

Invited Paper

Scholarship on Race and Ethnicity: Assessing Contributions to Leisure Theory and Practice

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Abstract

Increasing racial and ethnic diversity along with a recent surge in racial conflict highlight the need for leisure studies to reflect on its capacity to provide scientific understanding and inform practice related to these issues. As these events unfold, questions emerge about how such trends will shape leisure experiences and opportunities. There are also questions about how we prepare future professionals to manage leisure services in an increasingly multiracial and multiethnic society. These and related issues were addressed in the Butler Lecture at 2016 National Recreation and Park Association Research Symposium. Based on the lecture, this paper provides an assessment of the field's positioning to provide theoretical perspective on contemporary challenges pertaining to race and ethnicity and explores how the academy can address racial disparities in leisure contexts and within the academy itself.

Keywords

Diversity, equity, social justice

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Just over four years prior to the submission of this paper, a young black man named Michael Brown became another symbol of the racial division and lack of trust between police and law enforcement and the black community, and exposed the continuing racial divide in the country. Such events force us to confront uncomfortable truths. First, we have not entered into a post-racial society. Second, racism—blatant and covert—is alive and well. Third, racism requires constant vigilance among those who oppose it. For well over a century, the federal, state, and local governments sanctioned discrimination in housing and finance, jobs and education, for a time in military service, judicial systems (Cell, 1982; Woodard, 2002), and in public parks and recreation services (Murphy, 1972; Scott, 2014). In the seminal book *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), DuBois proposed, “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line” (p. xxxi). Although in 2018, in our increasingly multiethnic society, the color line is no longer rigidly black and white, the problem of racism endures. The dynamics of race, ethnicity, and immigration play out in the public sphere and parks and open spaces, convivial interactions in the streets and gathering places, and increasingly in the digital and virtual worlds. It is thus essential for leisure researchers to directly engage the problem of race and racism in our scholarship and practice. So, what should be our priorities? How should the academy be engaged? The goal of this paper is to focus on two questions: 1) What are the opportunities to move the field forward with respect to theory on race and racism? and 2) What are the opportunities to move the field forward with respect to empirical research on race *and* addressing racial disparities in academia?

What are the Opportunities to Move the Field Forward?

Theory

When we examine theories that have been used to study race in leisure contexts (Floyd & Stodolska, 2014; Lee & Stodolska, 2017), one could be impressed with the number of different perspectives available to frame research questions. They cover a range of concepts: socioeconomic status, culture, immigration, discrimination, identity, social networks, and many others. Our investigations of the determinants of leisure behavior among people of color have matured from one “cause” (e.g., race or class) to multiple sources of inequality (e.g., Floyd, Nicholas, Lee, Lee, & Scott, 2006). For the most part, they also can be utilized to examine multiple racial and ethnic groups. However, the reviews of the most frequently employed theoretical frameworks also uncovered clear “biases” toward (1) individual behavior—activity and destination choices and frequency of participation, and (2) group comparisons—how one group compares to another is clearly important to document disparity in use or access. So far, only two of the theories employed by leisure researchers—the critical race theory and social capital—lend themselves to understanding how racism is often embedded in organizations and institutional practices (e.g., Glover, 2007). Moreover, none of the studies published so far had “place” (i.e., neighborhoods or community) as a central concern. Racial disparities in neighborhood environmental quality, rates of unemployment, life expectancy, exposure to lead poisoning, and access to green spaces and playgrounds call attention to ways places reflect racial structure and how community institutions perpetuate injustices (Joassart-Marcelli, 2010). Thus, leisure research on race and racial inequalities could benefit from adopting complementary

theories that consider place-based approaches that recognize that “places are racialized while places also structure, construct, and reproduce individual identities” (Inwood & Yarbrough, 2010, p. 300).

Research

The examination of the current literature reveals that there are few compelling paradigms that would be well-suited to framing the challenges of our time and furthering empirical research in the field of leisure studies. Below we discuss several approaches that have the potential to move the sub-field of race and leisure forward and make it better aligned with issues critical to today’s society.

