

SHAPING COMMUNITY: HOW INTENTIONAL DESIGN IN RESIDENTAL HALLS CAN
INFLUENCE COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

For many young adults the first year of college marks the first chance to live independently and meet new people with whom they will form a community. A residence hall, formerly known as a dormitory or dorm, is on campus housing designed for this purpose. The experiences they foster, or preclude, are critical to the relationships they build and has the potential to shape long-term expectations and patterns of socialization. The thesis of this research is that the intentional design of residential halls can promote positive socialization and allow residents to build mature relationships with their peers. Review of research on this topic reveals that the spatial configurations of residence halls can impact the type and quality of students' social relationships. Amenities, like study rooms and shared living spaces, allow students to become involved within their hall's community, while suite-style rooms and computer rooms, can inhibit community building. Consideration of the role, goals and forms of residential halls requires universities and architects to move beyond efficient housing, to consider the how these incubators of society can contribute to broader goals of liberally educated, capable, and well-adjusted young adults.

I. Introduction

Residential halls are housing arrangements meant to house students on university grounds. Students who attend college often go to live in a residential hall, and for many this is their first moment of living independently of parents or legal guardians. The first few weeks of school are often filled with students engaging with others to find friends, organizations, communities. The residential hall acts as the locus for these social engagements, and the architecture of the building may influence student behavior. Involved in discussions of how students, future members of our society, are to be treated in residential halls is another question of what is the purpose of these halls, if any, besides housing students? Taking the unique characteristics of residential halls, I aim to show that certain intentional designs in university residential hall architecture may promote positive social behavior, foster shared ideas of community, and shape young adult's perception on residence.

The thesis having been established, to argue for its plausibility, it will be noted the structure and foundations of this paper. The historical development of university residential halls identifies the perceived function of that building throughout many different ages of the university. On the topic of community, an exploration of intentional communities is offered as both a unique form of community organization and as an ideal system to consider the special community of residential hall. An observation of the different data sets present in research on architectural designs goes to show the multifaceted nature of housing and how interconnected it is with ideas of community, satisfaction, and mental health. Grounding our emerging connections is one example of residential hall architecture, at Dennison university, where members of one hall live willingly each day to practice more sustainable housing practices.

II. Background

A. On the importance of residence halls

Residence halls are a cultural touchstone of the college student experience. The seminal experience of sharing one's room with a stranger for a school year marks many people's first experience of living independent of family or loved ones. The residence halls serve as an incubator for many young adults, who may shape their perception of community and self-consciousness, and the way we design these halls influences the behaviors of its residents; "Residential environments and programs can be structured so as to encourage values inquiry; promote cultural understanding and appreciation; encourage leadership development; and promote self-confidence, perseverance, empathy, and social responsibility" (Schroeder 13).

What additions or amenities can entice people to think and behave in the ways listed above? Architecture, the intentional design of spaces and structures, provides residence halls with their form. To understand how the design of a residence hall may affect a person's behavior, we must first understand the role of the residence hall. College residence halls serve many roles. On a basic level, they efficiently and affordably house students on campus and are an expression of the basic humanistic and egalitarian value of a liberal arts education. They provide an important space for the performance and representation of being a college student. In short, they are an extension of the university's educational mission.

Residential halls are more than secure bedrooms. Often one may hear residence halls be referred to as dorms or a dormitory, which derives its name from the Latin verb *Dormire*, meaning to sleep. The term residence hall is better used when referring to the housing of students on university grounds as it denotes a more varied lifestyle rather than referring to one's room as a sleeping quarter. The change in preference for residence halls over dorms mirrors the history of

the building type, as colleges began to see their housing not only in the sense of providing for the base physiological needs of its residents, but encompassing the many facets of life from friendship, to studying, from organizations to recreational activity.

