

Centennial Honors College

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Podium Presentation

The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same: A Question of Social, Political, and Cultural Agency in Black America

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Institutional racism creates reoccurring situations within society which introduces negative conditions against certain groups based on race and/ or ethnicity. This happens all the time and people need to be aware of it because it unfairly oppresses people. In other words, it helps establish situations where certain groups are favored and benefit while other groups struggle.

In this presentation I will discuss the relevancy of the National Urban League in the 21st century. I will explain in detail just why this type of organization is still very important for blacks and people of color. I plan to research different issues which this organization has dealt with and how it impacted the black community and also share personal experiences of how this particular organization has benefited my life. I will also examine the contributions of this organization to the black community and share ideas on why this is so important. In addition to this, I will include information from Kenneth J. Fashing-Varner's article, "No! The team ain't alright! The institutional and individual problematics of race."

The objectives of this study will be:

- To bring clarity to the intersection of race and class, within social and civic organizations such as the National Urban league
- To heighten the awareness of the roles and purpose of Afro-American organizations within the larger society
- To explore the affects of institutional racism within the confines of the political agency of black America
- To explore the contributions of socio-political organizations in Black America

Methodology:

This study will rely heavily on an in-depth review of literature carried out by the researcher as well as empirical data through semi-informal interviews. The researcher will interview current leaders of the Peoria chapter of the National Urban League as well. As a former member of a National Urban League initiative called

Tomorrows Scientists, Technicians, and Managers (TSTM), I will also call upon my personal experiences to include in this study.