

## MONTANA AND TRAVEL GUIDES IN THE AGE OF RACIAL INEQUALITY

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### Aim and methodology of research

The methodology of research involves a combination of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include the archived and digitalized copies of guidebooks, as well as archival materials such as advertisements, letters, and personal accounts from Black travelers. Secondary sources include scholarly articles and books, as well as cultural artifacts such as music, literature, and film. The research on guidebooks for Blacks begun with literature review to identify key works on the topic. Archival materials and other primary sources were also consulted in order to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of Black travelers during the era of segregation.

In preparing the description of hotels operating in the past, and today in Montana, the information contained on the official websites of stated hotels, thematic books and entries of *National Historic Register* have been used. When preparing hotel descriptions, it was decided to limit the selection to those that still exist, the ones that are entered in the register of historical monuments or are of greater importance to local communities. Naturally, not all hotels could be described. The same applies to the descriptions of guides, as well as their editions. When writing the article, editions that were available in archival collections have been utilized.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The author is truly indebted to the following persons: Zoe Ann Stoltz from *Montana Historical Society Research Center*, Kim Murphy Kohn at *Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives*,

The current state of knowledge about the image of Montana in travel guides for African Americans includes a study called *Montana in the Green Book* by Kate Hampton, *Community Preservation Coordinator* at the *Montana Historical Society*. This research however, was narrowed to presenting a list of hotels included in various editions of the *Green Book* in Montana. Furthermore, the results of the study were also published in the form of a digital map. In preparing the article, extensive collection of digitally archived editions of various guides, such as *Green Book*, *Travelguide*, etc., provided by the *Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture* at the *New York Public Library* has been used. Additionally, the archives of the *African American Travel Guide Survey Project* at the *Texas Historical Commission* as well as digital collection of travel guides stored in *Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture* have been consulted. *Automobile Blue Books* were consulted at *HathiTrust Digital Library* of *HathiTrust Research Center*. Editions of the *Automobile Blue Book*, were part of the exhibition titled *Behind the Wheel* at the *Connecticut Historical Society*.

In the last part of the article, selected hotels were discussed. Annex includes also listings of Montana towns in accessible editions of *Green Book* guides.

### Historical background

The creation of Montana and its development as a state was made possible by the *Louisiana Purchase* of 828000 square miles from France (3 cents an acre) in 1803.<sup>2</sup> As a result the size of the country almost doubled. The discovery of gold in *Grasshopper Creek* in the southwestern part of the state in 1862 undoubtedly contributed to the settlement of Montana. A few years later, even richer deposits were found. Mining settlements began to emerge in Bannack, Diamond City, Virginia City and many other places.<sup>3</sup> *Oro y Plata* became the state's motto, and Montana began to be referred to as the *Treasure State*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> C.C. Spence, *Montana. A History*, W.W.Norton&Company, New York 1978, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> C.C. Spence, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> I. Kostecka, W. Kostecki, *50+1 Kalejdoskop stanów Ameryki*, Linia, Warszawa 1991, p. 68-69.

Government legislation also contributed to the settlement of the state. In 1862, The Congress passed the first *Homestead Act*. This allowed immigrants as well as American citizens to apply for 160 acres of land offered by the government. Following approval of The Congress, president Lincoln signed into law the bill creating *Montana Territory* on May 26, 1864.<sup>5</sup> Montana joined the Union and was officially chartered as the 41st state in 1889. In the years 1880-1883, the state border was crossed by a railway line, which contributed to the development of settlement and, in the future, also tourism. Since 1891, the *Great Northern Railway* encouraged tourists to travel to Montana. To obtain full title to the land, they had to fulfill certain obligations related to land ownership — build a house and stay on the land for five years. The uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources and the development of industry became an increasingly real threat to the natural environment, the beauty of which was appreciated by travelers and conquerors of the Wild West.

In 1910, under the influence of the *Boone and Crockett Club*, and personal support of Louis W. Hill, president of the *Great Northern*, a bill was introduced into the U.S. Congress which created the Glacier National Park in the region. This bill was signed into law by President William Howard Taft in 1910. Louis Hill believed that the newly created park would become a tourist attraction that would be eagerly visited by Americans. Shortly after the creation of the park, the *Great Northern Railway* began building hotels for more affluent tourists. However, not all tourists were able to visit the park due to the applicable racial segregation in accommodation places, as well as frequent cases of racial violence. To avoid dangerous places, guides were created for Black travelers. One of them was *Green Book*. It is interesting that some places in Montana, including Glacier National Park, were not included in first editions of the *Green Book*. None of the hotels located in the park — *Many Glacier* opened in 1915, *Lake McDonald Lodge* opened in 1914, or *Glacier Park Lodge* opened in 1913 — were not listed in *Green Book* guides until 1956, when racial segregation in hotels was prohibited by law in the state of Montana.

It was not until the late 1950s that towns like Billings, Butte, Helena, Livingston, Missoula, Great Falls, and East Glacier were included in African American guidebooks. In many of the above-mentioned locations,

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<sup>5</sup> M. Malone, ed., *Montana. A history of Two Centuries*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 1991, p. 96.

the *Ku Klux Klan* was active since the 1920s, and in the case of Montana, it considered Catholics, African Americans and Asians its enemies. In 1968, United States Congress passed the *Fair Housing Act*, banning discrimination in housing, and the Supreme Court ruled in *Jones v. Mayer* that housing discrimination was unconstitutional.

## Introduction

In order to fully understand why guidebooks were published and what their social function was, it is necessary to understand the social realities of the time.

