

Attracting Hispanics to an African American Recreation Center *Examining Attitudes and Historical Factors*

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Abstract

This study sought to explore (a) how the Milton Recreation Center (MRC) became racialized as an African American space, (b) the factors limiting Hispanic parents from enrolling their children at the MRC, and (c) African Americans' attitudes toward increasing Hispanic participation at the MRC. The study employed qualitative methods including participant interviews. Findings suggested that historical discrimination toward the African American population was responsible for the overrepresentation of African American users at the facility, which limited the number of Hispanic users as some Hispanic families held negative attitudes toward African Americans. Hispanics encountered other constraints including cultural differences and bullying. This study stresses the importance of extending the discussion of discrimination to include instances of both horizontal and historical discrimination.

Keywords: *Race, ethnicity, youth, leisure constraints, white privilege, history, horizontal discrimination*

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The majority of the existing research on leisure among racial and ethnic minorities has examined the leisure constraints of people of color, predominantly addressing why racially marginalized groups display divergent leisure patterns from their White counterparts. The past four decades of research demonstrate that people of color are inhibited in their leisure participation by factors such as socioeconomics (Dunn, Kasul, & Brown, 2002; Washburne, 1978), subcultural differences (Edwards, 1981; Shinew, Floyd, & Parry, 2004; Washburne, 1978), and discrimination (Blahna & Black, 1993; Sharaievska, Stodolska, Shinew, & Kim, 2010; West, 1989). Although this literature is extensive, Shinew et al. (2006) asserted that the field has yet to explore the changes in racial stratification occurring due to “massive migration and mobility of groups” (p. 403). For example, current national demographic trends suggest that the non-Hispanic White population will only compose approximately 53% of the population by year 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010a). Since 2010, racial and ethnic minorities have already exceeded the White population in several areas of the United States (Texas, California, Hawaii, New Mexico, and the District of Columbia), with Hispanics driving the majority of the growth (U.S. Census Bureau).

Dramatic increases in the population of racial minorities have led scholars to foresee a new racial structure to replace the traditional black-white color line. For example, Bonilla-Silva (2010) has predicted the emergence of a three-tiered structure where Whites would occupy the first tier along with “assimilated White Latinos and Native Americans, some multiracials, and a few select Asian-origin members” (p. 180). The second tier would consist of “light skinned Latinos, Asian Americans, Middle Easterner Americans, and most multiracials,” followed by a bottom tier composed of the “collective blacks” (i.e., dark skinned Latinos, blacks from all sources, etc.) (p. 180).

While contemporary leisure research has addressed the interracial conflict occurring between African Americans and non-Hispanic Whites, less emphasis has been placed on the interactions between the different people of color (e.g., African Americans and Hispanics). Scholars in various fields have documented the conflicts related to competition over scarce resources as well as the social distance maintained between African Americans and Hispanics (Hernandez, 2007; Mindiola, Niemann, & Rodriguez, 2002; Straus, 2009). In the field of leisure, the intergroup conflict between Hispanics and African Americans has received less attention (e.g., Sharaievska et al.; Stodolska & Shinew, 2010). In lieu of the demographic shifts occurring in the U.S., it appears that the ethnicity, marginality, and discrimination frameworks have been beneficial to understanding the leisure constraints of minorities but are overdue to include instances of horizontal discrimination, which occurs between racial and ethnic minorities.

In addition to horizontal discrimination, historical factors have often been overlooked as an explanation of contemporary minority leisure patterns and behaviors. For example, Floyd (1998) noted the role of poverty and historical discrimination implied in frameworks such as the marginality theory. Other investigators have focused on variables such as income or availability of resources with little focus on how these factors developed (Erickson, Johnson, & Kivel, 2009; Floyd). Historical factors may help explain current leisure behaviors and preferences among minority group members (Nadel, 1951; Woodard, 1988), including why some places have become racialized (Bobo, 1987; Schuman, Steeh, & Bobo, 1985).

An opportunity to further explore issues related to horizontal discrimination and historical factors presented itself when the Milton Recreation Center (MRC) Director asked for assistance in recruiting Hispanic children to the facility which had historically primarily served African Americans. The MRC is situated in the historical African American neighborhood in a medium size town in East Texas. Despite the recent migration of Hispanic families into this neighbor-

hood, the number of Hispanic children using the Center remained limited. The purpose of this study was to examine (a) how the MRC became associated with the African American community, (b) factors that limited Hispanic parents from enrolling their children at the MRC, and (c) the attitudes African Americans held in regards to increasing Hispanics' participation at the MRC. The current study provided an opportunity for expanding our understanding of historical and contemporary factors that affect participation in leisure activities and the use of recreation resources among people of color.

Theoretical Framework

Several theoretical perspectives were particularly germane to understandings the difficulty of achieving integration of Hispanics into the everyday life of the Center. These included marginality, ethnicity, and discrimination. Each of these perspectives is reviewed below.

Ethnicity and Marginality

Washburne's (1978) ethnicity and marginality perspectives have provided much of the groundwork for the leisure research dealing with race and ethnicity. According to the ethnicity perspective, different groups possess different norms and values which reinforce certain leisure behaviors and preferences (Edwards, 1981; Kochman, 1981; Lee, 1972; Shinew et al., 2004; Washburne; West, 1989). In the case of Hispanics, researchers have noted the group's propensity to recreate in large groups composed primarily of relatives and close friends with socializing serving as their primary recreation motivation (e.g., Baas, Ewert, & Chavez, 1993; Dunn et al., 2002). Cookouts, playing sports (and soccer in particular), and playing loud music have also been cited as common among Hispanics.

The marginality theory refers to ethnic and racial minorities' marginal position in society as expressed through limited socioeconomic resources. Problems with covering costs of participation (i.e., entrance fees, transportation, equipment rentals) have been cited as the primary constraint on leisure activities among minority groups (Floyd, 1998; Stodolska & Jackson, 1998; Washburne, 1978). For instance, Dunn et al. (2002) noted that transportation was a problem for Hispanics trying to visit Corps lakes that were located in rural areas.

