



Leisure for Canadians

SECOND EDITION

EDITED BY

Ron McCarville Ph.D. and Kelly MacKay Ph.D.

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Second Edition

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Ron McCarville, Ph.D.
and
Kelly MacKay, Ph.D.



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Preface

We are pleased to present you with the second edition of **Leisure for Canadians**. This edition builds on the work we started in our first effort published in 2007. In that edition, we began to explore leisure within Canadian society. Our goal was to expose the reader to the many roles played by leisure, the ways in which Canadians take part, and to explore what this means for leisure providers.

This second edition introduces a new theme within the larger leisure literature, that of sport and events management. We have added seven new chapters on various aspects of sport and event planning. There are several reasons for this addition. First, sport and events (ranging from festivals to games and tournaments) are pervasive. They are so pervasive that they often dominate much of the public attention devoted to leisure. As a result, we thought it appropriate to place them both within the larger discussion of leisure. Second, sport delivery and event planning can be complex and demanding in terms of expertise and resources. As a result, both are receiving increasing attention from educators and providers alike. We thought the new edition should reflect this increasing attention.

We have also added a chapter on the built environment and leisure behavior. It suggests the often profound effect of parks and trails on human behavior. Shopping malls offer another example of the importance of the built environment. We have added a chapter on the pervasive role of shopping in Canadian society today.

As was the case in the first edition, this text is comprised of chapters written by scholars from across Canada. All our contributors were asked to imagine they were talking with someone who asked, “What do we know about [your topic]?” The individual and collective goal was to bring the reader up to date on what is known on that topic. We believe these scholars have done a commendable job of bringing their respective topic areas to life for the reader.

We also asked authors who contributed to our first edition if they wished to update their respective chapters. Several have done so. Some of these changes represent updates of citations or statistics while others are more editorial in nature. In all cases, this second edition has been improved as a result of their efforts. We owe all our authors a great debt of gratitude.

The format of each chapter is generally consistent throughout the text. The authors each introduce their topic, outline why this topic is relevant to the leisure community, establish what we now know about that topic, and what is yet to be learned. There are a few variations on this theme, of course. For example, chapters focusing on historical background might be provided in a format that is a bit different from those reporting industry trends. In all cases,

however, the goal is one of presenting the reader with our most current understanding of that topic.

We understand that this book is being used widely as an introductory textbook. Consequently, we wish to offer a bit of perspective on how this text might be used in the classroom. In his book **What the Best College Teachers Do** (2004), Ken Bain reports that many instructors simply assign chapter after chapter with no opportunity (or reason) for student debate and discourse. He found that the less effective instructors referred constantly to “covering the material.” In those cases students were failing to truly understand or relate to the material.

Bain (2004) encouraged instructors to move beyond simply reporting material in class. He found that the best teachers were those who built student engagement around compelling questions. The best teachers structured their courses and indeed each lecture around interesting and challenging questions. Embedded in these questions were all the key concepts the instructors hoped to cover. This book lends itself to the approach suggested by Ken Bain. All our authors have provided reflective questions throughout their chapters to help readers apply this new knowledge to their understanding of leisure in their own society and in their own lives.

We encourage instructors to use these questions as they progress through the text. In this way, the ideas and issues will become more relevant, more tangible. The authors also offer text boxes (we call them “idea-” or “i-boxes”) that highlight key issues and ideas that deserve special attention. Sometimes they are used to draw attention to an important study, while at other times they focus on a particular problem or challenge. In all cases, their goal is to provide a bit of additional perspective. Both the reflective questions and i-boxes can be used to initiate and structure class discussion.

We know too that the book contains more chapters than can be covered in a typical term or semester. We have done this to offer instructors choices regarding the topics they cover. We encourage instructors to pick and choose chapters they hope will encourage thought and debate among their students.

Finally, we feel this text is appropriate for new students to leisure hoping to grasp key issues as well as more advanced students seeking to explore leisure’s complex role in our society. The contributors have worked hard to bring you the most current thinking on a wide variety of topics. Together they paint a picture of both the challenges and opportunities that leisure presents. We hope you embrace both as you seek to understand and enjoy leisure.

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INTRODUCTION

Cicero once observed that, “to be ignorant of what occurred before you, is to remain always a child.” We couldn’t agree more. That is why we open the book with a prologue prepared by Jiri Zuzanik on the history of leisure research. In preparing this book, the authors in this text have drawn heavily from the decades of leisure research, so it is appropriate that we begin with the origins of our research traditions. The rest of the book is separated into two distinctive parts or halves. We believe so strongly in Cicero’s words that each of the book’s two halves begins with more historical perspective. In both cases, the goal is to outline the origins of the ideas and traditions that are discussed in that particular section.

PART 1: LEISURE IN CANADA

The first half of the text (Chapters 1–21) is devoted to the phenomenon of leisure. While Canadian society is the focus of this material, the discussion ranges widely across both space and time in its exploration of leisure. This portion of the book has three sections. The first section (Chapters 1–7) sets the stage for the rest of the text. It does so by first by offering definitions for leisure, recreation, and play and their respective roles in our society.

This section also introduces two themes that will recur throughout the text. The first theme focuses on the role of theory in helping us understand sport and leisure dynamics. The leisure literature generally, and this text in particular, are guided and directed by theory. It is the driving force that helps us make sense of all that we see and do. We thought this point should be emphasized early in the text. The second theme is that of politics and power. The authors in this text view sport and leisure as much more than benign, child-like activities. The discussion often draws attention to sport and leisure as potent forces in our individual and collective lives. These definitions and themes offer perspective on what is to come.

The second section (Chapters 8–19) begins to describe how Canadians spend their spare time. It is an exploration of those things we do when we are at leisure and play. This exploration offers a glimpse into the ways in which sport and leisure have become so much a part of everyday life. It suggests too the many things that influence the degree to which we are able to integrate sport and leisure into our everyday lives. What you learn about our leisure behaviours may surprise you.

The third section (Chapters 20–26) speaks to the diversity found within the Canadian social landscape. It becomes obvious that there is no one sport or leisure community.

There are many groups and subgroups, each with its own challenges and perspectives. We cannot understand sport or leisure in our society without understanding these perspectives. The perspectives presented here are by no means comprehensive, but they do offer some insight into dominant themes within current discussions of sport and leisure in Canadian society.

Taken together, the material in the first half of the book suggests that both sport and leisure are complex and politically charged. They can be constrained by social group, work demands, income level, gender, disability, or age. They can represent central life interests and can become personally and collectively destructive. They can be actively sought by millions of Canadians daily in settings ranging from their living rooms to the Arctic and around the world. All this insight is useful only if it informs decision makers as they seek to facilitate leisure activity, so the second half is concerned with “What now?” It deals with ways in which sport and leisure services can be, and are, delivered across Canada.

PART 2: LEISURE DELIVERY IN CANADA

The second half of this book is administrative in its focus. It offers the leisure provider with solutions to the challenges posed in the first half. The emphasis here is on much more than simply “how” to go about things. Our contributors offer ways of thinking about the role of providers as much as how to go about carrying out that role. The themes of empowerment and client focus come through time and time again.

Section 4 (Chapters 27–33) lays out the traditional approaches to leisure delivery. As was the case in the first half of the book, we begin with historical perspective. Chapter 27 provides a history of leisure provision over the past several hundred years here in Canada. In particular, it establishes why the public sector has adopted such a pervasive role in municipal leisure delivery. Chapter 28 then outlines the roles and challenges of private sector leisure delivery.

Section 5 (Chapters 34–41) discusses a variety of strategies that might be adopted in the delivery of leisure services. Again the emphasis is on empowerment and service to the community. The contributors insist that leisure management is not about the simple delivery of services. Rather, it is about deciding on where to place control of resources and how to best serve the community. These chapters also focus on traditional administrative challenges arising from the need to mobilize resources. The challenge is that of being both effective and efficient at the same time. This is not always an easy task, but this section should help.

It addresses program planning issues, human resource development (both paid and volunteer), financing, and marketing effort. These activities form the centerpiece of any administrative task, and each chapter offers both background and solutions to these challenges.

Prologue

Beginnings of Leisure Research in North America: A Forgotten Legacy?

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INTRODUCTION

The beginnings of systematic leisure inquiry in North America and Europe lie in the 1950s and 1960s. In North America, they are closely associated with the names of David Riesman (1950), Max Kaplan (1960), Nels Anderson (1961), Sebastian de Grazia (1962), Rolf Meyersohn (1958, 1972), and others. In Europe, the onset of intensive and methodical study of leisure is associated primarily with the name of Joffre Dumazedier (1967). Yet, the work of these authors did not spring by magic out of nowhere. Rather, it grew out of traditions dating back to the late nineteenth century, the 1920s, and particularly the 1930s.

LEISURE AS AN EDUCATIONAL, POLICY, AND APPLIED CONCERN

Social scientists were not necessarily the first who drove North Americans' attention to the importance of leisure phenomena. From the beginning of the twentieth century, but particularly since the 1920s, leisure has been often examined by authors operating from three perspectives: (a) educational and social-philosophical, (b) social problem/social policy, and (c) applied.

Authors approaching leisure from educational and social-philosophical perspectives viewed leisure primarily as a moral issue and an action-oriented concern. They emphasized leisure's contribution to the person's "wholesome" development and constructive uses of leisure time. Many authors who contributed to this tradition had an educational background and examined leisure in the broader context of play or expressive behaviour. Most of them shared an optimistic view of leisure as an opportunity for personal growth and contrasted it with instrumentally oriented work activities.

