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Diversifying the National Parks

Amalia Sommer

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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DIVERSIFYING THE NATIONAL PARKS

By

Amalia M. Sommer

Bachelor of Science
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

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Part 1: Introduction

Since World War II, the national parks have become more accessible to the general public (McDonell, 2007). Public works projects created the infrastructure and facilities necessary to make the national parks accessible to the average citizen, not only outdoor enthusiasts. Furthermore, the economic boom that occurred after World War II brought rapid population and income growth, as well as increases in leisure time and mobility to the United States. These changes in the environment made it possible for Americans to travel more and participate in outdoor recreation (Betz, 1999). As a result, approximately 274 million visits are made to the national parks annually (National Parks Conservation Association , 2011).

For many Americans the national parks equate to an ideal location for vacation and rejuvenation (McDonell, 2007). The national parks provide an arena for outdoor recreation and physical activity and the attainment of the many physical, social, and mental health benefits individuals receive from this engagement (Betz, 1999). The health benefits of outdoor recreation are particularly important as the United States faces a nationwide epidemic of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease attributed to a trend towards more sedentary lifestyles. In fact, over 17% of the nation's youth are considered obese; with even higher incidences in Hispanic and African American populations (Ogden & Carroll, 2010). The physical health benefits of outdoor recreation can help to fight this epidemic and include the reduction/ control of obesity, minimized risk of disease, including diabetes, heart disease, and cancer; increased life expectancy, and healthier immune systems (State of California Resources Division, 2005). The mental health benefits include reduction of stress in one's life, management of depression, control of mood, improvement of self-esteem, reduction of anxiety, and overall improvement of one's overall quality of life. Recreating in the parks also provides social benefits such as family

bonding, strengthening communities, support of youth; and stewardship and volunteering (State of California Resources Division, 2005). The physical, mental, and social benefits of outdoor recreation can occur simultaneously. Thus, a week-end spent camping in a national park might allow a parent to reduce her stress level, bond with her children, and participate in physical activity that reduces her weight. These factors all contribute to one's overall well-being and a balanced life.

Despite these benefits, there remains a large portion of the population that does not visit the national parks. Minority populations traditionally have very low rates of visitation to the parks. While it is generally accepted that less than 10% of visitors to the national parks are minorities (Falk, Heimlich, & Foutz, 2009), there is no statistical evidence confirming this. The National Park Service Public Use Statistics Office has kept records of park visitation for years, but the information collected is very basic and does not include data on visitor demographics (Schuett, Le, & Hollenhorst, 2010). However, there is data on minority attendance at specific parks. For instance, in a nation that is approximately 12 % African-American, only 0.4 % of visitors arriving by car to Yosemite National Park and 3.8 % of those arriving by bus were African American. (Goldsmith, 1994). Similarly, a visitor survey at Grand Canyon National Park (Goldsmith, 1994) found that African-Americans accounted for 1.5 % of those who arrived by car and 2 % of those that arrived by bus. The Latino population accounted for 4.7 % of visitors traveling by car and 1.4 % of those traveling by bus. The low visitation of minorities and high visitation of Caucasian visitors is not only prevalent in the West, but throughout the entire country. As the parks are at their very essence public lands designed for the enjoyment and benefit of all, there have been a number of attempts to diversify the national parks by increasing minority visitation. While very few of these attempts have been successful, the successful

attempts have been limited to specific sites and have not been replicated at other national parks (Schuett, Le, & Hollenhorst, 2010).

The Marginality theory suggests that low visitation of minorities in outdoor recreation is the direct result of a lack of economic resources. Measures, such as the level of education, employment status, access to transportation, and income, are used in examining economic resources. The lack of these economic resources is due largely to repeated patterns of discrimination in the U.S. These economic barriers have historically prevented minorities from participating in many of society's major social and cultural institutions, such as the national parks. (Stanfield, Manning, Budruk, & Floyd, 2005)

A study of minorities in the San Francisco Bay Area found that in fact the cost of participation and lack of transportation were major barriers to visiting national parks, even those within close proximity to urban areas (Roberts, 2007).

The Subcultural Theory (Myron, 1999) focuses on cultural factors, rather than economic ones. It suggests that low participation in outdoor recreation by minorities is the result of exposure to different socialization processes than those experienced by whites. The norms and value systems created in the socialization process ultimately drive what leisure sites and preferences are socially acceptable in a minority group (Stanfield, Manning, Budruk, & Floyd, 2005). The differing socialization processes create unique norms and values that place little worth in outdoor leisure (Myron, 1999). Socially acceptable leisure patterns set minority groups apart from one another. For instance, African Americans feel that a lack of representation of park staff that is of the same race is a major barrier preventing them from visiting Golden Gate National Recreation Area. However, Chinese Americans in the same area do not feel that the

race of the staff matters (Roberts, 2007). This difference represents the differing social norms of each group.

The Discrimination Hypothesis (Stanfield, Manning, Budruk, & Floyd, 2005) focuses on social interactions as a means for deterring minorities from visiting the national parks. The theory suggests that felt, actual, or perceived discrimination of minorities by other visitors or management at the national parks can be a major deterrent in future visitation. Negative interpersonal experiences at the national parks may lead to reduced visitation or withdrawal from the experience altogether (Myron, 1999). For instance, a study of Black recreation patterns indicated that Blacks tends to recreate in outdoor spaces in urban areas near to their homes; while Whites tend to travel farther distances to more remote areas to recreate. It is suggested that Blacks, in particular, stays close to home because they perceive and experience discrimination at parks outside of their home areas (Dwyer & Gobster, 1988).

As Leisure researchers continue to discover outdoor recreation trends, it becomes necessary to delve deeper and begin to understand why these trends are prevalent in our country. According to Jack Goldsmith (1994), an expert on minority use of parks, “It is true that ethnic breakdowns are becoming known, but until the reasons for low turnouts are better understood, scarce federal dollars are in danger of being wasted on ineffective measures” which are designed to make the parks more appealing to minorities. The application of theory to this issue may assist the National Park Service in addressing the lack of minority visitation to the parks. While the Park Service has limitations in performing its own research, due to its size and government affiliations, it may highly benefit from using existing minority specific research about barriers to outdoor recreation and urban park usage. Additionally, the previous research, focusing primarily on African-American and Hispanic park usage largely ignores the growing number of Asian,

Pacific Islander, and Native American populations. This paper will examine the issue of lack of minority visitation to the national parks through a thorough review of relevant theory and research. It will conclude with a presentation of specific implications to assist practitioners in diversifying the national parks, as well as implications for future research.

Part 2: Literature Review

The Benefits of Outdoor Recreation

Participation in outdoor recreation can improve the quality of life for the individual, family, social group, and the community as a whole (Rosenberger, Bergson, & Kline, 2009). The benefits of outdoor recreation do not occur independently of one another, but instead occur synergistically, thus overall improving the quality of one's life (State of California Resources Division, 2005). While improvements in physical health are the most logical and common linkages between outdoor recreation and improvements in quality of life, outdoor recreation can also have positive impacts on the mental, social, educational, and creative lives of individuals (Gobster & Buchner, 2010).

Outdoor recreation can provide many benefits to the physical, mental, and social health of recreationists. The physical benefits of outdoor activities include reduction/ control of obesity, minimized risk of disease, including diabetes, heart disease, and cancer; increased life expectancy, and healthier immune systems (State of California Resources Division, 2005; Ogden & Carroll, 2010). These health benefits are extremely relevant as the United States faces a nationwide epidemic of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease due to more sedentary lifestyles. In fact, over 17% of the nation's youth are considered obese, with even higher incidences in Hispanic and African American populations (Ogden & Carroll, 2010). Physical activity is a major component in preventing and fighting this epidemic. Outdoor recreation promotes physical activity and movement. In fact, a 2009 study of the linkages between health and outdoor recreation in Oregon indicated that counties with more access to outdoor recreation areas, such as hiking and urban trails, had higher instances of physically active individuals (Rosenberger, Bergson, & Kline, 2009). Additionally, individuals involved in non-motorized

outdoor recreation activities, such as hiking and biking, overall were more physically active than those involved in other types of recreation (Rosenberger, Bergson, & Kline, 2009).

Outdoor recreation has also been found to be beneficial to mental health by minimizing the amount of stress experienced, maximizing felt vitality, and reducing symptoms of common mental disorders, such as depression and ADHD (Ryan, Weinstein, Bernstein, Brown, Mistretta, & Gagne, 2010). To examine the effects of outdoor environments on these factors researchers have compared the physiological and psychological responses of individuals to performing the exact same tasks in urban and natural environments. For instance, when individuals are exposed to a stressful situation, their responses and recovery rate are very different in urban and natural settings. Those experiencing stress in natural settings tend to recover faster and more completely than those experiencing the same stress in an urban environment (Ulrich, Simons, Losito, Fiorito, Miles, & Zelson, 1991). This indicates that spending time in the outdoors can help one to manage the daily stresses that are experienced.

Outdoor recreation has also been found to be beneficial to the mental health of adults by reducing the amount of stress and maximizing the amount of vitality, or the physical and mental energy, that one experiences (Ryan, Weinstein, Bernstein, Brown, Mistretta, & Gagne, 2010). One study Ryan et al. (2010) examined the effects of taking a 15 minute walk in both a tree-lined path along a river and through a set of underground tunnels. The walk in the outdoor natural environment led to significantly higher levels of felt and experienced vitality. This demonstrates that regardless of physical level, the impact of performing tasks in a natural outdoor environment can have significant influence on one's mental health.