Place-based approaches. As suggested, place-based approaches could be one of the most promising areas for future work on race and racial disparities. In particular: (1) They recognize historical influences that can legitimize long-held grievances that in turn could increase communication and trust between agencies/organizations and communities of color; (2) They focus on environments and policies that shape them, with the potential to influence all age groups; (3) They help to account for significant intra-group variations in the minority members’ experience of leisure; (4) They create opportunities for multisectoral and interdisciplinary partnerships; (5) They open up multiple scales of analysis (e.g., neighborhood, CBG, tracts, metro areas); and (6) They encourage multilevel approaches such as the social-ecological approach that accounts for the interaction among people, social relationships, community-level variables, and societal influences.

For instance, there is a growing recognition that racial disparities in health outcomes can be explained by differential access to neighborhood environments that support healthy behaviors (LaVeist, Pollack, Thorpe, Fesahazion, & Gaskin, 2011) —meaning that when Blacks and Whites live in similar conditions, “disparities are minimized” (p. 1884). A place-based approach recognizes that U.S. cities are largely segregated (Denton, 2006; Iceland, Weinberg, & Steinmetz, 2002; Logan & Stults, 2011), leaving racial minorities (primarily African Americans, Latinos, and American Indians) exposed to a variety of health risks. One of the essential features of Jim Crow put in place to control Blacks after Emancipation was allocation of “physically superior space and amenities to White people and physically inferior space to Black people” (e.g., schools, education, travel accommodations, parks and playgrounds, and housing) (Cooper, Arriola, Haardörfer, & McBride, 2016).

In the second decade of the 21st century, segregation endures; on average, Whites live in areas 75% White, 8% Black, 11% Hispanic, and 5% Asian. In contrast, a typical Black person lives in an area that is 45% Black, 15% Hispanic, and 4% Asian (Logan & Stults, 2011). Examining racial segregation in the context of neighborhoods, parks, and green spaces, and its interrelation to the socioeconomic condition of racial and ethnic minority populations can provide important insights into their leisure experiences. It can account for intergroup differences by bringing to light fundamental structural factors underlying such differences. Moreover, it can help explain significant intra-group variations in the access to leisure among people of color of different socioeconomic status and place of residence.

For over a decade, researchers in the field of leisure increasingly recognized the health benefits of parks, recreation facilities, and green spaces (Bocarro & Edwards, 2016). Studies have shown that children and adults with access to parks are more

active and less likely to be overweight (Godbey & Mowen, 2010). An increasing number of studies have also shown that parks and greenspaces are associated with mental restoration, stress reduction, and social cohesion (Kuo, 2010). At the same time, parks, playgrounds, and public green spaces are less available in poorer and minority neighborhoods. Middle-class Whites have access to larger acreages of parkland (Boone, Buckley, Grove, & Sister, 2009), and White-dominated areas outcompete other communities for funding for parkland acquisition (Wolch, Wilson, & Fehrenbach, 2005). Inadequate staffing and delivery of recreation programs are more of a challenge for lower-income African-American and Latino communities than they are for middle-class Whites (Dahmann, Wolch, Joassart-Marcelli, Reynolds, & Jerrett, 2010). At the same time, as Joassart-Marcelli (2010) and García (2013) have noted, Blacks and Latinos are in greatest need of public parks and recreation but live in cities with the lowest amount of expenditures for recreation from local, state, and federal funds.

In light of this, more research should focus on the inequitable distribution of parks and recreation amenities. Methods such as spatial analysis (e.g., mapping parks overlaid with race and SES) could be used in studies with the goal of informing how fiscal resources should be distributed. In addition, research should examine the extent the legacy of segregation influences decision-making with respect to allocating resources for parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities. Studies should also explore policies that lead to gentrification, where racial and ethnic minorities are less able to afford housing near new or improved parks and open spaces (Smith & Floyd, 2013).

Such broader view of the quality of life contributions of leisure could foster interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaborations (Acevedo-Garcia, Osypuk, McArdle, & Williams, 2008). It is critical that we identify partners in other disciplines and fields whose work shapes neighborhood environments (e.g., law enforcement, criminal justice, social work, public health, geography, planning, transportation, and the private financial sector) and who have similar goals for improving health and well-being among the communities of color. Other social sciences can incorporate concepts from leisure studies into their frameworks and models. Research that aims to address issues of race and racial disparities should also transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries and bring together researchers from multiple disciplines to collaborate, share ideas, and contribute their knowledge and expertise. Leisure researchers and practitioners are uniquely positioned to play a critical role in such collaborations. In an era of limited fiscal resources (at universities and in municipal services), and with the urgent need to address racial disparities, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and cross-sector collaboration should be a priority for the field. Ultimately, the field of leisure studies could be better positioned to influence policy decisions related to what neighborhood amenities should be prioritized and initiatives on which public resources should be spent.

