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Wildland Recreation in the Rural South: An Examination of Marginality and Ethnicity Theory

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The ethnicity and marginality explanations of minority recreation participation provide the conceptual basis for our inquiry. These theories are examined for a sample of rural African Americans and whites. Using logistic regression, we test for black and white differences in: 1) visitation to wildland areas in general, 2) visitation to National Forest wildland areas; and 3) household visitation to the Apalachicola National Forest. Next, we test the marginality/ethnicity paradigm by examining reasons for non-visitation and latent demand for visitation. Our findings show that race, sex, and age as well as a race/poor (poor black) interaction term are strong predictors of visitation. However, race appears to be less effective in predicting reasons For non-visitation and latent demand for wildland visitation. Overall. results do not provide strong support for either ethnicity or marginality as a sole explicator of racial differences in wildland recreation. Rather, results indicate that the two probably work in combination to explain racial differences. The poor black interaction also suggests that rural black visitation to wildlands varies depending upon income, with less affluent blacks actually participating more than those with higher incomes. This contradicts the marginality assertion that recreation participation varies positively with income and suggests that marginality theory may need to be qualified depending upon residence (rural versus urban) and type of activity.

KEYWORDS: *Ethnicity, marginality, rural residence, wildland recreation.*

Introduction

Past studies have established that African Americans,' compared to whites, generally perceive wildland settings to be less aesthetically pleasing than built environments and are also less likely than whites to recreate in these areas (Zube & Pitt, 1981; Washburne & Wall, 1980; Kaplan & Talblot, 1988). Most

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'African American and black are used interchangeably.

of these investigations, however, have been conducted with nonrural household samples or with on-site samples in places relatively distant from black populations. Of the aforementioned studies, only Washburne & Wall's (1980) sample included rural respondents. Racial and ethnic differences in forest. recreation visitation, preferences, and perceptions for rural populations have received relatively little attention by researchers. This lack of attention is especially problematic as it concerns wildland and outdoor recreation in the South, where the proportion of African Americans living in rural areas is notably higher than in other regions of the country. For instance, African Americans comprise at least thirty-three percent of the population in southern Black Belt counties. Rankin & Falk (1991) define the Black Belt as a continuous group of rural, southern counties extending from Virginia through the Carolinas, down into Georgia and westward to Mississippi.

The present research reviews some of the theoretical explanations that have been advanced to account for black/white differences in outdoor recreation. Using primary data, we also examine visitation for a rural, southern sample to unspecified wildland recreation areas, visitation to National Forest wildlands, and household visits to the Apalachicola National Forest for a rural, southern sample. We also compare black/white responses on reasons for non-visitation and latent demand for wildland visitation. Recommendations are made for future research.

Literature Review

Early racial and ethnic leisure research focused on participation rate differences between groups (Hauser, 1962; Mueller, Gurin, & Wood 1962; Owens, 1984). Generally, investigators explained differences using hvo theories, ethnicity or marginality. A number of marginality-related theories have also been proposed. Included among these are opportunity/demographic, class identification, multiple hierarchy stratification, and class polarization. The following sections provide brief reviews of these theoretical perspectives.

Ethnicity attributes differences in recreation behavior to value differences based on subcultural norms. The theory postulates that subcultures or ethnic minorities possess unique cultural value systems which influence their recreation behavior. Testing ethnicity, Washburne (1978) compared use of wildland areas for a sample of black and white urban Californians. Results showed blacks were significantly less likely than whites to participate in undeveloped, primitive areas, even when socioeconomic factors were held constant. Washburne & Wall (1980) found significantly lower participation rates for African Americans than for whites for camping, hiking/backpacking, and hunting. Similar results were reported by Dwyer (1994). Klobus-Edwards (1981) found race was a factor in recreation preference for African Americans living in a predominantly black community, but race was not a strong

predictor of visitation for blacks who lived in integrated communities. Also, Stamps & Stamps (1985) found that race rather than social class was a greater predictor of leisure behavior.

Ethnicity studies have been criticized because of the way ethnicity is operationalized (West, 1989; Carr & Williams. 1992: Pfister, 1993). Typically, race serves as a proxy for ethnicity or subculture with socioeconomic status (income, education, occupation) and age held constant. If differences persist after accounting for socioeconomic factors, it is usually assumed these variations are due to subcultunl norms. Few attempts have been made to determine more precisely how these remaining racial variations affect recreation behavior.

Marginality

Marginality attributes minority (particularly black) differences in recreation behavior to social structural barriers such as lack of discretionary funds, transportation, and information about facilities. An implicit assumption is that marginalized groups would behave as do non-marginalized groups if structural impediments were removed (Washbume, 1978). Empirical examinations of marginality have also been criticized because such analyses lack a uniform measure of the construct (Philipp. 1995). Even studies assessing similar dependent variables have used different marginality indicators. Moreover, aggregated census categories such as annual income and education level may not be specific enough to an activity to reveal differences based on socioeconomic conditions (Washbume & Wall, 1980; Stamps & Stamps, 1985).