Depression is a common mental disorder that is growing in concern for our country. According to the World Health Organization (2011) depression affects more than 121 million

individuals globally and is the second most common reason for disability. Those experiencing depression tend to experience depressed moods, loss of interest in otherwise stimulating activities, feelings of low self-worth, disrupted sleep and appetite, low energy, and poor concentration (World Health Organization , 2011). Physical activity has long been a recommendation to help with the symptoms of depression, but most recently being active specifically in the outdoors has become the focus of some depression research. In fact, the relatively new field of Ecopsychology (Townsend, 2006) is based on the principle that many psychological and physical afflictions are a result of a loss of contact with nature. Furthermore, Townsend (2006) found that individuals suffering from depression benefited from intentional engagement in nature-based activities in a woodland setting. Those involved in the nature-based programming perceived their health as better, visited doctors less frequently, and experienced less social isolation. Participants attributed these improvements to the opportunity for mental relaxation that the natural environment provided.

Participation in outdoor recreation also has been found to affect cognitive development, including moderating Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, increasing resilience, and expanding one's knowledge of science. In a study of after-school programs and week-end activities (Kuo & Taylor, 2004) it was found that recreating in natural outdoor settings had significantly better effects on the symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), than similar activity in indoor settings or 'built' outdoor settings, such as playgrounds or sport fields. Some of the major symptoms analyzed were the most common indicators of ADHD in children, including the inability to focus on unappealing topics, difficulty in completing tasks, trouble listening and following directions, and the inability to resist distractions. Overall, it was found that activity in outdoor natural environments helped to reduce

these symptoms. These findings held true across a variety of ages, genders, ADHD severity levels, regions, community sizes, and household income levels.

Additionally, a recent analysis of outdoor programming for at-risk and marginalized youth (Ungar, Dumond, & McDonald, 2005) found that outdoor youth intervention programs served as a rite of passage by helping youth understand the consequences of their actions, develop a sense of purpose and meaning, and learn adaptive strategies that assist youth in being resilient to risk-factors.

Roggenbuck (2000) proposes that in addition to the physical, mental, and social benefits of outdoor recreation there are also educational. The educational benefits include environmental science education, understanding one's role in the larger picture, and developing a stewardship ethic towards the environment (Roggenbuck, 2000; State of California Resources Division, 2005; Gobster & Buchner). As there are so many benefits of outdoor recreation it is important that recreationists are educated about their environment in order to protect natural and wilderness areas for future outdoor recreationists.

From a social health perspective outdoor recreation can promote social cohesion, provide support of youth, and deter risky and negative behaviors. A study of the impact of an outdoor adventure trip on adolescents' self-perception (Garst, Schneider, & Baker, 2001) found that nature provided a sense of escape, which acted as a catalyst for change in the lives of the youth. The outdoor trip acted as an escape mechanism from family pressures and negative peer influences for the inner-city youth. Additionally, the novelty of the experience allowed students to view their own world in a different way. Personal responsibility and interdependence were quickly adopted by the youth, in order to survive in the natural world. This was demonstrated in the way the adolescents put the needs of the group in front of their own, were more tolerant of

differences, showed more appreciation of peers, and worked together to complete tasks. Most significantly, the influences of the trip transferred to the home lives of the adolescents where parents noted the adolescents demonstrated better listening skills and anger control.

While much of the research is focused on youth programs for convenience purposes, the benefits of outdoor recreation are cross generational. Townsend (2006) found similar trends in a group of adults involved in volunteer work in a woodland area in Australia. The natural settings provided an environment in which the volunteers could connect with others who had similar interests in their environment, gain a sense of meaning, and contribute to the welfare of their community. These social benefits transcended generations and were experienced by the children of volunteers as well. Children of participants widened their social circles, felt a stronger sense of belonging, and were more confident socially.

A relatively new area of study for recreation and leisure researchers is the effect of nature based recreation on spirituality. Since the 1990's, it has been generally acknowledged that participation in nature based recreation is conducive to spiritual well-being (Heinzman, 2009). However, empirical research on this connection is somewhat challenging as these spiritual experiences are often self-defined and intensely personal (White & Hendee, 2000). In an analysis of a variety of nature based recreation programs Heinzman (2009) found that the elements of the natural environment and being away from everyday life were the most important factors in how nature based recreation produces spiritual outcomes. Other factors, such as solitude and free time were necessary for spiritual experiences to occur; but not nearly as much as nature and being away from everyday life.

Similar results were found by White and Hendee (White & Hendee, 2000). In an analysis of three wilderness programs, White and Hendee (2000) confirmed that spirituality was

positively correlated with environments that were natural and provided solitude. Such environments create a “deep sense of connection to all things, such as the larger universe, a higher power, nature, and a feeling of oneness.” Spirituality was such a prevalent benefit to recreating in the wilderness, that it was included, along with development of the self and community, as three major categories of their Primal Hypotheses, which provides a connection between the legislated traits of the wilderness and human benefit from these traits.

While the benefits of outdoor recreation abound, these benefits are unique to the group or individual depending upon the interest, preferences, and desired outcomes of the recreationists (Roggenbuck & Driver, 2000). While many of the overarching benefits, such as increases in life expectancy, are experienced by the majority of outdoor recreationists; benefits such as solitude and feelings of independence will differ for an individual who participates in guided group hikes in a developed recreation area and an individual who hikes solo in backcountry wilderness. Therefore, the ability to tailor and have control over one’s experience can be perceived as a major benefit of outdoor recreation; particularly as our lives become more rushed and scheduled. (Gobster & Buchner, 2010)

Theoretical Explanations for Differences Among Ethnic and Racial Populations

The Subcultural theory.

Subcultural Theory suggests that population concentrations, particularly in cities, stimulate the creation of *subcultures*, or sets of interconnected social networks each with unique norms and behaviors (Fischer, 1995). The individuals in a *subculture* share a common trait, such as ethnicity, race, language, or leisure interest; and, as such, associate with one another, are members of the same institutions, adhere to similar sets of principles, and share in a common way of life. The extent of subculture in-group similarities varies greatly by group and individual;

thus the boundaries of subcultures are often vague or overlapping (Fischer, 1995). For instance, an individual with parents from two differing ethnic backgrounds may be connected to two different subcultures with varying degrees of participation in each.

The concept of subculture as developed in the 50's, 60's and 70's is still a commonly used paradigm; the basic subcultural characteristics remain image, language, behavior and a specific culture (Naterer, 2011). David Muggleton explains that the continued use of the subculture concept should allow us to appreciate "the way in which coming together as a group however temporary and fragmented the group is can provide individuals with a sense of belonging and identification as well as a sense of individual identity or style" (Muggleton, 2005).

Most subculture research looks at youth and is based upon research begun in the 1950's. An important early work, Albert Cohen's 1955 Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang, analyzed delinquent subcultures in youth gangs (Naterer, 2011). Cohen theorized that these subcultures were established through a reversal of middle class norms. He explains that, due to a lack of opportunities and resources, lower-class boys had failed to attain the classic middle-class definition of success. These boys created a common solution to their status issue by reversing the norms into those that they could attain. They could then achieve the status denied them by the wider social system. In this case, the inversion resulted in non-utilitarian, malicious and negativistic behaviors (Terpstra, 2006).

Downe's (1966) also examined subculture in lower-class boys, but unlike Cohen, found that neither status frustration nor opposition to middle-class norms existed among the youth (Terpstra, 2006). Instead, he found that the boys disassociated from the dominant middle-class context of school or work but not from the desire for leisure consumption. Lacking the means to achieve the glamorous elements of leisure, the boys created a delinquent subculture to fulfill the

desire for leisure goods. The theory of subcultures as a shared solution to problems surfaced continuously in analyses of British youth culture throughout the rest of the 1960s and again during the 1970's (Terpstra, 2006).

The Subcultural theory is further developed through the concepts of *cultural capital* first introduced by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in the 70's (Bourdieu, 1974) and later expanded upon in a study of the subcultures of dance clubs in the 1990's (Thornton, 1996). Cultural capital describes the resources individuals have available, such as social, cultural, and historical knowledge (Erickson, Johnson, & Kivel, 2009). These resources are attained in the upbringing and education of an individual and are ultimately indicators of one's level of acceptance by others in the subculture. The three forms of cultural capital are the embodied, objectified, and institutional state (Terpstra, 2006). The embodied state is the internalizations of behavior that one perceives as appropriate within the subculture, such as the usage of appropriate body language or slang. The objectified state is the possession and/ or exhibition of objects that have cultural meaning, such as displaying an American flag. Finally, the institutionalized state is the institutional recognition that one receives, such as the attainment of an academic diploma or specialized accreditations (Thornton, 1996).

The study of youth subcultures provides some of the strongest evidence on how members of subcultures form unique preferences. In a study of street youth subculture in Edmonton, Canada (Baron & Hartnagel, 1998) it was found that the longer and thus more submerged youth were into the street subculture, the higher the rates of violence were. Interestingly, youth that reported little or no pressure from friends to participate in violence or criminal behavior demonstrated the highest rates of violent crimes. This suggests that like-minded individuals seek companionship with one another. Furthermore, the longer the youth spent being homeless and

with other members of the subculture the stronger the cultural norms of violence were. The findings also demonstrated that youth that participated in aggravated assaults have experienced street victimization and abusive home lives. The overall findings of the study demonstrate how cultural norms and values, violence in this case, are articulated through socialization with others in the subgroup and also passed along through generations.

