

TOURISM AND THE INTERSECTION OF RACIALIZATION

AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

IN HATTIESBURG, MISSISSIPPI

By

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Introduction

Tourism is often viewed under the hegemonic umbrella of capitalism that cloaks the economy, wherein the economy itself is viewed as a controller of society with no room for opportunities or differences from its capitalocentrism (Mosedale 2011). Gibson-Graham defines capitalocentrism as "a dominant economic discourse that places a positive value to all activities associated with capitalist economic activity" (Gibson-Graham 2006, 56), thus viewing all economic differences under the same umbrella of capitalism. This singular, blanket view represses the gendered, racialized, and alternative economic relationships that exist within and arguably sometimes beyond capitalism. Furthermore, it curtails the economy to be sheerly about the value of money and explicitly gaining more money instead of functioning as a system for the benefit of the people it serves (Pritchard and Morgan 2000, Mosedale 2011; Gibson-Graham 2006). The traditional way tourism is viewed focuses on profit, jobs, and growth, but reworking that mindset and embracing a multifaceted view would help see tourism and the economy outside of or in addition to its monetary value (Cave and Dredge 2018). Building on these insights from poststructural economic geography, this article seeks to rethink the economy of Hattiesburg, Mississippi in a non-capitalocentric frame, thereby contributing to broader efforts to imagine a range of potential development futures for this mid-sized city.

Broadly speaking, economic functions produce, distribute, exchange, and consume goods and services, but the diverse economies perspective looks outside of a capitalist's focus on appropriating surplus value and thereby realizing a profit. Conventional thinking on the economy does not consider the different social practices that help make society function, including, for example, the household labor done at home, referred to as a noncapitalistic household economy (Gibson-Graham 2006). The concept of unpaid household labor and its production and

distribution values thwarts the hegemony associated with capitalism by breaking down its economic identity into multiplicities; there is no singular '*the* economy,' but rather a range of productive, distributive, and consumptive relationships, many of which are made invisible when cast as outside 'the economy' as defined vis-a-vis capitalist relations of production. Unpaid household labor also demonstrates that for many people, more labor is spent in non-commodified, noncapitalist enterprises than in traditional capitalist labor throughout one's life. Gibson-Graham introduces this discourse and presents the noncapitalist household economy as a foundation of a theory of economic diversity. This theory offers us an example of alternative forms of businesses in the economy and allows us to question why we consider the economy to be capitalistic and what sort of world might become possible were we able to recognize and value existing economic diversity.

Other aspects that pertain to a diverse economy are race and gender. Capitalocentrism is viewed through a white-male-dominated lens and fails to acknowledge the racialized and gendered aspects found within. Pritchard and Morgan (2000) examine the rhetoric of tourism economies and the masculine nature surrounding business development and advertising. Femininity is associated with domestic practices, while categories like adventure, pleasure, or fun are presented masculinely (Pritchard and Morgan 2000). That differentiation prohibits the diversification of capitalism and limits women to smaller, less significant roles and more traditional roles. It further limits people of color who suffer the effects of racial capitalism; Bledsoe et al. (2019) argue, "the continued domination, displacement, and destruction of their bodies and spaces are central components of modernity and make capitalist relations possible," (3). Capitalism thrives on subjugation and the domination of women and people of color. Gibson-Graham argue that capitalocentric analysis, whether for or against capitalism, supports its

maintenance and reproduction by perpetuating the idea that capitalism is ‘the only game in town.’

Scholars such as Jan Mosedale call on tourism scholars to think more critically about their engagement with tourism in the economy. Research on the subject is more limited to capitalism's confines. Mosedale (2011, Chapter 13, Page 1) said:

The bulk of research on tourism economies either fails to mention alternative economies or views them as minor distortions of a capitalist system. The inherent difficulty of quantifying and measuring alternative exchanges and thus incorporating or addressing alternative economic practices in national accounts or official accounting systems offers governments and researchers a pretext to disregard, ignore or trivialize these economies.

By bringing into focus the already established alternate forms of economy, my research does not necessarily encourage change but highlights the diverse forms already present; it is looking outside of private corporations for a more sustainable and ethical future. While acknowledging possibility and change is a step forward, it is not the end-all-be-all solution to solving capitalocentrism's focus on money and not people; instead, it opens for a conversation.

The study that follows is based on background and spatial analysis of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and its tourism economy, examining the intersection of racialization, women-owned businesses (WOB), and tourism with ArcGIS data, demographic and economic data, scholarly articles, and visual materials. Following a brief description of the project methodology and research questions guiding the study, I surveyed relevant literature on tourism, diverse economies, and racialization. Next, I present a demographic and political-economic sketch of the city to provide social context for the case study. This section relies on demographic and economic data, city reports, visuals related to the city, scholarly articles, and news articles pertaining to the city. I then consider the relationship between the spatial distribution of women

of color (WOC) owned businesses in Hattiesburg and census data in the city to analyze the potential correlation between the two. Finally, an analysis and summary conclude the research.

This study examined the city of Hattiesburg's tourism economy, specifically the women-owned businesses, in an effort to bring to light already established forms of diverse economies. Through the case study background, the city's demographic and historic profile showed the economic backdrop, the racial and political makeup, and the rise and fall of the once-thriving Black community within the city. In spatial analysis, the population tracts show the demographic make-up of the city to set the stage for the subsequent analysis that demonstrates the 'hotspots' of Hattiesburg's women-owned businesses and their relation to the spatial layout of the city. The following discussion synthesizes the data presented and showcases Hattiesburg as a diverse economy.

Methodology

Statement of Purpose

Looking within the already existing capitalocentric economic space for alternative forms of economy undermines capitalism's hegemony and removes the limits of growth fixated on GDP (Krueger et al. 2017). Women-owned businesses are important to the economy and represent almost half of all businesses in the country (American Expresses 2019), with Black women-owned businesses having the highest growth. By undermining the hegemony of patriarchal capitalism, tourism would no longer be white-male-centric and solely associated with profit and economic growth, but instead with values such as sustainability and community (North 2015). By providing this research on Hattiesburg's diverse economies and the interaction of racialization and gender, I hope to create a space to further community development. In the

words of Patrick Brouder, "Some epistemological reflection is always needed in order to keep tourism research meaningful to the communities whose space is occupied by it" (Brouder 2018)—keeping the focus of Hattiesburg's tourism on the local economy for the benefit of the local economy.

The city of Hattiesburg is already driven by its local uniqueness (Harvey 2001), as stated time and again within the city's strategic plan and audits as a driving factor within their marketing. Their art scene has created a cultural mass and a distinctive character within the community, and the thriving Black community hosts ownership of many local businesses. However, under capitalism, the culture and uniqueness of the city are absorbed into a monopoly focused only on economic growth and monetary gain. Debasing the discursive hegemony of capitalocentrism allows for values like the quality of life, authenticity, and uniqueness to drive innovation (ibid). I argue that the Hattiesburg tourism economy is already a diverse entity regardless of the lack of conversation surrounding its commodification. To properly conceive this argument, I must first rely on previous research from scholars in Diverse Economies and gender studies, such as Gibson-Graham, Aitchison, Akuno and Nangwaya, and Langevang et al.; and scholars in tourism like Mosedale and Cave and Dredge. Following that, I will examine documentation on the city and, finally, the spatial layout of the city to answer my research questions.