Discrimination

Discrimination also has been analyzed by scholars interested in the leisure constraints of racial and ethnic minorities (Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Feagin, 2006; Floyd, 1998; Sharaievska et al., 2010; Stodolska & Jackson, 1998). In a study pertaining to racially diverse students' recreational experiences, Blahna and Black (1993) reported that a White male threatened to call immigration after seeing a Hispanic male using the tennis courts. Tirone (1999) discussed South Asian Canadian youth's interactions in leisure settings where the teens reported being victims of verbal harassment. Flood and McAvooy (2007) reported that American Indians faced disrespect in the form of stares, racial slurs, and threats from other recreationists. For the racial group members not experiencing direct discrimination, feelings of being unwelcomed were noted as contributing to constraints on leisure participation (Blahna & Black; Chavez, 1993; Phillip, 1999; Shinew et al., 2004; West, 1989).

The risk of potential racism is a limiting factor when marginalized groups choose to recreate in leisure spaces (Blahna & Black, 1993; Chavez, 1993; Phillip, 1999; Shinew et al., 2004; West, 1989). Fear of racism often results from previous encounters with racism, stories about discrimination circulated by the media, or discrimination accounts regarding particular recreational sites (Sharaievska et al., 2010). In Phillip's (1999) study on middle-income African Americans and

European Americans, both groups rated how welcome African American users would feel in 20 leisure activities. Findings indicated that both African Americans and European Americans were cognizant of where African Americans would “fit” (p. 397). African Americans further reported feelings of being unwelcomed in many leisure activities. According to Stodolska and Jackson (1998), potential fear of discrimination has the power to influence leisure preferences including the type of activities one chooses to undertake and the “choice of where and with whom to participate” (p. 39).

In addition, Floyd (1998) suggested that historical discrimination is intertwined in the discussion of marginality. Scholars in parent disciplines such as sociology have acknowledged that non-Hispanic Whites enjoy better access to education, employment, housing, health care, and leisure opportunities compared to racial and ethnic minorities (American Sociological Association, 2003; Feagin, 2006). In respect to leisure opportunities, people of color are more likely to live in unsafe neighborhoods with higher rates of poverty which limits their leisure participation (Gobster, 1998; Shinew et al., 2006). In contrast, White neighborhoods have been documented as having greater access to recreation facilities and better maintained park infrastructure and community resources (Ferriss, 1962; Floyd, Taylor & Whitt-Glover, 2009; Stodolska & Shinew, 2010). These findings are indicative of the racial stratification of American society where non-Hispanic Whites hold more prestige and access to resources in comparison to people of color (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Kahn, Ho, Sidanius, & Pratto, 2009; Shinew et al.).

Regarding racial stratification, a number of studies have focused on vertical discrimination (non-Hispanic Whites-to-racial and ethnic minorities) that occurs within the racial hierarchy, with less emphasis placed on horizontal discrimination which occurs between racial and ethnic minorities (Mindiola et al., 2002; Sharaievska et al., 2010). Nevertheless, there is growing interest in interactions between different minority populations (e.g., Hispanics and African Americans). According to Mindiola et al.'s study that documented the influx of Hispanics into predominantly African American neighborhoods in the Houston area, African Americans and Hispanics held negative views of each other. However, Hispanics held slightly more negative views of their African American counterparts than African Americans held about Hispanics.

Hernandez (2007) described the intergroup tension that exists between Hispanics and African Americans in racially diverse communities in Los Angeles with specific attention to the aggression committed against African Americans by Hispanic gangs. Hispanic gangs targeted African Americans in order to encourage them to move out of neighborhoods that were perceived as Hispanic. Hernandez noted that the literature mostly represented African Americans as “aggressors,” whereas Hispanics were portrayed as victims. Her findings, however, showed that on many occasions it was the Hispanics who were responsible for racially motivated attacks against African Americans. Other scholars have suggested that the negative interactions between Hispanics and African Americans are due to competition related to employment and resources such as education (Johnson & Oliver, 1989; Straus, 2009).

Within the leisure literature, few studies addressed the problem of horizontal discrimination. Existing research reported that some Hispanics displayed racist sentiments toward African Americans at the group level but not on an individual level (e.g., “I’m not prejudiced, but many of my people are”) (Sharaievska et al., 2010, p. 320). In a study by Stodolska and Shinew (2010) regarding Hispanic families in Chicago, the researchers reported that racial tensions existed between Hispanics and African Americans which reinforced racial boundaries within the city parks. More research regarding horizontal discrimination is needed.

Literature Review

Explaining Contemporary Leisure Patterns through Historical Factors and White Privilege

Cultural anthropologists have long argued that present-day behaviors and attitudes are creations of historical circumstances and environmental conditions (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997; Nadel, 1951; Titiev, 1954; Woodard, 1988). Several leisure scholars have noted the importance of historical analysis in explaining contemporary patterns of leisure behavior (Erickson et al., 2009; Floyd, 1998).

In the case of African Americans, historical events seem to play a role in leisure choices and access to participation venues (Erickson et al., 2009; Shumaker, 2009; Wiltse, 2007). For example, some outdoor areas still hold negative connotations for African Americans, as lynching and images of slavery were often related to the outdoors (Erickson et al.; Martin, 2004). Erickson et al.'s study suggested that African Americans were restricted in their visitation to Rocky Mountain National Park for various reasons including the historical oppression experienced in the given site. Holland (2002) noted that historically in the United States, African Americans had less access to leisure opportunities which still may influence their leisure behavior today.

In the case of American Indians, attention to historical factors has helped to explain their current outdoor recreation patterns. The creation of state and federal parks oftentimes required the removal of native peoples (Mowatt, 2009; Schelhas, 2002). According to McAvoy (2002), the tension between federal parks and Native American tribes still exists. In the case of groups such as the Native Americans, place attachment developed with certain locales (Tuan, 1977). Long residence, frequent time spent in a place, or even an intense, shorter experience can contribute to the bonds people create with particular places (Tuan; Williams & Patterson, 1999). In some cases, spaces become racialized through their association with certain people of color (Bobo, 1987; Schuman et al., 1985). For example, groups of people may ascribe symbolic significance to a place which primarily serves members of their group. Spaces may consequently be linked with the group of people utilizing the space (e.g., "Black people's park" or "Hispanic park") (Stodolska & Shinew, 2010, p. 327). Thus there is a delicate balance between a group's place attachment and the public's right to recreate.

Contemporary interracial behaviors and attitudes may be further understood in terms of White privilege and hegemony (McDonald, 2009; Mowatt, 2009; Omi & Winant, 1994). Scholars have suggested that leisure experiences often have been understood in reference to normative society. For example, Taylor (2000) noted how the movement to preserve wilderness focused on the experiences of White, middle-income males with little to no reference to people of color (see Rose & Paisley, 2012 for further discussion of Whiteness in outdoor recreation). Various scholars have noted how individuals, both majority and minority group members, have insisted that they are "color blind," a mechanism typically utilized to avoid the topic of racism and accusations of racial discrimination (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; McDonald; Sharaievska et al., 2010).

