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SEGREGATION AND USE AT RIIS PARK

Terry Williams and William Kornblum
Department of Sociology
City University of New York
National Park Service

The segregation of visitors to parks often presents difficult planning and management problems for park administrators. The existence of well defined territorial groups in a public space may make the decisions regarding location of new amenities highly problematic. Segregation by race, by ethnic groups, or by other cultural traits, may pose serious problems in the programming of special events, or in the maintenance of easy social relations among the visitors. One need only remember the patterns of segregation by age and life styles which emerged in the Valley of Yosemite National Park in the late 1960's and the ensuing rioting which occurred there, to understand at least superficially how segregation in a park may reinforce hostilities between human groups.

Racial segregation can lead to especially dangerous situations in public spaces like parks. Indeed the worst incidents of rioting between black and white Americans have occurred in parks. With the exception of the New York Draft Riots of 1861, the worst episodes of inter-racial violence in this country have occurred at beaches, particularly the 1919 riots in Chicago and the Belle Isle riots in Detroit in 1949. These and others of one of the most infamous incidents of racial conflict in American history were precipitated over competition for space in regional or local parks. In Black Metropolis, their classic study of the black community in Chicago, St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton describe the events of 1919 as follows:

This Chicago riot began on a hot July day in 1919 as the result of an altercation at a bathing beach. A colored boy swam across the imaginary line which was supposed to separate Negroes from Whites at the Twenty-ninth Street beach. He was stoned by a group of white boys. During the ensuing argument between groups of Negro and White bathers, the boy was drowned. Colored bathers were enraged. Rumor swept the beach, "White people killed a Negro." The resulting fight, which involved the beach

police and the white and colored crowd, set off six days of rioting.

Pitched battles were fought in the Black Belt streets. Negroes were snatched from streetcars and beaten; gangs of hoodlums roamed the Negro neighborhood, shooting at random. Instead of the occasional bombings of two years before, this was a program. But the Negroes fought back.

Drake and Cayton are careful not to attribute the severe rioting to the situation at the beach alone. This tragic event which lasted more than five days, took seventy five lives, and left thousands homeless, had to be the result of larger social forces than the mere assortment of Black and white people on a beach. Thus the authors show that patterns of segregation on the beach were a reflection of residential segregation in the city itself. The severe hostility which exploded between the groups on the beach was only a symptom of the bitter competition between blacks and whites for scarce jobs and housing on the city's South side. (Drake and Cayton, p.66 v. I) The beach became the "neutral ground" upon which the antagonistic groups would meet and clash.

While the segregation of people in public places may exacerbate tensions which exist elsewhere, not all segregation, even by race, is indicative of hostility. The segregation of park visitors according to their preference for leisure activities is a phenomenon often legitimated in the design of park facilities themselves. In the national parks we often find the campers in recreational vehicles are segregated from those who use tents, and back packers seek to avoid the more sedentary campgrounds of both types. Nature study areas are kept separate from zone of heavy use such as picnic areas or visitor centers.

Even segregation of people by race or by life style is not necessarily a threat to social order or to the peaceful pursuit of leisure activities. In his book, The Social Order of the Slum, perhaps the best recent study of ecological processes in urban neighborhoods, Gerald Suttles demonstrates how patterns of territorial segregation by age, race, and ethnicity, actually may contribute to the stability of heterogeneous communities margin within the City. By arriving at tacitly agreed upon zones of use, in parks and other public spaces, which vary according to the time of day or week, the residents of a racially and ethnically diverse inner city area create a human ecology within which they can circulate comfortably and where they feel secure.

The view of segregation as functional to the preservation of social order in public places may allay fears of racial or other types of conflict, but it creates dilemmas for those who would plan or manage for the use of public facilities. If planners continue to design facilities according to the assumption that all will have equal access to them, what is to be done when the people who use the facilities voluntarily segregate themselves over the available space and therefore do not have equal access to the planned amenities or programs? This is a practical version of a larger question concerning to what degree to leaders of public agencies ought to recognize the limitations of cultural homogeneity in contemporary American society.