Research Questions

I seek to start the conversation about the commodification of the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission (HBURG) as an economically and socially diverse entity. More specifically, I will explore the intersection of racialization, women-owned businesses, and tourism within

Hattiesburg. Women-owned businesses (WOBs) have grown exponentially, with an estimated number of 40-48% of United States businesses owned by women (Jurik 2020). In a capitalist, male-dominated economy, women are contriving their own space for entrepreneurship (Orhan 2001). This brings up a range of concerns regarding equity and the gender gap between men-owned businesses and women-owned businesses: Is women's empowerment actually being reached by WOBs in our patriarchal capitalist society? Is the feminized version of capitalism found in WOBs better than the patriarchal capitalism we have currently? And how does racialization intersect with both capitalism and women-owned businesses? Much of the discourse on WOBs is 'color-blind' and fails to acknowledge the difference between white women and women of color in the industry.

To contribute to scholarly and popular discussions of these questions, my research is guided by the following overarching research questions:

- (a) What is the spatial distribution of Black and white residential patterns in the city today, several decades after the end of legal segregation?
- (b) What is the spatial distribution of tourism-related businesses in Hattiesburg today, as the city's economy is increasingly structured around the tourism industry?
- (c) What is the relationship between Black women-owned businesses and white women-owned businesses in relation to the population demographics of the city?

Literature review: Tourism geographies and economic diversity

Tourism cannot be discussed fully without considering the importance of gender (Pritchard and Morgan 2000, Gibson 2001, Aitchison 2005). Tourism is a product of a gendered society; tourism processes are gendered in their development, appearance, consumption, and the way they speak to the male gaze (Pritchard and Morgan 2000, Xu 2018). Heather Gibson (2001, 24) says,

If we are to reach the gender-scholarship stage in tourism research, we need to adopt a feminist perspective to aid our understanding of the experiences of a women traveler; furthermore, work in leisure studies that are grounded in the new cultural geography that incorporates a gender perspective may offer insights into the experiences of the female tourist that have previously been uncharted.

Gibson referred to the shift in the late 1990s-early 2000s when cultural geography became more apparent in the field, and with that, the recognition of space being socially constructed. The field no longer focused solely on materialist analysis and standpoint feminism, and the door to combining poststructural feminism and cultural analysis opened (Aitchison 2005).

The concept of social-cultural nexus coined by Aitchison is a theoretical framework bringing together both standpoint and poststructural feminism to render the connection between the social and cultural and their corresponding material and symbolic depiction of power visible (Aitchison 2005). While standpoint feminism is all about structure as a process, poststructural feminism focuses on challenging and drawing attention to systemic power relations that affect minorities and women. The benefit of combining both these types of feminist theory allows for a more critical view of space. Poststructural feminism alone can be too discursive or semiotic and tends to ignore or downplay the systemic issues focused on in standpoint theory. Aitchison says, "A key question for feminist research in leisure and tourism is, therefore, to enquire as to the extent to which systemic male power (patriarchy) and systemic economic power (capitalism) exist in relation to the production and consumption of leisure and tourism" (Aitchison 2005).

When discussing the systemic economic power of capitalism and gender, we look to the diverse economies perspective coined by Gibson-Graham. In both *A Postcapitalist Politics* (2006) and *The End Of Capitalism (As We Knew It)* (1996), Gibson-Graham calls to dismantle capitalism's understanding by challenging us to defamiliarize ourselves with what we know

about capitalism and instead to analyze it as an economic and social descriptor; Gibson-Graham (1996, 4) said:

It is the way capitalism has been "thought" that has made it so difficult for people to imagine its supersession; it is, therefore, the ways in which capitalism is known that we wish to delegitimize and displace. The process is one of unearthing, bringing to light images and habits of understanding that constitute "hegemonic capitalism" at the intersection of a set of representations.

This, they argue, the first step toward theorizing capitalism without characterizing hegemony as an innate and unavoidable aspect of its being (Gibson-Graham 2006).

A common struggle in the discourse of capitalism, especially the critique, is a socially constructed narrative that the economy, or better yet, the capitalist market economy, is a singular and all-encompassing abstruse body (Mosedale 2011). One of the ways capitalism can be deconstructed is by finding the alternative forms of economy that already exist within. These alternative forms of the economy include corporate social responsibility (CSR), communal ownership and resources, voluntary contributions, and volunteerism, among others. CSRs are influenced by ethical values (Henderson 2007), which involve a dynamic exchange between traditional capitalist interests with its notion of the bottom line and philanthropy.

Social structures most often influence communal ownership and surplus-value distribution (Mosedale 2011). Community welfare projects can be seen as communal as the surplus of labor is dispersed into the broader community through education, conservation, food, housing, and healthcare. Volunteerism, or in this instance, voluntourism, is unpaid labor that is influenced by a sense of self and achievement (Mosedale 2011, McIntosh and Zahra 2007). The concept of voluntourism stems from the idea that tourism can and should bring about positive impacts on the local community; however, there is a lack of research into the notion of power relations in

regards to voluntourism and the impact it has between the volunteers and the organization utilizing their labor (Sin 2009).

Since capitalism is often viewed as the controller, a dominant, hegemonic part of the natural order of developed society (Mosedale 2011, Gibson-Graham 2006, Cave and Dredge 2020), minorities often find themselves held back or displaced. In Jackson, Mississippi, a group called Cooperation Jackson is fighting for Black and other minority voices. Authors Akuno and Nangwaya argue, "A population or people that do not have access to and control over the means and process [of production] cannot be said to possess or exercise self-determination" (Akuno and Nangwaya 2017). Time and again, Black people find themselves marginalized and disinvested in white spaces of oppression (Akuno and Nangwaya 2017, Bledsoe et al. 2019, Hawthorn and Heitz 2018, Wright et al.). Black geographies are centralized around Black space and how the place is perceived, experienced, and shaped within the community (McKittrick 2011, Wright et al.). Hawthorne and Heitz (2018) said, "Generations of Black scholars have persistently carved out spaces within the discipline of geography even when they are not formally offered a 'seat at the table' of dialogue— from Clyde Woods to Katherine McKittrick, from George Lipsitz to Ruth Wilson Gilmore, from Harold Rose to Carolyn Finney (and many, many more)" (151).

Race informs entrepreneurship and ownership of business with white frames and Black counter-frames that rework our understanding of the economy. Wingfield and Taylor (2016) discussed different frames as a way to view the economy. A white frame is the conventional, i.e., capitalocentric, view of the economy, whereas a Black counter-frame includes an intersection of gender to produce a minority-driven understanding of economic functions (Wingfield and Taylor 2016, Romero and Valdez 2016). The intersectional counter-frame works as both a pathway to economic stability and a response to existing inequality. Wingfield and Taylor say,

"Counterframes provide a narrative that undermines the messages, beliefs, and ideologies present in the white racial frame that disparage people of colour and unduly enrich whites" (1703). These counter-frames assist the understanding of diverse economies from an endangered and Black perspective.

