

CHAPTER ONE: SOUTH CAMPUS

One campus myth freshmen at the University learn their first semester is that the South Campus dormitories are modeled after prison housing.⁹¹ This fallacy highlights a general precept that the concrete high-rises of Hinton James, Morrison, Ehringhaus, and Craige Residence Halls in the South Campus residence community are, at best, not the most desirable campus housing, and at worst, a space of containment and punishment. In 1980, less than thirty years after the desegregation of the University by Black students, the University's student newspaper *The Daily Tar Heel*, reported on a housing pattern they described as a "common knowledge" issue: "For the most part, blacks live on South Campus and whites on North Campus...People can juggle figures as long as they want but that is the simple fact. In many of the dormitories on North Campus that average 200-300 people, only three to five of those are black—and that estimate is probably too optimistic. The vast majority of Blacks who attend Carolina live on South Campus in three high-rise dormitories—Hinton James, Morrison, and Ehringhaus."⁹² Black students who attended the University from the 1970s through the 2000s reported living in the South Campus dorms for most of their years in Chapel Hill. "We all stayed in E-house [Ehringhaus]," John Bradley, class of 1994, explained. "You never really realize until you get here that ninety percent of the African-American students are all on South Campus. So it's like, wow, we're all in one place. I

⁹¹ Greg Turosak, "James A Unique Place to Live," *The Daily Tar Heel*, 25 September 1973, 1.

⁹² Thomas Jessiman, "Segregation, prevalent as ever in residence halls," *The Daily Tar Heel*, 6 November 1980, 8.

didn't even know there was a North Campus. I just thought North Campus was where the academic buildings were...You never really realize that difference, but there's a racial segregation there as well."⁹³

South Campus was an informal counter-space, created by Black students, beginning in the early 1970s, to serve as powerful community space for themselves within and against the white supremacy of the University. This chapter argues that South Campus, as a Black student-created counter-space, developed to challenge certain anti-Black institutional processes, setting a crucial precedent for other future acts of space creation; at the same time, the University operated to control Black students within the space through overt discrimination and neglect. Because South Campus operated continually through at least the 2000s as a counter-space for Black students, it is an essential space to examine, and its history illustrates a number of crucial themes—the enactment of anti-Black institutional policies, white students' complicity in maintaining white supremacy, and the ways in which the University operates to maintain segregation while appearing to desegregate—that emerge throughout the history of racial justice movements at the University.

Creating a Geography of Exclusion

Segregation in campus housing had been a practice at the University long before *The Daily Tar Heel* identified the North-South Campus housing pattern. When the first Black students desegregated the University in the summer of 1951 following a lawsuit from the NAACP, the four male law students lived on an entirely separate floor of Steele Building, at the time a residence hall on North Campus. One of these former students, Floyd McKissick, described the experience of living in segregated campus housing his first semester: “I stayed in a

⁹³ Interview with John Bradley by Charlotte Fryar, 2 December 2017, L-0452.

cubicle where the other Black students were supposed to stay and did stay sometimes during the day time. Many of them [other Black students] didn't want to at night. So I was alone there. And they [white students] would come in and they'd put a Black snake in my drawer, a dead Black snake, in my drawer on my shirts. They would put water on your clothes... You'd get a letter every day from the Ku Klux Klan telling you that you're in the wrong place and what's going to happen to you. You had a lot of threats."⁹⁴

Black students were not only segregated by housing, but also were unable to attend athletic events by order from the University's Chancellor, Robert House, who claimed that football games were "social occasions," implying that Black and white students should not spend time together socially.⁹⁵ McKissick resisted these Jim Crow restrictions throughout his career, including his time in Chapel Hill, notably jumping into the campus pool to "integrate" one of the University's most prized athletic spaces for its white students.⁹⁶ The institution's establishment of explicit housing and social segregation in the 1950s established what geography scholar David Sibley termed a "geography of exclusion" for the institution's Black students who lived within the campus landscape.⁹⁷ By segregating Black students from the social and living spaces of white students, the institution used "negative interaction and nuanced forms of social pressure" to

⁹⁴ Interview with Floyd McKissick by Bruce Kalk, 31 May 1989, L-0040.

⁹⁵ William A. Snider, *Light on the Hill: A History of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 248.

