

**Re-imagining Outdoor Recreation Enthusiasts: An Analysis of the Impact of
Gender and Race on Outdoor Recreation Preferences**

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ABSTRACT

The Back to Nature Movement inspired middle class Americans from all backgrounds to escape the diseases and pollution that plagued U.S cities in favor of the “great outdoors.” The construction of these spaces as white has often erased the experiences of minorities as they navigated outdoor recreation landscapes. In order to challenge these constructions this thesis seeks to understand how university of students across different backgrounds navigate outdoor recreation. Using historical and sociological methods, I surveyed 459 university students from May-September to assess their outdoor recreation preferences. The first section provides an historical overview of African American outdoor leisure to lay the foundation of minority outdoor leisure preferences. The following sections explore outdoor recreation preferences across gender, and race/ethnicity, displaying how millennials from all backgrounds seek to engage with the environment. The results found that there were minimal differences in outdoor recreation preferences across race and gender, challenging dominant discourses around gender, race and outdoor recreation.

Keywords: race, ethnicity, gender, culture, outdoor recreation, preferences, environment.

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Chapter 1: An historical account of outdoor leisure practices in African American communities

“Well I don’t think black people like to camp,” claims Lee Harvey, founder of Burning Man, an outdoor festival that brings a wide variety of people together in a desert for weeklong festivities. Harvey’s remarks were in response to criticisms that Burning Man was not racially diverse. Less than 1.3% of African Americans attend, compared to 74% of white Americans.¹ Harvey’s comments reveal long held ideologies in the American consciousness that African Americans are disconnected from the environment. Studies have attributed the lack of participation to slavery, racism, and the coding of wilderness. Scholars argue that the legacy of slavery, where Africans Americans were often abused in forests, prevents them from enjoying the outdoors today. Some even assert that when African Americans do enter wilderness areas they face racism and discrimination. While others have looked out how wilderness spaces are “coded” as white spaces, and the effect of that universalism on minority participation.²

¹ “Burning Man Founder: Black Folks Don’t like to Camp as much as White Folks” The Guardian. Accessed December 17, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2015/sep/04/burning-man-founder-larry-harvey-race-diversity-silicon-valley> .

² Carolyn Marie Finney, “Introduction” in *Black faces, white spaces: Reimagining the relationship of African Americans to the great outdoors*. UNC Press Books, 2014., and Glave, Dianne D., and Mark Stoll, eds. *To love the wind and the rain: African Americans and environmental history*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005.

It is important to understand the different barriers African Americans face when engaging in nature, however, these studies overlook key historical narratives that can also help frame this debate. There is a long history of African Americans not only participating in outdoor leisure, but also in creating separate outdoor spaces where they could flee the urban ills faced in cities.³ While they did face racial violence when entering these “white spaces” it did not deter African Americans for promoting vacation in outdoor areas, especially Black elites.

This thesis seeks to build on historical works that highlights how marginalized identities navigated outdoor leisure beginning in the Jim Crow Era, in order to complicate contemporary debates around minorities and outdoor recreation. It focuses on how millennial populations from diverse backgrounds engage with nature. It builds on survey data distributed during the summer of 2016 to test the subculture and marginality theses on minorities and outdoor recreation. First, I provide historical background on African Americans and outdoor leisure. Second, I dive into contemporary ways that minorities engage in nature, drawing from sociological methods. By using mixed methods, I am able to account for the historical and contemporary uses of nature, which is a major gap in current sociological studies on the topic.

³ For more information on the rise of cities in the United States see: Dorceta E. Taylor, *The Environment and the People in American Cities, 1600s1900s: Disorder, Inequality, and Social Change*. Duke University Press, 2009. For more information on Black leisure practices see: Dorceta E. Taylor, *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection*. Duke University Press, 2016.

The goal of this first section is to analyze how African Americans participated in outdoor leisure as promoted in African American periodicals during the Jim Crow Era. Despite the constraints of racism, African Americans continued to flock to natural areas, and used it as a way to promote racial uplift in the black community.

1.1 The Rise of Outdoor Leisure in the United States

Nature's shift from a place of utility to a space of play and recreation is an important aspect of African Americans engagement in outdoor leisure. With the rise of the back to nature movement in the United States—shaped by Romanticism and Transcendentalism—playing in nature became a new theme in American culture coinciding with the rise of national park movement. This section will provide a brief overview of the rise of outdoor leisure in the United States.

Back to Nature: The Closing Frontier and Outdoor Recreation

What the Mediterranean Sea was to the Greeks, breaking the bond of custom, offering new experiences, calling out new institutions and activities, that, and more, the ever retreating frontier has been to the United States directly, and to the nations of Europe more remotely. And now, four centuries from the discovery of America, at the end of a hundred years of life under the Constitution, the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history.⁴

⁴ Fredrick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," accessed on December 16, 2015, <https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/archives/the-significance-of-the-frontier-in-american-history>.

During the time of Fredrick Jackson Turner's essay "The Significance of the Frontier" the "back to nature" movement in the United States was well underway. The back to nature movement developed from a new wave of thinking that placed humans as a prominent part of nature as opposed to being separate from it. Championed by thinkers such as Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Emerson this movement was shaped by romanticism and transcendentalism.⁵ Both Thoreau and Emerson proposed that nature should be protected for its own sake. During the height of the Industrial Revolution, Thoreau saw nature as an escape from urban decay. He writes, "how important is a constant intercourse with nature and the contemplation of natural phenomena to the preservation of moral and intellectual health!"⁶ Compared to earlier periods, where nature was seen as desolate and evil, the back to nature movement associated nature as something sacred and sublime.

This ideology of spending time in nature for its beauty and other non-utilitarian uses, spread across the United States. In the backdrop of the creation of the first national parks, there was also an increase of urban parks, and the establishment of different groups and organizations that sought out natural landscapes for leisurely pursuits.⁷ For example, in Southern California, several hiking groups were established to allow citizens to traverse through the San Gabriel Mountains. Camping was also a new pastime that developed out of this movement, and many middleclass Americans would "rough it" in the woods for a few days to get the full "wilderness" experience. It is important to situate the back to nature movement with the rise of the middleclass. The growth of the

⁵ Matthew Klinge, *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007, 155.

⁶ Henry David Thoreau, accessed on December 16, 2015, <https://www.walden.org/Library/Quotations/Nature>.

⁷ Dorceta Taylor, *The Environment and the People in American Cities*, 1-41.

middleclass made space for more people to use their “spare time” for leisurely pursuits.⁸ As intellectuals such as Thoreau espoused the merits of enjoying nature for its aesthetics, more Americans found themselves with the free time necessary to be able to “appreciate” nature in new ways.

Urban Consumers and Wilderness

Rapid urbanization inspired many middle class and wealthy Americans to experience the pleasures of nature. Cities were associated with disease and decay, while nature was viewed as full of health benefits and embodying “American values.”⁹ Nature was now commoditized in news ways, where advertisements promoted nature as an escape from unpleasant city life. By virtue of American expansion, the West was America’s playground, and cities in the West began to capitalize off this image by selling themselves as cleaner cities. Seattle’s Chamber of Commerce pamphlet claimed that Seattle was “becoming a health and pleasure resort of deserved fame...” and offered tourists “a country full of charms.”¹⁰

The consumptive nature of wilderness is pertinent in understanding the shifting narratives surrounding nature and outdoor leisure. Klinge argues that “leisure paralleled and merged with the rise of consumerism, a means of escape for Americans of means from the strictures and

⁸ Judy A. Rose "No Gingerbread or Doodads Allowed: Recreation Residence Tracts in the National Forests of California." *Multiple Dwelling and Tourism: Negotiating Place, Home and Identity* (2006): 295.

⁹Roderick Frazier Nash, “Introduction,” *Wilderness and the American mind*. Yale University Press, 2014.

¹⁰ Matthew Klinge, *Emerald City*, 156.

complexities of a new machine-made world.”¹¹ It is of little surprise then that the rise of outdoor leisure in the United States emerged at a time where more Americans both black and white could afford to take vacations. Inspired by the words of Thoreau and Teddy Roosevelt, outdoor leisure became entrenched in notions of freedom, manliness, health, as well as social status.¹² It is in this backdrop that the African American middleclass also shifts into vacationing in the wild.

1.2. Going Wild: African Americans and Outdoor Leisure

For sheer physical beauty— for sheen of water and golden air, for nobleness of tree and flower of shrub, for shining river and song of bird and the low, moving whisper of sun, moon, and star, it is the beautifulest [sic] stretch I have seen for twenty years; and then to that add fellowship . . . all sons and great— grandchildren of Ethiopia, all with the wide leisure of rest and play— can you imagine a more marvelous thing than Idlewild?¹³

African Americans were also a prominent part of the back to nature trend spreading across the United States during the twentieth century. W.E.B Dubois, arguably one of the United States’ most formidable sociologist, encouraged readers of *The Crisis* to enjoy the pleasures of nature. Dubois was particularly fond of Idlewild, a now historic African American community in Michigan. During the height of the Jim Crow Era it was a major nature resort for middleclass African Americans around the country. He promoted Idlewild as a haven that celebrates both

¹¹ Klinge, *Emerald City*, 158.

¹² William Cronon "The trouble with wilderness: or, getting back to the wrong nature." *Environmental History* (1996): 7-28.

¹³ W. E. B. DU BOIS, “Hopkinsville, Chicago, and Idlewild,” *Crisis*, 1921.

African American culture and nature. By the first half of the twentieth century middleclass African Americans already engaged in outdoor leisure as a vehicle to escape the confines of cities.¹⁴

African Americans also associated cities with pollution, disease and vice. Unlike their white counterparts, African Americans were often limited in their mobility. They often were restricted to certain neighborhoods or blocks, due to institutionalized segregation mechanized through racial zoning, restrictive covenants, urban renewal and redlining.¹⁵ The need to find solace in nature was intensified amongst African Americans due to the racial landscape of the twentieth century. Reformers and scholars such as Dubois urged other African Americans to participate in outdoor leisure to reap the benefits of a more natural living. Even though Black elites had to navigate racism in the outdoors, they still utilized outdoor leisure to reaffirm respectability politics as part of a larger racial uplift narrative that was common in the Jim Crow Era.¹⁶

¹⁴ Colin Fisher, *Urban Green: Nature, Recreation, and the Working Class in Industrial Chicago*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015, 40.

¹⁵ Dorceta E. Taylor, *Toxic communities: Environmental racism, industrial pollution, and residential mobility*. NYU Press, 2014, 192-227.

¹⁶ For more information on African American outdoor leisure preferences and motivations to recreate see Dorceta E. Taylor, *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection*. Duke University Press, 2016.

This paper focuses on how African Americans participated in outdoor leisure during the late nineteenth and twentieth century. A part of the larger back to nature movement, Black Chicagoans, in particular, also sought to use nature as vehicle to escape the confines of the city. By the latter half of the nineteenth century, Chicago's black population grew to 14,271. While the majority of African Americans were in the domestic service industry, there was a sizeable middleclass population that included pastors, businessmen, and other professionals.

The center of the African American community was the Southside of Chicago; though some African American populations were also dispersed around affluent white communities in Chicago. The city was not immune to racism, but segregation was not as strictly policed as it would later become the tantamount feature of Chicago's history.¹⁷ In fact, public spaces were often shared openly between black and white communities. Fisher notes that during the 1890s, Oswald Gardens often held events for Germans, Scandinavians and African Americans, with the *Chicago Tribune* reporting that "it was a large, good-humored, parti-colored crowd, resembling at a distance a huge dish of ice-cream, vanilla and chocolate mixed."¹⁸

The Great Migration shifted these dynamics, as the influx of African Americans from the South increased racial tension in Chicago. As white Americans began to sharply define racial barriers, African Americans found themselves increasingly trapped in the Belt Black, "a narrow

¹⁷ Colin Fisher "African Americans, Outdoor Recreation, and the 1919 Chicago Race Riot," in "To Love the Wind and the Rain": Essays in African American Environmental History, ed. Dianne Glave and Mark Stoll (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 64.

¹⁸ Colin Fisher *Urban Green*, 90.

strip just a few blocks wide that ran along State Street from Twelfth to Fifty-seventh Streets.”¹⁹ The Black Belt contained some of the largest slums in Chicago, and poor African Americans experienced high levels of pollution and other poor environmental conditions.²⁰ The Black Belt also contained an affluent Black community in the Bronzeville neighborhood that also dealt with an increasingly overcrowded area. Yet affluent African Americans did not have the ability to move to more spacious communities. Distinct from affluent white communities, who for the most could keep some distance from the poor. The physical limits imposed on black mobility encouraged them to seek out nature in their spare time. Nature provided a space for greater mobility, better environmental conditions, and beauty.

It is also important to provide context on respectability politics within the black community. During the height of the Jim Crow Era African American activists promoted “racial pride, respectability, and work ethic” as part of a larger racial uplift ideology. Racial uplift developed out of educated African Americans working towards eliminating racism through improving the lives of poorer blacks. Respectability politics espoused that if African Americans, especially the lower class, acted with a set of ethics and respect for themselves then they would gain entry into mainstream society. Many educated African Americans established schools and organizations that sought to uplift the race by employing these tenets.²¹ Outdoor leisure evolved in the African American community to not only represent an escape from urban ills, but also as a

¹⁹ Ibid 91.

²⁰ Fisher “African Americans, Outdoor Recreation, and the 1919 Chicago Race Riot,” 91.

²¹ Victoria Wolcott, “Bible, Bath, and Broom: Nannie Helen Burrough’s National Training school and African American racial uplift,” *Journal of Women's History*, Volume 9, Number 1, Spring 1997, pp. 88-110 (Article) DOI: 10.1353/jowh.2010.0161.

mechanism to impose social control over working class blacks behavior in the name of racial uplift.

1.3. Racial Uplift and Outdoor Leisure

Working class African Americans in particular hoped for some respite from hours spent working in factories, and took solace in local parks that provided greenery. For example, in Washington Park, which intersected with parts of the Black Belt, African Americans would picnic, fish, play sports, swim, and enjoy a clean environment. *The Chicago Defender* reported that Washington Park was “spring to those who are not financially able to answer the call of the wild, and the parks afford at least a breathing space, a place to dream.”²² This was perhaps heightened in black communities, where racism kept the of majority of black population confined to certain parts of the city. The Black Metropolis utilized Washington Park as space where they could relieve themselves from the tension of urban centers.

Even though Washington Park only encompassed two square miles of park land accessible to blacks, it still flourished. African Americans flocked to the green space to engage in all sort of leisurely activities.²³ Outdoor leisure spaces became little oasis within black communities that were usually under developed. This section will first address how the Black middleclass promoted outdoor leisure to the masses. Finally, it will highlight how nature became a space where African

²² Fisher, *Urban Green*, 40.

²³ Fisher, *Urban Green*, 104.

Americans could perform their culture, connecting it all to outdoor leisure becoming a place of racial uplift.

Outdoor leisure became a place where gender, race and class collided in the African American community. In 1935 *The Chicago Defender*, one of the major African American newspapers in the country, published an article detailing a recent event held by the local Camp Fire Girls chapter, a national organization that promoted youth development through camping and outdoor recreation. *The Defender* writes “girls as well as observers gain a new insight into the meaning of Camp Fire and new vision of working together of all groups united as a whole.” It continued on that “camping trips, hikes...and all other such activities are given to the girls which leads to the developing of them into splendid womanhood. It also takes care of the leisure time of the adolescent girl.”²⁴ Wolcott notes during this time educated black women established training schools and organizations as institutions of uplift.²⁵ The local black chapter of Camp Fire Girls was no exception to this ideology. It promoted outdoor leisure as a training ground for young girls to grow into respectable women that would “bring the race forward.”²⁶

Outdoor leisure became a prominent mechanism in rearing “respectable” children, the Camp Fire Girls association was one example, another example is the idea of “home camping” that arose during the war time. “War time travel restrictions won’t interfere with the summer campers at the Robert Brooks Homes,” announced *The Defender* in 1945. The Stay-at-Home

²⁴ *The Chicago Defender* “Campfire Girls” March 30 1935, accessed December 16, 2015, <http://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/492533206?accountid=14667> .

²⁵ Victoria Wolcott, “Bible, Bath, and Broom,” 93.

²⁶ Ibid.

campers “will meet five days a week...to participate in sports, folk dancing...[and] day trips to points outside of the city’s neighborhood [including]...parks.”²⁷ At the time Robert Brooks Homes, was a new housing project in the West side of Chicago that was intended to be 80% Black and 20% White.²⁸ Programs like Stay-at-Home Campers and Camp Fire Girls sought to act as “training grounds” for black youth to fully indoctrinate them into respectability politics. Prominent African Americans would continue to use newspapers as a vehicle to promote respectability politics through outdoor leisure.