The diverse economies approach of alternate economic practice is not new for Black people; it is their way to survive (Bledsoe et al., 2019). Gibson-Graham and the Community Economies Collective do not adequately acknowledge how racial and colonial establishments use control and violence to inhibit the choices and freedoms of particular groups of people (Bledsoe et al., 2019). For Black people, the need to reimagine the traditional capitalistic economic sphere is to survive and transform the conditions of subjectification they suffer (Bledsoe et al., 2019). There is a need to resituate conversations of capitalocentrism to include an understanding of race and colonization, not to marginalize further the Black community (Akuno and Nangwaya 2017, Bledsoe et al. 2019).

Furthermore, to understand Black women and their entrepreneurship and ownership of business, the combination of Black counter-frames and the social-cultural nexus offers a unique opportunity to view the socially and economically diverse experiences of Black women through a theoretical lens. Discussing what they refer to as mix-embeddedness, Langevang et al. (2015) note, "Drawing on this perspective, entrepreneurs and the opportunity structures they act within can be seen as social phenomena embedded in social relations and differing institutional contexts, which operate at a range of scales" (454). The duality of Black women-owned businesses and their intersectionality is a counter-frame in itself, one that finds itself within the diverse economies framework: "Some entrepreneurs also use intersectional counter-frames that emphasize caretaking, social support, and giving back. Specifically, this intersectional

counter-frame promotes the importance of valuing black communities, particularly women and children" (Wingfield and Taylor 2016, 1712). These counter-frames and theories provide us with the means to reexamine what we know, to challenge capitalocentrism and the broad assumption that capitalism is the only way for the economy. This is key to understanding alternative forms of the economy (Turker and Murphy 2021).

Case study background

City of Hattiesburg: Demographics and political economy

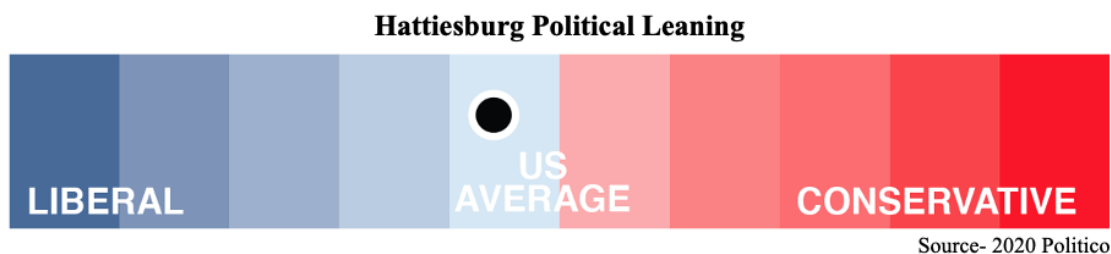
Dubbed "the Hub City," Hattiesburg is a major Mississippi city that connects much of the South (VisitHBURG). Because of Hattiesburg's particular geographical position and booming tourism industry (The ADP) is a leader in the regional economy providing jobs, retail, restaurants, medical, and education for the area. The Tourism Commission considers the town a "creative economy that lends to the diversity and beauty of our destination" (Dorsey 2020) with a large creative influence that shapes the town's economy. This creative economy approach has to do with growing the economy through creative arts (Herrington 2017) in an effort to diversify the city. The approach utilized the Hattiesburg Arts Council to support artists and arts programs throughout the city (The ADP).

Surveyed for the 2019 Visitors Report, Hattiesburg was labeled friendly and fun by most respondents, with its amenities being the driving factor of tourism for the city (Hattiesburg Strategic Plan 2019). The city finds itself one of the top destinations for visitors in Mississippi; tourism is a big market, with over 248 million spent on accommodation and food services in 2012 (VisitHBURG). In retail sales, the city's businesses received over four billion in revenue,

and both major hospitals brought in revenue over one billion (US Census Bureau 2020).

Consumption options also include dining, retail, museums, and bars.

Hattiesburg is a relatively progressive city with a young, millennial Independent mayor whose agenda emphasizes diversity, social responsibility, accountability, quality, authentic customer service, hard work, teamwork, and continuous improvement (City of Hattiesburg). The city council is a semi-diverse entity that does a better-than-average job representing the city's constituents (National League of Cities). The city of Hattiesburg is Liberal-leaning but the county, Forrest, was primarily Republican in every election since 2000 (Politico).



However, the city has shifted more liberal in presidential elections going from 59.69% Republican and 38.2% Democrat in 2000 to 54.62% Republican and 43.45% Democrat in the 2020 presidential election. Hattiesburg's cultural atmosphere is vibrant and young; the median age of residents is 29 for both male and female residents (US Census Bureau 2020).

In terms of race and ethnicity, the percentages of the overall population have changed over the last 20 years. There was a significant increase in the Black resident population in Hattiesburg and a decrease in the white population (World Population Review). In 2000, the Black population was 47.3%, and the white population was 49.9%. Those numbers shifted by 2020, and we now see 54.6% of the population are Black, and 40.4% are white. The Native American population grew very slightly from 0.2% in 2000 to 0.5% in 2020, and the Asian American population shrunk slightly from 1.2% in 2000 to 1.1% in 2020. The Hispanic population saw a small

increase from 1.4% in 2000 to 3.3% in 2020 (US Census Bureau 2020). As for gender, Hattiesburg is generally evenly distributed with a 50.5% female population and 49.5% male population (US Census Bureau 2020).

Between the years 2000 and 2010, the population rose from 44,779 to 45,989 and further grew in 2020 to 48,730 (US Census Bureau 2020). While Hattiesburg has slight growth, Mississippi as a whole suffers from what some call the brain drain (Mississippi Today 2018), with many college-educated residents leaving. In Hattiesburg, 25.39% of the population received a bachelor's degree or higher (US Census Bureau 2020). The high school graduation rate in Hattiesburg is much higher at 68.71% percent of the population receiving a high school diploma in 2020.

Education Percentages in Hattiesburg



Source- American Community Survey

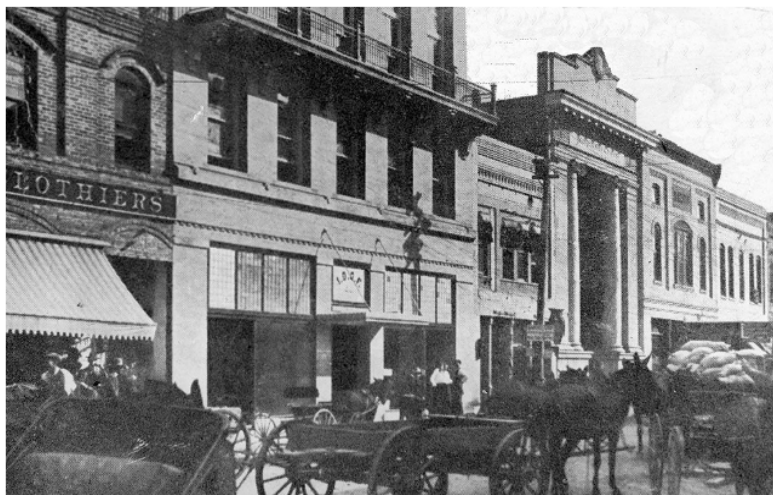
Hattiesburg has a median income of \$36,111 which is below the state average of \$46,511 (US Census Bureau 2020), and the poverty rate in Hattiesburg is higher at 32% compared to the 18.7% percent of the state. About 62% of the population over the age of 16 work within the civilian workforce, with over 50% of the female population also working in the civilian sector. The poverty rate has risen from 28.3% in 2000 to 32% in 2020 (US Census Bureau 2020). The white-collar working sector has stayed relatively the same over the year, with a decrease in the

blue-collar sector by 3.6%, keeping the employment concentrations similar throughout the last two decades.

