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THE SOCIAL CIRCLE OF CATFISHERMEN:  
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIOLOGY OF FISHING

by

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## NOTE

The use of the terms 'fisherman', 'fishermen', and 'outdoorsmen' is not intended to ignore the fact that women also participate in fishing and other outdoor activities. Rather, they are intended to be used merely as common terms to facilitate the flow of the paper and the conveyance of the contents therein.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Despite fishing's popularity both as a leisure and sport activity, the world of the recreational fisherman has only recently begun to be investigated by sociologists. While there are literally thousands of studies on various species of fish, there are relatively few studies on the angler. Thomas Dailey (1977) lists only 103 social and behavioral studies on the participants of recreational fishing in his annotated bibliography on the subject. This bibliography encompasses nearly all of the studies of recreational fishermen up to 1974. These studies primarily reflect quantified, descriptive accounts of the characteristics and motives of the fishermen in relation to recreational management. More recently, articles and papers have begun to define areas of further needed research.

#### Objectives

Many of the studies of fishermen and their recreational activity have attempted to assist recreational resource managers. The majority were aimed at gathering data on socioeconomic characteristics of anglers, what fishermen do, and motivations for the activity. These were often conducted by recreationalists and resource extension agents. Sociologists and other behavioral scientists occasionally conducted research on fishermen, but generally failed to go beyond socioeconomic activities, and motivational consideration. While these studies have provided useful information, certain misconceptions have developed. One major