The residence halls' residents are a special, unique group of people when viewed critically. Most of a university's residence hall residents are young adults, typically freshmen entering their first year of college; most students at the undergraduate level are young adults between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two (Percentage of the Population by Age Group). The student who lives on-campus at a residential hall will be classified as a resident for the sake of this paper. These students had up until their move-in typically lived with their parents or legal guardians, which results in a varied standard of living among the freshmen population. They themselves will have to take care of their needs in place of any previous support systems from loved ones or family. The cleanliness of the room, the state of laundry, cooking and dishes, all these become the responsibility of the new resident once situated in their residence hall.

Many colleges require incoming first years to stay on campus inside a residential hall for the entirety of their first school year (Housing Requirements). This makes it so that it is often necessary for students to become residents at a residence hall, which makes research into this area more pertinent to current issues regarding students in general. Compounding the necessary on-campus housing issue, the halls themselves are not free and often require higher spending than would a normal apartment near the university cost (Trends in College Pricing). This puts campus housing on a market, where students choose specific residence halls for better perceived advantages, such as private suites and amenities. This prices out certain students from specific housing options and relegated often to older housing units. The university itself contributes to

this issue by spending money on residence halls which aim to attract wealthy students instead of creating housing appropriate to maximize its students' residential environment.

B. Emergence and Historical Evolution of Residence Halls

Having established the peculiar function of residence halls and the unique target audience, we must explore in more depth the details and conditions of both subjects. The history of residence halls sees the journey the building has had in Western history and presents us with the present notion of a community designed to bridge the private and public self into the broader university system. The change over time comes not only in the function and purpose of residence halls, but also in how universities themselves have changed over time, and what their current missions are implicitly details what use and reason residence halls ought to strive for in their current construction and any remodeling of old student housing.

The history of the residence hall university system is a history of the university itself. The book "Realizing the Educational Potential of Residence Halls" by Charles C. Schroeder, Phyllis Mable, and Associates details the intricate relationship. To establish the increased importance of residence halls by charting the changing role of the university, we see our present era situated after the Second World War with the rapid construction of residential halls in the United States of America, which spurred architects to reimagine the function of the building, adding amenities unrelated to the basic needs of students, that being a space to sleep and live in-between courses. The present design philosophy of residence halls comes first from the development of the space and its role in the university.

American residence halls begin their history with the English system as developed by universities like Oxford and Cambridge; "Residential facilities, originally referred to as

dormitories, were rooted in the English universities on which American higher education was modeled” (Schroeder 5). The university, as understood as the place for scholars to come enlighten themselves on God and the natural sciences, did not at first take up the charge of overseeing for the care and nourishment of its student and faculty. Those base drives were seen to be the work of others, while the instructors and lecturers ought to be concerned only with the education and moral development of students. Students, left to their own devices, began to develop a reputation for raucous behavior and shenanigans, which eventually put pressure on the university system to rethink their role in the life of the student.

The new English understanding of the collegiate lifestyle involved the interference of the university into the personal lives of its students. Various colleges in these universities began to incorporate student housing and students’ schedules into their mission: to not only educate the scholar in the philosophies and sciences of the day but also to help foster proper upbringing and manners. This was done by having university faculty in charge of supervising the students staying on the ground in a college dorm. The university had successfully breached the personal life of the student with the academic environment of the institution; “designed to bring faculty and students together in a common life which was both intellectual and moral” (Brubacher and Rudy 42).

This first system of residence halls was not without its faults. The intent of the English universities was not to develop a community of peers, but rather establish hall regimes with paternalistic wardens and professors who found that they must conflate their professional relationships with their personal relationships with residents when they stay in the same space. This stifled the student’s free time and free association, as they must answer for their actions when their professor is their neighbor. To amend the fractured relationship between professor and

student, new, professional staff were hired whose aim and responsibilities concerned the students primarily in their living quarters and behaviors instead of their academics. Professors who remained within the residence halls began to establish new relationships with students, and now not having to be the officer keeping up hall appearances, they were able to form friendships with the college students; “Free from responsibility for monitoring student conduct, British instructors formed friendships with their students through such activities as tutorials and dining together” (Schroeder 6).

