

Field Assignment #2:

ULDRICK A. THOMPSON II

Beulah Heights University

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The Pita house middle eastern food and grocery.

A Mediterranean family has been running the restaurant called pita house for at least ten years and today is going strong. It is owned by Peter and operated with his daughter and son and other employees. Serving meals not just from any one country, but from across the Middle East and the Mediterranean. A hub with varying types of dishes that come from such countries like Lebanon, Israel, Turkey, etc. The food made up of local and fresh ingredients, from cooks who genuinely know the meals of their custom. For locals and tourists, the restaurant is a place to acquire food cooked and served from a family sharing a part of themselves. As well as being for those of middle-eastern background, a social hub. That is not to say there is no other interaction with people and places of different backgrounds.

The business has two sides one as the restaurant itself, and the other as the grocery & deli store serving patrons with food, household items, and the ingredients necessary to prepare these styles of dishes yourself, and also sells hookahs and tobacco products.

For this community, the restaurant has been and remains a place akin to a home, and carries familiarity. Here in the upstate, there is nothing like Chinatown, Little Havana or anything else of the kind. Just these restaurant and others like it, few and spread out they now are. Hosting receptions for weddings, birthdays, families coming for dinners and friends to enjoy each other's company over coffee.

This establishment is something authentic, born out of a local community, operated by a family, supported by people who actively work to keep it as it is. Especially for this area with pushes for more development and increases in more commercialization, buildings which seem to have no life to them. While other establishments are remaining that are of a local spirit, there is less than before. Less of businesses grown and built from the ground up, and seeks merely to be in the industry it's in and while serving its community.

From this experience I get a sense that having this restaurant for certain people is akin to having a picture in a home, drawn from memory or historical account of a place pointing to one's origin. A living memento not just to a distant past, and something to continue unto what shall also come to past. Future memories. Something that has been held on to and carried forward to now. Containing the liveness as those who have brought it into existence. Made up of not just material objects or like an artifact in a museum, hanging on a shelf, but something pulsing with life like the people who make up this restaurant. Who carries out its services, who partake in what it has to offer, who receive, and also are giving back into it.