Journalistic publications written from this perspective are marked by an almost religious belief in the developmental potentials of leisure and exhibit great zeal in advancing leisure's cause. Titles of selected articles from the 1920s and 1930s provide a fairly good idea of the orientation and beliefs shared by their authors, and include: "Education for the

Proper Use of Leisure Time," "Training in the Right Use of Leisure," "Training for the Wise Use of Leisure," "Training for the Profitable Use of Leisure," "Guidance in the Worthy Use of Leisure Time," "Report of Committee on Best Use of Leisure Time," "Education and the Larger Leisure," "The Wider Use of Leisure," and "Significance of Education for Leisure" (emphases added).

Many influential books written from this perspective share a similarly apologetic view of leisure. In *The Education of the Whole Man* (1931), Jacks suggested that we should regard leisure as an "opportunity for exercising those creative and imaginative faculties, which the general standardization of labour tends to suppress" (p. 64). Leisure is called upon to educate not just parts of men, such as mind, character, and body, but the "whole man as an inseparable unity of all four" (p. 69).

Burns carefully noted that his *Leisure in the Modern World* (1932) is not a "sermon," yet he structures the book as an extensive apology of leisure's contribution towards such worthy causes as "spontaneous enjoyment," "inner life," and "elimination of 'traditionalism,' 'localism,' and 'class distinctions.'" Overstreet's publication *A Guide to Civilized Leisure* (1934) centres upon the argument that "[i]n a world of scarcity, we have had to give our hostages to toil. Now, in an age of plenty, we can look forward to an increasing amount of time that is our own. We have, to an extent, grown work-wise. In the future, we shall grow leisure-wise" (p. 9).

Nash, in *The Philosophy of Recreation and Leisure* (1953), and Brightbill, in *The Challenge of Leisure* (1960), find in leisure a source of spontaneity, creativity, playfulness, community spirit, social equality, democracy, personal self-realization, and harmonious development of physical, intellectual, and artistic skills. Nash's "pyramid diagram" (see Figure 1), showing how man's uses of time progress from leisure inspired by the lowest instincts (delinquency) to the "peaks of creative achievement," probably best exemplifies this approach (Nash, 1953, p. 89). In short, leisure

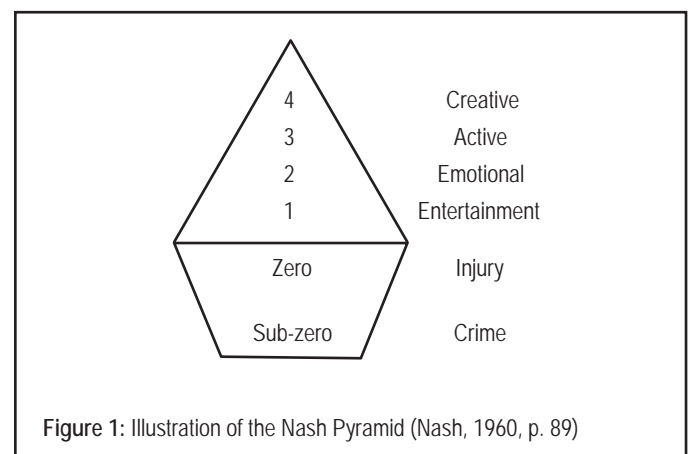


Figure 1: Illustration of the Nash Pyramid (Nash, 1960, p. 89)

has been heralded as a potential answer to most problems of modern civilization, capable of helping where work failed. This group of publications formulated some basic assumptions of subsequent leisure and recreational studies and programmes, and it still forms an integral part of readings in the numerous courses of the philosophy of leisure offered in North American universities.

The social problem/social policy approach toward leisure focuses on the challenges and pitfalls rather than the opportunities associated with leisure. This literature sees leisure, in essence, as problematic. It is dominated by moralistic concerns and regards growing amounts of leisure in modern societies as a source of alarming and disquieting developments, such as growing passivity, privatization, alienation, violence, or political corruption reminiscent of the late days of the Roman Empire (“bread and circuses”). A random selection of article titles from the 1920s and 1930s gives a good idea of the prevailing concerns of some of these writings: “**Delinquency and Leisure**,” “**The Curse of Leisure**,” “**Our Need for Wasting More Time**,” “**Tonic of Disaster**,” “**Menace of Leisure**,” “**Leisure and Crime**,” “**Dangers in the New Leisure Area**,” “**New Leisure—Blessing or Curse?**” (emphases added).

Books such as Cutten’s *The Threat of Leisure* (1926) and Durant’s *The Problem of Leisure* (1938) exemplify well this approach toward leisure. Cutten, in particular, draws attention to the fact that, “While machinery has given opportunity for thought, the opportunity has not been grasped, and today leisure is chiefly ... a cloak for idleness” (1926, p. 74). More categorically still, Cutten insists that, while leisure is the most precious gift that the past century has bestowed upon us, “it is also the most dangerous one” (p. 86). Coupled with the comfort and ease of modern life, leisure will result, according to Cutten, in “physical and mental degeneracy” (p. 89). An unlimited, unorganized, unled, and uncontrolled leisure is seen as “the greatest danger to which any nation was ever exposed” (p. 96). Cutten concludes his analyses by saying: “For a variety of reasons we are less prepared for leisure than any people since the beginning of time, and untrained and unready as we are, it may do more harm under present circumstances than it can do good” (p. 101).

A number of publications have highlighted the policy challenges of “new leisure.” An early publication of Fulk, *The Municipalization of Play and Recreation* (1922), pointed out that “[t]he complicated and troublesome social situation of the city has forced some recognition of the problem of public leisure by municipal government” (p. 2). The book examines in great detail opportunity structures and policies of municipal recreation agencies in selected U.S. cities. Lies, in *The New Leisure Challenges for the Schools* (1933), examines policy issues associated with the

introduction of education for leisure into school curricula and after-school activities.

As early as 1909–1911, several U.S. universities offered the first courses in recreation, park, and playground management, thus putting leisure study into the context of practical and applied interests (Van Doren & Hodges, 1975). Weir’s book *Parks: A Manual of Municipal and County Parks* (1928) provided the first comprehensive introduction into park management and recreation administration. One also finds in the 1930s the first attempts to examine leisure from a social adjustment and therapeutic perspective, as in Davis’s *Principles and Practice of Recreational Therapy* (1936) and *Play and Mental Health* (1938).

In general, social–philosophical, educational, social–problem, and applied studies of leisure published in the 1920s and 1930s contain interesting social observations and promising analyses of practical use and organization of leisure, but they are also often marked by superficial journalism, pedagogical moralizing, and wishful thinking.

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE STUDY OF LEISURE

Differently than educators or moral philosophers, social scientists examined leisure as a socially patterned behaviour rather than a moral issue or an object of social reform, although all groups regarded leisure as a major social policy concern. The work of four social scientists, spanning the period from the turn of the century to the 1930s is particularly interesting and influential in view of the subsequent development of leisure research in North America: Thorstein Veblen, author of *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899); Robert and Helen Lynds, authors of the *Middletown* (1929), and *Middletown in Transition* (1937); and George Lundberg, the leading author of *Leisure: A Suburban Study* (1934) [co-authored with Komarovskiy and McNerny].

Thorstein Veblen:

The Theory of the Leisure Class

Veblen’s classic, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), is America’s first serious social inquiry of leisure. Although written by an economist, this is an eminently sociological book. In Rosenberg’s words, Veblen received his formal training in philosophy, and is commonly regarded as an economist, yet “his vocation was truly that of a sociologist” (1970, p. 7).

Veblen was not a friend of leisure. His views of leisure were “tainted” by a strong Puritan bias, strengthened by his upbringing as a farmer’s son from a family of hard-working Norwegian immigrants. Veblen stands out as a rare instance of an American scholar who does not partake in dominant liberal ideology with its appreciation of the values of dis-

cretion, spontaneity, and self-expression. Veblen neither embraced nor emphasized beneficial effects of leisure in his work. **The Theory of the Leisure Class** is a scathing and bitter attack on the lifestyles of American upper classes, the rich and the famous, for whom leisure was a status symbol, manifested by conspicuous consumption, vicarious leisure, waste, and snobbery. This being said, we should not underestimate Veblen's contribution to the social analysis of leisure. Veblen introduced an important theme into the sociology of leisure by examining the relationship between leisure, social status, and social stratification.

According to Veblen, leisure rather than work manifests and reinforces social differences. "In order to gain and to hold esteem, it is not sufficient merely to possess wealth and power. The wealth or power must be put in evidence" (1953, p. 42). Such evidence is provided by conspicuous consumption and vicarious leisure. "Since the consumption of more excellent goods is an evidence of wealth, it becomes honorific; and conversely the failure to consume in due quantity and quality becomes a mark of inferiority and demerit" (1953, pp. 63–64).

Veblen was nostalgic of the early stages of American history, that short period of time when status was associated with work rather than leisure, and leisure formed an integral part of the community life. Eventually work and leisure have split. A significant change occurred in the character of the American entrepreneurial classes. Speculation, absentee ownership, conspicuous consumption, and wasteful leisure betrayed the values of the early American Puritans and businessmen. Leisure became, according to Veblen, not honorific, but self-serving, senseless, and despicably unfair.

