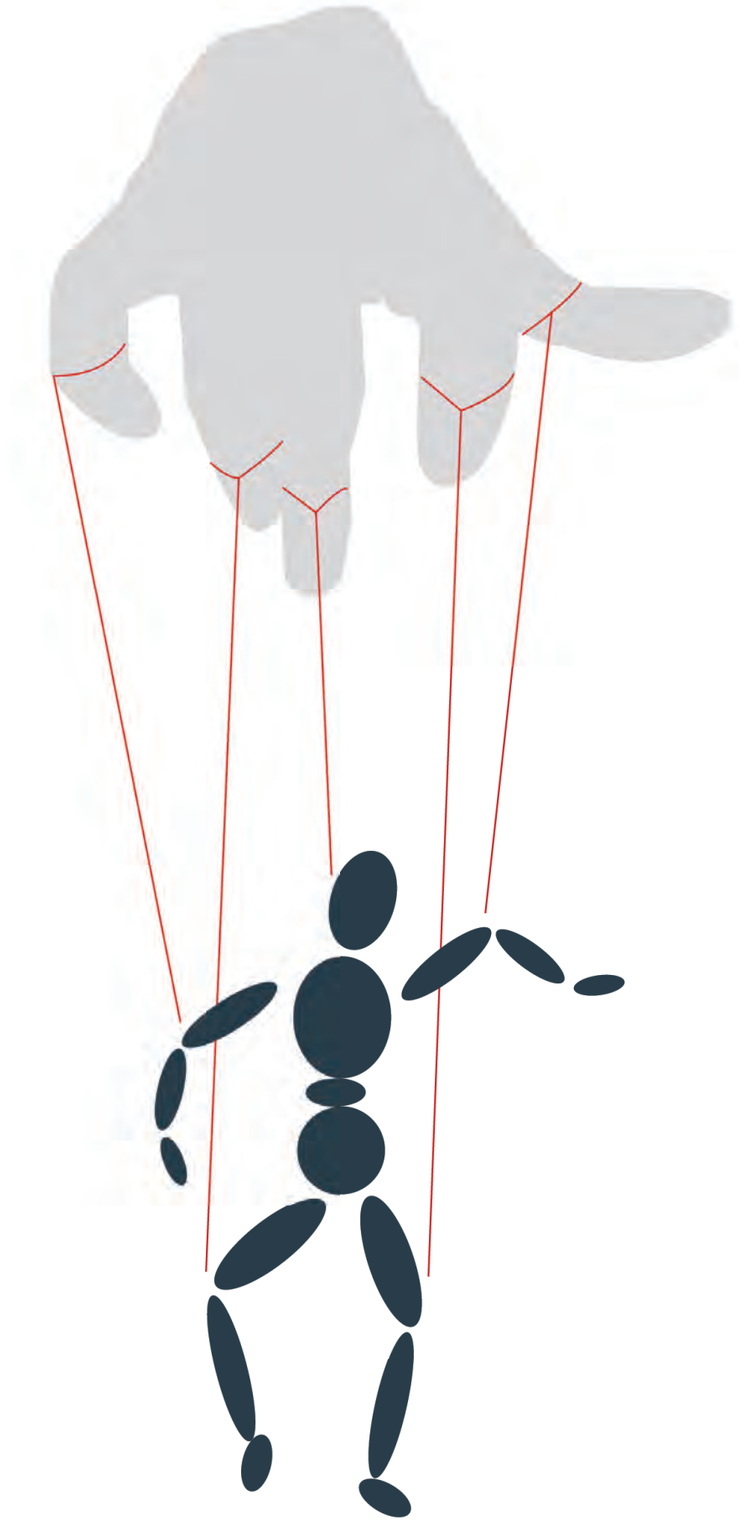


Figure 32.0 Mannekin based on Image from Medium

05

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE?

TRAJECTORY

It is easier to find solutions that already exist. In research, it is part of the process to reference and gain ideas from other works. For this exploration, it became apparent that recycling the same approach was not going to work as a “solution”.

The ends of this research, like said before, currently stops at bringing awareness and encouraging others to do something about this. When all is said and done, this work is not stopping here. There is a clear need for a new answer or algorithm to stop this. This is the beginning of a journey to stop the get rid of the system that has been working so well. By now it should be clear that this issue is not accidental. There is a reason black communities continue to be neglected. There is a reason for the lack of space. There is a reason for There is reason.

Figure 33.1-33.12 Hangman inspired by Gary Simmons

CULTURE PRESERVATION

It only makes sense to have to think of black people in regard to this issue. It is not just about unappealing physical space, but a disservice to the functions of the community. Culture preservation refers to the efforts and practices aimed at safeguarding and maintaining aspects of a particular culture, including its traditions, customs, language, artifacts, knowledge, and rituals. There is a uniqueness within the black community that should be preserved and sustained. This uniqueness is apparent in many ways, but for the purpose of this research the focus is a trait on the perseverance of black people. They make space and utilize it in a multitude of ways despite the lack of physical space. Preserving this uniqueness ensures that these elements are passed down from generation to generation, thereby maintaining the identity of the black community. Usually, preservation is more about the physical nature of a building. In this case preserving physical space within the black community is not the focus. This is because the intangible qualities were more important to preserve than the current physical condition of the communities. Also, the communities this research examined were typically in physical disarray or based on standards set by the dominant culture.

Preserving black culture strengthens the identity of that community. The more prevalent it is within the neighborhood the more black residents can feel seen and included within their own community. It is also less likely for them to assimilate due to the lack of identity and resources within the neighborhood. Preservation of black culture can encourage those outside of the community to learn more about it and see how to uplift it. The goal of this practice is to make black culture widespread in their communities so that it becomes a different version of "normal". In a scenario where it is not seen as so different it needs to be diminished. Potentially even encouraging outsiders to learn traits. However, it is important to note the intention is to not exploit this feature of black culture for others to take advantage of. The black community deserves autonomy and ownership over their neighborhood, including the tangible and ethereal qualities.

DESIGN PROCESS

As previously noted, the process of design and development needs to be revamped. The future of black neighborhoods requires culturally informed design.
Generally, it can be understood that the phases of architectural design are schematic design, design development, construction, documentation, bidding, and construction administration. Within these phases, different services happen, and additional phases could be included. This research also looked into the process of development, and it is more streamlined with the phases being planning, pricing, and execution. The process focuses on maximizing returns for investors and developers. This approach can benefit those who stand again, financially, including the local government seeking to increase tax revenues. Yet, it harms existing residents who may face displacement. Additionally, the emphasis on profitability leads to the neglect of community input, and the prioritization of short-term gains Over long-term sustainability and inclusivity. As a result, while development can bring economic growth, and revitalization, it often raises questions about equity and the broader social impact of neighborhood development initiatives. Architecture and development relate because of the built environment architecture focuses on the design and planning of buildings, emphasizing aesthetics, functionality, and spatial relationships. Architects also are primarily concerned with designs that meet the needs and purposes of clients while adhering to building codes and regulations. They often work closely with client and consultants to translate the design to tangible structures to ensure the design intent is produced. Development involves the broader process of acquiring, financing, and managing real estate projects. This includes land acquisition, construction, and property management. Developers are responsible for identifying investment opportunities and obtaining the necessary permits and approvals. Development projects, encompass a wide range of activities beyond architecture to ensure the feasibility. Architecture and development are influenced by frameworks and traditional processes to create an approach that is more efficient in time and production.

Proposing a recommended method to build a sustainable community, involves a focus on education, economic, opportunities, engagement, and other social aspects to promote resiliency. This investigation proposes this process as an alternative to approaching development.

Process is divided into four steps called, identify, assess, document, and propose.

In the **identify** phase, a person must look and decode whether black culture is evident in the space then determine if that current space is adding to the current culture of the place or is a form of conformity. They also must research the connection with the residents, how the space came about, and if it aligns with the current resident's values. Followed by a self reflection portion where the person must ask themselves is this space being viewed for improvement because of outside assumptions or is this a need that was expressed by that black community.

In the **assess** phase, the person must understand the history of the place and determine is there a particular reason it is currently in the state it is in. They must highlight any connections to a history that is harmful to black residents.

During the **document** phase, there is another self reflection portion where the designer asks themselves if they are a current resident, and if they are black, which will determine a time to check themselves for any biases that will harm the community. This phase also suggests learning how to engage with the community in their spaces to fully understand the needs and current condition. Next, they must conduct qualitative research, including interviewing residents and taking pictures to understand the story of the neighborhood. While also collecting quantitative data to determine its validity and accuracy with city records. Then finally organizing the different types of research and publishing it for others to access easily.