As the American universities, such as the college of William and Mary, began their lessons and instructions, we copied this last model of English university collegiate life. The little academic villages of Yale or the university of Virginia did not remain, for the influence of Germany and its university system began to take over the American institutions. German universities were fantastic for producing research and data and were always innovating new disciplines and ideas. This system left out the concept of the college student as a ward to be developed not only in mind but also in spirit and concerned itself only with the pragmatic results of lab research. Student housing was once again put off the campus and the professor and staff of a university concerned themselves with that was thought to be the only function of a modern university; “Teaching and research were the sole purpose of German universities, and little, if any, attention was paid to the “collegiate way of life” (Schroeder 6).

American universities began to change after the second world war when this country saw a new demand for colleges and college diplomas. The increased population of American university students necessitated the increased construction and admittance rates of people within university systems. Notably, Harvard created a dean of student relations which began the movement in higher education to consider the holistic experience of a student and aim to incorporate the

private life of the student within their academic venture. This marks one of the first actions which sees the university's role as going beyond the classroom and creating a positive environment which nourishes the student "this dean not only became the first dean of men – he also became the first college official to be charged with responsibility for student relations as separate and distinct from instruction" (Schroeder 7).

The increase in student population also observed new kinds of students entering the college system en masse. To reflect the new broad, diverse population of students, campuses began to hire professional residence educators and directors to create programs and initiatives to better situate all students within the campus culture; "To serve this large and diverse group of residents, highly specialized, professional roles were created within student affairs divisions and housing departments, particularly at relatively large state institutions" (Schroeder 9). Issues such as whether men and women may live together in the same residence hall, how best to introduce college to first generation students, and how residence halls are to function not only as a place to dwell, but a location where once can thrive all saw their development from the introduction of the dean of student relations. "Residence educators were also instrumental in implementing a variety of life-style options (such as coed living), unique living-learning centers, and new models for community governance" (Schroeder 8), the new professions of serving residents at a university allows for a more holistic college experience echoing back to the English college dorm system which sought to prepare the student in academia as well as provincial life.

The perspective that university concerns academia alone is still a present idea to many adults and even some students. The separation of a student's life between the axes of academia and leisure fails to incorporate the total experience of the student within the university's developmental aspirations. To combine both the world of school and the world of free time

would be to connect all aspects of the student life, from parents to admins, in helping foster the future identity both self-conscious and social; “Though residence halls attempted to become more educationally and developmentally viable settings, students, parents, faculty, and academic administrators have often viewed their programs and services as removed from the core of undergraduate education and therefore as peripheral to the academic priorities of the institution” (Schroeder 11).

The present function of the university residence hall system is an aggregation of all that has come before. The lessons learned from the 60’s and onwards have been to incorporate the experiences of the student in their free time with the educational aspirations of the university. It is not just for a background in a discipline for which a student chose and lives the scholastic lifestyle, but rather one’s identity and ideas are developed from the places detailed by the university. The actual structures and buildings move residents into dialogue and thought which may dramatically alter their previous understanding of life and create new social dynamic systems: “Residential environments and programs can be structured so as to encourage values inquiry; promote cultural understanding and appreciation; encourage leadership development; and promote self-confidence, perseverance, empathy, and social responsibility” (Schroeder 13).

C. The Resident and Community

The audience of residence halls, university students, have been noted to be a unique age group transitioning into adults by deciding their own actions and schedule. On the first day of move-in, we find thousands of students across the country leave their homes and begin to live away from one’s parents or legal guardians. The students do not know many of the other

residents, if any at all, and will have to navigate the new community they find themselves in. The shared use of space initiates membership of any residence halls, as the people who inhabit one's building will have more chances to socialize with each other than would students living across campus. The first step to a community is the agreement to being a member, sharing some common cause or facet which leads to cooperation for shared or even separate goals; "The sense of belonging and identification involves the feeling, belief, and expectation that one fits in the group and has a place there, a feeling of acceptance by the group, and a willingness to sacrifice for the group" (McMillan 5). This begins our question, what is the community of a residence hall?