The Theory of the Leisure Class is an emotional and highly biased book written with passion and brilliance. Veblen exaggerates the idleness of the upper classes. According to Mills, "of course, there is and there has been a working upper class—in fact, a class of prodigiously active people" (1953, p. xv). Yet, Veblen did not approve of their work and ignored it. Veblen's violent condemnation of virtually all consumption, save the subsistence one, as conspicuous did not endear his views to modern economists. The latter are not prepared to accept Veblen's distinction between the "serviceable" (i.e., legitimate) and "non-serviceable" (i.e., wasteful needs). Yet even economists find Veblen's indignation with wasteful consumption morally and socially compelling (Wallich, 1965).

Paradoxically, Veblen may have drawn attention to developments that took reign in social life half a century after his book was published. His critique applies to the middle-class America of the 1930s, and the "mass society" of the post-World War II era (heralded as the end of class society), no less and possibly more than to the America of the late nineteenth century.

One is taken by surprise by the number of parallels between Veblen's analyses of the "leisure classes" and the discussion of social and club life in Lynds's **Middletown** (1929), Lundberg's (1934) analyses of organized leisure in Westchester suburbia, Riesman's (1950) penetrating examination of consumption's role in forming an "other-directed" personality of the mid-twentieth century, or Warner and Lunt's (1941) analyses of class and life-style distinctions in Yankee City. From Veblen's theories of competitive emulation as the motivating factor for consumption, there is only a step to Mills's distinction between the all-American values of "utility" and "workmanship" as opposed to those of the "world of the fast buck" (Mills, 1953, p. xi), Linder's (1970) theory of the "harried leisure class," or Hirsch's (1976) distinction between "conventional" and "positional" goods. Veblen is often remembered as the author of anecdotal references to the status-conferring role of leisure in distant history, such as Chinese Mandarin's long fingernails or Victorian ladies' corsets, but by examining leisure as a status symbol in America, Veblen focused researchers' attention to the social meaning and functions of leisure in modern societies and brought leisure into a broader context of studying contemporary society and social change.

Robert and Helen Lynd: *Middletown and Middletown in Transition*

The Lynds's studies, **Middletown** (1929) and **Middletown in Transition** (1937), contain some of the best-documented observations of America's leisure habits in the 1920s and 1930s. The first of these two volumes examines daily life in a medium-sized Midwest city—Muncie, Indiana—around 1924. The authors traced their analyses back to 1890. For this they collected considerable statistical and printed information from the 1890s. In his foreword to **Middletown**, Clark Wissler commended the authors for their "foresight in revealing the Middletown of 1890 as a genesis of the Middletown of today, not as its contrast" (1929, p. vi). When the book was published in 1929, the first year of the Great Depression, it met with instant success. The American ways of life were dramatically altered. This gave the Lynds an impetus to replicate their study under new conditions. The results of the second study, conducted in 1934–1935, form the basis of the **Middletown in Transition**.

Middletown and Middletown in Transition are social-anthropological studies. The Lynds did not focus in their books specifically on leisure phenomena. Rather, they examined the structure of everyday community life, including making a living, getting a home, training the young using leisure, and engaging in religious practices and leisure activities. The Lynds's analyses are based on the study of statistical evidence, published documents, observations, and extensive interviews. The **Middletown** volumes are filled

with data, as well as cogent generalizations, and are regarded by many authors as classics among American community studies.

The Lynds' interest in leisure, unlike Veblen's, focused primarily on the relationships between leisure and social change, rather than leisure and social stratification. According to the Lynds, four factors contributed to the "remaking" of Middletown's leisure between 1890 and 1924: (a) shorter working hours; (b) proliferation of the automobile; (c) arrival of the movies; and (d) invention of the radio.

In 1924, daily work was an hour shorter than in 1890; half-day Saturday holidays were becoming a norm; and the word "vacation," virtually unknown in the 1890s, acquired its modern meaning, at least in the lives of the middle classes.

The automobile revolutionized Middletown's leisure more than anything else. It obliterated the horse culture of the 1890s, and made leisure a "regularly expected part of every day and week rather than an occasional event" (1929, p. 260). By 1923, there were 6,221 passenger cars in the city, or roughly two cars for every three families (1929, p. 253). Gone were carriage-riding and Sunday strolls. Walking for pleasure became practically extinct. On the 4th of July, Memorial Day, and Labor Day, people were leaving town rather than crowding its streets. Clergymen were competing with the automobile for Sunday church attendance.

Like the automobile, the motion picture meant more for Middletown than "just a new way of doing an old thing" (1929, p. 263). In 1890, there was only one opera house in Middletown. In 1923, nine motion picture theatres operated from 1:00 to 11:00 p.m., seven days a week, summer and winter.

These inventions, according to the Lynds, carried with them broader social and cultural connotations. More books were borrowed and periodicals sold in Middletown in the mid-1920s than in 1890. There were, however, fewer public debates focusing on new publications. Reading circles, rather active in the 1890s, mostly disappeared. Interest in music proliferated, but it took the form of listening rather than active participation. Phonograph and Victrola substituted for piano-playing and singing. The role of the neighbourhood and church declined. Associations and organized club groups gained in prominence (1929, p. 276). In 1890, people used to drop over in the evening. In 1923, they had to be invited "way ahead of the date to make a party of it" (1929, p. 275). Art and music served in the 1920s as a symbol of "belonging," rather than an expression of spontaneous artistic interest.

The developments after 1924 were also controversial. According to the Lynds, since 1925, Middletown had been through two periods with widely different implications for leisure.

The first was big with both the promise and reality of leisure—golf, mid-winter trips to Florida, and the vague hope of "retiring" into that blessed land where "every day will be Sunday bye and bye" for the business class; and for the working class the tangible realities of automobiles, radio, and other tools for employing leisure. Then, swiftly, the second period, when enforced leisure drowned men with its once-coveted abundance, and its taste became sour and brackish. Today Middletown is emerging from the doldrums of the depression more than ever in recent years committed to the goodness of work.... Nobody is complaining nowadays about the former "smoke nuisance." (1937, p. 246)

Examination of the "bad" 1930s witnessed that Middletown read more books than the "good" pre-Depression years. The 1930s had also seen the end of Prohibition and the replacement of speakeasies with legal taverns serving, in the Lynds's words, as physical places for meeting new people and "institutionalizing spontaneity." The 1930s also experienced a spectacular rise of middle-class bridge game, hailed as the hostess's best friend and an "unparalleled device for an urban world that wants to avoid issues, to keep things impersonal, to enjoy people without laying oneself open or committing oneself to them, and to have fun in the process" (1937, p. 271). Last but not least, the 1930s were marked by a growth of public provisions for leisure needs provided mostly under emergency federal programs.

Drawing a summary balance for the Middletown's four years of prosperous growth and six years of Depression experience, the Lynds suggested that the community had not undergone a dramatic lifestyle change but rather had made some temporary adjustments.

In the overwhelming majority of cases, the community has simply in the fat years bought more of the same kinds of leisure, and in the lean years made what curtailments it was forced to make and just marked time pending the return of the time when it could resume the doing of the familiar things. (1937, p. 293)

While the issue of social change is the focus of most of the Lynds' research attention, their analyses of the relationship between leisure and social class are also interesting, since they are done in the context of social change. Although the Lynds were aware of the advances of modern popular entertainment and approved of the growing provision of public recreational services to the lower-income groups, they were in no rush to conclude that leisure would obliterate class distinctions. For them, even in a modern society, leisure

remains mostly a status game, perhaps slightly less ostentatious than it was in the earlier periods.

The Lynds clearly distinguish between the function of leisure in the lives of the business classes and the working classes. Their assessment of the role of leisure in the life of the upper classes differed from Veblen. According to the Lynds, in the lives of the business classes, particularly their male part, leisure is secondary to work.

In this business-class world in which the job itself is so important to status ... men work not to get leisure but to get money, to “get ahead,” to “get up in the world.” The resulting spectacle—of some of the ablest members of society ... spending themselves unremittingly in work, denying themselves leisure and bending fine energies to the endless acquisition of the means of living a life they so often take insufficient leisure to live—is one factor leading certain contemporary psychiatrists to remark on the masochistic tendencies in our culture. (1937, p. 244)

The situation is quite different for the working classes. Here work does not, as a rule, provide an avenue for self-realization, while leisure provides some immediate gratifications, opportunity for socialization, entertainment, and possibly escape.

Status in the workingman’s world, where skill is yielding to the machine ... is increasingly beyond the worker’s reach.... You have a job—if you’re lucky—and you work.... Someday you’re going to die. Meanwhile, leisure assumes a simple, direct, and important place in your scheme of things; it’s when you live, and you get all of it you can—here, now, and all the time. (1937, p. 245)

The neighbourhood plays a more important role in the lives of the working classes than in the lives of the business classes, and so do many material possessions. “Only by understanding the different focus upon leisure in the lives of those living north and south of the tracks can one appreciate the tenacity with which the working man clings to his automobile” (1937, p. 245).

The Lynds’s analyses of *Middletown* were at times labelled as “descriptive” (Mitchell, 1968). This critique is misdirected. The two *Middletown* volumes are by no means lacking insight or conceptualization. The Lynds do not shy away from interpretation. They combine judicious combination of statistical and survey data with what Weber called a “*verstehen*” (i.e., understanding) approach. The Lynds project themselves into the social and existential situation

of their respondents, as if “reading their minds.” Symptomatically, the authors of *Middletown* often use as their respondents well-informed individuals rather than random samples of indifferent populations. This makes for interesting reading, particularly since respondents are quoted verbatim.