The final phase is the **proposal**. Here the designer decides what scale of the proposal is appropriate to fulfill the needs of the community. Also looking at all of the research and the current proposal and answering the question, does this improve the space or erase it? The final step of this phase is to consider if this proposal becomes something to reference when designing for other black neighborhoods and future black neighborhoods.

This phased approach was designed to consider black people more and start documenting more to progress the neighborhood's improvement. Although, this research also revealed findings that this process is just recycled ideas that have worked in the past but only produced a temporary effect. It suggests that there should be more research to find the proper solution. It also recognizes that financial gain is a goal within these practices, and it doesn't suggest that money is not considered in the process, but that the intention behind the process changes. Meaning that developers and architects perform culturally informed design to sustain the community while making money.

Community Engagement is a process where community members are actively engaged with prompts or activities to make decisions and solve problems within their neighborhoods. This typically addresses local needs and promotes a better quality of life for those residents. Community engagement can look like anything from a conversation to a large event that prompts people to participate in design activities. More community engagement is suggested for black communities to be able to hear from the people. These sessions should be held within the community and at multiple different times to make it accessible to everyone.

This research also understands the "for us by us" concept as an approach as well. Black neighborhoods designed by black people fosters a sense of empowerment, and the culture is preserved. Black people on the development team can ensure that the built environment reflects the unique needs and values of the community. This does not mean, every black person will have the community's best interest at heart, but it could be better than keeping the same process of black neighborhoods, mostly being developed by non-black people. This autonomy allows for the creation of spaces that celebrate black culture and address issues that have withheld opportunities. When black architects, urban planners, and community leaders are involved in this design process, it can counteract that historical legacy of systemic racism. Ultimately, black design neighborhoods are not just about physical structures, but about creating environments that the neighborhood will provide adequate resources to the residents.

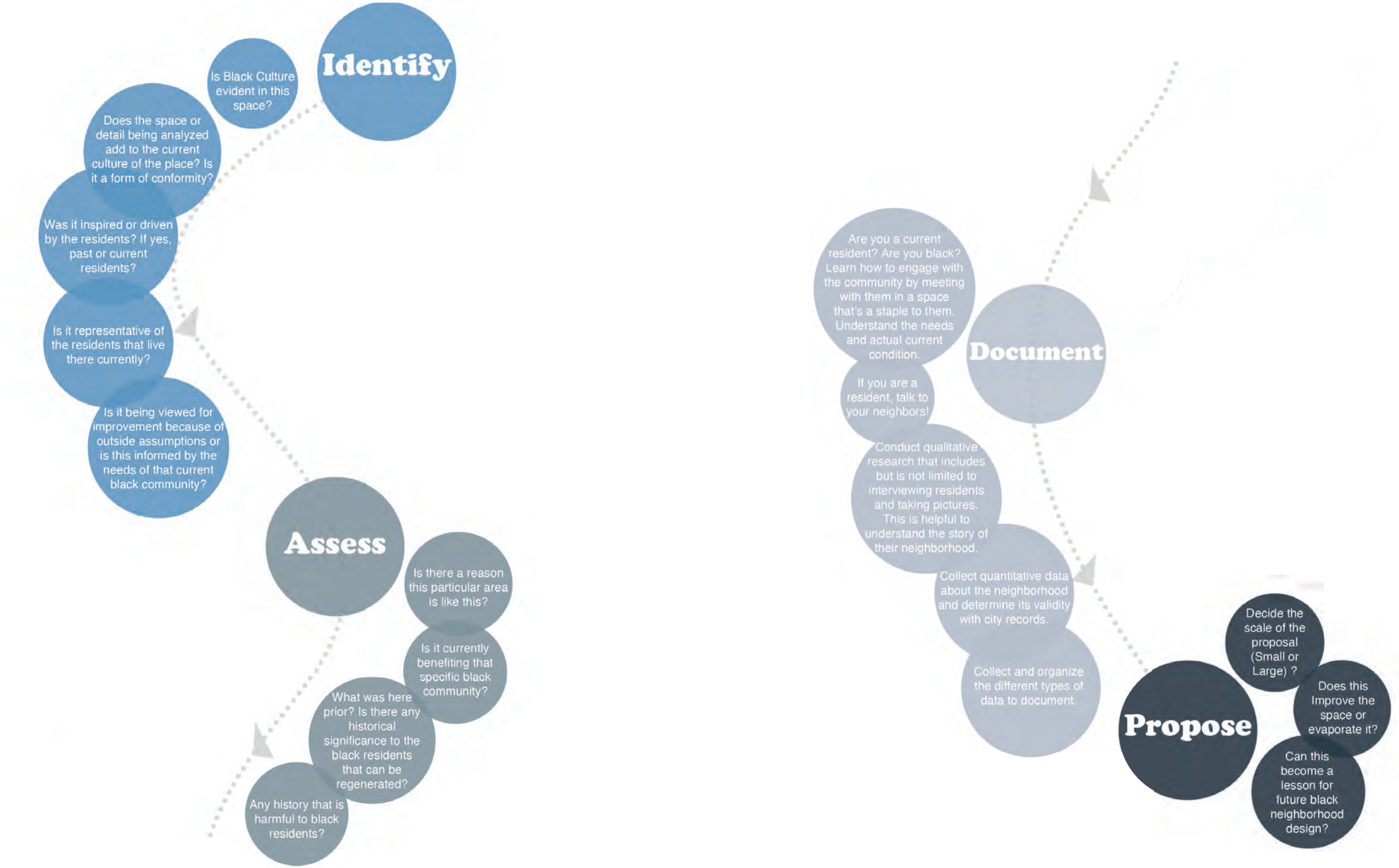


Figure 34.1-34.2 Recommended Process

BLACK ARCHITECTURE

BLACK AESTHETIC CONVERSATIONS

This research defines blackness as a concept that encompasses a complex and multifaceted identity. It uses the shared experience with their cultural heritage to inform design. And embraces the expressions reflected through the black experience in America and references the origin place of Africa.

Blackness influences the black aesthetic by reflecting resilience and identity through creative expressions. For example, in music and incorporate, stains of struggle and celebration. And literature, authors, explore, unique, perspectives and experience. Visual arts may highlight African heritage, address, social issues, and celebrate black beauty. Fashion inspired by blackness can incorporate styles rooted in African traditions, and also embrace black beauty standards. Overall, the black aesthetic is a dynamic and evolving expression that reflects the death and diversity of black experiences and culture. This concept of finding the black aesthetic and how this is supposed to look within the built environment is explored by Demar Matthews in his research called, “Discovering a Black Aesthetic in Architecture”. To be clear, this research is not saying that if a building has an African cloth or pattern on it, it becomes black architecture. It is not suggesting that just because a person behind a design is black that is black architecture. The reason this needs to be stated is because it can be confused that there are not black people in roles that harm black people directly and indirectly. This research does not exclude black people from being in these harmful roles. In reference to the black aesthetic, a non-black person can attempt to unearth a black aesthetic and in a lot of cases a false narrative of what the black aesthetic looks like is what is produced. Hence, the comment about the African cloth being on a building.

There have been ongoing conversations about several of the topics introduced in this investigation. It is important to recognize that these conversations should not die but should be added to for a solution to the issue introduced. This exploration also referenced several works of black designers, artist, architects, and other professionals. Not only does this analysis add to the current conversation, but it encourages readers to explore and investigate these other studies to continue in advance this conversation.

There is existing research by Jack Travis, Melvin, Mitchell, and other professionals mentioned in this document that discuss what black architecture is.

REPRESENTATION

Only 2% of the licensed architects and America are black. Less than one percent of that are black women. The profession continues to grow, but there is the need for more black professionals in all professions involving the built environment. The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) is an organization pioneering for change within the world and encouraging black people to join the profession.

Figure 35.1-35.8 Finding an Aesthetic

PROGRAMMING

Black neighborhoods are judged and later designed based on their proximity to whiteness. This harms the opportunity for the cultural fabric of the black community to erupt and sustain over time. People in general have been conditioned to align with aesthetics and programming that have been normalized by whoever has control.

Figure 36.0 Collective

UNIQUENESS

The way black people approach space is unique among other cultures and utilize across the world and several black communities. Black people do not use spaces just for one use. They make spaces multifunctional to the point a community network is built everywhere. Even in the face of adversity with limited resources, black people make space. For example, the church being a central motif within black culture, but black people do not just go to church for spiritual service. There's a place to convene, get a free meal, and build community. This led the research to look at other examples of the way black people create space. This is a common characteristic across black communities in America and the world. This can be viewed positively or negatively. Positively because it's an innovative way to approach space. Also, because black space does not want to be the same but unique. Negatively due to the fact that black spaces have to be flexible because of constraints and doing so out of necessity.