⁹⁶ Interview with Floyd McKissick by Bruce Kalk, 31 May 1989, L-0040.

⁹⁷ David Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West*, (London: Routledge, 1995).

contain Black identities as separate from the whiteness of the cultural landscape, setting a precedent that the institution would continue to follow in housing future Black students.⁹⁸

The ensuing generation of Black students at the University shared McKissick and his peers' experiences with the racist policies that produced the institution's "geography of exclusion."⁹⁹ Many Black students who attended the University in the 1960s described either being assigned no roommate at all for their freshman year or having their assigned white roommate move out upon learning they were to live with a Black person. For many Black students, already socially isolated on the campus, the experience of living alone exacerbated that feeling of isolation.¹⁰⁰ Karen Parker, the first Black woman to graduate from the University, chose to live with a white student her senior year, 1964 to 1965. "If you were a white and a Black living together," she recalled, "they sent your parents a form, like, 'My daughter, Karen Parker, Negro, has permission to room with Louise Ambrosiano, white,' and her parents got the opposite ones. Our parents signed it."¹⁰¹

In the fall of her senior year, Parker discovered that her roommate had been punished by the University for choosing to live with her Black peer, by losing one of the few social privileges permitted for female students. "They punished her," Parker described. "She was not permitted to

⁹⁸ Roza Tchoukaleyska, "Geographies of Exclusion," in *The International Encyclopedia of Geography*, ed. Douglas Richardson, Noel Castree, Michael F. Goodchild, Aubrey Kobayashi, Weidong Liu, and Richard A. Marston, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2017), 1.

⁹⁹ David Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West*, (London: Routledge, 1995).

¹⁰⁰ Interview with James Womack by Charlotte Eure, 2 March 2016, N-0048.

¹⁰¹ Black male students who wished to live with white students reported receiving the same form. See: Interview with James Womack by Charlotte Eure, 2 March 2016, N-0048; Interview with John Sellars by Alex Ford, 8 November 2015 N-0042; Interview with Larry Poe by Devin Holman, 3 March 2016, N-0041.

go off campus.”¹⁰² These experiences demonstrate how the University operated to control the conditions under which Black and white female students could participate in the social life of the University before the end of *in loco parentis* policies in 1969.¹⁰³ But Black female students, including Parker, faced what activist Frances Beal called “double jeopardy,” in which they experienced not just racism and sexism together, but an amplification of both types of discrimination from the institution.¹⁰⁴

Parker, along with David Dansby and a few anti-racist white students, participated in Chapel Hill’s civil rights movement, which was led primarily by Black Chapel Hill students from Lincoln High School. Parker was jailed twice for her demonstrations of civil disobedience, and threatened by the University’s Dean of Women, Katherine Carmichael, for her unfeminine acts of resistance to anti-Blackness. The main objective of the movement in Chapel Hill from 1960 to 1964 was to desegregate the town’s private establishments, but largely because the University refused to use its power in the town to expand Black civil rights, Chapel Hill was not legally desegregated until the passage of the federal Civil Rights Act.¹⁰⁵ Thus, although the University was no longer explicitly quarantining Black students to a separate floor or dormitory,

¹⁰² Interview with Karen Parker by Kadejah Murray, 3 March 2016, N-0046.

¹⁰³ Interview with Sharon Rose Powell by Pamela Dean, 20 June 1989, L-0041.

¹⁰⁴ Frances M. Beal, “Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female,” in *Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings from the Women’s Liberation Movement*, Ed. Robin Morgan, (New York: Random House, 1970): 340-356.

¹⁰⁵ John K. Chapman, “Second generation: black youth and the origins of the civil rights movement in Chapel Hill, N.C., 1937-1963,” (Masters’s Thesis, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1995).

their policies in regards to housing and the Black Chapel Hill community produced the same segregating effects for the first generations of the University's Black students.¹⁰⁶