Unfortunately, colorblindness and meritocracy have real life impacts in the lives of racial and ethnic minorities. McDonald (2009) acknowledged the "public policy decisions and subsequent actions" that benefited White neighborhoods in Los Angeles even though African American and Hispanic taxpayer money was utilized in the neighborhood renovations (p. 14). McDonald added that White neighborhoods were revamped "under the guise of community development" while the neighborhoods associated with people of color were situated near "environmental hazards and toxins" (p. 14; also see Pulido, 2000). Further, in the case of McAvoy (2009) and Robert's (2009) records, it appears that access to federal public lands was something

to be enjoyed by Whites whereas other groups had to contend with the majority group's usage. In regard to practitioners, McDonald called attention toward whether an organization's course of action reflected its pledge to put a halt to racism and to be truly inclusive.

Related to the current study, the marginality and ethnicity perspectives, discrimination, and historical factors along with White privilege may shed some light into the reasons why a limited number of Hispanic children attended the MRC, which chiefly serves African Americans. Scholars have suggested that the traditional frameworks such as the marginality and ethnicity theory fall short of accounting for contemporary leisure patterns and behaviors (Floyd, 1998; Martin, 2004). As such, the goal of this qualitative study was to extend the analysis beyond marginality and ethnicity by exploring White privilege and historical factors that resulted in the MRC being associated with the African American population. In addition, the attitudes held by Hispanic parents toward the usage of the Center were assessed in order to shed light on intergroup tensions.

Methods

The study employed a qualitative approach in terms of addressing the research questions pertaining to this study (Henderson, 2006; Warren & Karner, 2005). Data were collected through the use of participant interviews, and historical documents were accessed to reconstruct the historical origins of the MRC.

Study Site

The MRC is located in Philo, Texas, which lies in the eastern region of the state.¹ The MRC is owned by the local municipality, mainly supported through public funds and run by the Philo Parks and Recreation Department. The MRC houses a branch of the Boys & Girls Club, which serves children from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the school year and from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the summer months.

Over 90,000 individuals reside in Philo. Residents are mainly composed of retirees and university-aged students as a large public university is located in the community. In regard to racial composition, Whites comprise 77% of Philo's total population, African Americans 6%, and individuals identifying as Hispanic, 14%. Approximately 526 individuals lived in the community directly surrounding the MRC, with 78% of this population identifying as African American. Out of the 526 individuals, 16% identified as Hispanic or Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010b). In the Montgomery County where Philo is located, the Hispanic population grew from 17% to 23% between 2000 and 2010.

Data Collection

To collect information for the study, during fall of 2010, 32 semistructured interviews were conducted with various members of the community, including 12 Hispanic and 11 African American parents. The Hispanic study participants included 11 mothers and one grandmother who was the primary caregiver of her grandchild. Eight of the women reported being homemakers, whereas three reported holding full-time employment, and the other reported holding a part-time position. In regard to education level, only one Hispanic mother reported having some college or vocational experience. Seven of the women reported having a high school education, and the other four reported having dropped out of school sometime between first and eighth

¹Pseudonyms were assigned to the study participants, recreation center, city, and county.

grade. In regard to family household income, six women reported having an income of less than \$15,000, with the remaining below \$50,000.

The African American study participants included 10 mothers and one father. In regard to occupation, five reported being homemakers, four reported being full-time workers, one reported being a part-time worker, and one reported being a student. In contrast to the Hispanic participants, the African American study participants reported having a higher education level, with seven of them reporting having some college or vocational experience. The rest of the study participants received a high school education. In regard to family household income, six of the participants reported having an income of less than \$15,000, with the remaining below \$75,000.

Interviews were additionally conducted with one Boys & Girls Club Outreach Specialist, and seven City of Philo workers (three MRC staff members, two city employees, a former city parks board member, and the recently retired director of the Parks and Recreation Department). The Boys & Girls Club employee and the City of Philo workers were identified using researchers' contacts in the community. Parent interviews were conducted with both parents who had enrolled their children at the MRC and those who had chosen not to enroll their children.

In order to recruit African American families who utilized the MRC, flyers were posted in highly visible areas of the facility. Snowball sampling through recommendations of families who responded to the flyer was then used. Additional African American families were recruited through making house visits to African American families in the community surrounding the MRC.

To recruit Hispanic families of Mexican descent who used the MRC, participant records were retrieved that included information on whether parents self-identified as Hispanic or non-Hispanic. In order to be eligible to participate, parents had to mark the box indicating they were of Hispanic origin. Parents were also asked about their racial background. For historical reasons, some Hispanics of Mexican descent may designate themselves as White even though they may not necessarily associate with a White ancestry (Omi & Winant, 1994). Consequently, Hispanic families who either marked White or Other in addition to Hispanic were eligible to participate depending on whether they identified with their Hispanic or Mexican ancestry. Hispanics of other ancestries (i.e., Cubans, Puerto Ricans) were excluded to create a more homogenous study population.

To recruit Hispanic parents who did not enroll their children at the MRC, the MRC Director was asked to identify the homes of Hispanic families with children in the community surrounding the facility. Visits were made to the identified homes in order to assess if individuals qualified and were interested in participating in the study. Finally, a number of Hispanic families were living in a public housing unit where soliciting was prohibited. Nevertheless, the primary researcher approached a Hispanic woman standing outside her home and after the details of the project were discussed, the woman agreed to serve as an informant and subsequently walked the researcher through the neighborhood pointing out the homes of Hispanic families living in the area. The informant gave permission to use her name as a way of establishing credibility when approaching the people who lived in these homes.

Interviews were conducted in mutually agreed upon locations, typically at the MRC or in the study participants' homes. All parents were asked questions about family recreation patterns, migration patterns into the community, and children's out-of-school activities. Hispanic parents were also asked (1) Why are Hispanics parents less inclined to take their children to the Center?, (2) What would it mean to the Hispanic community if more Hispanic children attended the Center?, and (3) What suggestions do you have for the MRC Director in his goal to increase

Hispanic participation? For the African American parents, the second question was modified to capture the impact on the African American community if Hispanic children attended the Center. Interviews were conducted in Spanish when requested.