Even the way housing is perceived within the black community. It is a parent that housing has been reinvented overtime for functional purposes yet, practices were also changed according to different characteristics of the home. For example, the way black people view a porch. The porch is not just a transitional space between the exterior and interior. The porch becomes a sacred gathering space. It is also a form of safety and a node within the black community. Even without the porch, blacks people find ways to adapt and use spaces for similar purposes. They find ways to use space even when it's not given to them. Another example is the game called "curb". Curb is a game where one person throws the basketball at the curb on the other side of the street and watch it bounce back. The goal of the game is to try to hit it hard enough to make it fly over the other players heads or over parked cars. This can be a multiplayer or solo game. Either way it was created for entertainment when there is no basketball hoop. This is a game that has been passed down through generations and is well-known across many black communities in different areas.

Development can progress where there is no longer a box trying to contain the anomaly referred to as black culture. Instead, giving spaces where the uniqueness of black culture is not constrained and culturally sustains the community.

Home is the place where stories begin and serves as a safe place where one can feel a sense of belonging. Often it can erect intangible feelings that create a sense of attachment. This is based on the work displayed in *Know Your Price*. And this book he explains the importance of home the effect it has on the black community. And the importance of home ownership and property value within a community. "My home, upbringing, community, and culture have significant value, even though others devalue them."

Figure 37.1 Balck Space: Church

“MY HOME HAS SIGNIFICANT VALUE EVEN THOUGH OTHERS DEVALUE IT”

-Andre M. Perry

Figure 38.0 Andre M. Perry

Figure 37.2 Black Space: Street

Figure 37.3 Black Space: Park

Figure 37.4 Black Space: Parking Lot

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community development is defined in this research as a neighborhood revitalization initiative led by local residents and community organizations based on readings from Reclaiming Your Community by Majora Carter.

Figure 39.0 Sphere of Influence

WHAT IS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

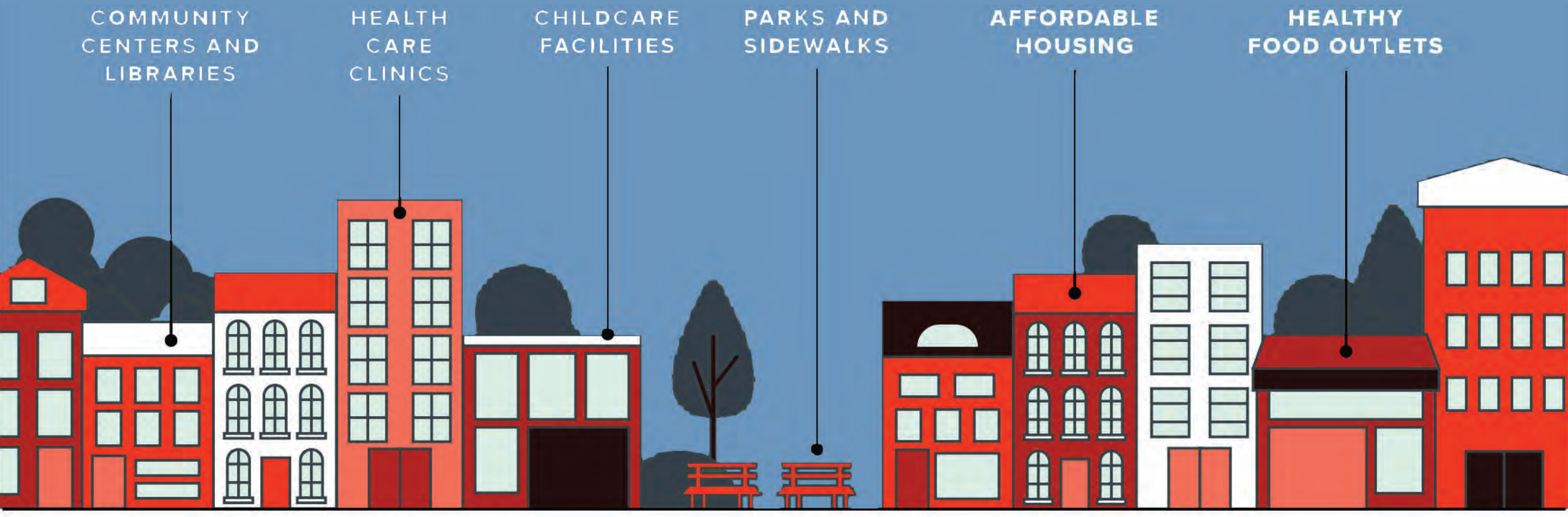


Figure 40.0 Community Development Minneapolis Reserve Bank

REAL ESTATE

Becoming a developer doesn't require formal qualifications; but obtaining a real estate license is possible. While having a bachelor's degree or significant experience in a relevant field is recommended; knowledge in zoning, policy, financing, laws, and codes is also expected. Building experience and networking within the industry are recommended steps.

Development can be understood as real estate development (physical) and neighborhood development (focused on program). It can be a "risky" business, so having access to capital and the ability to raise more funds is crucial for success. In addition, it is important to mention the necessity of targeted training and support within the development field to empower black communities and ensure they can be sustained.

PROCESS

Currently, development is more of a streamlined approach. It focuses more on the financing portion of the process. The residents and the existing culture is not at the forefront of planning. This is how communities are built or developed cheap, fast, and without concern of the current condition.

The recommended approach mentioned earlier focuses more on the planning stage to ensure that if a developer, architect, or designer decide they want to develop an existing black community, the cultural essence of the space can be maintained or amplified instead of depleted.

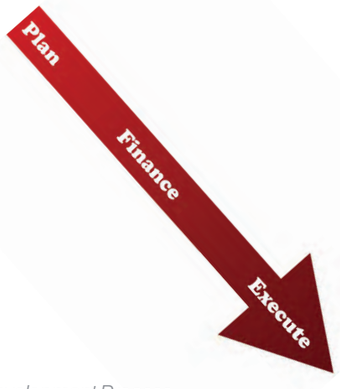


Figure 41.0 Development Process

INFORMING

Education + Design + Development are subjects that is important for community members to understand. This helps with gaining autonomy over their homes. Education of the built environment serves as a cornerstone for advancement and provides a visuals with the knowledge and skills needed to advocate for their rights. By equipping members of black neighborhood with information about design and development, they can actively participate in shaping it. Their voices become more projected, and their unique needs are clearly addressed. And enables them to make informed decisions about their future and mitigating the risks discussed in this investigation.

Aside from learning a new development process, designers, architects, and developers can become educated about certain black neighborhoods to ensure they are making the right decisions. This could be training facilitated by NOMA to make it widespread and attainable. This does not have to just be a program for emerging black professionals but also non-black allies who really want to help.

SEGREGATION

There has been consideration among black people different points in history to segregate themselves and establish new black only neighborhoods. This is a response to the systemic racism projected onto them. As mentioned earlier, a lot of these efforts were stopped in either violent or legal systemic matters. Such initiatives can be seen as a former resistance against a simulation and celebrate, the cultural identity. It also conserves as a means of protecting those black resident. It is also interesting that when black people try to separate themselves and have these black only neighborhoods, it was looked at as segregation, and not as a black cultural neighborhood. As previously noted, there's nothing wrong with culturally, diverse neighborhoods as long as everyone is respected. Be that as it may, there should be black, cultural neighborhoods that thrive.

