



INCLUSION IN THE OUTDOORS

History: Slavery was abolished by 1865. However, ongoing segregation has caused deeply rooted inequality for Black people and other People of Color (POC). Specifically, outdoor recreation opportunities were segregated well into the 1960's. That's about 100 years! Access was limited and facilities were unkept or not present at all. This overall lack of access created a hole in the representation of Blacks and other POC who were recreating.

Today: Expensive gear, stereotypes, prejudices, and racism have continued to limit access to the outdoors for POC. Lack of representation in media plays a huge role in normalizing the people we see while recreating. This media has majorly portrayed athletic white folks. Already existing prejudices combined with lack of representation in media strengthens the idea of exclusive participation in the outdoors. Exclusive means unshared. The outdoors are not shared with POC, LGBTQ+, and persons with disabilities. White people, who are represented, unknowingly or knowingly created a prejudice of who can and can't recreate. A white athletic person was normalized; but, these are not the only humans who enjoy the outdoors.

Change: Create inclusion! Inclusion means that all people, regardless of who they are, have the right to be included. First and foremost, educate yourself and others of these issues. Learn from and listen to those who are being excluded. Second, explore and change your own mindset. This step is never ending. Evaluate your thoughts to become aware ways that you may be contributing to the issue. Lastly, encourage leaders who fight for change. Everyone can make a difference and it takes everyone to make change.



Resources:

<https://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/pattie-gonia-lgbtq-environmental-justice>

<https://www.diversifyoutdoors.com/>

<https://www.girlventures.org/>

<https://outdoorafro.com/>

<https://www.nationalrecreationfoundation.org/>

<https://outdoorsforall.org/>

<http://ableoutdoors.net/>

<https://www.rei.com/blog/camp/i-would-but-i-am-the-only-person-of-color>