By instituting exclusionary policies for Black students through the 1950s and 1960s, the University ensured that it would be almost two decades (1969) after the legal desegregation of the institution before the number of Black undergraduates on campus reached one hundred—only one percent of the total undergraduate population, though Black citizens at that time constituted twenty-five percent of North Carolina's population.¹⁰⁷ After 1951, as the University tried and failed to obstruct its own desegregation, administrators utilized the institution's outsized political power in the state to enact a series of policies that would have the effect of discouraging an influx of Black graduate students at the University. Administrators, particularly University Vice President William D. Carmichael, worked with the state legislature to strengthen graduate programs at North Carolina College to provide greater incentive for Black students to enroll at a Black college instead of attempting to enroll at the University. The commitment to “program duplication”—creating the same academic programs at the state's Black college and white University—helped considerably to slow the process of desegregation at the University and relieve institutional fears that the University would be “flooded” and “inundated” by Black students.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ John K. Chapman, *Black Freedom and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1793-1960*, (Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2006), 172.

¹⁰⁷ Sarah D. Manekin, “Black student protest and the moral crisis of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1967-1969,” (Honors Thesis, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1998), 15.

¹⁰⁸ John K. Chapman, *Black Freedom and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1793-1960*, (Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2006), 169; Neal Cheek, *An Historical Study of the Administrative Actions in the Racial Desegregation of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1930-1955*, (Ph. D. Dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1973), 168.

Establishing the South Campus Housing Pattern

South Campus, an area now delineated from the North Campus as the landscape between Kenan Memorial Stadium and the Dean Smith Student Activities Center (better known as the Dean Dome), experienced a construction boom through the 1960s as several high-rise dormitories were constructed to house the growing numbers of incoming students. The new dorms would be known as the South Campus residence community, though that entire area of the campus encompassing dorms and other buildings was known to students as South Campus. The terms for the residence community and this area of campus were and are interchangeable. Craige and Ehringhaus dormitories were completed in 1962.¹⁰⁹ Morrison was finished in 1965. And Hinton James, the largest of the four, was completed in 1967.¹¹⁰ “To some, [Hinton] James is unique in the negative sense,” *The Daily Tar Heel* wrote in 1973. “A place seemingly miles from Franklin St., [Hinton] James is huge, impersonal, and prison-like...Of the approximately 1,000 students who live in [Hinton] James, half are male, and half are female...about 450 residents are black, an increase of about 200 over last year.”¹¹¹

Most white students did not consider the South Campus dorms to be a favorable location to live. Contributing to white students’ preference for North Campus was the fact that the South Campus dorms were further away from the main campus, the rooms were smaller, and the number of Black students housed there was greater. A student who lived on North Campus

¹⁰⁹ Craige Residence Hall was built to house graduate students, though undergraduates also lived there. Although it was constructed at the same time as the other three dormitories, it did not follow the same housing pattern as Hinton James, Ehringhaus, and Morrison until the 1980s, when it became a majority-undergraduate dormitory.

¹¹⁰ “Hinton James Residence Hall” “Ehringhaus Residence Hall” “Craige Residence Hall” “Morrison Residence Hall” in UNC Plan Room, Engineering Information Services, Facility Services, Accessed January 23, 2018, <<https://planroom.unc.edu/FacilityInfo.aspx?facilityID=109>>.

¹¹¹ Greg Turosak, “James A Unique Place to Live,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 25 September 1973, 1.

expressed this widespread white view of South Campus, asking *The Daily Tar Heel* in 1974, “[Hinton] James? There are a lot of weird people down there aren’t there? A lot of blacks?”¹¹² But for Black students, the South Campus dorms had several positive attributes. South Campus was close to the main social gathering space for Black students, Upendo Lounge, and most importantly, it was where they continued to find one another’s company. As a result, by as early as 1973, Hinton James had firmly established “a reputation for housing blacks.”¹¹³ Because of this reputation, the dorm also earned several derogatory nicknames, including “the Ghetto,” “Congo Towers,” and “the back door to the southern part of heaven.”¹¹⁴ The prior description in *The Daily Tar Heel* of the South Campus dorms as “prison-like” and the myth that the dorms are modeled on prison housing takes on a particularly damaging resonance considering that these dorms housed a large number of Black students, the group that the institution most sought to control and police.