Ideologically, the Lynds were not immune to the zeitgeist of the 1930s. Like so many other intellectuals, they were disturbed by the fallout of the Great Depression, and the fact that it could not be rationally explained or controlled. Their ire turned against the system and traditional establishment. They looked to the government for intervention. The moneyed culture of the middle classes appeared to the Lynds as shallow and pretentious rather than genuine and spontaneous, and in spite of their considerable attention to the working-class culture, it did not excite them either. Although less formal, it also has been affected by the all-American fascination with consumption. *Middletown* and *Middletown in Transition* are books written with mixed feelings. The authors seem to be longing for closer community ties typical of the *gemeinschaft* (i.e., community-bound) relationships of the 1890s, but they do not moralise about this issue or offer speculative remedies. Rather they faithfully report the pros and the cons of the new developments. Their work contains precisely unadulterated information about everyday life and leisure in the 1920s and 1930s and makes it one of the most interesting readings about America’s life during this period.

George Lundberg: *Leisure—A Suburban Study*

The book *Leisure—A Suburban Study* (1934) by Lundberg, Komarovsky, and McNerny is probably the first North American social science publication that uses the notion of leisure in its title in the modern sense, signifying discretionary time of large groups of urban and suburban population. In Lundberg’s own words, he and his associates became interested in the problem of leisure because

first, the amount of leisure time has been constantly increasing and seems destined to an even more rapid increase in the near future. Secondly, urban civilization and mechanical devices ... disrupted traditional leisure pursuits and the individual’s control over his own spare time, thus compelling community recognition of the subject. (1934, p. 4)

The study on which Lundberg’s publication rests was carried out between January 1932 and April 1933 in Westchester County, New York. It focused on a wealthy residential neighbourhood, a mixed suburb or satellite city, and a relatively poor residential neighbourhood. The authors’ interest in suburbia was prompted by the fact that in the 1930s,

suburbs in the United States were growing faster than the parent cities. Lundberg used modern survey techniques for the study of leisure, including time diaries and leisure participation questionnaires. A time-budget study of 2,460 individuals from Westchester County provided Lundberg with detailed information about the distribution of time between major daily and leisure activities among different occupational and gender groups.

Apart from the detailed information about the time use of America's urban and suburban population, the book covered a broad range of issues, such as organizational structure of community leisure and recreation, relationships between leisure and the family, leisure and church, leisure and school, and leisure and the arts. This produced a work that, in Meyersohn's words, has succeeded as no other study in "comprehending the social organization of leisure" (1969, p. 54).

According to Lundberg, the technological revolution and social changes in America profoundly affected leisure opportunities and activities.

Spontaneous and informal neighbourhood life, which formerly provided a chief use of leisure, has largely disappeared as a result of the tremendous mobility of modern urban society. Neighbourhood life depends upon relative stability; it cannot flourish where a substantial part of the population moves every year or two. (1934, pp. 6-7)

Congested living quarters and the disappearance of the yard and other outdoor facilities have shifted recreation to the school, the club, and the commercial recreation place.

Home and neighbourhood games and sports are supplanted by billiard "parlours" and public dance halls. Huge stadia offer a vicarious satisfaction for the urges that conditions no longer permit to fulfil directly. Instead of singing around the piano, we turn on the radio. (1934, pp. 6-7)

While some of these changes were disruptive, Lundberg did not see the situation as totally negative. In his opinion, the family was still the most stable nucleus of recreational activities in the suburb.

Despite the inroads which clubs, sports, commercial amusements, the automobile, and the bridge game have made, the affectional and leisure functions of the family remain, even though many of the more overt recreational activities are carried on outside of the home. (1934, p. 189)

According to Lundberg, it is also doubtful whether modern leisure is more standardized than the leisure under

simpler conditions. "The tremendous variety of products and facilities afforded by modern organizations, goods, and services, and the resulting opportunities for a broad latitude of choices, has probably offset the tendency toward standardization" (1934, p. 81).

The relationship between leisure and economy, and its social implications, concerned Lundberg greatly. Lundberg and his associates were aware of the arguments put forth by business and government, namely that intensified leisure consumption contributes to the flow of economic activities and stimulates production. They conceded that competitive consumption "undoubtedly keeps many out of mischief," yet, they could not suppress their uneasiness about this "charmed circle unpleasantly suggestive of a squirrel cage" (1934, p. 16). Leisure activities have, according to Lundberg, lost their essential nature as leisure. "One of the commonest of the ulterior ends toward which leisure activities tend to be perverted is that of competitive social status on a pecuniary basis" (1934, p. 82). As a result, an increasing number of people find themselves coerced into a meaningless round of "recreational" leisure activities, which they "heroically endure but which are devoid of capacity to minister to release of nervous tensions and to the development of personality" (1934, p. 17).

This analysis brings Lundberg logically to the conclusion that greater amounts of leisure time under existing conditions do not necessarily bring greater happiness. A shorter working day does not necessarily mean more leisure of a desired or desirable kind. Mere freedom from vigorous physical toil and long hours of labour, according to Lundberg, will not insure men against heavy and unhappy lives. "Clearly, something more than a short and easy working day, even with economic security, is needed before we have any assurance that the lives of men will be happier and lighter" (1934, p. 2).

The analysis of the conflict between the growing amounts of leisure and their poor use brings Lundberg and his associates into the realm of social policy. "It must be clear," Lundberg stated, "the main objects of striving are no longer to be attained through the mere accumulation of individual wealth. Health, personal security, and aesthetic satisfactions are increasingly dependent not upon individual wealth but upon community organization" (1934, p. 252). According to Lundberg, changing conditions of life made recreation a public concern "of the same basic character as education and health" (1934, p. 346).

Lundberg is a strong advocate of government intervention. He is not willing to concede leisure development to commercial recreation and competitive consumption. The issues are too complex to be treated on an individual or purely laissez-faire basis. Satisfaction of the leisure needs of one group increasingly infringes upon the interests of

others or the larger interest of the community and culture. In this situation, the government is expected to engage experts, including social scientists, to ascertain societal priorities, and recommend means for their implementation.

Public business has reached a degree of complexity where only expert professional administration should be tolerated in municipal and state, as well as in national, affairs. At present, the most profitable civic adult education is that which will convince people of their own incapacity to grasp many of the matters with which they are now struggling. (1934, p. 342)

This admirably frank, yet somewhat condescending, statement reflects the real complexities of modern-age management of public affairs, but unfortunately ignores the fact that experts' decisions are rarely independent and often bend to self-serving and special interests.

Lundberg was, perhaps, the first American social scientist before World War II to draw attention to the full impact of leisure on the future development of modern societies. He emphasized that the central problem before modern societies is that of "long hours of leisure for the masses of men" (1934, p. 10). He was aware, however, that it is not so much the amount of leisure time but the way it is or will be used that matter. The difference of greatest significance in the leisure of various groups is found, according to Lundberg, not in the total amount of leisure, nor in its distribution between different activities, but rather in the content and quality of its components.

LAYING FOUNDATIONS TO MODERN STUDIES OF LEISURE PHENOMENA

The post-World War II leisure research in North America (and to a certain extent in Europe) can be divided roughly into two periods: before and after 1965. The first period, from 1945 to the mid-1960s, is characterized by broad sociological conceptualizations and a widely shared consensus that leisure represents one of the focal concerns of modern civilization. The second period, after 1965, is characterized by a proliferation of specialized, technical, and applied studies, diversification of the disciplinary base of leisure research, and regrettably, a decline in the theoretical breadth of the analyses of leisure.

It is surprising to look at how much interest leisure generated among social scientists of the 1950s and 1960s. Relevant names include the following: David Riesman, Margaret Mead, Nels Anderson, Sebastian de Grazia, Martha Wolfenstein, Bennett Berger, Robert Dubin, Harold Wilensky, Wilbert Moore, Rolf Meyersohn, and Max Kaplan

in North America; Georges Friedmann, Pierre Naville, Jacques Ellul, and Joffre Dumazedier in France; and Reinhardt Wippler in the Netherlands. This was an extremely fruitful period for leisure research both intellectually and institutionally, as evidenced by the creation of the Chicago Centre for the Study of Leisure, the CNRS Group for the Study of Leisure and Popular Culture in Paris, and the UNESCO European Centre for Leisure and Education in Prague.

What are the links between the pre- and post-World War II research? What intellectual convergences or divergences does one discern when comparing these two periods? An attempt will be made to answer these questions by addressing three interrelated issues, which have "haunted" social scientists before and after World War II: (a) the relationships between leisure and social status, (b) the impact of cultural and technological factors on leisure, and (c) methodological challenges of capturing the role of leisure in modern societies.

Interest in the relationship between leisure and social status originated with Veblen. Few subsequent authors agreed with him. Most thought that Veblen erred in identifying leisure with social status. The Lynds, Lundberg, Riesman, Mills, and Wilensky have shown that upper classes in America were working hard rather than idling. According to Wilensky, "there is a general tendency for higher occupational strata to work long hours" (1963, p. 117). More specifically, "entrepreneurship is a powerful impetus to long hours of work" (1963, p. 120). Economists seemed to agree with Veblen about the role of social emulation in motivating consumption in modern societies, but rejected Veblen's moral critique of this phenomenon (Duesenberry, 1949; Hayek, 1965). Kaplan (1960) and Anderson (1961) in the United States, and Dumazedier (1957) in France, questioned Veblen's views of the status-conferral role of leisure, and emphasized instead mass leisure's contribution to greater equality in modern societies.