Sociology presents us with an initial understanding of community through the idea of the intentional community. The freely agreeing people who constitute an intentional community come together to form a social bond based upon a shared attachment to some mission or idea. The context of these communities often informs the shared goals espoused by members. To further a project, it is necessary to have other people join and labor for the sake of some goal, and it is this same principle which constitutes intentional community's argument. Shifting this simple idea of intentional communities allows us to begin dissecting the nature of residential hall communities.

The populations of any university vary wildly from any other. University, however, is known for the culture clash many young people experience when they begin attending. Students from a variety of backgrounds come together and live in a residence hall for one school year. They will have social interactions among their peers and develop friendships, relationships, and other dynamic social roles depending on their actions and thoughts. Understanding the shared qualities

that these students possess allows us to better see how they can relate to each other and start a social relationship, which, if carried out by more members, could become a vibrant community with a sense of shared identity.

The residents of a residential hall are all students attending the same university. They may pursue wildly different degrees, but each will study and learn some discipline. This study will require academic labor, such as essay writing, exams, or any other number of assignments meant to showcase one's knowledge on a subject. The students also share physical space with one another and may also develop relationships with others. Students may join some campus organization to better know other people with a shared interest, and here we must emphasize how people begin to socialize and form communities. The needs and wants of students compel them to interact with other people to obtain some end.

Introducing oneself to one's neighbors, that first week of move-in is an anxious period for the new arrivals. The resident assistant is a person whose job is to assist the residents of a residence hall. They hold hall meetings to discuss what rules are to be followed within the hall. Each of the students starts with this agreement, and here begins their relationship with the other students. The agreed upon rules and regulations provide students with a safe environment where one puts trust in the other members to comply with hall rules. From there, with safety secured, we see students begin to form relationships outside the boundaries of the rules. Friendship is not something that can be regulated against, and in fact derives its origin from conventions agreed upon by both parties included.

In going beyond the initial guidelines, which are set to secure the safety of the residents, the community begins to create itself, and we see how the residents themselves decide to associate with each other. Intentional communities are communities where members associate themselves

with each other not based on conventional means like family or economic class, but rather create their own shared aims and causes. The residents of a residence hall are not all necessarily members of an intentional community by the definition included above, but rather each residence hall could become an intentional community. The difference in whether a hall is or is not an intentional community comes from how involved the residents of the hall are in local hall related systems of operation; from resident assistants creating events and meetings for the sake of business and pleasure, and in organizations like hall councils which allows elected members to create events financed usually by the university.

What does a residential hall look like if there is no intentional community? We would see members of these residential halls treat their building like a suburb where one's own room is private, and one does not socialize with the other residents. There is no commitment on the part of the resident who does not participate in the intentional community of their own hall, and so they drift along and monitor only their own actions and events in the hall, making the housing matter merely a financial transaction to support their physiological needs. One could go through all their college experience and not participate in group activities and bonding, and then we see these people come and join society at large, and often to detrimental effects do we see how such a person is unable to meaningfully contribute to social settings and often faces mental stress leading to an unhealthy life (Dusselier).

The first week of move-in marks the start of any hall community, and as with any intentional community there are issues to be addresses if a community wished to both begin and maintain its own stability: "they must overcome three problems of commitment: continued member participation, social cohesion, and social control over members' conduct" (Rubin 184). First, the issue of commitment revolves around how members of a residential hall can be enticed to join in

the events and opportunities presented by their housing and with their neighbors when they might also decide to not join that community and either commit to privacy in staying in their room or other groups outside the residential hall. Second, how to keep joined members interested in the continuation of the hall community, when burnout and other factors may push members away from their hall. Third, how to monitor and encourage positive behavior and create social cohesion when the student body is varied, and arguments or disputes are bound to occur.