Despite gaining a reputation as Black dorms, Hinton James and the other South Campus dorms were never majority Black residence halls. In fact, the South Campus dorms were, by the early 1970s, the most racially integrated space on the campus, both because the student body remained overwhelming white and because the number of Black students living in the South Campus dorms was so high compared to other residence communities. Although only thirty-five percent of Hinton James’s residents were Black in 1974, the dorm housed the largest number of Black students compared to other dorms. That year, Black students made up 6.1 percent of the

¹¹² Gary Dorsey, “James Dorm: the myths persist,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 18 September 1974, 1.

¹¹³ Greg Turosak, “James A Unique Place to Live,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 25 September 1973, 1.

¹¹⁴ Letter from Hinton James Residence Hall Staff to Residents, July 1975 the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Records #40124, University Archives, Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

total student body, with 853 Black undergraduate students enrolled.¹¹⁵ Housing administrator Colin Ruston explained the ratio between the numbers of Black students enrolled and the numbers of Black students living on South Campus to the University Student Television campus news show, *Campus Profile*, stating “there is integration to a great extent anywhere there are black kids on campus.”¹¹⁶ But regardless of the actual numbers of Black students living on South Campus, white students and administrators regarded the dorms as a site of Black self-segregation.¹¹⁷

This view on the housing pattern of South Campus as determined by Black students’ choices willfully ignored the reality that white students continued to self-segregate in both the North Campus dorms and off-campus, often after living their freshman years in the more integrated South Campus dorms. Because the University’s guarantee for on-campus housing for freshman pushed the majority of upper-class students into off-campus housing, it is clear that white students were not totally motivated by race in their decision to move from South Campus.¹¹⁸ But regardless of white students’ motivations, this policy and practice meant that while Black students living on South Campus beyond their freshman year often spent multiple years living in an integrated housing space, white students usually spent less than one year living in integrated housing and some spent no time at all in integrated dormitories. “Morrison, Craige,

¹¹⁵ This percentage includes graduate and professional students, as well as undergraduate students.; Enrollment Statistics, 1974-1975 in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Records #40301, University Archives, Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

¹¹⁶ “Race Relations on Campus: A Special Campus Profile Presentation,” *Campus Profile*, Episode 77, UNC Student Television, 14 November 1988, <<http://www.uncstv.com/shows/campus-profile-episode-77>>.

¹¹⁷ Amy Branen, “Dorm racial situations considered,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 13 October 1983, 4.

¹¹⁸ Tony Mace, “Freshman housing requirement raises annual ‘axe’ over students,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 27 February 1978, 1.

Hinton James and Ehringhaus can boast large multi-racial populations,” *The Daily Tar Heel* explained in 1983. “As a result, any white or black student on South campus lives in a more diverse, more challenging environment.”¹¹⁹ And while many Black students understood that integrated housing would not solve the issue of racial discrimination on the campus, most students engaged with the issue believed, as Black Greek Council president Terry Allen stated in 1983, that “integration may be a start.”¹²⁰

This housing pattern between North and South Campus also continued through an intentional lack of engagement with the issue from the University’s housing administrators. In 1965, at the same time that the South Campus dorms were constructed and the number of enrolled Black students was beginning to increase by more than single digits each year, the University permitted the construction of a privately-owned off-campus dormitory, which allowed students the opportunity to live off campus their freshman year if they did not want to be assigned to a University-owned dorm. Granville Towers was first designed to house only graduate women, though it soon expanded to house undergraduate women in the East Tower and men in the West Tower.¹²¹ Therefore, Granville Towers, the first off-campus dormitory, provided alternative housing for many students who would otherwise be assigned to live on South Campus and were willing to pay more than twice the on-campus rate per semester for their room and board.¹²² The economic barrier for Black or white students moving to Granville

¹¹⁹ S.L. Price, “Old Habits Die Hard,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 7 September 1983, 6.

¹²⁰ Amy Branen, “Dorm racial situations considered,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 13 October 1983, 4.

¹²¹ I suspect that Granville served initially as housing for primarily white women in order to operate as a protective space for them against the perceived sexual threat of Black men, who would presumably live in the same dormitories on South Campus, but I did not find primary source evidence to support this claim.

¹²² Peytie Fearington, “Granville Provides Luxurious Living,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 23 April 1966, 3.

Towers was considerable and contributed to Granville's almost immediate attainment of its enduring status as a dormitory for wealthy white students.