West (1989) tested marginality with a sample of Detroit residents, where visitation to city and surrounding regional parks was compared for blacks and whites. Findings showed blacks used city parks more often than whites, while whites had higher visitation rates to regional parks outside the city. Racial differences remained after controlling for income, education, and sex. However, some support for marginality was found in terms of access to transportation. Blacks in the sample indicated lack of transportation often prevented them from visiting regional parks outside of their neighborhoods.

Recently, more in-depth studies exploring structural impediments to recreation participation have appeared in the literature. Floyd, Shinew, & McGuire (1994) used a national telephone probability sample to investigate the hypothesis that respondents of similar social class would indicate similar leisure preferences. In bivariate tests, few significant racial or social class differences were found for preferred activities. However, in tests controlling for both race and social class, blacks and whites who defined themselves as middle-class had similar rankings for activity preferences. Contrary to expectations, working class/poor subgroups of blacks and whites showed less correspondence in preferred activities.

Shinew, Floyd, & McGuire (1995) analyzed multiple hierarchy stratification and class polarization theory. To test the multiple hierarchy theory,

researchers hypothesized that groups which occupy marginalized societal positions, for example-older, poor, minority, females-were distinct from other racial or socioeconomic groups in their recreation behavior. Similarly, class polarization theory was examined with the hypothesis that class differences for black males were more distinct than class differences for black females. Results showed the leisure preferences of lower-class black women were distinct from those of whites and middle-class black men but similar to middle-class black women and lower-class black men. No support was found for the hypothesis of greater differences in leisure preferences among black men than among black women of different social classes.

..Opportunity/demographic explanations maintain that differences in outdoor recreation participation appear as a result of demographic composition and access to recreation resources (Lindsey & Ogle, 1972; Washburne & Wall, 1980). Lindsay & Ogle (1972) found that income and education were less useful than availability of resources or opportunity in predicting visitation to a National Forest. Hutchison (1987) also found support for the demographic explanation in his study of Chicago area park visitors. Study results showed that a large number of park visitors were older whites who lived in neighborhoods near the parks.

Race and Place of Residence

The present study can aid our understanding of the marginality/ethnicity paradigm because we consider these theories in the context of a southern, rural sample. Previous studies have generally shown less participation by blacks in wildland and other forms of outdoor recreation, but these studies focused on urban populations quite removed from rural, backcountry settings; however, it is also important to consider that intra-racial leisure variations may exist between rural and non-rural African Americans. These differences are believed to be determined by more than demographic proximity. Rather, rural cultures-folkways, ecology, economics, population size and density-are all thought to contribute to the creation of a rural perspective which is distinct from non-rural ways of viewing the world. Along these lines, Snipp (1996) writes that race and ethnicity continue to be important determinants of both cultural perspectives and life chances in rural areas. He contrasts the economic situation of rural blacks with that of the growing black, urban middleclass. Because rural populations are less affluent than urbanites, particularly in the rural South, it may well be that marginality is a more precise predictor of visitation for rural than for urban blacks.

Several studies have focused on rural-urban differences in recreation participation and preference. Hauser (1962) found support for the hypothesis that more urbanized whites and non-whites (all of whom were black) exhibited similar outdoor recreation behavior. Generally, the more urban the respondent, the less likely he or she was to engage in backcountry type activities. This relationship was true for both whites and non-whites in the

study. Craig (1972) examined the recreation patterns of recently migrated rural African Americans to an urban area in Louisiana. It was hypothesized that a rural upbringing was more influential in shaping the migrants' recreational pursuits than an immediate improvement in education or change in residence. Findings showed that many recreational pursuits carried over from the rural milieu. Philipp (1986) tested for black/white leisure differences while controlling for rural dwelling. Results showed very few differences in leisure pursuits remained after accounting for education, race, and rural residence, even for wildland-related activities.

Woodard (1988) examined the influence of both social class and region (rather than residence) on urban, leisure choices of African Americans in Chicago. It was hypothesized that middle-class blacks would be more likely to engage in metropolitan activities such as attending the theater, ballets, and symphonic concerts. No class differences were expected for informal, domestic activities like card playing and visiting family. With respect to regional differences, blacks reared in the rural South were expected to participate more in domestic activities, and city-reared respondents were expected to engage more in night life activities (going to bars, clubs, partying). Results showed regionality was somewhat less important than social class in predicting leisure behavior. Nevertheless, Woodard concluded that both region and education (social class) were important factors in understanding how African American leisure preferences vary.