After the end of the Civil War, despite the undoubted success of abolishing slavery and the gradual incorporation of the Negro community into American society, many US states introduced laws aimed at limiting the freedoms of African Americans. Although the *Civil Rights Act of 1866* was meant to extend equal protection of the law to all citizens, *Jim Crow* laws perpetuated the oppression of Black citizens. They took the form of local laws, the so-called Black codes, supported by local authorities and enforced by often radical social and political organizations. One of them was the infamous *Ku Klux Klan*.

The humiliation of African Americans was sanctioned by law with the Supreme Court ruling in 1896 in the case *Plessy vs. Ferguson*. Racial segregation in public places was vowed to be legal. Allowed by law it assumed equal but separate access to places such as hotels, laundries, hairdressers, etc. However, this did not mean that the services offered to African Americans were of the same quality as for the whites.

Traveling in the pioneering times of motoring at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries was difficult due to the insufficient number of roads and lack of appropriate signs. However, tourists wanted to explore the country. The development of tourism was initially driven by railway companies and the construction of railway lines, and over time by the development of road transport with the emerging road connections between cities. The development of tourism was spurred by the creation of tourist attractions such as national parks. The demand for tourism created a need for more reliable automobiles and an increasingly denser road network.

Horatio Nelson Jackson was the first driver who completed the first trans-continental journey in 1903 by automobile from San Francisco to New York, in golden times of railroads. Automobile travel was then still in its infancy. The journey lasted sixty three days mainly due to poor condition and scarcity

of roads. Another major problem was navigation. Jackson relied on knowledge of compass and directions given by people.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the often illusory guarantee of inalienable rights to African Americans, such as the right to travel with a sense of security, these citizens could not always and everywhere fully enjoy these rights. To enjoy the opportunity to travel and explore the beauty of their country, African Americans often had to resort to using various publications, such as travel guides containing lists of hotels and other places serving African Americans. Knowledge of their content could in some way guarantee a successful holiday, without humiliation. Thanks to the guides, Black motorists could avoid staying in towns where various forms of racial exclusion were applied. Such places were called “sundown towns.” James Loewen argues that there were probably such cities in Montana as well.<sup>7</sup>

#### Travel guides

Back during the modern Jim Crow era, African Americans endured discriminatory hazards while traveling around the country. To circumnavigate these unwelcome situations, they used various travel guides to locate where they could purchase gas, get a haircut, buy a meal, sleep for the night, or enjoy some entertainment. These travel guides were published from the early 1930s up to the late 1960s and provided information that would keep the African American traveler “from running into difficulties, embarrassments and to make his trips more enjoyable.”<sup>8</sup>

#### *Hackley and Harrison's Hotel and Apartment Guide for Colored Travelers*

The inaugural travel guide for Black individuals, titled *Hackley and Harrison's Hotel and Apartment Guide for Colored Travelers*, was released in 1930. This guide was the collaborative effort of Edwin Henry Hackley, an African American lawyer and writer, and Sarah D. Harrison, a secretary at the *New London Negro Welfare Council* in Connecticut. In 1929, Harrison recognized

<sup>6</sup> Bauer, J.T., “The Official Automobile Blue Book, 1901-1929: Precursor to the American Road Map,” *Cartographic Perspectives* 2009 (62), p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> J. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism*, New Press, New York 2005, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> “African-American Travel Guide Survey Project,” Texas Historical Commission, accessed 23 II 2023, <https://www.thc.texas.gov/content/african-american-travel-guide-survey-project>

the necessity for safe travel accommodations for the increasing number of African Americans journeying by car. She conducted extensive research on over 300 cities across the United States and Canada. Harrison hailed from a distinguished family in Philadelphia; her grandfather was Bishop Benjamin Tucker Tanner, and her mother, Halle Tanner Johnson, was the first woman and the first woman of color to be licensed as a physician in Alabama. Edwin Henry Hackley, a notable journalist and lawyer from Philadelphia, provided financial support for the project and was a strong advocate for civil rights and the advancement of African Americans.<sup>9</sup> His life story, *A Biography of Edwin Henry Hackley 1859-1940: African American Attorney and Activist*, was published in 2003.

The first edition by Hackley and Harrison was created shortly after W.E. B. Du Bois contacted Harrison to request safe lodging for his trip to New London. This letter is preserved in the 1930 edition. The guide encompassed listings of hotels and motels in three hundred cities across the United States and Canada. Sadly, Hackley passed away soon after the guide's publication. Due to a lack of additional funding, only two editions were released, in 1930 and 1931. Other Black travel guides from that time include *Smith's Tourist Guide*, which commenced in 1940, the *Go Guide to Pleasant Motoring* (1952-1959), and *Travelguide* (1947-1963).

#### *Travelguide*

Another travel guide was created by William H. "Billy" Butler, who was a traveling musician during the 1930s and 40s. He founded *Travelguide* in 1946. It focused on the new upwardly mobile Black community. The covers often included beautiful women (mostly lighter skinned) who were either celebrities or models and always posing in a very expensive car. The cover models almost always carried with them one of the strongest symbols of affluence — golf clubs. The motto of *Travelguide* was, "vacation & recreation without humiliation."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> "Nostalgia: Black," accessed 23 II 2023, <https://twitter.com/nostalgiablkl/status/1488926303797616641>

<sup>10</sup> "Travelguide 1947," Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division, The New York Public Library, accessed 13 II 2023, <https://libguides.nypl.org/c.php?g=655303&p=7164024>, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/6a055d00-7431-0137-841d-39eef981cbfa>