Yet Veblen's views continue to hold fascination with many students of leisure. One finds direct allusions to Veblen's views in the Lynds' analyses of Middletown's social life, in Lundberg's critique of the conspicuous consumption of New York suburbanites, and in Riesman's analyses of the fads and fashions of the "other-directed" America. Riesman did not consider himself a "devotee" of Veblen and downplayed Veblen's dismissal of supposedly vicarious needs, yet the "other-directed" America he so vividly portrayed, displays many Veblenesque features. "When I observe women on the beach or in the backyard suffering from sun, sand, and insects in order to become appropriately tanned," he wrote, "I sometimes wonder whether the management of corsets was more uncomfortable than of bare skin now" (1953, p. 177).

One recognizes Veblen's overtones in Berger's (1963) comments on Americans' fascination with cowboys, de-

tectives, bull fighters, and sports-car racers as opposed to computer programmers, accountants, and executives, as well as in Seeley's (1956) analyses of the status-driven world of Crestwood Heights, or in Wilensky's (1964) discussion of the role of mass culture in the mass society. It seems that Veblen is more influential today than he is given credit for. He has created a "vision," a lens of sorts, and we can't help but see things through that lens. What was originally conceived by Veblen as a critique of the upper classes of nineteenth-century America became a telling metaphor of the middle classes and "mass society" of the twentieth century. Veblen's sarcasm may have been misdirected, but paradoxically, it turned prophetic.

American authors, unlike their European counterparts, often examined leisure in the context of cultural (value) change rather than technological progress. This is true of the Lynds, for whom changing leisure ways are as much a product of technical innovations and economic change, as they are a reflection of the newly emerging interests and values of the business and working classes. For Riesman, the changing role of leisure in modern America is tied foremost to the change in value orientations from those of inner-directedness to other-directedness, from production to consumption. The same theme is brilliantly addressed by Leo Lowenthal (1961) in his discussion of the shifts in Americans' reading allegiances from the "idols of production" to the "idols of consumption," and in Martha Wolfenstein's (1951) provocative comments about Americans' conversion to "fun morality." Margaret Mead (1957) associated leisure's growing importance in America with a shift of values from work to family, and Daniel Bell (1976) suggested that in the conflict between society's functional imperatives and its cultural values, the latter may have taken a lead in the 1960s.

Of course, greater emphasis on cultural values than on technological change is only a matter of degree. All of the aforementioned authors are aware of the importance of technical and economic changes, as well as of the impact of urbanization, industrialization, and mechanization on modern leisure. Yet cultural rather than technological and economic factors are in the forefront of their attention. Regrettably, this tradition may have ceased to inspire contemporary authors and we are missing an in-depth analysis of the cultural rather than technological underpinning of leisure trends at the turn of the two millennia.

Commenting on the sociological study of leisure of the 1960s, Bennett Berger pointed out its methodological shortcomings. According to Berger,

theoretical relevance is precisely what is missing from most of the contemporary work in the sociology of leisure. The sociology of leisure today is little else than a reporting of survey data on

what selected samples of individuals do with their time in which they are not working and the correlation of these data with conventional demographic variables. (1963, p. 28)

The situation described by Berger, contrasts sharply with that of the 1920s and 1930s, but unfortunately it very much resembles the one we face today. Although demographic variables used in today's analyses may be more varied than they were in the 1960s, much of current leisure discourse lacks theoretical breadth and conceptual anchorage.

The lack of theoretical focus, pointed out by Berger, may be in part related to an excessive emphasis put in modern survey research on random and representative sampling. According to Meyersohn, if the subject of leisure studies should shift from the duration to the process and meaning of leisure,

the unit of analysis should shift from the disembodied individual, randomly selected, to the various communities which provide the relevant context for leisure activities. Above all, leisure is a social phenomenon: the meaning and importance of leisure activities are provided by the groups in which activities are shared. These groups are systematically ignored in random sampling of individuals and can only be captured in research designs which treat as their unit of analysis the groups in which particular leisure interests occur. (1972, p. 227)

In this regard books with a specific community or sub-cultural focus, born out of the **Middletown** tradition, such as Hollingshead's *Elmtown's Youth* (1949) and Seeley, Sim and Looseley's *Crestwood Heights* (1956), make survey data "meaningful through their linkage to a theory of community or class or subculture or whatever the dominant focus of the book in question happens to be" (Berger, 1963, p. 27).

In our discussion we tried to assess the relative contribution of educational and social science writings of the 1920s and the 1930s to our understanding of modern leisure. Our preference clearly lies with the analytical writings of social scientists rather than the moralistic and prescriptive writings of the educators. It lies with theoretical and conceptual relevancy rather than superficial social commentary, and with methodological complexity rather than shallow descriptiveness. It remains to be seen to what extent these qualities, present in the pre-World War II and early post-war leisure research, continue to inform our present-day leisure inquiry.

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PART I: LEISURE IN CANADA

SECTION A: UNDERSTANDING LEISURE



Chapter 1

Defining Leisure

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Before you begin reading this chapter, take a few minutes and write down your own definition of leisure. As you read this chapter reflect on how your definition is similar to or different from those presented in the chapter.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, students will be able to

1. Understand why it is important to define leisure.
2. Understand the major Western concepts of leisure.
3. Understand the historical evolution of the leisure concept.
4. Be aware of non-Western views of leisure.
5. Develop their own definition of leisure.

INTRODUCTION

Imagine ... the bewilderment a naïve researcher suffers when discovering leisure may be free time, freedom, an activity, a state of mind, or a license of some sort... leisure studies is plagued by conceptual confusion... (Sylvester, 1990, p. 292)

In this chapter, we will not eliminate all the confusion, but hopefully by the end of the chapter, you will be able to understand the major ways that leisure has been defined in the Western world. Since Canada is an increasingly multicultural society we will very briefly introduce “non-Western” views of leisure, keeping in mind that we need to be cautious when equating non-Western views and words with Western views (see Chapter 21). Our approach will be historical in that we will start with earlier understandings of leisure and illustrate how the concept of leisure has evolved over time. An historical perspective helps us to understand how past ideas and events have shaped current ideas about leisure. The concepts in Table 1.1 will be covered.

Why should we define leisure? First, developing your own understanding of leisure has relevance for your life. Second, if you anticipate working in the leisure services field, it is important for you to develop an understanding of leisure as a foundation for your work. Third, an understanding of

Table 1.1

Concept	Key idea(s)
Classical leisure	A state of being; an attitude
Leisure as activity	Non-work activity
Leisure as free time	Time after work and existence tasks
Leisure as a symbol of social class	Conspicuous consumption
Leisure as a state of mind	An optimal psychological experience
Feminist leisure	Meaningful experience; enjoyment
Holistic leisure	Leisure in all of life



Etymological Background of Leisure

Etymology is concerned with where a word came from and the development of its meaning. The English word “leisure” derives from the Latin *licere* by way of the French, *leisure*. The root word, *licere*, which means to be allowed and implies freedom from restraint, also evolved into the English word “license” (Owens, 1981). Literally, leisure meant permission in regard to the opportunity provided when one was free from legal occupation. Most Roman writers employed *otium* to denote the idea of leisure. *Otium* was linked with contemplation and opportunity for freedom from both time and occupation (Arnold, 1991). The Greek equivalent of Latin’s *licere* and *otium* is *schole*, which can be traced to the same root as that of the Greek verb “to have” (Owens, 1981). de Grazia (1964, p. 10) elaborates: “The etymological root of *schole* meant to halt or cease, hence to have quiet or peace. Later it meant to have time to spare or, specially, time for oneself.” The notion of leisure was expressed positively, signifying that it was valued more highly than work, while work was viewed negatively as *ascholia*. Likewise, in Latin, business was *negotium*.

Latin and Greek notions of leisure were closely associated with education: in Greek leisure is *schole* and in Latin, *schola*, the English “school.” Therefore the word school, used to indicate the place where education takes place, comes from a word, which means leisure. Furthermore, the Greek concept of leisure is the origin of the division between the liberal arts and servile work. Liberal arts with the idea of education for its own sake, reflects the Greek notion of leisure.

the common definitions of leisure will be helpful to you when working with a diversity of Canadians who hold a variety of understandings of leisure.

THE CLASSICAL VIEW OF LEISURE: LEISURE AS A STATE OF BEING

The **classical view** emphasizes “contemplation, enjoyment of self in search of knowledge, debate, politics, and cultural enlightenment” (Murphy, 1974, p. 3). “Classical” refers to ancient civilizations, and, thus, in the Western world, it refers to the view of leisure in ancient societies such as Greece and Rome. In ancient Greece, there were clear distinctions between work, recreation, and leisure. Work was a means to provide for life’s needs, recreation was rest from work, and leisure was the noblest pursuit in life. The ideal lifestyle consisted of leisure, but this lifestyle was dependent on a society where slaves, who made up 80% of the population, did most of the work.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–322 BCE) believed that while work was important, leisure was an even more worthy endeavour: “Both occupation and leisure are necessary; but ... leisure is higher than occupation, and is the end to which occupation is directed” (**Politics**, trans. 1963, Book VIII, iii, 3). He wrote, “We do business in order that we may have leisure” (**Nicomachean Ethics**, trans. 1947, Book X, vii, 6). Rest and recreation were good, but not the highest good: “Happiness is not found in amusements... For amusement is a form of rest; but we need rest because we are not able to go on working without a break, and therefore it is not an end, since we take it as a means to further activity” (**Nicomachean Ethics**, X, vi, 3).

