



Celebrating, challenging and re-envisioning serious leisure

Karen Gallant , Susan Arai & Bryan Smale

To cite this article: Karen Gallant , Susan Arai & Bryan Smale (2013) Celebrating, challenging and re-envisioning serious leisure, Leisure/Loisir, 37:2, 91-109, DOI: [10.1080/14927713.2013.803678](https://doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2013.803678)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2013.803678>



Published online: 06 Jun 2013.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 343



View related articles [↗](#)



Citing articles: 3 View citing articles [↗](#)

Celebrating, challenging and re-envisioning serious leisure

Karen Gallant^{a*}, Susan Arai^b, and Bryan Smale^b

^a*School of Health and Human Performance, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 1T8 Canada;* ^b*Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G1 Canada*

(Received May 2012, final version received March 2013)

In this article, we explore and expand theorizing about serious leisure examining its complexities and contradictions and its potential for the social sphere, applying particularly the critical lens of feminist communitarianism. Beginning with a critique of the reliance on activity-based definitions of serious leisure in empirical research and conceptualizations of serious leisure as embedded in a series of dualisms such as positive–negative, work–leisure and serious–casual, we suggest serious leisure be re-envisioned as a complex *experience* influencing and influenced by the sociopolitical context. We also explore the functional, normative nature of previous literature on serious leisure and the possibility of re-envisioning serious leisure as an expressive and creative experience that nurtures diversity. Advocating for increased attention to the sociopolitical context and the adoption of a critical lens, we suggest that serious leisure experiences may be gendered, commodified and stratified. We advocate for a more complex analysis of serious leisure linked to social and political spheres and celebrate its potential as an avenue for nurturing social ties and building identity. Finally, based on the preceding analysis, we offer a re-envisioned definition of serious leisure for consideration.

Keywords: serious leisure; equity; diversity; feminist communitarianism; socio-political

Dans cet article, nous explorons la complexité, les contradictions et le potentiel des loisirs sérieux dans les domaines sociaux, nous plaçons aussi une attention particulière sur l'application de l'objectif essentiel du communautarisme féministe. Nous commençons cette étude par une critique de la dépendance à l'égard basé sur l'activité des définitions de loisir sérieux dans la recherche empirique et la conceptualisation dualiste (positif – négatif, travail et loisirs, sérieux – décontracté) des loisirs sérieux. Nous suggérons que les loisirs sérieux devraient être envisagés comme des expériences complexes influencées par leurs contextes sociopolitiques. Nous explorons également le caractère normatif et fonctionnel de la littérature examinant les loisirs sérieux, et la possibilité de réenvisager sérieusement de loisirs comme une expérience expressive et créative. Afin de célébrer, le potentiel du loisir sérieux, nous recommandons une plus grande attention au contexte sociopolitique, car les loisirs sérieux sans revue critique, peut devenir sexualisé et commercialisé. En conclusion, nous proposons une définition plus progressive des loisirs sérieux.

Mots-clés: loisirs sérieux; l'équité; la diversité; le communautarisme féministe; aspects sociopolitiques

*Corresponding author. Email: karen.gallant@dal.ca

Introduction

Scholarly interest in leisure has been informed by a number of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, economics, political science, anthropology and geography, and it is from these disciplines that most of our theoretical and methodological foundations are grounded (Rojek, Shaw, & Veal, 2006). While these influences have afforded leisure studies the benefits of a truly interdisciplinary perspective, a corollary outcome is that there has been little theoretical development that could be regarded as uniquely formed within leisure studies. A notable exception to this condition is *serious leisure*, which stands as one of the most significant concepts shaping leisure research over the last 30 years. Even though conceived and developed by the sociologist Robert Stebbins, serious leisure has been embraced by leisure studies scholars and popularized most significantly within their literature.