*Go, Guide to Pleasant Motoring*

First published in 1952 by *Andrew F. Jackson & Associates*, this guide was designed similarly to *Travelguide*, appealing to the Black elite with cover visuals of stylish Black couples driving luxury cars on scenic routes. It began as a compact guide divided by regions, but eventually expanded into a full-sized publication that provided recommendations for tourist sites and hotels. Many ads for restaurants, entertainment venues, or lodging featured images of the owners or managers to emphasize their Black ownership or management.<sup>11</sup>

*Afro-American's Travel Guide*

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Afro-American newspapers published an annual travel guide called *The Afro-American's Travel Guide (Afro Travel Guide)*, which was first introduced in 1939 by the *Afro-American Company*, the publisher of the *Baltimore Afro-American*. This guide, akin to the *Green Book* and other similar resources from the segregation period, listed hotels, restaurants, and other venues that were hospitable to African American patrons. It also operated a travel bureau through its newspaper column, enabling readers to request advice, directions, tailored road maps, and reservation information.<sup>12</sup> The promotion of tourist destinations and entertainment was quite limited. Designed with practicality in mind, the guide included a pocket for maps, timetables, and identification, as well as budgeting charts for trips. Archival copies of *The Afro-American's Travel Guide* are accessible in the *Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division*, with some items also part of the collection at the *Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture*.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> "Go, guide to pleasant motoring," Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division, The New York Public Library, accessed 23 II 2023, <https://libguides.nypl.org/c.php?g=655303&p=7165078>, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/9a7d4be0-7e4c-0137-fed1-0538bac30339>

<sup>12</sup> "AFRO Travel Guide Digital Collection," Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture, accessed 13 II 2023, <https://nmaahc.si.edu/>

<sup>13</sup> "Afro-American's Travel Guide," Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division, The New York Public Library, accessed 23 II 2023, <https://libguides.nypl.org/c.php?g=655303&p=7165543>

*The Black American Travel Guide (1971)*

Most of the African American travel guides ceased publication in the late 1950s and early 1960s. However, in the 1970s it was still believed that there should be a travel guide specifically for African Americans. Bob Hayes, an activist, founded his own travel company serving the Black community called *The Other Brothers*. He published *The Black American Travel Guide* in 1971, stating that the guide, “provides important historical & political background, the social & cultural climate of each city [and] the life & location of every Black community.” Archival copies of this guide can be accessed in the *Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division*.<sup>14</sup>

*Other guides*

In addition to the previously mentioned guides, there were several other minor publications. One notable example is *Grayson's Travel and Business Guide*, which was launched in 1937 and referred to itself in its subtitle as “A National Directory of Hotels, Cafes, Resorts and Motels, Where Civil Rights Are Extended to All.” A few years later, the Roosevelt administration released its own guide, the *Directory of Negro Hotels and Guest Houses in the United States*, published by the Department of the Interior in 1941. This guide was introduced during the tenure of Harold Ickes, a prominent advocate for various African American initiatives and anti-segregation efforts, who served as Secretary of the Interior. The booklet aimed to provide a trustworthy resource for Black travelers across the United States. The preface stated that the *Travel Bureau* sought to enhance the “nation’s physical, economic, and social welfare by encouraging more Americans to travel in their own country.”<sup>15</sup> The timing of its publication coincided with the war effort, as many Black soldiers and workers faced ongoing relocation needs. This guide included over 250 listings, ranging from large hotels to individual home accommodations.

<sup>14</sup> “The Black American Travel Guide (1971),” Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division, The New York Public Library, accessed 23 II 2023, <https://libguides.nypl.org/c.php?g=655303&p=7165705>

<sup>15</sup> “A “Reliable Source” for the Assurance of Adequate Accommodations,” Library of Congress Blogs, Library Of Congress, Washington 08 II 2018, accessed 28 VIII 2024, [https://blogs.loc.gov/inside\\_adams/2018/02/a-reliable-source-for-the-assurance-of-adequate-accommodations/](https://blogs.loc.gov/inside_adams/2018/02/a-reliable-source-for-the-assurance-of-adequate-accommodations/)



All those guides were a blessing to the Black community, but none was in print as long or had the reach and readership of the *Green Book*.<sup>16</sup> None also matched the circulation and readership of the *Green Book* nor its time span of operation.<sup>17</sup> *Green Book* was even dubbed the “bible of Black travel.”<sup>18</sup> Its annual circulation reached 2,000,000 copies in 1962.<sup>19</sup> Understanding the history of the *Green Book* is essential, as it stands out as the most widely used guide for Black motorists.

### *The Green Book*

It was a travel guide published in several series between 1936 and 1964 by Victor H. Green and his wife Alma D. Green. In 1947, Green formally established *Victor H. Green & Company*, where he and his wife not only published *The Green Book*, but also booked advance reservations for Black vacationers at resorts and hotels.<sup>20</sup> It provided African American motorists and tourists with information about safe places to eat, sleep, tour, have fun, go to the restroom, and get gas during the era of segregation. The establishment of safe spaces for recreation and leisure by and for Black people was a show of resistance and also a site of power.<sup>21</sup> Michael Ra-Shon Hall interprets *The Negro Motorist Green Book* series as a postcolonial record of power and disenfranchisement.<sup>22</sup> Without a doubt, the *Negro Motorist Green Book* fostered pride and created a physical network of safe spaces within the Black community.<sup>23</sup> However, one of the key issues was that the *Green Book* was little known

<sup>16</sup> C. Taylor, *Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America*, Abrams Press, New York 2020, p. 68-69.