Children's health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2013 homicide was *the* leading cause of death among Black males (15-34 years of age)—47.8%—compared to unintentional injuries among Whites and Hispanics. Research in the field of public health and youth development revealed that African American adolescents' exposure to violence leads to symptoms of psychological trauma, including depression, anger, anxiety, disassociation, and posttraumatic stress (Singer, Anglin, Song, & Lunghofer 1995). Studies have also shown that discrimination negatively affects psychological functioning among

African American and Latino adolescents and results in increased levels of perceived stress, depressive symptomatology, low self-esteem, conduct problems, likelihood of involvement in violence, and decreased overall psychological well-being (Brody et al., 2006; Romero, Martinez, & Carvajal, 2007; Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2007). Discrimination experienced by youth of color has also been linked to higher rates of cigarette smoking, as well as marijuana, inhalants, and cocaine use (Choi, Harachi, Gillmore, & Catalano, 2006; Williams & Mohammed, 2009). Moreover, Black and Latino children are more likely to be overweight or obese and suffer from chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes (Health United States, 2015). Since leisure contributes to stress reduction and increased self-esteem as well as helps prevent delinquent behaviors among youth (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000), how and to what extent leisure can serve as a buffer to the negative effects of discrimination on youth's health and well-being would constitute a promising area of inquiry.

Writing for The Pew Research Center, Patten and Krogstad (2015) reported that Black and Latino children are more likely to live in poverty than their non-Hispanic White counterparts. For instance, in 2013 there were more Latino children living in poverty than any other group. Almost a third (32.9%) of Latinos were children, and 42.5% of them lived in poverty households. The same was true for 38% of African American children who made up 27% of the Black population. By mid-century, 60% or more of the U.S. population under the age of 18 will be Black and Latino (Passel & Cohn, 2008). Poverty is one of the major determinants of health and is associated with chronic stress that leads to increased morbidity and mortality (Adler & Newman, 2002; Myers, 2009). Thus, poverty and restricted access to positive recreation opportunities among children of color are critical areas where our research can try to address racial disparities. Issues such the role of after-school programs and physical activity engagements in health promotion and violence prevention should be addressed. Other fruitful areas for future inquiry include lack of access among minority children to quality natural environments both in urban areas and in more distant national parks. Such research efforts would be in line with the existing initiatives of the National Park Service Urban Agenda which has as one of its principles to "Be relevant to All Americans" (National Park Service, 2015) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative," which strives to connect and better serve diverse populations (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2014).

The effects and operation of racism and discrimination. In their 2008 paper, Floyd, Bocarro, and Thompson reported results of a systematic review of five major journals (*Journal of Leisure Research*, *Leisure Sciences*, *Leisure Studies*, *Journal of Parks and Recreation Administration*, and *Leisure & Society*). Out of 313 studies on race, ethnicity, and leisure that they identified, 25 (or 8%) dealt with race relations and interracial interactions (e.g., discrimination, prejudice), and eight papers (3%) focused on environment or social justice. The research has shown that discrimination affects where people go for recreation, restricts their choices of recreation activities and co-participants, and that people of color are more likely than Whites to experience discrimination in recreation areas (Sharaievska, Stodolska, & Floyd, 2014). Studies have examined the role of recreation agencies in perpetuating discrimination and racism and found that agencies often "unwittingly or unknowingly, foster organizational barriers" that limit access to racial and ethnic minorities (Allison & Hibbler, 2004, p. 262). Despite its growing volume, the focus on discrimination and racism remains a

small part of our literature, and the focus on organizational barriers is even smaller (Scott, 2014). More needs to be known about organizational barriers experienced by minority populations and the characteristics of recreation/leisure service organizations that make them ineffective in serving people of color (Pearce & Kivel, 2000).