Methods

The purpose of this paper is to examine whether the general finding that blacks participate less than whites in wildland recreation can be extended to a rural, southern population. In doing so, we evaluate the relative importance of marginality and ethnicity factors in explaining these differences. There are several reasons why we focus on a sample from a rural area in the South that is near a National Forest. By doing so. we eliminate the effects of several important variables that could explain recreation behavior, including region, place of residence (i.e., rural versus urban), and physical proximity to the recreation resource. Thus, the effects of marginality or ethnicity in our results should be more easily identified. Second, very few, if any, studies in the literature have drawn samples specifically from this particular population, so our findings will at least partially address that gap. Finally, managers and policy makers in public agencies are showing renewed interest in the needs and views of people who live close to and are most dependent on resources managed by those agencies. Both have sensed the need to be aware of and understand the barriers to reaching the underserved portion of their potential market.

To test whether African Americans and whites have different rates of visitation to wildland areas, we employ a series of logistic models using maximum likelihood estimation techniques (Gujarati 1988, p. 483-489). Three questions were used to elicit information on visitation to wildland recreation

TABLE 1

List of Reasons /or Non-visitfltion (Constraints)

If you do not go to wooded areas to recreate. please tell us why not.

- 0 lack of time
- ☐ no interest
- 0 such places not safe
- 0 would not feel comfortable
- o my family/friends do not like that kind of recreation
- ❑ lack of money
- ❑ such areas too crowded
- o no one to go with to such areas
- ☐ no such place close to my home [lack of information]
- 0 other (please explain)

areas.' First, respondents were asked whether they went to any kind of wildland area for recreation. Individuals were next asked if they visited National Forest wildlands; and lastly they were asked if anyone in the household visited the Apalachicola National Forest for any reason, not just for wildland recreation.

For each of the three logistic visitation models, the probability that the respondent visited the given wildland area was modeled as a function of the aforementioned sociodemographic variables:

$$P\ (\text{visit}) = (1 + \exp\ (-XB))^{-1}$$

where X is a matrix of independent variables, and B is the parameter vector. Race, sex, household income, age, and a race/poor interaction term are the independent variables. All variables except income and age are categorical, (1 = black, 1 = male, and 1 = black with income less than $20,000). Race is a proxy for ethnic influences on visitation. A significant coefficient on race would provide support for ethnicity. The existing literature suggests that the sign on this coefficient would be negative. We use both income and the race/poor interaction to test for marginality. A significant and positive coefficient on income would provide support for marginality although income alone as a predictor of marginality has been criticized (Philip, 1995). Here we include the interaction of race and being poor to assess whether the effects of being both black and having low income is different than the racial effect alone. A significant and negative sign on the race/poor interaction term would further support marginality, as this group would be considered among the most marginalized in society.

Reasons for Non-visitation

To further test the ethnicity/marginality paradigm, we presented respondents who did not visit wildlands (about thirty-three percent of the sample) with a list of reasons relating to non-visitation and asked them to check the box corresponding to the reason(s) which precluded their visitation (Table I). Factors included in our survey which we considered related more to marginality concerns were: lack of time, lack of money, perception that wildland areas are not safe, and lack of awareness of wildland resources close to home. Lack of time and money as marginality constraints are obvious. We also included safety concerns and lack of awareness about wildland places as marginality factors because these relate to the broader definition of marginality specified by Blahna & Black (1993). To the extent that safety in public places is a privilege or amenity to which African Americans generally have less access than whites in American society, we believe that safety issues constitute a marginality factor. Support for such an assertion is supported by statistics showing that blacks, particularly young, black males, are more likely than whites to be the victims of violent crime (Sampson, 1987). Blahna & Black (1993) refer to this heightened concern for safety among blacks as the "*sociological* component of marginality" (original italics). With respect to outdoor recreation participation, Blahna & Black (1993) and West (1993) report that blacks, more so than other ethnic groups, are more cognizant of the potential for race related crime and other random violence when they recreate in the outdoors.

We also consider lack of awareness about wildland resources as a marginality factor because information access or awareness of societal resources can be said to be one of the prime determinants of socioeconomic positioning within society. Those groups with greater access to information are more aware of societal resources and are more likely to be included among the higher socioeconomic strata (Bell, 1976). It could be argued that lack of information is correlated with lack of interest, which suggests that lack of awareness actually relates more to an ethnicity rather than a marginality factor. People are not aware of wildland areas because they have no interest in such places. This would be a tenable argument if blacks in our sample were significantly less likely than whites to have an interest in wildland visitation. However, we found no significant racial difference in interest, which suggests that the difference in information access may relate more to availability of information rather than lack of interest among blacks in the survey area. Certainly, more research is needed to explore the links between lack of awareness and interest in outdoor recreation. To test for racial differences in factors relating to non-visitation, we use a standard chi-squared test of the sample frequencies by race for each factor.