The homeownership or the owner-occupied housing rate in Hattiesburg has decreased by 6.5%, from 44.6% in 2000 to 38.1% in 2020 (US Census Bureau 2020). That rate of decline is surprising given the increase in median household income between 2000 from \$24,409 to \$36,111 in 2020. The median value of owner-occupied housing was \$66,100 in 2000 and increased by \$44,400 to \$110,500 in 2020.

Historical sketch of Hattiesburg

The town of Hattiesburg was founded in 1882 by Captain William Hardy, named after his wife, Hattie. Living in the town of Meridian, Captain Hardy sought a place to form a railroad line to connect Meridian to New Orleans, LA. As a surveyor, Captain Hardy found the geographical location to be a ripe spot for a train station. Hattiesburg was founded first as a railroad station and was then incorporated into a town two years later. As a regional transit hub, the city connects New Orleans, Meridian, Mobile, the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and the Mississippi State capital, Jackson. In 1908, Hattiesburg became the county seat of the newly minted Forrest County, named after Nathan Bedford Forrest, the first Grand Wizard of the Klu Klux Klan. The land was formerly a part of the Choctaw Nation until 1903,



Source- Jones, Hub City Spokes

when they were removed and sent West. With the railroad and lumber industry booming, Hattiesburg developed into a central city with two colleges – the University of Southern Mississippi and William Carrey University, as well as Camp Shelby, the National Guard Base, and two major hospitals, Forrest General and Merit Health Wesley, and that serves the surrounding 19 counties. Now dubbed "the Hub City," Hattiesburg is a major Mississippi city that connects much of the South.

In Mississippi, race relations are a contentious subject, but in the town of Hattiesburg, race plays a crucial role in the foundation of the city's development. Founded during reconstruction, Hattiesburg was historically segregated, with the Black community creating their own thriving



Source- Wood, WDAM

village, a Black downtown, within the city. Considered "the Beale Street of Hattiesburg" (Wood 2022), Mobile Street was an area of success for Black residents, both male and female of Hattiesburg, and a safe haven from the horrors of

segregation in the city during the Jim Crow-era South. Mobile Street offered Black residents a place to conduct business and grow and thrive when they were ostracized from white society.

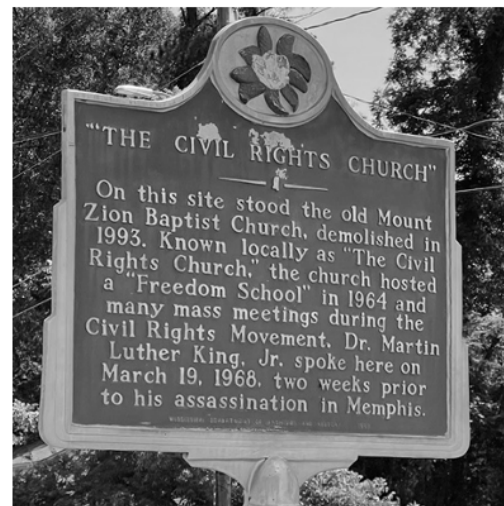
Ashton Pittman of the *Jackson Free Press* said, "during the reign of Jim Crow, [Mobile Street] served as one of Mississippi's most important hubs of black entrepreneurship, professional life, commerce and, later, a crucible of civil-rights activism that would have ramifications across the state and the nation" (Pittman 2019). A crucial part of the civil rights activism was Freedom Summer, in which notable figures, including John Lewis, US House Representative, and Martin

Luther King Jr., descended on the town to provide education and to get Black voters registered and prepped for the polls (HBURGFreedomTrail).

The tight-knit Black community centered on the area around Mobile Street and built a village and community of support. Barbershops, beauty salons, restaurants, clothing stores, churches, the Eureka School – one of the only brick schools for Black students in the state (Hattiesburg Eureka) – and the Freedom House, the home for the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), a key group in the fight for equality, all owned by both Black men and women. This village provided the breeding grounds for the local civil rights movement to gather and build momentum in the fight against white supremacy.

An essential and integral part of Hattiesburg's local civil rights movement was the historically Black churches located throughout Mobile Street. One of those churches, St. Paul Methodist Church, hosted important figures such as Medgar Evers, Clyde Kennard, J.C. Fairley, Peggy Jean Connor, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Vernan Dahmer during NAACP and other local civil rights meetings (Sturkey 2019). Other important sites in the area include the Smith Drug Store, the St. John United Methodist Church, Mount Zion Baptist Church, the Hattiesburg Ministers Union Headquarters, and the Woods Guest House, which was later renamed the Freedom House.

Women in the community came together during Freedom Summer to do both the seen and the unseen work (Shankar 2017) needed to support the cause. Ellie Dahmer cooked, cleaned, and supported the activists in Hattiesburg during 1964, keeping herself primarily behind the scenes



Source- Emily Marye Runnels

where essential work went unnoticed (Crosby 2015). After her husband Vernan was killed by the Klu Klux Klan, Dahmer went on to testify against the KKK members involved and other Officials who tried to silence her (MS Civil Rights Project). Later Dahmer went on to become election commissioner for district two, the predominantly Black census tract. (Shankar 2017). Peggy Jean Conner was a local business owner in Hattiesburg and an important figure in the early inception of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) along with Fanny Lou Hammier (SNCC). These women worked to fight against the segregationists in the political parties of Mississippi to provide representation for all citizens of the State. Like Dahmer, Conner's work went primarily unseen, and little recognition has been given to these women and their contributions to Freedom Summer.

Today, Mobile Street is a desolate and disinvested area with abandoned buildings and bare concrete slabs (Pittman 2019). Few historic Black businesses remain, and fewer buildings are



Source- Emily Marye Runnels

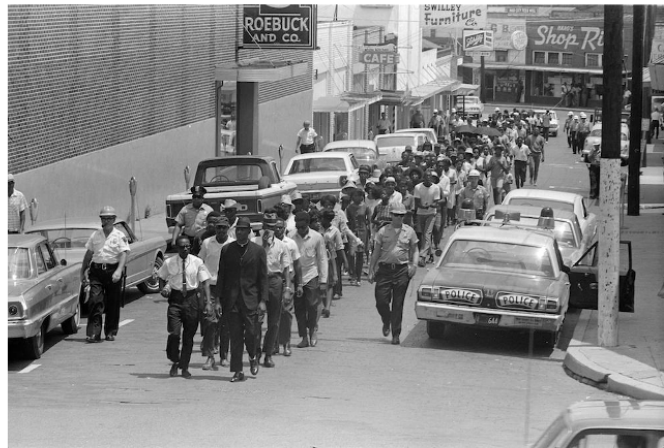
well-maintained broken windows, caved-in roofs, and rotting wood is common, and the once-thriving community center is no more. The Eureka School, closed after desegregation with the public schools in Hattiesburg, is now the Historic Eureka School Museum, a landmark historic site in Hattiesburg.