Since its emergence in the early 1980s, serious leisure has both been celebrated – as evidenced by the number of empirical studies – and been subject to some healthy and constructive criticism. For example, serious leisure has inspired numerous studies of a variety of leisure pursuits, especially those engaged in by amateurs (e.g. Baldwin & Norris, 1999; Bartram, 2001; Dilley & Scraton, 2010; Heo, Lee, Kim, & Stebbins, 2012; Kane & Zink, 2004; Kim, Dattilo, & Heo, 2011; Kuentzel & Heberlein, 2008; Major, 2001), hobbyists (e.g. Cheng & Tsaur, 2012; Ezra & Slater, 2006; Fawbert, 2006; Frew, 2006; Gillespie, Leffler, & Lerner, 2002; Hunt, 2004; King, 2001; Worthington, 2006) and volunteers (e.g. Arai & Pedlar, 1997; Arai & Reid, 2003; Benoit & Perkins, 1997/1998; Cuskelly, Harrington & Stebbins, 2002/2003; Gravelle & Laroque, 2005; Holmes, 2006; Perkins & Benoit, 2004; Raisborough, 2006; Stebbins, 1998; Yarnel & Dowler, 2002/2003). Some studies have begun with the assumption that engagement in these activities *necessarily* means serious leisure is present, or researchers have selected these activities for examination and then set out to find inevitable evidence of serious leisure.

This pattern has persisted perhaps in part because these three activities are entrenched in the definition of serious leisure, even though a definition did not appear in Stebbins's seminal article from 1982.¹ In the years since, and following a few revisions to its original form, Stebbins (2007) defines serious leisure in his recent book as:

the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer core activity that people find so substantial, interesting, and fulfilling that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a (leisure) career centred on acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge and experience. (p. 5)

Over the years, the focus of many researchers shifted from the conceptual definition of serious leisure to an exploration of its “six distinct qualities” (Stebbins, 1982, p. 256). However, despite some minor modifications to the theory as our ideas matured, the definition and qualities of serious leisure have remained largely unchanged and unchallenged. This speaks to the durability of the concept, but it also reflects its somewhat intractable links to its past and the intellectual context from which the theory emerged.

Scholarly engagement in the exploration of leisure evolved at a time when it was regarded as a sphere of life that could contribute in meaningful ways to the fulfillment of the individual. In earlier reflections during the 1960s and 1970s, leisure typically was examined in conjunction with and in contrast to work (e.g. Parker, 1971). Nevertheless, in our western industrial society, as Reid (1995) points out, “to a great extent, there are no fixed boundaries or distinctive separations between work and leisure but they are inextricably and necessarily linked” (p. 90). Indeed, we may be naïve in expecting that our thinking about leisure is entirely independent of our beliefs about work, especially when

“capitalism and its greatest manifestation, the industrial society dominate the expression of leisure” (Reid, 1995, p. 91). However, the recognition of this link between work and leisure comes with the problem of disassociating the personal and social values of leisure from those of work.

However, leisure should not be consigned to a role of simply serving work. In other words, even though in some scholars’ view leisure might restore us for work, it does not exist *because of* work. As Brightbill (1960) said, “Leisure has a much larger and higher role than this. . . . To look upon leisure only as a respite from work is never to discover its full potential” (p. 6). This view reflects the desire to see leisure as an independent sphere, one free from comparisons to work and representing something pure, liberating (Dumazedier, 1967) and even civilising (de Grazia, 1962). However, by the 1970s, particularly in North America, scholars theorized less about leisure in its own right and directed their focus more on the instrumental function leisure could play. Because work is often the source of our feelings of accomplishment, rewards and success, we inevitably were led to consider leisure as a potential source for similar outcomes. As Schor (2006) points out, post-industrial society and modernization were rooted in an unquestioning belief in progress, and leisure was very much included in that belief. Hence, the emergence of leisure studies in its formative years during the latter half of the twentieth century was dominated by a focus on how leisure could be used “well” and be a vehicle to achieve “benefits.”

Over the years since, leisure scholars have found it difficult to escape considering leisure within the context of work, and, indeed, have even imbued leisure with “work-like” traits to justify its importance. This viewpoint has contributed to the ongoing functionalist, instrumental and utilitarian perspectives taken to leisure (Zuzanek, 2007) and led, too, to its commodification. Stebbins’s reflections on serious leisure first appeared in the context of this intellectual atmosphere of the work–leisure debate. While the debate is no longer as prominent in the literature, the underlying tension remains evident within serious leisure.