In answer to these three concerns, we must admit that there is a limit as to what the architectural design of these spaces can do to solve such crises. Rather, the spaces must be seen as the facilitating areas where further group development and cohesion may spring up from. To develop in a community relies upon members believing themselves to be accurately represented by the hall through its planned events and social structures. As Rubin and others write:

“it is important for communities to put in place structural mechanisms to promote egalitarian decision making, regardless of whether they follow through with them completely in practice”

(Rubin 190). This in mind, the creation of open, public spaces upon which dialogue and conversation may arrive which does not create hierarchical dominion by elevating one person’s position through incidental means such as sitting in the natural light ought to be avoided and one must endeavor to imagine what arrangements of space would adequately address a resident’s concern and desire.

The mechanisms in place within the residence hall system must be noted before the consideration of space is applied. Universities will usually have an office of housing and resident life, whose aim is to supply spaces for students to live and mediate any conflict emerging from the hall. The resident assistant is placed within the hall to inform residents of hall issues and announcements, but also is an initiator of community and creates events for the residents, either

for pleasure or for academic business. The Resident director, who may also stay at the hall, is often an adult helping to administer the business of the residence hall. Issues related to garbage and recycling, plumbing and electricity, and student conduct and tragedy, all concern the resident director.

The next stage in the development of a community within a residence hall is in what shared cause members possess. David McMillan and David Chavis, in their piece *Sense of Community: A definition and theory*, seek to ground community in the shared concerns and issues present to a population, which leads that same group to organize and seek solutions capable of being carried out by the members; “When a common concern emerges (i.e., something they all seem to need, such as a safe neighborhood), the organizer begins to conceive of ways in which the residents can work together to meet their need”(McMillan 16). The example of a neighborhood invested in its own safety further leads to community leaders emerging who start to talk with other neighbors about their shared concern, and from there group organization comes about and meetings are held to inform and brainstorm answers to common questions. At the residence hall level, there are organizations like hall council, but these organizations mostly seek to serve a social role in creating fun events and parties for the sake of students. Going beyond the constraints of hall council, we can envision how the collected members may come together and plan interactions with one another.

The residence hall takes a life of its own, and we see the intentional community which a hall can take. The residents decide what decisions and actions are taken in the hall. Any issue may be discussed, as people come to adjust their behavior at home with new neighbors. All this action requires residents to have the will and strength to keep the community engaged and

growing. The theory behind the socialization of residents through the lens of intentional communities allowed us to explore only some of the possible social configurations in a residential hall setting. The spaces which the residents dwell in is now to be shown to have several consequences to the behavior and actions of people living and working in those spaces.

III. Review of Literature

A. Introduction

The body of data collected from the various articles and papers collected for this project may be divided into two separate categories: that of health and that of socialness. The data collected either goes to promote the personal health of residents or promotes social interaction and one's sense of community. The data of each article is weighed in resemblance with the data from other research. The reasons why they contribute to discussion on either health or socialness in the context of residence halls shall be explained. Three examples will be given of excellent design in residence halls which promote the well-being of both its residents and its shared community.

Interior Color and Psychological Functioning in a University Residence Hall collects data concerning the preference of interior coloring for residence halls. The students were assigned one of six halls, each alike in every detail barring the color. Each hall possesses a unique color, from blue and green to red and yellow. The researchers sent residents a survey which measured general chromatic preferences, lightness satisfaction, and resident functionality and mood. Blue came out on top, with a higher preference for its relation to studying while warmer colors might irritate the eye when it tries to concentrate (Costa).

The interior coloring of a residence hall reveals what details and elements of a built setting directly affect the experience of residents. The association of cooler colors with more appropriate spaces to study hinges on a subjective yet prominent attitude that, when considered, allows architects and designers to create spaces which abuse those conceptual habits. Colors like yellow showed far less resident functionality and mood, which goes to show how little details such as color may negatively impact resident's experience. If the room one spends one's time in is not conducive to certain functions like work or rest, one may exacerbate the problems one is facing by having a negative space.