Terpstra's work on boys in low income neighborhoods reflects the major themes in subcultural theory developed over the past six decades. Terpstra (2006) describes four factors that lead to an individual wanting to become part of a subculture and the resultant development of a subculture: desire for status or prestige, disappointment with institutions, attraction to belong with those in the same age group, and reactions of others in the community towards the individual's behavior. Terpstra explains this through the example of truancy amongst boys living in low income neighborhoods. In this subculture, boys who prove their autonomy with regard to school are considered tough, loyal to their own people, and smarter than the teachers (Terpstra, 2006). Consequently these boys are rewarded with higher status within the subculture, which can in turn promote dropping out of school early and delinquency. Disappointments in the relations with institutions, like school and the experience of being treated as 'failing,' might easily result in the boys keeping their distance from school. Competition within age groups may promote tough behavior and it is likely that younger boys will look to the behavior of older boys as a model for their own behavior. Finally, the reactions of adults in the community to the boys' behavior might promote the drift towards this subculture. Adults that acted the same when they were young will likely be ambivalent to the boys' misbehavior and some may even directly encourage truancy by offering an opportunities to engage in crimes.

While much Subcultural theory research has been on delinquency in disadvantaged youth, the theory has been applied to a number of other subculture formations. Golub, Johnson, and Dunlap (2005) applied the Subcultural theory to prevailing drug use trends. The theory was used as a framework to explain drug phenomena, including popular drug eras, drug generations, and the gateway phenomena. Golub et al. suggested that there are many cultural elements of drug use, including the socialization of users, use by friends, references in mass media, legal consequences, and youth rebellion. Thus the popularity of illicit drugs is greatly affected by the dominant culture, as well as drug subcultures. The choice to use drugs is affected by drug subcultures and each person's place relative to the subcultures. Individual's decisions about drug use ultimately impact the drug subculture and cause existing subcultures to evolve and new subcultures to develop.

In 2003 Wheaton and Beal examined the meanings of subculture-specific media to windsurfers in the United Kingdom and skateboarders in the US. The researchers found that niche magazines, including the advertising, were an important source of cultural capital for the sport enthusiasts. The magazines served an important role in communicating common cultural knowledge to members of the subculture. Additionally, the ownership of the magazine and knowledge acquired from it served to increase the objectified state of subcultural capital amongst readers. Based on finding from Thornton's (1996) research on night club subcultures, the study made a strong distinction between mass media and specialized media sources. The specialized or subculture-specific media sources contributed to subcultural identity and had a stronger sense of authenticity for members, while mass media was much less effective and sometimes even alienating. This study demonstrates the importance media currently plays in the creation of subcultural capital through the process of communicating the norms and trends of the subculture

to members and potentially to outsiders. It may also represent how media can effectively be targeted at minority groups through specialized sources.

One theme that has remained fairly consistent throughout research into subcultures in the United States is that many subcultures are considered subordinate to the white, middle class dominant culture. Subculture norms and behaviors are seen as unconventional or nonconforming, compared to those of the dominant culture. When individuals from different subcultures interact, such as two individuals from different ethnic groups, a number of processes may occur. First, the individuals may mutually influence the norms and behaviors of one another. When larger subcultures influence smaller subcultures, unconventional behaviors and norms decline. Contrarily, when smaller subcultures influence larger subcultures, nonconformity increases. At some point the alternative beliefs of subculture may become the norm for the dominant culture. The larger the subculture, the more likely it is that the alternative beliefs of the subculture will become the norms for the dominant culture. (Fischer, 1995)

However, between-group interaction does not always lead to harmonious influence; interaction can also lead to friction between groups. Interaction between subcultures with vastly different belief systems can often lead to conflict. This is particularly true if individuals of one group feel as if members of other groups are threatening to their way of life. Some see a direct connection between this sense of fear or resistance to change and the white dominant cultures' tendency to stigmatize or isolate minority groups in the United States (Williams, 1989).

The Discrimination theory.

In the context of ethnic or racial subcultures, subcultural research in the United States often focuses on negative aspects, particularly violence and crime. This is not useful and can, in fact, be detrimental in investigating neutral or positive subcultural aspects, such as recreation and

leisure activities. A more useful analysis involves directly analyzing the experience of discrimination by minority racial and ethnic groups.

It is important to consider the distinction between race and ethnicity when looking through an ethno-racial lens in order to avoid generalizations and subsequent discriminatory practices. Race is considered a social construct that defines a group of people by their distinctive and hereditary traits, such as skin color (Skrentny, 2008). Ethnicity is also a social construct, but rather than focusing on physical similarities, defines a group of people by their cultural similarities (Vazquez & Ramirez-Krodel, 1989). Thus an ethnic group is a group that is self-defined and perceived by others to share cultural traits, such as language or religious ceremonies (Chavez D. J., 2000). While the roots of these individuals may be shared, recent research has demonstrated that in-group differences in ethno-racial groups may be as significant, if not greater, than differences between minority groups (Skrentny, 2008). Thus, it is important to consider the degree of social capital and habitus that members of ethno-racial subcultures inhibit before assuming homogeneity (Thornton, 1996).

However, through the majority of U.S. history, cultural variability has not been widely recognized and individuals of similar ethnic and racial backgrounds have typically been categorized into singular groups, such as “African-American” or “Asian” with the assumptions that these individuals share the same attributes, behaviors, and interests (Skrentny, 2008). The categorizing of these individuals into ethno-racial groups has resulted in the stigmatization of segments of the population; including those considered to be African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans (Vazquez & Ramirez-Krodel, 1989). Thus it is important to consider the historical and cultural patterns of oppression that have been experienced by ethno-

racial minority groups in considering how participation in social and cultural institutions has been shaped.

For instance, one of the very foundational forms of historical oppression in the United States was slavery. Enslavement of African-Americans began in the 1600's and was engrained in every element of American life, including the legal system (Riphagen, 2010). The oppression of African-Americans by the white dominant class drew a divide in our country and was the catalyst for the Civil War. The end of the Civil War in 1865 marked the end of slavery, but did not create equality for African-Americans. Between 1875 and 1965 the Jim Crow Laws sanctioned legal racial discrimination against African Americans, and other minorities, in voting, education, employment, health care, housing, the legal system, and use of public facilities, spaces, services, and transportation. (Krieger, 2012) Rights for African-American did not see any major changes until the 1960's Civil Rights Movement. The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 finally banned discriminatory practices from places of employment and public accommodations, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 restored voting rights to all American citizens (Riphagen, 2010). Although legal discrimination is no longer allowed, inequity still remains in many areas of life for African-Americans, including income, employment, access to healthcare, infant mortality, and incarceration (Krieger, 2012).

Similar forms of oppression and discrimination affect other minority groups in the United States. For instance, statistics from the past 25 years show that students of color have been and continue to be subject to much higher rates of school suspension, disciplinary referrals to school administration, corporal punishment, and school expulsion (Skiba, 2011). Research into student behavior, race, and discipline has not shown that the difference in disciplinary rates can be explained by a corresponding difference in behavior of students of color or socio-economic

status. Given the disproportionate rates of discipline, it is not surprising that there continues to be significant racial and ethnic disparities in education including the achievement gap, disproportionality in special education, and dropout and graduation rates (Skiba, 2011).

While discrimination is tied to lower educational achievement for some ethnic and racial groups, there is also a connection to higher achievement of other groups. In the UK Philips (2010) noted that the educational achievement of Chinese students are generally positively stereotyped, while the achievement of black Caribbean, black African, and South Asian students are generally negatively stereotyped. Institutional policies, similar to those in the United States, exist from the national government that pressures school districts to improve the overall performance of the students. In turn, this policy forces the teacher to target the students they feels have the best opportunity to excel. Based on the stereotypes, the Chinese students are given more attention in the classroom, which results in higher levels of academic achievement; while the black and South Asian students are typically not fully supported or challenged educationally and thus have lower levels of academic achievement. The perceptions of academic achievement by the teachers were based on historical stereotypes of Chinese students being disciplined, having high expectations from the family and valuing education; while the stereotypes for the black students were of being lazy, having minimal family expectations, and limited intellect (Philips, 2010). Interestingly, the perceptions of the South Asian students were based upon stereotypes of fundamentalist beliefs and self-segregation; which imply a lack of interest in mainstream education.

In addition to educational disparities, many Hispanics in the United States face language barriers (Vazquez & Ramirez-Krodel, 1989), and persistent discrimination in employment (Pager, 2009). Like African-Americans, Hispanics (used interchangeably with “Latino”),

residents of the United States who can trace their ancestry to the Spanish-speaking regions of Latin America and the Caribbean, have long suffered discrimination in the United States (Sizemore, 2004). As late as the 1970's, meaningful participation in the political process was virtually closed to Hispanics and they were subjected to severe discrimination in housing, education, public accommodations, etc., especially in border states like Texas (Garza, 2001). Hispanics, particularly Mexican-Americans, were inspired by the African-American Civil Rights Movement to take political action in the late 1960s and early 1970s. While the movement was successful in defeating legalized discrimination, Hispanics continue to suffer inequities in income, employment, access to healthcare, infant mortality, incarceration, and other socio-economic factors (Krieger, 2012).