The Defender had a legacy of publishing articles promoting outdoor leisure. The weekly health columnist Dr. Wilberforce Williams posted a series of columns applauding the benefits of outdoor leisure:

There is an ever increasing demand, for us to get out, and away from the city—to get close to nature—to commune with the running brooks, trees, and singing birds, and all the growing vegetation—to get far away from the heat, the dust, the hurry, the bustling marts and the streets of overcrowded, jostling municipality and find some cool, shady spot to camp where one may find rest for mind for mind and body with nature’s purest food, water and air.²⁹

Prominent members of the Chicago black middleclass promoted outdoor leisure to other African Americans, emphasizing the benefits of vacationing, nature, and escaping the city over the summer. Other affluent African Americans would also promote leisure to the masses. *The Defender* wrote: “to those who love the life outdoors nothing commends itself from the standpoint

²⁷ *The Chicago Defender*, “Bilikens to Enjoy Summer of Home Camping,” June 30, 1945. Accessed December 16, 2015.

<http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/492675205/fulltextPDF?accountid=14667> .

²⁸ Bowly Devereaux, *The Poorhouse: Subsidized Housing in Chicago*, SIU Press, 2012, 33 and Wolcott “Bible, Broom, and Bath,” 90.

²⁹ Fisher “African Americans, Outdoor Recreation, and the 1919 Chicago Race Riot,” 69.

of health more than a few weeks' outing along the seashore for a week or two... [it] brings out the best in our nature."³⁰ *The Defender* as a structure within the Black Belt zealously promoted outdoor leisure. Fisher notes "for those without the means to travel to the woods and lakes of Michigan *The Defender* urged the frequent visits to nearby parks, beaches, and forest preserves."³¹ It became a major advertising site for the promotion of outdoor leisure in black communities.

Black elites continuously promoted camping among the lower classes. Fisher stated that "many affluent and middle-class African Americans not only sought the country and the wilderness, but also supported organizations that made nature available to less privileged children and young adults. African American reformers continued to believe that outdoor recreation in parks and wilderness served as a much needed antidote to unhealthy life in the ghetto..."³² Affluent blacks realized that outdoor leisure was an alternative to "vice" and other undesirable behaviors that poor blacks showcased in their spare time. They encouraged all African Americans to participate in outdoor leisure as a way of racial uplift.³³ Henry Mason, writer for the *Christian Advocate* wrote:

Twelve million Negroes with social circumscription constantly being drawn more tightly about them are entitled to at least one decent, well-equipped, attractive place where they may go at times for meditation, recuperation, and informal social contacts under pleasant conditions. Unless the pressure upon the Negro is lifted by offering and providing for him some outlet for his pent-up energies and feelings, there is danger of producing a mental and pathological condition in the race that will become a menace to public welfare.³⁴

³⁰ *The Chicago Defender*, "Is part of Human Nature: Love of Outdoor Life has been planted deep in the breasts of men and women," September 26, 1914. Accessed December 16, 2015 (<http://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/docview/493213453?accountid=14667>).

³¹ Fisher, "African Americans, Outdoor Recreation, and the 1919 Chicago Race Riot," 70.

³² *Ibid* 74.

³³ Dorceta Taylor, *Rise of the American Conservation Movement*, 338.

³⁴ Henry J. Mason, *Christian Advocate* (Southwestern Edition), May 12, 1938.

There was a real fear among reformers that if lower class blacks were left to their own devices, that vice would run rampant. Thus middleclass African Americans sought to use nature as way of racial uplift.

African Americans also noted how natural spaces at times were interracial and cultural. Biloxian Lee Owens reminisces on his past vacations where he states “later in the evening, that beach would be full...Anybody could go down there and sit down on the beach all night long...Fish down there. White and black used to sit down there together.”³⁵ Outdoor leisure became a space where different identities intersected. It was also a space where they could express their culture.

In Chicago African Americans used local parks and green areas to celebrate their African identity. The Bud Billiken Parade and Picnic held in Washington Park embodied practices from Yoruba culture, adopted dances from the Congo, and attire from all over West Africa. Fisher argues that “Chicago’s black community understood that these roots grew through the soil...the Negro Speaks of Rivers of the rural South, but their roots did not begin in this fraught landscape. Rather they extended from Chicago back to Africa.”³⁶ Outdoor leisure became a pathway for African Americans to honor and remember their past, connect to their culture, and build a strong community among each other.³⁷ Outdoor leisure manifested itself into a space where African

³⁵ Andrew W. Kahrl, *The Land Was Ours: African American beaches from Jim Crow to the Sunbelt South*. Harvard University Press, 2012, 11.

³⁶ Fisher, *Urban Green*, 112.

³⁷ Ibid.

Americans could perform their culture and build community. This aspect of community and identity building also contributed to racial uplift.³⁸

Black elites not only saw nature a space where they could escape urban ills, but also as a site of morality building. They promoted outdoor leisure among working class blacks, because they believed that structured time in nature prevented the working class from degrading themselves. Nature also became a space where African Americans could celebrate their own culture and identity, with festivals like Juneteenth often celebrated in green spaces. Both the cultural connections and the respectability politics connected to a larger ideology of racial uplift.

African American reformers believed that if they trained the working class and poor to respect themselves, and educated them on their history, that it would help all African Americans gain access to white society.³⁹ Outdoor leisure became a stage where racial uplift could occur. Even though black elites, especially, enjoyed participating in outdoor leisure, they still faced racism and racial violence when they entered spaces that were shared with whites. The next section will discuss the racial violence that occurred when blacks attempted to access nature.

³⁸ Ibid 111.

³⁹ Wolcott, "Bible, Broom, and Bath," 92.

1.4. In the face of Jim Crow

This is not to suggest that African Americans did not face many incidents of racial violence in their pursuit of nature. In a time where African Americans were seen as second class citizens, the presence of blacks in nature often juxtaposed with the American values whites ascribed to the outdoors. African Americans often navigated wilderness areas with care, acutely aware of the violence that could erupt if they entered a non “Colored” area. The presence of racism in outdoor recreation space led African Americans to at times navigate nature in different ways than their white counterparts. This mainly included only taking day trips, as there were less quality accommodations for African Americans during the Jim Crow Era.⁴⁰ This section will highlight the challenges African American faced when pursuing outdoor leisure.

The 1919 Chicago Race Riots

On a hot Sunday afternoon in July, five African American boys boarded a raft near Hot and Cold, an industrial area that lay just north of an informal colored beach on the 25th street, and south of an informally segregated white beach off 29th street. The boys steered their hand built raft down Lake Michigan slowly approaching the “white side of the beach.” As they reached the center of the lake a white man threw rocks at them, hitting Eugene Williams in the head, knocking him off the raft, where he drowned. The other four boys frantically paddled back towards the black beach to get help, only to find that the black police officer on scene at the beach, was

⁴⁰ Mark S. Foster, "In the face of" Jim Crow": Prosperous blacks and vacations, travel and outdoor leisure, 1890-1945." *Journal of Negro History* (1999): 135.

powerless against the white officers on the scene at the white beach, where the assailant remained protected. The altercation that ensued after Eugene drowned, sparked the 1919 Chicago Race Riot. In its aftermath the riot left 1,000 homeless, 537 injured, and 38 people dead.⁴¹⁴² The contest over outdoor leisure space, in a city racially divided, led to the largest race riot in Chicago's history.

African Americans faced great challenges when accessing outdoor areas in cities. As William Cronon notes many Chicagoans “contrasted the supposed artifice of Chicago, with a seemingly natural countryside stretching just beyond the boundaries of their city.”⁴³ African Americans were eager to find spaces in nature where they could play and escape the ills of the city. However, within the city they faced a lot of antagonism, and nature often became a battleground over “who” had rights to natural spaces. In a time where segregation was king, unlike neighborhoods or storefronts that could explicitly enforce racial boundaries through signage and other restrictive means, the very nature of wilderness made it difficult to restrict through the usual edifices of Jim Crow politics. Historian Andrew Kahrl notes that beaches in particular are difficult to police “the shore itself—that liminal, mercurial, and volatile space dividing land from water, where the boundaries separating public resources from private property become indistinct and highly contested.”⁴⁴ Nature areas often encompassed imaginary color lines.

⁴¹ Fisher “Outdoor Recreation and the Chicago Race Riot”, 65.

⁴² Note African Americans also faced discrimination and violence in Gary, Indiana. For more information, see: Dorceta E. Taylor, *Toxic communities: Environmental racism, industrial pollution, and residential mobility*. NYU Press, 2014.

⁴³ William Cronon, *Nature's metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. WW Norton & Company, 2009, 66.

⁴⁴ Andrew Kahrl, *This Land Was our Ours*, 4.

Nature, unlike storefronts and bus depots where one could easily post “colored only” signs, was unruly and unmanageable in terms of reflecting a racialized landscape. In the case of the Chicago Race Riots while it was implicitly known which was the colored beach and which was the white beach, it was difficult to restrict the lake itself with signage. The inability to restrict nature lent itself to the amount of racial violence that erupted in these areas. Historian Colin Fisher argued “whites restricted black access to this green space. White youth gangs or social athletic clubs, composed of American-born ethnic and especially Irish youth, who were sometimes closely aligned with local Democratic politicians, played the biggest part in driving blacks out of parks.”⁴⁵ Denying blacks access to green spaces became only another mechanism to impose Jim Crow politics over northern African Americans, who fled the South only to find discrimination in the North as well. The race riot of Chicago was only one instance of racial violence erupting over outdoor spaces in the city.

⁴⁵ Fisher, “Outdoor Recreation and the Chicago Race Riot,” 67.

1.5. McKinney, Texas and Policing Outdoor Leisure

The legacy of racial violence in recreation spaces continues today, this section will analyze the McKinney, Texas pool incident, connecting it to the larger narrative on racial violence, respectability, and outdoor leisure.

On June 5th, 2015, a group of 70 teens from all racial backgrounds gathered for a pool party advertised in a small and wealthy suburb in McKinney Texas. What ensued next would lead to a police officer resigning, after being filmed slamming and sitting on top of 15-year-old bikini clad teenager. In the midst of all the chaos, competing stories were released. Numerous accounts reported that two older white women told two of the black teenagers “to go back to section 8,” afterwards a fight broke out between one of the women and the teen. Other accounts condemn the teen for getting into a fight with the security guard on scene. Most accounts situate what happened in McKinney as another example of overuse of force, centering it within the Black Lives Movement.

While understanding the racial and gendered implications of McKinney is crucial, it is also imperative to understand McKinney in the larger context of excluding blacks from outdoor leisure and public spaces highlighted in the section above. During the early half of the twentieth century over 2,000 local municipalities invested and maintained public pools. These pools of course were segregated. When segregation became illegal in the United States, middleclass whites began to

privatize pools within their own neighborhoods, to maintain segregated public spaces.⁴⁶ With pool privatization, many of the public pools either closed or fell into disrepair. Historian Jeff Wiltse argues that:

The primary appeal of club pools, however, was the assurance of not having to swim with black Americans. Civil rights laws applied only to “public accommodations,” so private pools could legally continue to exclude black swimmers even after the courts had forced cities to desegregate municipal pools. Many swim clubs, especially those located in suburbs accessible to black Americans, explicitly barred black families from joining.⁴⁷

There is a long history of white people self-segregating and privatizing the resources in their own neighborhoods to control who has access to different goods and services.

The tragic events that occurred in McKinney, not only highlight an overuse of force, but also showcase a long history of racial exclusion over public goods and leisure spaces. When a white woman told the black teens to go back to section 8, she was speaking to the intentional segregation of blacks from that neighborhood, and was attempting to reassert social control over the teen invaders; who crossed over the imaginary color line that separated the Cross Ranch from the rest of McKinney. In the end, like Eugene Williams who was killed for rafting too close to the white side of Lake Michigan, a young girl was brutally attacked on camera, as a message to show what happens when blacks attempt to break the color line in outdoor leisure spaces.

⁴⁶Slate Magazine, Accessed on December, 16, 2015, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2015/06/mckinney_texas_police_misconduct_at_swimming_pool_party_america_s_ugly_history.html .

⁴⁷ Jeff Wiltse, *Contested Waters: A Social History of Swimming Pools in American*, University of North Carolina Press, 2007, 181.

Preserving Whiteness in Leisure Spaces

As McKinney was not incident of racial violence, the 1919 Chicago Race Riots was not the first time that Lake Michigan became a stage for racial violence in the city. In 1918 the *Chicago Defender* reported that “a gang of white ruffians...[was trying to] prevent Race people from bathing in the lake.”⁴⁸ Gang violence would become a major mechanism in intimidating blacks into respecting imaginary racial lines in natural spaces. A report from the Juvenile Protective Association, after a African American boy was attacked by a mob near shore, reported that “even the waters of Lake Michigan are not available to colored children.”⁴⁹ Later in the year a white crowd caught a young black boy near the white section of the lake and nearly drowned him for “polluting the water.”⁵⁰

Gang rule was only one mechanism that attempted to exclude blacks from leisure spaces. Exclusion was also reinforced at the institutional level. Fisher notes that institutions such as park directors, park police, and the local government all worked to prevent African Americans from accessing nature. “Before Beutner Playground became a black recreation facility... the director, at the behest of the surrounding community, ‘showed by his actions to the colored people that they were not fully accepted.’” He continued to note that “a similar pattern appears to have occurred [in other parks] which had very low black attendance despite its close proximity to black neighborhoods.”⁵¹ Many systems were implemented to deny blacks access to leisure spaces.

⁴⁸ Fisher, “Outdoor Recreation and the Chicago Race Riots,” 68.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Soon this segregation in natural spaces percolated throughout society, as nature organizations such as the Boy Scouts of American, and the Prairie Club, an environmental organization in the Midwest, all enforced a strict color line. The Prairie Club's mission up until the 1940s declared that its wilderness activities were only open to "white people of any nationality or creed."⁵² As more and more African Americans saw the benefits in participating in outdoor leisure, whites attempted to implement different mechanisms even through extralegal affairs or through institutionalized practices, to prevent blacks from entering spaces that were associated with whiteness.

This form of dispossession could also be seen on the shoreline, where the hundreds of black owned beach houses in the South slowly disappeared. Kahrl claims that "the shores that African Americans steadily lost over the course of the second half of the twentieth century demonstrate the inextricability of environmental and human exploitation..." defined as "power over lands and power over persons."⁵³ Similarly, notes that "two black aldermen investigating racism along the Lake Michigan shore in 1918 reported that white lifeguards 'were largely responsible for the assaults on Race people seeking privileges of bathing there.' The aldermen also blamed the lifeguards for encouraging gang violence against blacks."⁵⁴ At every turn African Americans faced obstacles when trying to access natural spaces. In the case of African American history the rise of vacationing and travelling for pleasure redefined racial barriers, as the prices of coast land increased, effectively forcing African Americans off the beaches.⁵⁵

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Kahrl, *This Land Was Ours*, 50.

⁵⁴ Fisher 68.

⁵⁵ Kahrl, *This Land Was Ours*, 52.

Outdoor leisure not only highlights respectability politics amongst African Americans but also structural and physical violence that African Americans endured in the outdoors. Kahrl highlights that “African Americans were not only more likely to be the targets of various forms of brutality and retaliation, but also—and more subtly—to be exposed to the most exploitative extremes of American capitalism.”⁵⁶ He continues to note that “as a result, possession of valuable property...accentuated and hardened class divisions among black Americans.”⁵⁷ Under Jim Crow, African Americans were often excluded from outdoor leisure spaces, especially beachfronts, which implications are felt today. While the racism African Americans faced in these areas created an extra set of challenges, African Americans continued to use outdoor leisure as a vehicle of escape. In turn, many wealthier African Americans established colored only resorts or beaches, in order to provide spaces where African Americans could recreate freely, as will be furthered discussed in the next section. African Americans would continue to navigate the racial and natural landscape during the twentieth century, fully committed to traversing America’s great outdoors.

⁵⁶ Kahrl, *This Land Was Ours*, 12.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

1.6. Building their Own: Black Resorts and the Commodification of Nature

African Americans faced racial violence when they tried to access outdoor spaces that were traditionally coded as white spaces. In response, black elites created their own resorts and outdoor spaces, that became oasis for African Americans. These economic enterprises highlight African Americans participation to outdoor leisure, and their connection to nature.