Latent Demand

As a further test of ethnicity/marginality, we asked respondents who did not currently visit wildlands if they would consider visiting, given the opportunity. This was an assessment of latent demand. If, indeed, structural barriers such as lack of discretionary income, information, and safety concerns inhibit African American participation in wildland recreation, we would ex-

[2]The survey defined wildlands or woods as any undevelped, natural, forested setting where recreation is allowed. It was emphasized that people could camp, hunt, or fish in these areas, but such areas should not contain any built structures like basketball courts, picnic areas, tap water, or other services. The terms wooded, forested, and wildlands are used interchangeably.

pect blacks to have a greater latent desire to participate in such activities. Marginality theory maintains that minority recreation is "frustrated" by disctiminacoty and hegemonic factors which ate largely beyond the control of minority groups. However, if these inequities were removed, blacks and other minorities would participate to a similar extent as do whites (Washbutne, 1978). As with the impediments to visitation above, we employ a standard chi-squared test on the response frequencies for black and white nonvisitors.

Data

Households were selected from 1990 census tracts of six rural counties surrounding the Apalachicola National Forest in northwest Florida: Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Liberty, and Wakulla (Survey Sampling, Inc., 1992). The six counties encompass an area of over 3,600 square miles, collectively referred to in this study as the Apalachicola region. The total population is 92,358. The black sample was drawn at random from white page telephone directories in census tracts that contained at least fifty percent black households. The white sample was selected at nndom, regardless of racial density. Different sampling strategies were used for blacks and whites to help insure that a representative black sample would be selected. Sample size was calculated based on the total number of black and white housing units in the Apalachicola region, 8,915 African American and 22,626 white units.

In the past, Liberty and Calhoun counties have depended heavily upon the timber industry for revenues. Ninety-five percent of Liberty county's total land area is forested, with fifty percent managed by the USDA Forest Service. In 1990, the Forest Service adopted new management policies to protect habitats for the ted-cockaded woodpecker. The result of these actions was a drastic reduction in the amount of timber hat-vested on National Forests. Liberty County has since had a substantial reduction in employment opportunities and decreases in dollar returns from timber. The seafood industry (shrimping and oysteting) accounts for eighty percent of private sector revenues for Franklin county. The other twenty percent comes primarily from tourism. The major industries in Gulf county ate paper products, fishing, chemical processing, and timber. Wakulla county's major industries include gunpowder manufacturing, timber products, and fishing. Gadsden county is the most populated county in the study area and is the only county with a majority of African Americans (57.5 percent). The agticultutal industry provides a substantial number of jobs in the county. Other major private sector employers are wholesale food distribution, lumber/plywood, printing, furniture, utilities, and computer products.

Surveys were mailed in late December 1994, followed by a postcard remindet to non-respondents two weeks later. After three weeks, a replacement sutvey was sent to those who still had not responded. The postcard reminder and replacement survey were sent to help increase response rate and reduce non-response bias (Dillman, 1978). Responses by persons under eighteen or by someone who did not live in the sample area were omitted from the

analyses. Only black and white responses wete used in out analyses. Race/ethnic groups other than black or white were only 2.5 percent of the sample. The number of useable addresses was 1,177, attd the overall return rate was thirty-nine percent. Separate return rates for blacks and whites could not be calculated because addresses could not be identified by race prior to mailing.

To assess the teptesentativeness of the sample, we compared aggregated sample characteristics—race, sex, age, education, household income, and employment status--to 1990 U.S. census figures for the region (U.S. Department of Cotnmetce 1992). Census figures ate repotted only for black and white adults eighteen and over unless otherwise indicated. The sample differed from the population for three of six characteristics. African Americans comprised about twenty-eight percent of the sample, whites sixty-nine percent, and other groups 2.5 percent. The proportion of African Americans (adult) in the population was apptoxitnately thirty-one percent, and whites made up about sixty-seven percent of the population. Also, the ptopottion of males to females in both the overall sample and the population was approximately equal. The proportion of males and females in the population includes races otltet than blacks and whites: however. other races comprised less than three percent of the population. Median age category for the sample was forty-six to sixty and forty to forty-four for the adult population in the Apalachicola region. About one-half the respondents repotted educational attainment at the college or technical school level (48.9 percent), and approximately fifty-one percent of the population twenty-five and over had post-high school education. Median household income tanged from $17,247 in Franklin county to $25,019 in Wakulla county. Median household income for the sample was $35,000. About sixty-two percent of the sample was employed either full or part-time, and toughly fifty-three percent of the civilian labor force sixteen and over in the population was employed.

The racial, sex, and education distributions for the overall sample and population ate similar. Though the education figure for the population excludes persons under twenty-five, we feel confident in comparing it to the sample proportion because only 3.8 percent of out sample was younger than twenty-five. Age, however, is skewed to the upper ranges. Also, work force participation for the sample is higher than for the population, and median household income for the sample is higher than that for the population. This may be explained by the fact that parts of the sample area, particularly Liberty and Calhoun counties, ate economically depressed. Also, the higher employment rates and income for the sample may reflect the common phenomenon of higher response rates among persons of higher socioeconomic status.