The Boys & Girls Club Outreach Specialist and seven City of Philo workers were informed of the MRC Director's wishes to increase Hispanic enrollment at the Center. Study participants were asked for factors that might dissuade Hispanics from attending the MRC, as well as specific recommendations regarding attracting more Hispanics to the facility. The Boys & Girls Club Outreach Specialist had knowledge of the recruiting materials utilized by the MRC. The former parks board member was included in the study because of his knowledge of city board decisions involving the MRC over a 30-year time span during which he was involved with the parks and recreation department.

In addition to the outreach specialist and City of Philo workers, the director of the Philo Parks and Recreation Department from 2008-2010 was interviewed. The interview protocol consisted of questions related to diversity at the MRC in comparison to other city-sponsored programs. Questions were also asked about the feasibility of utilizing the city budget to sponsor Hispanic recruitment.

The two city employees (one a former student from the Milton High School and the other from J&S Consolidated) were asked about the history of the Center and the surrounding community. Finally, MRC workers were asked to comment on their experiences at the Center, with particular attention to the interactions between Hispanic and African American children.

Interviews lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes. They were recorded and transcribed using a professional transcription service. Field notes were written after each interview (Berg, 2009). The resulting transcripts were subjected to analytic induction (Riessman, 1993).

Further, historical and archival documents were reviewed to help reconstruct the history of the MRC. The Philo History Project data base, which contained past city newsletters that documented the history of the MRC, old newspaper clippings, and documents compiled by city residents were accessed. In addition to these sources, an autobiography of a local resident was reviewed which documented the segregation occurring in Montgomery County during the Civil Rights Era (Nash, 1996). The tale included vignettes about local history, including several regarding school segregation in the area. Further information was obtained from a doctoral dissertation, which narrated the school segregation occurring in Philo and the neighboring town of Beverly (Standish, 2006).

Data Analysis

Transcripts were subjected to analytic induction using Atlas.ti (Katz, 1983; Riessman, 1993; Scientific-Software, 2007). Open coding was used to analyze the interviews and to identify categories and subcategories. Similar categories were then grouped, and the themes aligning with the study purpose were identified.

Trustworthiness of the data (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was determined through the use of data from a variety of different sources, including historical and archival records and interviews with various stakeholders. To account for differences in thoughts and views, parent, staff, and community members' interview transcripts were compared against the historical and archival documents. In addition, peer review and debriefings (Lincoln & Guba 1985) were undertaken using fellow graduate students as well as professors from the home department of the authors of this study. Finally, member checking aided in establishing credibility of the data. Once data were collected and analyzed, a follow up meeting occurred with selected participants. This process consisted of home visits where the major findings of the study were

outlined and interviewees were asked for their feedback and thoughts on the themes developed to date.

Results

Three major themes emerged from the data analysis: (a) the MRC as a symbolic place for the African American population, (b) leisure constraints inhibiting Hispanic parents from enrolling their children at the MRC, and (c) the attitudes African Americans held in regard to increasing Hispanics' participation at the MRC.

The Recreation Center as a Symbolic Place

The recreation center served as a symbolic place for the African American population. During the first half of the 20th century, the African American youth of Philo were bused to the nearby town's segregated schools since such a facility did not exist in their own hometown (Jasek, n.d.; Standish, 2006). As the African American population increased, so did the cost of bussing. As a result, to decrease costs, the Philo Independent School District Board of Trustees proposed a bond issue to establish a segregated school in Philo. The bond to build J&S Consolidated Negro School was approved in 1941. While the school was supposed to be only for high school children, children from grades 1-12 attended the school. In 1946, the school changed its name to Milton High School.

According to two former students, the historian, and historical records, the students at Milton High School were all African American; White and Hispanic youth attended J&S Consolidated High School. Accounts in the historical documents indicated that Milton High School was not maintained at the same standards as the other public schools in Philo (Jasek, n.d.; Standish, 2010). By the 1950s, the dissatisfaction with the facility and curriculum initiated a debate about integrating Milton and J&S Consolidated High Schools. In 1960, a discussion was held with the school board over racially integrating the public schools, but the "president of the board assured the citizens...that there was no desire among the Negroes of the community to have their children attend an integrated school" (Morris, 1960, p. 6). The issues went unaddressed until the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) demanded school integration. Although the federal government had initiated the Stair Step integration plan, this program was ineffective in its mission to integrate all grades of Milton High School into the J&S Consolidated High School.

In 1966, a fire that occurred at Milton High School rendered it unusable and facilitated full mandatory integration. Racial integration began in the schools located in the City of Philo over the span of a few months. Although the African American children now had access to better schools, according to Marcus, a Milton High School former student, some members of the African American community mourned the loss of their beloved school. After the fire, the former segregated school facility underwent various modifications and by 1980, it was dedicated and renamed the Milton Recreation Center (MRC).

Since its inauguration, the MRC faced some challenges over the course of the years. Clinton, the former parks board member, mentioned that "the more affluent part of town was not interested in going over to Milton Center." He added that in the 1990s, the City of Philo decided to install "ball fields" next to the MRC in order to increase "African American participation in Little League." At the time, the Little League dictated that children enrolled in a sport were to play on the fields closest to their homes. However, the Little League subsequently changed their policy to randomly assign players to sites around the community. This change meant that recruiting African American children to play on fields close to where they lived was undermined.

Despite the struggles, the Milton Former Students Association served and continues to serve as advocates for the MRC. Two years after the MRC dedication, the Milton Former Students Association was established to keep the history and memories of the old segregated school alive. The Association continued to be active in their mission even at the time of the study. At the same time, over the years, the MRC Director mentioned that the African American community has expressed feelings of entitlement relative to the facility as integral to holding community functions and as a symbol of African American history in the community. Symbolic items pertinent to the African American community included large portraits of African American role models (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr., Maya Angelou) and local African American dignitaries painted on the MRC gym wall. The MRC Director commented that the murals represented a former MRC Director's heroes. The idea was supported by the City of Philo. Additionally, pictures of the African American children and seniors who frequented the MRC were found along the walls. No photographs of individuals from other racial or ethnic groups were displayed. The majority of the staff members were African American, as was the director, and most days African American children and seniors were the main individuals using the facility.

Constraints to Hispanic Participation

Seven sub-themes emerged regarding factors that inhibited Hispanic presence at the MRC: Hispanic parents perceived the MRC as a place for African Americans; cultural differences; Hispanic parents' attitudes toward African Americans; perceptions of safety at the MRC and the surrounding community; bullying; lack of outreach implementation; and cost of participation.