One of the main inhibitors to African Americans who desired to participate in outdoor leisure was finding safe accommodation. Many accommodations remained segregated, which could mean several different possibilities for African Americans travelling. In some cases, there were no accommodations for blacks, and travelers would have to pass through, until they found places that welcomed blacks. Oftentimes the facilities available to blacks were in major disrepair. To avoid the risk of not finding suitable accommodations, many blacks would only take day trips, or only travel either early in the morning or late at night. This severely limited the ways in which blacks engaged with nature in the United States. Historian Mark Foster notes that the lack of accommodation provided a new enterprise for wealthy African Americans, who now started to acquire land and build accommodations for black travelers.⁵⁸⁵⁹ The following are three case studies of black owned resorts to highlight the ways in which African Americans engaged in nature.

⁵⁸ Foster, "In face of Jim Crow," 137.

⁵⁹ The following of course is only a partial list of African American resorts, for even more examples see: Dorceta E. Taylor *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection*. Duke University Press, 2016.

Idlewild, Michigan

Idlewild, Michigan is now a historic community, and was once the most renowned black resort in the Midwest. It sits on over 2,000 acres and is 69 miles north of Grand Rapids. Originally owned by four white men, they eventually sold off all their parcels at a very low cost to a group of African American businessmen. Officially established in the early 1920s, black tourists travelled to Idlewild to spend their summers boating, swimming, horseback riding, and fishing. Idlewild would eventually become famous for being a part of the ‘chitterling circuit.’ The circuit brought in up and coming artists such as Duke Ellington, Dinah Washington, and Sammy Davis, Jr, turning Idlewild from a regular campsite to a “summer cultural mecca.” Its popularity grew so much that by the 1940s the population of Idlewild jumped to 22,000.⁶⁰

Idlewild provides an example of how successful black resorts were during the Jim Crow Era. Black resorts provided a safe haven for African American tourists who often faced obstacles when pursuing leisure activities. Black resorts also catered to different aspects of African American culture, by bringing in and supporting black artists. It also highlighted the business prowess of African American entrepreneurs who were able to create oasis out of remote and undeveloped areas. African American businessmen were a part of the commodification of nature, as they profited off the beauty of their resorts “selling” beauty and leisure to other elites. In this sense segregation provided a niche market for black businessmen, who could capitalize both off of nature and discrimination by supplying the demand of leisure spaces to African Americans.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Foster 139.

⁶¹ Kahrl, *On the Beach*, ProQuest, 2008, 50.

Idlewild also started a trend of other black resorts that flourished in the Midwest, providing black urbanites from Detroit, Chicago and other major cities plenty of options to leave the cities and visit natural spaces across the Midwest, without the threat of racial violence as experienced when engaging in white dominated leisure spaces. These black spaces created an opportunity for blacks to engage in leisure activities.

Memory and Celebration: African Americans and Harper's Ferry

Black entrepreneurs capitalizing off of the beauty of nature not only helped secure their finances, but it also created spaces where African Americans could play in nature, and celebrate their culture and history. One such example of nature acting as a space of commemoration is Harper's Ferry. Harper's Ferry, West Virginia was the sight of one of the largest slave revolts in United States history. John Brown, an abolitionist and a group of slaves launched an attack on Harper's Ferry in hopes of acquiring more weaponry and inciting a national rebellion against slavery. Though unsuccessful, Harper's Ferry remained a site of freedom. Nearly 40 years later, Harper's Ferry also became a site of African American outdoor leisure. African American groups travelled to Harper's Ferry in commemoration of Brown and to visit the historical sites. They also took advantage of "hiking mountainous trails" and "strolling along the Potomac."⁶² Harper's Ferry was a short train ride from Washington D.C that contained a sizeable middleclass black population. So there was great demand for accommodations in Harpers.

⁶² Ibid 25.

Many African American Americans stayed at Storer College, founded in 1867 for the education of freedmen and women. Storer was also near the site of Brown's historic rebellion. In efforts to raise money for the college, Storer began providing accommodation for weekend and summer getaways that rivaled other available accommodation in the area. As many black Washingtonians turned to weekend getaways to escape from the city, there were few accommodations available for even short overnight stays, as highlighted in the Idlewild case study. Storer College filled a niche market, where African Americans could enjoy extended stays in Harpers, and where black mothers "could retreat during the 'heated term,' to be greeted by their husbands at the train depot on weekends."⁶³ With secure accommodation available, Harpers Ferry emerged as an another oasis of African American leisure expeditions.

Not only did families enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers, they also became spaces to perform culture and to define public representation. Kahrl notes "leisure and recreation became fully enmeshed in blacks' debates over public self-representation, and at Harpers Ferry, the utilization of the past to shape the present."⁶⁴ The seemingly simple act of African Americans venturing to Harpers Ferry and reclaiming a space deeply connected to their own identities, relaxing and participating in outdoor leisure was an implicit act of rejecting white historical narratives of slavery and of stereotypical African American identities.⁶⁵

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

The historical and natural significance of Harper's Ferry was promoted through various mechanisms to African Americans. *The Washington Bee* wrote:

The visitor to Harper's Ferry is doubly paid, for he not only feels the thrilling impulses which come from a contemplation of the movement of the first martyr of a true and not spurious American freedom, but the natural beauty of a place appeals strongly to the most refined and exalted part of his being.⁶⁶

African Americans sought to integrate their heritage with their leisure activities, and visiting Harpers provided a stage where nature intersected with cultural heritage. Affluent blacks also saw the value of meshing history with outdoor leisure. A founding member of the Niagara Movement, J. Max Barber espoused:

The scenery and the history in and around these little mountain village possess an interest that is unusual. I have heard men speak of the peculiar sensation, the thrill which comes to one as he stands in the shadow of some mighty structure or on a spot where some great deed was wrought that perceptibly advanced the world. Men have journeyed to the other side of the world to drink a draught of air that played around a Calvary, a Trafalgar or a Runnymede, and they have felt well-paid for their trouble. I too have known what it meant to meditate at Valley Forge, Queenstown and Gettysburg. But I must confess that I had never yet felt as I felt at Harpers Ferry.⁶⁷

African Americans imposed their own set of cultural values onto the natural landscape that shaped their desire to visit these places, despite the obstacles they faced as blacks recreating during the Jim Crow Era. Prominent African Americans especially sought out these natural spaces to reaffirm these values, and hoped to extend these to the lower classes as a form of racial uplift.

⁶⁶ *Washington Bee*, June 16, 1888, p. 1.

⁶⁷ J. Max Barber, "The Niagara Movement at Harpers Ferry." *Voice of the Negro*, 10 (Oct. 1906), 402.

This is not to say that classism did not intersect with race. Working class Blacks increasingly began to seek out black resorts as spaces to recreate. A columnist for *The Washington Bee* exalted Harpers because it provided a space for respectable blacks. Blacks were eager to make distinctions between places where respectable people recreated compared to lower class workers. In one such comparison a columnist for *The Bee* writes, “Atlantic City is becoming a resort for fast people, noisy men, and that class of sojourners that refinement should always be very glad to be far away from.”⁶⁸ It seems that prominent African Americans supported working class blacks’ introduction into nature, as long as they could maintain their separate and elite spaces in the outdoors. While nature became a form of racial uplift for all classes, it at times became a space where class distinctions sharply highlighted in the African American community. Outdoor leisure in African American communities manifested itself in many ways: a space to instill respectability politics, a space to perform culture and reclaim identities, a space of racial violence, but also as space of entrepreneurship and racial uplift.

The Gulfside and the Rise of Black Beach Towns

Robert Jones, known by some as a revolutionary reverend and by others as accomodationist, with the backing of his congregation purchased a large tract of land along the Gulf Side of Mexico. In the larger context, this was unremarkable in that black entrepreneurs began commodifying nature by establishing black resorts all across the United States’ shorelines, as mentioned in earlier sections. What made this event incredulous was the fact that Jones was able to purchase such a large piece of land in an area that was restricted from black ownership. Later

⁶⁸*Washington Bee*, July 28, 1883.

that year Jones opened the first “permanent” black Chautauqua-style religious resort in the United States.⁶⁹ At Jones’ resort he created a space where nature mixed with religion. Here he hosted children camps, religious training programs, and various other events. Serving as a beacon of paradise in otherwise white dominated and segregated shoreline.

One visiting minister to Jones’ establishment commented that “here God speaks through the giant, aged oaks, the flowing ebbing of the tides, fishermen casting their nets from the shore...the starry heavens above and moonlit waters of the sea.”⁷⁰ Nature connected to a religious experience especially in the era of Transcendentalism. In the context of African American leisure practices, the churches backing of spending leisure time in nature further served to endorse the practice. Black churches often associated leisure time with vice and as a moral defect. However, as more and more African Americans started to engage in outdoor leisure en masse, churches saw nature as another space to proselytize and as a platform for racial uplift.⁷¹

Jones himself would simultaneously promote his property on the Gulfside, and become an advocate for increasing access to outdoor spaces amongst African Americans. Kahrl argues, “Jones purchase grew out of a deep concern over the recreational deprivations black Southerners faced under Jim Crow and its crippling effects on community and religion and perceptions of racial difference.”⁷² Jones saw nature as a way to uplift the black race, believing that respectability would

⁶⁹ Kahrl, *On the Beach*, 159.

⁷⁰ J. Leonard Farmer, “Gulfside and the Summer School for Undergraduate Preachers,” *Christian Advocate* (Central Edition), Dec. 11, 1941, p. 797.

⁷¹ Kahrl *On the Beach*, 146.

⁷² *Ibid* 160.

“insulate them from racial prejudice.”⁷³ Jones shaped his own resort to reflect the religious values he felt would uplift the race. As a preacher who preached to interracial groups, he attempted to teach the same values that allowed him to integrate between communities to African Americans who passed through his resort. Nature became a stage where these ideas could be enacted. Coastal resorts were ideal for the type of work Jones wanted to enact.

Resorts enabled owners to “[carve] out their own social niches,” and it was in the safety and beauty of Jones own resort that racial uplift could occur. Jones was also an acute businessman. Taking advantage of a key opportunity to purchase an “exotic” piece of land, and transforming it into a space where elite African Americans could come together and experience a luxurious vacation. It is in African American outdoor leisure where nature, access, class, race, power, religion, capitalism, and culture all merge to shape the landscape of the United States during the Jim Crow Era.⁷⁴ Thus understanding the ways in which African Americans navigated outdoor leisure during the twentieth century provides new ways of understanding the significance of the back to nature movement, and the rise of outdoor recreation in the United States, and its implications on African American communities.

⁷³ Ibid 161.

⁷⁴ Kahrl, *This Land Was Ours*, 209.

⁷⁵ For more information on segregation in national parks see: Taylor, Dorceta E. *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection*. Duke University Press, 2016. For contemporary examples of African American outdoor leisure practices see: Stephanie Freeman and Dorceta E. Taylor. “Heritage Tourism: A Mechanism to Facilitate the Preservation of Black Family Farms.” *Research in Social Problems and Public Policy*. Vol. 18: 261-285. October 2014.

1.7. CONCLUSION

History shows that African Americans have been engaged in outdoor leisure similar to white Americans. Race and class intersected to shape how and when Africans could engage in nature, and this engagement at times could result in racial violence. While it did not deter black elites from going on beach vacations or on picnics to national parks, it shaped their experiences in these spaces, and influenced the strategies they employed when in these spaces. This included building their own properties, only driving early in the mornings, or traveling in larger groups. This suggests that a more nuanced approach is needed in assessing both the historical and contemporary ways that African Americans are viewed in relation to the environment. Nature was not just a place of violence or slavery, it was also a space of activism and pleasure, and it is this complex relationship with nature that still informs the ways in which African Americans access and participate in outdoor leisure today.

This master's thesis will seek to accomplish two things: First it will seek to build on the work of environmental historians who focus on race and nature. As highlighted above, there is a discourse that still exist in the United States that African Americans are apathetic to nature, and do not participate in outdoor recreation. However, history tells us that nature and through extension outdoor recreation held a special place in African American everyday life. Nature was a place of leisure, healing, and a way to escape Jim Crow politics. This thesis will continue along similar veins by highlighting the diverse experiences in nature via outdoor recreation. Second this thesis proposes to wrestle critically with dominant discourses around race, class, gender and outdoor recreation.

The following sections therefore will explore: [1] gender differences in outdoor recreation preferences, and [2] outdoor recreation preferences among racial groups. By engaging critically both with outdoor recreation literature and survey data in order to develop a framework that addresses broadly university student's engagement with outdoor recreation. This study pulled on archival records, a survey developed for the purposes of this study, newspaper articles, and secondary sources. In the following sections I will provide a review of outdoor recreation literature and outline my methodology. Following, I will underscore outdoor recreation preferences across different identities. The final section will draw conclusions from the results and works to establish a framework on the intersections of outdoor recreation and race.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Outdoor recreation emerged out of the back to nature movement cementing its place in American society. Current studies of outdoor recreation, while spread across different fields, tend to focus mainly on the economic and ecological impacts of outdoor recreation. While in recent decades, there has been a shift to understand the societal and psychological impacts of outdoor recreation, the connections between race and outdoor recreation is still limited to older theories from the 1970s. This section will provide an overview of the current trends of outdoor recreation literature. Beginning with the first volume on outdoor recreation: *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, which highlighted several challenges facing outdoor recreation. Similar to general trends of outdoor recreation studies these challenges focused on: environmental challenges, societal challenges, and political and economic challenges.⁷⁶

Beginning in the 1970s, two trends emerged out of the outdoor recreation literature. The first trend focuses on the negative ecological impacts of outdoor recreation on ecosystems. Studies in this trend discuss how outdoor recreation poses a threat to ecosystems by surpassing carrying capacity, and leads to poor environmental stewardship when recreating. Other studies focus on the increasing challenges facing natural spaces as the demand for outdoor recreation increases.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Eric White, J. M. Bowker, Ashley E. Askew, Linda L. Langner, J. Ross Arnold, and Donald BK English. "Federal outdoor recreation trends: effects on economic opportunities." (2016).

⁷⁷ Zbigniew Mieczkowski, *Environmental issues of tourism and recreation*. University Press of America, 1995, Scott G. Miller, Richard L. Knight, and Clinton K. Miller. "Influence of recreational trails on breeding bird communities." *Ecological Applications* 8, no. 1 (1998): 162-169. See also Stephen A. Boyle, and Fred B. Samson, "Effects of nonconsumptive recreation on wildlife: a review." *Wildlife Society Bulletin (1973-2006)* 13, no. 2 (1985): 110-116. Riley E.

While other studies chose to focus on the impacts of the outdoor recreation tourism on wildlife and ecosystems.⁷⁸

The second trend in outdoor recreation studies that emerged out of the 1970s connected environmental stewardship to outdoor recreation. Scholars argued that there was a positive correlation between outdoor recreation and environmentalism.⁷⁹ However this theory was quickly challenged by other researchers, for example, Nord et al researched the connection between forest recreation, environmentalism and environmental concern. They found that while there is correlation between forest recreation and environmentalism, there is a weak correlation between outdoor recreation and environmental concern.⁸⁰ Similar papers noted that the correlations between environmental stewardship and outdoor recreation are also weak, and that additional research is needed to understand what motivates people to care about the environment.⁸¹ Current studies on outdoor recreation and the environment will guide my own work, as I try to understand these studies in the context of gender and race. In this study I seek to challenge dominant discourses

Dunlap, and Robert B. Heffernan, "Outdoor recreation and environmental concern: An empirical examination." *Rural Sociology* 40, no. 1 (1975): 18.

⁷⁸ Paul Kerlinger, Joanna Burger, H. Ken Cordell, Daniel J. Decker, David N. Cole, Peter Landres, E. Norbert Smith, *Wildlife and recreationists: coexistence through management and research*. Island Press, 2013.

⁷⁹ Riley Dunlap and Robert B. Heffernan. "Outdoor recreation and environmental concern," 18.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Brijesh Thapa, "The mediation effect of outdoor recreation participation on environmental attitude-behavior correspondence." *The Journal of environmental education* 41, no. 3 (2010): 133-150, Edgar L. Jackson, "Outdoor recreation participation and attitudes to the environment." *Leisure studies* 5, no. 1 (1986): 1-23. Geisler, Charles C., Oscar B. Martinson, and Eugene A. Wilkening, "Outdoor recreation and environmental concern: a restudy." *Rural Sociology* 42, no. 2 (1977): 241.

around gender, race and outdoor recreation. This includes stereotypes that minorities are apathetic to the environment as evidenced by their lack of participation in outdoor recreation.