<sup>17</sup> A.T. Jackson, *Heritage, Tourism and Race. The Other Side of Leisure*, Routledge, New York 2020, p. 13.

<sup>18</sup> J. Wallenfeldt, “The Green Book Guide,” Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed 23 II 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Green-Book-travel-guide>

<sup>19</sup> M.K. Monahan, “The Green Book: Safely Navigating Jim Crow America,” “Green Bag” 2016 Vol. 20, no. 1, p. 46

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> A.T. Jackson, op. cit., p. 1

<sup>22</sup> A.T. Jackson, op. cit., p. 5

<sup>23</sup> S. Klassen, et al., “More than a Modern Day Green Book: Exploring the Online Community of Black Twitter,” Proceedings of ACM Conference on Computer-Supportive Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW), Article 458, accessed 23 II 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3479602>

outside the African American community.<sup>24</sup> One traveler noted in his personal memoir that “*The Green Book* was the bible of every Negro traveler in the 1950s and early 1960s. You literally didn’t dare leave home without it.”<sup>25</sup> *Green Book* acted as a site of resistance, of community, and as a gateway to joy and leisure. This dynamic of exclusion and resistance is epitomized by the circulation of the guide. Over time, the *Green Book* came to cover the North, East, South, and West of the United States along with international destinations such as Canada, the Caribbean, Latin America, Europe, and Africa.<sup>26</sup>

When discussing the significance of the *Green Book*, it is essential to acknowledge its creator, Victor Green. A Manhattan resident recalled him as “a very tall man, impeccably well dressed. He was wearing a suit, a tie, and a hat.”<sup>27</sup> In the early 1930s, it is probable that Victor Green utilized various strategies while transporting his wife, Alma, from Harlem to her hometown of Richmond, Virginia. During this period, Green also managed the career of his brother-in-law, Robert Duke, a talented musician who resided with the Greens and provided music lessons in their home. Victor Green likely heard numerous distressing accounts from Duke regarding the challenges faced by him and his fellow musicians in finding safe lodging while on tour. These experiences may have motivated Green to create his guide. Additionally, it is said that the inspiration for a Black travel guide came to Green while observing a Jewish friend use a kosher guide for vacations in the *Borscht Belt*, located in New York State’s Catskill Mountains.

Despite the considerable effort and time-consuming tasks involved in producing the *Green Book* editions, Victor Green maintained his full-time position as a letter carrier for the *U.S. Postal Service*, commuting from Harlem to Hackensack, New Jersey, five days a week. He retained this job due to its reliability and stability. Throughout his career, he was affiliated with the *National Association of Letter Carriers*, a predominantly white union, although there existed a Black postal union known as the *National Alliance of Letter Carriers*;

<sup>24</sup> J. Freedom du Lac, “Guidebook that aided Black travelers during segregation reveals vastly different D.C.,” “The Washington Post”, 2010, September 12, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/11/AR2010091105358.html>

<sup>25</sup> M.K. Monahan, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>26</sup> S. Klassen, et al., op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> C. Taylor, *Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America*, Abrams Press, New York 2020, p. 63.

nonetheless, Victor chose to join the former.<sup>28</sup> After completing his daily duties, Green dedicated his evenings and weekends to developing his guide. Competing with at least six other Black travel guides available during the *Green Book's* circulation, he had to exert significant effort to distinguish his work.<sup>29</sup> Given that the initial *Green Books* were priced at just a quarter, it is evident that this endeavor was not financially lucrative for Victor Green. In fact, in 1940, he reported an income of \$2,100, which was typical for a letter carrier at that time.<sup>30</sup> Following his retirement from the post office in 1952, Green devoted himself entirely to the guide until his passing in 1960.<sup>31</sup>

Victor Green created his guide in this era of optimism, and the first two editions were centered on New York City's Harlem, where he and Alma lived.<sup>32</sup> During this period, due to the increased availability of automobiles, disposable income, and interstate highways, the United States experienced a surge in independent leisure travel and vacationing. Suddenly, the dream of adventure became a possibility for many Americans.

At the end of World War I, the advent of mass automobile production appeared to grant Black Americans access to dignity, privacy, and self-determination. Green was a staunch advocate for the influence of Black-owned businesses, especially in the field of Black advertising. The *Green Book* recognized the increasing significance of African Americans as a consumer market. Candacy Taylor points out that the need to avoid the discomfort and psychological burden of segregated travel drove many Black Americans to strive for car ownership, with the *Green Book* acting as an essential guide for those fortunate enough to possess a vehicle.<sup>33</sup>

In reality, the concept of the "open road" for Black motorists was one that was closely monitored and controlled by Jim Crow laws.<sup>34</sup> For many Black Americans, travel was not a leisurely escape, but a persistent reminder of the injustices, oppression, and discrimination they faced. They were unable to traverse the country without the looming threat of prejudice, which

<sup>28</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>31</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 88.

<sup>32</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>33</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>34</sup> M.K. Monahan, op. cit., p. 43.

hindered their ability to fully experience the “mobile citizenship” that white motorists enjoyed.<sup>35</sup> Importantly, *The Negro Motorist Green Book* was promoted as a resource to address the segregation challenges encountered by African American travelers. They had to be prepared for inconveniences and even dangers that white motorists typically did not face. Many Black motorists transformed their vehicles into mobile homes, equipped with food, sleeping bags, maps, spare car parts, and portable toilets.<sup>36</sup> Even when a Black-friendly motel or tourist home was listed, there was no assurance of available accommodations, and reservations were often impossible since most listings lacked phone numbers.<sup>37</sup> The tone of the *Green Book* was never aggressive, and it did not address the severe risks of being stranded or denied service.<sup>38</sup>

A primary concern for Black motorists was the threat of being stranded in *sundown towns*—exclusive white neighborhoods that forbade Black individuals from entering after nightfall. Loewen explains that sundown towns were predominantly a Northern development, beginning around 1890 and extending into the 1960s.<sup>39</sup> Many of those towns explicitly signaled their unwelcome stance towards Black people through prominent visual indicators.