By October 1966, the second semester that Granville was open to undergraduates, the University chapter of the NAACP charged the privately-owned dormitory with “discriminating against Negroes.”¹²³ Although the charges brought by the NAACP—moving white students out of rooms where they were assigned to live with Black students—were similar to experiences shared by Black students who lived in University-owned dorms, the University was not directly responsible for the charges of discrimination in Granville. Housing Director James Wadsworth, responding to charges of discrimination in University-owned dorms, explained that “there’s definitely no discrimination in the housing office of the University...If anything, we lean over backwards to give proper accommodations to non-whites.” Concerning questions about Granville and other off-campus housing options, Wadsworth explained, “We don’t handle that.”¹²⁴ Although many white students surely chose to live in Granville Towers for its convenient location and amenities, the reputation created by Granville Towers as a white haven provided a choice for white students who did not want to live with their Black peers. By allowing for the construction of a privately-owned dormitory which kept out Black students through discrimination, expense, and reputation, the University supported the choice for white students to self-segregate, while later questioning Black students who chose to live together on South Campus.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the framing of the housing segregation issue as one determined solely by student choice allowed the University to disengage from the issue entirely.

¹²³ Ernest Robl, “NAACP Accuses Granville of Bias,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 4 October 1966, 1.

¹²⁴ Bill Amlong, “NAACP Protests Campus Housing,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 30 September 1966, 1.

James Condie, the director of University Housing in 1980, told *The Daily Tar Heel* that “as long as people were living, for the most part, where they wanted to, the split of Blacks and whites was not a problem.”¹²⁵ Through the 1980s, University Housing held firm in their stance that the housing pattern which continued to place a majority of Black students on South Campus and permitted white students to segregate themselves on the North Campus and off-campus was simply a result of students’ housing choices, and not, at least in part, a result of administrators’ refusal to intervene in the issue.¹²⁶ This approach followed a national movement towards a passive practice of “benign neglect” in racial matters, spearheaded in the 1970s by former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, an advisor to Presidents Johnson and Nixon. For the University, “benign neglect” of racial issues, including the pressing matter of housing segregation, was a necessary policy in order to ostensibly better focus on issues that benefited all students, instead of considering what barriers prevented Black students from moving to North Campus.¹²⁷

University administrators employed the same tactic with regard to Black student recruitment and enrollment. The University System (consolidated in 1972 to include the state’s sixteen four-year public colleges and universities) struggled through the 1970s and into the mid-1980s to meet federal mandates from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare’s Office for Civil Rights (HEW-OCR) to comply with desegregation policies, which would require, among many policy mandates, that the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

¹²⁵ Thomas Jessiman, “Segregation, prevalent as ever in residence halls,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 6 November 1980, 8.

¹²⁶ “Race Relations on Campus: A Special Campus Profile Presentation,” *Campus Profile*, Episode 77, UNC Student Television, 14 November 1988, <<http://www.uncstv.com/shows/campus-profile-episode-77>>.

¹²⁷ Tim Wise, *Colorblind: the rise of post-racial politics and the retreat from racial equity*, (San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 2010), 27-28.

increase Black student enrollment to 10.6 percent of the student body. Despite reports that the University was working to enact federal policy with “good faith efforts,” they failed to meet the mandate by the 1986 deadline by almost 3 percent.¹²⁸ After witnessing the University’s negation of mediation towards a desegregation plan, Reverend Dr. Pauli Murray, who had been refused admittance to the University in 1938 and forty years later, been offered an honorary doctorate at the University for her contributions to human rights, refused to receive the conciliatory honorary degree. “To accept the honor from the university at this point,” she explained, “would be interpreted as acquiescence in its unwillingness to comply with the federal government’s demand for more thoroughgoing desegregation.”¹²⁹

Administrators ignored student claims made in depositions to HEW-OCR that Black freshman were assigned disproportionately to South Campus, and instead, continued to argue that students’ choices alone had established the pattern of housing segregation.¹³⁰ By arguing that the creation of the housing pattern had been directed by student choice, the University effectively switched from their early endorsement of *de jure* segregation, supported by explicitly discriminatory housing policies, to *de facto* segregation, which “emphasizes the power of individual action and decision-making and veils the deep influences of policy and politics.”¹³¹

¹²⁸ Donyell L. Roseboro, *Icons of Power and Landscapes of Protest: The Student Movement for the Sonja Haynes Stone Black Cultural Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, (Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2005), 18; UNC-Chapel Hill Fact Book 1986-1987, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Accessed 3 October 2018, <https://oira.unc.edu/files/2017/07/fb1986_1987.pdf>.