The built environment and mental health analyze trends in how environmental characteristics go on to impact people's mental health. High-rise housing is linked with elevated psychological distress, especially in populations of low-income mothers. On the opposite end, the intentional placing of furniture has been seen to increase social interaction and reduce passive, isolated behavior in populations of psychiatric patients. Other environmental characteristics such as noise, crowding, distance, and spatial hierarchy all have effects and impacts on the experiences of people using those spaces (Evans 547).

The specific investigation of how certain environmental characteristics influence mental health directly relates to the experience physical spaces possess when interacted with by people. Following up on the interior color article, we see how both researchers relied on the responses of participating residents and measured their responses. This gathering of information is qualitative but shares similar principles just as how some colors were conducive to studying as furniture placement influences social perception. There is some exterior object in both cases which elicits certain actions or behaviors. The question of how these associates drawn between specific environmental characteristics and mental health apply in cases of residence colleges sees some

overlap with papers like *The built environment and mental health*. Evans makes the important notion in architecture that much of design theory, while drawing on quantifiable data which might suggest certain patterns of behavior or thought when encountering arrangements of space, is fundamentally a theoretical endeavor. Theoretical, as opposed to demonstrations of the natural sciences; a ball will always fall at the speed of gravity when tested, but a space will not always entice people to act or behave in certain ways. Architecture has the potential for such ends, but it is contingent on the subjective whims of the passerby to see if it reaches its goal of producing such and such an emotion or response: “*Design elements other than nature may have similar capabilities Salient qualities include fascination, quiet and solitude, and coherent, tranquil stimuli. Primarily theoretical arguments with little data*” (Evans 547).

Living green: examining sustainable dorms and identities presents a survey given out to residents concerning perceived association of residents with environmental sustainability measures. Two sets of residents are surveyed, with one group being a part of a sustainable residence hall with such features as recycling spaces accessible on every floor; the other group being students housed in non-sustainable designed residence halls. The survey sent asked residents to choose a number between one and seven, with one meaning ‘never’ and seven meaning ‘always’. The questions asked revolved around how important and engaged one was to certain environmental issues and actions. Advocacy relates to how the importance of sustainability involves educating both oneself and one’s peers regarding habits and attitudes. Conservation follows off advocacy, but grounds its efforts in the preservation of certain ecological features and sustainability efforts. The scale of recycling refers to the actions taken by one to properly dispose of or recycle the packaging and material used in daily consumption.

The striking finding is that the self-perceived importance of matters such as advocacy, conservation, and recycling were quite similarly recorded by both students raised in sustainable living ideas and students who were not raised as such. The effects of living in the green dorm for a year showed a growth in all three categories and goes to show how the experience and proximity of programs and amenities may change the valuation of students. The intentional design of the environmentally sound residence halls showed residents more involved with the designated goal of the hall, that being on living more sustainable lifestyles. By having in mind an idea of what one wishes the residents to become, we may ask how the spaces we design are best suited to certain ends or aims such as civic responsibility.

Living Learning Units by LeRoy A. Olson demonstrates how the inclusion of professor offices and school classrooms into a residence hall created new social dimensions between students and professors. The convenience of having your bed and room in the same building as one of your college classes lessens travel time and more social possibilities between classmates living in the same hall/classroom. Professors noted having more interactions with students when in the residence hall, and so we see how such a project promotes the socialness of a residence hall.

How does the design of a residence hall affect a student's behavior? Data suggests that shared public spaces such as restrooms and kitchens offer students more opportunities to socialize with neighbors due to proximity. Proximity is the key idea when tying all the residence halls; the fact that all residents are in one building or section offers ample chances for people to interact with a familiar cast. What changes from one instance to another comes at the subjective level of the individual, who one day strikes up the nerve to talk with a stranger. To track the change in student behavior over time, it is important once again to note the basic needs and attention which

all people need in order to pursue loftier courses of actions; a starving student is hardly able to appreciate the warm light of a delicately designed lobby.