Recreational spaces are markers of culture and who is considered “cultured” as well as indicators of social and institutional norms and hierarchies. They are also markers of citizenship status. Paying particular attention to these markers in the U.S. during the period of legalized racial segregation underscores why travel guides such as the *Green Book* came to offer a treasure trove of knowledge about African American travel, leisure and recreational agency.<sup>40</sup> The *Green Book* is an archived record of places that were open to and welcoming of Black travelers. It provides documented insight into African American travel and leisure pursuits over a period of nearly thirty years. The *Green Book* sheds light on the places and ways African Americans traveled in spite of laws aimed at denying them access to leisure spaces and limiting their freedom of movement.<sup>41</sup> By the mid-1950s, *The Green Book* stopped using the word

<sup>35</sup> M.K. Monahan, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>36</sup> M.K. Monahan, op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>37</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>40</sup> A.T. Jackson, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

«discrimination». During the backlash against *Brown v. Board of Education*, it dropped the *Negro* from its title and was almost as coy about the book's reason for existing as it had been in the 1930s.

In the 1940s, *Esso* was recognized as one of the largest corporations in the world and stood out as a progressive leader in the treatment of Black individuals. The company distributed *Green Books* at its service stations nationwide, but its efforts went beyond this initiative. *Esso* provided opportunities for Black men to own gas station franchises during a period when many stations would not sell them fuel.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, *Esso* employed Black workers in various capacities, including chemists, pipeline workers, seamen, and mailroom clerks. By the early 1940s, 312 of the 830 *Esso* dealers were Black-owned, more than 2,000 Black men were engaged in kerosene distribution for *Esso*, and over 800 Black employees were set to receive pensions from the company.<sup>43</sup> Thanks to the marketing efforts of *Esso Standard Oil Company*, the *Green Book* achieved a circulation of two million copies by 1962.<sup>44</sup>

Although *Green* intended to publish the guide each year, its release was interrupted by the Second World War. The publication resumed in 1947, with the last edition appearing in 1966/67. The covers of the *Green Book* reflect the historical context of their release, indicating the guide's growing budget and the sophistication of its messaging. In terms of pricing, the *Green Book's* cost evolved from 25 cents for the first edition to 75 cents in 1947, one dollar in 1950, and \$1.95 by the 1960s.<sup>45</sup> Beginning with the 1960 edition, the term "Negro" was eliminated from the title. This change from *The Negro Travelers' Green Book* to *The Travelers' Green Book* mirrors the cultural and political shifts of the era and the guide's expanding influence.<sup>46</sup> Even after the enactment of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, which allowed public accommodations for all races, the *Green Book* continued to serve as a testament to the ongoing need to challenge Jim Crow cultural norms and prejudices.

*The Green Book* was not just a travel guide, but also a cultural artifact that reflected the struggles and resilience of African Americans during a challenging

<sup>42</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 76.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> A.T. Jackson, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>45</sup> A.T. Jackson, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>46</sup> A.T. Jackson, op. cit., p. 16.

time in American history. It highlighted the importance of community and solidarity, as well as the ongoing fight for civil rights and equality.

Today, the *Green Book* is a reminder of a painful chapter in American history, but it is also a testament to the resilience and determination of the Black community in the face of adversity. It is a reminder that even in the darkest of times, people can come together to create solutions and build a better future.

A revival of interest in the *Green Book* is currently underway. Various archival initiatives, cultural narratives, and reinterpretations highlight the significance of the *Green Book* as a representation and instrument of African American empowerment, entrepreneurial drive, and identity expression. The *Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture*, part of the *New York Public Library*, has made digitized versions of all editions available for free access, along with a research guide and blog posts related to the *Green Book*. In addition to the collections at NYPL, the *Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture* holds a copy of the 1941 edition. Furthermore, the *Mapping the Green Book* project explores themes of race, architecture, and landscape in the post-World War II era, aiming to chart locations featured in both the *Green Book* and *Travelguide*.<sup>47</sup> Notably, the guide has once again become a focal point of academic discussion following the release of the film *Green Book* in 2018.

#### *The Blue Book*

In examining the function of guides for drivers, it is essential to acknowledge the publications designed for affluent, white, middle-class individuals. Among the earliest of these guides was the *Official Automobile Blue Book*, which aimed to assist travelers in accessing cities and tourist destinations. The inaugural edition of the *Official Automobile Blue Book* was released by Charles Howard Gillette in 1901.<sup>48</sup> This publication offered motorists essential touring directions, information on service stations and hotels, insights into state road regulations, travel preparation tips, and advertisements.