Aristotle equated leisure with “freedom from the necessity of labour” (**Politics**, II, ix, 2), thus the person of leisure was free from the need to work for life’s necessities and could focus on other things. For Aristotle, leisure, unlike recreation, was engaged in for its own sake: “We think of it [leisure] as having in itself intrinsic pleasure, intrinsic happiness, intrinsic felicity” (**Politics**, VIII, iii, 4). Leisure was closely related to **diagoge**, or cultivation of mind, and contemplation, or the search for truth. Aristotle viewed leisure as necessary for virtue, ethical development, and good government: “Leisure is a necessity, both for growth in goodness and for the pursuit of political activities” (**Politics**, VII, ix, 4). Education was to prepare a person for leisure and was to be distinguished from studies that prepared a person for work:

There are some branches of learning and education which ought to be studied with a view to the proper use of leisure in the cultivation of the mind ... these studies should be regarded as ends in themselves, while studies pursued with a view to occupation should be regarded merely as a means and matters of necessity. (**Politics**, VIII, iii, 6)

Although Aristotle’s view of leisure has received much attention, his view reflected that of aristocratic philosophers and a variety of perspectives on leisure probably existed in ancient Greek society (Sylvester, 1999).



How was Aristotle’s view of leisure related to his understanding of (1) work, (2) recreation, and (3) education? Drawing a diagram might be a helpful way to understand these relationships.

While a criticism of the Greek ideal of leisure was that it was based on a society supported by slavery, as the classical view developed and evolved it did not necessarily continue to be associated with slavery. In Roman society, **otium**, the Latin word for leisure, was linked to contemplation and freedom; however, over time, **otium** was viewed for *negotium*’s (work’s) sake.

The Greek ideal of leisure was also modified in early Christianity where it became associated with the contemplative or spiritual life. Augustine (354–440 CE), a theologian and bishop, noted that there were three types of life: the life of leisure, the life of action, and the combined life of action and leisure. All of these lives were worthwhile as long as the life of leisure did not ignore the needs of one’s neighbour and the life of action did not ignore the contemplation of God. For Augustine, leisure involved the “investigation and discovery of truth ... and no one is debarred from devoting himself to the pursuit of truth, for that involves a praiseworthy kind of leisure” (1972, Book XIX, ch. 19, p. 880).

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), a prominent theologian of the Middle Ages who brought together Aristotle’s thought with Christian teachings, located Aristotle’s notion of leisure and contemplation in the blessed vision of God. The contemplative understanding of leisure was also an important part of monastic culture, where the work of monks was united with the contemplative life of leisure (**otium**) (Leclercq, 1984). This tradition continued in the Roman Catholic theologian and philosopher Josef Pieper (1904–1997), who defined leisure as “a mental and spiritual attitude ... a condition of the soul ... a receptive attitude of mind, a contemplative attitude” in his book **Leisure: The Basis of Culture** (1963, pp. 40–41).

Today, the classical view of leisure is advocated by many in the Roman Catholic tradition (e.g., Doohan, 1990) who, like Pieper, see leisure as a spiritual attitude, and by leisure scholars, who see value in Aristotelian philosophy. For example, Sylvester (1990) has emphasized that classical leisure, unlike some more recent concepts of leisure, involved the virtue of moral judgment; it was important to use leisure rightly. Hemingway (1988) has highlighted that Aristotle viewed leisure as the arena through which an individual

developed character and participated in the affairs of the community.

The classical Western view of leisure has some similarities with the classical Hindu view of leisure (Kashyap, 1991). In Hinduism, a distinction is made between **Pravritti**, the active life, and **Nivritti**, the contemplative life, which is associated with leisure. **Nishkam-karma-yoga** or inner leisure is characterized by a relaxing peace and a mind free from turmoil.



Is the classical view of leisure relevant to today's society?

LEISURE AS ACTIVITY

The **leisure as activity** view of leisure may be defined as “non-work activity in which people engage during their free time—apart from obligations of work, family and society” (Murphy, 1974, p. 4). Historically, the activity view of leisure was usually a utilitarian view, that is, the activity was engaged in to achieve a benefit such as physical health. In this view, leisure has often been subservient to work and associated with a rhythm to life of work and recreation. More recently, the leisure-as-activity concept has not necessarily been a utilitarian view.

As mentioned earlier, in Roman society **otium** (leisure) began to be for *negotium*'s (work's) sake. Cicero (106–43 BCE) viewed leisure as “virtuous activities” by which a person “grows morally, intellectually, and spiritually” (as quoted by Stebbins, 1982, p. 268). Typical of Roman writers, he suggested a person is occupied in the work of the military, politics, or business and then re-creates (de Grazia, 1964). The classical view of leisure was gradually forgotten, work became the noblest activity, and leisure took the form of activity, or recreation, to re-create oneself to go back to work. This view was reinforced during the Renaissance (fourteenth to sixteenth century) and the Reformation (sixteenth century). During the Renaissance, as illustrated by the saying “a person is the measure of all things,” there was a focus upon the unlimited potential of humans and on the present world rather than life after death. As a result, work was given greater value and non-work activities were seen as important to create a sound body and mind.

The Protestant reformers (sixteenth century) rejected the classical and medieval distinction between the active (secular) life and the contemplative (spiritual) life. For them, all of life and work was sacred. For the reformer Martin Luther (1483–1546) every activity, including non-work activities, could be used to glorify God (Luther, 1965). John Calvin (1509–1564) was opposed to excesses but approved

of participation in the arts, games, and social parties as long as they contributed to the rhythm of life: “no where are we prohibited to laugh, or to be satiated with food, or to annex new possessions ... or to be delighted with musical harmony, or to drink wine” (1813, p. 316). The Puritans, who were enthusiastic reformers, frowned upon over-indulgence and destructive activities but celebrated life. While non-work activities often served work, as illustrated by Benjamin Colman's (1673–1747) comment that “we daily need some respite and diversion, without which, we dull our Powers; a little intermission sharpens 'em again” (as quoted in Miller & Johnson, 1963, p. 392), the use of leisure for instrumental purposes happily co-existed with enjoyment in the Puritan view (Johnson, 2009).

A modern proponent of the activity view of leisure was the French sociologist Joffre Dumazedier (1915–2002), who wrote: “Leisure is activity—apart from the obligations of work, family and society—to which the individual turns at will, for relaxation, diversion, or broadening his knowledge and his spontaneous social participation, the free exercise of his creative capacity” (1967, pp. 16–17).

Dumazedier believed that leisure had three functions: relaxation, entertainment, and development of personality.

Based upon an activity understanding of leisure, Robert Stebbins has recently developed the concepts of **serious leisure, casual leisure, and project-based leisure** (see Chapter 8). He defined serious leisure as “the systematic pursuit of ... an activity that participants find so substantial and interesting that ... they launch themselves on a career centered on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge, and experience” (1999, p. 69). He identified three types of serious leisure: amateurs (e.g., amateur artists), hobbyists (e.g., collectors), and volunteers (e.g., social welfare volunteers). The distinctive qualities of serious leisure are as follows:

- a. the need to persevere in the activity;
- b. finding a career of achievement or involvement in the activity;
- c. making a significant personal effort in the activity;
- d. obtaining long-lasting tangible or intangible benefits or rewards through the activity;
- e. strong identification with the chosen activity; and
- f. a unique ethos or social world of the participants who engage in the activity.

In contrast, Stebbins defined casual leisure as “an immediately, intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to

enjoy it” (1997, p. 18). Casual leisure may involve play, relaxation, passive or active entertainment, conversation, sensory stimulation, or casual volunteering. The central characteristic of casual leisure is pleasure.

Project-based leisure is “a short-term, moderately complicated, ...though infrequent, creative undertaking carried out in free time” (Stebbins, 2005, p. 2), which involves considerable effort and planning and sometimes knowledge and skill. These may be one-shot projects such as investigating one’s genealogy or occasional projects such as decorating one’s home for Christmas every year.

Defined as activity, leisure may have political or social purposes. Leisure may be seen as a form of political practice where everyday leisure activities can challenge or weaken dominant belief systems, thereby serving as a form of resistance (Shaw, 2001; see Chapter 7). Mair (2002/2003) has used the term civil leisure to describe people who use their non-work time for social activism concerning important societal issues.

The activity view of leisure has relevance in Islam (Martin & Mason, 2004). The prophet Mohammed (570–633 CE) stated: “Recreate your hearts hour after hour, for the

tired hearts go blind” and “Teach your children swimming, shooting, and horseback riding” (Ibrahim, 1991, p. 206). In Islam, leisure activities fulfill three desires:

- a. amusement, relaxation and, laughter;
- b. rhythmic tunes and the experience of objects through the senses; and
- c. the desire to wonder, learn, and gain knowledge.

LEISURE AS FREE TIME

We have also thought of leisure as **free time**. This is a quantitative perspective that defines leisure as “that portion of time which remains when time for work and basic requirements for existence have been satisfied” (Murphy, 1974, p. 3). Life may be divided into existence (taking care of biological needs such as sleeping and eating), subsistence (work), and leisure (discretionary or non-obligated time).

In preindustrial societies, time was viewed cyclically; that is, time was rooted in the rhythms of the natural world. People’s lives revolved around sunrise and sunset, the change of seasons, and the planting and harvesting of crops. They were unlikely to separate work and leisure within their daily lives, and the demands of work were often lightened by songs and storytelling. Traditional gatherings like a barn-raising or a quilting bee possessed both leisure and work-like components. As a result, notions of work and leisure blended together.

The Industrial Revolution (1760–1830), however, changed everything. Unlike previous eras, the work of the industrial age was focused not on the farm, but in the factory. People began to move to the cities to tend the machines. Work was now situated **in space** at the factory and structured **in time** as the worker had to be at the workplace at a certain time to perform work duties. Facilitated by the development of clocks, work could be assigned to specific times, and work could be measured precisely. Time began to be viewed mechanically, and this linear notion of time began to influence and change people’s understanding of leisure. Time away from work was free of the often unpleasant demands of the workspace, so it was called **free time**. This free time became synonymous with leisure.