Once the physiological needs of a person are met, new demands and wants to fill the minds of people, of these are included sensations of belonging to a group, the capability to pursue liberal arts and creative enterprises whose aim lies in its own completion rather than for the sake of some other object like money or fame. To connect the hierarchy of needs with the subject of residential halls provides us a simplistic yet compelling narrative which follows the development of residential halls through their history. The basic needs of students to live secured from danger is provided for in the basic form of a dorm, a place to sleep. Residential halls also allow students to better pursue their academic goals, as being on campus connects students to all the faculties and departments of which commuters must first face the challenge of commuting to campus while maintaining responsibility to their off-campus housing and any other endeavors such as jobs or extracurricular activities.

Articles such as *Campus Architecture is Campus Marketing* concern how the residential halls themselves are not only useful and good for residents but also contribute to other aspects and fields of the university system. The decision of some students to attend a particular university may in fact rely on the quality of life promised to the student body of a university as displayed in the daily occurrences and experience of which a residential hall presents the space and lodging for these endeavors. Such an article displays other ways a residential hall may help assist a university continue to grow and develop, making the subject of this paper more important and penetrable to issues outside the scope of this paper.

One rather odd article to be discussed within the boundaries of this paper comes from the reflections of Witold Rybczynski in *Good Dorms Make Good Friends*. The reason to include

such a personal anecdote relies on how we wish to see community and the impact of residential halls even years after one's residence. Anecdotes act as the start of which statistics may come later which attempt to quantify abstract feelings. To not contradict with an earlier passage which stated that to quantify such emotions as happiness or ideas like community is ultimately doomed to fail. It is doomed to fail in so much as no absolute definition or procedure of such terms like happiness, but theorists may put forward possible contending proposals which include attributes of happiness or community. A working theory which seeks to recommend certain actions or measures to entice positive behaviors and thought.

Specific architectural elements also compose a great deal of importance to this project, as for example the issue of interior color, as explored in the article *Interior Color and Psychological Functioning in a University Residence Hall*. On the question of what color is most preferred within a residential hall, this article tests six colors: blue, red, green, orange, yellow, and violet. These colors were selected to serve as the interior color of six identical halls, whose only difference lied in which color lined their halls. Blue came out as the preferred color of the majority, standing at 34.7% (Costa), coming from answered questionnaires sent out to participating students residing in the example halls. Such data being collected as it is from the personal subjective responses of populations marks the great majority of architectural research.

This overview of literature and theory encapsulates the methods taken in researching this paper. By drawing on multiple yet distinct examples of intentional design we can observe certain characteristics of both spatial planning and resident thought. That space has the potential to affect the emotions and mental states of its perceivers, that relationships can change and prosper when taking proximity as a tool of endearment, and that besides the body and mind of residents there lie other financial and important reasons to invest in excellent residential halls all go to show the

hidden influence space has on people. It would be an error of cause and effect to believe that the behavior and attitude examined emerges from the architecture, for rather the architecture serves as the context wherein may be found the material for the effect but which relies upon some actor or agent to bring about any change or effect. An examination of a notable residential hall, one which engages with the intentional community theory from earlier in the paper, may serve as a prime example of this idea.

B. Case Study

Denison University possesses a rather unique form of residential hall. Homestead is a student-run intentional community. Twelve students per semester live and work together in pursuit of a more ecologically sustainable lifestyle; the wooden cabins are designed by the residents as well as shared spaces. This residence hall creates a unique community by offering residents an entirely different lifestyle and encouraging thought and action. Students share a desire to live a more sustainable life, and the space which the Homestead provides allows for activities and habits to be developed which are less wasteful, some of the features which encourage more sustainable actions include: Radiant floor heating, Composting toilet system, and Concrete and brick flooring (Mission of the Homestead).

This is an excellent example of an intentional community. The members who opt in for the Homestead housing are people wanting to live opposed to the conventional lifestyles of most college students. That the community does out tasks and chores to its members, that they grow some of their own food and manage the properties, that students may build structures and new buildings and help design and erect them, these are all ways in which the unique organizing of

this residence hall is able to expand the content of student action. These residents have a concern for the environment and endeavor to live more sustainably, in a way demonstrating what they wish all people would act and behave.

