Black/Female/Body *Hypervisibility* and *Invisibility*

A Black Feminist Augmentation of Feminist Leisure Research

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Abstract

Through an interdisciplinary lens, this paper proposes two concepts for Black feminist analysis (visibility and hypervisibility) to augment feminist leisure scholarship. We examine questions of *invisibility* in relation to the systematic oppression that besets Black women in society, and in the academy, through their absence as research participants and researchers. This raises a new sense of *invisible* marginality that may exist in scholarship, and otherwise. With *hypervisibility* in body politics, Black women are represented in stereotyped and commodified ways throughout leisure spaces and scholarship. The critique of historical and contemporary representations of hyper-visibility is conducted through representations of Black women's bodies. We conclude with specific implications as Black feminism provides a culturally congruent epistemology to advance the field and augment third wave feminism.

Keywords: *Black feminism, womanism, Black studies, body politics, racial identity*

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"Only the Black Woman can say, when and where I enter, in the quiet, undisputed dignity of my womanhood, without violence and without suing or special patronage, then and there the whole…race enters with me."

—Anna Julia Cooper, 1892, *A Voice from the South*, p. 144-145

Invisibility is a fundamental aspect of being Black in a White-dominated society. The Black body comes into view, however, when conceptions of sexual-subjection or social disparities are discussed. That is, when Black women's bodies are on display to be ridiculed (e.g., the focus on Serena Williams' buttocks), or when sociopolitical agendas use Black women experiences as scapegoats (e.g., Black women targeted in welfare reform). The ways Black women's bodies are viewed as spectacles in the general public and especially in sex industries, for the leisure and pleasure of men, is rooted in racialized gendered intersections of power, privilege, and oppression (as noted by Shaw, 1999). In response to the call for this special issue of the *Journal of Leisure Research* on feminist contributions, this paper explores the roles of Black feminism as a theoretical framework that will center Black women's experiences and challenge intersecting identities of race and gender, and intersecting oppressions of sexism and racism. Ultimately this paper calls for a new centering of the Black woman to augment feminist discourse and research in leisure studies.

To achieve this goal, we unpack the intersectional experiences of race and gender specifically pertaining to Black women's bodies and social politics, to demonstrate the need for intersections between Black feminism and leisure studies. We explore and critique two juxtaposing positions for Black women in leisure research, *invisibility* and *hypervisibility*. We consider Black women's presence in leisure studies as invisible through the consequences of systemic sexism and racism throughout society and the academy. We argue that systematic oppression specifically besets Black women in the academy, and thus equal access and participation, given their lack of presence as research participants and as researchers. This line of inquiry identifies a new sense of marginality and invisibility that may exist in leisure-based scholarship.

Comparatively, when Black women are represented in leisure spaces, they are often hypervisible (Aitchison, 1999; Shaw, 1999), as Black women's bodies are stereotyped as abnormal (Newton, Guo, Yang, & Malkin, 2012; Riddick & Stewart, 1994), hypersexual (Miller-Young, 2010; West, 2006), and their social location highlighted as deviant (Wyatt, 1992; Yuen, Arai, & Fortune, 2012). This is often implied to represent excusable means for exploitation and violence (McNair & Neville, 1996; Nelson, 1993). This *hypervisbility* requires the recognition of race in conjunction with gendered body politics (Henderson, 1996); we specifically discuss sexual commodification and body representation through a review of Black feminist-related research.

We begin with a discussion of the utility of Black feminism as a framework for studying intersecting identities in leisure research. We then present an overview of Black feminism as an epistemological framework, while integrating Black feminist research from historical and social science scholarship. Next, we unpack the implied ways in which Black women are both invisible and hypervisible in leisure research. Our manuscript ends with a discussion of the integration of Black feminism within leisure studies, and the theoretical and empirical possibilities for future directions. This paper centers on Black North American women's experiences, although we recognize the increased representation of women of color in international research including Australia (Fullagar, 2008); India (Khan, 1997); Iran (Arab-Moghaddam, Henderson, & Sheikholesami, 2007); New Zealand (Lloyd & Little, 2010); Scandinavia (Thrane, 2000); Sudan (Russell & Stage, 1996); Taiwan (Tsai, 2010); and Turkey (Koca, Henderson, Asci, & Bulgu, 2009).