Table 2 shows racial group comparisons for the above characteristics. The African American and white samples were statistically different fot sex and household income. Because sex distributions within each racial group were disproportionate to those in the population for these groups, overall black/white responses were weighted to reflect actual sex distributions in the population.

TABLE 2
Demographics for Pooled, African American, and White Samples

	Total Sample (n=403)	African American (n=114)	White (n=289)	χ^2 (p)
Characteristic				
Percent male	51.2	32.1	58.3	.00
Median age category	46-60	46–60	46–60	.58
Percent college or technical school graduate	48.9	45.3	51.2	.39
Percent employed	61.8	64.0	61.0	.55
Median household income*	$35.000	$26.800	$40.000	.01

*N = 256

Results

Forest Visitation

Table 3, column 1 shows results for the general wildland visitation models. Models were estimated using LIMDEP (Greene, 1992). The model for the first equation was significant and correctly predicted responses to question one seventy-nine percent of the time. Seventy percent of the respondents reported visiting wildland recreation areas of some type. Race, sex, and age were significant and had the expected signs on the regression coefficients. Blacks were less likely to visit, other factors equal; males were more likely than females to visit, and older respondents visited less often than younger ones. Income was not statistically significant. The race/poor variable was marginally significant at $p = 0.07$. Interestingly, the coefficient on this variable had a positive sign indicating that poor blacks (those with less than $20,000 per annum household income) were more likely than blacks in general to visit wildlands.

Results for National Forest visits are reported in Table 3, column 2. Fifty-six percent of the sample reported visiting National Forest wildlands. As with the general wildland model above, age is significant and negative while sex is significant and positive. Race is significant and negative, while income is positive but insignificant. However, the race/poor interaction term is significant at the 5-percent level and, as above, the sign is positive suggesting that when other factors are held constant, poor blacks are more likely to visit National Forest wildlands than their black counterparts in the sample.

Results for the third model reporting visitation to the Apalachicola National Forest for any reason, whether recreation, work-related, or some other activity, are reported in Table 3, column 3. Forty-seven percent of those sampled reported visiting this forest. Like the previous two models, sex' and age arc significant with the expected signs. Here however, income is marginally

TABLE 3
Weighted MLE Logistic Regression Parameter Estimates: Unspecified Wildland Visits, National Forest Wildland Visits, and Apalachicola National Forest Visits (Binary Dependent Variable, I = Visit). * Number in Parentheses is p Value.

	Model 1 Unspecified Wildlands	Model 2 National Forest Visits	Model 3 Apalachicola National Forest Visits	
	MLE coeff.	MLE coeff.	MLE coeff.	Mean
Intercept	2.10	0.75	0.34	
	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.39)	
Race	-1.93	-01.34	−1.74	0.29
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	
Sex	1.40	0.96	0.39	0.53
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.05)	
Household income	0.53E-05	0.38E-05	0.73E-05	$41,013
	(0.28)	(0.34)	(0.07)	
Age	−0.32E-02	−0.26E-02	−0.13E-01	49
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.05)	
Poor black	0.78	0.80	0.77	0.11
	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.09)	
Model Chi-square	121	72	63	
Significance Level	0.000	0.1 0E-06	0.10E-06	
Percent Correct Predictions	79	64	63	
Frequency 'yes' responses	0.70	0.56	0.47	

*N = 256

significant ($p = 0.07$). Race is highly significant with the expected negative sign and the race/poor interaction variable is marginally significant ($p = 0.09$) with a positive sign consistent with the hvo previous models.

Overall, these logistic results appear to show strong support for differences between blacks and whites when controlling for other factors. The coefficient on race is negative and statistically significant in all three models, which strongly suggests support for ethnicity. On the other hand, while positive, the coefficient on income is insignificant in hvo of the three models and only marginally significant in the third indicating little or no support for marginality. Contrary to expectations, the race/poor interaction term is positive and significant between the five percent and nine percent levels in all models. This result implies that poor blacks are more likely to partake of wildland recreation than blacks at higher incomes.' This finding would ap-

'We note that because the magnitude of this coefficient is smaller than the race coefficient, poor blacks would still be less likely than whites to respond 'yes' to any of the visitation questions.

pear to contradict accepted wisdom pertaining to marginality and wildland recreation.