By the 1990s, the majority of the research on outdoor recreation focuses on economic development and growth. Cordell et al, with support from the U.S Department of Agriculture, released a national assessment on outdoor recreation trends. This report found that the dominant use of natural resources is recreation. For example, two thirds of Americans participating in outdoor recreation every year, one half going every month, and one third taking outdoor vacations. The study also found many benefits associated with outdoor recreation including: stabilizing local economies, stabilizing local communities, and improved habitat for wildlife (which provide ecosystem services).⁸²

The study highlights several trends surrounding outdoor recreation. During 20th century, the government began maintaining and creating public recreation areas—forest reserves and national parks, through the passage of the 1902 Morris Act, making the National Park Service the nation’s largest landholder. Finally, the passage of the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1963 required that outdoor recreation needs be evaluated for the good of society. Out of this legislation, came the popularity of outdoor recreation activities that are not demanding and not expensive including: social activities, swimming, snorkeling, bird watching etc.⁸³

⁸² Cordell, Bergstrom, Hartmann, and English. "An analysis of the outdoor recreation," 12.

⁸³ Ibid. For more information of the economics of outdoor recreation see: Marion Clawson, and Jack L. Knetsch. *Economics of outdoor recreation*. Vol. 3. Routledge, 2013.

By 1995, sixty-five percent of U.S population participated in some form of outdoor recreation activity. Timing is another factor in outdoor recreation. The study found that more Hispanics came to San Bernardino National Park during holidays than on regular days. Finally, it found that perceptions were also a factor—what should be there (cabins no roads). For example, race affected the perception of place, and suggested that minorities prefer larger groups when recreating. Finally, it estimated that historic tourism would outgrow the demand for outdoor recreation by 2050.⁸⁴ This study, along with others usually released by state governments often frame outdoor recreation research in terms of economic potential. It will frame my own study, however, by shaping how my survey understands how perceptions of outdoor recreation differ based on race and gender.

Finally, outdoor recreation studies investigate social and psychological impacts of outdoor recreation. Studies found that outdoor recreation had positive impacts on urban dwellers emotional wellbeing and their psychological resiliency. For example, the distance to sites is more important than the quality of the sites. As opposed to frequency, activity level within the site and time spent in the site are more relevant to benefits received.⁸⁵ Other studies have tried to understand the impacts of outdoor recreation on different user types: i.e. day and overnight visitors. They found that daytime visitors were not only increasing (and now a majority of recreation land-users) but also using natural spaces differently than overnight guests. Daytime users were less annoyed by

⁸⁴ Cordell, H. Ken, Carter Betz, J. Michael Bowker, Donald BK English, Shela H. Mou, John C. Bergstrom, R. Jeff Teasley, Michael A. Tarrant, and John Loomis. "Outdoor recreation in American life: a national assessment of demand and supply trends." *Champaign, IL: Sagamore Publishing* (1999).15.

⁸⁵ Perry J. Brown, "Psychological benefits of outdoor recreation." *Psychological benefits of outdoor recreation*. (1981): 13-17.

crowding and welcomed policy that allowed access for recreation, whereas overnight users welcomed more spaces for solitude.⁸⁶ Understanding the social implications of outdoor recreation will be useful in contextualizing university students' use of natural spaces.

There have also been many studies on the psychological impacts of outdoor recreation in particular Bedimo-Rung et al. , Country Recreation Network, and Korpela et al.⁸⁷ Bedimo-Rung developed a framework describing the relationships between park use, physical activity, and benefits of park use. They concluded that well maintained parks not only have social, economic and environmental benefits, but they also help promote health and physical activity in adults.⁸⁸ The Country Recreation Network (CRN) released a report for the UK government linking a decrease in obesity rates to outdoor recreation. CRN found that mental and physical well-being is linked to access to outdoor recreation spaces and activities.⁸⁹ Finally, Korpela argue that among other benefits that access to green spaces promote cultural and heritage identities, improve work and home environments, and improve mental and physical health.⁹⁰ As the literature in outdoor

⁸⁶ Lelaina D. Marin, Peter Newman, Robert Manning, Jerry J. Vaske, and David Stack. "Motivation and acceptability norms of human-caused sound in Muir Woods National Monument." *Leisure Sciences* 33, no. 2 (2011): 147-161.

⁸⁷, Ariane L. Bedimo-Rung, Andrew J. Mowen, and Deborah A. Cohen. "The significance of parks to physical activity and public health: a conceptual model." *American journal of preventive medicine* 28, no. 2 (2005): 159-168. K. Korpela, K. Borodulin, M. Neuvonen, O. Paronen, and L. Tyrväinen. "Analyzing the mediators between nature-based outdoor recreation and emotional well-being." *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 37 (2014): 1-7. Network, Countryside Recreation. "A countryside for health and wellbeing: the physical and mental health benefits of green exercise." *Cancer* (2017).

⁸⁸ Bedimo-Rung "Significance of Parks," 164.

⁸⁹ Countryside Recreation Network, "A countryside for health and wellbeing."

⁹⁰ Korpela "Analyzing mediators between nature-based outdoor recreation," 3.

recreation studies expands into social and psychological benefits and even the economic benefits, it is important to be cognizant of how these benefits may or may not be equally distributed.

2.1. Outdoor Recreation and universities

The next body of literature that frames this project is the literature on outdoor education. This study in particular will measure university students' attitudes towards outdoor recreation, which is framed by the presence of outdoor education on university campuses. The works of Tozer and Breunig both sought to understand specific skills students developed through outdoor education on university campuses.⁹¹ Breunig found that outdoor recreation develops positive interpersonal skills and group experiences that enhance relationships and a sense of community.⁹² While Tozer highlighted the ability for students to transfer, the skills learned in the outdoors to the classroom. They found that wilderness education was a mechanism to build confidence, character, connectivity, competency, and the ability to care; it provides young adults with the ability to go back and improve their communities.⁹³

⁹¹ Mary C. Breunig, Timothy S. O'Connell, Sharon Todd, Lynn Anderson, and Anderson Young. "The impact of outdoor pursuits on college students' perceived sense of community." *Journal of Leisure Research* 42, no. 4 (2010): 551. Mark Tozer, Ioan Fazey, and John Fazey. "Recognizing and developing adaptive expertise within outdoor and expedition leaders." *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning* 7, no. 1 (2007): 55-75.

⁹² Breunig et al, "The impact of outdoor pursuits on college students' perceived sense of community, 548" .

⁹³ Tozer et al, "Recognizing and developing adaptive expertise," 75.

Other studies have focused on the community building that happens in outdoor recreation activities. Bogner, Neill, and Yoshino found that students who participated in their school's outdoor orientation program reported increases in their ability to make friends, to find trusted individuals, and promotes a growing sense of community.⁹⁴ Jewell linked to outdoor recreation to environmentalism in university students. He found that membership and parental involvement could be positively be linked to environmentalism, and that "appreciative leisure" is "strongly associated" with nature-appreciation, which likewise is associated with concern for environmental problems. Concluding that environmental concern, nature-appreciation, and membership in recreation clubs are linked to pro-environmentalisms, a more nuanced observation than what was proposed by Dunlap.⁹⁵ I hope to extend Jewell's findings in particular to understand university students' attitudes towards outdoor recreation.

Finally, scholars have attempted to understand what motivates students to participate in outdoor recreation, in particular Schuett, Festeu, Pizam, and Humberstone. They note that people are motivated by different factors when deciding to recreate including activity type, age, interests, and leadership characteristics. These studies found that students are particularly interested in these concepts of freedom, fun, a sense of belonging, ability to accomplish something, and types of

⁹⁴ Franz X. Bogner, "The influence of short-term outdoor ecology education on long-term variables of environmental perspective." *The Journal of Environmental Education* 29, no. 4 (1998): 17-29. James T. Neill and Garry E. Richards. "Does outdoor education really work? A summary of recent meta--analyses." *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education* 3, no. 1 (1998). Alan Ewert and Aiko Yoshino. "The influence of short-term adventure-based experiences on levels of resilience." *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning* 11, no. 1 (2011): 35-50.

⁹⁵ Timothy Daniel. Jewell, "Outdoor Leisure and Environmentalism among College Students." (1978).

challenges they could potentially face.⁹⁶ Festue, in particular, found that the motivational climate was essential for student involvement. In a qualitative study on students' motivations, he found that students are most motivated to participate in outdoor recreation because it is an opportunity to have fun, make new friends, escaping the drudgery of everyday life, to enjoy nature, and the ability to explore unknown territories.⁹⁷ Tsorbatzoudis found that additionally students are motivated by being able to push their limits, the ability to achieve certain goals, and the ability to learn about the natural world.⁹⁸

2.3. Gender and Outdoor Recreation

Researchers argue that history repeats itself in terms of gender disparities in outdoor recreation.⁹⁹ Studies show that wealthy college educated white men dominate outdoor

⁹⁶ Michael A. Schuett, "Refining measures of adventure recreation involvement." *Leisure Sciences* 15, no. 3 (1993): 205-216. Dorin Festue, "Motivational factors that influence students' participation in outdoor activities." *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning* 2, no. 1 (2002): 43-54. Abraham Pizam, Gang-Hoan Jeong, Arie Reichel, Hermann van Boemmel, Jean Marc Lusson, Lizl Steynberg, Olimpia State-Costache, "The relationship between risk-taking, sensation-seeking, and the tourist behavior of young adults: A cross-cultural study." *Journal of Travel Research* 42, no. 3 (2004): 251-260. Linda Allin and Barbara Humberstone. "Exploring careership in outdoor education and the lives of women outdoor educators." *Sport, Education and Society* 11, no. 2 (2006): 135-153.

⁹⁷ Festue, "Motivational factors," 54.

⁹⁸ Haralambos Tsorbatzoudis, Alexandros Konstantinos, Panagiotis Zahariadis, and George Grouios. "Examining the relationship between recreational sport participation and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and a motivation." *Perceptual and motor skills* 103, no. 2 (2006): 363-374.

⁹⁹ McNiel, Jamie N., Deborah A. Harris, and Kristi M. Fondren. 2012. "Women and the Wild: Gender Socialization in Wilderness Recreation Advertising." *Gender Issues* 29:39-55.

recreation.¹⁰⁰ While women participation slowly increases, it is still lagging behind men participation.¹⁰¹ Siikamäki conducted a study from 1965-2007 that measured outdoor recreation time use. He argued that there are persistent and prominent differences between how men and women recreate. Siikamäki suggested that men participate more frequently and spend more time participating in outdoor recreation. He noted that the participation gap was closing in some cases, but men still participated almost double the rate of women.¹⁰² Likewise, Humberstone and Little framed outdoor recreation within the greater history of leisure participation can help explain the continued disparities seen today.¹⁰³

Little argued that access to leisure is indoctrinated into the gender power structure in society. They suggested that patriarchal structures within capitalism mixed with theories on femininity excluded women from public spaces to keep them in the domestic sphere. Women's limited mobility constrained their access and participation in leisure. Thus, the ideologies of femininity have only supported the participation gap in outdoor recreation.¹⁰⁴ Continuing along the line of the impact of gender expectations on outdoor recreation Henderson argues that outdoor activities upholds hegemonic masculinity as masculinity is seen to be conducive to outdoor

¹⁰⁰ Cassandra Y. Johnson, J.M. Bowker, and Ken Cordell. 2001. "Outdoor Recreation Constraints: An Examination of Race, Gender, and Rural Dwelling." *Southern Rural Sociology* 17:111-133.

¹⁰¹ Donna E. Little, 2002. "Women and Adventure Recreation: Reconstructing Leisure Constraints and Adventure Experiences to Negotiate Continuing Participation." *Journal of Leisure Research* 34(2):157-177.

¹⁰² Juha Siikamäki, "Use of time for outdoor recreation in the United States, 1965–2007." (2009).

¹⁰³ Barbara. Humberstone 2000, "The 'Outdoor Industry' as Social and Educational Phenomena: Gender and Outdoor Adventure/Education." *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning* 1(1):21-35.

¹⁰⁴ Little, "Women and Adventure Recreation,"157.

adventure pursuits.¹⁰⁵ Finally, researchers argue that gender socialization also impacts the participation gap. Where the outdoors is often seen as an unsafe space for women. For example, women were afraid of crime and violence. These gender constraints restrict women to certain outdoor spaces compared to men.¹⁰⁶

When women do take more leadership roles in outdoor recreation work they often face stereotypes for not fitting in the more traditional role of the woman in the outdoors.¹⁰⁷ Traditional female leadership roles are often associated with being collaborative, docile, soft spoken, and lacking hard skills. When they display more “aggressive” qualities, or qualities displayed by men they are often viewed and evaluated negatively.¹⁰⁸ In addition, women who choose to display more masculine qualities are often seen as being butch or manly.¹⁰⁹

Women are pressured to meet certain expectations that are not expected from their male counterparts. Women often internalize these expectations in attempts to outperform their male

¹⁰⁵ Karla A. Henderson, 1994, “Broadening an Understanding of Women, Gender, and Leisure.” *Journal of Leisure Research*. 26(1):1-7.

¹⁰⁶ Anja Whittington 2006, “Challenging Girls’ Constructions of Femininity in the Outdoors.” *The Journal of Experiential Education* 28(3):205-221.

¹⁰⁷ Craig Allen, Sandy and Claire Hartley 2012, “Exploring the Long-Term Effects for Young Women Involved in an Outdoor Education Program.” *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership* 4(2):88-91. Maggie Boniface 2006, “The Meaning of Adventurous Activities for ‘Women in the Outdoors.’” *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning* 6(1):9-24. Humberstone, “Exploring Careership in Outdoor Education,”153.

¹⁰⁸ Carrie R. Wittmer 2001, “Leadership and Gender-Role Congruency: A Guide for Wilderness and Outdoor Practitioners.” *The Journal of Experiential Education* 24(3):173-178.

¹⁰⁹ Mary McClintock 1996, “Lesbian Baiting Hurts All Women.” Pp. 241-250 in *Women’s Voices in Experiential Education*, edited by Karen Warren. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co.

colleagues.¹¹⁰ They also feel pressured to represent their gender, with some women being self-conscious to engage in outdoor recreation because of these stereotypes. And for those who do take up leadership roles they constantly worry that if they show any indication of weakness or supposed feminine qualities they will lose their position. Coupled with higher expectations women in this field are at an extreme disadvantage. Many often end up fatigued and burnt out in their work.¹¹¹ The current body of literature focuses heavily on obstacles that women face when recreating, without exploring how women may navigate these conditions in their pursuit of leisure. It does suggest that the outdoor recreational landscape is gendered, but it does little to show how women overcome these challenges.

2.3. Race and Outdoor Recreation

When thinking through environmental justice many scholars tend to focus on environmental hazards as opposed to spatial inequities. However, environmental justice is not just a hazardous waste issue it also expands to the accessibility of outdoor recreation spaces.¹¹² The focus of this study will be in part to continue to expand the environmental justice literature to understand how certain groups face different constraints when trying to access nature. Since the

¹¹⁰ Karen Warren, 1996, "Women's Outdoor Adventures: Myth and Reality." Pp. 10-17 in *Women's Voices in Experiential Education*, edited by Karen Warren. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co.

¹¹¹ Michelle Wright and Tonia Gray. 2013. "The Hidden Turmoil: Females Achieving Longevity in the Outdoor Learning Profession." *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education* 16(2):12-23.

¹¹² Myron F. Floyd, and Cassandra Y. Johnson. "Coming to terms with environmental justice in outdoor recreation: A conceptual discussion with research implications." *Leisure Sciences* 24, no. 1 (2002): 59-77.

1970s, anthropologists, historians, and politicians have been concerned over the lack of minority presence in the national park system and other wilderness areas.¹¹³ This includes recent waves of articles in the New York Times, Washington Post, and etc. all interrogating one question: “why don’t black people like hiking?”¹¹⁴ The environmental justice literature is now turning to questions of access and spatial inequities when it comes to wilderness areas.

Much of the environmental justice literature previously has focused on environmental racism through toxic and hazardous sites placed disproportionately in minority neighborhoods. African Americans are not only (across class) most likely to be sited near toxic dumps, they are also less likely to have access to green spaces.¹¹⁵ These spatial inequities can also have negative impacts on African American communities as studies show that outdoor recreation has immense health benefits.¹¹⁶ Perhaps more radically, African American intellectuals have now begun to look at how African Americans pay taxes for institutions that are not accessible to them, including

¹¹³ Joe Weber, and Selima Sultana, "Why do so few minority people visit National Parks? Visitation and the accessibility of “America's Best Idea”." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 103, no. 3 (2013): 437-464.