Intersections: Leisure Studies, Race, and Feminism

The intention of this manuscript is to introduce leisure studies to the insights of Black Feminism in order to augment leisure research and caution against the overuse of certain critical research stances, such as Critical Race Theory (CRT), as an unintentional default approach to examine Race. Our critique does not imply faults with the use of CRT, or that there has been a shortcoming in the use of CRT (Arai & Kivel, 2009; Floyd, 2007; Glover, 2007; Hylton, 2005; Johnson, Richmond, & Kivel, 2008; Kivel, Johnson, & Scraton, 2009; Long & Hylton, 2002; McDonald, 2009; Richmond & Johnson, 2009; Rose & Paisley, 2012; Spracklen, 2007; van Ingen, 2008). However, the need for greater insight in examining Race becomes clear given the limited use of other race-based theoretical perspectives, the lack of familiarity with other effective research methodologies to engage and interact with diverse populations, and the limited available expertise to provide critical review for submitted works on Race. Specifically Roberts (2009) cautioned that an upsurge of the use of critical race theory will "move us towards building additional critiques of the inadequate theorization of race and other constructions of cultural difference in traditional recreation and leisure studies" (p. 506).

The continued overuse of certain research approaches and the lack of a nuanced understanding of Blackness in leisure scholarship is hindering our ability to be relevant to a broader audience while preventing us from presenting healthy alternatives (Henderson & Ainsworth, 2001). This also limits our contributions to social justice within the academy and beyond. As Scraton and Watson (1998) posited, "differences between women can and do lead to different levels of access and experience (including leisure and recreation)" (p. 126). Due to institutional and negotiated expressions of power, Black women may in fact have to resist and express themselves in leisure in very different ways in order to gain access or fully experience leisure.

Leisure establishes sites where power is both erected and exercised in various ways that reinforce the gender-based and racially oppressive relations that are features of other societal institutions (Aitchison, 1999). Thus Black feminism presents a research perspective that highlights the importance to question how leisure "choices" may be created for, by, and with Black women. Further, the intersections of race and gender may forcefully counter Shaw's (1994) perspective that leisure creates an opportunity to resist and express "choice, control, and self-determination," (p. 9). Black women may in fact never gain an opportunity to truly resist or express leisure as others may, hence, some of the roles in leisure may only compound their placement in society.

The field of leisure studies is in a unique position to further integrate a Black feminist framework into scholarship by specifically providing an increased voice and representation of Black women experiences. This framework is explained in the next section but as Henderson and Hickerson (2007) noted, "more attention was paid to race and ethnicity in the research [of the eight primary English language journals] conducted about women and leisure from 2001-2005" (p. 596). However, only 3% were related to a non-White population, neither of which were Black North American women. Over a third of the articles offered no race-related descriptors and 8% were specifically on White research participants (p. 596). Henderson and Gibson (2013) updated this integrative review and discussed the particular importance of studying other identities in addition to gender.

> The importance of studying other identities in addition to gender has been recommended consistently in the past two decades by feminist African American scholars (e.g., Collins, 1990) and feminist leisure scholars (e.g., Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw, & Freysinger, 1996), but researchers only recently seem to have begun to integrate the complexities of inclusion into studies of women, gender, and leisure (p. 124).

If leisure studies is to expand theory and research to explore Black women's realities, prioritizing knowledge by Black women themselves, and adopting a theoretical framework to contextualize these realities becomes particularly paramount.

Black Feminism: An Overview

Black women have participated formally in feminist movements for decades and have long fought for gender and racial justice in the U.S.; however, acknowledgment and validation of their participation went largely ignored (Collins, 1990). Within this participation, Black feminists critiqued overt and covert racism and classism within mainstream feminist movements for its focus on the needs of White middle class women, while ignoring the realities of women of color and poor women, and engaging in racist ideologies within the movement itself (Hull, Bell-Scott, & Smith, 1982). In the United States, the National Black Feminist Organization was created in 1973 in response to the need for Black feminists to have their own identity group. Black feminists sought specifically to develop antiracist and antisexist politics, which were too often lacking in civil rights and Black liberation movements (Hull et al., 1982).

In the desire to define feminism for women of color against the elitism and racism within traditional White feminist movements, and one that identifies a love for all women, Walker (1983) coined the term "womanist." Womanism centers on an understanding of the complicated intersections of race, class, sexual, and gender oppression that described women of color's distinct interpretations of feminism. The practice of identifying as a Black feminist involves a connection to the specific historical legacy of Black women who were active in anti-racism and sexist struggles through first and second wave feminist movements (Collins, 2001). Though some scholars argue that there are distinct differences between womanism and Black feminism, others use the two terms interchangeably, including Walker herself (Collins, 2001). Thus for the purpose of this paper, we use the term Black feminism for clarity and consistency throughout.