<sup>47</sup> A.T. Jackson, op. cit., pp. 17-18

<sup>48</sup> J.T. Bauer, "The Official Automobile Blue Book, 1901-1929: Precursor to the American Road Map," "Cartographic Perspectives" 2009, number 62, p. 11 (<https://cartographicperspectives.org/index.php/journal/article/view/cp62-bauer/pdf> accessed 2.04.2025)

The first editions of the book primarily catered to wealthy Americans seeking leisure travel, as owning an automobile was a luxury reserved for the rich in the early 1900s. The release of the *Model T* in 1908 marked a shift in target audience towards the middle class. Each *Blue Book* volume contained hundreds of advertisements for hotels, restaurants, garages, and auto dealers, with some retailers proudly displaying signs that identified them as an *Official Automobile Blue Book Garage* or an *Official Automobile Blue Book Hotel*.<sup>49</sup>

Prior to establishing the *Automobile Blue Book*, Gillette was employed at the *Pope Manufacturing Company* and also founded the *Columbia Lubricants Company* in New York City. He played a significant role in the founding of the *Automobile Club of Hartford* and held the position of secretary for the *American Automobile Association*. The *Automobile Blue Book* was initially released as a single volume each year until 1906, after which it expanded to three volumes in 1907, although it did not encompass the entire United States until 1915.<sup>50</sup> In 1906, the *American Automobile Association (AAA)* began officially endorsing the book, which significantly boosted its circulation as it was offered to association members at a reduced price. The publication provided readers with valuable information on trip planning and state road regulations. At its peak in 1921, the *Blue Book* comprised 12 volumes detailing 62 routes across the continental United States and parts of Canada. Earlier editions of the *Automobile Blue Book*, published before 1927, primarily focused on scenic routes connecting cities. The routes featured in the *Blue Book* were initially created by amateur “pathfinders.” By 1907, the *Blue Book* had established its own fleet of vehicles and employed professional pathfinders who worked in pairs to develop and update the routes.<sup>51</sup>

The *Automobile Green Book*, the official guide of the *Automobile Legal Association of Massachusetts*, along with *King’s Official Route Guide*, released by Sidney J. King from Chicago, Illinois, the *Interstate Automobile Tourists’ Guide*, produced by *F.S. Blanchard and Company* of Worcester, Massachusetts, and the *Official Automobile Blue Book*, issued by the *Automobile Blue Book Publishing Company (ABBPC)* of New York, represent just a selection of the guides that were widely accessible from 1900 to 1930. The emergence

<sup>49</sup> J.T. Bauer, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>50</sup> J.T. Bauer, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>51</sup> J.T. Bauer, op. cit., p. 18.

of new road atlases contributed to the decline of the *Blue Book*, with its final edition published in 1929.<sup>52</sup>

#### A selection of Montana hotels listed in African American tourist guides

*Mrs. M. Stitt (tourist home)*

*Original address 204 S. Park, Helena, MT 59601*

Located in what is now the park just north of Pioneer Cabin, two-story building, shown as under construction in 1890. Mrs. Mabel Stitt died on August 19, 1939, though her name appears in subsequent *Green Books*. Her husband Aaron and daughter Carrie Burnett may have continued running the boarding house. It is likely that the building was torn down after *Urban Renewal* in 1958. It was the earliest and for many years the only one entry from Montana in the *Green Book*.

*Northern Hotel*

*Original address: 19 N Broadway, Billings, MT 59101*

For more than a century, the *Northern Hotel* has played a significant role in the history of Billings and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This historic edifice is situated in the Downtown Core of Billings and was established in 1902 when two of the city's early business magnates, P.B. Moss and Colonel Henry W. Rowley, began constructing what was intended to be the most contemporary hotel in Montana. The hotel was completed in 1904 and enjoyed over thirty years of success until a catastrophic fire occurred on September 11, 1940. Subsequently, the current ten-story *Northern Hotel*, designed by *Holabird & Root*, began construction in April 1941 and was finished and reopened on July 7, 1942, boasting greater elegance and sophistication than before. After its closure in September 2006, the hotel was auctioned in January 2009 to Mike and Chris Nelson, who undertook a comprehensive renovation, restoring the building to its structural framework. The hotel celebrated its grand reopening on March 16, 2013, and was added to the *U.S. National Register of Historic Places* on June 21 of the same year. Through their visionary efforts, the Nelson brothers revitalized the *Northern*, transforming it into the most modern and luxurious hotel in Montana, equipped with

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<sup>52</sup> J.T. Bauer, op. cit., p. 5.



cutting-edge technology that positioned it among the most advanced hotels in the nation.

#### *Motel Central*

*Original address: 715 Central Ave, W Great Falls, MT 59404*

It was constructed in 1947, the first proprietors were Ted J. and Ann D. Kuglin, who owned it at least until 1959. In 1949, the *Polk Directory* listing boasted: “«The Newest, Most Modern Motel in Great Falls», Thermostatically Controlled Heating, Simmons Beautyrest Mattresses, Garages.” The motel still welcomes guests.

### **Conclusion**

The earliest record of accommodations in Montana can be traced back to the 1930 guide by *Hackley & Harrison*, which mentions two towns: Helena, featuring guest rooms at the Stitts, and Missoula, home to the *Paxton Hotel* along with guest rooms provided by Josephine Duffy and R.J. Lucas. In contrast, the *Green Book*, a widely recognized guide, first included Montana in its 1939 edition, highlighting the guest rooms of Mr. and Mrs. Stitt. Further entries from Montana appeared only in the editions from 1956 to 1963, as well as in the *Travelers Green Book* from 1960 to 1967. Notably, accommodations near Glacier National Park, established in 1910, were not listed in African American guidebooks until the 1950s. The *GoGuide* from 1953 to 1959 featured hotels and motor inns in Glacier Park, while the *Green Book Negro Motorist* included Glacier Park in its 1956-63 editions, later rebranded as the *Travelers Green Book* from 1960 to 1967. Interestingly, none of the *Travelguide* editions mentioned hotels in Glacier Park.