Both the findings of recent studies (Harrison, 2013) and the racially charged events of 2015-2018 are poignant reminders of the consequences of racism on the lives of individuals and communities. Similar to the argument of Scott (2014) and Sharaievska et al. (2014), who examined the literature on racism in the field of leisure, Smedley (2012) argued that in the field of public health, much of the literature focused on individually mediated racism while little attention has been paid to racism that operates at internalized, institutional, and structural levels. Smedley called for a “more comprehensive model of the lived experience of race (...) that considers the cumulative, interactive effects of different forms of racism on health over the lifespan” (p. 933). Such a model was proposed by Krieger (2012), who drew on the ecosocial theory of disease distribution (Krieger, 1994, 2005, 2011) to show how discrimination can lead to persistent racial/ethnic disparities in health. As she pointed out, “the lived realities of discrimination [are] an exploitative and oppressive societal phenomenon operating at multiple levels and involving myriad pathways across both the life course and historical generations” (p. 936). In her theory, Krieger argued that there are many pathways by which discrimination affects health. The major ones involve “economic and social deprivation; excess exposure to toxins, hazards, and pathogens; social trauma; health-harming responses to discrimination; targeted marketing of harmful commodities; inadequate medical care; and, especially (but not only) for indigenous peoples, ecosystem degradation and alienation from the land” (p. 937). Racism and health are related at different levels, including individual, household, area, regional, national, and global. It is the historical context that determines “which pathways matter and are operative, at what level and at what point in the life course” (p. 937).

The linkages between racism, discrimination and racial disparities in health among adults have also been documented by other research in the field of public health. As Williams and Mohammed (2009) argued, “Racial disparities in health in the U.S. are large and pervasive... For most of the 15 leading causes of death including heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, kidney disease, hypertension, liver cirrhosis and homicide, African Americans (or blacks) have higher death rates than whites” (p. 20). For some health outcomes, these disparities are worsening, and race seems to play a role in affecting people’s health even if socioeconomic status is controlled. Racism has been suggested as one of the factors contributing to these health disparities through generating chronic stress that appears to accelerate cellular aging and lead to premature mortality (Brondolo, Gallo, & Myers, 2009; Williams & Mohammed, 2009). Discrimination-induced stress also leads to decreased mental health status, elevated blood pressure, and increased hypertension risk, physical fatigue, elevated risk of breast cancer, coronary artery calcification and uterine fibroids, and poor sleep (Brondolo et al., 2009; Williams & Mohammad, 2009). Literature has also documented a relationship between racism and involvement in risky behaviors such as smoking and substance use, lower likelihood of seeking preventive health services, and inconsistent use of prescribed medications (Brondolo et al., 2009).

Leisure studies are in a unique position to contribute to the discourse on the contribution of racism to health disparities and, in particular, to the examination of the

pathways by which discrimination affects health. Our studies have shown that perceived discrimination limits people's lives in a multitude of ways, including decreasing ability to enjoy leisure as interracial or same-sex couples (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002) and limiting their travel choices (Philipp, 1994) and the use of urban green spaces and national parks (Erickson, Johnson, & Kivel, 2009; Sharaievska, Stodolska, Shinew, & Kim, 2010). The key for future leisure research, however, will be to expand the investigation of the ways in which discrimination in leisure contexts can be linked to public health—both directly through limiting people's use of recreation areas and involvement in health-promoting behaviors, and indirectly through ecosystem degradation and perpetuating economic and social disparities. Moreover, as we have already indicated in the section on children's health, pathways through which recreation can ward off the negative health outcomes of discrimination need to be investigated. It will also be important for future leisure scholars to step beyond the investigation of people's individual experience of discrimination and pay more attention to the macro processes at the societal and global levels that lead to the perpetuation of racial inequality. We need to understand better the historical processes that led to the existence of disparities in recreation provision, intergroup conflict, and factors that are responsible for the unique leisure behaviors among people of color.

Another possible area for future investigation is the relationship between racism and new leisure activities and spaces. In the current era of technology and the rise of social media, racist messages can be perpetuated through new channels and can influence people's lives in much more insidious and indirect ways. Research has shown that online bullying is almost impossible to escape from for youth who are exposed to hundreds of text messages, tweets, and Facebook posts each day (Espelage & Swearer, 2011). Social media offers perpetrators almost complete anonymity and allows for a wide and instantaneous propagation of negative and degrading posts. Racist messages perpetuated through online comments, blogs, and chatrooms are used to bully, threaten, and intimidate youth of color or children who even slightly deviate from the "mainstream norm" (e.g., LGBTQ, overweight, lower SES). They also expose youth to the detrimental effects of discrimination. Online communities are today's new playgrounds and leisure spaces, but so far no research in the field of leisure has been conducted on how they are used to raise, reproduce, and propagate racist ideologies and how these ideologies affect the well-being, social interactions, and the future of America's youth (Pinckney et al., 2018).