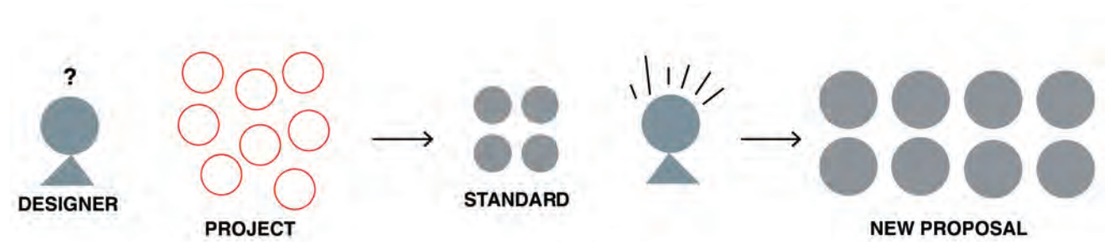


Figure 42.1 Design inspiration standard

Figure 42.2 Design inspiration culture

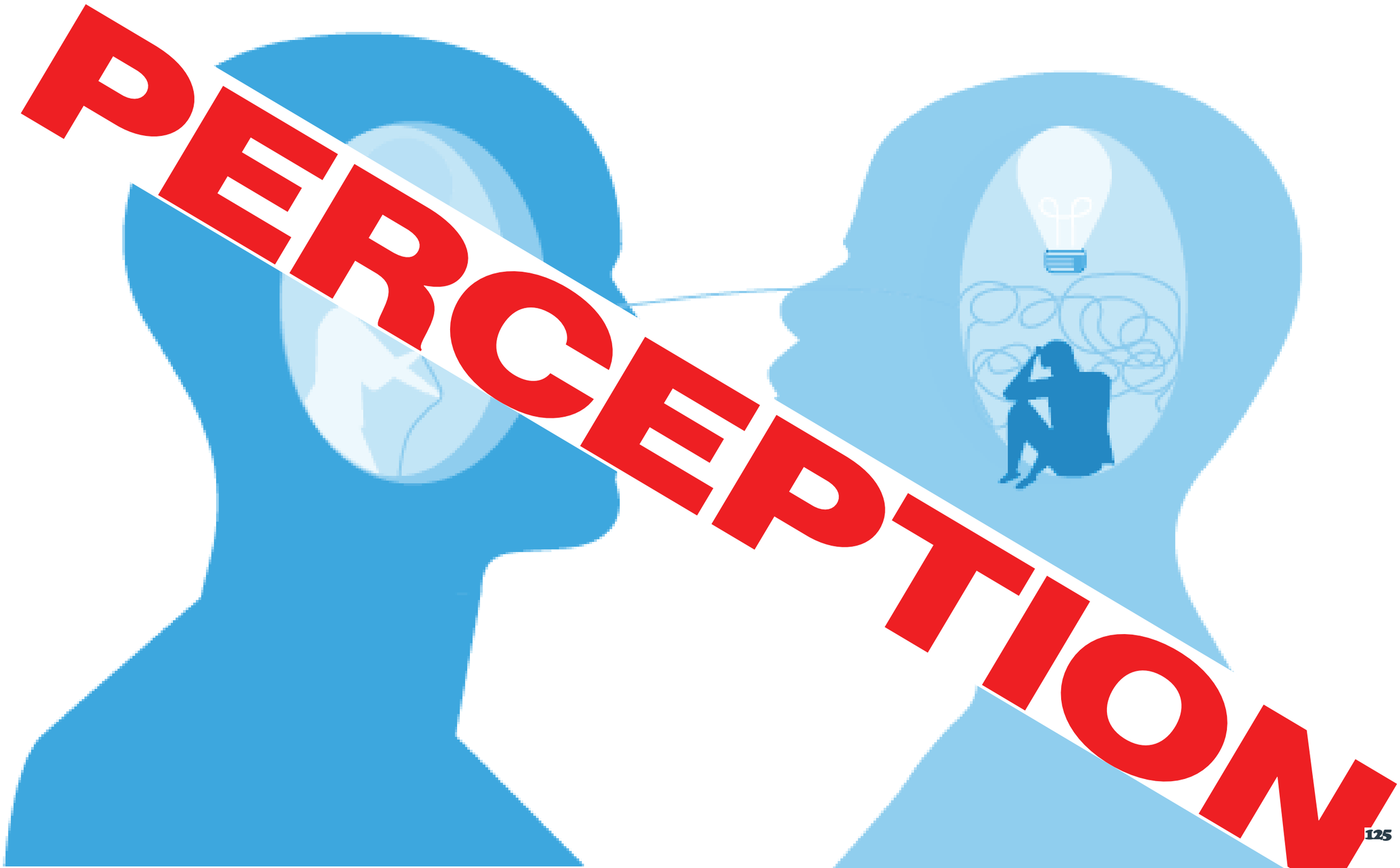


Figure 43.0 Empathy

INTENTION

Perception is the lens through which people interpret the world around us, shaped by their experiences, beliefs, and cultural backgrounds. It influences how people understand and interact with one another, along with how judgments and decisions are formed. Though, perception is not always accurate, and it can be influenced by biases and stereotypes, leading to discrimination. Discrimination occurs when people treat individuals or groups differently based on characteristics such as race, gender, ethnicity, religion, or social status. These biases can manifest in various forms, including prejudice, stereotyping, and unconscious bias. Discrimination can have profound effects on individuals and communities, perpetuating inequality and social divisions.

The intention behind discrimination can vary, ranging from negative to positive. **Negative Intention:** Discrimination driven by negative intentions involves deliberate prejudice or bias against certain groups. This may stem from fear, ignorance, or a desire for power and control. Negative discrimination can lead to harmful actions such as exclusion, harassment, or violence, perpetuating cycles of oppression and injustice.

Positive Intention: In some cases, discrimination may arise from seemingly positive intentions, such as a desire to help or protect certain groups. However, even well-meaning actions can reinforce stereotypes or perpetuate inequality if they are based on assumptions rather than individual merit. For example, offering preferential treatment to certain groups under the guise of benevolence can undermine efforts to achieve true equality and fairness.

It is essential to recognize and challenge biases and assumptions to promote a more inclusive and equitable society. This requires introspection, empathy, and a willingness to confront uncomfortable truths about one's own attitude and behavior. By fostering understanding and empathy, people can work towards dismantling discrimination and building a world where everyone is valued and respected for their unique contributions and humanity.

BARRIERS

Mental barriers and serial attitudes towards black people often stem from a complex interplay of historical, cultural, and psychological factors.

Historical injustices like systemic racism, slavery, and segregation continue to shape contemporary attitudes. Generationally this can create implicit bias at a subconscious level. To the point people exclaimed they do not have bias because they may not directly or overtly be racist. This implicit bias also comes from staying in internalized environments that perpetuate or promote these stereotypes. Another factor to keep in mind is the digital age that the world is in. Media representation plays a significant role in shaping public perceptions of black people. There is lots of negative portrayals of black people and not enough education about their culture and livelihood. The negative portrayal reinforces the untrue notion that black people are in poverty, criminals, and inferior to the dominant culture. Also leading to believe there is nothing valuable within black neighborhoods. Inherently, out of fear, people (especially white people) will not experience black spaces firsthand. They will not deduce the stereotypes or even go to the black neighborhoods in need to help give a space that is representative of black people. There will continue to remain a climate of prejudice and negative assumptions that take away from the present conversation.

BIASES

Unconscious Bias is another way to say implicit bias and is defined as a negative attitude, of which one is not consciously aware, against a specific social group.

There are multiple different types of biases. This is a layered concept even within those types. Perception, affinity, group think, halo effect, confirmation are types of unconscious (implicit) bias that are most commonly apparent in design. *Perception Bias* is when one makes decisions based only on assumptions and stereotypes. *Affinity Bias* is a preference for people who are similar to each other. *Group Think Bias* is when a person makes decisions to keep the group satisfied. *Confirmation Bias* is when someone looks for information that only confirms their own ideas. *Halo Effect Bias* is when one has a positive judgment towards something because it looks appealing to them.

There are three distinct aspects of decision making. Instinct, Intuition, and Intellect. These can work together or be independent of each other depending on the circumstances. They fulfill their function in how people perceive, understand, and respond. **Instinct** is an innate, natural tendency or impulse that guides behavior. It is often subconscious and is believed to be rooted in evolutionary processes, helping people survive and thrive in their environments. Instincts can include behaviors such as fight-or-flight responses, parental care, and various social behaviors. **Intuition** is a form of knowledge or insight believed to arise without conscious reasoning. It is often described as a gut feeling, hunch, or sense of knowing something without being able to explain exactly why. It is thought to draw on past experiences, emotions, and unconscious processes to guide decision-making. **Intellect** refers to the rational, logical, and analytical aspect of thinking. It involves using reason, facts, and evidence to understand, analyze, and solve problems. It is often associated with conscious, deliberate thought processes.

