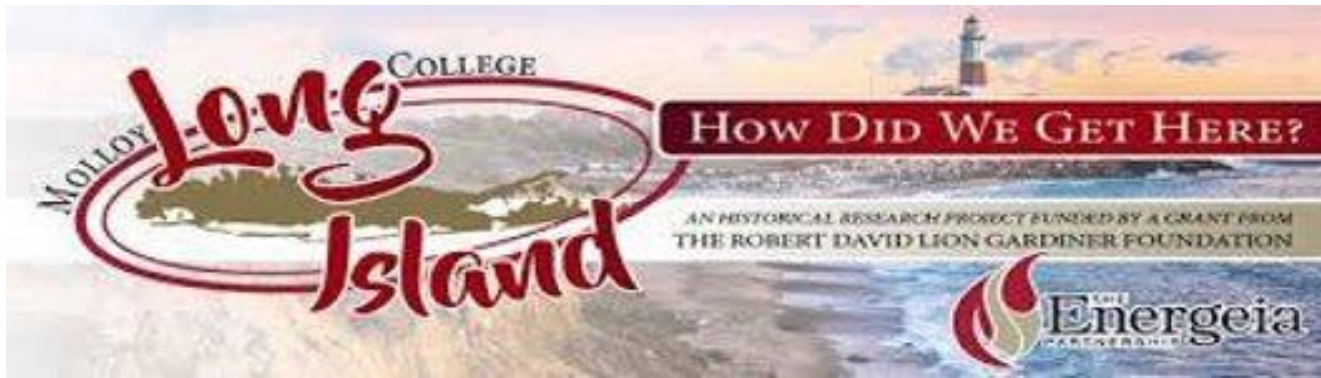


What Does it Mean to Be a Long Islander?

A Presentation by
Nadia Khan-Roopnarine & Betyne Farrell

*Research funded by the Gardiner Foundation grant
at Molloy College*



Acknowledgements

— — —

- The Gardiner Foundation
- Molloy College Ed.D. Program
- Dr. Allison Roda
- Dr. Max Renner
- Gardiner Fellows
- Research Participants

Positionality

— — —

“refers to how differences in social position and power shape identities and access in society.”

Definition from the
University of
British Columbia

Betyne Farrell

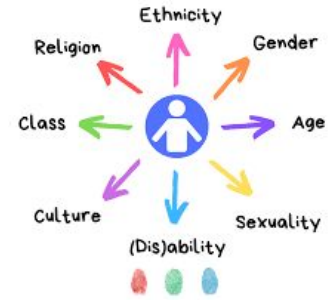


Nadia Khan-Roopnarine

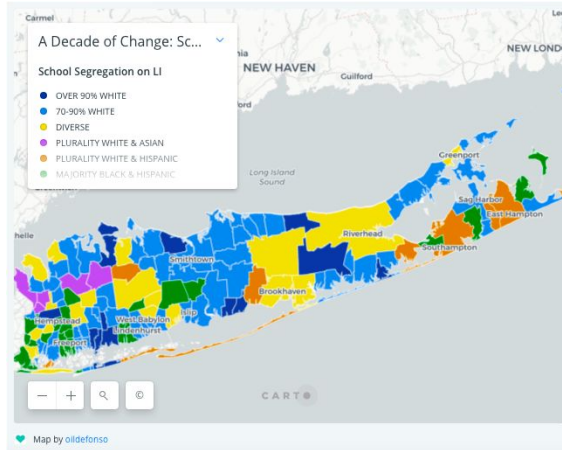




Themes



- **Key Framework: Insider / Outsider**
- **Theme 1: Location Based Identity**
- **Theme 2: Cultural / Racial Identity**
- **Theme 3: Education Identity**



LI Map Source:
<https://www.eraseracismny.org/component/content/article/497>



Review of Previous Research

Participants stated the following....

Location based identity

- “A Long Islander is someone who lives in the region from the Queens / Nassau border to the tip of Montauk.”
- “Someone who has a sense of history...person has some attachment to NYC.”
- “It’s more local.”
- “by region” “the tracks divide the haves and have nots.” **“We’re very cultural in the sense of identity when it comes to our towns.”**

Cultural identity

- “someone who is community-minded” “someone who values living in a community with people and raising a family in the same environment...**a piece of Americana.**”
- “...someone who takes pride in Long Island...if you live here on Long Island, you were raised here..., you will raise your family here on Long Island, and you will ultimately spend eternity here on Long Island.”
- **“Diversity” and “Segregation”**

Education based identity

- “they’ll either identify by their town or in most cases **they identify by their local school district** which is really the foundation of local home rule.”