However, many of the rest of the historic sites have either been burned down, such as the Freedom House, or have been demolished, like the Palmers Crossing Community Center. A few of the churches still remain, such as St. Paul's Methodist, but the businesses that served the Black community during Jim Crow are all but gone. While segregation necessitated Black communities to band

together, their legacy and the legacy of Black Hattiesburg have all but disappeared from the physical world as *de jure* segregation slowly ended.

This brief historical sketch demonstrates that Hattiesburg's social and economic structure has always been diverse in terms of racial difference and the relationships between economic activity and sociality, and the work women have contributed to the desegregation and emancipation of Black folk in the city. Mobile Street is a prime example of Black community engagement through entrepreneurship and business ownership. In the book *Chocolate Cities* (2018), Hunter and Robinson introduce the concept of "the village" as both a location and a space for the mental and physical gathering of resistance and resilience for Black communities living in white supremacist societies. The village is then a way for Black people to be supported and to support each other through their lived experiences (59).

Viewing historical Mobile Street as such a village, we might conclude that its rise and



Source- Kaplan, Mississippi Encyclopedia

fall show us how racial capitalism, the dominant approach to and framing of economic activity in the city, has shaped the economy both then and now with the exclusion and then the dissolution of Black community business space. From a diverse economies perspective, the social economy that existed within the Mobile Street area and provided community resilience in the face of white supremacy and segregation has arguably dispersed throughout the city as Black residents and businesses have dispersed away from their historic center. This raises questions about the spatial

distribution of both Black residents and businesses in the city today, as the city has transitioned away from legal segregation and increasingly structured its economy around tourism.

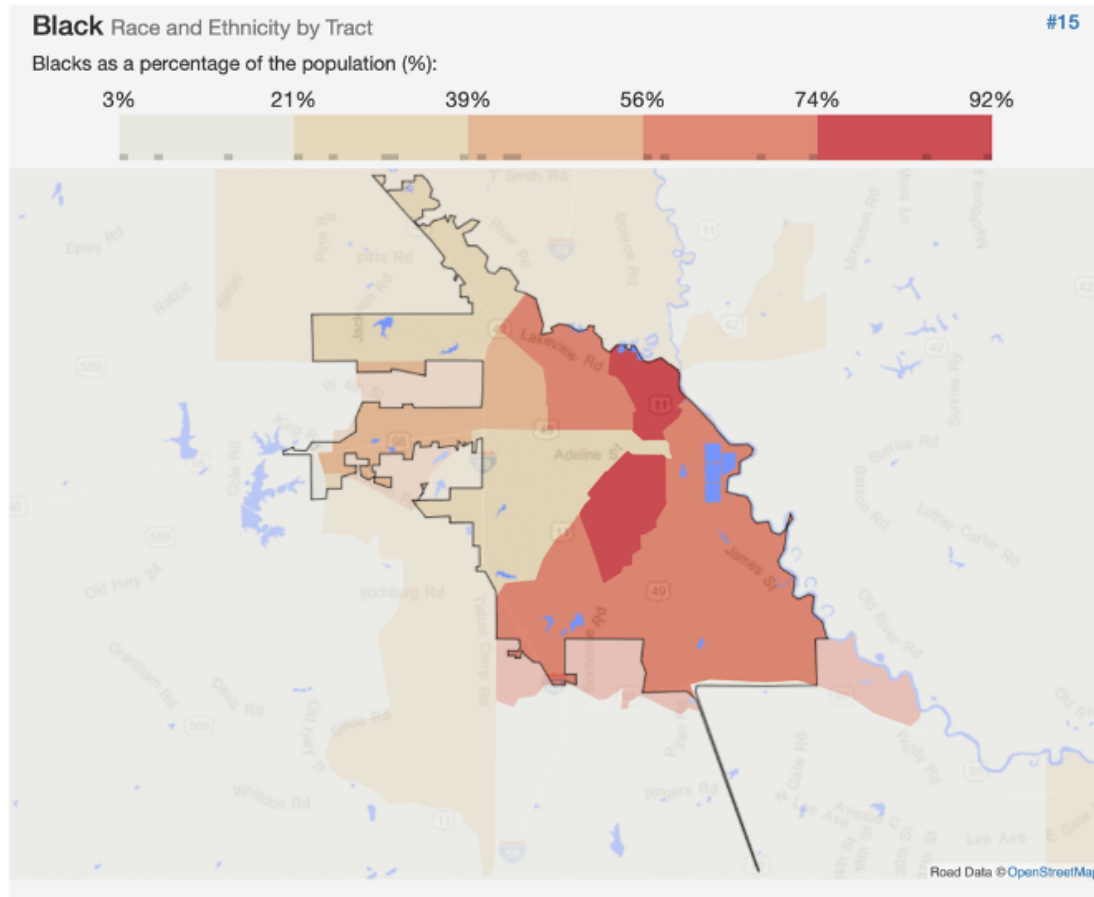
Spatial Analysis

The city of Hattiesburg's makeup has now shifted as the city expanded west and *de jure* segregation ended throughout the country. As the patterns of human behavior (Clarke 2003) are examined in the city now, the spatial layout has changed, and new clusters of business types can be examined. Tourism economy businesses include dining, retail, and experiences such as restaurants, hair salons, boutiques, bars, and nightclubs. In Hattiesburg, women-owned businesses are less than half of the total number of tourism economy businesses, and Black women-owned businesses are less than half of all women-owned businesses. The demographic makeup of the city plays a role in the business makeup of women-owned and Black women-owned businesses. Understanding where businesses are located in relation to the demographic layout of the city will help understand their relationship towards each other and towards the white male patriarchal domination found in conventional capitalism by providing visual context for the examination of alternative forms of economy.

According to the census tract data in Map One, the Black population in Hattiesburg is still similar to the historical makeup of the city but as the population has grown, so has the residential area of residents. The northeast corner, depicting between 74-92% Black population, is the area around the historic Mobile Street, and further south, away from the major areas of commerce, is also a hot spot for Black residents. With over 50% of the population identifying as Black (US Census Bureau 2020), Hattiesburg is considered a Black-majority census tract. Examining both

the Census Tract maps, the white population of Hattiesburg is almost the opposite of the Black demographic layout, with little overlap between the two.