An emerging critique

More recently, leisure scholars have begun to raise questions about serious leisure by drawing on different philosophical and conceptual lenses and considering the theory in a variety of contexts. In our own work with volunteers (Arai, 2000; Arai & Pedlar, 1997; Gallant, 2011; Gallant, Arai, & Smale, 2010), serious leisure has shown to be a useful concept for understanding individuals’ pursuits of leisure to which they are highly committed. However, we have struggled with the limitations imposed by three aspects of serious leisure and the way in which they have manifested in the leisure studies literature. First, in many empirical studies, assumptions are often made that if one participates in a certain *activity*, he or she is necessarily engaged in serious leisure, and, hence, receiving the positive benefits that stem from engagement in that activity. Essentially, these assumptions have reflected a normative tone about the *types* of activities considered to be serious leisure and the inevitable benefits that can be accrued from participation in them. Further, little has been said about the *costs* associated of being engaged in serious leisure. Notably, some of these notions have been challenged in recent studies in which researchers have begun to explore more normatively marginal activities such as vampirism (Williams, 2008) and Star Trek fandom (Lawrence, 2006).

Second, serious leisure maintains the limited purview on psychological aspects of the individual pursuit that has permeated much of the leisure studies literature. Like Kivel,

Johnson, and Scraton (2009), we argue for an expanded view of *experiences* of leisure in general, and serious leisure more specifically, particularly the gendered and commodified nature of these experiences, as well as the potential for diversity and innovation.

Third, the focus of serious leisure has largely remained on the *individual* benefits of involvement even though it has the potential to engage the social contexts in which it occurs, and, hence, to address broader issues of community and social justice. Indeed, critiques emerging from articles in the last decade imply the need for reflection on the role of serious leisure in both the social (Bartram, 2001; Dilley & Scraton, 2010; Raisborough, 2006; Shen & Yarnal, 2010) and the political spheres (Arai & Reid, 2003). In the latter context, several authors have argued the need to consider the politics of serious leisure, including its implications for community health (Arai & Pedlar, 2003) and for politics, government and democracy (Arai, 2000; Arai & Reid, 2003, Hemingway, 1999; Mair, 2002/2003). Further, there is a need to consider aspects of serious leisure with respect to the dark side of power and collective action within racism and other forms of discrimination (Arai, 1997).

Our examination of serious leisure suggests it is more textured and complex than often acknowledged. As we sought to expand theorizing about serious leisure, we considered a number of alternative perspectives to address our concerns, and one that emerged as a possible lens to deepen our understanding was *feminist communitarianism*. Feminist communitarian thought is an approach to communitarianism (Delanty, 2003) and shares with all communitarian theory a re-assertion of collectivism and a critique of individualism and the narrow emphasis on competitiveness and individual choice that characterizes Western societies (Delanty, 2003; Sandel, 1998). Rather than defining community in contrast to individualism, feminist communitarians suggest the two are mutually reinforcing aspects of a respectful and tolerant society. In this way, feminist communitarian thinking departs from the normative concerns of some other strains of communitarianism, suggesting that homogeneity and unity are not necessary antecedents to a collective, caring society (Young, 2000). Thus, the feminist communitarian perspective evokes ideas of equity, difference, identity, solidarity and social ties (Delanty, 2003; Weiss, 1995; Young, 2000). In the context of serious leisure, feminist communitarianism facilitates exploration of the *politics of difference* (Young, 1995, 2000), the intersection of class, gender, race and sexual orientation within broader experiences of power, and the social organization of community. Using a feminist communitarian lens enables us to explore assumptions underlying serious leisure, address our concerns with certain aspects and expand theorizing about serious leisure. These, then, are our objectives for this article.

Experiences of serious leisure: beyond activity and dichotomy

When serious leisure is employed in empirical studies, authors have had a tendency to assume that because participants are involved in an *activity* such as volunteering or singing in a choir they are necessarily engaged in serious leisure, a critique raised by a growing number, including Scott (2012) and Shen and Yarnal (2010). Shen and Yarnal argued the limitations of defining serious leisure in activity-based terms as, “[a]ny leisure activity can be approached with different styles and most activities offer a range of skill or behavioural involvement levels for participants. Serious and casual leisure pursuits can be found in practically any activity” (p. 165). We find the common practice of defining serious leisure based on the activity problematic and suggest that serious leisure is best described as an *experience*. Envisioning serious leisure as an experience draws attention to the quality and nature of serious leisure and to the process through which it is experienced.