One can deduce that the absence of hotels in guidebooks was linked to the essence of the guidebooks, the demographic they targeted, and the exclusive nature of the hotels themselves. Louis Hill and his son envisioned these establishments as catering exclusively to affluent travelers. This is further evidenced by the repeated mention of hotels such as *Many Glacier* in every edition of *GoGuide*, which was specifically tailored for wealthy tourists. While *Travelguide* had a comparable focus, it is important to highlight that none of its editions included listings for Glacier Park.

Taylor indicates that the reluctance towards Black tourists in certain instances arises from worries about the reputation of hotels, a perceived decline

in service quality, a focus on wealthy tourists, and fears of radical groups targeting African Americans. When Victor Green reached out to businesses in Montana, a writer from Shelby cautioned him against promoting the area to Black motorists, stating,

Our very limited families have been taxed to the limit the last couple of years in trying to give adequate service to the touring public. Upon consulting with some of them, who may well represent the rest, they believe Negro patrons have a right to fair consideration, but they would hesitate to place their names in your directory for fear of finding all touring Negroes near here over-crowding the facilities to the exclusion of old customers. A pretty reasonable attitude exists here, but we have had so few colored people in this area that I would hesitate to say to what extent many more would be at liberty to come and go without running into difficulty.<sup>53</sup>

According to Candacy Taylor, Black travelers in Montana, New Mexico, and West Virginia had no means to seek redress for poor treatment, given that these states had not implemented anti-Jim Crow laws at that time.<sup>54</sup>

Interestingly, the oldest guide for motorists in the USA — *The Blue Book* — included entries of hotels in the state of Montana from the 1915 edition. Tourist attractions, such as Glacier Park, opened in 1910, were also included in *Blue Book* editions earlier than in guides for black motorists. The Glacier Hotel has been included in the *Blue Book* guide since 1919, but for comparison, in the most popular guide for African Americans, the *Green Book*, the hotel appears only in the 1956 edition, after the abolition of racial segregation in accommodations in the state of Montana. This allows us to assume that a significant part of hotels in Montana were segregated.

Guides such as the *Green Book* played a significant role in American segregated society at a time when lynching, black codes, local ordinances, and social covenants marked a color line, crossing which resulted in financial and corporal penalties. The guides were also incredibly helpful in traveling safely across America and avoiding places where racist violence dominated social relations during the day and after dark. After racial segregation was abolished in the USA, guides were no longer needed. Each of them was different in nature

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<sup>53</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 130.

<sup>54</sup> C. Taylor, op. cit., p. 304.

and concerned different social groups. Some of them were just hotel lists, others contained interesting advertisements, colorful graphics and unique covers. Somewhat forgotten after many years, they now constitute interesting research material. Just like the stories of hotels and accommodations that were included in such guides. The film *Green Book* from 2018 undoubtedly contributed to the renewed interest in the topic of guides. The *Negro Motorist Green Book*, an exhibition developed by the *Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service* in collaboration with award-winning author, photographer and cultural documentarian, Candacy Taylor is yet another proof of this interest. It reflects on the reality of those bygone times, serves as living legacy of days when this annual guide served as an indispensable resource for the nation's rising African American middle and upper classes.

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Table 1. Montana hotels in Green Book editions

Edition	Cities						
	Helena	Billings	Livingston	Butte	Missoula	Great Falls	East Glacier
1939	Mrs. M. Stitt's						
1956-1963	Placer Hotel, Capitol Court	Rimrock Lodge, General Custer Motel	Yellowstone Motel, Murray Hotel, Willow Park Cottages	Ham's Court	Florence Hotel	Motel Central	Porter's Deluxe Cabins, Glacier Park Lodge

Table 2. Comparison of Montana hotels in various tourist guides

Name of hotel and city	Guides and editions (earliest-known entry)				
	Automobile Blue Book	Green Book	Go Guide	Travel Guide	Negro Travellers Green Book
Palace Hotel Missoula	1915		1953		
Olive Miles City	1916				
Shaw&Powell Camping Livingston	1916				
Northern Hotel Billings	1916, 1922		1953	1962	
Bozeman Hotel	1916				
Thornton Hotel Butte	1916				
Leggat Hotel Butte	1916, 1922				
Florence Missoula	1916, 1922	1956-63	1953		1960
Montana Hotel Anaconda	1916				

Name of hotel and city	Guides and editions (earliest-known entry)				
	Automobile Blue Book	Green Book	Go Guide	Travel Guide	Negro Travellers Green Book
Kalispell, Butte, Bozeman, Livingston, Helena	1919				
Motor Inn Big Timber	1922				
Alexander Hotel Forsyth	1922				
Park Hotel Great Falls	1922, 1924		1953		
Grabow Hotel Livingston	1922				
Rainbow Hotel Great Falls	1922			1962	
Johnson Hotel Great Falls	1922				
Placer Hotel Helena	1922	1956-63	1953		1960
Many Glacier*			1953		
Glacier Park Hotel*	1919, 1922	1956-63	1953		1960
Helena Hotel			1953		
Porter DeLuxe Cabins*					1960

\*Hotels located within the boundaries of *Glacier National Park*.

