

The Hypothesis

- ➔ **Problem:** fragmentation and loss of community in higher education
- ➔ **Hypothesis:** intentional Christian communities can counteract this powerful force

The Historical Context

☞ Massachusetts Constitution - John Adams

☞ Harvard

☞ Effects of the American Revolution on higher education

☞ Princeton

The Historical Context

- John Stuart Mill
- Twentieth Century Progressivism
- Horizontalism v. Verticalism (the rise of the Social Gospel)
- Researching the "Social Problem" and the Settlement House Movement
- Current Context -- Educating Citizens

Our Study

☞ Focused on three intentional communities at Calvin during the last 30 years

☞ Subjects

☞ Purposive Sample (variables)

☞ 45 interviews

☞ Data Collection

☞ Conversations with mentors (past & present)

☞ Interviews with students

☞ Surveys

Survey Instrument

☞ Interview - questions include:

- ☞ What were your most memorable experiences while living in the house?
- ☞ How do you think the housing project impacted the neighborhood where it was located?
- ☞ How do you think the housing project impacted the Calvin Community?
- ☞ How have your perceptions of the entire living experience changed over time?
- ☞ How has your experience within this community shaped your career choices, community engagement, and your faith?

Initial Analysis

- **Individual Community Themes - Project Neighborhood**
 - **Varied perspectives based on houses**
 - **Some professional impact**
 - **Lack of continuity a problem**
 - **Most intentional**
 - **Largest neighborhood impact**

Initial Analysis

➤ Worden Street Community

➤ Pamoja House

➤ Most concern about social justice issues

➤ Transience has inhibited neighborhood impact

➤ Maintenance issues: discernible differences in early and late houses

➤ Strong impact on faith

➤ Limited neighborhood impact

➤ Limited impact on current community involvement

Initial Analysis

☞ Inter-Community Themes

- ☞ Children as entry point to the community
- ☞ Important roles of mentors
- ☞ Difficulty in maintenance
- ☞ Importance of co-creation
- ☞ Overall, highly impactful
(different areas for different communities)

Limitations of the Project

- Fairly small sample
- Short existence of Pamoja & Project Neighborhood
- Some comparison difficulties

Further Research

- Residence halls
- Other non-incorporated off-campus residences
- Neighborhood and church perspectives

Intentionally connecting the mind, heart and hands through

PN

☞ Class -- Fall & Spring

- ☞ Initial retreat

- ☞ House covenants

- ☞ Field trips to other intentional communities

- ☞ Assignments

☞ Service commitments

- ☞ Partnership with churches, community organizations

Application to the larger Calvin Community

➔ Helping students see the value of community and getting involved in their communities

➔ Streetfest

➔ Service Learning Center



Application to the larger Calvin Community

- Continue to provide a wide range of housing options
- Creating resources for all students
 - Helping students be intentional (e.g. roommate matching)
 - Helping students understand their expectations
 - Helping students live their values and virtues