Hispanic parents perceived the MRC as a place for African Americans. Recognizing that the recreation center had its origins as a segregated school for African Americans in the mid-twentieth century, Clinton, the former parks board member, indicated that the MRC was "still recognized as being an African American center...officially, of course, it's the city's recreation center, but the reality is it is not. It is the area of the African Americans."

The "ownership" of the Center by African Americans did not go unnoticed by the Hispanic parents in this study. Laura, a Hispanic mother of a seven-year old girl who attended the Center, commented, "Everyone in the front was Black. I think that makes other Black people feel more welcome. And then I was thinking, 'Oh, my gosh, is it just for Black kids?'" Parents like Laura chose to enroll their children at the MRC but mentioned that the number of Hispanic children attending the Center was limited. Other parents were unable to overcome the image of the Center as a place for African Americans. Angelina, a Hispanic mother of a two and seven-year-old daughter, stated that an increase in Hispanic enrollment would encourage her to enroll her children. Alejandra, a Hispanic mother of a 10- and 11-year-old daughter and son, expressed similar views; she preferred places where there was a mix of people with whom her children could interact. In addition to the predominance of African Americans, there were also cultural differences that restricted Hispanic parents from enrolling their children.

Cultural differences. Perceived cultural differences between Hispanics and African Americans appeared to be keeping Hispanics from attending the Center. Laticia, an African American mother of four, complimented the MRC for allowing her children to listen and dance to hip hop music; an opportunity she felt was not available in any other youth organization. However, Rosemary, a former employee of the MRC, indicated that activities such as the dancing, music, and basketball mainly catered to the African American population and their interests.

While the available activities may be inviting to the African American attendees, this might not have been the case for the Hispanic population. Laura, the Hispanic mother of the seven-year-old daughter, indicated that she witnessed children playing basketball at the recreation cen-

ter: “Basketball is generally around only White people and Black people... You rarely see a Mexican playing.” Moreover, while she perceived some of the special event activities (e.g., celebration of Black History Month) as catering to African Americans, she commented that Hispanic events such as a Cinco de Mayo Celebration were rarely organized. In addition to activities geared toward the African American population, language was a deterrent to the Hispanic children using the Center. A majority of the Hispanic study participants identified Spanish as their primary language and indicated that language served as a constraint to enrolling their children at the MRC. During the time this study was conducted, no employee at the Center spoke Spanish. Interestingly, although he desired to increase Hispanic participation at the Center, the current director did not perceive language as a major barrier to participation. Even if currently a problem, he felt that language would not be an issue in the future since he believed more Hispanic children and parents would be learning English.

Although the director did not acknowledge language as a major reason for a lack of Hispanic participation at the MRC, a staff member and parents (both Hispanic and African American) felt differently. Alejandra, a Hispanic mother who did not enroll her child at the Center, commented, “I’m not even going to understand what they tell me.” This was one of the reasons Alejandra cited for not registering her child at the MRC. Carolina, a Hispanic mother with three sons enrolled at the MRC, lacked the confidence to enroll her sons in programs where the staff did not speak Spanish. Carolina lacked knowledge of MRC program offerings and the layout of the facility, something she attributed to the language gap. Most of the Hispanic families perceived that it was their responsibility to learn English because it was the primary language spoken in the United States. Carolina stated, “When there is someone who doesn’t speak Spanish, well-sometimes people who are White Americans try to understand us, and I feel bad, right? Because really I should know English because I’m here, right?” However, this desire to learn English was offset by the need to devote time to work to provide for the family rather than learning English.

Hispanic attitudes toward African Americans. Some of the Hispanic parents were hesitant to enroll their children at the MRC due to the ambivalent attitudes they harbored toward the African American population. Francisco, a Hispanic city worker and former C&J Consolidated student, indicated the following:

[African Americans are] more aggressive at times in different ways not even intentional or being mean or even the ones that are nice they’re just—I don’t even know how to describe it...they’re very athletic, so you can get intimidated by that.

This view was corroborated by several Hispanic interviewees. Cindy, a Hispanic mother whose children had attended the Center for some time, claimed that her children remarked that “the Black children were crazy... they wanted to fight for everything.” Angelina, a Hispanic mother of a 7-year-old daughter, complained that “the Black kids are very aggressive, and well I don’t teach my kids to fight.” Angelina added that she decided not to encourage her children to participate as “every time things happen between children, adults get involved, and I don’t want any problems.” Other parents enrolled their children at the MRC, but not without some reservations. Laura, a Hispanic mother, shared the apprehension she felt at the beginning,

I’d never feel comfortable to take my kids there because of all the Black people. And they are probably like “who are you?” I don’t know how they are going to treat me, really. And I don’t know them. I guess I just don’t want to have to deal with it.

Although several parents reflected this view point, other parents made a distinction between the negative behaviors and the African American race. Carolina, the Hispanic mother

whose sons were enrolled at the MRC felt that they had to be careful in their speech and behaviors in case the African American children took offense. One of Carolina's sons had also encountered problems with the African American participants at the Boys and Girls Club in the neighboring town of Beverly. With the move to a new environment, interactions between her son and attendees were expected to improve, but the child pointed out that "there were Blacks [at this Center], too, and they were mean, too." In this case, Carolina took partial blame for the negative attitudes her son exhibited toward African Americans. She attempted to clarify, with the following comment, "Well, they [Blacks] aren't bad, rather they yell a lot, that's what it is, they never know when to close their mouth." In effect, the negative attitudes toward the behavior displayed by African American children were a determining factor in whether some Hispanic parents chose to allow their children to participate. Sometimes the negative behavior was absent, but the recreation center and the community already had a reputation in the minds of some of the potential Hispanic users.

Perceptions of safety at the MRC and in the surrounding community. In addition to the ambivalent attitudes harbored toward African Americans, safety issues deterred Hispanic parents from enrolling their children at the MRC. According to some of the parents, the predominantly African American neighborhood surrounding the MRC was perceived to have problems of drug use, violence, and prostitution. Hispanic study participants (e.g., Evelia, Cindy, and Vanessa) further mentioned the constant presence of police in the neighborhood. Vanessa, a Hispanic mother, added, "[African Americans] fight all the time. The law's always out here." Both Hispanic and African American study participants acknowledged that African American youth were the ones typically involved in fights.