Figure 44.0 Unconscious Bias

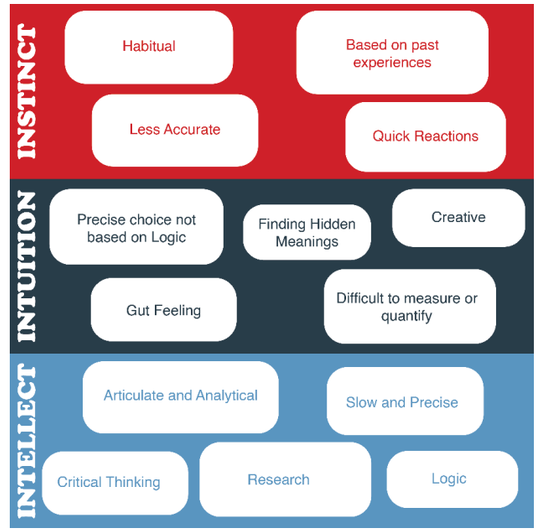


Figure 45.0 Decision Making

AFFINITY

Preference for people who are like me

PERCEPTION

Making decisions based only on assumptions and stereotypes

GROUP THINK

Making decisions to keep the group satisfied

TYPES OF BIAS

HALO EFFECT

Having a positive judgement towards something if it looks appealing

CONFIRMATION

Looking for information that ONLY confirms my own ideas

Figure 46.0 Types of Bias

Figure 47.0 Man with mask blue tint

OWNERSHIP

Understanding the importance of having one's own identity, autonomy, and aspirations is crucial within the context of blackness. It involves recognizing and valuing the uniqueness and dignity of black people, affirming their right to self-expression, personal growth, and fulfillment. Historically, black people were not given that right. Every person on earth can see the importance of having ownership over something in their life. This can be small, large, intangible or tangible. Whether they have it or not, it is evident how having this sense of ownership can bring a sense of freedom.

UNDERSTANDING

Fostering empathy and understanding towards black people regarding the conditions of their neighborhoods and livelihoods can be a challenge. Explaining the issue is not enough. Education and awareness about the historical and systemic factors contributing to disparities are essential. Sharing personal stories and experiences from individuals in black communities humanizes these issues and encourages empathy. Promoting diverse media representations of black experiences challenges stereotypes and amplifies marginalized voices. Additionally, advocating for policy changes that address systemic inequalities and promote equity is crucial in creating lasting change and building a more empathetic and inclusive society. Still, research suggests that direct contact with the neighborhood helps with exposure. Direct comparisons to help people understand.

HUMAN LIKENESS

Human likeness encompasses the various ways in which human traits, behaviors, and appearances are represented or perceived in different contexts.

The vision of this investigation has changed over time. Through this process it has been recognized that this topic has been studied before by many others. It is currently in a preliminary phase of planning in hopes of making change.

This research has led to many different processes and proposals in the past. It begs the question; Why is this still a problem? What needs to be different? What is not working?

It has questioned the way developers practice and the ways in which this has not been beneficial to black communities specifically. It challenges the idea that everyone must do the same thing and stick to the traditional practice. What if there were no constraints? How do black communities start to look without them? What does culturally driven development look like?

There is also a moment when people must question themselves and ask "Is enough being done? Is the situation being handled correctly?" There is a future to this project that will involve the future of black communities. A neighborhood where there are no constraints and black people do not have to "make do with what they have" out of necessity but choice.

In conclusion, delving into this topic, not only contributes to designers' growth, but also in rich is the diversity of approaches and design. The relevance of this expiration lies and challenging conventional notions of the design process, but then black neighborhoods, were communities and identities often faced to risk of being lost, mid development. Whether displacement or the absence of thoughtful development, spatial assimilation, poses a significant concern. The call to empathize with one another and initiate a dialogue for transformative change is essential. Acknowledging and addressing preconceived notions is crucial, especially when examining the development methods happening in black neighborhoods. Perception and ethics play a pivotal role in the life span of a neighborhood.

This is a real-world issue. When everything is considered, one of the final questions becomes, "What makes people design for people?" In more specific terms, "What makes people design for black people the right way?"

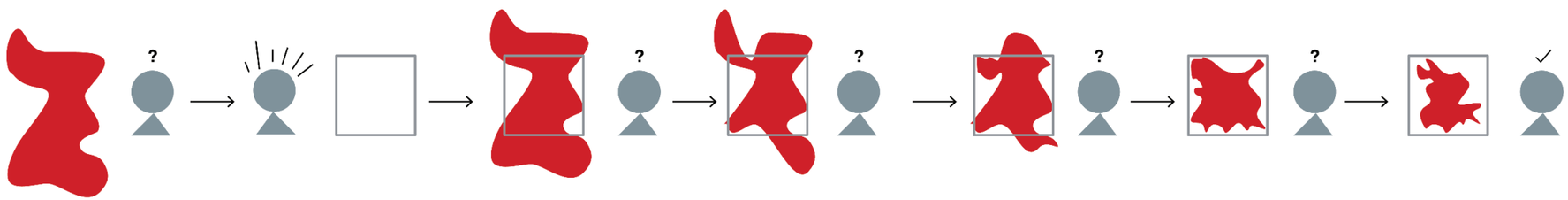


Figure 48.0 Black Culture being constrained

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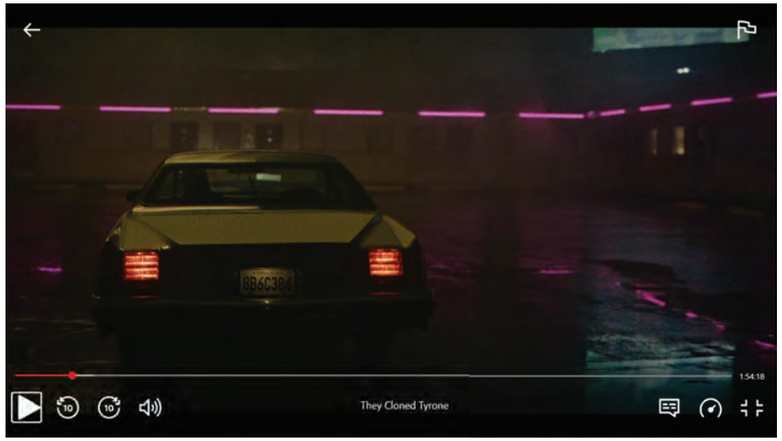
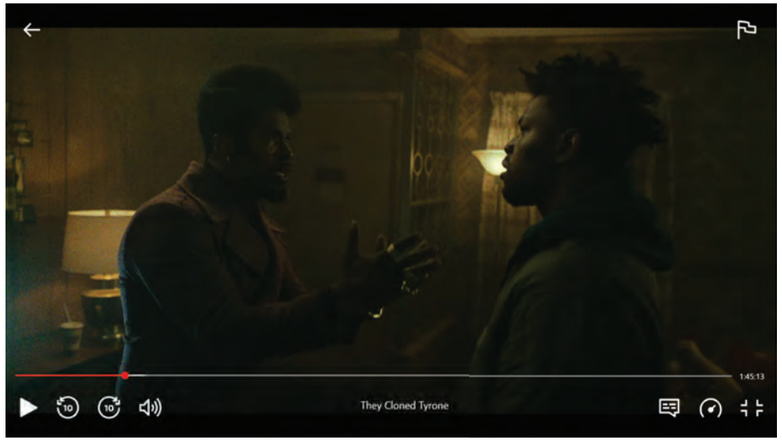
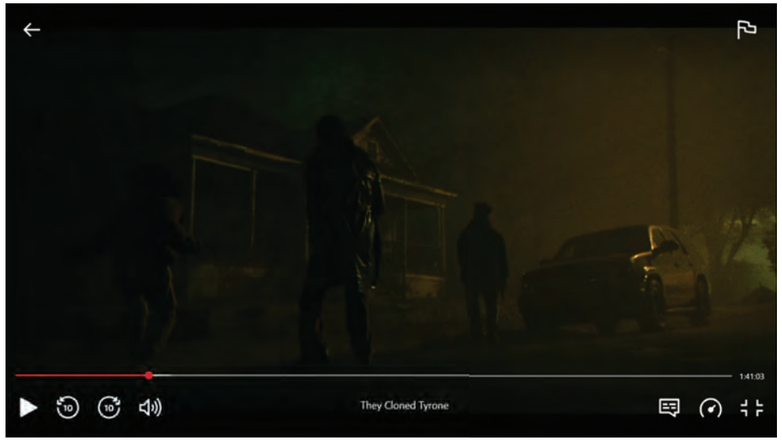
APPENDIX I -MOVIE SCENES