When leisure is viewed as free time, the amount of leisure a person has depends on factors such as how long a person lives, when a person retires, the length of a person’s work week, whether a person has a full-time job, a part-time job or a second job, the length of vacations and other paid time off. Furthermore, the size and timing of the units of free time are as important as the total amount of free time. For example, free time is different for a person who works eight



What Is Recreation?

There is generally more consensus about the meaning of recreation than the meaning of leisure. The English word “recreation” is derived from the Latin word *recreatio*, which means restoration or recovery. This notion implies the re-creation of energy or the restoration of the ability to perform a specific function and therefore presupposes that some other activity has depleted one’s energy or has negatively affected the ability to function.

de Grazia (1964) defined recreation as “activity that rests men from work often giving them a change (distraction, diversion) and restores (re-creates) them for work” (p. 233). Recreation may also be used to restore a person for volunteer, family, education, or health purposes. Unlike some understandings of leisure, such as the classical view where leisure is an end in itself, recreation is not engaged in “for its own sake,” but represents a means to an end. For example, Kelly (1990) defined recreation as “voluntary non-work activity that is organized for the attainment of personal and social benefits including restoration and social cohesion” (p. 27). Therefore we can conclude that the concept of recreation is similar to the leisure as activity concept.



How do you see the relationship between the concepts of leisure and recreation?

hours a day for five days per week than a person who works ten hours a day for four days per week.

This view of leisure as free time influences how we think and talk about leisure today. We talk about leisure time as time away from work. Even the most rudimentary examination of our daily lives tells us that this view is overly simplistic. Is leisure simply the time when you are not eating, sleeping, studying, or in class? The free time view of leisure reduces leisure to a quantity of time and says nothing about the quality of that time. It assumes that more free time equates with more leisure.

The Jewish concept of Sabbath has some similarities to the notion of leisure as free time. The Jewish Scriptures command the Jewish people not to work on the Sabbath. For example, Exodus 20:8–11 reads, “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.” The Sabbath is a time of no work but also a time of celebration: “not a date but an atmosphere” (Heschel, 1951, p. 21). Thus, it does not completely fit within a quantitative free-time understanding of leisure but also includes a qualitative dimension (Heintzman, 2006). Sabbath was not only the foundation of Jewish life, but it also provided a more democratic form of leisure than in Greek society. Aristotle’s leisure was based on the ancient Greek institution of slavery, whereas the Jewish Torah declared that everyone, including male and female servants, had an inalienable right to Sabbath (Gordis, 1982). The Jewish Sabbath was adopted and modified in the Christian Sunday and Islamic Friday. While it is often suggested that the roots of the Western concept of leisure are in ancient Greek society, some argue that it is equally rooted in the ancient Jewish tradition of the Sabbath with its organization of life into seven days and a valuing of leisure (Crabtree, 1982; Trafton, 1985).



Draw a circle for your average weekday. Divide the circle according to the time you devote to existence, subsistence, and leisure. List your main activities in each category.

LEISURE AS A SYMBOL OF SOCIAL CLASS: CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION

The concept of leisure as a **symbol of social class** views “leisure as a way of life for the rich elite” (Murphy, 1974, p. 92). In 1899, the American sociologist Thorstein Veblen wrote a classic book titled *The Theory of the Leisure Class* in which he questioned the intrinsic character of leisure activities and suggested that leisure behaviour was influ-

enced by the desire to impress others and distinguish oneself from other people. He defined leisure as “non-productive consumption of time. Time is consumed non-productively (1) from a sense of the unworthiness of productive work, and (2) as an evidence of pecuniary ability to afford a life of idleness” (Veblen, 1899/1953, p. 46). He used the terms “conspicuous leisure” and “conspicuous consumption” to suggest that the visible display of leisure and consuming was more important than engaging in the leisure activity for its own sake. Thus, leisure had a symbolic nature. He suggested that wealthy classes throughout time have been identified by their possessions and by their use of leisure while lower classes emulate or imitate the wealthy classes so that society becomes increasingly consumptive (see Chapter 26). An article in the *Financial Post* titled “Ridiculously, Deliciously Conspicuous Consumption” reflects Veblen’s theory (Siddiqi, 2003). The subtitle of the article illustrates the emulation principle: “Imagine that money’s no object, that you’re one of the elite making ultra-luxury goods the hot trend of the season. Now go ahead and drool.” The items described included an \$85,000 designer piano and bejewelled underwear worth \$11 million.

In an ethnographic study titled *The Native Leisure Class: Consumption and Cultural Creativity in the Andes*, Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld (1999) documents how the sale of textiles gave rise to an indigenous leisure class in Otavalo, a market town in northern Ecuador. The merchant elite has become a leisure class characterized by the consumption of both local (e.g., fajas) and global (e.g., televisions, automobiles) products. Wealthy Otavalena women show off their wealth by wearing a new faja (sash) for every social occasion, thereby creating an overt symbol of class division. Consumption has become culturally important and a primary way to obtain stature in that the wealthy display their identity through their conspicuous consumption rather than through their work.



Is the theory of the leisure class applicable to our society?

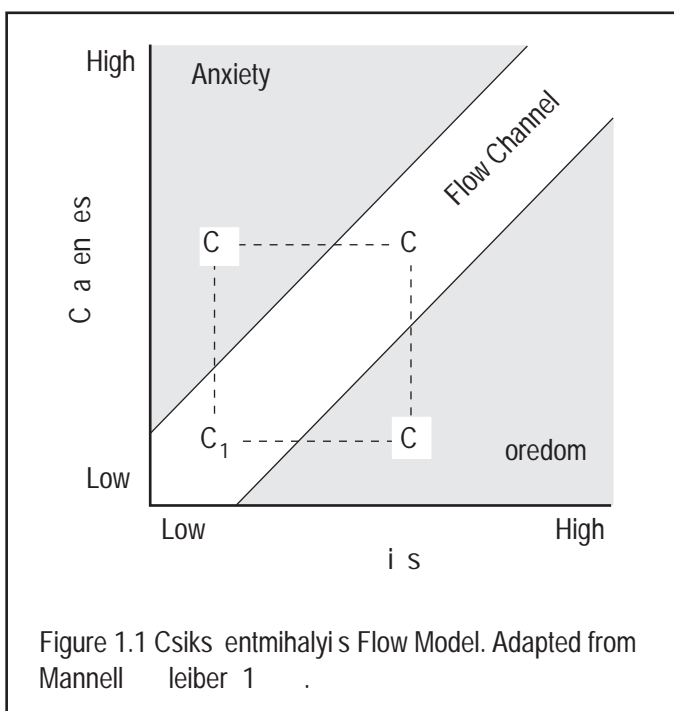
LEISURE AS A STATE OF MIND: A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE

The state of mind view of leisure, also known as **subjective leisure or leisure as psychological experience**, became prominent in the 1980s. It may be defined as “an experience that results from recreation engagements” (Driver & Tocher, 1970, p. 10); however, it often focuses on the optimal leisure experience. This psychological experience can include properties such as the following:

- a. emotions and moods;
- b. levels of intensity, such as relaxation, arousal, activation;
- c. cognitive components, such as ideas and images;
- d. perceptions of how quickly time is passing;
- e. self-consciousness and self-awareness;
- f. levels of absorption, attention, and concentration;
- g. feelings of competence in regards to knowledge or skill;
- h. and a sense of freedom. (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997)

The state-of-mind view defines leisure as an overriding experience that is not defined in contrast to work, but rather certain conditions are necessary to experience it.

The state-of-mind view is founded upon psychology. The psychologist William James introduced the term **stream of consciousness** in 1890 to refer to mental experiences or conscious states perceived as ever-changing and continuous. Another psychologist, Abraham Maslow, suggested that self-actualizers experienced peak experiences, which he defined as “moments of highest happiness and fulfillment” (1968, p. 73). Building on the work of psychologists, an early leisure scholar, John Neulinger defined pure leisure as: “A state of mind brought about by an activity freely engaged in and done for its own sake” (1981, p. 18). The two criteria for this experience are **perceived freedom** (the perception that a person is engaging in the activity because one has the choice to do so and desires to do it) and **intrinsic motivation**



What Is Play?

As we will see in Chapter 2 by Henle on play, leisure as a state of mind shares many traits with play: intrinsic motivation, free choice, suspension of reality, and positive affect.

Johann Huizinga (1955, p. 13) defined play as “a free activity standing quite consciously outside ‘ordinary life’ as being not ‘serious’ but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly.”



How do you see the relationship between the concepts of leisure and play?

(the individual gains satisfaction from the activity itself and not from an external reward).

Another psychological concept frequently associated with the state-of-mind view of leisure is the theory of *flow*. The social psychologist Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi (1975) proposed that flow experiences were intensely absorbing experiences where the challenge of an activity matched the skill level of the individual so that the person lost track of both time and awareness of self (C_1 and C_4 on Figure 1.1). If a person’s skills were much higher than the challenges of the activity, the person would experience boredom (C_2), while if the challenges were much higher than the skills a person would experience anxiety (C_3).

Jing Jie, the highest goal in life and highest pursuit of Chinese Taoist leisure, has been suggested to be similar to flow (Wang & Stringer, 2000). In Taoism, **Jing Jie**, an essence characterized by happiness and joyfulness that underlies all organic life, cannot be pursued but is a benefit of participation in activities such as martial arts, creative arts, or meditation. The Chinese experience of **rm**, a fascinating, enchanting, and absorbing experience, has also been shown to be similar to leisure as psychological experience (Walker & Deng, 2003/2004).