The students who can design their own structures and building demonstrate the principles of intentional design. The projects have a determined function, which the design helps to address. It is one thing to have flooring in one's residential hall, it is another to choose concrete and brick flooring which has a high heat capacity for passive solar heating. The choice of a specific material for the reason of passive solar heating is a perfect example of how one choice may go on to determine the environment of a space. Such a consideration goes beyond the scope of what is 'necessary' for a residential hall; needing only spaces for students to sleep. We go beyond the essential being of a residential hall and enter a dialogue concerning what is a good life.

The homestead is an example of both an intentional community as well as intentional design. Specific issues are addressed by the community and the space is planned and labored in by the members. Creating the structures and spaces necessary to develop more sustainable habits and behaviors showcases the dynamic relationship between a person and their home. If one wishes to pick up a habit, hobby, or trait, one needs the ability to exercise that quality. One may only master an instrument upon practice with that same instrument. The spaces of Homestead are open to the desires and needs of students, and the programming allows for students to take the initiative and determine their own space.

IV. Conclusion

Residential halls have been explored in this paper, regarding how their design helps promote community. Positive examples abound of different architectural practices which grounds the design philosophy in the experiences of a building's residents. Negative examples highlight how ignorance of space can lead to poor design choices which have a detrimental effect on students. The very structure of a dorm room may have either of these effects, as mentioned earlier with how the traditional style promotes student socialization by the very fact that the traditional style, with no walls or barriers in between roommates, creates an awkward environment which may either be mitigated through befriending one's roommate or through simply leaving the space. By leaving the space, residents find new locations and spaces, public instead of private dorm rooms, and here is where potential social relationships may be cultivated.

The history of residential halls grounds our understanding of the building and allows us to debate the function and purpose of these places. The residential hall has changed over the centuries, because of both residential concerns and needs as well as the changing role of the university itself. We take up the early foundations of residential halls, the purpose of housing students and attending to their physiological needs and social demands and bring with it a developed sense of campus life which situates the student in a network of professors and university staff, reconciling the private life of the student with their public, academic journey.

Intentional communities serve as an inspirational ideal when it comes to conversation on group community. Defined not by determined social norms or conventions, intentional communities are particularly shaped and molded by their members into whatever form is most agreeable to the community. Issues of maintaining a community were also brought up in the discussion, and this serves as a sober reminder of how much effort is required to organize one's neighbors, mitigate conflicts, and provide new events and opportunities for members to

participate in the socialization. Communities, so varied and so many, press on into the future when there is a healthy body of members sharing some principle or idea from which actual courses of action can be taken.

The overview of literature provides us with examples of intentional design influencing the behavior and attitudes of people. A discussion on the nature of these recorded experiments showcases the delicate balance between hard, objective facts such as statistical findings on academic excellence through GPA, and the soft, subjective experience of residents and people which can not be forced out by spatial planning alone. Elements such as color, corridor length, tripling, and amenities each support either the health or social mood of students, or sometimes even hinder them. Identifying what is being measured in an article concerning intentional design, be it satisfaction surveys or collected data detailing energy usage, we may understand that intentional design, unlike the natural sciences, draws its information from a broad range of sources and points.

The Homestead exemplifies the findings recounted in the paragraphs above. The Homestead follows the historical development of residential halls by prefiguring what social arrangements and behaviors the twenty first century requires when combatting issues related to climate and resource scarcity. The issues of this new age influence the function of the residential hall, just as how after the Second World War with the increased population going to university necessitated larger construction of residential halls and incorporating the private leisure of residents with the academic village idea. The Homestead is very clearly an intentional community, and exhibits the democratic, participatory environment which results in students engaging with each other and their space in a critical manner. The Homestead combines the hard data of sustainable design with the soft data of student satisfaction. Residents have a knowledge of principles which

promote more sustainable lifestyles, and residents also have subjective interpersonal relationships with their peers. The Homestead is not only interesting for its own architecture, but also because its residents in a way represent their residential hall and mirror its mission of sustainability and community.

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