## Montana and Travel Guides in the Age of Racial Inequality

In the age of racial inequality, African American tourist guides played a crucial role in promoting Black travel and tourism. During the *Jim Crow* era, when segregation and discrimination were rampant, African American tourist guides were especially important. They helped African American travelers navigate the complex system of racial restrictions and avoid dangerous areas. These guides played a key role as they provided information about safe places to travel, accommodations that welcomed Black visitors, and businesses that treated Black customers fairly. The purpose of this article is to show the impact and role that tourist guidebooks served Black tourists travelling to the state of Montana during the period of racial persecution when color line was drawn upon the society. The study

analyses listings of accommodation facilities and hotels in tourist guides against the provisions of local and state laws defining the principles of segregation in force over time. Furthermore, it highlights how Black Americans developed alternative routes and travel plans to live within a racist and segregated nation. This resource study is informed by archival records as well as archival and museum collections. The study also draws from archival material and is enriched by newspaper accounts. The conducted research may contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon of racism in the Northwest of the USA in the area of tourism and become the cornerstone for mapping of places where racial prejudice existed in the state of Montana. This, in turn, will allow in the long run to identify potential “sundown towns” or “gray towns” — cities or districts where racial and ethnic segregation was practiced through the institutional use of restrictions on civil rights, discriminatory local laws, intimidation and violence. Hostility towards non-white clientele was very common during the Jim Crow era in almost all aspects of society. Hostility also affected tourists making short and transcontinental trips. As Ćwikła states it was this “hostility” — etymologically co-inscribed with “hospitality” (in French and English: *hostilité/hostility* — *hospitalité/hospitality* — together with considerations regarding the antinomy of the threshold and open hands inherent in hospitality, that made Derrida coin the term “*hostpitalité/s*” – *hostpitality*).<sup>55</sup>

**Keywords:** racism, travel, guide, hotel, Montana

## Montana i przewodniki turystyczne w epoce nierówności rasowych

William Edward Burghardt (W.E.B) Du Bois podkreślał znaczenie prawa do odpoczynku Afroamerykanów jako formy poczucia wolności od „linii koloru”. Miejsca rekreacji byłyby obszarami, gdzie najczęściej doświadczano praw rasistowskich znanych jako „Jim Crow”. Marguerite S. Shaffer rasizmem dziedziczonym określa dyskryminację w miejscach publicznej rekreacji. Dla Meltona parki narodowe, będące obszarami tylko dla białych, stanowią przykład kultury wykluczenia. Parki narodowe były także miejscami samowykluczenia Afroamerykanów powodowanego pamięcią zbiorową i pełną dramatycznych wydarzeń historią. Po zakończeniu wojny secesyjnej, pomimo niewątpliwego sukcesu zniesienia niewolnictwa i stopniowego włączania Afroamerykanów do społeczeństwa amerykańskiego, wiele stanów USA wprowadziło prawa mające na celu ograniczenie ich wolności. Chociaż Ustawa o prawach obywatelskich z 1866 r. miała na celu rozszerzenie równej ochrony prawnej na wszystkich obywateli, prawa „Jima Crowa” utrwały dotychczasowy podział rasowy obywateli. Prawa te przybierały formę praw lokalnych, tzw. czarnych kodeksów, wspieranych przez władze i egzekwowanych przez często radykalne organizacje społeczne i polityczne. Jedną z nich był niesławny Ku Klux Klan. Ponizanie Afroamerykanów zostało usankcjonowane przez prawo orzeczeniem Sądu Najwyższego z 1896 roku w sprawie

<sup>55</sup> P. Ćwikła, „Gościnność niejednoznaczna : analiza wybranych przypadków na przykładzie powieści Lalka i filmu Green Book,” „Kultura i Społeczeństwo” 2020, vol. 64, no 1, p.133, doi 10.35757/KiS.2020.64.1.6

Plessy vs. Ferguson. Sąd uznał, iż segregacja rasowa w miejscach publicznych była legalna. Dozwolony przez prawo był równy, ale odrębny dostęp do miejsc takich jak hotele, pralnie, fryzjerzy itp. Nie oznaczało to jednak, że usługi oferowane Afroamerykanom były tej samej jakości, co dla białych. Pomimo często iluzorycznej gwarancji niezbywalnych praw Afroamerykanów, takich jak prawo do podróżowania w poczuciu bezpieczeństwa, obywatele ci nie zawsze i nie wszędzie mogli z tych praw w pełni korzystać. Aby cieszyć się możliwością bezpiecznego podróżowania i odkrywania piękna swojego kraju, musieli korzystać z różnych publikacji, takich jak przewodniki turystyczne zawierające wykazy hoteli i innych miejsc obsługujących Afroamerykanów. Znajomość ich treści mogłaby w jakiś sposób dawać nadzieję na odpoczynek bez doświadczania upokorzeń. W 1936 roku Victor H. Green stworzył serię przewodników pod nazwą „Negro Motorist Green Book” dla Afroamerykanów, uwzględniających miejsca takie jak hotele, salony piękności, restauracje itp. obsługujące Afroamerykanów w okresie segregacji rasowej. Interesujące jest to, iż niektóre z miejsc znajdujących się w stanie Montana, w tym popularne wśród turystów, jak choćby utworzony w 1910 roku Glacier Park, nie znalazły się w pierwszych edycjach „Green Book”. Żaden z hoteli położonych na terenie parku nie figurował w przewodnikach „Green Book” aż do 1956 roku, gdy segregacja rasowa w hotelach została prawnie zakazana w stanie Montana. Dopiero pod koniec lat 50. XX wieku miejscowości takie jak Billings, Butte, Helena, Livingston, Missoula, Great Falls i East Glacier znalazły się w przewodnikach dla Afroamerykanów. W wielu spośród wymienionych lokalizacji od lat 20. XX wieku aktywnie działał Ku Klux Klan, który w przypadku stanu Montana za swoich wrogów uważał katolików, Afroamerykanów i Azjatów.

**Słowa kluczowe:** rasizm, podróż, przewodnik, hotel, Montana

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