Consistent with Afrocentric cultural values of communalism and other-"orientedness" with Black and other socially oppressed communities, Black feminism connects with other marginalized groups and offers a new identification for Black women with a specific politic, while not necessarily associating with historical feminist movements (Collins, 1986). Such an alternative inquiry differs through approach and ideologies that include multiple ways of knowing, including lived experiences and intuition as well as intellect; includes dialogue, where the listener is just as important as the speaker; privileging personal testimony through storytelling and interviewing, a reframing of intersectionality to advance the negotiation of multiple marginalization, an ethic of caring, where one speaks from the heart and with empathy; and holding the researcher to personal accountability to assess knowledge claims (Collins, 2000, Guy-Sheftall, 1995).

Black women's realities are more than a problem of patriarchy, but instead exist within intersecting oppressions of racism, sexism, and classism (e.g., Collins, 2004; Crenshaw, 1995). Black feminism recognizes the multiple minority statuses that Black women hold in society, being subjected to racism and sexism often by members of their own community (e.g., experiencing sexism by Black men and racism by White women; Reid & Comas-Diaz, 1990). Moreover, the critical paradigm that Black feminism adopts moves beyond individual acts of oppression to push boundaries and progression that name and critique systems of institutional, structural, and cultural oppression for an intersectional analysis of racism and sexism that Black women experience. Black feminism encourages a scholarship that transcends privileged theories that are often rooted in racism and sexism, to use power in ways that challenge and change ways of thinking and knowing (Hooks, 1989). With this potential in mind, we discuss two broad areas of inquiry

that offer an important intersectional analysis for Black women in past and future leisure studies: invisibility and hypervisibility.

Invisibility: Tackling Systems of Oppression that Impact Black Women

Our specific understanding of Black women and how they view leisure, experience leisure, and interact with leisure spaces has been understudied in leisure research (Henderson & Ainsworth, 2001; Henderson & Gibson, 2013; Henderson & Hickerson, 2007). This reality in our research stands as a gap in the healthy representation of race-specific and gender-specific research that either incorporates Black North American women's experiences or assumes their experiences are captured by discussions within those larger topical areas of research. To empirically acknowledge and explore multiple identities requires researchers to seek "methodological imagination in conducting studies" in regards to race and leisure (Henderson & Ainsworth, 2001, p. 28). Arnold and Shinew (1998), Bialeschki and Walbert (1998), Shinew, Floyd, McGuire, and Noe (1995) and Kivel, Johnson, and Scraton (2009), stand as four unique occurrences in leisure research that recognize the multiple and intersectional racialized and gendered identities that populations of color operate within. However, as a group unto themselves on leisure related discussions, Black women exist in a state of systemic invisibility or problematic visibility.

Black Women's Systematic Oppression

Systemic oppression occurs for Black women in multiple ways. Black women are overrepresented in poverty and unemployment (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2012), homelessness (Datillo, Datillo, Samdahl, & Klieber, 1994; Klitzing, 2003; 2004); and incarceration (Yuen & Pedlar, 2009; Yuen, Arai, & Fortune, 2012). These social inequities translate to health consequences. Over half of Black women 20 years and older are considered obese, and 44% of Black women 20 years and older have hypertension. Black women are nearly twice as likely as White women to be diagnosed with diabetes and 2.5 times as likely to die from diabetes (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). Heart disease is one of the leading killers of racial and ethnic minority communities (National Center for Health Statistics, 2011) and Black women have a 29% increased likelihood of dying from the disease. Moreover, Black women show greater mortality rates of breast cancer than their White counterparts (American Association for Cancer Research, 2013). Several contextual factors relate to these health disparities within African American communities including chronic and race-related stress, socioeconomic conditions, cultural mistrust of the medical system, and targeted food marketing (Alleyne & LaPoint, 2004). This systemic invisibility has implications for scholarly invisibility.

