

Public Abstract

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Title:Desegregation and its impact on institutional culture at a Historically Black University

In this case study, 38 Black and White participants shared their recollections of intergroup contact during the first 15 years of desegregation (1954-1969) at a Historically Black University in a predominantly White Midwestern community. Faculty and alumnae/i candidly evoked their experiences in this unusual desegregation setting and their memories collectively provided a vivid portrayal of Lincoln University's transition from a Black university to a fully desegregated institution over the period of the study. Bracketed within the zenith of the Civil Rights Era, this study provides a rich account of the movement as it unfolded and influenced this Historically Black University. Findings of the study revealed a positive process of desegregation marked by the absence of racial hostility. A retrospective organizational analysis showed that desegregation had a profound effect on the institutional culture due mainly to the depletion of Black scholars and highly talented Black Students and a leadership crisis that engendered the rise of a powerful student government.