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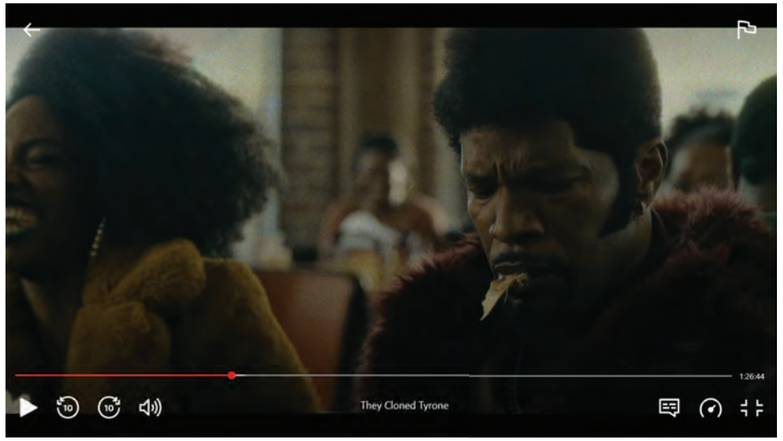
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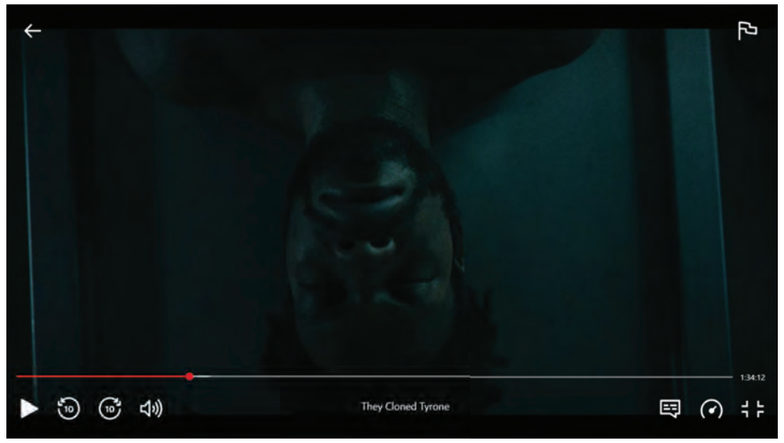
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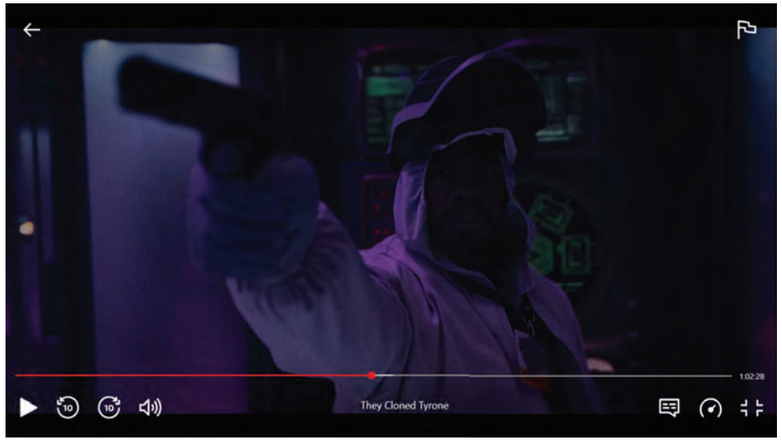
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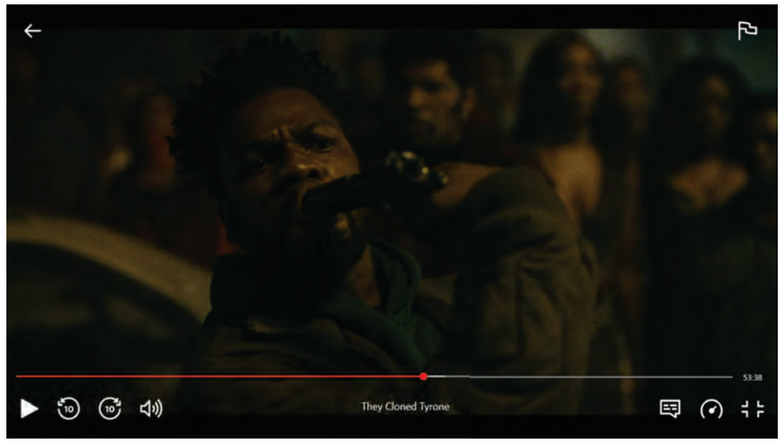
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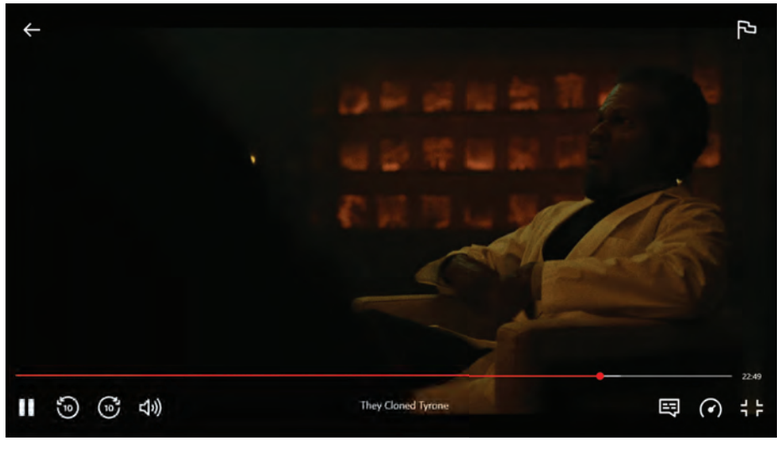
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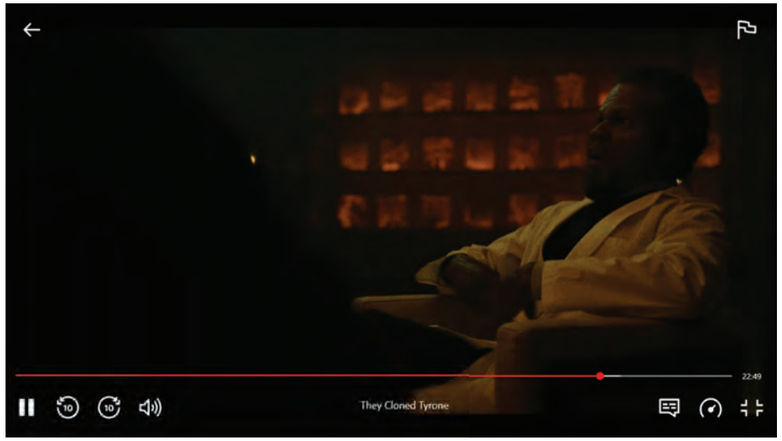
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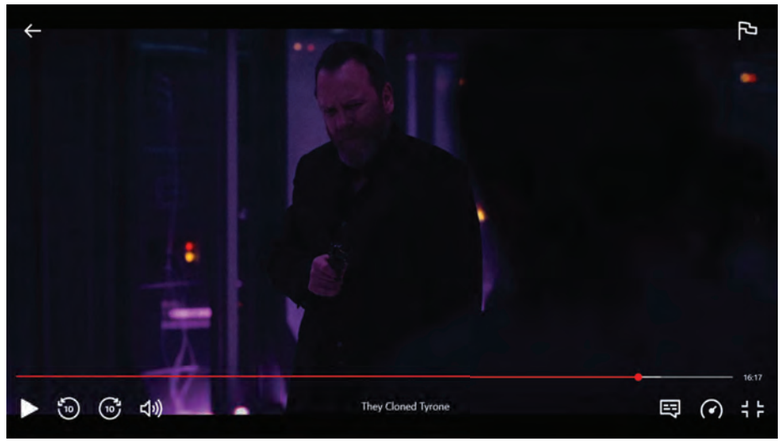
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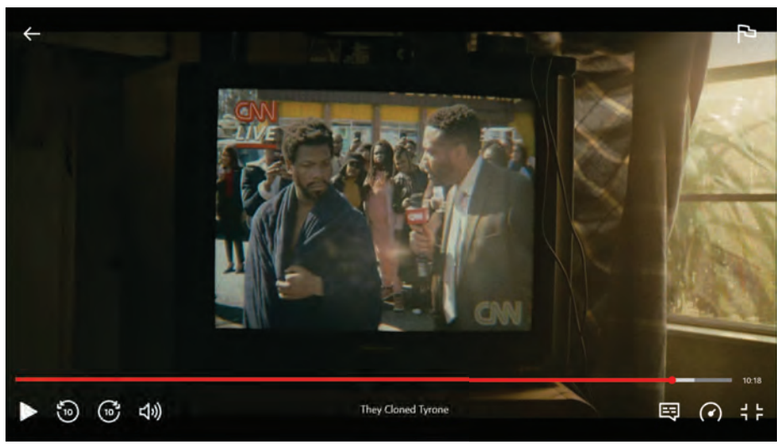
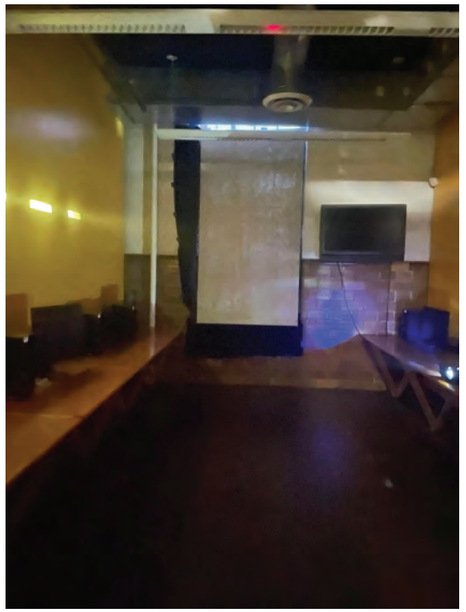
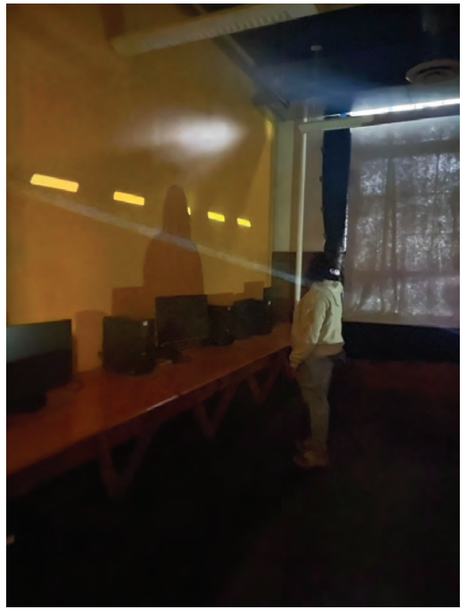
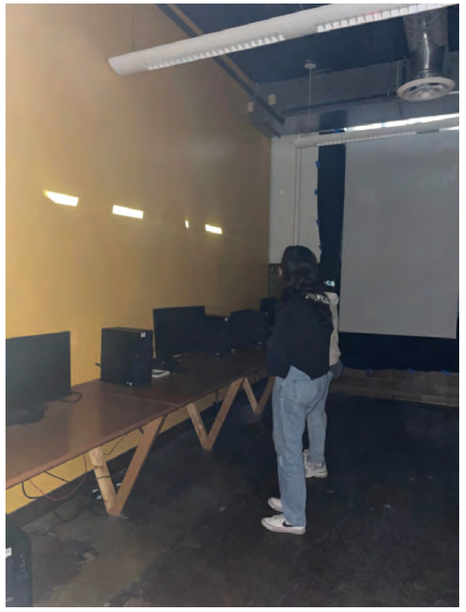