Black Women's Academic Invisibility

The salience of Black women's systemic invisibility in leisure research is troubling as many studies that focus on "women's leisure" do not include a representation of/or collect racial demographics while engaging in important studies of health, such as aging and menopause (Dionigi, Horton, & Bellamy, 2011; Parry & Shaw, 1999); labor (Harrington & Dawson, 1995); early recreation movement history (Henderson, 1990; 1992); romantic relationships (Herridge & Shaw, 2003); depression and alcoholism (Hood, 2003; Janke, Nimrod, & Klieber, 2008); body image (Liechty, Freeman, & Zabriske, 2006); constraints (Little, 2002); child-bearing, mothering, and infertility (Miller & Brown, 2005; Parry & Shinew, 2004; Parry, 2005); breast cancer survival (Shannon & Shaw, 2005); and embodiment (Yarnal, Chick, & Kerstetter, 2008).

To expand feminist theory inquiry in leisure studies we need to expand our understanding that a dominant White cultural perspective may still be present in leisure discussions (Sky, 1994).

The racial disparities in health and the social determinants of health should force our hand and attention to address health-related discussions of aging, reproduction, and disease, especially if the focus of our research is to create collective action for increased physical activity (Burk & Shinew, 2013; Henderson & Ainsworth, 2001), environmental health (Li et al. 2010), and equal opportunity/access (Airhihenbuwa & Liburd, 2006). The abhorred nature of these disparities should move us beyond an "add race and stir" approach to research (Deem, 1999; Henderson, 1994). Paucity in studies solely on Black populations has returned to becoming a norm in leisure research although there were earlier strides (Arnold & Shinew, 1998; Bialeschki & Walbert, 1998; Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw & Freysinger, 1996; Philipp, 1997; 1998). Henderson, Hodges, and Kivel's (2002) statement that "ideology suggest that ideas cannot be separated from practice" elicits a question concerning leisure research for not being better in including or at least explaining the exclusion of and focusing on Black women in research (p. 259).

The Black/female/body is under constant subjugation, scrutiny, and marginalization even within an academic setting, wherein the expectation is that people will be valued and judged for their ideas, not their race and/or gender. As a lesson to learn from anthropology, in regards to Black academics, Russell (1993) articulated best the issue of the presence and politics of the Black body, not as subject or topic, but as an academic when she stated,

> The presence of the black woman faculty member is a daily reminder that the (university) as an institution has been adjudicated a practitioner of racial and gender discrimination, an immoral act of rank order…evokes an ugly history of subordination from which white males (and females), directly and indirectly, purposely and fortuitously, benefitted. Presented daily with such a burdensome history, many colleagues…are awash in guilt and shame…some to resort to discrete unwitnessed acts of animosity. Others…inconsistently grant and deny her their friendship. Most consciously have to remind themselves that she is their equal. Otherwise the tendency is to assume her inferiority…her appointment was unmerited, and…nothing more than a grant of their grace. (p. 261)

The perceived lack of Black women's representation as researchers in leisure studies may speak more about their cumulative oppression over the span of decades. How have the codes of conduct in our field contributed to either Black women's lack of interest or the barriers to their access? There has been a devaluing and demeaning of their lines of thought as undergraduate students in classes, with master degree students needing encouragement to go further, doctoral candidates developing dissertations, junior faculty requiring mentoring, scholars seeking publishing, and academic pressure to gain tenure leads to the perpetuation of White privilege, even within feminist scholarship (Grant & Simmons, 2008). Unchecked codes of conduct that include examples of intellectual violence only reinforce the success of invisible systems of oppression (Stanley, 2007).

Hypervisibility: Troubling the Body Politics of Black Women

Although Black women are often excluded as participants and scholars in leisure research, when Black women are included as participants, they are often a small portion of a predominantly White sample and their experiences decontextualized with little regard to social realities of race and gender. The few Black women scholars in leisure studies face particular marginalization as their numbers continue to reflect a lack growth in producing future scholars of color but also the "assumed" expectation of addressing such discussions as Black feminism. One of the

ways Black feminist epistemology can further the field of leisure studies is to challenge the body politics and representations of Black women. In this section we provide a historical overview of stereotypical images that constrict Black womanhood and psychosocial implications of these stereotypic representations.