Native Americans share some of the same disparities with African-Americans and Hispanics. Historically these issues have impeded Native Americans from participating in some cultural and social institutions, and certainly contribute to the fact that Native Americans have the highest unemployment rate in the United States (Krieger, 2012). Looking back at the history of this group may help to identify where some of the disparities originated.

Native American history is marked by the drastic effects of the Western colonial invasion. When European colonists arrived in what is now the United States, they brought disease, differing religious doctrines, new political ideologies, Western educational systems, and ultimately plans for western domination (Champagne, 1999). These social, cultural, and political views differed greatly from those of the people already living in the Americas. Ultimately, the Native Americans were forced to convert to new Western cultural and religious ideologies or face death. As a result many Native Americans lost their lives, were removed from the land they had lived on for thousands of years, and were forced to live on reservations. This complicated

history has led current Native American culture to be a very complex mix of Native values and Western influence (Champagne, 1999). Problems with substance abuse, obesity, diabetes, suicide, lack of opportunity on reservations, poverty, homelessness, and low educational attainment are prevalent issues for many Native Americans (Committee on Indian Affairs, 2002).

While many of the injustices historically experienced by minority groups in the United States are no longer culturally acceptable, nor legal, such as slavery and segregation, the effects of such racism are still prevalent in our society. It has been argued that even if individuals do not experience overt racism; that racism may still be experienced because it is deeply embedded in many conventions in U.S. society (Phillips, 2010). These forms of racism are often referred to as *institutional racism*. Institutional racism addresses the shared disparities experienced by minorities, such as lack of opportunities in higher education and employment disadvantages, which are produced by institutions' routine operations; regardless of the intent of the institution (Williams, 1989). Institutional racism can be applied to explain ethnic inequalities in socio-economics, neighborhood composition, educational attainment, institutional practices, and political empowerment (Phillips, 2010). For instance, Phillips applied the concept of institutional racism to minority underachievement in educational systems. As explained above, she found that historical injustices against minorities were so embedded in educational culture, that even when common barriers were removed, such as socio-economic disadvantages, persistent inequalities remained. Phillip's example illustrates how historically-rooted prejudice and stereotyping of subcultures ultimately leads to racism on an institutional level and to further disparities in treatment.

Symbolic Interaction theory.

Symbolic Interaction Theory is attributed to American sociologist Herbert Blumber, who first wrote about the concept in the late 1930's (Ballis, 1995). The theory is focused on the individual and how the individual views the situation at hand. The world consists of social objects, both material and immaterial, that have meaning based on past socialization and through social interactions. The meaning of the social objects to the individual is created through a process of interpretation. One considers how relevant the object is to the situation, how others interpret the object, how others might perceive the object, past experiences related to the object, personal values pertaining to the object, etc. (Ballis, 1995) The most important of these objects is the 'self' or the interpretation one has of him/herself based upon how immediate others have treated him/her and the way that he interacts with/confronts others. The meaning of the self may also be affected by imagination through the means of imagery of media.

Furthermore, the acquisition of culture through means of language, socialization, and education is what adds value to the culture and transmits the experience of the group to others. Communication, through means of language, socialization, and education, is crucial to the group because it is what ties the individuals in the group to one another by creating a shared understanding and perpetuates the culture through generations. (Ballis, 1995)

Thus, social institutions may represent differing meanings for differing subcultural groups and even different individuals within these groups. The meanings of these institutions have been created by one's experience with the institution, how others in the group feel about the institution, socialization and education regarding the institution, and perceptions of how one in the group *should* feel or act towards the institution. These perceptions are influenced by cultural values and norms, historical discrimination, and how one sees oneself in relation to these

institutions. The symbolic interaction minorities have with this country's social and cultural institutions are largely demonstrative of minorities' participation in these establishments.

Leisure Research on Ethnicity and Race

Race and ethnicity are not areas commonly covered by leisure research. In fact, less than 5% of the articles in the top five leisure journals discuss race or ethnicity (Floyd, Bocarro, & Thompson, 2008). Furthermore, Floyd et al. (2008) found that the vast majority of articles used survey and qualitative research methods, rather than experimental design. The lack of quantitative research and use of secondary data sets limit the profession's ability to apply the leisure research to general populations because the research is very narrow and short-term in scope (Floyd, Bocarro, & Thompson, 2008). The existing leisure research on ethnicity and race has gone through an evolution from descriptive atheoretical studies to more theory based approaches.

Atheoretical leisure research studies on ethnicity and race

The success of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's encouraged social science research into race and ethnicity in leisure studies (Floyd M. , 1998). As the movement increased awareness of racial inequality, the Jim Crowe laws were dismantled, resulting in the removal of legal barriers to the use of public parks and recreation areas for black Americans. The Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Committee, a congressional advisory committee, was responsible for some of the first leisure research that included race as a variable (Stanfield, Manning, Budruk, & Floyd, 2005). The majority of the findings from the ORRRC in relation to race were basic comparisons of differences in recreation behaviors of blacks and whites. For instance, in a report on recreation in metropolitan areas of the United States the ORRRC found that blacks in the South participate in sustenance hunting, while whites participate in hunting for recreation. It

was also shown that blacks were less likely to participate in walking for recreation purposes, such as sightseeing and nature viewing, than whites were (Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission , 1962). In 1962 the committee presented an official report on the current state of recreation to President Kennedy and Congress (Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Committee, 1962). The committee found that nonwhites participate in playing games and walking at higher rates than whites; and whites participate in water sports, camping, and hiking at higher rates than nonwhites. Changes in the political and social environment and findings from the ORRRC spurred leisure researchers to become more interested in differences between black and white Americans' outdoor recreation and leisure activities (Floyd M. , 1998).

Arai and Kivel (2009) suggest that the first flourish of race research in leisure took place in the 1970's. The general tone of the research was focused on racial inequality in recreation. Whereas studies involving black and white comparisons of leisure activities flourished, contradictory findings were produced (Hutchinson, 1987). For example in 1976, Cheek, Field, and Burdge (as cited in Hutchinson, 1987) found few differences in the leisure behaviors of blacks and whites when socioeconomic status was controlled for (Hutchinson, 1987). Contrarily, Meeker (1973) found vast differences in the behaviors of blacks and whites in group orientation, use of recreational facilities, and activity preferences. These disparities in findings prompted further exploration into the topic.

Washburne's (1978) study of black participation in outdoor recreation was one of the first to provide a framework to explain the differences in leisure behavior between blacks and whites. Analyzing data from the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Washburne compared the leisure patterns of black and whites living in eight California cities. The results showed that blacks tend to participate more often in team sports, such as basketball, and as spectators at

sporting events when compared to whites. Additionally, blacks tend to have lower levels of participation in wildland recreation and activities that involve traveling outside of their community, including road trips, vacations, and camping. Few differences were found between the patterns of participation for fishing, hunting, crabbing, and the use of local parks.

In addition to activity preference Washburne addressed the issue of barriers to participation. More barriers to leisure were present for blacks than whites; particularly activity cost and transportation hindered Black leisure participation. These barriers would be expected as minorities, including African Americans, historically have lower socioeconomic status than whites. While Washburne explained these differences in leisure behaviors using the Subcultural Theory, suggesting that Blacks had differing subcultural value systems, his work provided no empirical evidence for this explanation. Washburne also presented the Marginality Theory, which suggests that the position of minorities is a result of a constrained lifestyle due to limited access to basic needs, inadequate transportation, and limited opportunities. Much of the leisure research following Washburne was framed by the debate of whether the Subcultural (aka Ethnicity Theory) or the Marginality Theory was the most appropriate explanation for minority differences in leisure. (Gomez, 2002)

As the country's demographics became more diverse and complicated with the growth of minority population segments, leisure research studies moved beyond the simple black-white paradigm (Floyd M. , 1998) and shifted to a more inclusive approach with studies taking into account a wide variety of racial and ethnic groups, most commonly Asians, Hispanics, and Indigenous peoples (Li, Chick, Zinn, Absher, & Graefe, 2007). Despite a significant body of research built upon Washburne's seminal work, atheoretical studies persisted.

For example, Dwyer and Barro (2001) included Hispanic subjects in their study of recreation behaviors and preferences of urban populations in Chicago; however, they provided no theoretical explanation for the significant differences found among racial and ethnic groups. The study found that significant differences by race were shown in 27 of 43 recreation activities and in 14 of 20 places of recreation. Whites were more likely to participate in activities in natural environments, like camping, and travel further to places outside of the city limits for recreation. African-Americans were more likely to prefer more developed outdoor facilities and Whites were the least likely to prefer these areas. Hispanic-Americans preferred activities that included large groups of adults and children from their family and African-Americans preferred to socialize at church functions with both family and friends. These differences are significant, but may be very specific to the geographic areas studied and provide no explanation for these racial differences, nor any theoretical framework to view these differences.