There is no simple answer to the dilemma posed by human segregation in public facilities. Solutions will necessarily vary from one situation to another. And even before solution can be suggested, it will be necessary to feel confident that

the ecological processes which are being shaped by policy and plans are well understood. Therefore in the following pages we describe the patterns of segregation as they currently exist at Jacob Riis Park, a large and immensely popular ocean beach in the new Gateway National Recreation Area. We also seek to offer suggestions as to how the patterns of segregation which now characterize use at Riis Park came about and how they could be modified as the National Park Service seeks to improve the quality of facilities and recreational experiences at what is now the most heavily used park area in the national system. Since those responsible for the major decisions which will affect the future of Riis Park are generally quite different in life style and culture from the people who are the park's heaviest users, we also seek to convey the ethos or "feel" of life in the park.

Jacob Riis Park

There is no little irony in the fact that Gateway National Recreation Area's most popular site for beach recreation is named after one of the great urban reformers of the Progressive era. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Jacob Riis, publicized the horrible plight of immigrants who crowded the slums and tenements of New York. Himself an immigrant, Riis became a leader in the reform movements which stimulated so much social welfare legislation and later gave rise to New York reform leaders like Fiorello LaGuardia and Robert Moses. Pioneer Urban reformers like Riis, Jane Addams, and Lincoln Steffens were to the Cities of the United States with Mather and Muir, were to the nation's great natural areas. Thus at Gateway N.R.A. one has the marriage, however uneasy, of the two most successful conservationist traditions in American Society.

There is even further irony in the contemporary use of Riis Park. Over 3 million people visited the 1.5 miles of beach strand here in 1974, but this visitation hardly conforms to Jacob Riis' dream of an Americanized population. Riis was a strong advocate of assimilation; the cultural diversity and multi-lingualism of the beach park would no doubt shock him. The situation of cultural pluralism which marks American society today was never anticipated by the first generation of city reformers who pinned their hopes for a homogeneous society of Americans on the uplifting influence of schools, settlement houses, and parks.

The patterns of segregation by race, sexual preference, and ethnicity which are typical of Riis park today are also antithetical to the planning philosophy of Robert Moses, the Master Builder who initiated almost all the public facilities built in New York State from 1920-1960.

During the depths of Depression, while he was establishing his power and his reputation as a parkway and park builder, Robert Moses also turned his attention to the deplorable conditions of public parks in New York City. Access to the beaches which surround the city soon became a priority in Moses' plans to expand opportunities for outdoor recreation in New York City. In The Power Broker, Robert Caro describes the state of beach recreation in the city before Moses began to exercise his immense talents:

New York (in 1932) was a city of islands, a city surrounded by permeated by water. But with Orchard Beach and Wolfe's Pond Park handed over to Tammany insiders, the only acquaintance that most of the city's lower-income families, who did

not own cars and thus were virtually barred from Jones Beach, made with the ocean surf was at Coney Island, where a million people, treading gingerly among broken glass and filth that seemed never to be cleaned up, jammed the beach so full on a Sunday that one could hardly see the sand. The beach at Jacob Riis Park in Rockaways was used only sparsely, but there was reason: there was no way for a family without a car to reach it, and families with cars could reach it only after a tortuous trip.

.....Parents who took their children to city beaches on Sundays learned not to allow them near the shacks on the beach labelled "First Aid Station." The shacks were invariably filled with prostitutes sleeping off the effects of their Saturday night parties with the lifeguards.

It is rather depressing to note that the same general observations could be made about beach access in the city today. As seen earlier, very few visitors without cars find their way to Riis Park, while five subway lines coverage on nearby Coney Island, still one of the most congested public beach areas in the world. And at Riis Park itself, although the efforts of Robert Moses vastly improved the physical conditions of the area before fiscal limitations of the City of New York it was allowed to become run down once more, the visitors hardly conform to the ideal of the middle class white American family which the National Park Service is comfortable in serving.

Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of life at Riis Park is the "culture of civility," a set of norms that allow all the groups which frequent the park to get along despite their great diversity. Just as there are norms which have emerged over time to define the use of space by the various groups, so there are norms of behavior in those areas or situations in which the groups are brought together in the park. In order to understand how this "culture of ^{civility} activity"

has been established and how it may be preserved and enhanced, it is necessary to take a closer look at some of Riis' typical use patterns. We begin at the boardwalk, the common meeting ground for all the user groups.

The Riis Boardwalk

One is unsure who is the spectator and who is the show on the Boardwalk. On hot summer days this wide strip of concrete is ablaze with multi-colored trousers, shorees, fluorescent toe nails, and string bikinis covering the walk in cosmic diversity. Conversations flow through a breeze of suntan oil and cannabis as drag queens whisper and wink in hope of the capture. But this also a heterosexual space; men follow the smiles of young women as they walk to the talk of the street linguist with the hippest credentials. This is the boardwalk, the vital link in the way Riis park people connect socially. It brings us away from our 12' by 12' square of sand space to the dialectic of the concrete where interaction is more open, amorphous, and more like a gigantic party. Radios, tapes, drums, echo musical rhythms of every syncopation all meshing into a mellow wave punctuated by talk, laughter, giggles, raps, footsteps, stomps, dances of the bump, styles of fashion, bops and grooves, mixtures of cultures, alive and dynamic as the city from which they spring.

The boardwalk on July 4th was lined with people: young and old, children by the thousands, swimming in the ocean, playing on the sand space; the concessions packed as the line wound past the administration building; hot dogs and hot feet marshmellowing in the sun as way down at the head of the line the call goes out.

"Tickets please, tickets, got tickets here." Good times was there, laughing,

gaiety, dancing was there, everybody was there. Music blasting tapes decks, food getting scoffed, purple, red, green, lavender, turquoise bikinis and jump-suits, cats and chicks decked out, James Brown was there. Water splashing, reffer smoking, tap dancing, exhibits and exhibitionists. Somebody was/ everybody was rapping/ sounding/running it down/ picking it up/shucking/jiving/ signifying. There were all kinds of games: the "dozens" and every other "get down" ethnic game, socialist basketball games, the women playing the men games, the dudes being outdone, colors and sounds and people and people and people. This was parks to the people and people to the parks; if you can dig it.

Blacks and Latins

Thousands of Blacks and Latin descend on Riis Park beach every weekend. Their use of the park ranges from minimal use on weekdays (mostly for recreational purposes such as basketball and baseball) to maximum use on weekends during peak season. During these specific days, they occupy the section of the beach called Bay 5. Black and Latin users will expand into Bays 4 and 6 when their number proportionately expand.

Blacks and Latins of various ethnicities (West Indians, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, etc.) locate in Ba- 5 with a kind of mutual co-existence and very little conflict. Because of their historical roots, and the intercultural blends of music and ethnic life styles, Blacks and Latins frequently share space and activities in the park. One illustrative example of this is offered by a regular user at Riis:

Riis should have a Black & Puerto Rican Day Festival so the brothers and sisters can really get off. Last year they had drummers here every Saturday and Sunday night and the Latin brothers drank, smoke and brought other instruments like flutes, shakers. The sisters were dancing and singing. They ought to have this again.

Compatible diversity and ethnic consolidation is also manifested in a variety of musical styles and themes. The conga drums is one vivid illustration since it screams with both an African and Latin influence.

Black and Latin families and other groups often congregate in the low lined tree and bush shrubbery area at the park where they make a base of operations in the cool shade.

Here the level of use is very much dependent on temperature, the number of people present at the park, and on the time of day.

Blacks expand their space on the beach by sheer weight of number rather than by conflict. July 4th was one an illustration of this process. On that day, Blacks and Latins numbered perhaps 30,000 and their spatial dominance was immense. The shrubbery, trees and underbush were all covered with visitors.