CNN
LIVE
CNN
10:18
They Cloned Tyrone

APPENDIX II-HOME ELEVATIONS

APPENDIX III-INTROSPECTION SKETCH PROBLEM







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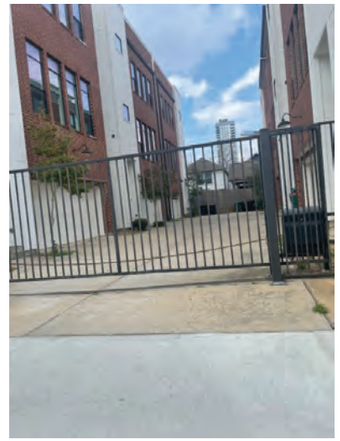

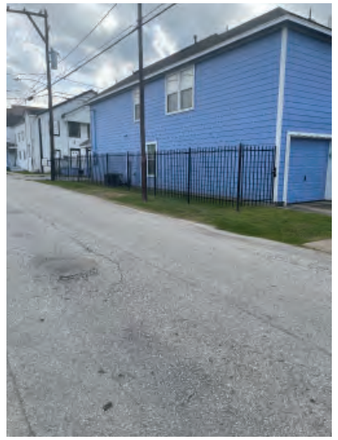

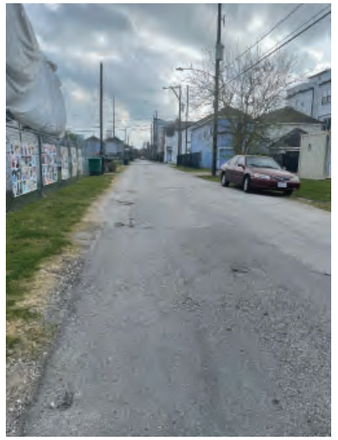

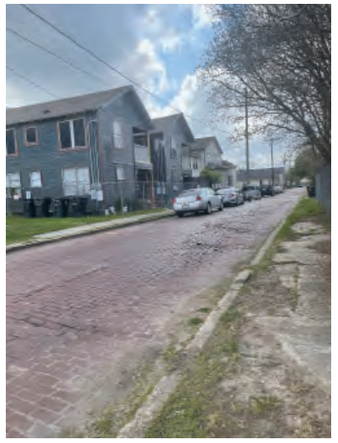

ARCHAEOLOGY EDUCATION PRESERVATION

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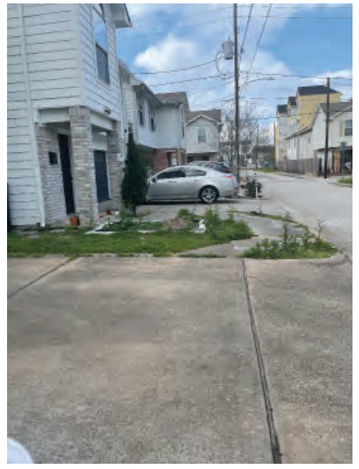
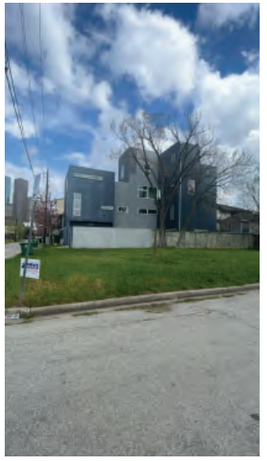
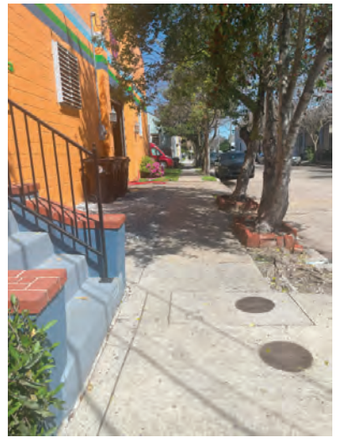
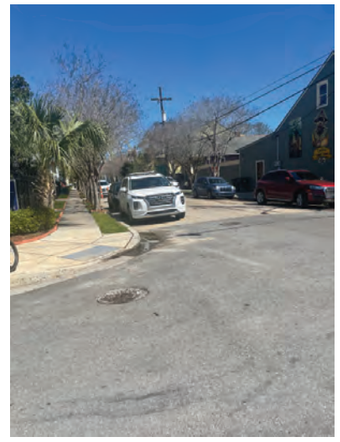
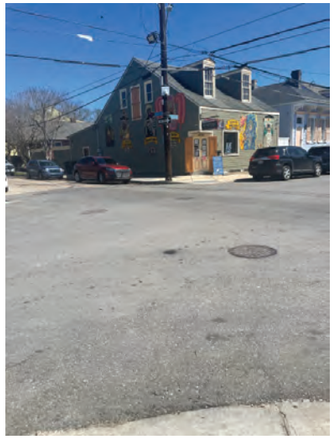
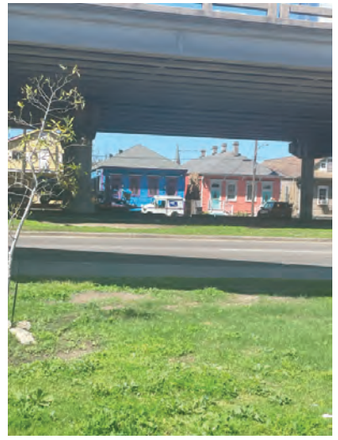