More recently, leisure scholars have begun to examine the intersection of multiple factors, including race, ethnicity, gender, age, and social class (Shinew, Stodolska, & Floyd, 2006). For example, Lee, Scott, and Floyd (2001) propose that a “hierarchy of participation” exists in which young white men with high education and incomes levels lay at one end of the spectrum with the greatest probability of participation in leisure experiences. On the other end of the hierarchy lay elderly minority women with low education levels and low incomes. Race, gender, and class remain major sources of inequality in American society and so multi-perspective analyses including these factors, such as Lee, Scott, and Floyd’s, are essential to further understanding why minorities have lower participation rates in some types of recreation.

Theoretical studies of the leisure patterns of racial and ethnic minorities.

Cultural identity. In the leisure studies context, subcultural theory attributes differences in recreation behavior to value differences based on subcultural norms. That is, the recreation behavior of a member of a subculture is influenced by that subculture's unique cultural values. (Johnson C. B., 1998). While some studies testing the subcultural theory provide valuable insight into how subcultural values may influence leisure behavior, much research in this area still focuses on surveying racial or ethnic group members on their recreation activity preferences (Bowker, 1998). This narrow focus has likely contributed to some scholars questioning whether subcultural theory is useful in examining difference in participation of racial and ethnic groups.

Modern research does not seem to have reached a consensus as to the effect race has on recreation behavior. While several studies have reported differences between races in leisure attitudes and behaviors, others have found that leisure attitudes and behaviors are more strongly related to socioeconomic status than racial differences (Tinsley & Tinsely, 2002).

A handful of leisure researchers have even questioned the use of ethnicity as a variable in leisure research (Li, Chick, Zinn, Absher, & Graefe, 2007) (Floyd M. , 1999). Li, Chick, Zinn, Absher, and Graefe (2007) examined the usefulness and validity of ethnicity as a variable at the Angeles National Forest. Their aim was to determine whether the typically studied ethnic groups of Anglos, Hispanics, and Asians had homogenous cultural beliefs. The study (Li, Chick, Zinn, Absher, & Graefe, 2007) was undertaken because the researchers felt that the field of leisure often assumes that differences in ethnicity equates to differences in cultural values. The results of the study demonstrated that cultural values of Anglos, Hispanics, and Asians differed greatly. Furthermore, in-group cultural values differed more than between-group cultural values. These results confirmed the researchers' beliefs that ethnicity may no longer be an indicator of values and thus has little value in future leisure research.

Much of the research in this area has been limited to surveys of individuals on their leisure preferences and participation (Tinsley & Tinsely, 2002). This includes many of the studies that conclude that race and ethnicity do not provide useful information for leisure studies researchers. The usefulness of subcultural theory research may be limited where results are entirely dependent upon surveying preference. For example, (Philipp, 1997) found that gender, rather than race, had more of an impact on what leisure benefits people desire. Just a year later, Phillip (1998) found race to be a more salient factor than gender, in explaining adolescent peer group approval of leisure activities. In both these studies, the results were based upon surveys of African-American and Caucasians. These results may be a function of the researchers asking the wrong questions rather than demonstrating that subculture theory is not a useful construct in leisure studies.

In a critique of Li et. al's work, Gobster (2007) asserts that the research is flawed in that it uses a broadbased measure of national cultural values, specifically Hofstede's 1980 four dimensions (power distance, individualism, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance) of national cultural value developed in a business context. Instead, Gobster suggests, in studying aspects of race, ethnicity, and culture relevant to wildland outdoor recreation, researchers should look at factors such as picnic foods, group sizes and compositions, activities, areas where the individuals were raised, and other factors shown to be important to different groups' leisure activities (Gobster P. H., 2007). Observation research that looks at such factors seems to provide the most useful information on differences in recreation behavior from a subcultural theory view. Such studies have found significant difference between racial or ethnic groups in patterns of group size, makeup, age, and recreational activity in outdoor recreation settings.

Tinsley and Tinsley's research (2002) sought to explore the possibility that differences in ethnicity are associated with important aspects of leisure behavior and did, in fact, find significant differences among four ethnic groups studied. Tinsley and Tinsley interviewed older African-American, Hispanic-American, Asian-American and Caucasian-Americans using a large urban park. The study was designed to study park usage patterns, the social environment within which park usage occurred, the psychosocial benefits of park use, and whether or not benefits vary by ethnicity. Instead of simply asking individuals about their preferences, Tinsley and Tinsley documented participation in different activities by individuals of different ethnicities and asked about specific aspects of park use. They found significant differences among activity participation between ethnic groups. Significant differences were also observed in the social setting within which the four ethnic groups visited the park. African-Americans were more likely to visit the park with their friends; Caucasians were more likely to use the park alone or with an immediate family member; Hispanics were most likely to visit the park with their extended family or with an organization; and Asian park users tended to visit the park in the largest groups with immediate family, extended family, or friends.

The other studied factors were also in line with the observed social differences. For example, Asians rated satisfaction of the need for affiliation the highest psychosocial benefit and likewise rated exercise and self-enhancement benefits (experienced primarily by individuals rather than social groups) as a less important psychosocial benefit of park use. Tinsley and Tinsley concluded that the differences in park use factors between ethnicities may be attributed to the known cultural differences of groups as being primarily collectivist or individualist. Hispanic and Asian cultures are regarded as collectivist, because of the greater importance given to the family unit in Hispanic culture and the larger social organizations in Asian culture. On the

other hand, African-American culture values individualism through development and maintenance of small groups of close friends, while Caucasian culture emphasizes “the rugged individual.” The different ways in which each group was found to use and view the park seems to follow these collectivist or individualistic cultural values.

Other studies support this collectivist/individualistic view. A 2004 study of African-American and Caucasian Chicago park users (Shinew, Floyd, & Parry, 2004) indicates that individuals chose leisure pursuits that reinforce their subcultural identity. The researchers (Shinew, Floyd, & Parry, 2004) postulated that African-Americans would perceive more barriers to access and enjoyment of leisure based on their subordinate and disadvantaged status in dominant society. Surprisingly, the results of the study showed that Caucasians perceived significantly more barriers to park use and leisure than African-Americans. In this study, African-Americans showed the greatest preference for sport/fitness activities, socializing activities, and non-outdoor activities, while Caucasians preferred leisure enthusiast activities and outdoor activities.

Marginality and discrimination. While some research, such as (Li, Chick, Zinn, Absher, & Graefe, 2007), indicates that race and ethnicity does not influence leisure behavior; leisure research focusing on discrimination indicates the contrary. In a survey and descriptive study (Sharaievksa, Stodolska, Shinew, & Kim, 2010) of perceived discrimination in two Latino urban communities in Chicago, Sharaievksa et al. (2010) found that nearly 25% of all Latino park users in the area experienced discrimination in their neighborhood parks. Although historical racism and economic discrimination were not reported by the participants, verbal harassment by other recreationists, racial/ethnic profiling by police, and denial of service or being provided substandard service were forms of discrimination reported by the park users. These same types

of discrimination also occurred in other places of leisure, such as at swimming pools and restaurants.

As one would expect, fear of experiencing discrimination affects how one recreates (Stodolska, 2005). Discriminatory behavior clearly leads to the objects of such discrimination feeling unwelcome and experiencing less overall enjoyment. Stodolska explains, while this alone may not always entirely deter participation, participation is effected as those discriminated against adjust their behavior to try and minimize the impact of discrimination. This may include changes in the time and or place of the activity, visiting only in large groups and/or frequenting places where other people of the same background are present, and being extremely vigilant of surroundings.

For example, a focus group study of how Hmong use public lands in Minnesota and Wisconsin (Bengston, Schermann, Moua, & Lee, 2008) found that discrimination and harassment from other recreationists, park officials, and private land owners determined where and how the Hmong chose to recreate. Racial slurs and other verbal harassment; and attempts to steal fish and game that the participants had hunted were types of discrimination regularly reported. Additionally, a fatal clash between six white hunters and a Hmong hunter in Wisconsin sparked racial discrimination that demarked much of the leisure experiences for Hmong in Wisconsin and Minnesota. In response to this negative treatment, the Hmong showed preferences to recreating on public land areas where they found the land managers were welcoming and showed respect for their traditional customs of hunting in large groups, fishing, and gathering. Furthermore, the fear of discrimination and intolerance was so great for some, that some of the participants had stopped hunting and fishing altogether. (Bengston, Schermann, Moua, & Lee, 2008)

The subcultural model is one possible explanation for why between group and in-group discrimination occurs in leisure settings. Sharaievksa et al. (2010) suggested that people who live in close proximity to others with different cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds may develop fears of the different subcultures they do not understand. Thus strangers that are seen as having different values are considered threatening and are often the recipients of discrimination.

The fear of unfamiliar subcultures is often explained using the contact theory - that a lack of contact between racial and ethnic groups leads to the formation of negative images of other races or cultures based upon ignorance and misconceptions (Shinew, Glover, & Parry, 2004). Contact theory proponents argue that positive interracial contact provides the recreationist with information about the values, life-styles, and behaviors of those of different races. The gained information about other races promotes positive and unprejudiced behaviors by demonstrating that previously held negative attitudes are unjustified (Shinew, Glover, & Parry, 2004). Researchers theorize that this is important in the leisure studies context in two ways. First, lack of contact may explain differences in leisure activity preferences among racial groups. (Floyd & Shinew, 1999). Second, leisure presents good opportunities for equal-status and cooperative interracial contact because, unlike work or formal environments, leisure settings are often defined by the elements of free-choice and self-determination (Shinew, Glover, & Parry, 2004).