The roles of leisure in building bridges among communities and improving interracial/ interethnic relations. For decades, leisure has been recognized for its important role in the cultural preservation and cultural transmission among the "mainstream" population (Pieper, 1963) and among ethnic and racial minorities (Tirone & Goodberry, 2011). Research has also shown that leisure has a potential to improve interracial/interethnic interactions in the context of community gardens (Shinew, Glover, & Parry, 2004) and city parks (Main, 2013; Peters, Elands, & Buijs, 2010). However, from the studies conducted in Illinois (Stodolska, Shinew, Acevedo, & Izenstark, 2011) and Texas (Fernandez & Witt, 2013), and the wave of racist events that is taking place in the U.S. and Europe in public recreation environments (Fearnow, 2018; Rubin, 2016), we also know that conflict over the use of recreation resources, the "right to space," or cultural expression can lead to aggravation of ethnic tensions. Thus, one of the important avenues for future leisure research should be examining how to

leverage the opportunities for positive interactions provided by leisure activities and leisure spaces to build bridges among ethnic communities.

Within the Academy

In a 2016 paper in *Schole*, Mowatt, Johnson, Roberts, and Kivel brought attention to the lack of racial and ethnic diversity among leisure studies faculty. The lack of faculty of color in the field of leisure studies is not unique as other fields also struggle with the shortage of faculty and students from underrepresented groups. A number of issues, however, should be confronted by leisure studies as a discipline: (1) The field is not producing sufficient numbers of *scholars of color*, and there is no coordinated intervention to address this problem; (2) The field is not producing enough *research on race and the challenges of racism*; (3) This state of affairs limits fuller understanding of leisure and society. We should emphasize that it is not a given that scholars of color will be *better* teachers or researchers on race and related topics. Rather, academics of color are in “a different—not better—position” with respect to their own communities (Peake & Kobayashi, 2002, p. 56) and can serve as role models for students from underrepresented groups who will become future leaders in the recreation profession. The scarcity of scholars of colors and scholarship on race and leisure give rise to a critical question about the nature of our knowledge (epistemological foundations): To what extent is leisure studies a White discipline?

The 2008 review by Floyd et al. offers some perspective. As of 2007 (when the review was conducted), 3,369 articles were published in the five major leisure journals: 150 or 4.5% of them focused on race or ethnicity. The vast majority of studies on the meanings of leisure, constraints to leisure, and leisure attitudes were based largely on White samples. An argument that leisure studies promotes “White normativity” that characterizes the field in terms of analytic strategies, topics, and research participants warrants close examination. For instance, studies that directly focused on leisure experiences of racial and ethnic minorities routinely used Whites as the reference group against which all other groups were compared, often without analyses of observed differences. In the 40 years since the publication of Washburne’s (1978) seminal paper, the term “underparticipation” was used to describe any deviation from the White norm in activity patterns among racial/ethnic groups. In terms of race and what has been studied, the outdoor recreation literature stands as a clear example. In her book, *Black Faces, White Spaces*, Carolyn Finney (2014) reminded us that the meaning of wilderness and parks is informed by a “rhetoric of wilderness conquest” (p. 28) that excludes the history of people of color. Cronon (1996) wrote that the wilderness is “entirely a creation of the culture that holds it dear, a product of the very history it seeks to deny” (p. 79). The outdoor recreation literature as a whole does not reflect the viewpoints of African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans. It largely reflects a racialized outdoor leisure identity that is young, White, and male (Martin, 2004) and the dominant narratives that inform the management policies of resource management agencies (Finney, 2014). Although the leisure literature in general has become more critical recognizing how nature and the outdoor experiences are gendered and racialized, we must continue to question the ways in which leisure scholarship reinforces dominant narratives.

