

Integrated Seminar 2
Ashiara Freeman
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Home?

Throughout grade school and specifically elementary school, was the first time that I was taught what home is. Home was taught to be the physical place and location in which families lived their lives apart from the outside world. Within a home lived specific types of family groups. Either your family was a single family meaning there is only one parent and their child/children, a nuclear family meaning there are both parents and their child/children or a joint family meaning that extended family besides the parents and their child/children all lived together. The place in which these families would choose to claim as their home, would be the place that they would live comfortably, feel secure and spend their everyday lives together. The space that they claimed would become their own and they would have the ability to do as they pleased with it. Having a home was also something that was labeled as essential for humans, known as shelter, one of the necessities besides air and water for individuals to live. These were some of the ideas that were part of the “American Dream” and because it was a part of my education at such a young age, it seemed to be the right way and only way. Though this snippet of a dream that I was taught at a young age became a system that was obscure and was not fully revealed to me in depth until I became older.

As I got older, I started becoming more observant of my surroundings and the home that I was taught in grade school differed from the various living conditions present within society and even in my own home. One thing that I observed is that home is economical. These physical spaces carry their own monetary values and they differ depending on the location, their construction, whom they are constructed by..etc. In addition, money is necessary to keep these spaces functioning so that they meet the essential needs and desires of the residents who live within them. This system psychologically reminds and makes residents aware of what should be made a priority to keep as well as what they are able to afford and have access to. Secondly, home is political. Instilled within each household there are chains of power and for some, there are learned behaviors in which residents are taught to live within their homes as well as how to take care of it. This learned behavior or set of laws can come from the ways of the government, landlord, real estate owner and/or family order. Third, home is social. There are various views of what home should be like and the influence of what a home should entail can all be influenced by society and brought into the home. This goes back to the American Dream being that this idea of a perfect home has become the influence for so many individuals’ ways of living. Some individuals wish to fulfill this dream directly such as immigrants while others act on it obliviously because of the way that systems within society are set in order to fulfill the “American way of thinking.” This shows that beyond the physical makeup of the home the idea of home has turned it into something psychological because in reality it’s limits realistically have made this idea inaccessible to every individual.

What does home look like for an individual that does not physically have access to this idea of home? Where can they go to have this access and control? They can dream. Dreams within an individual's head can create a bridge between reality and fantasy. Under a system where individuals do not have full

control over their lives and their desires, specifically in connection to the idea of home, dreaming allows for individuals to have control over what comforts, secures and shelters them beyond the limitations and requirements that it takes to have a home within society. It can be public, private, a person, thought, place, an object...etc, which expresses to me that home as a concept, dream or fantasy may be treasured and followed commonly because there are no limits and every individual has access as well as the ability to do it. Though is this fair that what is taught to be an essential part of living can only be dreamed of by some individuals? In reference to the various images that we took outside of our windows, is that actually home? Is it something that was truly asked for or was it given to us to call home? Home for some people is something that has been made familiar and is forced to become home because that is what they have been exposed and had access to. I find it very interesting how some individuals have to become content in adapting to an environment they never truly had the chance to decide for themselves. The images that were taken are representations of an individual's life that they are familiar with and can easily recognize. It seems that it is easy to find comfort and security in that because you have all the answers, but when it comes to something like a dream, change in methods or new ideas, the feeling of certainty, control and understanding may no longer be present which may be the reason for this behavior by some to adapt to what is out of their control.

This idea of home under the American Dream should not be a part of the influence in which systems that govern people are built upon simply because it is a dream. Home for many individuals symbolizes a place of protection, security, comfort and stability. With this idea as a dream, this is not made possible because dreams themselves are not guaranteed to happen. If home is an essential for an individual to be able to live sufficiently, it should be made accessible, be unlimited to its possibilities and be guaranteed for all individuals. Whether it be physical or psychological, home should have the ability to be made tangible or present because to not have access to home does not allow every individual to live.