The Black communal network at Riis for which the boardwalk is only the spatial center, is important because families, young adults, children find a place where interactions come easily and are not subject to outside pressures. There is general solidarity present among all visitors to Bay 5. As a Riis patron who has visited the park regularly for years says:

We always have six or seven people with us when we come.
On Sunday evenings, we get there and play cards, eat,
party until sometimes 3:00 in the morning.

*This section is based on conversation with park users, park officials and observations by the author.

The partying element is very much a part of what Riis is all about.

Another user says:

I dig Riis and being with a lot of groovy Black folk.
We can do what we want to here without being hassled.

The solidarity among Blacks extends to bonds between one person to another until a sort of network is established which permeates the entire Bay 5 area.

The various forms of recreation in which all Riis visitors find enjoyment and pleasure, be it reefer smoking, nudity, gay activity, etc. should be carefully considered before any stringent enforcement policies are implemented. Riis is the place where one can forget for a time, the restrictions and repressive conditions of urban life and find fun, laughter and other multi-mellow options available to them.

Gay Men and Lesbian Women

The presence of a large gay community is consistent feature of Bay 1 and 2 throughout the summer months. Their use of the beach dates back over 20 years. They inhabit Riis on a daily basis from early morning to late nights. Bay 1 is about 70% gay on an average day which Bay 2 is about 90% gay.

While ethnicity, race and age have particular significance for patrons of Riis Park, spatial locations by sexual orientation has even greater importance. Thus Blacks and Latins gays will most likely settle into the gay area as opposed to the Black and Latin area at Bay 5. Whatever their race or ethnicity, gay men and lesbian women prefer those areas defined as gay territory. Arthur Evans' article in The Advocate, a gay publication, explains:

A part of the 'why' has to do with the oppressive conditions of gay life. The gay section at Riis Park has traditionally been our turf. We Gays generally find our selves pushed out of almost every area in this society. Our jobs, our churches, our families, our government. Riis Park has been one of these places we've fled to as a haven - one place, finally where we could be openly and outrageously gay without having to worry about tight-assed straights snooping around. It was ours no matter what anybody thought.

The sexual freedom Bay 1 and 2 provide is not available in the other bay sections.

The gay population is predominantly white and male, with a smaller proportion of lesbian women, both Black, Latin and white. There does exist racial and ethnic compatibility, mostly on a sexually preferred basis. Black and Latin heterosexuals in Bay 5 might view gay men and lesbian women as threatening were they to approach or inhabit Bay 5 with any consistency.

While playing basketball, during my field observations, the senior author broached the subject of the gays in Bay 1 and 2 with two young black dudes. One of them stated:

As long as them faggots don't bother me they all right.
But if they come over here fucking around, there might be trouble.

Like Lenny Bruce said, "I don't have nothing homosexuals but I wouldn't want one to marry my brother".

Gay Black males often congregate on the Bay 5 boardwalk, an area which is exceptionally popular and conducive to a great deal of free interaction. While mobile on the boardwalk, Black gays usually resist the stationery milieu Bay 5 provides for straight Blacks.

The General Dimensions of Ecological Segregation

Ethnic and racial groups tend to locate themselves spatially and temporally within specific sections of the park. These sections are roughly 100 yards in diameter. There is a need to comprehend this relationship to each other in an effort to identify the problems this phenomenon poses for park planners. There is a further need to examine demographically those characteristics which directly relate to park behavior, i.e. sex, race age.

RACE

There are three distinct racial groups who populate Riis Park: Blacks, Latins and Whites. Blacks constitute the largest group in number on any given weekend. These groups and their various ethnicities voluntarily choose strategically located spaces on the beach front. These spaces, voluntarily chosen, allow cultural and ethnic lifestyles to co-exist with a minimum of conflict.

Temporally, all the spaces on the beach are utilized by some members of the various groups at one time period or another. But seldom is a specifically designated space of one group occupied by another group. Blacks have never en masse occupied Bay 1 and 2 or vice versa. Specific space is only relinquished during particular days and hours when such groups are not on the beach. On weekdays when very few Blacks are on the beach, some whites will locate in the Bay 5 area. However, during the weekends, whites will desert this area and move to other bays. On Saturday and Sundays throughout the summer months, Bay 5 remains exclusively Black and Latin.