The work on increasing the numbers of scholars of color in the field of leisure needs to begin at the level of undergraduate education or even before students make

their decisions regarding their college majors. For years, departments in the fields of recreation, sport, and tourism have struggled with attracting minority students to their undergraduate and especially graduate programs, ultimately producing few faculty of color who could take jobs in academia. Several reasons can be cited for the low numbers of underrepresented students in our curricula, but each of these obstacles can be addressed with the use of creative strategies.

First, each family, but particularly those whose children will be first-generation college graduates aspires to steer their sons and daughters to the majors that will ensure their professional success and well-being. For years, the field of recreation and leisure studies has struggled for legitimacy and even today has to compete for the best and brightest minds with more established disciplines such as business, engineering, law, and medicine. In light of this, we need to continue to educate people about the value of leisure as the domain indispensable to people's quality of life, the well-being of communities, and a human right that should be enjoyed by all. Since in most of our institutions, recreation and leisure studies is a "discovery major," we are in a unique position to spread the message of the critical role of leisure to the broad spectrum of students who are enrolled in our classes. *Second*, leisure departments should leverage their collaborations with local recreation professionals who have access to youth in their formative years. Most youth who engage in leisure programs take for granted that such opportunities exist and give little thought to the fact that recreation they enjoy can become their lifelong career. Thus, recreation professionals are in a unique position to introduce the potential careers in the field of leisure to the youth of color who have not yet decided on their college majors. *Third*, not only recruiting but also admitting and retaining diverse students should be a priority. Overreliance on standardized tests that are known to disadvantage students from underprivileged backgrounds needs to be reevaluated. Moreover, we need to create a climate on our campuses and departments that is free of bias and discrimination and that is conducive to the success of minority students. *Fourth*, we should develop ladders of success where minority graduates serve as leaders and mentors to future generations of students of color. Such mentorship networks can be developed not only within our departments, but across our institutions. Last, and most importantly, we should continue to teach all students, not only those from minority backgrounds, about the value of inclusiveness and tolerance.

Within the Recreation Profession

Calls for elimination of institutional biases and racism from the recreation profession and for the equitable provision of recreation resources are not new and have been made for decades (Allison & Schneider, 2000; see also Scott, 2014). However, recreation practitioners should be continuously vigilant to ensure that their programs and settings are free from bias and discrimination. They should be appropriately trained to detect, avoid, and eliminate all cases of overt or implicit bias and microaggression in their interactions with recreation participants of color. It is particularly critical in the current political climate when many members of ethnic and racial groups are prevented from using recreation resources by overt racism from other residents and the police. Cases of the law enforcement being called on youth of color recreating in pools (Cole-Frowe & Fausset, 2015), African American couples barbecuing in parks (Fearnow, 2018), or Latinos speaking Spanish in public places (Perry, 2018) have been occurring with increasing frequency. Moreover, recreation facilities need to reconsider potential

institutional barriers that may prevent people of color and immigrants from using their services in this rapidly changing political and legal environment. For instance, fear of deportation caused by the increased operation of the U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) agents has resulted in many Latinos being reluctant to visit public recreation spaces, travel, and sign up their children for recreation programs (Camarillo, 2018; Stodolska, Shinew, & Camarillo, 2018). Effectively serving communities of color is becoming a challenge when public trust is being eroded. At the same time, recreation has an opportunity to play a vital role in bringing communities together, quelling racial tensions, and improving climate in our diverse society.

Closing Comments

In summary, the theory and research related to race have increased, but there are clear limitations on what we have done. While some of the topics examined by leisure researchers align with current issues, there is no way to conclude that our field is in a good position to adequately respond to the challenges of our times. The field of leisure studies is constrained by theory and research focused on individual experiences and lack of recognition of the structural and institutional factors associated with race. Opportunities do exist, however, to bring more attention to the organizational, place-based, and health-focused approaches to address racial disparities in leisure and quality of life. To that end, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary partnerships are critical. Finally, as we have argued, the field of leisure studies must increase the number and representation of scholars of color and build on traditional scholarship while breaking away from the past approaches that serve to reinforce dominant racist narratives. Across the country, community organizations such as Outdoor Afro and Latino Outdoors are taking decisive action and are bringing creative solutions to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in outdoor recreation. The question of whether the field of leisure studies will respond with its own decisive and creative solutions remains unanswered.

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