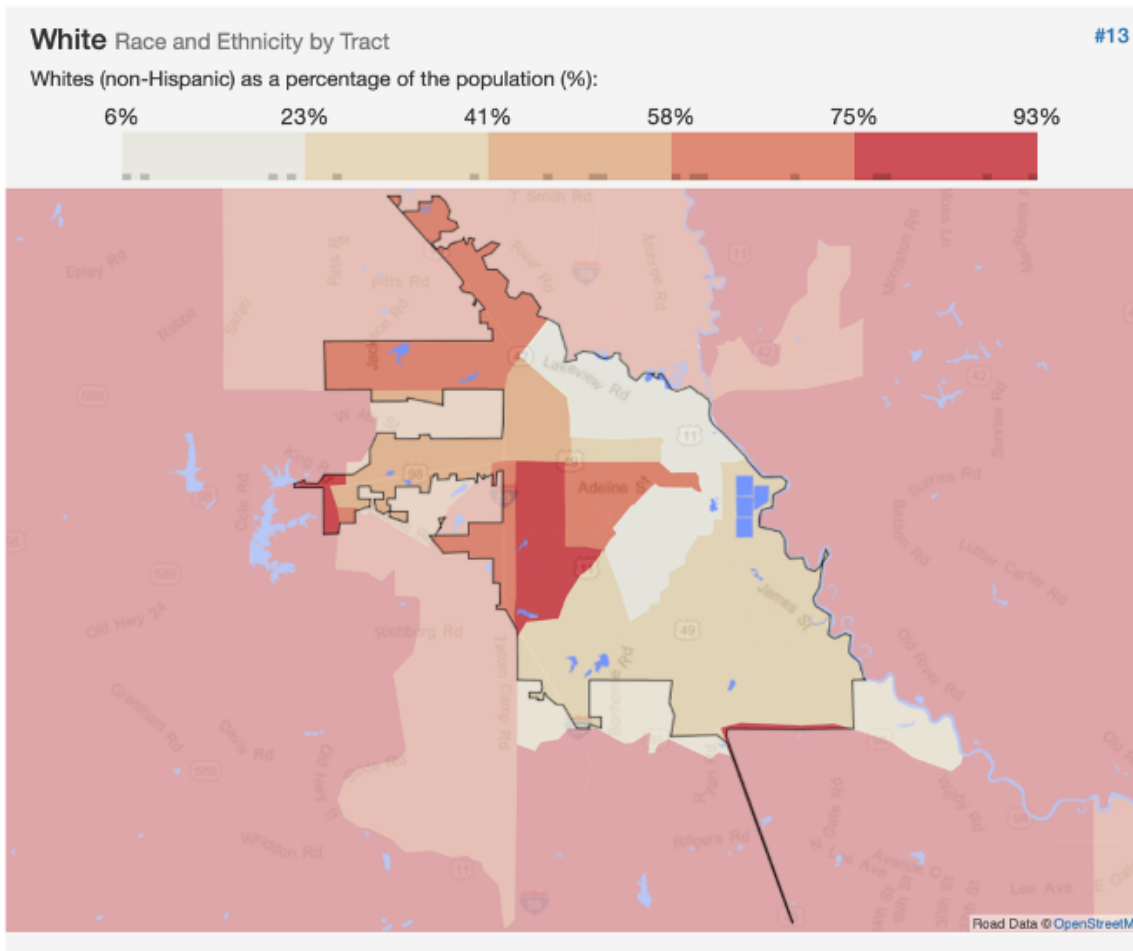
Map One, Census Tract Map of the Black Population in Hattiesburg



Source- U.S. Census Bureau

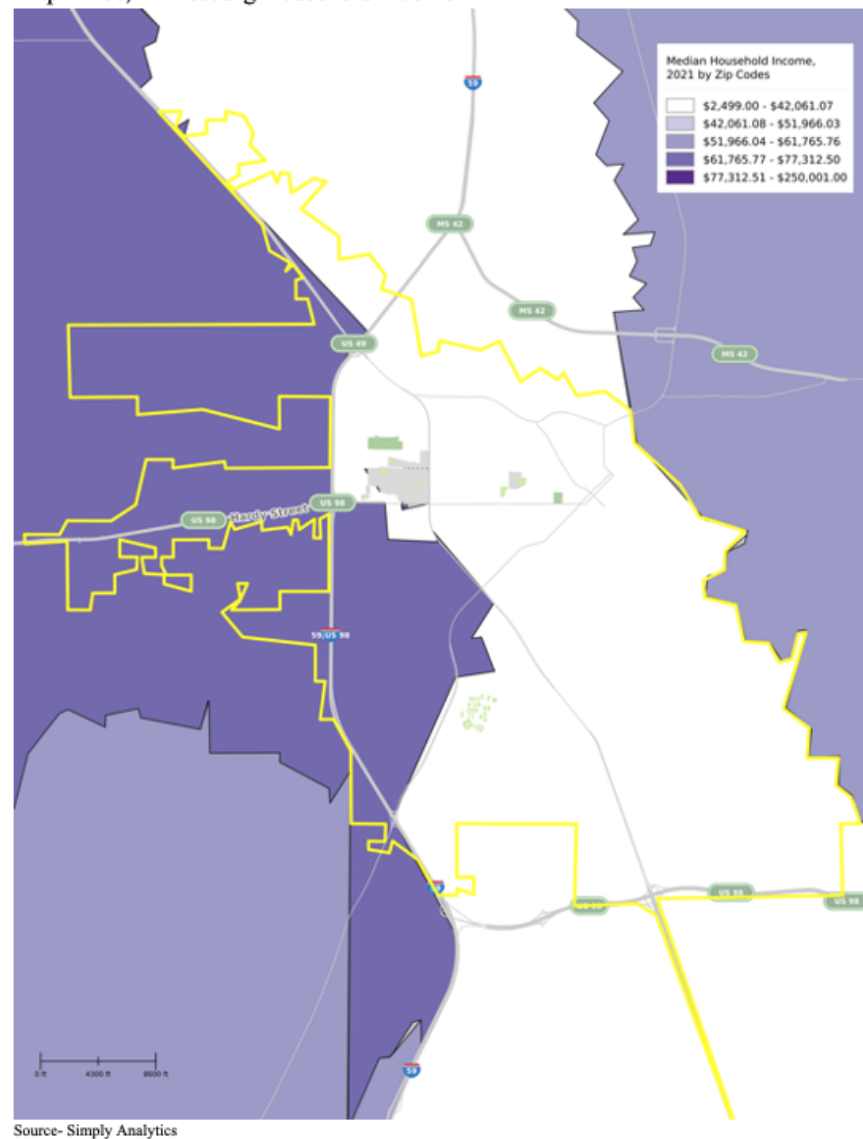
In Map Two, the white population tract's distribution falls along the lines of high commerce and higher concentrations outside of the city limits in the suburbs. While *de jure* segregation ended in Hattiesburg over 50 years ago (Pittman 2019), these two population tracts depict a city that still has some residential segregation in a few areas, with over 70% of one race residing within. In Maps One and Two, the racial population distribution presents a visual-spatial understanding of the city's makeup.