White users at the park populate the greatest area in both spatial and temporal dimensions. By bay sections, they inhabit Bay 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14.

In terms of time, they frequent the beach on each day of the week.

The relinquishing of territory without physical conflict is an indication of mutual respect and acceptance of territorial possession by racial groups. This kind of mutual acceptance allows for a peaceful co-existence among groups who are generally antagonistic toward each other in most other circumstances.

AGE

For the most part, people come to parks to mingle and participate in people-related activities. Indeed segregation is one why in which they voluntarily limit the range of an options for contact. Age has importance in regard to this complex process. At Riis the major age categories are: adolescents, young adults, families with young children, and the elderly.

Parents are often concerned about the kinds of activities their children will be exposed to, especially nudity, sodomy and marijuana use. It has prompted some users to not bring their children to Riis. One such parent remarked:

I have always considered Riis and adult park and because of this, I never bring my kids here. wouldn't want my kids to see some of the things happening around here. When me and my friends come, to party, drink, play cards and shit like that.

Nude behavior was virtually non-existent in the black areas when children were present.

The youngest members of the family can go to the playground area accompanied by an adult or older sibling. The playgrounds are located on both sides of the Administration Building (one near Bay 2 and 3; and one near Bay 5 and 6). An amalgam of sound and voice meet the ears as children swing on the swings of playgrounds opposite the walk; Seesaws are instruments which can be mastered to perfection.

Among all groups family as a unit played few games. Swimming was the most prevalent groups activity and family groups were usually less mobile than most other users because of their children and the need for a permanent space. The need for permanence on the beach front is important especially when the area becomes more crowded. For singles or small groups permanence is less important. Strategic locations gain precedence. For example, small groups will often move several times to different places to gain a more enjoyable position on the beach front.

Certain locations will attract certain age groupings. Adolescents and young adults in a family are not expected to remain in one area throughout the day. They may wander off to the basketball courts or other spots. Young adults, for example, will often congregate on the boardwalk for the boardwalk is the place where exciting, dynamic things happen. Family units and the elderly will usually not be quite as mobile; by and large they remain in one place throughout their time at the park.

Most formal events at Riis are highly age specific. For example the discotheque was mostly attended by young adults, predominantly Black and Latin, male and female. Black music was taped for each session and the unauthorized sale of wine and pot was common place.

The Discotheque or a "Get Down" Summer with a Thousand Julys

The cat ride from Harlem, Bed-stuy is long and hot but still easier than travel for the crowds who arrive at the Flatbush Avenue station, descend from the iron-hore, and reaching the outside, with endlessly for the packed Rockaway bus. But the people are used to the thousands of annoyances and besides, today is the SUN Day after Noon.

A day mellow-like mellow and the line to the bus is stretched long and young and hip and ready. Radios, straw hats, marshmallow shoes, transcendental heels, Pointer Sister sisters and platform brothers enter the 45¢ bus to an immediate clapping to a taped 'boggie down baby' tune. Today is disco night. A summer with a thousand Julys.

The Disco is the double hippest mello-drama. A happening that happens on odd and even days as long as it ends on a sun day. The ride is quick as the sounds carry one off the bus onto the walk to the vibrating rhythm of basketballs and other assortments of oohs and aahs of a darker multitude who are already present in form, style and visual hip. "Play that funky music" hip. The get down ethnic permeates the scene as multi-colored zoot-suits and opulent flashes of the past in dress and music transcend the immediate and reach out for happy times of a yesteryear as present as today.

Today is Disco night. And the various elements which make the evening special are beginning to assemble as conga drums and head bands, and beads on feet and feet on concrete compete for the complete syncopation. A small group cluster to form a mass. A 125th Street on Saturday-like mass, a Fulton Street mass, and another group a mass of like proportions and they multiply to equal 5,000. The music has started and the bells start ringing and whistles whistle while claps clapping. The scene is blowing while the tremendous mass of darker/multi-colored humanness shake the Rockaway foundation or it seems so.