¹²⁹ Pauli Murray, *Song In A Weary Throat* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018), 167.

¹³⁰ Deposition of Rosalind R. Fuse for HEW-OCR Investigation, 1979 in the Department of University Housing of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Records #40129, University Archives, Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

¹³¹ Ansley T. Erickson, “The Rhetoric of Choice: Segregation, Desegregation, and Charter Schools,” *Dissent Magazine*, (Fall 2011): 41-42.

The University similarly updated its admissions policies in the mid-1960s towards “color-blind admissions,” which both “enhanced the University’s reputation as a liberal institution willing to make changes in the name of equality,” and “crippled the efforts of activists committed to increasing black student enrollment.”¹³² The University’s use of the rhetoric of choice, non-discrimination, and color-blindness echoed the national movement through the 1970s and 1980s, led by white political and social elites, towards slow if not totally static, desegregation efforts.

By embracing these coded and non-racialized terms, the University, along with dozens of other white institutions, could state their support for desegregation without committing to policies that would lead to integration. Through the 1990s in the local Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools, for example, the rhetoric of diversity and colorblind universalism created the conditions for white parents in Chapel Hill (many of them faculty and administrators at the University) to engage in opportunity hoarding on behalf their white children, maintaining the status quo of racial inequity in the towns’ public schools, desegregated in name only.¹³³ Likewise, the University’s adoption of a false *de facto* logic through the promotion of the rhetoric of student choice allowed them “render invisible the policies” that left the spaces for white self-segregation on the North Campus unquestioned and threw into suspicion the community that Black students had built for themselves on the South Campus.¹³⁴ This intentional lack of engagement through acceptance of the myth of *de facto* segregation deepened the divide between white and Black

¹³² Sarah D. Manekin, “Black student protest and the moral crisis of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1967-1969,” (Honors Thesis, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1998), 15.

¹³³ Grace Tatter, “The Struggle for Racial Equality in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools,” (Honors Thesis, The University of North Carolina, 2014), 31-56.

¹³⁴ Ansley T. Erickson, “The Rhetoric of Choice: Segregation, Desegregation, and Charter Schools,” *Dissent Magazine*, (Fall 2011): 41-42.

students over housing and supported the incomplete narrative of Black self-segregation on the South Campus.

“If I had to live on North Campus, I wouldn’t go here.”

Through reporting in *The Daily Tar Heel*, Black students explained that they continued to live on South Campus because they wanted to “stay with friends on South Campus.”¹³⁵ Some Black students liked that the South Campus dormitories were arranged by suite style, rather than by floor, thereby decreasing the number of individuals one might interact with and “confin[ing] the interaction” with racist white students.¹³⁶ Antoine Foxworth told the newspaper in 1983 that “I applied for all south campus dorms because I wanted to segregate myself. I saw the numbers of whites on north campus and the ratio scared me. I thought I wouldn’t be able to relate to people there.”¹³⁷ *Black Ink*, the publication of the major organization for Black students, the Black Student Movement, supported a community-based explanation of the pattern, writing that “Blacks discovered that they liked the halls in which they first experienced the University, so they decided to stay there.”¹³⁸ In 1991, Miessa Stowe told *The Daily Tar Heel* plainly, “If I had to live on North Campus, I wouldn’t go here.” The same year, University Housing reported that sixty-seven percent of Black students lived in one of the four South Campus dormitories. Only

¹³⁵ Mara Lee, “Racial Division on campus sparks integration debate,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 30 January 1991, 5.

¹³⁶ “Race Relations on Campus: A Special Campus Profile Presentation,” *Campus Profile*, Episode 77, UNC Student Television, 14 November 1988, <<http://www.uncstv.com/shows/campus-profile-episode-77>>.

¹³⁷ Amy Branen, “Dorm racial situations considered,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 13 October 1983, 4.