¹¹⁴ Here are a few examples of media coverage around race and outdoor recreation: Staff, Fusion. "Here are the reasons why black Americans don't visit state and national parks." Fusion. June 07, 2016. Accessed April 08, 2017. <http://fusion.net/here-are-the-reasons-why-black-americans-dont-visit-sta-1793857319>. Nelson, Glenn. "Why Are Our Parks So White?" The New York Times. July 10, 2015. Accessed April 08, 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/12/opinion/sunday/diversify-our-national-parks.html>. Tabachnick, Cara. "Few minorities visit Sequoia National Forest or the Sawtooth Wilderness. This man wants to change that." The Washington Post. October 01, 2015. Accessed April 08, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/can-a-former-corrections-official-help-integrate-our-national-parklands/2015/09/25/303f1742-5019-11e5-8c19-0b6825aa4a3a_story.html?utm_term=.24998ef057be.

¹¹⁵ Floyd and Johnson. "Coming to terms with environmental justice," 59.

¹¹⁶ Cordell, "Outdoor recreation trends and futures.”

national parks.¹¹⁷ Understanding African American outdoor recreation can help the National Park Service better serve communities that not only contribute to the upkeep of current national parks, but will also be advocates for future conservation projects in the United States. This project hopes to inform the conservation movement as a whole on how to better engage in issues of spatial inequities when advocating for new conservation sites.

Scholars in multiple disciplines have proposed two main hypotheses over the last forty-five years to explain the disconnect between African Americans and outdoor recreation: First, African Americans are marginalized (racially and socioeconomically) and therefore do not have access. Second, outdoor recreation is not within African Americans “ethnic boundaries.”¹¹⁸ They argue that parks may unintentionally exclude minority visitors due to the lack of cultural interpretations and signage. For example, civil rights monuments, also maintained through NPS, are well used by African Americans.¹¹⁹

Marginalization theory argues that race and socioeconomic factors lead minorities to be disconnected from nature.¹²⁰ For example, Johnson argues that African Americans are absent from national parks because of racial and economic disparities. Her argument centers around the cost and distance to many campgrounds make them inaccessible to ethnic communities.¹²¹ While I

¹¹⁷ Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations." *The Atlantic*. September 15, 2015. Accessed April 08, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>.

¹¹⁸ Weber and Sultana. "Why do so few minority people visit National Parks?" 454.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid* 440.

¹²⁰ Kimberly J. Shinew, Monika Stodolska, Myron Floyd, Dan Hibbler, Maria Allison, Cassandra Johnson, and Carla Santos. "Race and ethnicity in leisure behavior: Where have we been and where do we need to go?" *Leisure Sciences* 28, no. 4 (2006): 403-408.

¹²¹ Johnson et al, "Outdoor recreation constraints."

agree there are certain barriers that inhibit African American participation, relying on socioeconomic conditions ignore how historically African Americans developed strategies to navigate barriers preventing them from accessing natural spaces.

Finally, the subculture or ethnicity proposes that outdoor recreation is a part of white culture. Specifically, that while white Americans see nature as an escape, African Americans associate it with oppression.¹²² Scholars argue that culture played a critical role in African American engagement. They noticed that even if you account for socioeconomics that minorities still are not participating in “traditional” outdoor recreation activities as much as whites.¹²³ Scholars also propose that the geographic distribution of parks inhibit African American visitation, as most national parks are located near white communities. However, African Americans utilize smaller parks that are closer to their communities.¹²⁴

As Floyd argues, it is time to move beyond the marginality and ethnicity/subculture theories, as this erases different identities experiences in nature.¹²⁵ There have been several major studies of African American outdoor recreation. While environmental justice provides an excellent framework to understand the longer history of African American environmental thought, few EJ

¹²² Myron F. Floyd, James H. Gramann, and Rogelio Saenz. "Ethnic factors and the use of public outdoor recreation areas: The case of Mexican Americans." *Leisure Sciences* 15, no. 2 (1993): 83-98.

¹²³ Deborah S. Carr, and Daniel R. Williams, "Understanding the role of ethnicity in outdoor recreation experiences." *Journal of Leisure Research* 25, no. 1 (1993): 22.

¹²⁴ Sandra L. Shaull, and James H. Gramann. "The effect of cultural assimilation on the importance of family-related and nature-related recreation among Hispanic Americans." *Journal of Leisure Research* 30, no. 1 (1998): 47.

¹²⁵ Myron F. Floyd, "Getting beyond marginality and ethnicity: The challenge for race and ethnic studies in leisure research." *Journal of leisure research* 30, no. 1 (1998): 3.

scholars have turned their attention to the “Great Outdoors,” the muse of the modern conservation movement. Understanding outdoor recreation in African American communities will only contribute to the environmental justice field.

Constraint theory can also be applied to minorities’ recreation practices. Metcalf proposes that non-traditional groups use different strategies in order to engage in outdoor recreation including planning ahead, saving money, and setting up time to recreate. She argues that constraints provide a framework to understand what influences participation. Leisure can be constrained by fear and the pressure to acculturate. Therefore, managers should be more aware of the different ways that minorities navigate outdoor recreation.¹²⁶ For example, in a study on Hispanic recreation practices, Hutchison highlights how Hispanics navigate recreation time differently. For example, Hispanics who were more acculturated did fit within in the dominate culture of outdoor recreation use, while those non-acculturated preferred to recreate in larger groups and for more festive reasons.¹²⁷ They encourage managers to gain a better understanding on how different groups use parks to better support diverse groups’ recreation needs.

Finally, Freeman and Taylor found that outdoor recreation is linked to culture. They claimed that heritage tourism could diversify income for black farmers. African Americans currently contribute 1.1 billion in tourism revenue, and although nature tourism is the largest form of tourism in the United States, African Americans increasingly are participating in heritage

¹²⁶ Elizabeth Covelli Metcalf, Robert C. Burns, and Alan R. Graefe. "Understanding non-traditional forest recreation: The role of constraints and negotiation strategies among racial and ethnic minorities." *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism* 1 (2013): 29-39.

¹²⁷ Metcalf et al, "Understanding non-traditional forest recreation," 39, and Carr et al, "Understanding the role of ethnicity in outdoor recreation experiences," 22.

tourism. There is a strong desire to develop black heritage tourism sites centered on environmental activities.¹²⁸ This thesis seeks to build on the work of Freeman and Taylor by surveying diverse university students to gauge their outdoor recreation preferences.

2.4. Methodology

This project relies on quantitative data collected during the summer of 2016. We distributed a survey to university students in three phases in order to capture seasonal variation. We devised a thirty-four question survey modelled from state recreational departments. The first surveys were sent in May 2016. The next distribution phase took place in July 2016, and the final distribution period took place in September 2016. The data in this study represent national data with primary participation coming from the East Coast, the South, and the Midwest. In this sample, 70% of the students attended school in the Midwest.

Previous surveys investigating outdoor recreation preferences among university students focused mainly on perceptions of white students. In order to make sure that African Americans were well represented in this sample, I relied on networks from a Historically Black College and University conference I attended, in order to target a population that is typically underrepresented and harder to gain access to. This strategy allowed me to collect a more diverse survey set, especially with fewer resources allocated to larger state recreation departments. It did mean,

¹²⁸ Stephanie Freeman and Dorceta E. Taylor. "Heritage Tourism: A Mechanism to Facilitate the Preservation of Black Family Farms." *Research in Social Problems and Public Policy*. Vol. 18: 261-285. October 2014.

however, that I relied on a snowball sampling method versus a random sampling. Therefore, I cannot report the response rate of my survey beyond rough estimations.

This study therefore will not make broad generalizations based on the responses of the subset. However, the snowball method did allow me to collect responses from my target group. Out of the 459 respondents, 333 students completed the full survey. I later had to condense my gender variable from five categories to two, and my race variable from eleven categories to five, leaving me with a sample size of 326. Out of the 326, 71 students were African Americans, 18 Latinx, 46 were Asian American, and 54 were multiracial.¹²⁹ There were 137 white students who completed this survey. I wanted to focus on millennial populations, and so almost half my respondents (46.5%) were 18-24, and enrolled in four-year institutions.

I surveyed 30 colleges and universities with 10% of my sample coming from Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The rest of the sample was collected from predominantly white institutions. To ensure that the same collection method I used throughout my data collection, I also relied the snowball sample method. I decided to focus on university students because universities are incorporating outdoor recreation education into their higher education curriculum. I wanted to extend this research to understand how race and gender influenced these curricula changes.

Using the snowball sampling method, I contacted key informants by electronic mail who attended my target universities to distribute the survey among their networks. Each communication contained a description of the survey, information on the gift card that was raffled as an incentive,

¹²⁹ Native American, Alaskan, etc.

and an online link to the Qualtrics survey. Per IRB approval, no identifying features were matched with answers, and each survey took 20 minutes to complete. Since I am measuring how outdoor recreation preferences shift across identities, my different identity groups were my independent variables such race, gender, and sexuality. For my analysis, I focused on four questions that asked participants to select if they valued outdoor recreation, who they participated with, where did they participate, and how often they participated.

In order to analyze my data, I utilized statistical inference. Using SPSS, I ran descriptive statistics on four questions compared against my identity groups. I ran frequencies to compile descriptive statistics, and since I was primarily working with categorical data ran chi-squared tests at the .1, .05, and .001 significance levels.

Chapter 3: Overview of Outdoor Recreation Preferences among University Students

This project investigates outdoor recreation preferences in diverse gender and racial groups. Its aim is to re-imagine *outdoor recreation enthusiasts* who historically have been defined as wealthy white male elites, that ventured out on solitary wilderness explorations.¹³⁰ This project challenges that narrative by painting a more colorful portrait of outdoor recreationists, highlighting preferences in gender and racial identities. We sought to use the history of African American outdoor leisure as a starting point to understand gender, race and nature in contemporary times. The major findings of this paper show that there are relatively few differences across race and gender on how students engage in outdoor recreation. The cases where there were differences reveal how different social identity groups navigate the outdoor recreation landscape. First, I will provide an overview of the entire sample reporting on the demographic characteristics. Next, I highlight four questions for analysis: What activities respondents completed in past month, who people prefer to recreate with, where people prefer to go, and the importance of outdoor recreation.

Out of the 30 colleges surveyed, 65.2% were women and 34.8% were men. The sample was more racially diverse: 5.5% were Latinx, 14.1% were Asian, 16.6% were multiracial,¹³¹ 21.8% identified as black, and 42% identified as white. We were also interested in student's cultural heritage, and specifically identified students who identified with the African diaspora black students: 22.8% of black students identified as Caribbean, 33.7 identified as African, and 37.2%

¹³⁰ Taylor, "Rise of the American Conservation Movement," 52.

¹³¹ This was combined with the category bi racial and students who picked more than one race.

as black American. Finally, we had a sample that was regionally diverse 16.7% of the sample were from the East Coast, 17% were from the South, 33.7% from the Midwest, 18.6% were from the West, and finally 13.9% of the students were International (see Table 3.1.) The diversity of this sample will allow a more nuanced analysis of the often complex outdoor recreation landscape.

Demographics

Table 3.1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Demographic Factors	Demographics	Number	Percent
Gender	Female	215	64.2
	Male	115	34.3
Race	Latinx	18	5.4
	Asian	46	13.8
	Multiracial	54	16.2
	Black	71	21.3
	White	137	41.1
Black Diaspora	Caribbean	17	21.8
	African	29	37.2
	Black American	32	41.0
Region	East	54	16.7
	South	55	17.0
	Midwest	109	33.7
	West	60	18.6
	International	45	13.9
Income	Less than \$5,000	118	25.7
	\$5,000-\$9,999	41	8.9
	\$10,000-\$19,999	46	10.0
	\$20,000-\$39,999	91	19.8
	\$40,000-\$59,999	21	4.6
	\$60,000 or more	12	2.6
Age	18-24	162	46.5
	25-31	156	44.8
	32 and older	30	8.6
Region of School	East	35	10.8
	South	32	9.9
	Midwest	225	69.6
	West	31	9.5

Activities Completed in the Past

We asked participants to give a sense of what activities they completed most frequently. For the purposes of this study we report on students' responses to what activities they have completed in the past, and what activities they have no interest in (see Table 3.2) In future projects we will consider how many days out of a year students spend on each activity.

The most popular activities that university students had completed ranged from bicycling to going to the beach. The top three activities included: visiting zoos/aquariums, going on picnics, and visiting parks outside of their neighborhood. The top three choices are not surprising because they are relatively low cost activities, that especially in terms of location are some of the easiest forms of recreation. The popularity of going to zoos/aquariums, in particular, could be due to how widespread zoos and aquariums are across the U.S.

Table 3.2: Recreational Activities Participated in the Past

Activity	Sample Size (n)	Have Done (n)	Percent	No Interest (n)	Percent
Visit Zoo/Aquariums	296	241	81.4	55	18.6
Picnicking	264	219	83.0	45	17.0
Visit Parks Not in Neighborhood	233	191	82.0	42	18.0
Visitng Botancial Gardens	274	187	68.2	87	31.8
Hiking on Trails	222	184	82.9	38	17.1
Bicycling	222	181	81.5	41	18.5
Swimming	238	181	76.1	57	23.9
Outdoor Artmaking	276	161	58.3	115	41.7
Horesback Riding	261	153	58.6	108	41.4
Visit Parks in Neighborhood	173	153	88.4	20	11.6
Visiting State Parks	179	151	84.4	28	15.6
Family Gatherings and Reunions	186	148	79.6	38	20.4
Gardening	264	139	52.7	125	47.3
Walking on trails	149	134	89.9	15	10.1
Canoeing	197	132	67.0	65	33.0
Skiing	262	131	50.0	131	50.0
Visiting Historic Sites	167	129	77.2	38	8.3
Floating	208	126	60.6	82	39.4
Going to the Beach	140	125	89.3	15	10.7
Camping	171	123	71.9	48	28.1
Jogging on Trails	189	122	64.6	67	35.4
Backpacking	205	120	58.5	85	41.5
Kayaking	175	119	68.0	56	32.0
Visiting National Parks	142	119	83.8	23	16.2
Driving for Pleasure	264	118	44.7	146	55.3
Visiting Farms	177	105	59.3	72	40.7
Off Road Vehicle	319	104	32.6	215	67.4
ScubaDiving	234	99	42.3	135	57.7
Rollerskating	321	98	30.5	223	69.5
Bird Watching	254	79	31.1	175	68.9
Beekeeping	311	68	21.9	243	78.1

The least three popular activities included: beekeeping at 21.9%, roller-skating at 30.5%, and bird watching 31.1%. This was not surprising as these activities require a higher level of skill in order to gain full benefits. In particular, bird watching is dependent on one's knowledge of birds, and beekeeping requires high technical skills to avoid injury. A salient theme that appeared regardless of social identity, was that millennials often sought cheaper and closer activities to engage in.

Who they participate with

We asked students who they preferred to recreate with: family, friends, outing clubs, partners, coworkers, and alone. The common portrait of the outdoor enthusiast is a person who takes solo journeys in the wilderness.¹³² We wanted to get a sense if that image of outdoor recreation held among millennial populations (see Table 3.3.) Recreating alone was one of the least preferred in millennial populations. Most of the sample preferred to recreate with family members, friends, or their partners. Only 29.3% of the sample selected recreating alone as a preference, compared to 70.7% who did not prefer. On the other hand, 91.4% of the sample preferred to recreate with their friends, and 69% preferred to recreate with their family.

Table 3.3: Who Students Recreate With

Who	Prefer	Percent	Does Not Prefer	Percent
Friends	412	91.4	39	8.6
Family	311	69.0	140	31.0
Partner	174	38.6	277	61.4
Clubs/Organization	145	32.2	306	67.8
Alone	132	29.3	319	70.7
Outing Clubs	32	7.1	419	92.9
Colleagues	30	6.7	421	93.3
Sample Size (n)	451			

¹³² Derek Christopher. Martin, "Apartheid in the great outdoors: American advertising and the reproduction of a racialized outdoor leisure identity." *Journal of Leisure Research* 36, no. 4 (2004): 513.

Where Students Recreate

Students were asked where they preferred to participate in outdoor recreation. Out of a sample of 451, 33.4% preferred to recreate in a park or other green space outside of their neighborhood but within their town/city. Only .7% selected that they preferred to recreate outside of their home country, while the majority of the sample (35.9%) elected to recreate in a park or green space within their own neighborhood. Millennial populations are less likely to travel far in order to recreate.