Ironically, a few Hispanic families living in the vicinity described their neighborhood as calm. However, the constant police presence made these families feel like they needed protection. As a result, a majority of Hispanic parents instructed their children to remain indoors; children were occasionally allowed outside if they were on the property or being supervised by their parents.

Some Hispanic parents perceived that the African American youth and children who were involved in fights and other deviant behaviors were the primary users of the recreation center. Laura, a Hispanic mother, related her concerns with particular attention to a nearby apartment complex:

I noticed that the Milton Recreation Center was right next to that apartment complex, I was afraid... They all had problems with like child abuse, and government, and things like that. And the children had problems so I was thinking I hope none of the family members try to come over.

The MRC Director claimed that the community had experienced some positive changes, but he felt that the MRC and its surrounding neighborhood still had a negative reputation. In the case of the MRC, the reputation was enough to deter some of the possible participants.

Bullying. In addition to the safety concerns pertaining to the MRC and the surrounding neighborhood, Hispanic parents who enrolled their children at the facility discussed bullying as an area of concern. Laura, a Hispanic mother, noted that her young daughter was bullied by the African American children because of cultural differences related to language. It appeared that the daughter had trouble understanding Ebonics. The young girl's light skin complexion further aggravated the situation leading to constant teasing from the African American children. Lorena remarked that an African American attendee struck her 9-year-old Hispanic daughter without the staff members even noticing. Lorena instructed her daughter to report the incident the very

next day. The Hispanic city worker, Francisco, also registered his foster son at the MRC for a short time period but due to bullying Francisco and his wife terminated their son's participation at the MRC. Maura, a Hispanic grandmother and primary caregiver, suspected that her 11-year-old grandson might have been bullied when the child ceased participation within the first week of enrollment and refused to attend the MRC or even discuss the situation.

In addition to parents' accounts, Britney, an African American employee, observed that the African American children bullied other children who were perceived to be different, including those belonging to other racial or ethnic groups. In regard to the Hispanic children, Britney noted that they typically "stayed to themselves" and interacted minimally with other attendees and staff. However, the director downplayed the issue of bullying and added that staff members could easily send the instigators directly to him. In light of the accounts provided by staff members and parents, this did not always occur.

Lack of outreach implementation. Lack of awareness of the MRC's programs added to reasons why there were a limited number of Hispanic children at the facility. Although two Hispanic mothers indicated that they had seen flyers advertising the Center, most parents were not aware of MRC marketing materials. Laura, for instance, gained knowledge about the MRC through "word of mouth." Although this mother did not live adjacent to the MRC, other families who lived in the area surrounding the MRC were not aware of the programs offered at the facility either.

This lack of awareness could have possibly been overcome by the implementation of a national outreach program developed by the Boys & Girls Club. In the interview with Erika, the Boys & Girls Club Outreach Specialist, she acknowledged that MRC management had access to the Latino outreach materials and that a grant had been recently posted that could have helped the MRC "create a position for...a Latino outreach specialist." Although the grant sponsored temporary help (one year), it could have been utilized to jumpstart a Hispanic outreach effort.

Although the outreach material was accessible, the MRC management had not capitalized on the opportunity provided by the Boys & Girls Club Latino Outreach program. The director admitted that the MRC had not implemented the recommended suggestions set forth by the Boys & Girls Club. He felt he needed authorization from his superior to access and implement the outreach material. The director further commented, "I can pass out [flyers] and put up posters but that's not—they're not going to see it." According to the director, he had attempted to collaborate with Hispanic university students to aid in events such as a Cinco de Mayo celebration, but the partnership never came to fruition leaving the director frustrated and discouraged about hosting events for the Hispanic residents.

Additionally, during the interview with the director, he focused on the City of Philo and its lack of incentives for outreach. Francisco, the Hispanic city worker, was able to corroborate this point. Francisco stated that the public discourse centered on diversity, "but as far as action, [Francisco] didn't see a lot." In his case, Francisco was interested in beautification projects in the City of Philo, but he felt that the city made it "easier to look the other way and just say 'Well, you know, somebody else can help them.'" Francisco added that the City of Philo's city council lacked racial diversity, whereas the neighboring town of Beverly had a more racially diverse group on its council, mainly due to electing council members by districts as opposed to electing them on a city wide basis as it was done in Philo. However, according to the former parks and recreation director and parks board member, the financial pressures the city was facing made it almost impossible to fund any new projects. The MRC Director would need to seek other funding opportunities such as the one provided by the Boys & Girls Club if recruitment of Hispanic families was to be undertaken.

Cost of participation. Residents were required to pay \$30 per year for their children to attend the afterschool program and \$50 for the summer program. Qualifying residents with lower incomes received a discount and were subject to a \$20 yearly charge for enrolling their child in the afterschool program. Compared to other youth organizations, the MRC's price for admission appealed to Hispanic parents who were able to afford the fees. A few parents living in the public housing unit next to the MRC mentioned that their fees were waived. The MRC Director further mentioned, "Public doesn't always run free but if it came down to, you know, a child needing a safe place to stay, to play and to stay then we wouldn't run them away from here."

While fees seemed minimal, and in some cases even waived, costs were a concern for a few of the Hispanic parents in this study. According to Lorena, her husband's job was "not a sure thing that will be there all the time." Because employment was tentative, Lorena felt that enrolling her children at the MRC was a luxury the family could not afford. Unfortunately, the families were unaware of the MRC's informal policy to accept children even if payment could not be made.

Attitudes among African Americans about Increasing Hispanic Participation

Given that the African American community expressed feelings of ownership toward the MRC, this study incorporated the voices of several African American stakeholders to assess the impacts of increasing Hispanic participation at the Center. Increasing Hispanic attendance was proposed by the MRC Director, but at the beginning of the study, it was unclear whether other African Americans supported the director's goals for diversifying the MRC. As such, African American parents were also interviewed as well as one former student of Milton High School.

The former student was one of the few individuals interviewed for this study who displayed divergent views from those of the MRC Director. Although the director had acknowledged that few Hispanic children attended the MRC, Marcus, the Milton High School former student remarked, "I thought that they were [participating]. I thought that MRC [does] have Hispanics." When asked if this number was substantial, Marcus said it was not, but the MRC still had Hispanic enrollment. Although the numbers were low, Marcus appeared content with the status quo.