The bump is the coordinated rhythm of hip and behind, behind and elbow, behind the behind. Today is Disco night. The vendors of illegal wares approach the crowd on all sides to offer merchandise of a marijuana produce, non-labelled cigarettes, Jamaica red and aculpoco gold.

The smoke circles the crowd and forms labyrinths of idyllic images of the Isley Brothers whose composition makes up a rhythmic clap as the beat continues and time is of no consequence as MFSB plays on to spiritual together. And reefer is puffed and passed to young women in colors of turquoise silhouettes of darker complexions. And what the wine man sells the people will buy because everyone knows cannabis is dry to the after taste.

Tonight is Disco night, "boggie down" like night, "check that ass out" night, "funky fever" like night. Riis, a summer with a thousand Julys.

The Discotheque night was one of the few innovative and successful activities provided this year at Riis. While there were other activities with good response, the Disco was exceptionally well received and those who attended thought it was great. One person commented:

My brother and I went to the Disco every Sunday it was on. We really dug it. I did not go to the beach much but I never missed a disco.

The Disco was extremely popular and those who attended derived a positive kind of experience from it. There were instances of trouble, however, when a rival gang succeeded in creating havoc using the Disco night as the time for rival fighting. The incident caused minor property damage and panic for those persons present. The police and other park officials felt the incident was too threatening and the Disco was closed for the remainder of the summer. The park then was devoid of the kind of musical diversity, cultural richness and gaiety so often vital for users at Riis.

Some people expressed resentment at the closing of the Disco. One person responded:

All of a sudden the Disco stopped. We didn't know who was responsible for it starting in the first place. We had wanted all along to thank or compliment somebody for putting it on cause it was so good. And all of a sudden it stopped. We just want it back again.

The Disco had several key elements which aided in its being successful and effective. The volunteer organizers provided a reasonably good sound system under difficult situations, i.e. a large crowd of 5,000, the concrete, the larger amount of equipment. The disc jockey was another part of the Disco show which was later complimented by a Disco night person, and group of youths volunteered to supervise the crowd and to assist in keeping the fights, if there were any, at a minimum. They attempted to isolate arguments and frictions so as to keep them away from the larger group.

There was no official mention of the reason why the disco was closed. Informally one park official stated:

The closing of the Disco was very much caused by the 'gang incident'. That incident was the culmination of many previous things, mainly the unauthorized vendors selling wine and drugs. And also the crowds. You see we had sometimes eight or nine thousand people out there and the police couldn't handle them all. And, of course, they were frightened. But if the vendors had not been there, things would have been a lot better. But as far as drugs are concerned, they were being used like water out there anyway. I think even the 'gang incident' was an over reaction by everybody but it could have been a real nasty affair had it got out of hand.

Obviously, the need for recommendations and policy concerning unauthorized vendors is crucial. But the need for a more open approach to people and their needs and desires is at least equally crucial and is often ignored. Park management expressed the desire to continue the Disco next season and there is

some chance it could continue, but it is simply too bad its continuation during the 1974 summer could not have been worked out for the disco it had enormous support from its users.

Temporal Ordering

The use of segregated space by ethnic and racial groups is largely dependent on temporality. Because of the different times chosen for usage by specific groups, several types of users emerge:

a. The Resident - The resident user of the park is characterized by his/her familiarity with the facilities and the activities generated by the park. He/she is fully cognizant of the "goings-on" and can give insightful accounts of the happenings the park provides. One such resident is the self-proclaimed mayor of Bay 5, Lloyd Smith. He offered advice on crowd control and behavioral patterns of his area. Asked what should the police do about marijuana smoking at Riis, if anything he replied:

The police should maintain a low profile and not attempt to arrest people smoking pot. Bay 5 is like a little Harlem and any incident using force might incite the wrath of Blacks.