Local recreation options such as city parks and local recreation facilities continue to be an important part of the outdoor recreation landscape. Even though the city continues to be seen as *unnatural*, this sample highlights the importance of outdoor recreation participation that occurs in cities and towns, and outside of more traditionally thought of spaces, such national parks.¹³³ The fact remains that it is more likely that millennials will find themselves engaging with nature through local parks, though some are willing to travel within city limits to recreate (see Table 3.4.)

Table 3.4: Where Students Recreate

Where	Prefer	Percent
Park or other area in my neighborhood	159	35.9
Park or other area outside my neighborhood, but within my town / city	148	33.4
Park or other area outside my town / city	103	23.3
Park or other area outside of my state	30	6.8
Park or other area outside of my country	3	0.7
Sample Size (n)	443	

¹³³ Nik Heynen, "Urban political ecology I: The urban century." *Progress in Human Geography* 38, no. 4 (2014): 598-604.

Importance of Outdoor Recreation

Finally, we asked students how they valued outdoor recreation. Only 2% of the sample found that outdoor recreation was not important, with 33.9% finding outdoor recreation to be very important. This is indicative of the studies which linked outdoor recreation participation in university students to psychological well-being.¹³⁴ Students are increasingly participating and valuing outdoor recreation for its mental and emotional health benefits. In total 84.8% of the sample found outdoor recreation to be at least moderately important and at most extremely important to their day to day lives (see Table 3.5.)

Table 3.5: Importance of Outdoor Recreation

Importance	Number	Percent
Very important	152	33.9
Moderately important	116	25.9
Extremely important	112	25.0
Slightly important	59	13.2
Not at all important	9	2.0
Sample Size (n)	448	

Overall, the entire sample reveals an interesting trajectory of outdoor recreation preferences among university students. We see millennials as a whole rejecting the notion of the solitary wilderness man.¹³⁵ Students prefer to recreate with others and in places that historically

¹³⁴ Judith A. Bryant, Trudy W. Banta and Jama L. Bradley. "Assessment provides insight into the impact and effectiveness of campus recreation programs." *NASPA journal* 32, no. 2 (1995): 153-160.

¹³⁵ J. Adam Beeco and Greg Brown. "Integrating space, spatial tools, and spatial analysis into the human dimensions of parks and outdoor recreation." *Applied Geography* 38 (2013): 76-85.

were not seen as wilderness or even nature. Most students sampled recreate more in parks and green spaces within their neighborhood than in spaces outside of their city and state. Even though students spend more time in local parks there is still a high value for outdoor recreation, with 25% of the sample feeling that outdoor recreation is extremely important.

In this next section I will explore the intersections between gender and outdoor recreation preferences. Gender and outdoor recreation has been well studied among scholars, however, with more studies focusing on the gender exclusion in outdoor recreation. This study will shift from that narrative focusing on how women navigate outdoor recreation landscapes. Ultimately, we found that the differences among gender and outdoor recreation were minimal, but still highlight interesting facets of how women navigate outdoor recreation.

Chapter 4: Wild Women: The Gendering of Outdoor Recreation in University Students

4.1. Introduction

Outdoor recreation provides many benefits to health, wellness, education, and society. It is incorporated into many higher education programs from having majors in outdoor education to school sponsored programs and orientations based on outdoor education. Outdoor education is a tool used to promote a conservation ethic, often seen as a way to get new generations of people invested in environmental protections. Unfortunately, the benefits of outdoor recreation are often shared among majority wealthy and white men. This disparity is seen in many facets of promoting outdoor recreation like in advertising campaigns from REI, LL Bean, Patagonia.¹³⁶ Dominant discourse promotes the wilderness as a man's playground,¹³⁷ but is this really so? This section asks does outdoor recreation preference (in use, settings, and diversity of use) vary among gender? It will highlight these differences among male and female university students.

¹³⁶ Jessica Dooley, "Young, Wild, and Female: Gendered Experiences at an Outdoor Adventure Camp." (2016).

¹³⁷ Mary Ellen. Avery, "The gendering of outdoor recreation: Women's experiences on their path to leadership." PhD diss., Texas State University, 2015.

Man-ning Up the Great Outdoors

Outdoor recreation has been traditionally associated with men and masculinity, as women were assumed to be too weak to engage in nature.¹³⁸ In the origins of the conservation movement, women were a part of recreational activities and reform, but their role was still primarily to promote conservation and to soften the image of outdoorsmen, distinguishing them from the supposed boorishness of wilderness men.¹³⁹

Theodore Roosevelt, known as the father of conservation, formed his ideologies on protecting the environment during his experiences in the American West. After one his expeditions from the Badlands he wrote, "I heartily enjoy this life, with its perfect freedom, for I am very fond of hunting, and there are few sensations I prefer to that of galloping over these rolling limitless prairies, with rifle in hand, or winding my way among the barren, fantastic and grimly picturesque deserts of the so-called Badlands..."¹⁴⁰ Roosevelt would go on to shape an environmental ethic that incorporated wise use of natural resources with the preservation of wildlands. White male elites often sought to impose social control over nature and people by applying "true-gentleman" codes to how resources were managed in the American West. The wilderness was painted as a rough and tough landscape that was deemed inappropriate for women,

¹³⁸ K. Oliver, (2013). Hunting girls: Patriarchal fantasy or feminist progress? *Americana: The Journal of American Popular Culture (1900-Present)*, 12(1), 3.

¹³⁹ L. Warren, (1997). "Prologue" In *The hunter's game: Poachers and conservationists in twentieth-century America*. Yale University Press. Pp. 1-227, and Taylor, *Rise of American Conservation Movement*, 83.

¹⁴⁰ D. Brinkley, *The wilderness warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the crusade for America*. New York: HarperCollins. Pp. 75. (2009).

especially proper women.¹⁴¹ This discourse shaped the conservation ethic and influenced future laws on natural resources and preservation, including the development of national parks and wilderness areas. The history of outdoor recreation provides insight on how a highly elitist conservation ethic developed throughout the United States.

A perfect example of the masculinization of outdoor recreation is through analyzing trends in hunting, fishing, and trapping in the United States. European settlers hunted for primarily three reasons in the United States: subsistence hunting, market hunting, and hunting for sport. Subsistence hunting was practiced primarily by working class and nonwhites and provided a source of livelihood. The demand for game meat in Europe led to an increase of hunters selling game commercially. Finally, in hopes of extending traditions from Europe as well as reaffirming American masculinity, hunting for sport evolved out of an upper middle class value system.¹⁴² The rise of hunting for sport led to the evolution of hunting laws, policies, and ethics that would later shape the early conservation movement.

In many historical accounts, women are noted as having little to no place in the outdoors. The establishment of sports hunting is often seen a method by which elite males sought to redeem their manhood; however, the ‘men-only’ image of hunting is not entirely true. The same magazines that are credited with cultivating a ‘hunting fraternity’ where early sportsmen could pursue their masculinity and build political identities as sportsmen also featured women and included female contributors. In particular, women often influenced the wildlife conservation campaigns that were

¹⁴¹ Taylor, *Rise of the American Conservation Movement*, 94.

¹⁴² Warren, “Prologue,” 126.

the foundation for the cultural and legal reform of hunting.¹⁴³ Many scholars perpetuate the notion that women were not suited to practice ‘blood’ sports; however recently, stories of female presence in sports hunting have resurfaced. Hunting was in fact a male-dominated sport, but there were women who challenged the idea of ‘true womanhood’ and used recreational hunting as an opportunity to expand the boundaries of what was socially expectable for their gender.¹⁴⁴

Furthermore, by including women in sport hunting, elites were able to further disassociate the image of ‘true sportsmen’ from subsistence and market hunting. Women were viewed as pure and moral, and their assumed feminine qualities were utilized to pose sports hunting above other ‘immoral’ methods of hunting. The connection between sports hunting and class was linked now to the inclusion of genders, which was seen as an upgrade to its image. Women’s participation in sports hunting and its subsequent magazines reformed the image of hunting; assumptions about female nature were used to further promote the political agenda of the elites.

Subsistence and market hunting was associated with savage and barbaric qualities, while sports hunting was being promoted as respectable, family-orientated recreation.¹⁴⁵ The belief was held that if women were present in hunting, no foul language or ill-behavior was involved. Magazines noted “a camp that is not fit for your wife and children is not fit for you” and women made hunting “sunny and cheerful,” keeping the “man animal on his good behavior.”¹⁴⁶ Gender

¹⁴³ A.L. Smalley, “Our lady sportsmen”: gender, class and conservation in sport hunting magazines, 1873-1920. *The Journal of Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 4(4), 355-380 (2005). Retrieved on November 5, 2015 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25144412>.

¹⁴⁴ M.Stange, “Women and hunting in the west.” *Montana: the magazine of western history*, 55(3), 14-21. (2005). Retrieved on November 5, 2015 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4520714>.

¹⁴⁵ Smalley “Our lady sportsmen,” 363.

¹⁴⁶ Smalley 377.

inclusion legitimized the elite's perception that sports hunting was 'correct' form of hunting. Sportsmen were more concerned with promoting recreational hunting as the only proper way of hunting game, than with protecting the masculine image of hunting. Gender equality was still not at all present in the field, however women's participation in hunting represents a connection between changing gender ideals, class-based definitions of recreation, and the politics present in environmental reform.¹⁴⁷

Given all the research on the subject of gender differences in outdoor recreation I wanted to test these frameworks to see how university women, who arguably were raised in different times, navigated the outdoor recreation landscape. Are there differences between outdoor recreation in gender groups? Did gender dictate participation in certain activities, preference for outdoor settings, have differing attitudes towards the importance of outdoor recreation? In the discussion I will address these questions by highlighting significant gender differences in outdoor recreation preferences.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

4.2. RESULTS

In this first section I will provide a demographic snapshot of the sample used to analyze the following questions for women and men: how important is outdoor recreation to you, where do you most often complete these activities, who do you complete these activities with, and activities completed in the past? In this sample 44.4% were white women, 40.4% were white men, 24.9% were black women, 14.4% were black men, 13.2% were multiracial women, 20.7% were multiracial men, 12.7% were Asian women, 18% were Asian men, and 4.9% were Latina and 6.3% were Latino.

The majority of this sample came from the Midwest with 31.8% of the women from that region and 34.9% men, 15.9% of women came from the East and 17.9% of men, 16.9% of women were from the South and 17% of men, 20.9% of women came from the West and 16% of men, and 14.4% of women were International and 14.2% of men (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Demographics of Gender Sample

Demographic Factors	Demographics	Gender	Number	Percent
Race	Latinx	Female	10	4.9
		Male	7	6.3
	Asian	Female	26	12.7
		Male	20	18
	Multiracial	Female	27	13.2
		Male	23	20.7
	Black	Female	51	24.9
		Male	16	14.4
	White	Female	91	44.4
		Male	45	40.5
Region	East	Female	32	15.9
		Male	19	17.9
	South	Female	34	16.9
		Male	18	17
	Midwest	Female	64	31.8
		Male	37	34.9
	West	Female	42	20.9
		Male	17	16
	International	Female	29	14.4
		Male	15	14.2

Frequency of Participation

In the survey we wanted to gauge how frequently participants engaged in different activities, and to see if certain activities were preferred by specific genders. For the purposes of this study we analyzed what activities were completed in the past, and what activities they were not interested in. Activities such as picnicking, collecting fruits and vegetables, and gardening were more popular among women students. For example, 89.7% of women had gone picnicking in the past compared to only 38.2% men. Water based activities such as sailboarding, jetskiing, sailing,

and boating were more popular among men students. For example, 70% of men had gone boating in the past compared to 50% of women (see Table 4.2.)

Table 4.2: Activities Based on Gender

Sample Size (n)	Activities	Gender	Have Number (n)	%Have Done	No Interest (n)	%No Interested	Chi square Value	P-Value
165	Collecting Fruits and Vegetables	Female	65	62.5	39	37.7	2.793	.095*
		Male	30	49.2	31	50.8		
215	Wakeboarding	Female	33	24.6	101	75.4	9.098	0.003***
		Male	36	44.4	45	55.6		
215	Sailboarding	Female	25	18.7	109	81.3	5.93	.022**
		Male	27	33.3	54	66.7		
240	Horseback Riding	Female	100	65.8	52	34.2	9.482	0.001***
		Male	40	45.5	48	54.5		
216	Climbing	Female	59	41.3	84	58.7	4.319	0.038**
		Male	41	56.2	32	43.8		
254	Hunting	Female	36	21.1	135	78.9	6.618	0.010*
		Male	30	36.1	53	63.9		
211	Picnicking	Female	122	89.7	14	10.3	8.287	0.004**
		Male	59	38.2	19	61.8		
211	Gardening	Female	80	59.7	54	40.3	5.578	0.018***
		Male	33	42.9	44	57.1		
225	Jetskiing	Female	54	37.5	90	67.6	5.966	0.015***
		Male	44	54.3	37	45.7		
158	Boating	Female	49	50.0	49	50.0	6.095	0.014***
		Male	44	70.0	18	30.0		
200	Sailing	Female	58	47.2	65	52.8	3.005	0.083*
		Male	46	59.7	31	40.3		
257	Off Road Vehicle	Female	55	55.6	50	73.5	2.819	0.014***
		Male	34	38.2	55	61.8		
157	Visiting Farms	Female	63	63.6	36	36.4	2.803	0.094*
		Male	46	59.7	31	40.3		

Who do you complete these activities with?

We asked participants to tell us with who do they complete outdoor recreation activities. Participants were able to select from a list of groups, and could select all that applied. For this question there was a N of 316. The list included: family, friends, organizations, alone, partner, colleague, outdoor groups, and other. We ran a chi squared test to see if there was an association between gender and preference for who people wish to complete outdoor recreation activities. We found that there was no association between gender and with who people recreate. For example, 70.7% of women preferred to recreate with family compared to 69.4% of men (see Table 4.3.)

In order to complicate our model, we ran a three-way cross tabulation to understand the intersections between race, gender and with who people recreate. Once racial identities were taken into account we see significant differences between preferences of who students recreate with. With a p-value of .0014, we found that 76.5 % of black women were least likely to want to recreate alone, compared to 66% of white women. We also found that 43.1% of black women preferred to recreate with a club or organization compared to 25% of black men, and even 23.1% of white women, and 38.2% of white men. Though the overall trend was that students prefer to recreate with friends, once we apply a race and gender lens the preference for recreating with family increases significantly (see Table 4.4.)

Table 4.3: Gender and Who People Recreate With

Who	Demographics	Prefer	Percent	Does Not Prefer	Percent	Chi square Value	P-Value
Family	Female	145	70.7	60	29.3	0.064	0.851
	Male	77	69.4	34	30.6		
Clubs/Organization	Female	65	31.7	140	68.3	0.132	0.717
	Male	33	29.7	78	70.3		
						5.93	
Friends	Female	186	90.7	19	9.3	0.391	0.545
	Male	103	92.8	8	7.2		
Partner	Female	78	38.0	127	62.0	4.319	1.463
	Male	50	55.0	61	45.0		
Alone	Female	54	26.3	151	73.7	6.618	2.174
	Male	38	34.2	73	65.8		
Sample Size (n)	316						

Table 4.4: Gender, Race and Who People Recreate With

Race	Gender	Who	Prefer	Percent	Does Not Prefer	Percent	Chi Square Value	P-Value
Asian	Female	Family	13	50.0	13	50.0	1.481	0.617
	Male		10	50.0	10	50.0		
	Female	Clubs/Organization	10	38.5	16	61.5	0.065	0.434
	Male		10	50.0	10	50.0		
	Female	Friends	25	96.2	1	3.8	1.092	0.849
	Male		19	95.0	1	5.0		
	Female	Alone	4	15.4	22	84.6	1.265	0.415
	Male		5	55.6	15	40.5		
Black	Female	Family	32	62.7	19	37.3	0.051	0.604
	Male		10	62.7	6	37.5		
	Female	Clubs/Organization	22	43.1	29	56.9	0.271	0.194
	Male		4	25.0	12	75.0		
	Female	Friends	47	92.2	4	7.8	0.288	0.213
	Male		13	81.3	3	18.8		
	Female	Alone	12	23.5	39	76.5	1.488	0.014***
	Male		9	56.3	7	43.8		
Latinx	Female	Family	4	40.0	6	60.0	1.600	0.278
	Male		6	85.7	1	14.3		
	Female	Clubs/Organization	4	40.0	6	60.0	0.280	0.05**
	Male		0	0.0	7	100.0		
	Female	Friends	9	90.0	1	10.0	0.114	0.787
	Male		6	85.7	1	14.3		
	Female	Alone	2	20.0	8	80.0	0.208	0.208
	Male		0	0.0	7	100.0		
Multiracial	Female	Family	8	29.6	19	70.4	2.021	0.38
	Male		5	21.7	18	78.3		

Where do you go?