Conversely, African American parents voiced support for increasing Hispanic participation at the MRC. A few of the African American parents commented that by being in contact with Hispanic children, their children could possibly learn Spanish, something that could propel their children's marketability in the job market. For instance, Jada, an African American mother of a four, five, seven, and 8-year-old, commented, "I think it will be a great thing for more other races to come... More kids get to meet other kids. Maybe if they get more Hispanics to come, they'll start a Spanish class." DeAndra, an African American mother of a two, three, and six year old, placed importance on learning Spanish, as she commented, "If I can learn Spanish, then I will make money, too. You have to be bilingual nowadays anyway. So, I think it is just better for them to be diverse."

African American parents failed to mention as many constraints of Hispanic participation as had been noted by the Hispanic parents. A few parents noted that interaction with Hispanic families in the community remained limited as Hispanic families were rarely outdoors. One African American mother, Brianna, claimed that if Hispanic enrollment was increased, bullying would most likely happen. In regard to African American youth, Brianna stated,

I see the way they treat the people that's not Black. I hear the kids, the little Caucasian kids and Hispanic kids, they've been picking on them when they get off the bus and stuff. So I understand. Pushing them around, cussing them out. Telling them they go-

ing to beat their butt and all of this, you know, they've been doing it wrong, and if they was to go to the MRC, it would probably be better because there'd be more authority around than outside.

Most of the African American and Hispanic families had stated that African American boys were the ones fighting in the community surrounding the MRC. Because the Hispanic parents mostly kept their children indoors, the accounts suggested that the fights occurred within the African American population. Brianna was one of the few parents who clarified that bullying occurred toward other people of color as well. She expected this behavior to spill over into the MRC, but believed the interracial interactions would be better as the MRS staff supervised the premises.

Discussion/Conclusion

This study supported some of the findings in the leisure field pertaining to marginality, ethnicity, and discrimination. Most salient were the historical factors that explained why the MRC became racialized and factors which limited Hispanic parents from enrolling their children at the Center.

Interestingly, the African American and Hispanic parent interviews suggested that African American parents generally held positive views of Hispanics and viewed an increase in Hispanic enrollment as positive. Based on the accounts of bullying, the same could not be said of African American children, who seemed to target anyone who appeared to be different including Hispanic children. Although interviews were not conducted with African American children, the findings perhaps suggest African American parents are cognizant of the social norms shared by society, including embracing cultural diversity, but children may not be as aware of the social norms due to their young age. Scholars such as Nesdale, Durkin, Maass, Kiesner, and Griffiths (2008) further discussed the "group-based phenomenon" of bullying which occurs when "members of one group [bully] individuals or out-group members who have lower status or power" (p. 890). Although many factors may determine who constitutes an in-group member, researchers such as Loukaitou-Sideris discussed that diverse children's common spaces worked best when children had spent considerable time together. Being that the Hispanic migration was fairly recent, the African American children may have not had enough time to interact and view Hispanics as members of their in-group.

Further, although the African American parents displayed favorable attitudes toward Hispanics, the same could not be said about Hispanic parents' attitudes toward African Americans. Some Hispanic parents appeared to harbor negative attitudes toward African Americans prior to enrolling their children at the MRC. Although some Hispanic families did not see African Americans as a problem, others openly expressed their disapproval. This could have happened for several reasons. First, the African American individuals interviewed in this study may have been exposed over a longer period of time to the public discourse regarding diversity and tolerance. Because some of the Hispanic families were first generation immigrants, it is possible that they brought negative attitudes from their home country. Hernández (2007) noted that the politics in Mexico tend to be biased against those with African blood. Because of their Mexican background, participants may have not been exposed to the Civil Rights, diversity, and tolerance discourses in the United States. Finally, the identity of the researcher (Hispanic) who interviewed the Hispanic parents may have played a role in what the study participants allowed themselves to say.

Further, the study provided an insight into the intergroup conflict that may arise when two marginalized groups compete for resources. In this case, the initial attendance by Hispanic children was met with resistance by the African American children. This was also the case in the surrounding community where Hispanics were outnumbered. On an organizational level, it appeared that the stakeholders of the MRC held ambivalent attitudes toward sharing the recreation center with Hispanics. One of the former students expressed that there were already enough Hispanic children at the Center, whereas some MRC staff personnel expressed their approval for increasing the number of Hispanic children. Given that the MRC only featured symbols coinciding with an African American space (i.e., portraits of historical African American figures, African American celebrations), it is possible that some of the African Americans expressing positive views of sharing the space might retract their statements once Hispanic symbols are introduced to the Center. The director's hesitancy toward incorporating the Latino outreach program which provided posters of Hispanic role models and the lack of acknowledgment for a need of bilingual staff suggested that African Americans associated with this site were the gatekeepers of this resource.

The findings seem to suggest that the established group (African Americans) were the beneficiaries of the scarce resources in the community, whereas Hispanics appeared to have less access. In reality, some Hispanic families also harbored negative feelings and views of the African American community. This confirmed Hernández's (2007) findings that both parties are responsible for the intergroup tensions that arise when groups come into close contact. Over the years, scholars have asked if racial and ethnic minority groups are capable of racism and discrimination (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Kivel, 2005). On the surface level, this study seems to suggest that people of color may harbor prejudicial attitudes toward other groups regardless of their marginalized status. However, many scholars warn that studies need to be properly contextualized in order to understand why racial and ethnic minorities show prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behaviors toward others (Kivel).

Examining the MRC and its surrounding community brings to light the competition for scarce resources the African Americans have endured due to the power structure favoring affluent Whites. This power struggle would have been difficult to pinpoint by solely listening to the accounts of Hispanic and African American parents. Yet, the historical information sheds light on the historical discrimination which occurred in the community, particularly the fact that the Milton High School existed because of the discrimination toward African Americans exercised by White community members. These circumstances in effect led to the development of an African American space. The former parks board member also mentioned the reluctance of many affluent Whites to recreate at the MRC. White residents and city officials seemed to dictate where the city resources were to be apportioned. They also had access to and utilized other recreation amenities, while groups such as African Americans and now Hispanics received limited resources and had less access to other amenities in the community. Further study would be needed to assess whether community members are cognizant of the disparities in the services provided by the MRC and other programs. Some research suggests that White privilege has allowed majority group members to recreate without giving much thought to the experiences of minorities (McDonald, 2009; Stodolska, 2000).