Residents are the most consistent users of the park and they usually live near the vicinity of the park, either in Queens or Brooklyn. Their knowledge of park behavior is unquestioned and they are usually respected by other park users and by local management.

b. The Patron - The patrons are usually regular users of the park but their encounters with park personnel are much less frequent. Nevertheless, because of their interaction in this setting they are generally in the know about park activities and recognize other patrons and residents by sight, if not by name. The patron, depending on ethnicity or sexual orientation, will usually remain in that area most comfortable for interactions and not circulate as does the resident.

c. Freak seekers - The freak seekers are those users who come to the beach only after a certain publicity has been generated. They are not regular users or patrons and do not come to involve themselves in the facilities the park offers. They usually come to see, look or gaze at the persons, objects or events whose publicity has aroused their interest. Their length of stay at the park is short or long depending on the duration of the event for which they come. Freak seekers can be Black, White, Latin, single, couples, families, the elderly, the young, the hip and the square. They have no loyalty to spatial dimensions choosing any and every area with equal curiosity. Since they are not regular users of the park, freak seekers do not remain in any area very long. Transient by the nature of their park use, they will only return if the possibility of seeing or becoming a part of excitement re-occurs.

Territorial Defense

In any attempt to understand behavioral patterns at Riis Park, one must focus on specific types of incidents which test the limits of civility. Fires

vandalism, fightings and other kinds of physical confrontations may often be defensive actions against territorial encroachment. Fighting in particular is a behavior which may stress honor, rights, and "ownership" of space. After all people or groups who inhabit a particular space do consistently develop an identification regarding space and a sense that "our turf is established." But violence at Riis is rare. A four year visitor to Riis and the "resident" speaks on the incidence of fights in Bay 5. She says:

I've been coming to Riis Park for years and I have yet to see a fight between Blacks in Bay 5. That doesn't mean there were none, but its just I haven't see any. We all seem to get along real well.

Many Blacks feel the police will not encroach upon Bay 5 because they respect both the space and its inhabitants.

The cops won't come into this area (Bay 5) and fuck with us like they do them faggots over there (pointing toward Bay 1 and 2) because we ain't gonna stand for it.

In this matter, territorial defense against spatial encroachment centers around the idea of respect. That is, the space or territory is respected only as much as those who occupy it are respected. Blacks are seen as those who will defend their territory and few, if any, groups will enroach upon it.

Harassment

Harassment is another form of territorial encroachment which involves official action against park users. The officials are seen as park violators who arrest, harass or otherwise, intimidate in both justified and unjustified situations depending on whose version one hears. But the summons, or arrests are

the publicity on the nudity and gay activities put great pressures on them to crack down.

Conclusion:

Benefits and Problems of Segregation

It is clear from the descriptive material presented in preceeding sections of this paper that the general patterns of spatial segregation which characterize daily life at Riis Park serve a number of purposes for the park visitors. First these patterns provide the park users with the opportunity to voluntarily select those with whom they wish to be close and to interact. Second, these zones of segregated use provide a more or less stable ecology of behaviors; people familiar with the beach know what to expect in different areas of the park and therefore know how to avoid behavior which they do not wish to engage in or which they do not wish to witness.

The paper has also demonstrated that there are areas of the park where the groups come together for activities and interaction. The boardwalk with its concession stands, and its nearby playgrounds and athletic facilities is the primary common ground for the meeting of user cultures. It is here that the overall "culture of civility" which guides the behavior of all user groups is most evident. The striking feature of life at Riis Park is that despite marked patterns of segregation there is generally high level of respect among the visitors for the life styles and behaviors which are unique to the various groups. One does see instances of hostility, especially between homosexuals and white teenagers, but in general there is extremely little tension due to racial or ethnic divisions.

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The "culture of civility" at Riis park is one in which there is extreme tolerance for deviance of all kinds. Much more will be said, in the paper by Mr. Canavan which follows, about the subject of sexual behavior but it should also be noted that the various groups treat space as a value to be acquired through peaceful means, largely by simple force of occupation. People or groups who deviate from the norms of segregation are not ill-treated. Thus, if a white family were to remain in the Bay 5 area of the beach they would not be harassed by the Black people who dominate that stretch of sand, and this is generally true for all other permutations with the exception of sexual behavior as noted earlier.