¹³⁸ Myron B. Pitts, “North and South: the Black/South Campus-White/North Campus Residency Cycle,” *Black Ink*, 22 October 1991, 7.

fifteen percent of Black students lived in dorms located north of South Road, which *The Daily Tar Heel* termed “the Mason-Dixon line of UNC.”¹³⁹

Black students explained their dislike of North Campus for a number of reasons. Some had encountered racial discrimination while living on North Campus, while others simply felt uncomfortable there, believing that they were not wanted in that part of the campus. It is also likely that as Black students learned the history of the University’s campus as a site of enslavement, they did not wish to live in the older North Campus dormitories that had been constructed using the labor of enslaved Black men. Former vice chancellor of University Affairs Harold Wallace explained the desire to not live on North Campus as a matter of tradition. Black students, Wallace said, “could not claim that their elders had lived in the North Campus residence halls which have long and nostalgic histories only for some white students.”¹⁴⁰

With all of these explanations placed into context with housing data from the 1980s and 1990s, it is clear that South Campus was not a site of isolated segregation working against the interests of Black students, but rather a space for the social community of Black students. South Campus became the first informal social counter-space on the campus, crucial for Black students in that it “afforded African American students with space, outside of the classroom confines, to vent their frustrations and get to know others who shared their experiences of microaggressions and/or overt discrimination,” and served as a space in which to simply socialize with other Black students.¹⁴¹ The explanation for the housing pattern that identified South Campus as a location of

¹³⁹ Mara Lee, “Racial Division on campus sparks integration debate,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 30 January 1991, 5.

¹⁴⁰ Myron B. Pitts, “North and South: the Black/South Campus-White/North Campus Residency Cycle,” *Black Ink*, 22 October 1991, 7.

¹⁴¹ Daniel Solórzano, Miguel M. Ceja, and Tara Yosso, “Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American college students,” *Journal of Negro Education* 69, No. 1 (2000): 70.

Black self-segregation ignored this important status of South Campus as a counter-space for Black students.

For most white students, there was little benefit to them to engage with the issue of housing segregation. By refusing to question their own motivations for self-segregation, white students made what scholar George Lipsitz termed “a possessive investment in whiteness.” By not questioning the fact of segregation, white students continued to populate the centrally-located and much larger dormitories on North Campus, an obvious advantage to them made by investing in the perpetuation of housing segregation.¹⁴² Only a few white students publicly engaged with this issue, and many championed a solution that would randomly assign Black students to the North Campus dorms where some dorms housed less than three Black students for every three hundred white students. This proposal, besides demonstrating disdain for the autonomy of Black people, also disregarded the reality that Black students preferred South Campus because of the social support they found there.

Through the 1980s, a few progressively-minded white students argued against the idea of randomly assigning Black students to the North Campus dormitories as the only apparent solution to the issue of housing segregation. “North Campus has nothing comparable to the Upendo Lounge,” senior Anna Giattina wrote in *The Daily Tar Heel* in 1983. “It has a limited number of black residence assistants and black students, and it lacks the ‘built-in’ support system, which has established itself over the years on South Campus.” Instead, Giattina argued, if the University wanted to have more integrated housing, University Housing should “create a comprehensive plan for increasing the recruitment of minority RAs and housing staff,” and

¹⁴² George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment In Whiteness: How White People Profit From Identity Politics*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

“create a black support system on North Campus as an incentive for blacks to move to North Campus.”¹⁴³ While Giattina’s policy proposals acknowledged that Black students needed spaces in which to find support from one another, her policies, which received much support from progressive white students interested in the issues of integration and diversity, required little effort on the part of white students to question their own motivations for self-segregation.

Other proposed, supposedly progressive policies forwarded by white students and faculty refused to challenge the entrenched institutional culture of white supremacy, in which Black students were continually excluded from the dominant culture of the campus. Giattina, along with other supporters through the 1980s and 1990s, argued for various iterations of “a pilot project on interracial/cross cultural housing...with equal numbers of blacks and whites,” though this kind of interracial interaction was already happening within the integrated South Campus dorms.¹⁴⁴ In the early 1990s, individual Black students took up the task of “integrating” North Campus, inspiring the student-operated Residence Hall Association (RHA) to create a “Racial Diversity Program” in 1992. Through the program, a small number of rooms were reserved in North Campus dormitories for Black students, and through the mid-1990s the number of Black students living on North Campus increased, though minimally. Despite some shifts in Black student housing towards North Campus, data through the late 1990s confirms that the South Campus dorms remained where the majority of Black students lived. Conversation regarding the reassignment of Black students to the North Campus dorms continued through the early 2000s, after the RHA quietly stopped its Racial Diversity Program.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Anna Giattina, “Potential for integration exists,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 21 September 1983, 6.