Shinew et al. (2004) surveyed community gardeners in St. Louis and found that community gardening was successful in promoting interracial contact. Floyd and Shinew (1999) take the theory that leisure provides opportunities for interracial contact a step further, theorizing that increased interracial contact results in greater similarities in leisure preferences between racial or ethnic groups. In yet another onsite study in a Chicago Park, the researchers surveyed African American and White park users on their leisure preferences, as well as their level of

interracial contact. The study compared African Americans and Whites with low interracial contact and high interracial. It was found that the greater the level of contact, the greater the similarities in leisure preferences were between individuals of each group. Floyd and Shinew explain that interracial contact increases exposure to the norms of other groups, provides shared frames of reference, and social relationships. These all contribute to greater similarities of preferences in leisure activities.

While much of the disparities in the leisure behavior of minorities groups may be equated to a lack of interracial contact, institutional racism often serves to perpetuate these differences. The lack of responsiveness by public land management agencies to the needs of the Hmong people in Minnesota is a perfect example of institutional racism (Bengston, Schermann, Moua, & Lee, 2008). Low-literacy rates of Hmong elders and recent refugees prevent much of the Hmong population from being able to read signage and the book of rules and regulations for hunting and fishing. However, verbal and written information for non-English speakers, such as the Hmong, is often not provided in leisure and recreation spaces. Similar forms of institutional racism are often reported by American Indians recreating on publically managed lands (Flood & McAvoy, 2007). The use of the National Forests by Salish-Kootenia tribe members in Montana was the focus of a research study. Much like the Hmong, the Salish-Kootenia have strong traditions of hunting, fishing, and gathering. More than 25% of participants of the study reported overt forms of racism from land management staff, such as racial slurs. However, less overt forms of racism were also heavily reported, such as profiling from law enforcement and altering of the landscape traditionally used for hunting or gathering by land managers were two major forms reported by the tribe members (Flood & McAvoy, 2007). While these forms of racism are often considered

less overt, for the Salish-Kootenia they were more influential on the recreation behaviors of the tribe members.

Bowker and Leeworthy (1998) explored a much more discreet component of ethnicity, travel cost demand of Hispanics participating in outdoor recreation. This objective of this research was to explore price response and discretionary income differences in recreation demand conditioned by ethnic group. The findings suggests that Hispanics are more sensitive to price changes than Caucasians and, as a result, increased travel costs due to increased park entry fees could have a greater effect on Hispanics participation rates in visiting the Keys. They conclude that these findings demonstrate significant differences in the structure of demand across ethnic subgroups and corroborate previous research which indicates that ethnic differences in recreation behavior exist.

Innovative approaches. Some leisure researchers have begun to use empirical data to drive the design of new theoretical frameworks to explain diversity and leisure patterns. Gomez's 2002 Ethnicity and Public Recreation Participation Model (Gomez, 2002) combined the work of his previous leisure predecessors to create a model that explains the relationship between ethno-racial identity and recreation participation. This model considers acculturation, socioeconomic status, and subcultural identity, benefits of leisure, and discrimination as major factors determining recreation participation. In addition to these factors, Gomez suggests that a historical perspective be considered by further research into leisure behavior.

An innovative approach to addressing race and leisure is through a geographical perspective. Bryne and Wolch (Byrne, Wolch, & Zhange, 2009) propose that the physical set-up of parks and facilities are determined by ethno-racial factors which, in turn, influence use and non-use of parks by certain groups. The authors suggest that rather than using leisure research

explanations of park use as a function of characteristics and preferences, park use is a function of physical park space and design. The leisure research points to the same four theories: marginality, race/ethnicity, assimilation/acculturation, and discrimination; however these theories underestimate or all together ignore spatial effects of systematic racism and tend to treat parks as homogenous areas.

This concept is based on two premises: (1) parks are and have historically been viewed as elitist “culture-natures” and (2) parks are and have historically been seen as places of exclusion. Bryne et al. looked to a history of parks from English aristocracy through the Civil Right Movement to demonstrate these phenomena. This framework provides a strong argument for parks as both elitist and exclusionary in nature. In order to improve research on race and park use the authors provide a conceptual model that includes socio-demographic factors, political ecology/amenities of the parks, history/culture of park provisions, and individual perception of park spaces.

Leisure research specific to national parks

Of the limited body of research on race/ethnicity in the leisure field, a majority of the research focuses on minority participation in outdoor and nature-based recreation (Floyd, Bocarro, & Thompson, 2008). National Parks are often the setting for outdoor and nature-based recreation research because they are public areas that can provide a large sample size.

Examination into the issue of minority underrepresentation in the National Parks has been addressed for nearly fifty years. In 1973 Meeker wrote *Red, White, and Black in the National Parks*, an article addressing the aristocratic history of the National Parks (Meeker, 1973). Meeker suggests that nature as a romanticized symbol of purity and refuge from urban life is a Western ideological concept that is not maintained by other cultures, such as those of Native Americans

and African Americans. He traces the appreciation for spending leisure time in the outdoors to wealthy Greeks and Romans whose economic and social class allowed them the freedom to escape the city. Meeker traces the establishments of the National Parks to the Jeffersonian dream of the United States being an agrarian paradise, tended to by the great landowners who established our political and social systems. However, Native and African Americans do not share this common dream because their cultural systems do not support a separation between daily life and nature, as Western culture does. Furthermore, Meeker proposes the historical connection to the land for African-Americans is that of hard work and slavery and, for Native Americans, displacement and cultural exploitation. Ultimately, Meeker states that the National Parks will never serve the same emotional needs for minorities as they do whites, and as thus the purpose of the parks should be reconceived as areas that supports natural equilibrium and opportunities for human learning. Meeker's historically-based opinion piece is a good representation of the beginnings of study into the relationship between the National Parks and minorities. An emotional connection is established between historical discrimination experienced by minorities in relation to the parks, but no empirical evidence is provided in support of this argument.

As the United States continued to become more diversified and accepting of minorities in the late 1970's, the lack of empirical evidence in this area became an opportunity for leisure researchers to explore the relationship between ethno-racial identity and leisure behavior. The research on minorities in the National Parks beginning in the 1980's focused mainly on how minorities used the parks.

After a number of studies (Erickson, Johnson, & Kivel, 2009) (Floyd M. , 1999) (Schuett, Le, & Hollenhorst, 2010) (Roberts N. S., 2007) clearly established that minorities were not

equally represented at the national parks the literature began to focus on applying and creating theoretical models to explain this underrepresentation. For instance, in a literature review of the National Parks, Floyd (1999) found that there is a lack of literature specific to minority use of the national parks. While research exists suggesting that minorities are less likely to visit the parks, little research is available to suggest why this may be true. Following the same patterns as general leisure research, he suggested that the Marginality Hypothesis, The Subcultural Hypothesis, Assimilation Theory, and Discrimination Hypothesis are the best approaches to address this issue. Floyd advocates the need for the National Park Service to use science-based approaches when addressing the topic of minority use of the national parks. This research should include an integrated model that ties culture, socioeconomics, and discrimination together to explain the lack of minority visitation to the parks. In order for this model to be salient further research should include the impact of perceived, actual, and institutional racism.

In 2009 Erickson, Johnson, and Dana performed a qualitative inquiry study on African-Americans visitation to Rocky Mountain National Park (Erickson, Johnson, & Kivel, 2009). The researchers proposed that the current literature's focus on ethnicity, cultural assimilation, discrimination, and marginalization fails to acknowledge historical and cultural patterns of oppression. Although not explicitly stated, these patterns of oppression represent institutional discrimination. The interviews were collected from African-Americans living in the city of Denver, which is located 70 miles from the Rocky Mountain National Park. The interviews focused on how cultural factors, including beliefs, values, customs, and behaviors, and historical factors, including life history, socioeconomic status, racism, nature-based language, and destination-minded travel patterns, impacted African-American visitation to the park. The study found that introduction to the park experience as a child, financial constraints, perceived racial

segregation of outdoor spaces, knowledge and access to facilities and services in the park, and historical interpretation of the outdoors as unwelcoming are all factors that impact African-American park visitation. These factors confirmed that historical factors, as well as cultural factors, determine African-American visitation to the parks. Even in 2009 the results of the study once again confirmed that visitation to the National Parks is still interpreted as a white activity.

Implications

Implications for National Park Managers

The National Parks Service has come to realize that the lack of diversity in the parks is a major issue. In 2008 the National Parks Conservation Association created the National Parks Second Century Commission (National Parks Conservation Association, 2009). The goal of the commission was to create a unique plan to lead the NPS into the 21st century. A major objective of the commission was encouraging more diversity among park visitors and park employees. This objective is to be achieved through community outreach programs, employee training programs; and creating awareness of sites that celebrate cultural diversity and minority achievements.

In 2009, the National Parks Second Century Commission published a final report entitled “Advancing the National Park Idea” (National Parks Second Century Commission, 2009). The report consists of the recommendations of thirty diverse commissioners, ranging from retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor to REI CEO Sally Jewell to W. Richard West, Jr, founder of the National Museum of the American Indian. The commissioners spent the majority of 2008 and 2009 visiting many of the nation’s 390 National Parks, as well as meeting with NPS volunteers and employees; park advocates, school teachers, conservation experts, and citizens. The Cultural Resource and Historic Preservation Committee made the following recommendations in relation to diversity in the National Parks:

- “Make all visitors feel welcome in parks by increasing diversity among park employees and using multiple language interpretative programs and educational outreach such as those at Santa Monica Mountains and Lowell.