Reasons for Non-visitation

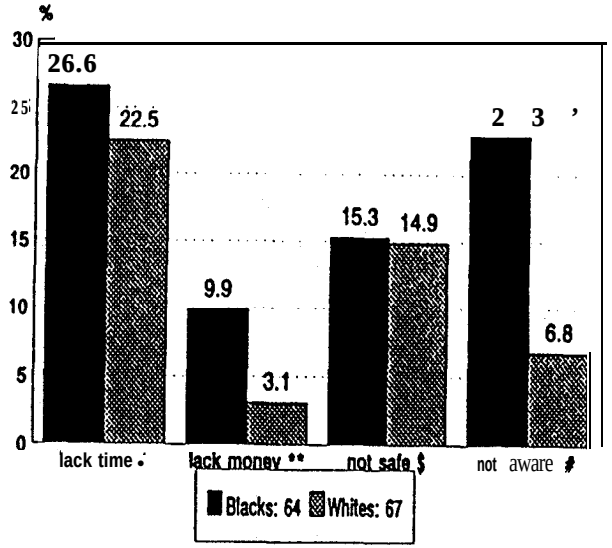
Frequencies and chi-squared test results for the marginality factors are reported in Figure 1. African Americans were more likely than whites to report being constrained by three of the four marginality factors-lack of time, lack of money, and not being aware of wildland resources. However, the only statistically significant difference was for the awareness constraint ($p = 0.04$). Blacks were more than three times as likely as whites to report that they were unaware of nearby wildland areas. These results do not provide much support for marginality.

Figure 2 presents frequencies and chi-squared test results for ethnicity factors related to non-visitation— no interest in wildland visitation, discomfort in wildland settings, family and friends not liking wildland areas, and not having anyone to go with to wildlands. We interpreted the discomfort response "would not feel comfortable" in terms of social uneasiness. However, this interpretation should be viewed with caution in that respondents could have attributed alternative meanings such as physical discomfort.[4] Blacks scored higher on the not comfortable and no companion constraints; whereas more whites said they did not visit because they had no interest in wildland recreation environments, and their family and friends did not like these areas. The response distribution for the no interest constraint appears to contradict the ethnicity explanation of recreation behavior. According to ethnicity, we would expect higher proportions of blacks to report that they did not visit because they had no interest in wildland recreation areas. Actually, higher proportions of whites said they were inhibited by this factor although the difference was not significant. The no companion factor was the only participation barrier that came close to being statistically significant for differences between the two groups ($p = 0.07$). Blacks were about twice as likely as whites to say they did not visit because they had no companion to accompany them to wildland areas. Overall, these findings do not provide support for ethnicity.

Latent Demand

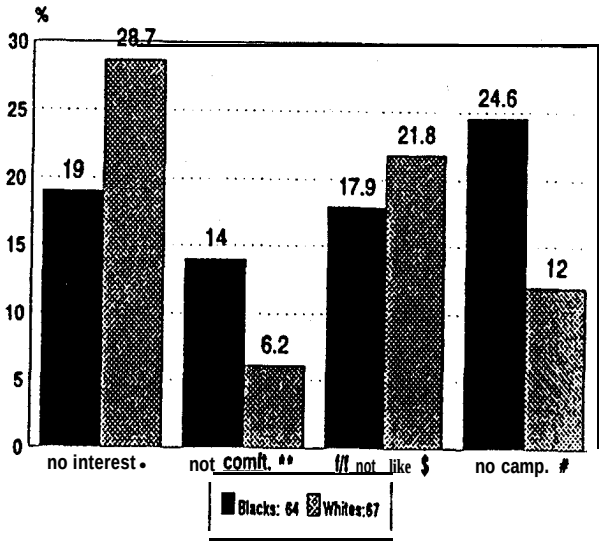
Respondents who did not currently go to wildlands were asked if they would ever consider visiting. According to marginality, there should exist a greater latent demand among marginalized minorities to participate in activities in which they do not currently engage. Figure 3 shows black responses are more evenly distributed among the three categories. About forty percent

[4] An anonymous reviewer called attention to the possible discrepancy between our interpretation of discomfort and the interpretation attributed to this factor by blacks and whites. Black respondents could have viewed the question more in terms of the possibility of encounters with hostile whites. whereas whites may have considered the physical discomfort of the land.