APPENDIX V-TREME, NOLA









ONE WAY
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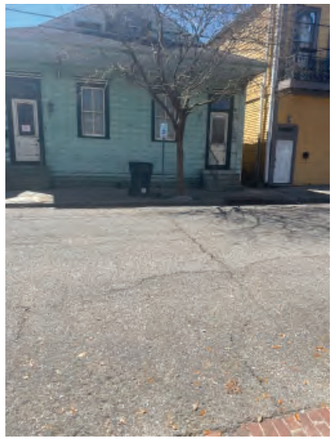
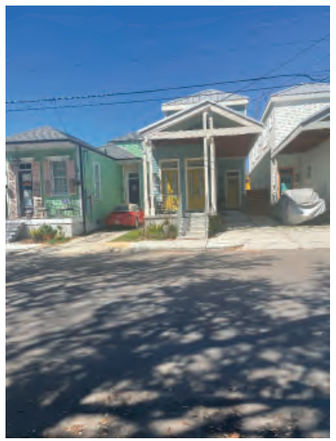
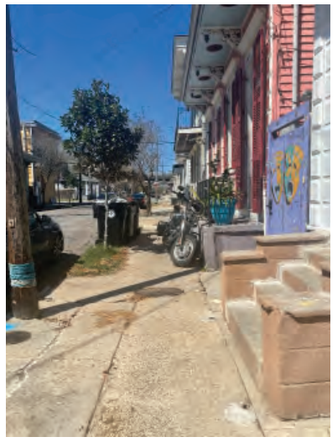
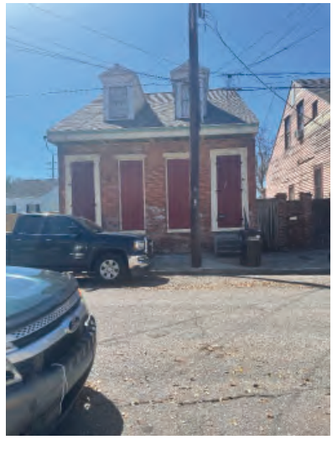
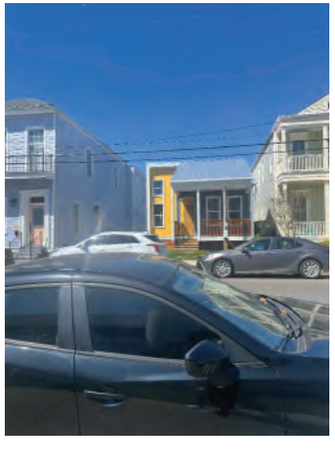
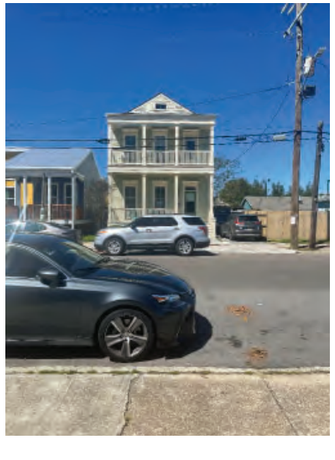
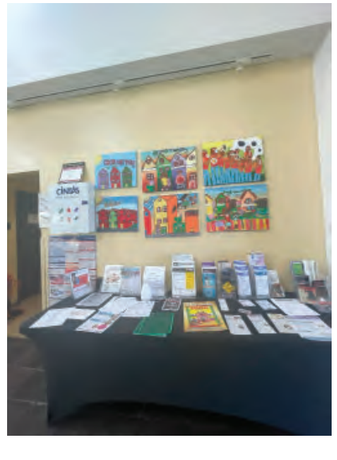
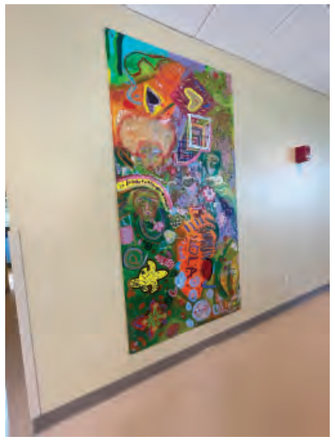
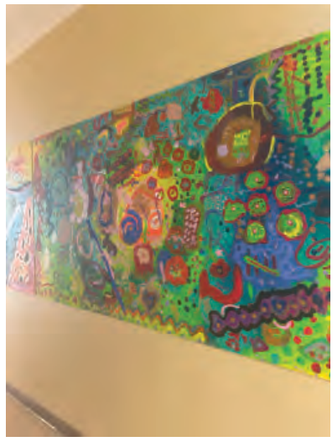
HIGHWAY


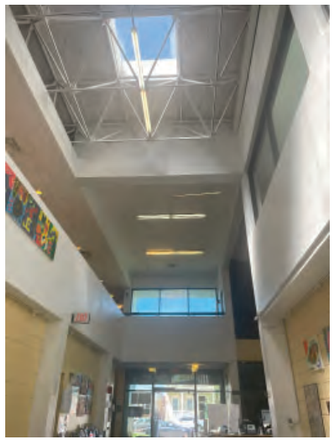




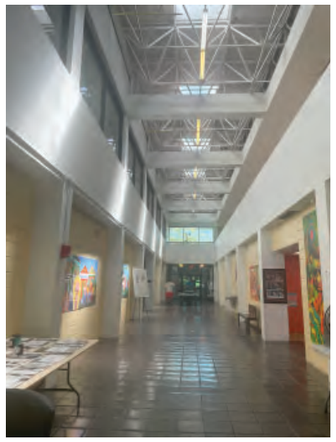









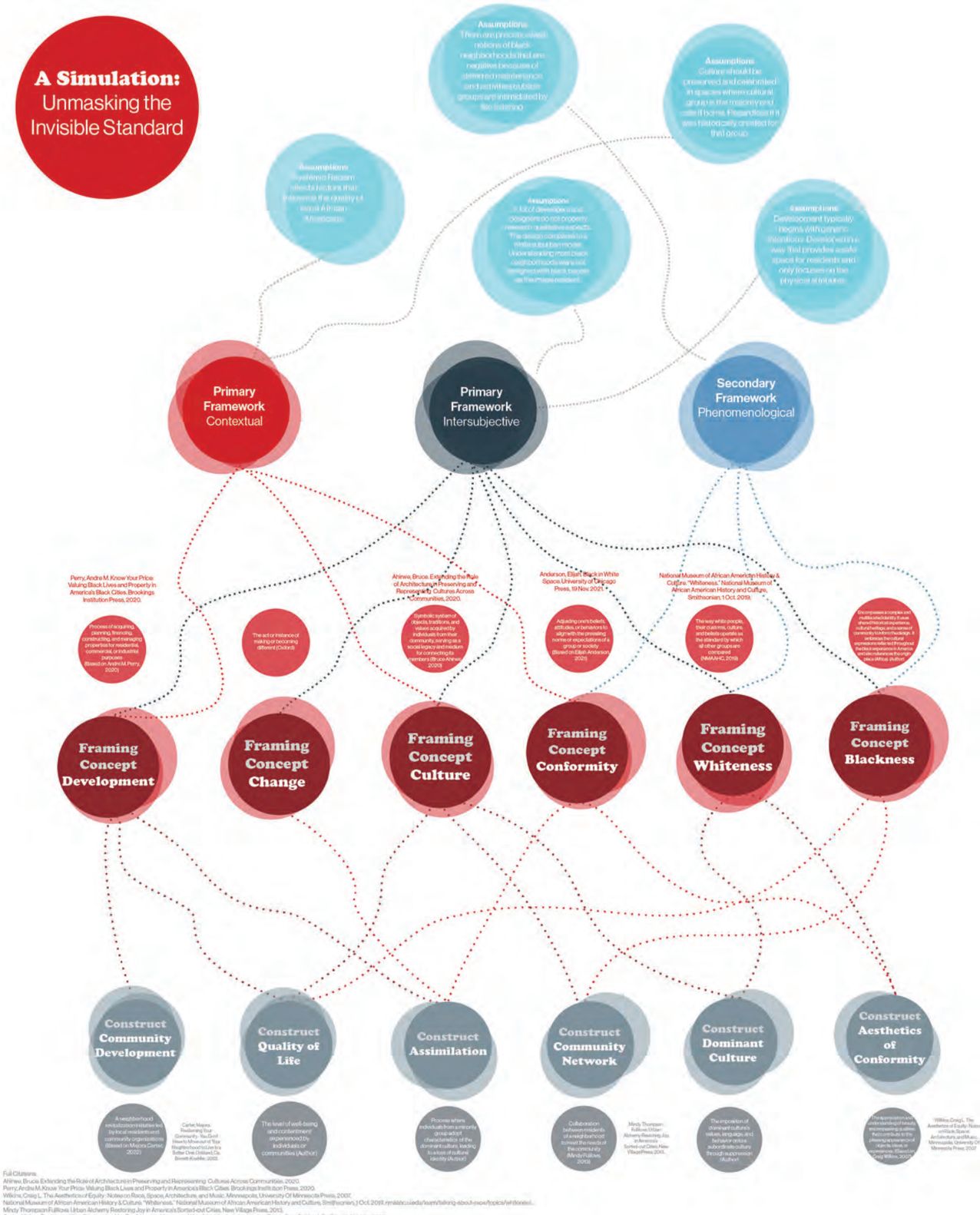


Who Was Dr King? Who was Mal



THEME CENTER

APPENDIX VI- FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM



Do Better. Be Better.