Context of Black Women's Bodies

Black female bodies have historically been considered grotesque, animalistic, and unnatural (Carroll, 2000; Gilman, 1985). This is evident in the horrific lived reality of Sara Baartman, a South African woman who lived in the 1800s. While enslaved, a British doctor described her body shape, including large buttocks, genitalia, and breasts, as amusing, inferior, and oversexed (Young, 1997). Sara Baartman was placed on display for paying customers to view her naked body and became known as the "Hottentot Venus" throughout London and Paris, and her body parts were preserved and inhumanely kept on public display until 1974. She was finally returned to South Africa in 2002, after Nelson Mandela's protests, for a final burial (e.g., Qureshi, 2004). This historical context has had long-standing impacts on understanding Black women's bodies as hypersexualized spectacles for consumption (e.g., Durham, 2012; Harris-Perry, 2011)

The visibility of Black women in leisure research seems to appear in less empowering and nuanced ways from discussions centered solely on race (that tend to favor a Black male focus) or solely on gender (that tend to favor a White female focus). Applying a Black feminist lens to the leisure literature, we have chosen to highlight three of the four main stereotypes of Black women in the literature (the fourth is that of the Matriarch or Superwoman): (1) the Jezebel; (2) the Mammy; and, (3) The angry Black woman/Sapphire (Collins, 1990; Collins, 2004; Harris-Perry, 2011).

The Jezebel. The "Jezebel" image stereotypes Black women as hypersexual, manipulative, animalistic and promiscuous females who cannot be controlled (Collins, 2004). Oftentimes, this stereotype embodies a woman with light skin, long hair, and a shapely body who uses her sexuality to get attention, love, and material goods (Collins, 2000). The Jezebel image has been utilized to justify the rape and sexual exploitation of Black women by White men insofar as Black women could not be raped because they are always looking for, wanting, and ready for sex (West, 1995; Wyatt, 1992). One in five women in the U.S. will experience sexual assault in her lifetime and rates are comparable for Black women (Black et al., 2011). Commercialized sexual exploitation (CSE) is one pervasive form of sexual violence and exploitation that Black women experience, including sexual servitude, prostitution, and servile marriage, as well as other sex-related activities such as sex tourism, pornography, exotic dancing, entertainment, and escort services (Logan, Walker, & Hunt, 2009). Sexual exploitation continues to objectify women, which in turn incites violence against women and reduces women to commodities for market exchange (Barry, 1995).

The sexualization of Black women has further consequences for sexual commodification, as violence is more than a problem of sexism and exists within intersecting oppressions of racism, sexism, and classism (e.g. Collins 2004; Crenshaw 1995). Leisure spaces become one of the problematic locations of this intersection. One recent example is Black women's critique of the 2011 "Slut Walk" and anti-slut shaming movement (Black Women's Blueprint, 2011). Black activists and their allies in this movement argued that the term "slut walk" ignored the historical legacy of sexual violence and racism that intertwined for Black women who do not have the privilege to "play on destructive representations" and call themselves "slut." This movement was seen as exemplar of the way Black women have been repeatedly excluded in mainstream women's movements.

The Jezebel stereotype and sexualization of Black women emerges in the leisure literature. For example, research on clubs and pole dancing portrays Black women in sexualized ways (Atencio, 2008; Holland, 2009; Holland & Atwood, 2008). Specifically, Holland's (2009) and Holland and Atwood's (2008) discussion of self-determination and gendered leisure fails to reconcile the existence of the actual pole in a pole-dancing class. Holland (2009) discussed three vignettes that included a Black participant among a larger study of 15 women. Each woman was interviewed for the time, costs, and motivations for engagement despite issues of childcare, work duties, and lack of support from their partners. However, there seemed to be no discussion of the privilege of "feeling sexy" for White women (pole dancing classes, burlesque shows) and the perpetual state of sexualization that Black women face due to the Jezebel stereotype. Though perhaps empowering in some respects, the sexualized pole in such classes, typically associated with strip clubs, further exploits Black women's sexuality and represents narrow confines. Without a Black feminist analysis that takes into context sexualized racial histories, what we conceive as problematic for Black women is often left unpacked. This representation of Black women is particularly problematic as the pornography industry, represented by the leisure viewing of films, Internet sites, magazines, products, and live shows, has received little attention by leisure researchers (Miller-Young, 2010). Specifically, the intersections and separations of race, gender, and income have received considerably less attention among leisure scholarship (Shaw, 1999). For women in certain spaces, such as the city, "others' leisure becomes their work" (Scraton & Watson, 1998, p. 128) and "gaze," servitude, and sex become intertwined with leisure experiences and work experiences in leisure settings for Black women as they become divided beings, Black/female/body (Skeggs, 1999). Racial-sexualization and stereotyping, through mainstream media and pornography, portray Black women as over-sexed or otherwise available for prostitution, contributing to the demand specifically for racialized women (French, 2013; French & Neville, 2012; McNair & Neville, 1996; Stephens & Phillips, 2003; West, 2006; Wyatt, 1992).