The processes whereby segregation occurs, especially role of the various types of visitors who populate the park, need to be observed further and in more quantitative detail in future evaluation studies. In this regard it will be especially important to observe how the patterns described here may change as additional portions of the beach are opened (extending into what is currently Fort Tilden).

Not all aspects of segregation at Riis Park are so positive for the overall social order of activities there. Indeed some instances of segregated uses may be inimical to the goals of the National Park Service or to the safety and general well-being of the visitors. This is especially true with respect to activities which are segregated along racial or cultural lines. For example segregation of gay people in Bays 1 and 2 permits some of the visitors there to behave in a fashion which draws undue attention by the wider metropolitan public, especially through the agency of the media, to a fairly small number of exhibitionists.

This attention tends to result in a popular label for the park as an "adult beach"

a term similar in connotation to "adult movie". This labelling process may limit the diversity of citizens whom Gateway can serve at Riis Park. If this does happen it is unfortunate, but there is little empirical evidence that such is the case. There is more evidence to the contrary, in the variety of users who do populate the beach that those people who do fill Riis to capacity of most sunny weekends have discovered the means whereby they can avoid behaviors they do not wish to experience.

Segregation of people in activities which were designed to have equal access for all can be a serious problem in any public facility. The use of a public restroom as a spot for sexual behavior is an instance where the general public has its needs denied due to the behavior patterns of a minority. More will be said on this subject in Canavan's paper.

Some Service officials have viewed the Disco at Riis as another example of the negative aspect of segregation in park use. These events were attended by at least 99% Blacks and Latins. No attempt was made in their organization or their conduct to attract other park users. In addition, the presence of 3000 to 5000 young Blacks and Latins, and the absence of other groups made the Disco appear as if it was intended to be only for these groups. This seeming violation of the principle that park events should attract as broad a base of visitors as possible must account in some part for the sudden termination of the Disco as soon as an incident occurred which posed some danger to park officials and participants.

The Disco experience merits the attention given to it here because it is an example of the kind of situation which the Service must confront increasingly

as it becomes involved in urban recreation. Incidents of conflict such as that which occurred between members of two rival gangs at the last Disco are bound to occur again at Gateway. Termination of the event will not be a satisfactory answer in the long term. In this case the argument was also made that the facility where the Disco was held is of poor quality and presents problems for "crowd control". To some extent this is a rationalization for an action which was taken out of a desire to avoid further incidents.

More visitors are injured and killed in using the back country areas of the National Parks, or in climbing mountains like Raier, and more Service personnel risk their safety in rescue operations, than will ever be endangered at events like the Disco. The same skill and fortitude which the Service shows in treating visitors who are privileged enough to reach the back country should be applied to visitors at events in the urban parks as well.

These comments do not imply that Service managers should be content to run or sponsor events which appeal to an audience which is segregated along racial and ethnic criteria. But such segregation does tend to be a preferred mode of activity and will generally occur. What is required then is the simultaneous phasing of other events which will appeal to other audiences, and perhaps among them will be events which draw as many groups together as possible.

More will necessarily be said on these issues in further work and activity so far the meantime here is the general orientation which has guided these observations. In his collected essays, People and Plans, Herbert Gans expresses the view which might best be adopted in planning and managing the uses of Riis and other Gateway areas. Gans' position is that:

...planners and other professionals do not monopolize wisdom about goals and values, diversity is valuable and people are entitled to live in any way they choose unless that way can be proved to be destructive to them or to their fellow men. Goals and values arise out of the opportunities and restraints which are encountered in everyday life, and different age and class groups inevitably have different goals and values. The planner ought to respect these and give people the opportunity, resources, and freedom to choose what they want to do. I am for the democracy in all spheres of life, cultural, economic, and social as well as political, for I do not believe anyone has the definitive conception of the purpose of life.