Research Process

According to current Long Island high schoolers, what does it mean to be a Long Islander?

Methodology



Ethnographic study



Convenience sampling



Series of virtual interviews taking place from (March 2021 to January 2022)



Focus group interviews were video recorded, transcribed, and hand coded

Interview Protocol Examples

— — —

Insider / Outsider

What do you love about living on Long Island?

Can you tell us about a time when you felt like an outsider on Long Island?

Can you tell us about a time where you felt mistreated or discriminated against because of your race, class, gender, religion, or sexuality?

Cultural Identity

Based on what we've discussed, how would you describe what it means to be a Long Islander?

When someone asks you "where are you from" how do you typically answer it?

Location Based identity

What do you love about living on Long Island?

If someone were thinking about moving to your town how would you describe your school, town or neighborhood to them?

Research Sites

St. Mary Magdalene Academy

Sample

- 4 Female students
- 2 sophomores / 1 junior / 1 senior
- **Black / White / Mixed race**

School Demographic

- 70% White
- 15% Hispanic / Black
- 15% Asian

Herrington High School

Sample

- 3 Female students
- 1 junior / 2 seniors
- **All of Caribbean descent**

School Demographic

- 15% White
- 75% Hispanic / Black
- 7% Asian / multiracial

Membership

Influence

Organizational Framework: Findings

Sense of Community Theory

Mcmillan & Chavis (1986)

**Integration and
fulfillment of needs**

**Shared emotional
connection**

Membership

The feeling of **belonging** or of sharing a sense of personal relatedness.

Five attributes include boundaries, emotional safety, a sense of belonging & identification, personal investment, and a common symbol system.



*“I would say that, in a sense, when you are in Long Island and you do find your **community**, it does feel very much like a **community**. . . I was embraced into the **community** of Color.”*

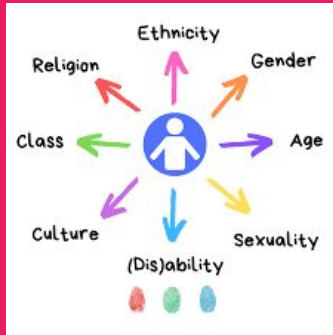
-Natalie Smith (SMA)

*“what’s great is the diversity... But, what’s not so great is that you could still see the old, **White values that are- that were prominent in the town before People of Color began to move- whenever- recently, while driving through the community, you could see there’s Trump stickers on the stop signs, there’s Trump flags being hung... everywhere. So definitely seeing the **White values and just what people used to believe** and the fact that it’s still prominent... still prevalent in this town and- just even knowing that what they... believe and what they think about People of Color is still prevalent in this town- I would just give a warning about moving to Long Island in general.”***

-Tamara Moore (HHS)

Influence

A sense of mattering, of making a difference to a group, and of the group mattering to its members.



**Cultural / Racial
Identity**

*“They did a protest- I think it was [Highland Park]- and a lot of people came and they gathered and they fought for- they were protesting for one single thing and I really felt the togetherness there, even though it was mostly People of Color at that protest- **I definitely felt like we were all protesting for one single thing.**”*

-Tamara Moore (HHS)

*“I was down there when I was younger and my brother and I were just playing, whatever, and my mom had to drop something off and a **White** lady comes out of her house, no one was bothering her, and says “**You need to go back to where you came from.**” But we came from four blocks down from you-...-so really, you have to- you really have to still be aware- you still have to be aware there are people who are not gonna be happy that you are in the environment that you are in.”*

-Zanyah Jackson (HHS)

Integration and Fulfillment of Needs

The feeling that members' needs will be met by the resources received through their membership in the group.



**Location Based
Identity**

“[Herrington] is a good place to be if you want to experience different types of things and be around different types of people.”

-Zanyah Jackson (HHS)

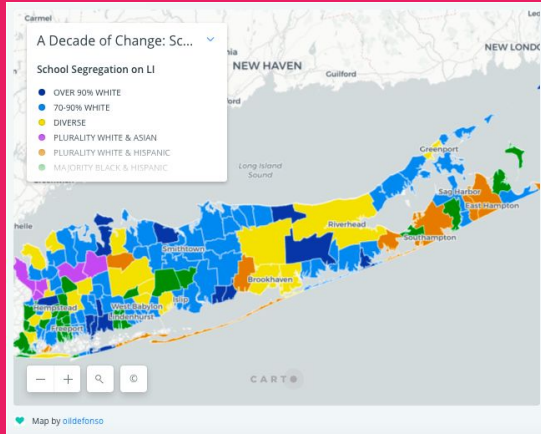
*“I remember we were in Southbay and **we didn’t even get seated**, like people wouldn’t seat us, like the owner watched us walk in and didn’t seat us. My mom had to practically keep reiterating, “Oh, you know, are we gonna sit down?” And people were coming in- White people were coming in around us and sitting down and **they wouldn’t seat us**, and then they- and then when they seated us, they proceeded to seat us in the most middle spot- like they were trying to put us on the spot and embarrass us...”*

-Natalie Smith (SMA)

— — —

Shared Emotional Connection

The commitment and belief that members have shared and will share history, common places, time together, and similar experiences.