Next we investigated where students preferred to recreate. For this question we had a N of 322, and found that for women, 81 preferred to recreate in a local park within their neighborhood, 65 enjoyed going to parks outside of their neighborhood but within their city. 51 said that preferred to find a park outside of their city, 14 wanted to go outside of the state, with only 2 women preferring to recreate outside of the country. This was compared to men, where 36 selected recreating in a local park, 39 enjoyed going to parks outside of their neighborhood, 29 preferred parks outside of their cities, 5 travelled outside of their state, with none preferring to travel outside of the country. With a p-value of .610 we failed to reject the null hypothesis with a 95% confidence interval (see Table 4.5.)

Table 4.5: Gender and Where Students Recreate

Where	Demographics	Prefer	Percent
Park or other area outside of my country	Female	2	0.9
	Male	0	0.0
Park or other area outside of my state	Female	14	6.6
	Male	5	4.6
Park or other area in my neighborhood	Female	81	38.0
	Male	36	33.0
Park or other area outside my neighborhood, but within my town / city	Female	65	30.5
	Male	39	35.8
Park or other area outside my town / city	Female	51	23.9
	Male	29	26.0
Chi Square Value	0.246		
P-Value	0.587		
Sample Size	322		

How important is outdoor recreation to you?

Participants were asked on a sliding scale “how important is outdoor recreation to you?” This question had a N of 315 respondents answered the question. In order to see the relationship between gender and the importance of outdoor recreation I ran a chi squared test. For example, 4 women found outdoor recreation to be not be important compared to 3 men, and 63 women found outdoor recreation to be extremely important compared to 28 men. The results of the chi squared test failed to reject the null hypothesis at the 95% confidence level, with a p value of .620 (see Table 4.6.)

Table 4.6: Gender and Importance of Outdoor Recreation

Importance	Demographics	Number	Percent
Not at all important	Female	4	2.0
	Male	3	2.7
Slightly important	Female	27	13.2
	Male	15	13.5
Moderately important	Female	49	24.0
	Male	26	23.4
Very important	Female	61	29.9
	Male	39	35.1
Extremely important	Female	63	30.9
	Male	28	25.2
Chi Square Value	1.609		
P-Value	0.620		
Sample Size (n)	315		

4.3. Discussion

This study attempts to expand the current literature on gender and outdoor recreation. I highlight on average this study found no differences amongst gender in frequency of participation, importance of outdoor recreation, or changes in outdoor recreation participation rights. There were only a few instances when gender did come into account, which have implications on how park managers can be more inclusive of gender identity in recreational areas and promotional materials. Dominant narratives surrounding gender, race and nature do not hold in more recent studies surrounding outdoor recreation.

Who do you participate with?

We found that there was no association between gender and with who people recreated. The underlying assumption was that women would be more likely to want to participate in outdoor recreation with others due to safety concerns.¹⁴⁸ In a recent article a women journalist reported:

You can't get much more alone than in the wilderness. Backpacking solo flouts all the usual precautions that women are told to adopt in order to protect themselves, like going out in numbers, staying close to home, and always keeping a cellphone within reach. When I share stories about hiking and camping by myself, I watch eyebrows go up and hear well-intentioned advice that I find a friend to keep me safe.

¹⁴⁸ Tonia Gray, "The" F" word: feminism in outdoor education." *Journal of Outdoor and Environmental Education* 19, no. 2 (2016): 25. For more information constraint theory see also Mary Ellen: Avery, "The gendering of outdoor recreation: Women's experiences on their path to leadership." PhD diss., Texas State University, 2015.

The isolation that is associated with wilderness is often cited as security threat.¹⁴⁹ As Gray argues the wilderness with danger or a space that they will be physically attacked. While this study does not undermine the very real safety concerns women face when entering public spaces, women were not more likely than men (in this sample) to prefer recreating with groups. In fact, from my survey data 26.3% of women preferred to recreate alone compared to 34.6% of men, a very minimal difference. This would suggest that millennial women have less fear recreating alone than older generations, even though overall there is a stronger trend towards recreating with groups.

Focusing on barriers solely often erases marginalized identities agency in the outdoor recreation landscape. It implies a sort of victimization that does not depict a more nuanced story of gender, race and outdoor recreation. Here constraint theory becomes a useful framework. As even with safety concerns we see women having similar recreation preferences as men. Metcalf suggests that under constraint theory the focus shifts from why minorities do not recreate to the extent and great lengths they take to recreate, as well as the strategies they employ to engage.¹⁵⁰ In this case, safety would be a constraint, and women may choose to recreate with their family in order to ease fear of crime.

In order to complicate this narrative, we did test how race and gender would impact who people prefer to recreate with. We found that there were differences in preferences around who

¹⁴⁹ Jen, Smith, 2017, "Sleeping Alone in The Woods While Female". *Outside Online*.
<https://www.outsideonline.com/2141556/sleeping-alone-woods-while-female>.

¹⁵⁰ Elizabeth Covelli Metcalf, Alan R. Graefe, Nate E. Trauntvein, and Robert C. Burns. "Understanding hunting constraints and negotiation strategies: A typology of female hunters." *Human Dimensions of Wildlife* 20, no. 1 (2015): 30-46.

students preferred to recreate with. For example, while recreating with organizations was not prominent with gender solely, once race was introduced we saw that black women in particular preferred to recreate with organizations over other groups and including black men. This suggests that for black women in particular, and for students of color more broadly that recreating in large groups is more salient in their outdoor recreation preferences. As seen in more recent studies¹⁵¹, students of color do tend engage in outdoor recreation as a form of community building.

Where do you recreate?

Under similar assumptions this project considered that women would prefer to participate in outdoor recreation in locations different from men. This would be due to several factors considering that women may face different constraints like time and safety. As noted earlier, for women, 81 preferred to recreate in a local park within their neighborhood, 65 enjoyed going to parks outside of their neighborhood but within their city. 51 said that preferred to find a park outside of their city, 14 wanted to go outside of the state, with 2 woman preferring to recreate outside of the country.

In this case the statistical test showed that there was no difference between men and women preferred to recreate, suggesting that in general most people preferred to have a local space to participate in outdoor recreation. In both cases, the farther the parks were located they less people preferred to recreate in them, suggesting that location of these spaces can be a major constraint

¹⁵¹ Dorceta E. Taylor, "Blacks and the environment: Toward an explanation of the concern and action gap between blacks and whites." *Environment and Behavior* 21, no. 2 (1989): 175-205.

regardless of gender. This is not surprising given the sample demographics. We surveyed a large proportion of 18-24 year olds, who may not have the time, transportation or income to travel far to recreate.

How important is outdoor recreation to you?

Similarly, there was no association between gender and the value students placed on outdoor recreation. We assumed that if women participated less in outdoor recreation, as other studies have shown, it could be due to a lack of valuing outdoor recreation. Organizations and institutions ascribe an apathy towards nature among minority groups, as the main reason they do not engage in these stakeholders.¹⁵² However, the results of this study challenge that narrative as it did not detect a difference based on gender in valuing outdoor recreation. Even though not significant, we found that a larger proportion of women found outdoor recreation to be extremely important. This suggests that organizations should feel encouraged to engage more with marginalized groups around outdoor recreation, as across the board groups felt that outdoor recreation was very important. It also suggests that low participation rates does not indicate the level of value one places on nature or outdoor recreation.

¹⁵² Taylor, Dorceta E. "Meeting the challenge of wild land recreation management: Demographic shifts and social inequality." *Journal of Leisure Research* 32, no. 1 (2000): 171.

Frequency of Participation

We did find differences between frequency and gender. We assumed that given the current literature there would be a difference in what activities different genders engaged in. Out Of the 50 activities listed, there were gender differences for 13 activities. This suggests that the current literature is right that there are still gender norms that dominate the culture of certain activities.¹⁵³ For example, picnicking is still seen as a feminine activity, and boating is seen as masculine.

Therefore, more works need to be done in re-defining outdoor recreation in order to make it more inclusive. By re-defining how we see certain activities we could eradicate these stereotypes and tropes that relegate certain groups to certain types of activities. The overall result coincides with the overall hypothesis of this paper that there is no difference in attitudes towards outdoor recreation based on gender. The differences that are detected speak more to how different genders navigate outdoor recreation differently, and not how they value, participate or engage in outdoor recreation.

¹⁵³ Avery, "The gendering of outdoor recreation", 46.

4.4. Conclusion

This section analyzed the relationship between gender and outdoor recreation, finding that on average there was no difference between men and women's attitudes towards outdoor recreation, the statistical tests ran did pick up on what is also framed under the constraint theory, where it is obviously that attitudes and preferences towards outdoor recreation are similar, women navigate outdoor recreation very differently from men. This could be because of confidence levels, time, or safety concerns. While these factors do not change women's views on outdoor recreation it does mean they employ different strategies in order to recreate, such as recreating with friends recreating locally, or choosing certain activities over others. Further research could investigate what those strategies are and how they can be supported by policymakers. In the next section I will analyze the intersection of race and outdoor recreation to see if similar trends exist.

Chapter 5: The Color of Nature: Racial Differences in Outdoor Recreation Preferences

5.1. Introduction

“I think we sometimes see people through a certain lens of struggle and say, ‘Oh those poor communities of color, they can never get outside, we gotta save them, but in reality there are a lot [people of color] like us that...have this passion, that maybe even majored in [environmental studies], but felt lonely for another reason, like we didn’t quite belong.”¹⁵⁴ Kimberly Gonzalez, chapter leader of Latino Outdoors of Washington reflects on the importance of representation in the outdoor recreation movement. As Gonzalez highlights, discourses around outdoor recreation commonly attribute lack of exposure to nature as a reason low income and communities of color are apathetic. However, this narrative often victimizes marginalized identities, and oversimplifies the intersections of race and nature.

The results of this study found that while there was some variation of outdoor recreation in racial groups, these differences did not lead to specific racial groups recreating less than others. In fact, when explicitly asked how race impacted how students navigated outdoor recreation few students talked about exposure. The majority discussed the lack of representation in the outdoor

¹⁵⁴ Yvonne Rogell, "Latino Outdoors has a simple solution to increase diversity in natural recreation." *The Seattle Globalist*, July 15, 2016. Accessed April 16, 2017. <http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2016/07/13/latino-outdoors-washington-diversity-natural-recreation/53597>.

recreation landscape (i.e. advertising.) As Gonzalez eloquently stated people of color are rendered invisible. This lack of visibility leads to students of color feeling uncomfortable when participating in outdoor recreation activities, as they are often made to feel like they do not belong.

This chapter seeks to challenge the current literature around race and outdoor recreation by challenging the marginality and subculture thesis. As highlighted earlier the marginality thesis claims that socioeconomics and race inhibit minority participation in outdoor recreation. The subculture thesis claims that outdoor recreation is not a part of minorities culture. Again, there was some variation in preferences, but that only reinforces that different cultures and ethnicities interpret and navigate outdoor recreation differently. This project shifts outdoor recreation conceptualizations from this very static idea to one that is more complicated, more malleable and fluid.

Given all the research on the subject of racial differences in outdoor recreation I wanted to test these frameworks to see how students of color, navigated the outdoor recreation landscape. Are there differences between outdoor recreation in racial groups? Does race dictate participation in certain activities, preference for outdoor settings, have differing attitudes towards the importance of outdoor recreation? In the discussion I will address these questions by highlighting significant racial differences in outdoor recreation preferences.

5.2. Results

In this section I will provide a demographic snapshot of the sample used to analyze the following questions for five racial groups and ethnicities: how important is outdoor recreation to you, where do you most often complete these activities, who do you complete these activities with, and activities completed in the past? Out of the 326 participants, 46 identified as Asian, 72 as African American, 54 Multiracial, 18 as Latinx, and 137 as White. The majority of Asian students came from the Midwest (19%), the majority of white students came from the Midwest (21.8%), and finally the majority of the of Multiracial students came from the Midwest (1.8.) The majority of the African Americans sampled were from the South (7.9%.) Likewise, Latinx students were also majorly from the South (2.11%.)

Frequency of Participation

In the survey we wanted to gage how frequently participants engaged in different activities to see if certain activities were preferred by specific races. For the purposes of this study we analyzed what activities where completed in the past, and what activities they were not interested in. We found that for all the activities tested that two had a significant p-value. In this case there was only an association between race, beekeeping and wildlife viewing, this was less than the gender differences detected. For example, with beekeeping, 37.9% of white students were not interested, compared to 73.7% of Latinx, 71.8% Asian, and 88.3% Black students (see Table 5.1.) We also tested activities based on race and gender. Three activities have significant associations in that model: sailing, beekeeping, and visiting local parks. For example, for sailing 61.3% of white

men had gone sailing compared to 42.9% of white women, 15.5% of multiracial women, and only 40% of black men (see Table 5.2.)

Table 5.1: Activities Based on Race

Sample Size (n)	Activities	Race	Number	%Have Done	Number	%Not Interested	Chi Square Value	P-Value
261	Beekeeping	Asian	11	28.2	28	71.8	4.342	0.041**
		Black	7	11.7	53	88.3		
		Latinx	4	26.7	11	73.7		
		Multiracial	4	10.0	36	90.0		
		White	29	27.1	72.9	37.9		
156	Wildlife Viewing	Asian	19	73.1	7	26.9	8.19	.085*
		Black	15	40.5	22	59.5		
		Latinx	6	66.7	3	33.3		
		Multiracial	16	66.7	8	33.3		
		White	33	55.0	27	45.0		

Table 5.2: Activities Based on Race and Gender

Sample Size (n)	Activities	Race	Gender	Number	%Have Done	Number	%Not Interested	Chi Square Value	P-Value				
255	Beekeeping	Asian	Female	6	30.0	14	70.0	4.796	0.05**				
			Male	5	26.3	14	73.7						
		Black	Female	5	11.1	40	88.9						
			Male	2	16.7	10	83.3						
		Latinx	Female	3	33.3	6	66.7						
			Male	1	20.0	4	80.0						
		Multiracial	Female	2	10.0	18	90.0						
			Male	2	10.5	17	89.5						
		White	Female	22	31.0	49	69.0						
			Male	7	20.0	28	80.0						
		200	Sailing	Asian	Female	6	37.5			10	62.5	5.94	0.034**
					Male	10	71.4			4	28.6		
				Black	Female	13	40.6			19	59.4		
					Male	4	40.0			6	60.0		
Latinx	Female			6	85.7	1	14.3						
	Male			4	80.0	1	20.0						
Multiracial	Female			75	15.5	3	25.0						
	Male			12	52.9	8	47.1						
White	Female			24	42.9	32	57.1						
	Male			19	61.3	12	38.7						
135	Visitng Parks within my neighborhood			Asian	Female	12	92.3	1	7.7	4.241	0.538		
					Male	5	62.5	3	37.5				
				Black	Female	26	89.7	3	10.3				
					Male	4	57.1	3	42.9				
		Latinx	Female	3	100.0	0	0.0						
			Male	4	100.0	0	0.0						
		Multiracial	Female	8	91.7	2	8.3						
			Male	11	25.6	1	12.5						
		White	Female	28	95.0	1	5.0						
			Male	19	44.2	1	12.5						

Who do you complete these activities with?

Participants reported with who they like to complete outdoor recreation activities. Participants selected from a list of activities, with the option to select all that applied. For this question there was a N of 326. The list included: family, friends, organizations, alone, partner, colleague, outdoor groups, and other. We ran a chi squared test to see if there was an association between race and who people complete outdoor recreation activities. For example, we found with a p-value of .0001, that 50% of Asians preferred to recreate with family compared to 60.6% of African Americans, and 79.6% of white students.

For prefer to recreate with a partner, with a p-value of less than .0005, we found that 50% of Latinx students preferred to recreate with a partner compared to 25.4% of African American students and 12% of Asian students. Finally, for recreating alone, with a p-value of .036, we found that 33.8% of African Americans preferred to not recreate alone, compared to 11.1% of Latinx students and 19.6% of Asian students (see Table 5.3.) While not significant, I wanted to note that more students of color preferred to recreate with organizations than white students. For example, 43.5% of Asians and 38% of Blacks preferred to recreate with an organization compared to 25% of Whites. Overall, we found that we were unable to reject the null hypothesis at a 90% confidence in all but three cases: family, partners, and recreate alone.