DIVERSIFYING THE NATIONAL PARKS

- Review for cultural bias and modify if appropriate the policies that affect uses of parks. Target interpretation toward groups whose cultural habits may not now comport with use policies that are appropriate.
- Thoughtfully consider needs for park sites or areas of larger parks that are focused on the needs and desires of different urban populations”

The committee also made specific recommendations relating to Native Americans:

- “Assure American Indian Tribal, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian consultation on all appropriate activities of National Parks and National Park Service programs.
- Increase recruitment of Native Americans as National Park Service employees.
- Use native stories and languages in park interpretation.
- Cooperate with and provide assistance to tribes in developing and operating tribal park systems and tribal programs to preserve natural and cultural resources and in other endeavors that are part of the National Park Idea.
- Assure full implementation of laws such as the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act that have particular importance for tribes.
- Update policies to facilitate connections by Native peoples and their living cultures to parks and other areas, including private access for ecologically sustainable traditional cultural practices.
- Establish an Office of Tribal and Native Peoples Relations within the Department of the Interior Solicitor’s Division of Conservation and Wildlife with the goal of removing unnecessary barriers to National Park Service and other agencies in tribal relations.

- Draw upon ‘Native Science,’ the knowledge, traditions, values, and attitudes toward the earth as guidance to the ways the National Park Service manages and interprets parks and resources”

While the current approaches to diversifying the visitation at the national parks have been somewhat effective, it is clear that more work is needed in order to make the national parks meaningful places for all citizens. Rather than trying to change the leisure preferences of subcultural ethnic groups to match those of the dominant White culture, the focus of diversifying the National Parks should be on creating programming and spaces that are inclusive and meaningful to those with differing backgrounds. In order to do this the strategies of the National Parks Service will need to address the subcultural differences of minority groups, the socioeconomic concerns constraining minority visitation, and the perceptions of overt and institutional discrimination surrounding the National Parks. While creative solutions are essential, rather than recreating the wheel, the National Parks Service should look to replicate the practices of existing programs that are successfully connecting minorities to the outdoors.

Addressing subcultural differences.

Sister Parks. Leisure research has demonstrated that while people of color do not recreate as often in natural settings, they do take advantage of urban parks (National Parks Conservation Association, 2009; Tinsley & Tinsely, 2002; Hutchinson, 1987; Bryne & Wolch, 2009; Washburne, 1978). Many of the activities in which minorities participate at urban parks, such as fishing, walking, grilling, and having family functions, are also available at many of the national parks. Creating partnerships between urban parks and the National Park Service can be a good way to make minorities more aware of what is available. One type of partnership that has not yet been explored is the creation of sister-parks. Sister-parks would be an established

relationship between an urban park and a national park that provide access to similar activities. Information about the similarities of the parks can be disseminated through park staff, signage, social media, and written materials provided at both parks. Once a month an outing, departing from the urban park, to the national park can be established to provide exposure to the park. The NPS can work with community interest groups and non-profits to provide free or discounted transportation for the outing (Chavez D. , 2008).

Youth Programs. As leisure behavior is greatly influenced by childhood experiences, exposing youth to the National Parks at young ages is a crucial element in increasing the value of National Parks for minority populations. As found at the Rocky Mountain National Park (Erickson, Johnson, & Kivel, 2009), introduction to the National Parks as a child is a key indicator in adult visitation and perceptions of the park. Lack of knowledge and access to facilities and services in the park, as well as the historical interpretation of the outdoors as unwelcoming were factors that also impacted park visitation. Courses and experiences specifically designed to expose minority youth to the National Parks can address these subcultural norms and make the parks a place where ethno-racial minorities feel welcome and comfortable.

The Yosemite Conservancy, previously the Yosemite Fund, is an extremely successful non-profit aimed at exposing individuals to Yosemite National Park (Yosemite Conservancy, 2012). In the past five years the Yosemite Conservancy has more than tripled its' spending on youth programs to \$1.7 million in order to increase Latino, African-American and Asian-American visitation to Yosemite (Rogers, 2012). A major aim is to bring youth from inner-city areas to Yosemite in the hopes of creating a generation that values the parks and will care for them in the future. Don Neubacher, Superintendant of Yosemite shares in the belief that youth

are an essential component to increasing minority visitation to his park: "My view is one kid at a time" (Rogers, 2012). Junior Ranger programs are one of the park's most successful youth programs with more than 25,000 participants in 2010. Another program called WildLink exposes underserved youth to the park over a five day outdoor exploration that includes outdoor recreation, cultural and natural history, and conservation and stewardship projects. Once the students have participated in WildLink they may return to participate in WildLink Bridge, a two week program that exposes young people to careers in the national parks (Yosemite Conservancy, 2012). WildLink also serves as an introduction and prerequisite for a number of other youth programs offered at Yosemite. A key portion of many successful minority youth programs, including WildLink, is the inclusion of family and community members in the programming. In this way youth programs can increase their impact beyond individuals and begin to affect the perceptions and actions of entire families and communities in regards to the National Parks.

Family Programs. As minority populations tend to prefer to recreate in large family groups that include children and adults (Dwyer & Barro, 2001), creating intergenerational family opportunities should be a key focus for the National Parks System. An extremely popular program that connects minority families with their public lands is the Families in Nature program in Las Vegas, NV. Families in Nature was created in 2008 as a research opportunity, but was so popular with the local community that it became a bi-monthly program that has served over 500 participants (UNLV Public Lands Institute). The program is a collaborative effort of the Southern Nevada Agency Partnership, a collective of the local branches of the federal land management agencies, including the National Park Service; the UNLV Public Lands Institute; and the Winchester Cultural Community Center. Families in Nature connects the predominantly Hispanic families, who use the cultural center and park upon which it resides, to natural areas around the

Las Vegas Valley. Excursions consist mainly of nature-based activities and have included family kayaking trips to Lake Mead National Recreation Area, ranger-led hiking programs and cookouts at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area; and plant and animal identification programs at the Spring Mountains National Forest. While the programming is nature-based, such as hiking or kayaking, a portion of each activity is always devoted to gathering with family and sharing a communal meal, which is a very important Hispanic subcultural norm. The programs and transportation are provided to the participants at no cost, which addresses some of the barriers for minorities associated with spending time at the National Parks (Erickson, Johnson, & Kivel, 2009).

Addressing socioeconomic concerns.

Socioeconomics is a crucial area for the National Park Service to address as many minority populations, especially Hispanics and Asians, tend to gather in much larger groups for socialization purposes (Tinsley & Tinsely, 2002). Thus, the cost of recreating in the National Parks may inherently be much greater for an Asian group of twenty, as opposed to a Caucasian group that would typically consist of two or three (Tinsley & Tinsely, 2002). Furthermore, these costs often represent a higher portion of minorities' total discretionary funding (Bowker, 1998), as opposed to Caucasians. While the high cost of transportation, entrance fees, and facility use fees at the National Parks are barriers that impact minorities at a greater rate (Bowker, 1998), the National Parks Service can work with community partners to help decrease the impact of these fees.

One way the National Park Service can expand its' influence on the community and avoid the financial restrictions of being a governmental agency is to work in partnership with friends groups, non-profits, and other federal agencies (Winter, 2007). These partners have fewer

restrictions than the NPS and can often provide alternate funding sources, pathways of communication prior to arrival onsite, and encourage community involvement (Chavez D. , 2008). The relationship between the Red Rock Canyon Interpretative Association, RRCIA, and the Bureau of Land Management, BLM, is a model for government organizations partnering with non-profit organizations. The two organizations operate under a Cooperative Agreement, which allows money to flow in both directions between the organizations (BLM, 2011). The agency uses some of its funding to provide free recreation, art, and environmental education classes that occur daily at Red Rock Canyon. It also provides funding for field trips for at-risk youth and for education programs that occur in the schools, such as the Mojave Max desert tortoise program. Through partnerships with community organizations and non-profits the National Park Service can help to provide free field trips, classes, and park entrance to minorities that may otherwise not have the financial means to access the National Parks.

Providing free classes and field trips to visit the national parks is an important step to creating more interest in the parks, but the indirect cost of visitation must also be addressed. The cost of car and gas expenses, purchasing food, and obtaining the appropriate equipment are all barriers for minority participation in outdoor recreation (Roberts & Chitewere, 2011) that need to be addressed by the National Park Service. For example, in regards to his ability to access the Golden Gate National Recreation in San Francisco an African American man stated: “Typically, African Americans don’t have home ownership to pass down to their children and so finances is a big issue as well. Not only do you have to know about the places and getting there, but they’re usually far out, takes a lot of gas, takes money to eat out or bring a lunch with you, you have to be prepared, it takes money” (Roberts & Chitewere, 2011). The separation from urban life and solitude that draws many to the national parks also makes many of the parks physically

inaccessible for those that depend on public transportation. In order to address the transportation concerns of minorities; the National Parks Service must work in conjunction with public transportation agencies to include recreation as a major goal of transit (Frescas, Martin, & Steenken, 2004). One such relationship is already in place with The Bay Area Open Space Council's Transit and Trails program. The Bay Area Open Space Council is a non-profit devoted to preserving and providing access to important natural areas in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Rails to Trails (Bay Area Open Space Council) program is a web-based application that allows recreationists to find public transportation routes to parks, trails, and natural areas. Some of the supporting partners of the program are the National Park Service, East Bay Regional Park District, Bay Area Rapid Transit, and Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (Bay Area Open Space Council). Each of the organizations has a commitment to making recreation and access to natural areas a serious priority. The program is making it possible for many of the residents of the racially and ethnically diverse area to access the eleven national parks in the region.