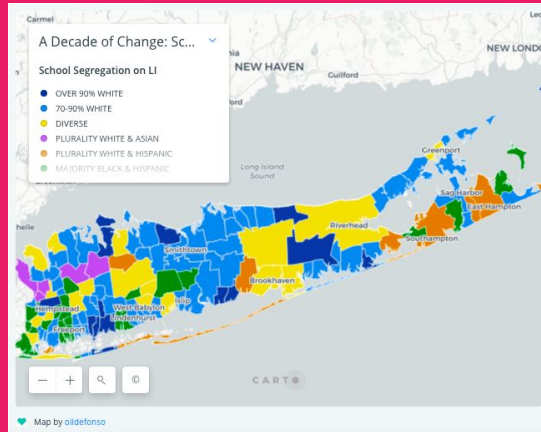
Education Identity

"I live in East Marsville but I live on the border of North Riverdale and Jonestown, so my backyard is North Riverdale, I'm in East Marsville and then Marsville Park is a few blocks down in front of me, and then Jonestown is to my right. And it's like you see how the funding is different essentially from like- East Marsville, ...I feel like they push anyone who's like diverse in Marsville to East Marsville- so then... the rest of Marsville and Marsville Park are mostly White people. So a bunch of the diverse people were pushed to East Marsville and then North Riverdale... they don't get funding, they're rundown, they're not as clean, and then Marsville is all pretty and everything and... the only reason why I'm going to private school is because if I went to public school, I'd be going to Riverdale Public School and they don't have- their- their education isn't that well- that's why I go to private school. And it's just how, just by town-wise, I live on the border, and there's such a difference when there shouldn't be."

-Ariel Robinson (SMA)

Shared Emotional Connection

The commitment and belief that members have shared and will share history, common places, time together, and similar experiences.



Education Identity

*"I would say being- being here on Long Island, we can definitely say that community's a big thing- **but the biggest thing about Long Island is that the communities aren't very integrated.** While Long Island does have a lot of wealth and a lot of poverty, it- there're just a really big disparity between the two and I think that while- while- if you're in a certain community- whether it's- whether you're, you know, in a certain town, or in a certain school, or you identify with a certain community, when you're in that community, it can be a really- a really, really beautiful thing."*

-Natalie Smith (SMA)

Policy

Public

Future Researchers

Implications

Teacher Practice

Pre-service teacher education programs

School Communities and Districts

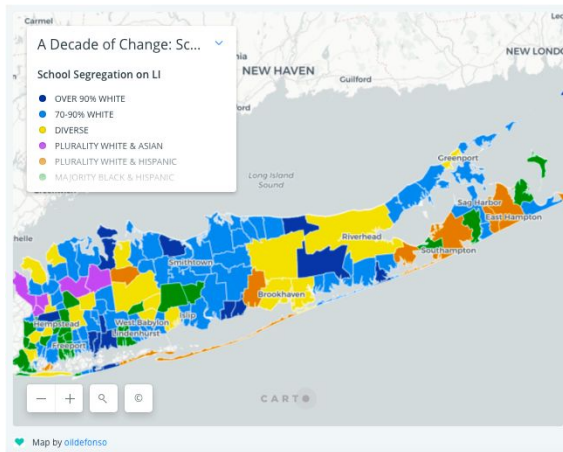
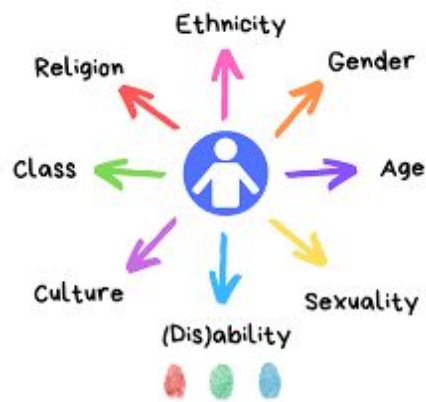
Recommendations for Future Research

— — —



Larger / more focus groups

Intergenerational focus groups



References

McMillan, D. W., & Chavis, D. M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14(1), 6-23.

For a more extensive look at our literature review, please scan the QR code to the right with your device.



Questions & Answers