¹⁴⁴ Anna Giattina, “Potential for integration exists,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 21 September 1983, 6.

¹⁴⁵ Michael Workman, “Housing Diversity Plan Receives Low Turnout,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, 17 March 1992, 1.

Each of these proposed and implemented policies supported the institution's "diversity without justice" cultural paradigm, in that they would have the effect of increasing the racial diversity of all housing spaces across the campus, but only by controlling Black students by directing them where they were to live.¹⁴⁶ A political cartoon in *The Daily Tar Heel* in 1983 summarizes the anti-Blackness at work in these policies: "Q. What could be worse for UNC Blacks than continued segregation on South Campus? A. 'Integration'—and isolation on North Campus."¹⁴⁷ Although the University continued to regard the North-South Campus housing pattern within a *de facto* segregation logic, even supposedly progressive policies, offered by well-meaning white students and designed to increase diversity in housing, were steeped in the white supremacy of the institution, in which Black students could be transported across the campus, cargo in the institution's pursuit of the appearance of diversity.

Legacy of South Campus

A 2002 article from *The Daily Tar Heel* reported that "roughly half of UNC's black students live on campus while less than a quarter of white students live on campus," citing "socioeconomic issues and an active campus community" as the key reasons for this discrepancy.¹⁴⁸ Although the article complicates the dominant historical narrative of South Campus as a site of Black self-segregation, it does little to support a narrative of South Campus a crucial site for the building of a community of Black students. That the University never sought to challenge this perception as false confirms how the institution operates to repress narratives

¹⁴⁶ John K. Chapman, *Black Freedom and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1793-1960*, (Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2006), 191.

¹⁴⁷ Sherrod Banks, "Integrating some truth into the 'DTH'," *The Daily Tar Heel*, 4 December 1984, 8.

¹⁴⁸ Meredith Nicholson, "Race and Residence: Housing Choices at UNC," *The Daily Tar Heel*, 26 March 2002.

which record histories of Black resistance. Although University Housing no longer publishes public data about the racial demographics of each residence community, students who attended the University in the last decade describe the same pattern of Black students choosing to live on South Campus, but not necessarily in the same high-rise dorms. “When I was going to school, it wasn’t in law that Black students live in South Campus,” Omololu Babatunde, a member of the class of 2015, remembered, “but all the Black students I knew lived in Rams Head [Village]. No one lived off campus— some did, but most lived in Rams, which is right up the street from HoJo [Hinton James].”¹⁴⁹

The continued legacy of the North-South Campus housing pattern, as defined by the segregation of Black students rather than the creation of a Black student community, supplies a clear illustration for how the institution acts or, in this case, purposefully does not act, to exclude Black students from the campus culture and landscape to protect the white supremacy of the institution. But despite the misunderstood legacy of South Campus as a site of Black self-segregation, the significance of the social community built by Black students on South Campus demonstrates the power in the creation of counter-spaces. South Campus existed as one of the first counter-spaces created for and by Black students, representing the “institutionalized mechanisms that serve[d] as a protective force for these students and allow[ed] them to maintain a strong racial sense of self.”¹⁵⁰ By supporting the false causality between housing choices made by Black students and campus segregation at the center of *de facto* segregation, the University supported a public narrative of Black self-segregation, instituting a method of neglect and

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Omololu Babatunde by Charlotte Fryar, 2 December 2017, L-0449.

¹⁵⁰ Dorinda J. Carter, “Role of Identity-Affirming Counter-Spaces in a Predominantly White High School,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 76, No. 4 (Fall 2007): 543.

prejudice it would repeat throughout the history of racial justice movements in Chapel Hill. South Campus, as a site for counter-space creation, challenges to white supremacy, and anti-Black institutional policies introduces many of the issues crucial to understanding how Black students sought to transform the cultural landscape of the University.