• p= .65 ** p= .17 $ p= .84 # p= .04

Figure 1. Marginality constraints by race



• p=.25 • *p=.52 $ p=.66 # p=.07

Figure 2. Ethnicity constraints by race

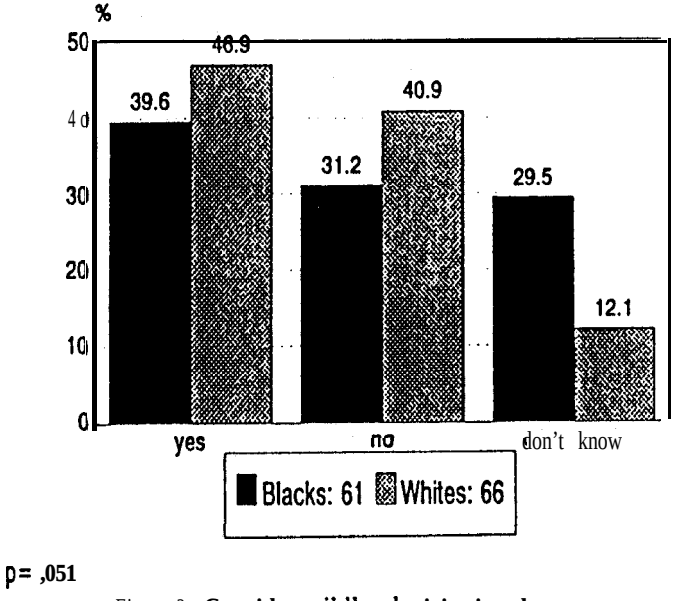


Figure 3. **Consider wildland visitation by race**

of African Americans said they would consider visiting, compared to about forty-seven percent of whites. Only thirty-one percent of blacks said they would not consider visiting, and about forty-one percent of whites said they would not consider going to such recreation areas. More interesting though, is that about thirty percent of African Americans reported that they did not know whether they would visit these areas if given the chance. This figure compares with only twelve percent of undecided responses for whites. Black/white responses to this question are significantly different at the five percent level.

Discussion

Wildland Visitation

This research examined racial differences in wildland recreation. We empirically examined marginality and ethnicity in terms of wildland visitation, factors that inhibit visitation, and latent demand to assess whether racial differences reported in prior studies for non-rural populations could be generalized to rural populations as well. Results showed significant racial differences in unspecified wildland visitation, National Forest visits, and household visits to the Apalachicola National Forest. These findings are somewhat consistent with findings from studies of urban populations involving forest-based

recreation in that the probability of blacks participating in this kind of recreation is less than whites. Findings also showed that sex (being male) was positively correlated with visitation while age was negatively correlated with visitation. Unlike previous studies, lower income African Americans were actually more likely than those with higher incomes to visit. This finding is counter to the argument that participation increases with higher incomes as would be maintained with marginality.

To understand this particular finding, one needs to consider the types of wildland activities blacks reported engaging in most often. Our analyses do not allow for an in-depth comparison and presentation of activity variables by race because such analyses were not available at time of this writing. However, a cursory examination of the data indicates that black uses and perceptions of wildland recreation places emphasized more consumptive uses, like fishing and hunting, rather than less consumptive or aesthetic uses like camping. hiking, or nature observation. These latter activities were engaged in more frequently by whites. If these differences hold under more rigorous examination, they would support findings from previous studies which show less black participation in non-consumptive wildland activities (Dwyer 1994).

Roughly eighty-two percent of African Americans in the sample who visited wildlands said they fished in these areas. This was the most frequently reported activity for both blacks and whites and was the only activity for which black participation was higher than white participation. Fishing has long been a leisure time activity of both black and white rural Southerners. For instance, Slave Narratives from the Georgia Piedmont contain a number of references to hunting and fishing (Lemaistre, 1988). Slaves and later sharecroppers engaged in these consumptive activities to supplement their oftentimes meager rations. These activities were probably as much or more for subsistence as for recreation. It may be that for southern rural blacks, fishing still carries connotations of a strictly agrarian-dependent existence. If more affluent blacks in the study area view agrarian dependence (i.e., fishing) as stigmatizing, then they may be less likely to visit the forest, given that fishing is the predominant activity.

Alternatively, an argument using simple economics would suggest that blacks with higher incomes have a higher opportunity cost on their recreation time and hence would be less likely to visit. Although we do not have sufficient data to test these two arguments, we think that in light of the ambiguous effects of income in the logit equations, the time argument is unlikely. Nevertheless, the increased probability of poor blacks visiting wildlands in this area merits further investigation.

Reasons for Non-visitation and Latent Demand

Racial comparisons of marginality constraints indicated that marginality factors were a greater impediment to black visitation than white visitation. Again, though, race was significantly related to only one of these factors. The lack of significant association for the other factors may be more a reflection

of inappropriate indicators for marginality rather than no association. The same may be true for ethnicity indicators. In choosing variables to represent broader constructs, investigators would be advised to select those variables most likely to have a close and immediate bearing on a given activity. Factors such as lack of transportation or lack of equipment for specific kinds of activities (for example, camping, canoeing, or even picnicking) may have a more direct bearing on visitation than the factors listed in our survey. Our study was also limited by the ambiguity of marginality/ethnicity factors, for example, the possible difference in interpretation given the discomfort question by blacks and whites, Also, we could not be certain that lack of awareness about resources did not result from lack of interest.

An alternative explanation for non-visitation which we do not address in this study is racial antagonism or discrimination in recreation settings. This type of discrimination is overt and is distinguished from the more general societal discrimination implied in the marginality explanation. West (1989; 1993) emphasized racial discrimination as a reason for differences between black and white recreation participation. He charges that researchers have not paid adequate attention to the social aspects of recreation participation and the potential for racial conflict in park settings. This research discusses outdoor recreation in terms of hostile, white opposition to blacks in "white territory," citing reported incidences of racial antagonisms and violence from white visitors directed against blacks.

