

Introduction to Recreation and Leisure



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Introduction to Recreation and Leisure

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Editor



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Preface

Welcome to recreation and leisure studies. This introductory course textbook provides you with a broad view of one of the top industries for the 21st century. Recreation and leisure programs serve people 24/7/365 and are part of a global economy. These services are vital to the lives of individuals, families, and communities and can provide you with a challenging career path.

This book invites you to take an amazing journey as you explore the world of recreation and leisure. Your escorts are 34 professors and professionals in the field from throughout the United States and Canada. Their careers and passions mirror the various aspects of this profession. From rising stars, experts, leading thinkers, and icons in the field, the contributing authors serve as your personal guides as you begin your undergraduate studies of this exciting field. Their unique viewpoints provide a foundation for understanding the field upon which your undergraduate studies will build.

Introduction to Recreation and Leisure showcases the authors who have made incredible contributions in providing this unprecedented view of recreation and leisure. The goal of this book is to illustrate the wealth of opportunities within this diverse profession.

For students pursuing a career or considering recreation or leisure as a potential career choice, this book offers vital information from which you can begin to make informed choices. We want to provide you with a big picture of this diverse profession so that in your later studies you can explore specific areas in depth to gain an understanding of recreation and leisure as the following:

- A profession that offers lifetime career satisfaction or maybe an entry-level start on a career path with many options
- A contemporary industry that provides employment opportunities in a wide variety of fields
- A worldwide phenomenon that drives most of the world's economies

ORGANIZATION

Introduction to Recreation and Leisure is divided into three parts. Part I, Foundations of Recreation and Leisure, provides the foundation of this industry, including an introduction, history, and philosophical concepts. Part II, Leisure and Recreation As a Multifaceted Delivery System, introduces you to different sectors and areas of the field. Part III, Recreation and Leisure Service Areas, presents the different types of programming found in recreation and leisure services. These interest areas include recreational sports; fitness, health, and wellness; outdoor and adventure; and culture and the arts. The final chapter addresses the nature of the profession and what it takes to become a professional.

FEATURES

Several unique and useful features are included in the book.

- **Chapter objectives.** Each chapter lists the many important concepts you will learn and understand.
- **Outstanding graduates.** Students who have graduated from recreation and leisure programs and gone on to successful careers have been highlighted. They share insights and advice on recreation and leisure as a career.
- **Web sites.** Each chapter includes a list of Web sites that provide additional information for you to explore.
- **Glossary.** Important terms are printed in boldface in the text, and the definitions are included in the glossary at the end of the book.
- **NRPA standards.** You will find a list of competencies in the appendix.

ANCILLARIES

Three types of ancillaries are available to supplement the information presented in the textbook:

- **Instructor guide.** The instructor guide includes chapter overviews, chapter objectives, discussion questions, and learning activities.
- **Test package.** The test package includes a variety of questions, from true/false to short answer. Instructors can create their own tests.
- **Presentation package.** A Microsoft® PowerPoint presentation package includes key points from the chapters. Instructors may use the presentation package to supplement their lectures. The presentation package may be adapted to suit each instructor's lecture content and style.

Introduction to Recreation and Leisure presents a comprehensive view of the multifaceted, expansive field of recreation and leisure. It is hoped you enjoy learning about recreation and leisure, reading what the principal thinkers and leaders have to say about the field, and meeting outstanding graduates from universities across the United States and Canada who share their career experiences. Let's enter the world of recreation and leisure.

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PART I

Foundations of Recreation and Leisure



CHAPTER 1

Power, Promise, Potential, and Possibilities of Parks, Recreation, and Leisure

Ellen O'Sullivan



Photo courtesy of San Jose Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services

You can tell more about a
society by how it plays rather
than by how it works.

*A. Bartlett Giamatti, president of Yale
University (1978-1986), commissioner
of Major League Baseball (1989)*

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Appreciate the role that parks, recreation, and leisure plays in all facets of life for all people
- Identify the different types of benefits associated with parks, recreation, and leisure
- Appreciate the unique qualities and opportunities afforded by this professional field

WHAT IF?