Further, findings of this research support studies that have suggested that when recreational areas are opened to various racial groups, problems arise because of one group's sense of ownership and attachment (McAvoy, 2000). In this case, the MRC was celebrated as an African American space which was manifested by the murals on the wall of famous historical African

American figures as well as the staged cultural events geared toward African American community. Additionally, parents and staff workers seemed well-aware of the bullying of Hispanic children. In the current case, the problems were between African Americans and Hispanics and can be viewed as the attitudes of a dominant user population towards a minority. Unfortunately, whether the Hispanic children felt unwelcome was not assessed. The only finding in regards to this theme was the staff worker Britney's comment that Hispanic children had limited interactions with staff and African American children. Given that Hispanics have and will continue to propel a vast majority of the Texas growth (Ramsey, Stiles, Aguilar, & Murphy, 2011), their encroachment into areas that are dominated by African Americans may need further examination to minimize possible future racial tensions between the groups.

The leisure field would further benefit from political discourse and analysis (Mowatt, 2009). According to Mowatt, such methodological tools should shed light on deliberate and concealed forms of "racism and Whiteness" (p. 523). This would also require researchers to take into account an organization's statements and its actual actions (McDonald, 2009). In the current study, it became apparent that the course of action digressed from official desire to be inclusive. However, pointing out such inconsistencies would benefit organizations trying to become more inclusive and welcoming of individuals regardless of their racial or ethnic background.

In the case of the MRC, implementing the Latino Outreach Initiative provided by the Boys & Girls Club would have greatly enhanced the MRC efforts to recruit and retain Hispanic attendees. To facilitate implementation, the Boys & Girls Club has made available translated materials, outreach training, and/or diversity training (Boys & Girls Club of America, 2011). The outreach and diversity training involves empowering staff to increase the recruitment, experiences, and retention of Latino individuals. For instance, staff members must possess knowledge of how to provide leadership care and discipline in accordance with the culture of individuals whom they wish to attract to the MRC. Other ideas include teaming up with Hispanic organizations, distributing flyers and brochures at locations frequented by Hispanics, and seeking out constructive stories of Hispanics in the newspaper in order to share with current Hispanic users. The recreation center may also consider word of mouth recruitment and making their written materials available in both English and Spanish. Teaming up with Hispanic organizations is particularly critical as staff cannot be expected to increase Hispanic enrollment by themselves. Unsuccessful efforts have been made with a Hispanic student group based at the nearby university, but other local Hispanic leaders, churches, and businesses also need to be involved.

Given that the MRC was perceived as a place for African Americans, efforts should be made to celebrate other cultures at the Center. Groups mentioned basketball, hip-hop, Black History Month, and the Juneteenth Celebration as African American-gear activities. Nevertheless, the need exists to promote and honor other cultural activities and traditions, which may include celebrating Hispanic History Month or Cinco de Mayo. Incorporating soccer into the curriculum may also be appropriate in regard to marketing to a Hispanic population. Further, only the portraits of key African American figures are present on the gym wall; the same could be done for other potential user groups, including Hispanics and Whites in order to make them feel that the Center is their space as well. This step may be difficult to implement because some of the African American stakeholders may feel that inclusion of others would diminish the history of the Center and their sense of place.

The reputation of the MRC also needs to be improved within the Hispanic community. Although the staff cannot control issues related to safety of the neighborhood, they can work towards curtailing instances of bullying and ensuring a sense of well-being for all participants.

Current Hispanic MRC participants mentioned bullying as a constraint to participation. The staff must undertake steps to deal with this issue through better efforts to retain the limited number of Hispanic children who currently use the center. The staff must also ensure children's safety by limiting altercations at the Center. This will require that time be devoted in staff meetings to address bullying prevention strategies, followed by ongoing supervision and setting high staff expectations for performance in this area.

Finally, costs for enrollment and participation need to be managed. In particular, more information needs to be provided about scholarships or cost reductions available to families in need. The Center does appear to make an effort to work with families with limited resources, but these efforts do not appear to be fully advertised.

Limitations

The study did not examine the attitudes and perceptions of African American participants or Hispanic children's personal experiences with the MRC. Although parents provided important insights and are often the primary decision makers with regard to their children's leisure choices, they may not be completely cognizant or fully able to express their children's feelings about the MRC and their desire to participate (Hill, Laybourn, & Borland, 1996). Additionally, the study focused on Hispanics of Mexican descent. Results might not be applicable to other Hispanic groups such as Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and so on.

Future Studies

For scholars interested in the leisure constraints of people of color, the study reiterates that traditional frameworks such as the marginality and ethnicity hypothesis are inadequate to understand the "complexities of racial differences in leisure participation" (Martin, 2004, p. 515). To more fully understand issues of participation, more attention should be given to historical accounts (Erickson et al., 2009; Floyd, 1998; Mowatt, 2009). Additionally, scholars may benefit from utilizing a social justice paradigm in cases where disenfranchised groups have been "exploited," "marginalized," and deemed "powerless" and subjugated to "cultural imperialism" and "violence" (Allison, 2000, p. 4; Mowatt).

With demographic shifts in American society, leisure researchers would benefit from analyzing the future interactions between people of color. Although this study suggests that discrimination may occur between racial and ethnic minorities competing for resources, ample studies confirming this finding have yet to be conducted in the leisure field. Conducting such research may uncover the hegemonic power of traditional groups within racialized places and spaces. Of course, such studies may also need to be contextualized in the frame of White privilege, which has also only received recent attention by leisure scholars (e.g., Arai & Kivel, 2009).

Leisure scholars further commented that undue attention has been placed on racial and ethnic minorities and the reasons they abstain from certain leisure sites while overlooking the practices of leisure providers as a cause of concern (Samdahl, 2005; Scott, 2010). Some studies have addressed this phenomenon by stating that organizational practices have inadvertently created White spaces that limit minority participation (e.g., Coleman, 1996). The organizational practices that create African American or Hispanic spaces and their hindrance to other group participation have received less attention. The shift to privatize public resources may aggravate this situation (Scott, 2000).

In addition to organizational policies, the social reproduction of norms deserves attention as this is the mechanism utilized to keep unequal power structures intact (Kivel, 2005; Scott, 2000; Singer, 2005). Although equality between racial and ethnic minorities is often stated as de-

sirable by various members of society, inequality is perpetuated by not challenging institutions, behaviors, and normalized ways of thinking. In this respect, Scott commented, "From what I have seen, most practitioners intend to treat all people fairly but, despite their best intentions, in some cases inequality is perpetuated" (p. 133). In effect, the system of inequality is being perpetuated by well-intentioned individuals. In the case of this study, it was perpetuated by some well-intentioned individuals who espoused an interest of being inclusive to Hispanics.

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