The Mammy. The "Mammy" refers to the image of dark-skinned, large framed, asexual, nurturing Black women who were required to be domestic servants for White slave owners and employers post emancipation (Collins, 2004). In this image, Black women were not deemed attractive or feminine by White standards, barely recognized as women, and seen as nonthreatening, always putting the needs of others first. However, despite this legacy of cultural oppression against Black women's bodies, Black girls and women have typically demonstrated a healthier body image compared to White girls and women. Several studies found that Black women show higher body satisfaction (i.e., being satisfied with personal body weight and shape) and body esteem (i.e., feelings about how one looks or overall appearance) than White women (Harris, 1994; Molly & Herzberger, 1998). Disordered eating rates are also found to be lower for Black than White women (Mulholland & Mintz, 2001). Moreover, Black women with higher body mass index (BMI) have shown lower overall body satisfaction, but greater satisfaction with particular body parts (Falconer & Neville, 2000).

These studies may offer new perceptions of engaging in body image discussions that have been conducted on experiences in exercise classes and types of clothing worn (Frederick & Shaw, 1995) and involvement in triathlons and other forms of serious sport participation (Cronan & Scott, 2008). While also augmenting our understanding of obesity stigma as we examine how Black women may actually create a counter space to situate their bodies in relationship to obesity (Lewis & Van Puymbroeck, 2008). Black women trouble our standard conventions of body image, but simultaneously offer other avenues to engage in body image, obesity, and physical activity research.

The Angry Black Woman/Sapphire. A final way in which we argue Black women experience *hypervisibility* is through personification of the angry Black woman stereotype. The angry Black woman, also referred to as Sapphire, is considered unintelligent, aggressive, domineering and emasculating, behaving in loud and offensive ways (Collins, 1990; Springer, 2007; West, 1995). This stereotype has significant implications for Black women in the academy including self-silencing among Black women, and scholarly productivity (Griffin & Reddick, 2011; Harley, 2008). For example, Black women often face racism, sexism, and cultural insensitivity in the academy and "when they voice their opinions about issues, they are labeled as trouble makers" (Hurley, 2008, p. 23). Similarly, Constantine and colleagues (2008) found that Black faculty experienced several racial microaggressions such that their scholarship was devalued for its focus on Black populations, they felt overexposed when advocating for diversity related issues, and their credentials questioned or challenged by other colleagues. The exuberant amount of service, mentoring, and advocacy that Black faculty often engage in, above and beyond what is required and what is practiced among White colleagues, also symbolizes the Mammy stereotype of the caretaker (Griffin & Reddick, 2011; Harley, 2008).

These stereotypic images of Black women have significant psychosocial consequences. As Black feminist psychological research have found, Black women who internalize the Jezebel, Mammy, and Sapphire images have shown lower levels of self-esteem (Thomas, Witherspoon, & Speight, 2004). The portrayals of these images can result in internalized societal stereotypes of Black women, thereby validating them and contributing to many negative reactions (e.g., anxiety, low self-worth) (Greene, 1994).

Theoretical and Empirical Promises for Future Scholarship

We make the following suggestions specifically from Black feminism to aid leisure studies in future scholarship by way of methodological improvements that can be made. As hooks (1989) argued, Black women's experiences and participation should be sought as foundations for theory development—not merely experiential examples. When people in positions of social power conduct research on marginalized and oppressed groups, these groups become objects whose identity is created and defined by others rather than subjects who define their own realities and history (Hooks, 1989). This domination is reinforced when there lacks a presence from the voices whom the scholar seeks to address, or when those voices are deemed unimportant (hooks, 1989). Thus, one essential goal for future scholarship should be to train and employ Black women scholars in leisure studies. Our understanding of the perpetuation of power via gender segregation can only be compounded with the inclusion of race if we follow Aitchison's (2001) model for exploring authorship and reviewership in leisure research. The principal call for action is the production of our own body of Black Feminist leisure researchers from our, severely lacking in racial diversity, doctoral programs (Floyd, 2002). Further diversifying that perspective could in fact infuse in leisure scholarship the ability to galvanize untapped resources among the future scholars in the bulk of our undergraduate and graduate courses.