One of the authors of the present study participated in a number of informal conversations with African Americans in the survey area to get a better understanding of open-ended perceptions of general wildland use and use of the Apalachicola National Forest in particular. We did not include this information in the results section because no formal, qualitative methods were followed in eliciting the information. Nevertheless, we believe these comments are informative and can provide a point of departure fot future studies, both qualitative and quantitative. Residents mentioned that there are racially demarcated recreation areas on the Apalachicola National Forest; African Americans use certain places and whites others. Of course the forest has never been legally segregated, but these conversations suggested that black and white locals are aware of certain tacit rules that make the forest, in effect, not "free" or neutral territory but racially and socially defined places much like the churches, social clubs, youth hang outs, and other places in the community. The small number of African Americans also commented that they would not feel comfortable camping in the forest because they were concerned about being hassled by groups of (white) drunks or "rednecks." They felt there would be little or no security in isolated camping areas. These comments provide support for West's argument of the possibility of interracial confrontations in outdoor recreation areas and also suggest that the continuing racial tensions in American society are not limited to "indoor" realms such as housing and education but also extend to outdoor environments and should be considered in investigations of southern, rural populations.

From these results, it is difficult to assess whether there exists a greater latent demand among African Atttericans for wildland visitation. Fewer blacks said they would visit, but fewer also indicated they would not visit. The higher proportion of "don't know" responses from Africatt Americans suggests that blacks may have less definitive notions about wildland recreation areas, compared to whites. Actually, this finding is not surprising given that blacks in the satnple were significantly less likely than whites to be aware of nearby wildland resources. If blacks in the survey area have less knowledge about available wildland areas and the kinds of recreation opportunities these places offer, it follows that it would be more difficult for this group to make decisions about visitation. Simply not knowittg about wildland recreation opportunities may play a prominent role in black "under-representation" in these areas.

Because black and white responses to the "don't know" category on the latent demand question were very different, we reviewed the response style literature to see whether blacks and whites tended to differ in their response styles. It may be that the extreme differences reported resulted, in part, from differences in black/white response styles. Bachman & O'Malley (1984) found that black and white high school students tended to provide different types of responses to scale items, regardless of the questions being asked. However, they found blacks were more likely to agree with agree/disagree type items and were also more likely to select extreme rather than moderate categories on Likert scales, particularly the positive end. These findings are counter to the results we observed and support the validity of legitimate black/white differences on the latent demand question.

Limitations and Recommendations

We must condition our findings with several caveats. First, our results are limited because of a relatively tow response rate (thirty-nine percent) and disproportionate sex ratios within racial groups. However, relatively low response rates are common in this type of research. Our results showed sitnilarities with patterns reported for urban poputadons, but this was only an indirect comparison. It would have been better to empirically examine both urban and rural samples in the same investigation; however, limited resources precluded such an effort. Further, black responses may be biased in favor of a "black community" response because blacks were sampled from census tracts with at least fifty percent black households. As Klobus-Edwards (1981) found, leisure expectations of blacks in racially segregated communities were different than those for blacks in racially mixed neighborhoods. More geographical and regional examinations of long standing recreation theories and assumptions should be conducted.

Future research could use qualitative methodologies such as focus group interviewing before surveying to first establish factors or constraints that bear upon groups living in particular areas such as the rural South. Place identity is important in identifying these impediments. Snipp (1996) argues that be-

cause rural minorities remain close to the institutions and places that have historically oppressed them (plantation agriculture in the case of African Americans. reservations for Native Americans and colonias for Latinos), these places and the collective memories of these places need to be incorporated into analyses of rural groups. This may be especially true for African Americans and their relationship to rural, wildland areas (Johnson, Horan, & Pepper, 1997). To what extent non-visitation among rural blacks reflects intergenerational angst associated with images of lynching and mob violence needs to be better explored.

As Blumer (1969) argues, in order to understand people's responses and reactions to places, one must understand the meanings they accord places. Applying these views to outdoor recreation and leisure. Lee (1972) maintains that it is incumbent upon outdoor recreation researchers to better understand the meanings people hold about recreation places in order to understand their behavior towards such places. Outdoor recreation areas, like other places in society are not value-free; that is, they are also contextualized or given meaning; and people's behavior in and towards outdoor recreation places is governed by the normative constraints and considerations of everyday social life. The interaction of rurality and race make for an interesting research study into the role of meaning and recreation behavior. We believe this is particularly important in the rural South, where there is a substantial percentage of African Americans whose families have lived in rural communities for generations. Yet, the interactions these Americans have with natural resources and natural resource agencies is not fully understood.

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