The state-of-mind view of leisure has been criticized as being concerned with private psychological experiences characterized by contentment, satisfaction, and well-being with little to say about the ethics and morality of these experiences (Sylvester, 1990). For example, participation in a criminal activity may provide an optimal psychological experience but not be ethical (see Chapter 18). Furthermore, the state-of-mind perspective has been criticized because of its emphasis upon optimal experience as an ideal outcome. This perspective seems to neglect the importance of less intense, but equally important, experiences like relaxation and “just being” (Kleiber, 2000). As Kleiber suggested, positive emotions can arise from relaxation as much as from action.



Do you agree with Sylvester's and Kleiber's critiques? Why or why not?

FEMINIST LEISURE: MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE

The contemporary women's movement emerged in the 1960s but it was not until the late 1980s that much attention was devoted to women's leisure (Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw, & Freysinger, 1996; see Chapter 20). While there are a variety of feminist perspectives, all views stress that women are exploited and oppressed, and that women have a universal right to leisure. Feminist theory is critical of the traditional views of leisure (i.e., free time, activity) because they are built on premises that in many cases do not apply to women. For example, the free-time view of leisure is based on a duality of paid work and leisure that is not necessarily applicable to some women whose work is at home, nor even to those who work outside the home. Also some women feel they are not entitled to, or have, time for leisure. Feminist theory also critiques the activity concept of leisure because women often have obligations intertwined with "recreational activities"; for example, caring for children while swimming. Thus work and leisure may occur simultaneously, while leisure activities are frequently fragmented by the carrying out of responsibilities.

Furthermore, there are unique constraints on women's participation in leisure activities (see Chapter 9). Intrapersonal constraints include an ethic of care where women feel responsibility to care for others—their children, parents, spouse—sometimes to the point of feeling they have no right to leisure, ultimately limiting their leisure access. Interpersonal constraints, such as social control by others, and structural constraints, such as fear for personal safety and lack of provided opportunities to participate, also place limits on women's activity participation. Meanwhile, leisure as psychological experience is criticized as being focused too much on the individual with not enough recognition of situational and social factors (Henderson et al., 1996).

The result of much feminist research on leisure has led to an enhanced understanding of leisure as **meaningful experience** characterized by **enjoyment** (Henderson et al., 1996). These meaningful experiences may be found in many aspects of life. Often, meaningful experience is associated with time for self to relax and do nothing, affiliative leisure that involves relationships with other people such as friends and family, and autonomy where one can express oneself through self-determined (as opposed to determined by other people) or agentic leisure. Because meaningful experience is emphasized on this model, the activity, social setting, or physical location is seen as a leisure container in which the

experience of leisure may take place. Feminists also speak of leisure enablers, the opposite of leisure constraints, which allow and facilitate leisure experiences. An example of a leisure enabler is a sense of entitlement to leisure. Leisure may also provide women with the opportunity to engage in acts of resistance that challenge the dominant values of society and thereby lead to women's empowerment.

Feminist observations about intrapersonal (e.g., ethic of care) and interpersonal (e.g., social control by others) constraints on women's leisure also exist in non-Western cultures. For example, Tsai (2006, 2008, 2010) used the feminist perspective to examine the leisure practices of Taiwanese women. Confucian teachings, prevalent in Taiwan, support a patriarchal society where a women's leisure is constrained by perceptions of women as passive and submissive, responsible for childrearing and domestic labour, and inherently and biologically inferior to men. Detailed regulations exist for women's leisure (e.g., women are discouraged from going out alone during leisure time) and leisure revolves around children and family. Thus, gender inequality in contemporary Taiwanese leisure settings is primarily due to premodern patriarchy and gender relations, and not lack of opportunity or individual obstacles. Despite the influence of Western feminism, Taiwanese women experience social pressure to conform to traditional roles in regards to leisure participation.



Do you agree with feminist theory's critique of traditional views of leisure? Why or why not?

HOLISTIC LEISURE: LEISURE AS A TOTAL WAY OF LIFE

All of the definitions offered here suggest leisure is complex. It may be that there is more to leisure than any and all of these definitions suggest. Consider the notion of **holistic leisure**: within this understanding, **leisure is a total way of life** that eliminates the dichotomy between work and leisure. Holism recognizes that everything we do and how we do it is interrelated and affected by the other elements of our lives. Leisure may be experienced within the various contexts of life such as family, education, religion, or work. Leisure is fused with satisfying work and is continuous rather than fragmented. Thus, the holistic concept blends leisure as an end, as in the classical view, with leisure as a means, as in the activity view. It combines a focus on "being" with a focus on "doing" and thus reflects a return to a more traditional way of life (Kaplan, 1974).

The basis of holistic leisure has existed for centuries, but it was conceptualized during the 1960s and 1970s in

response to a variety of social influences (Murphy, 1974), such as counter-cultural movements (e.g., the hippie movement), an increasing emphasis upon holistic understandings where the whole is seen as more than the sum of the parts, a crisis of identity and meaning when people were trying to find meaning in their work and in society, feelings of despair resulting from the Vietnam war, the fragmentation of life, and rapid change as documented in Toffler's (1971) book **Future Shock**. Historically societies tended to be holistic, but in the feudal and preindustrial period, social roles and elements of culture began to become distinguished and then in the industrial era work and leisure were clearly delineated. In many ways, holistic leisure returns to the preindustrial period in which work and leisure were simply different facets of everyday life.

A number of factors in the last few decades, most relating to the changing nature of work, have led to the possible development of a holistic integration of work and leisure (Goodale & Godbey, 1988; see also Chapter 11). These factors include the following:

- a search for authentic experiences at work and elsewhere
- the humanization of work
- a shift from the manufacturing to the service sector
- a rise in professionalism
- a broadening of the labour force with more women and more part-time workers
- removing of work from the workplace through technology such as computers, which reverses the trend of the Industrial Revolution when work was moved from the home to the factory

All of these factors make it more likely to experience elements of leisure in work and to integrate work and leisure into a holistic lifestyle.

Holistic expressions of leisure may be seen in preindustrial societies, such as ancient Israel when leisure involved components of time (Sabbath), activity (festivals), place (the Promised Land), attitude (faith), and state of being (physical and spiritual rest; Crabtree, 1982); in the monastic life where there was a unity of work and leisure as monks integrated both manual and intellectual work with the contemplative life of leisure (**otium** (Leclercq, 1984); and in the lives of many women, especially those working at home for whom work and leisure coexist. Another example is North American aboriginal peoples who developed a culture based on a close association with the land and a cyclical, holistic world view. For aboriginal people, leisure is not a separate segment of life, but is linked to all life situations such as birth and

death (Reid & Welke, 1998), and is reflected in cultural ceremonies, celebrations, and festivals (McDonald & McAvoy, 1997).



Is it possible to practice the holistic concept of leisure in contemporary North American society?

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we reviewed several different definitions of leisure. Some of you have probably already developed your own understanding of leisure, while others may only be confused by the multiplicity of definitions. If so, how do you go about developing your own understanding of leisure? Here are a few suggestions: First, if you think semantic faithfulness is important—that is, that the etymological background of a word is important in deciding how we understand a word—then the classical view of leisure needs consideration. Second, some people suggest leisure is personally defined. Whether it is possible for leisure to be whatever one thinks it is may depend on the way you see the relationship between ideas and reality. Different possibilities exist: ideas and reality are the same; ideas approximate reality; and reality is determined by our mind. If you believe in the third possibility, then you are more likely to accept that leisure may be personally defined. This brings us to a third consideration: how important are shared definitions of leisure in determining your definition? Each of the definitions of leisure presented above is a shared definition of leisure, as numerous people have shaped each of them. If we do not have shared meanings then communication becomes difficult and confusion might result in the delivery of leisure services. It has been suggested that leisure is a postmodern concept with multiple meanings (Henderson, 2008). Is it possible to have more than one definition of leisure? Are all of the definitions presented in this chapter referring to the same phenomenon or are they describing related but different phenomenon? Can one word, “leisure,” be used to describe a variety of related but different phenomena, or should we be more precise in our use of language? For example, as a person working in the leisure services field, one participant in your program might view leisure as free time and another participant might view leisure as a state of mind. Should we use the word “leisure” with both of them to describe these different phenomena? Perhaps the analogy of snow is helpful. For someone in a climate where snow is a rare occurrence such as the southernmost parts of Canada, one word might be sufficient to describe what snow is. But in the colder regions of Canada a variety of terms are used to describe it more

specifically, terms such as powder snow, corn snow, fine-grained snow, and wet snow, which are helpful especially if we are waxing our skis. Similarly, should we be precise and when possible use terms such as “classical leisure,” “leisure activity,” “leisure time,” “leisure as a symbol of social class,” “leisure as a state of mind,” “feminist leisure,” and “holistic leisure,” rather than simply use “leisure” to identify the phenomenon we are talking about? In other words, should we use different terms for different phenomena? Hopefully these considerations will be helpful to you in formulating and articulating your own understanding of leisure.



You began this chapter by writing your own definition of leisure. Now that you have read this chapter would you change your definition? How? Why?

KEY TERMS

Classical leisure
 Feminist leisure
 Holistic leisure
 Leisure as activity
 Leisure as free time
 Leisure as a symbol of social class
 Play
 Recreation
 State of mind leisure

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