In psychology, Thomas (2004) outlined several key suggestions for Black women's scholarship, which integrate Black feminist theories and offer important applications for most social science research. Within *knowledge development* and *diversity/equity*, Thomas suggests moving away from comparative research to studying Black women within themselves, as opposed to in contrast with White women, Black men, or other Women of Color. Leisure studies would benefit by solely exploring the lived realities of Black women and complexities of intersecting identities within Black women (i.e., African American v. African or Caribbean, English speak-

ing v. French-Creole or Spanish, rural v. urban, non-heterosexual, complexities within religious differences, regional differences, generation changes due to cultural involution, etc.). One promising way to reduce the privileging of academic perspectives as well (Hooks, 1989), is utilizing methodologies of participatory action research, which involves participants in the design and implementation of the study with the end goal towards collective action (McIntyre, 2008).

Researchers could study Black women within Thomas' principle of *contextuality*, using an ecological approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), to acknowledge multiple spheres of influence on Black women's lives ranging from intra and interpersonal to systemic and cultural. As such, leisure studies research should integrate systemic oppression, political, community, and cultural context in understanding Black women's roles and representation in work and leisure. Black feminist social science researchers have developed measures to better assess experiences unique to Black women that can help incorporate cultural context, such as the Stereotypical Roles of Black Women Scale (Thomas, Witherspoon, & Speight, 2007). These measures could be applied to the differences in use of leisure spaces such as fitness classes, sports clubs, or public parks.

Moreover, *collaboration and cross-fertilization* encourages multidisciplinary approaches to Black women research. Black feminism is interdisciplinary by nature and drawing on their theories can help inform scholarship pertaining to Black women in leisure research. Legal scholar Crenshaw (1995) has been a key leader in intersectionality research, and sociologist Essed (1991) coined the term *gendered racism* to explore intersecting and simultaneous experiences of both racism and sexism, which Collins (1990) also considers in her matrix of domination. Psychology scholars are exploring the concept of gendered racial microaggressions for Black women specifically (Lewis, Mendenhall, Harwood, & Huntt, 2012). By drawing from multiple disciplines, leisure studies can offer more complex analyses of Black women's leisure participation from sociological, psychological, and legal perspectives. Furthermore, how this operates within leisure settings could inform Black studies of further nuances to *gendered racism*. Some suggestions for integrating with leisure studies include acknowledging and documenting the systemic exclusion of leisure participation for Black women, the objectification of Black women's bodies for White male leisurely pleasure, and consideration of strength-based cultural norms rather than deficit thinking when defining leisure activities for Black women.

Conclusion

In conclusion, partnership between leisure studies and Black feminist scholars, as this manuscript is an example of, will allow us to (1) address and acknowledge issues of race that leisure studies does not fully appreciate, (2) educate leisure studies regarding the details of alternative approaches to conducting research, and (3) inform colleagues from other fields how leisure is as much as relevant foci as any other aspect of culture (Allen & Chin-Sang, 1990; Allison, 1988). The critical juncture posed by the retirement of pioneers in feminist leisure research calls for a broad development of current and future feminist scholars as feminist leisure research have impacted the ways that leisure research has been examined and by whom it has been examined. The impact of this diversification could be just as profound as the racial coalitions that occurred in the Women's Suffrage Movement and Feminist Activism for Women's Rights. These coalitions impacted how we all understood civil rights and social life by challenging propensities to hyper-visualize bodies in sexual contexts and marginalize women to social and intellectual "ghettoes."

In summary, Black women have largely been unintentionally excluded, or only marginally included, in leisure studies research, thus there is a need for the development of Black Feminist

theory and methodologies within feminist leisure research. This inclusion will assist the discipline in acknowledging conflating issues and intersections of gender, race, power, and difference, but also could provide a complex understanding of power relationships throughout all leisure scholarship (Aitchison, 2000; 2005). Black feminist theory offers an epistemological framework to increase our knowledge of Black women's lived realities using a critical and alternative paradigm. The results of Black feminist sociological and psychological research to date has provided not only evidence of important psychosocial impacts related to racial and gender identity, but also how racism and sexism situates the experiences of oppression for Black women. This in turn can help inform leisure research in relevant interdisciplinary ways. Leisure studies is in a rich position to advance the field and offer important contributions to exploring the context, behavior, and motivations of Black women's participation in leisure. This can create a tangible target for an improved quality of life that expands our understanding of the continued prevalence of specific health factors and disparities in communities.

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