What if there were an aspect of life with promise and potential to empower people to grow and thrive; provide communities with facilities and services that enhance quality of life; connect people both locally and globally; preserve and protect our natural, historic, and cultural heritage; and contribute to a prosperous economy? What if there was an aspect of life so central to human existence that people spent more time engaged in this critical life pursuit than working or attending school combined? What if there was a category of the economy that accounted for substantial expenditures and appeared to be an ever growing economic force? What if there were a variety of career opportunities associated with this essential aspect of behavior and major component of the economy that created opportunities for personal growth, professional flexibility, sense of purpose, and resourcefulness on the part of the professionals in that field?

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND LEISURE

Welcome to the opportunities, options, pursuits, and possibilities of parks and recreation. The shortened term for this profession, which encompasses myriad pursuits and passions such as sports, tourism, health and wellness, adventure recreation, environmental preservation and management, is generally *parks, recreation, and leisure*.

The challenge in learning more about this field as a personal pursuit, professional career, or a combination of both is to grasp the size and significance of the world known as parks, recreation, and leisure. This field is powerful because its activities and pursuits are truly everywhere, touching the lives of all human beings, and occur 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for the 52 weeks of a year. The potential and promise of parks, recreation, and leisure are simultaneously

challenging to grasp and critical to the well-being of individuals, communities, societies, and the world. The benefits of this field ensure that we have sufficient clean air and water to sustain life, opportunities to live purposeful and pleasurable lives, memories of happy times with friends and family, and options and opportunities for health and well-being throughout our lives.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND LEISURE: EVERYWHERE, EVERYONE, ALL THE TIME

Well-worn soccer balls skirt the streets of villages around the world, whether the villages are wracked with strife or disaster or support manicured fields and youth and adult teams in matching uniforms. The five rings of the Olympic Games burn brightly every four years as tens of thousands of athletes representing hundreds of countries from around the world gather in the spirit of competition and unity. Street merchants in Bangkok play a checker-like board game hastily constructed of cardboard and discarded bottle caps. Visitors from around the world marvel at the migration of wildlife across the plains of the Serengeti while other visitors admire the exceptional beauty and unique geological features of Gros Morne National Park in Newfoundland. People travel great distances to snorkel in Belize, fish in New Zealand, explore the Louvre, or observe the changing of the guard in Ottawa or at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington, DC. Historic sites and natural areas around the world are preserved and protected so that people can engage firsthand in a natural, cultural, or historic awareness and appreciation.

Parks, recreation, and leisure is everywhere—in the far reaches of the Sahara, the crowded seashores of California, the Broadway theaters and museums of New York City, the Hell's Gate Airtram, and the Classic Chinese Garden of Vancouver. Leisure pursuits take place in cities and towns, small villages, the countryside, and mega-urban centers. Leisure experiences occur inside buildings or outside and

sometimes in either location. For example, basketball is played either indoors or out, and band concerts, too, take place in buildings or in parks. The array of places is extensive, including auditoriums, zoos, churches, and casinos. There are even health clubs and spas located in airports, rock-climbing walls in retail establishments, and, of course, play areas at fast-food restaurants and even some furniture stores. Parks and recreation can be and is found everywhere—all the places and spaces in which people gather to play, enjoy, and relax.