Map Two, Census Tract Map of the White Population in Hattiesburg



Meanwhile, in Map Three, the median household income for the city of Hattiesburg shows a similar pattern of disbursement as the white population tract map in the figures above, implying a positive correlation between wealth and the predominantly white areas of residents. The west side of the city has a median income of \$61-\$77 thousand and an average white population of 41% to some areas that have 75% and higher. As stated in the demographics section above, the median household income for Hattiesburg is \$36,111 (US Census Bureau), which is represented within the white section of Map Three. While these three maps give a general layout of the

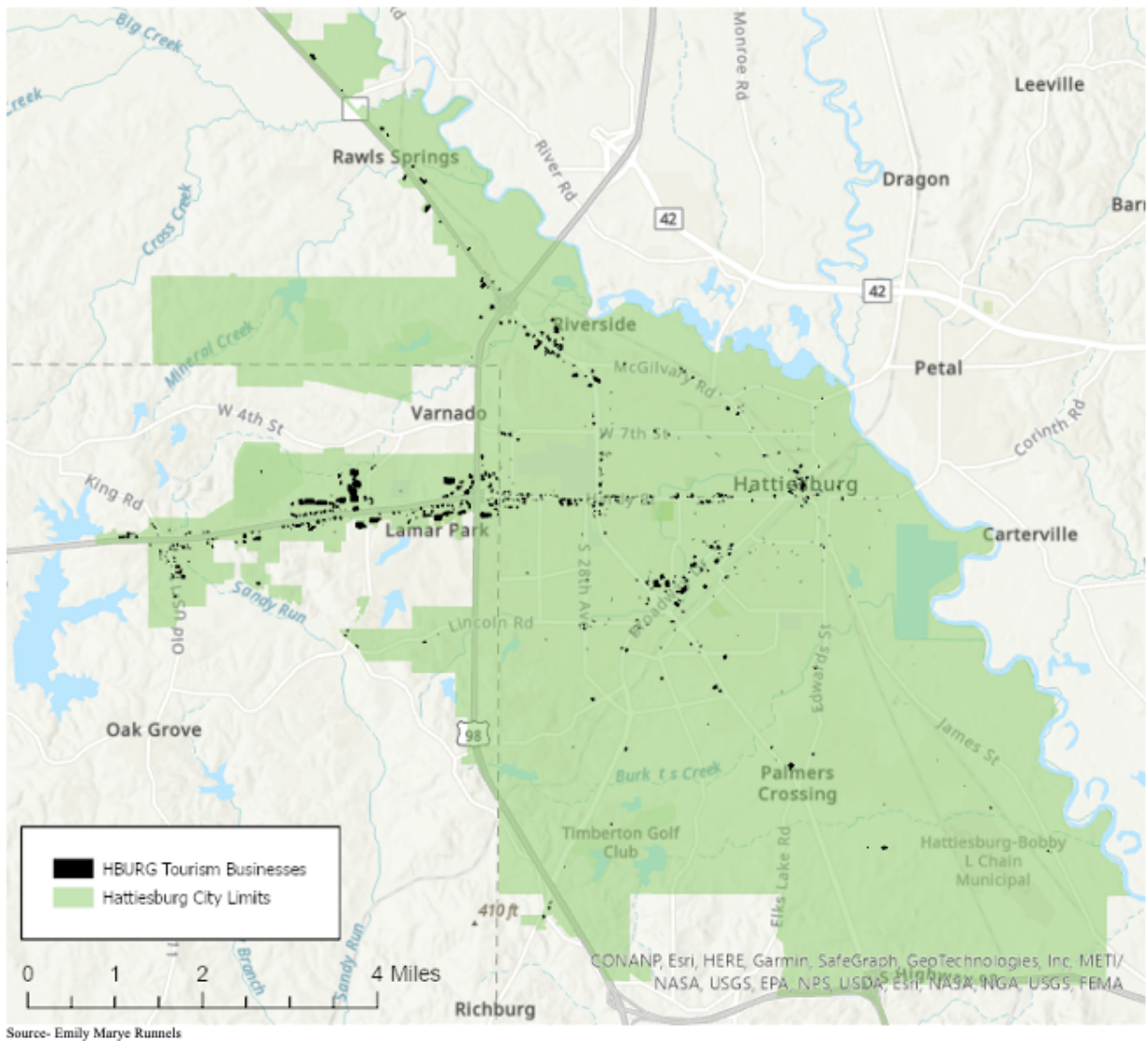
Map Three, Hattiesburg Household Income



spatial demographics of the city, the tourism economy and its businesses can be further explained in Map Four.

The density and distribution in locations of tourism businesses in Hattiesburg are displayed in the map below, Map Four, showing the general layout of tourism economy businesses within the city. The spatial relationship of these businesses primarily follows the main roadways and areas of high traffic and business. Tourism businesses are reliant on and impacted by the natural environment in which they are located (Parson et al., 2016); thus, these businesses are located in

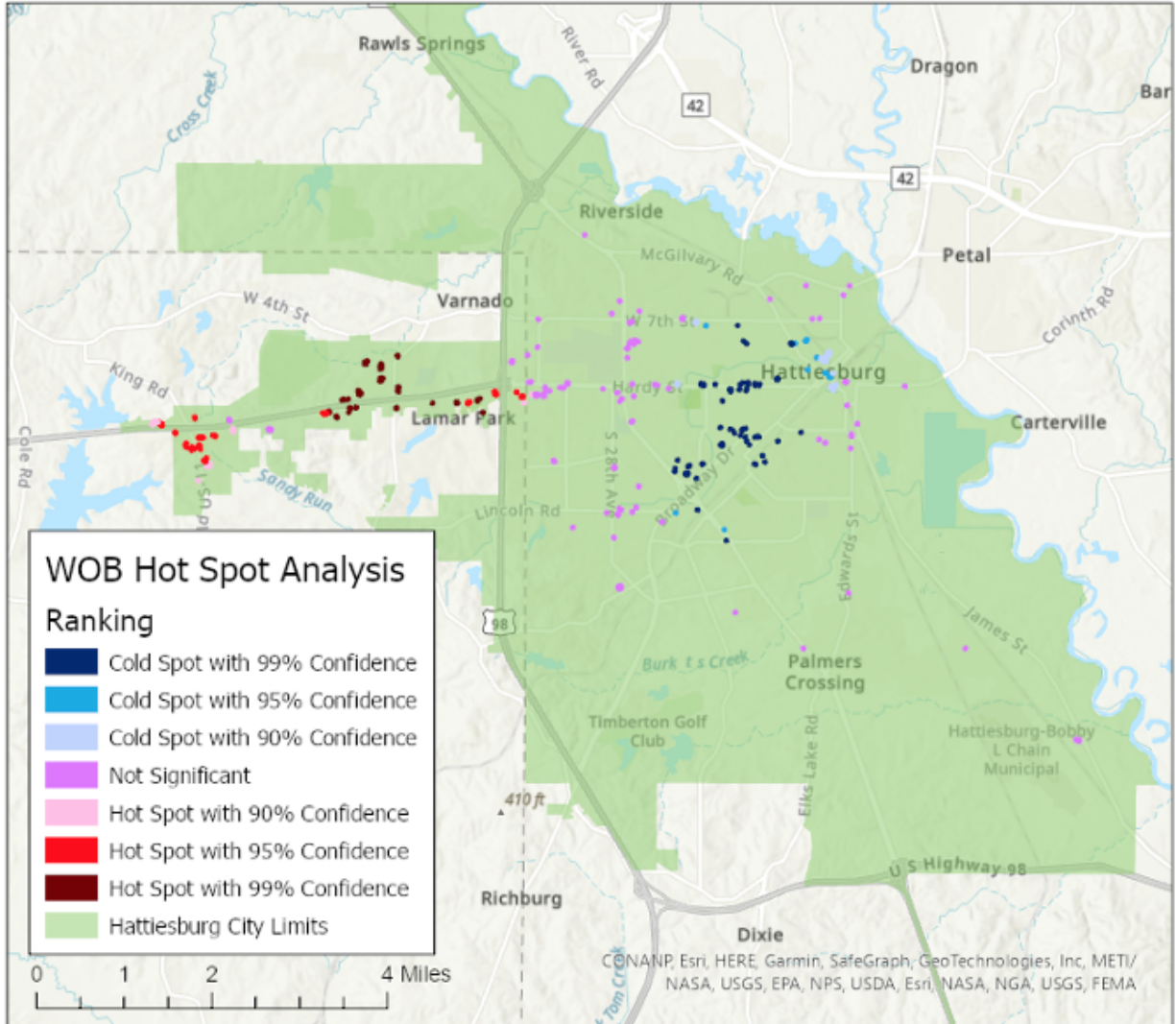
Map Four, Hattiesburg Tourism Businesses