Addressing discrimination

In order to fully address the perceptions of discrimination surrounding the National Parks, the National Park Service must directly address historic discrimination, institutional discrimination, and overt racism from other park users. The goal for the National Parks Service in addressing these issues should be to change the perception of the National Parks as spaces that are perceived as White spaces (Erickson, Johnson, & Kivel, 2009) and unwelcoming to minorities.

Historic discrimination. One way to address historic discrimination in the National Parks is to provide special programming that directly addresses the unique history of minorities in the National Parks; without avoiding sensitive issues, such as the enslavement of African-Americans or the displacement of Native Americans. These special programs and events aimed at

telling the real history of minorities in the National Parks can serve to create meaning for and connect minorities to the cultural and historical value of the national parks.

A successful example of special programming for minorities are the programs currently offered by ranger Shelton Johnson at Yosemite National Park (PBS, 2009). Johnson has spent the last twenty years as one of the only African American park rangers. His educational programs provide visitors with the history of the Sierra Buffalo Soldiers, an all black horse infantry that protected the borders of California's national parks. According to Shelton: "The prevailing view of American history is that African-Americans and other people of color played no major role in those formative years. People of color helped shape the American West; the recognition of this has not yet come to pass. The dead cannot speak for themselves; and therefore need a spokesperson" (Johnson S.). As one of the few African Americans representing the National Park Service, Shelton takes personal responsibility for representing the history of African Americans in the park service. He has extended this role beyond Yosemite National Park by speaking publicly about the lack of minority visitation to the national parks.

Institutional racism. The lack of responsiveness by public land management agencies to the needs of ethno-racial minority groups is an issue regularly stated in research relating to minority participation in outdoor recreation (Bengston, Schermann, Moua, & Lee, 2008). Three ways to combat this issue are to diversify the workforce at the National Parks, include community members of minority populations in decision-making, and increase the amount of information provided in languages other than English.

One of the main objectives of the Cultural Resource and Historic Preservation Committee is to "make all visitors feel welcome in parks by increasing diversity among park employees" (National Parks Second Century Commission, 2009). This objective is generally

being addressed by hiring more racial minorities to work in the parks. While the hiring of people with more diverse racial backgrounds is crucial, racial background does not equate to cultural sensitivity. In order to truly diversify the workforce, the NPS must increase cultural sensitivity training among staff. This cultural sensitivity training must be creative, unique, and interesting in order for it to truly have an impact on the NPS staff. Rather than the traditional method of sitting in a classroom lecture on how to avoid stereotyping and using racial slurs, bringing experts and community members of unique ethno-racial background to the parks would be impactful. For instance, one unconventional training method would be to have staff members from a variety of ethno-racial backgrounds train other staff on how to pronounce non-Anglican names from their cultures. Bringing experts on minorities in leisure and recreation, such as Chavez, Floyd, and Shinew, to speak to NPS staff about their findings and experiences would provide a strong foundation for staff..

In studies of the Salish-Kootenia tribe in Montana (Flood & McAvoy, 2007) and the Hmong in Minnesota (Bengston, Schermann, Moua, & Lee, 2008) park users showed a great desire to be more involved in the overall park's process. Both groups suggested that involving the leaders from their communities in the cultural training process would result in better understanding of their people and their needs. One Hmong woman even stated that "they have to have better training for the managers, park managers, about the Hmong- to understand the Hmong more. So when they see us, they will not hate us and not ask, 'Who are these Hmong?'" (Bengston, Schermann, Moua, & Lee, 2008).

Along with cultural sensitivity training, these same groups suggested that a lack of information in their language was a major barrier to their involvement in outdoor recreation. Signage that includes symbols and pictures, rather than only words written in English, is one

simple tool that can increase comprehension of important information and regulations.

Furthermore, providing maps, local information, and tour guides in multiple languages can help minorities feel more welcome and comfortable in the outdoor environment. Promoting bilingual hiring in the NPS can also help to alleviate this concern.

A lack of minority faces in the advertising used to market outdoor recreation and the National Parks is another reason why minorities may associate the National Parks with prejudice. Minorities are typically absent from advertising and literature on the outdoors (Martin, 2004). Marketing aimed at getting minorities active in the outdoor is another area that can be addressed by the National Parks Service. A recent and very effective strategy to promote the National Parks to minorities is to market the outdoors through successful and well-known minority figures, such as Michelle Obama and Oprah Winfrey. Obama's 'Let's Move Outside' initiative is part of the larger Let's Move program (Department of the Interior, 2011). The Let's Move Outside initiative is specifically aimed at promoting "kids and families to take advantage of American's great outdoors-which abound in every city, town and community" in order to be more active and improve physical and mental health. On June 1, 2010 the First Lady spoke in Las Vegas at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area along Harry Reid, Dina Titus, and Reah Suh of the Department of the Interior to promote the initiative (Staff, 2010). While Michelle Obama is the spokesperson for the campaign, the Department of the Interior actually administers the campaign. Here in Las Vegas, the program has partnered with the Clark County School District and the UNLV Public Lands Institute to provide outdoor physical recreation opportunities to disadvantaged elementary school students; who are mainly minorities. These trips have included free transportation and activity facilitation for school classes at a number of Southern Nevada's public lands, including areas managed by the National Park Service.

Overt racism. One of the hardest areas for the National Park Service to address in relation to minority populations is overt racism expressed from other park users. In order to break the perceptions of the National Parks as places of discrimination, the NPS will need to take a reactive and proactive stance. Staff at the parks should be trained in properly handling complaints. Individuals should be encouraged to report and document incidents of discrimination they experience while at the parks. These reports should be thoroughly investigated and the individuals reporting the events should receive follow-up on the incident so that minorities do not feel their concerns are ignored or that the NPS tolerates acts of discrimination.

Although it is challenging to change the existing beliefs of individuals, increasing positive interracial contact in the parks may be a successful way to promote unprejudiced behavior (Shinew, Glover, & Parry, 2004). In Floyd and Shinew's contact theory research (Floyd & Shinew, 1999), they studied not just preference and participation rates but also level and characters of interracial contact. This research can likewise be useful in leisure program design and marketing. Contact theory holds that when a person lacks contact with different types of people, he or she is likely to form a negative image of others based upon ignorance and misconception. Their conclusion that an increase in interracial contact leads to an increase in shared preference for a greater number of leisure activities can be used to encourage not only increased minority participation, but joint participation among different ethnic and racial groups. Youth and family programs can be a tool utilized by the National Park Service to increase the amount of interracial contact at the National Parks. Using partnerships with community resources, such as interest groups and non-profits, to advertise youth and family programs and special events may be a good way to draw a variety of different individuals to a specific venue at the park. Programming specific activities that require individuals to work together with those that

are unfamiliar with the national parks and outdoor recreation can further promote interracial contact. A simple ice breaker that requires all of the young people in a group to introduce themselves and define what a national park means to them, or a more complex team building activity that requires individuals to work together with strangers to complete a common goal, would serve to increase interracial contact. The key for National Park staff is to create positive opportunities for contact that allows for socialization and growth in order to learn about the norms and cultures of others.

Implications for Leisure Researchers

In order for future leisure research to be more applicable to the managers of the National Park Service, it will need to be more empirically and theoretically based (Floyd M. , 1999).

While it is clear that race and ethnicity play a role in leisure preferences, future research endeavors need to go beyond preference and begin to answer the questions of why these preferences exist and how our existing resources can accommodate diverse leisure patterns. With that said, leisure research would be much more valuable to the study of minorities if the field were to begin to borrow research methods and theoretical frameworks from other disciplines, such as ethnography, social-psychology, or health; rather than overrelying on Washburne and Floyd's Subcultural and Marginality theories (Bryne & Wolch, 2009). As Gobster suggests, researchers need to look beyond the self-reported preferences of minority groups and research factors such as picnic foods, group sizes and compositions, areas where the individuals were raised, and other factors shown to be important to different groups' leisure activities (Gobster P. H., 2007).

There is also a need for leisure research that can be applied to broader populations, not only applicable to users of a single park or geographical area. The results of leisure research that

is focused upon minority populations living in a limited geographical area may provide little carry-over to minority groups living in other parts of the country. For example, a majority of the studies on the leisure behavior of minorities, particularly African Americans, have occurred in the urban parks of Chicago (Shinew, Floyd, & Parry, 2004; Sharaievksa, Stodolska, Shinew, & Kim, 2010; Floyd and Shinew, 1999; Dwyer and Barro, 2001; Washburne, 1978); while much of the research on Hispanics occurs in the Southwest (Chavez D. , 2008). The use of these two areas for the majority of leisure research may explain why some contradicting data exists.

Although these samples may be convenient due to large concentrations of minority populations, the results are not particularly useful to those working in the National Parks. Applicable research will need to

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