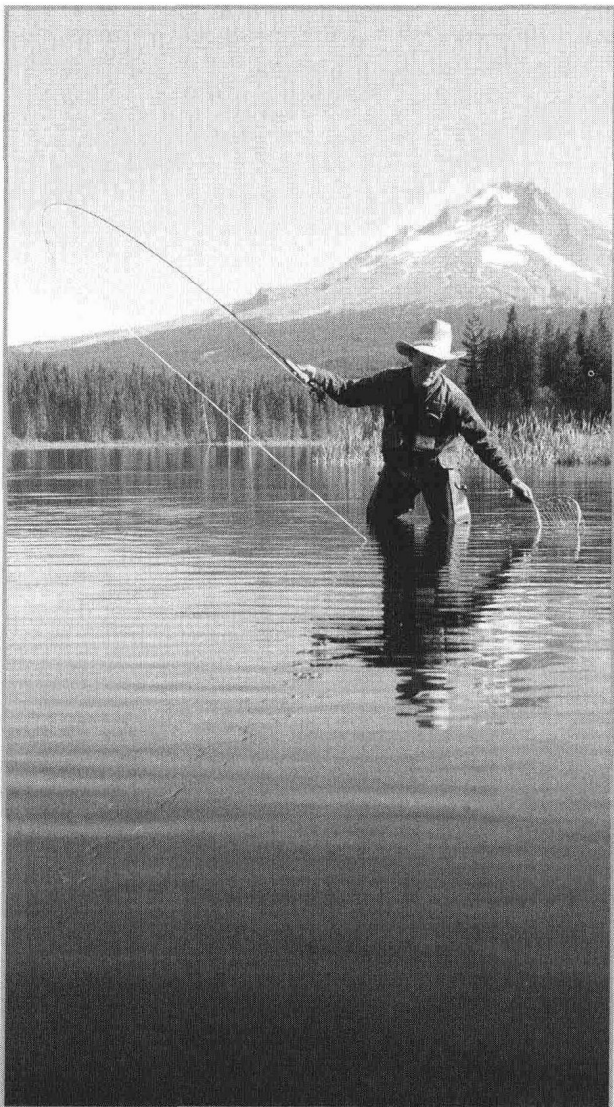
Another dimension of the “everywhere” quality of parks and recreation is illustrated in the fact that a variety of organizations provide park, recreation, and leisure services. The delivery of services is not

limited to just one type of organization. For example, one golf course might be under the governance of a city or state, and another similar course might be a private country club for members only, while a third course might be managed by a corporation. Organizations offering adventure pursuits can run the gamut from outdoor leadership training by a nonprofit organization such as a local YMCA to travel companies designing and offering adventure experiences around the globe. Parks and recreation services and facilities are provided by all types of organizations and businesses.

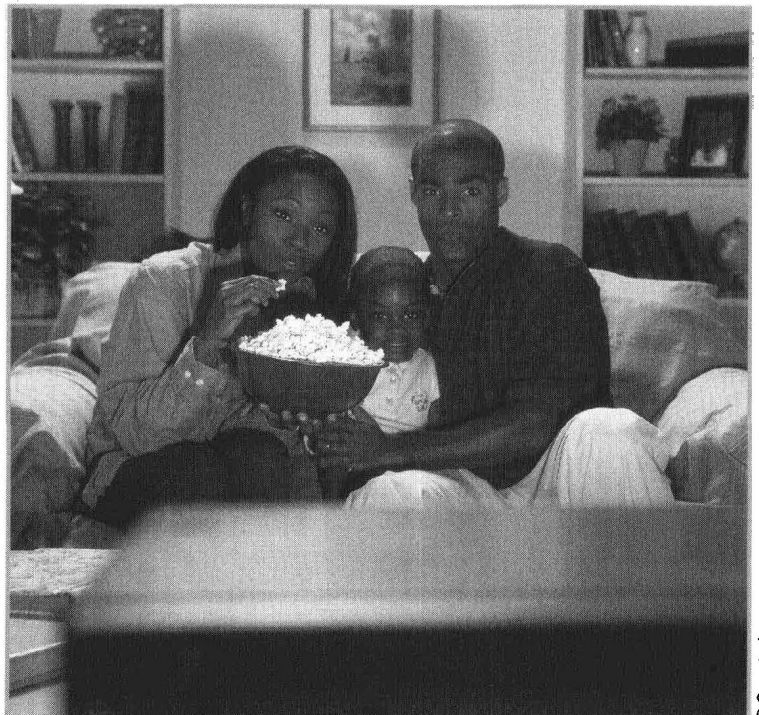
It's for Everyone

Consider the ways in which parks, recreation, and leisure touches the lives of everyone, all ages, life stages, cultures, social classes, and genders. Recall personal experiences or observations and identify the people participating in a recreation activity or spending time in a natural setting. These might include the following:

- College students playing coed volleyball in the school's intramural league
- A 10-year-old taking beginning drawing lessons at the community center



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Recreation can take place indoors or outdoors, at home or in a park, and at any time of day.

- A parent and toddler enrolled in the movement class at the local YMCA
- Female friends spending time together at a day spa
- Families picnicking while enjoying an outdoor band concert
- A youth hockey team practicing in the early morning on the same rink where up-and-coming young pro players ready themselves for the NHL at evening events
- A 12-year-old going away to camp for the first time
- Guys playing pickup basketball at the local park
- An adolescent testing self-sufficiency on an Outward Bound trip
- Grandparents taking grandchildren on a trip to the Grand Canyon
- A teen group teaching retirees how to surf the net
- A stressed-out adult watching the sunset
- Employees attending the annual company outing to a theme park
- Special Olympic athletes crossing the finish line with elation that brings smiles to the faces of participants and spectators alike
- The over-60 softball team exhibiting a desire to win similar to that of the youth soccer league players
- Both fledgling and gifted artists displaying work in the same community art show

An adage often used by park and recreation professionals employed in the community sector is that parks and recreation takes people "from the cradle to the grave," and while that is not the most appealing description, it does reinforce the presence of parks, recreation, and leisure in everyone's life.

All the Time

Although the pursuits of open space, physical activity, and social outings happen all the time—any month of the year, any day of the week, and throughout all the life stages of human existence. Some recreation activities are associated mainly with the summer or the winter, and holidays sometimes serve as an impetus. For example, the New Year with its emphasis on resolutions moti-

vates people to become more physically active or seek out new experiences. Independence Day celebrations are commonly accompanied by picnics, concerts, fireworks, trips, and other outings, and Halloween brings out the childlike spirit in young and old alike with parties and parades.

The physical characteristics of different seasons provide opportunities for year-round activity. The first thaw finds people tending lawns and starting gardens. Summer draws people to mountains, lakes, streams, or seashores. Winter gives way to skiing, skating, curling, and snowboarding. People's passions for certain activities have influenced the "all the time" approach to parks and recreation. At one time, tennis or soccer could only be played in warm weather, just as ice-skating and hockey once required cold weather. Indoor facilities and lighted playing fields and trails expand the opportunity for parks and recreation services to "all the time."

Recreation is pursued 24 hours a day as well. Ski areas open at first light to give would-be lift ticket purchasers the chance to check out snow conditions. Health clubs open at 4:30 a.m. enabling early risers to work out before heading to work. Heavily industrialized communities offer adult leagues and activities to accommodate the traditional three shifts of factory work. The city of Las Vegas with its "Beyond the Neon" slogan offers unusual times for programs and activities because many residents work shifts in the casinos, which, of course, operate around the clock. YMCAs and community centers offer sleepovers, which provide not only fun and excitement for children but also leisure time for parents. Midnight basketball continues to put recreation on the 24-hour timetable.

Parks, recreation, and leisure is "all the time" in an additional way. Play is essential for children. From infancy and through adolescence, they acquire important life skills through recreation and leisure activities and experiences. The peek-a-boo games so popular with babies and the Duck, Duck, Goose of almost everyone's early childhood teach important social connections and interactions. The same holds true at the other end of the life cycle, as recreation provides stress reduction for overworked adults and social support for older people living on their own.

Parks and Recreation: It Makes Up Most of Our Time

People sometimes discount the role and the importance of unobligated, or discretionary, time and