what could be considered optimal zones for conducting business within conventional capitalist economies. The patterns in the spatial layout of these businesses are visibly apparent as well. The relationship between the businesses shows clustering with few outliers here and there, primarily in the south part of the city. When examining both the census tract demographic data in comparison to the spatial layout of the tourism businesses, not much is apparent in terms of how the racialized elements of business practices are affecting and influencing women in their entrepreneurship and ownership of business. But to make visible women-owned businesses as a

way of disrupting hegemony, Map Five represents a point hot spot analysis on the women-owned businesses in Hattiesburg.

Map Five, Women-Owned Business Hot Spot Analysis



To further understand how and where women-owned businesses are clustered, an examination of the statistical significance of their location has been conducted through the Getis-Ord Gi of the spatial statistics of the high values and low values in the clustering. In Map Four, the density of the tourism businesses is shown through the spatial clustering patterns, but in Map Five, the statistical significance of the businesses is shown. Prior to performing the hot spot analysis, a

spatial autocorrelation was performed to determine mathematically if there were significant statistics for clustering. With a Z-score of 10.967871, there is a less than 1% probability that the clustering in Hattiesburg is the result of a random chance. Thus inferring the 99% likelihood of a statistical significance in clustering for women-owned businesses.

The hot spot analysis observes the spatial clustering of z-scores and p-scores within the data set to examine if the high or low values are more pronounced (ArcGIS). The analysis is a greater clustering of locations in comparison to the predicted number within a random distribution of locations. High values correlate with high clustering, with the higher the value, the more intensive the clustering featured in the map. In Map Five, the hot spots are clustered on the West side of town, with the cold spots towards the middle. For the spots to be considered hot, they need to have both high value and neighbors that are high value, a location can be high value, but if its neighbors are not high value, it is not statistically significant. Thus the blue area in the middle appears to be clustered but is not found to be statistically significant.

Discussion

After the dispersion of the Black business district on Mobile Street, the areas of traditional commerce have changed with the expansion of the city and the population shift therein. Examining both Map One and Map Two together, the census tract data illustrates the spatial distribution of demographic data for the white and Black populations of Hattiesburg. When examined in correlation to the historical sketch, there is not much that has changed in terms of the residential patterns post-(*de jure*)segregation. The historically Black Mobile Street area is still predominantly Black; however, based on the percentages in the maps, the majority of the city has integrated to some extent. In comparison to the median income in Map Three, the

disparity in the divide between wealth and color can be seen. While legal desegregation happened over 50 years ago, the population demographics do not perpetuate the concepts of integration or diversity.

In Map Four, the distribution of tourism-related businesses can be analyzed in the spatial layout of the city. The spatial distribution is clustered around the main areas of high traffic, and that tells us how tourism has benefited the economy in prime areas. Retail, restaurants, and attractions drive people from both inside and outside of town, and the prime locations within the high-traffic areas provide advantageous areas for commerce. In the population demographic maps (Map One and Map Two), the white and Black-owned businesses are shown within the context of the tourism economy to display how the racial makeup of the city is affected by tourism businesses. There are businesses spread out and clustered in both the densely packed white and Black areas of Hattiesburg. This shows how the tourism economy is a diverse entity. The spatial distribution of tourism-related businesses in Hattiesburg is one of economic dominance that follows high traffic population zones rather than racialized practices of commerce.

Map Five also shows the distribution of women-owned businesses throughout the population tracts of the city. That relationship is also diffused through both white and Black population tracts. In this case, the WOBs tend to follow closely in line towards areas of higher white population zones, implying that predominantly women-owned businesses tend to serve the white and general population more than the Black population. The number of businesses within the higher median income areas are not significant in relation to the WOB businesses. However, the significance of the clustering is shown to be more prominent in the higher-income areas. That trend suggests the high value and close relationship within the higher income and whiter areas.

Having taken into account the dismantling of the historical center of Black Hattiesburg – Mobile Street – and begun exploring the complex interplay of *de facto* residential segregation and the spatial distribution of women-owned businesses in a racial capitalocentric economy increasingly dominated by tourism, this raises important questions for future research: does the more collectively-oriented economy of historical Mobile Street continue to animate the entrepreneurial activities of Black women business owners in the city? How do Black women business owners view their work vis-a-vis the tourism economy on the one hand and Black community resilience on the other hand? What differences does gender make for Black and white women business owners? These questions exceed the scope of my current research, but this project has laid the groundwork for exploring these questions in the future.

Conclusion

This paper worked to examine the intersection of racialization and women-owned businesses through a case study of the city of Hattiesburg and how race and gender speak to the dominant approach of business practice in the field of tourism. The research questions concerned the examination of the ways white-male-capitalism dominates the representation of the tourism economy and what that means for women-owned and Black women-owned businesses in Hattiesburg. After reviewing the literature on tourism, gender, and critical geographies of race as a background for my research, I further explored literature, news articles, books, and city documents in Hattiesburg to understand and interpret the town and its history with race relations through a background analysis that provided a historical and demographic background of the city.

Further, in the spatial analysis, the questions of how white and Black women-owned businesses' strengths and assets to Hattiesburg's economy and understanding of the spatial distribution of both Black and white residential patterns in the city and tourism-related businesses in Hattiesburg are answered. They are explored through the census tract, income tracts, and hot spot analysis is performed. This analysis is used to better understand women's role and the impact they make on the economy. It is often generalized that businesses are gendered in their development, appearance, consumption, and the way businesses speak to the male gaze (Pritchard and Morgan 2000, Xu 2018), as mentioned in the literature review, and the analysis of the WOBs showed that many of their businesses are indeed gendered in their practice and performance through the function of their purpose (i.e., beauty salons and clothing stores). However, this analysis showed that while gendered practices do shape economies, income and race play a large role in the distribution of businesses throughout Hattiesburg.

This study set out to show the alternative ways communities of color and women are able to thrive under the racial capitalist, patriarchal hegemony, focusing on Black social economy and women's entrepreneurship and business ownership. Such activities, historically and today, arguably contribute towards the creation of an economy that functions by women and people of color. Racialization and gendered practice will continue to exist through economies in Hattiesburg and beyond, but conversations on the diverse commodification of economies like the tourism economy are beneficial to begin conversations surrounding more just economies and the use of non-capitalocentric frames to inform policy and economic practices.

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