Table 5.3: Race and Who Students Recreate With

Who	Demographics	Prefer	Percent	Does Not Prefer	Percent	Chi Square Value	P-Value
Family	Asian	23	50.0	23	50.0	3.501	0.001***
	Black	43	60.6	28	39.4		
	Latinx	13	72.2	5	27.8		
	Multiracial	39	72.2	15	27.8		
	White	109	79.6	28	20.4		
Clubs/Organization	Asian	20	43.5	26	56.5	3.793	0.126
	Black	27	38.0	44	62.0		
	Latinx	5	27.8	13	72.2		
	Multiracial	15	27.8	39	72.2		
	White	35	25.5	102	74.5		
Friends	Asian	44	95.7	2	4.3	0.548	0.835
	Black	64	90.1	7	9.9		
	Latinx	16	88.9	2	11.1		
	Multiracial	50	92.6	4	7.4		
	White	125	91.2	12	8.8		
Partner	Asian	12	26.1	34	73.9	8.349	.000***
	Black	18	25.4	53	74.6		
	Latinx	9	50.0	9	50.0		
	Multiracial	21	38.9	33	61.1		
	White	73	53.3	64	46.7		
Alone	Asian	9	19.6	37	80.4	4.215	0.036**
	Black	24	33.8	47	66.2		
	Latinx	2	11.1	16	88.9		
	Multiracial	12	22.2	42	77.8		
	White	50	36.5	87	63.5		
Sample Size (n)	326						

Where do you go?

Students also reported on where they preferred to engage in outdoor recreation. A total of 319 respondents completed this question. The majority of students prefer to recreate in parks in their neighborhood or at least within their town or city. While not significant, 42 of the white students selected that they enjoy recreating outside of their city, compared to 9 black students and only 4 Latinx students. With a p-value of .469 we failed to reject the null hypothesis with a 95% confidence interval. In the case of recreating outside of the one's home city, 26.7% of Asian students preferred to recreate there, compared to 22.2% of Latinx students and 13% of Black

students. In terms of recreating within one’s neighborhood African Americans made up 46.4% of students who preferred to recreate within their neighborhood compared to 35.6% of Asian students and 44.4% of Latinx students (see Table 5.4.)

Table 5.4: Race and Where Students Recreate

Where	Demographics	Prefer	Percent
Park or other area outside of my country	Asian	0	0.0
	Black	1	1.4
	Latinx	0	0.0
	Multiracial	0	0.0
	White	1	0.8
Park or other area outside of my state	Asian	3	6.7
	Black	2	2.9
	Latinx	0	0.0
	Multiracial	3	5.6
	White	11	8.3
Park or other area in my neighborhood	Asian	16	35.6
	Black	32	46.4
	Latinx	8	44.4
	Multiracial	22	40.7
	White	39	29.3
Park or other area outside my neighborhood, but within my town / city	Asian	14	31.1
	Black	25	38.2
	Latinx	6	33.3
	Multiracial	17	31.5
	White	41	30.8
Park or other area outside my town / city	Asian	12	26.7
	Black	9	13.0
	Latinx	4	22.2
	Multiracial	12	22.2
	White	41	30.8
Chi Square Value	8.924		
P-Value	0.469		

How important is outdoor recreation to you?

Finally, we reported on the value that racial groups placed on outdoor recreation, with a N of 325 participants. In order to see the relationship between race and the importance of outdoor recreation we ran a chi squared test. We found that there was an association between race and importance of outdoor recreation. With a p-value of less than .0005 we found that there is an association between race and value of outdoor recreation. For example, 42% of white students found outdoor recreation to be extremely important, compared to the 5.6% of Latinx students. On the other end of the spectrum, we found that 11.1% of Latinx students found outdoor recreation not be important compared to 0% of white students. The majority of students of color found outdoor recreation to be at least moderately or very important. In fact, 26.8% of African American students found that outdoor recreation was important to them, and 29.6% found that it was moderately important (see Table 5.5.)

Table 5.5: Race and Importance of Outdoor Recreation

Importance	Demographics	Number	Percent
Not at all important	Asian	3	6.5
	Black	2	2.8
	Latinx	2	11.1
	Multiracial	0	0
	White	0	0
Slightly Important	Asian	4	8.7
	Black	15	21.1
	Latinx	4	22.2
	Multiracial	11	20.4
	White	8	5.9
Moderately Important	Asian	18	39.1
	Black	21	29.6
	Latinx	6	33.3
	Multiracial	14	25.9
	White	22	16.2
Very Important	Asian	11	23.9
	Black	19	26.8
	Latinx	5	27.8
	Multiracial	19	35.2
	White	48	35.3
Extremely Important	Asian	10	21.7
	Black	14	19.7
	Latinx	1	5.6
	Multiracial	10	18.5
	White	58	42.6
Chi Square Value	5.382		
P-Value	.000***		
Sample Size (n)	325		

5.4. Discussion

Past studies have shown that people of color differ in their outdoor recreation preferences and participation,¹⁵⁵ in their parks needs and interests,¹⁵⁶ and in their recreation experiences.¹⁵⁷ This study attempted to build on the breadth of the current literature by exploring how different races navigate the outdoor recreation landscape, moving beyond typical Black/White binaries in typical race and outdoor recreation studies.¹⁵⁸ This study tests five different population subgroups to provide a more nuanced analysis on how different races navigate outdoor recreation. It also attempts to build more complicated models by testing race and gender and the importance of outdoor recreation. In future works I would like to further this multivariate analysis by building in a regional variable.

This study found weak associations between race and frequency of participation, who students recreate with, and where they recreate. Challenging previous works that relied on marginality and ethnicity theories in understanding race and outdoor recreation.¹⁵⁹ There was a

¹⁵⁵ James H Gramann, *Ethnicity, Race, and Outdoor Recreation. A Review of Trends, Policy, and Research*. TEXAS A AND M UNIV COLLEGE STATION, 1996.

¹⁵⁶ Tingwei Zhang and Paul H. Gobster. "Leisure preferences and open space needs in an urban Chinese American community." *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* (1998): 338-355.

¹⁵⁷ Johnson et al., "Outdoor recreation constraints: An examination of race, gender, and rural dwelling." (2001).

¹⁵⁸ Randy J. Virden, and Gordon J. Walker. "Ethnic/racial and gender variations among meanings given to, and preferences for, the natural environment." *Leisure Sciences* 21, no. 3 (1999): 219-239.

¹⁵⁹ Past research has shown that ethnic minority groups, in general, differ in their urban park and open space landscape, and natural setting preferences (Kaplan & Talbot. 1988; Talbot & Kaplan, 1993; Zhang & Gobster, 1998), park needs and interests (Gobster & Delgado, 1993; Zhang & Gobster. 1998), urban park use and leisure participation (Dwyer, 1993; Gobster, 1998;

strong association between race and value of outdoor recreation, which does have implications on how park managers can be more inclusive of racial identity in recreational areas and promotional materials. Dominant narratives surrounding race, gender and nature do are not representative of a more complex outdoor recreation landscape.

Who do you participate with?

We found that in some cases there was an association between race and with who people recreate. The chi squared test detected a statistically significant difference between races in terms of preference to recreate with family, partners, and to recreate alone. At the 95% confidence interval, 50% of Asian students, for example, would prefer to recreate with family or relatives, and only 2% of Latinx prefer to recreate alone. These results are in line with other works, which found that in the case of uses of national parks tensions arose between Latinx and white families over how spaces were used. Latinx families preferred to use parks for large gathering, as opposed to wildlife viewing like white families.¹⁶⁰ As we challenge constructions of outdoor recreation, it is important to highlight how outdoor recreation means different things to different people. I also want to note that students of color had a higher preference for recreating with an organization compared to white students, this would suggest that students of color do not solely seek outdoor

Hutchinson, 1993; Jeong, 1999; Taylor, 1993), recreation experiences (Carr & Williams, 1993; Keefe & Padilla, 1987), park visitation patterns and attitudes (Carr & Chavez, 1993), and environmental attitudes (Floyd & Noe, 1993; Noe & Snow, 1990).

¹⁶⁰ Floyd et al., "Ethnic factors and the use of public outdoor recreation areas: The case of Mexican Americans." *Leisure Sciences* 15, no. 2 (1993): 83-98.

recreation for nature, but also as a form of community building, as seen in the presence of groups such as Outdoor Afro and Latino Outdoors.

Constraint theory becomes a useful framework in an analyzing race and outdoor recreation. While dominant discourse attempts to completely erase people of color participation in outdoor recreation, it is important to understand how marginalized groups navigate environmental landscapes despite barriers. Metcalf suggests constraint theory to negotiate the tension between the hurdles that marginalized bodies experience when recreating while challenging the perception that minorities do not recreate at all.¹⁶¹ In this case, Latinx students may choose to recreate with families over recreating alone at higher percentages in order to fully enjoy nature, without feeling uncomfortable.¹⁶² Policymakers can continue to build inclusive outdoor recreation environments by ensuring that there are facilities and space available to facilitate how Latinx students prefer to recreate (such as having pavilions and plenty of picnic table to accommodate families.)

Where do you recreate?

Similarly, this project considered the differences of location of recreation across racial groups. As noted above, this question was not significant, indicating that there is no association between race and where people prefer to recreate. Most students prefer to recreate in areas within their neighborhood, which is similar to the findings in Sasidharan on urban forests and parks. These findings suggest that policymakers could continue to devise cities that contain potential for green

¹⁶¹ Avery, "The gendering of outdoor recreation," 10.

¹⁶² Metcalf et al., "Understanding hunting constraints and negotiation strategies" 35.

space and outdoor recreation, as it was mostly white students who prefer to travel outside of the city to recreate.¹⁶³

What was interesting in these findings, is that out of the sample who answered this question it appears that mainly white students were willing to travel further in order to recreate. The data highlighted that white students preferred recreating spaces outside of their neighborhoods at a high percentage than within their neighborhood, unlike all the other ethnic groups. In fact, as the students of color preference dropped significantly the farther away from local parks. This would suggest that lower percentages of for example at national parks, do not speak to a lack of disconnect from nature, but rather a stronger preference for urban parks.

How important is outdoor recreation to you?

Participation in outdoor recreation is often used as a way to gauge environmentalism in social groups. Researchers still draw on the subculture thesis from the 1970s to assess race and outdoor recreation. They claim that it is outside of the people of color's culture to engage in nature, which explains why they value outdoor recreation less. This has implications on how and when policymakers and organizations engage with communities of color. We sought to test these

¹⁶³ Vinod Sasidharan, "The urban recreation experience: An examination of multicultural differences in park and forest visitation characteristics." *Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA* (2001).

conclusions by investigating whether there was an association between race and value of outdoor recreation.

With a p-value of less than .0005, there was a strong association between the importance of outdoor recreation and race, however, in analyzing the results we found that the differences became between thinking outdoor recreation as extremely important versus moderately and very important. We found that 44.5% of African Americans found outdoor recreation to be either very important or moderately importantly, 12.4% of Latinx students found it to be very or moderately important, 35.9% of Multiracial students found it to be very or moderately important, and finally that 33% of Asian students found it to be very or moderately important. Students of color value outdoor recreation highly, even if they are less visible in the landscape. Relying on the subculture thesis again, erases the experiences of students of color as they continue to engage in outdoor recreation.

Frequency of Participation

Finally, I will discuss the association between race and frequency of participation. This question, in particular, can elucidate how minority groups navigate outdoor recreation. The few cases that there were differences, highlight an interesting story of outdoor recreation is evolving in the United States and how different cultures navigate outdoor recreation landscapes differently, contributing to the changing meaning of outdoor recreation. We found that at the intersection of race and activity preference that out of a list of 50 activities there were only two instance where race impacted that activity: beekeeping and wildlife viewing. With a p-value of .041, we found

that 88.3% of African American students stated that they have no interest in beekeeping compared to 73.7% of Latinx students, and only 37.9% of white students. This would suggest that there are cultural differences in certain outdoor recreation activities, and beekeeping may be less known or appealing to ethnic minority groups or not seen as a leisurely activity.

Wildlife viewing had a surprising result given the current literature. It was particularly popular in Latinx groups. With only 33% of Latinx students indicating they were not interested in the activity compared to almost 60% of Black students. This was surprising because in the Carr and Williams piece, they found that conflict arose in San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, because Hispanic families were seen as being too loud in parks, making it difficult for white visitors to view wildlife. Hutchison determined that Hispanics used San Gabriel Mountains differently from white visitors, seeing nature as a more social space.¹⁶⁴ However, Latinx students in this sample showed a strong interest in wildlife viewing, even having a stronger interest than white students sampled. Our results highlight the need for more updated studies on race and outdoor recreation, as social identities preferences and uses of nature of complex and ever changing.

For complexity we also tested the impacts of race and gender on outdoor recreation activities. We found that for three activities had a significant association between race, gender, and outdoor activities: beekeeping, sailing, and visiting parks within my neighborhood. With a p-value of .05, we found that women of color were interested in beekeeping more than men, with the exception of Asian students. For Asian students 26.3% of Asian males had participated in

¹⁶⁴ Daniel Williams, and Deborah S. Carr. "The sociocultural meanings of outdoor recreation places." *Culture, conflict, and communication in the wildland-urban interface* (1993): 209-219.

beekeeping in the past compared to 30% of Asian women. For African American students 11.5% of women said they had no interest in beekeeping compared to 16.7% of men. Sailing seemed to be more popular among women of color as well. For African American students 41% of women had gone sailing in the past compared to 40% of men, 86% of Latinx women had gone compared to 80% men. This difference between gender did not hold for Asian women and men 38% of women had gone in the past compared to 71.4% of men. In some cases, these results can speak to the gender norms that police certain activities, but in many cases when race and gender are included we see these gender norms being challenged. Particularly with activities like sailing where women of color were far more likely to engage in those types of activities.

Finally, women of color were more likely to have spent time in neighborhood parks than men. For example, 90% of African American women reported going to neighborhood parks in the past, compared to 57% of African American males, 92% of Asian women have gone compared to 63% of Asian men. The differences along race and gender may be indicative of several factors which future studies could further explore. For parks we see a different narrative than presented above. In this case we see how two marginalized identities can further limit your opportunities for recreation. Gender seems to have a more powerful impact on activities completed in the past. This highlights the importance of a multivariate analyses, which allows us to complicate and challenge current literature around race, gender and outdoor recreation.

5.5. Conclusion

This section analyzed the relationship between race and outdoor recreation, finding that on average there was no difference across race and attitudes towards outdoor recreation. Even though we found that students have similar outdoor recreation preferences, it is apparent that they navigate these spaces differently. We saw this in who students of color preferred to recreate with and where they recreated. We must continue to challenge how wilderness and outdoor recreation is constructed as it erases and excludes the experiences of people of color. We found that people of color employ different strategies that may at a glance appear outside of the realm of outdoor recreation. Making it even more important to expand the definition to be more inclusive of all identities.

Chapter 6: CONCLUSION

History shows that minorities have been engaged in outdoor leisure since the birth of outdoor recreation. The intersection of race, gender and class shaped how, for example, African Americans could engage in nature. Even with the threat of racial violence, black elites continued to go on beach vacations or on picnics to national parks. Their experiences in these spaces influenced the strategies they employed when engaging in outdoor leisure including: building their own properties, driving early in the mornings, or traveling in larger groups.

There is often a disconnect between the history of African American outdoor recreation and their engagement today. This survey was inspired to better bridge history with contemporary conditions. The findings of this thesis challenge older sociological studies on gender, race and outdoor recreation. We found that the majority of the respondents had similar preferences for outdoor recreation across race and gender. This study does not diminish the constraints that marginalized bodies face when recreating, in fact, we found that there were unique experiences in the outdoor recreation landscape based on race and gender. These unique experiences emphasized the need to challenge research around outdoor recreation, in order to paint a complex picture of the intersections between identity and outdoor recreation. This project highlights the need to re-imagine what an outdoor recreation enthusiast looks like.

There were limitations to this study and implications for future work in a longer and more comprehensive research project. In our efforts to ensure that minorities were well represented, we did target minority serving institutions in order to increase participation of students of color. This

was successful as 57% of my sample identified as students of color. While it did provide a larger number of minority students, in future works I'd like to do a more extensive study at Historically Black Colleges in a way to get a randomized sample.

I would also spend more time interviewing students as a follow up to this study to get a more nuanced perspective on how students across identities are navigating outdoor recreation. This would allow for greater opportunity to heterogenize black students who are often lumped in one monolithic category without considering region or cultural variations. Overall, I think this study lays the groundwork for a more comprehensive and nuanced study on race, gender and outdoor recreation. As we continue to strive for spatial equity and justice under the environmental justice movement, now more than ever is the time to pay greater attention to the intersections of race, gender and outdoor recreation

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