Serious leisure is often discussed with specific reference to its six defining qualities: the occasional need to persevere, personal effort using special skills or knowledge, the ability to follow a leisure career, adoption of a unique ethos, strong identification with the pursuit and the experience of durable benefits (Stebbins, 1992, 2007). Typically, the presence of such attributes is assumed to be the consequence of an individual's engagement in an activity, and, hence, indicative of serious leisure. However, these qualities are highly experiential in nature and one could easily argue that any activity could lead to these outcomes depending on the quality of the experience and the level of commitment – or perseverance – the individual attaches to the pursuit.

Further, as these qualities have been taken up, serious leisure has been conceptualized as being inherently positive and distinct from both casual leisure and work. To fully capture the *experience* of serious leisure, we need to move beyond the limitations imposed by these dichotomies. By doing so, we create space for a more complex analysis of serious leisure experiences that takes into consideration the intersectionality and fluidity of identity and power relationships. We begin to consider the way individual experiences of serious leisure are socially constructed within ideologies and discourses of gender, sexuality, race and class present within institutions and structures of society. Many leisure scholars have argued that leisure is experience, but as Kivel et al. (2009) point out, much of that understanding of experience has been phenomenological and social-psychological and focused on the individual. While Kivel et al. (2009) argue that “factors such as perceived freedom, intrinsic motivation, innate drive, leisure attitudes and situational and social factors . . . would influence if, and the extent to which, someone would ‘experience’ leisure” (p. 476), they also suggest a need for alternative methodologies and expanded theorizing to capture the ideologies and discourses that shape and construct that experience (i.e. gender, sexuality, race and class) that lie beyond these dichotomies. Our critique adopting a feminist lens suggests that human experiences defy categorization using dichotomous labels such as “positive” and “negative,” “benefits” and “costs,” “leisure” and “work.” As we argue in the following sections, the limitations of such terms are evident in the current framework of serious leisure. Advancing serious leisure theorizing requires moving beyond these dichotomies and exploring more fully the complexities of serious leisure experiences.

From inherently positive to inherently complex

Serious leisure is often viewed as inherently positive. The costs to individuals, families, other social groups and community have typically fallen outside the scope of most research. This critique is not confined to serious leisure, but rather describes a pattern in conceptualizing and researching the very nature of leisure for individuals. As Rojek (1999) has noted, “the twinning of leisure with social good is part of the modern mindset that can be found by turning back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries” (p. 21). Beginning with the Greeks and Romans, leisure was a sought-after and inherently positive state for those who were able to engage in it. For de Grazia (1962), leisure was an ideal state of being nurtured through awareness and appreciation of music and contemplation. For Dumazedier (1974), leisure was a time to cultivate the physical and emotional self through relaxation, enjoyment and personal development. Neulinger (1981) associated leisure with experiences of perceived freedom and intrinsic motivation. We can see these notions embedded in the durable benefits of serious leisure (e.g. self-actualization, self-enrichment, self-expression, regeneration or renewal of self, feelings of accomplishment, enhancement of self-image, social interaction and belongingness, and lasting physical products of the activity) which Stebbins (2007) describes as defining qualities.

In contrast, any of the costs associated with serious leisure are only ever noted on a case-by-case basis. Although some studies have considered both benefits and costs of serious leisure participation (cf. Baldwin & Norris, 1999; Gillespie et al., 2002; Jones, 2000; Lee & Scott, 2006; Major, 2001; Stebbins, 2005), Stebbins (2005, 2006, 2007) suggests costs are highly activity-dependent and thus have not been categorized or generalized to serious leisure. For Stebbins, the costs of serious leisure, such as disappointments, dislikes and tensions, emerge from the tendency for serious leisure endeavours to consume large amounts of time and money. Further, he suggests the costs of serious leisure are minimal and points to participants' own reports that their continued participation is evidence that the benefits outweigh the costs (Stebbins, 2007, 2011).

While some studies have found this is the case (cf. Lee & Scott, 2006; Major, 2001; Misener, Doherty, & Hamm, 2010), other scholars have noted the benefits of serious leisure also depend not just on the type of activity but on its nature or context (cf. Chun, Lee, & Heo, 2008; Gravelle & Larocque, 2005). For example, Gillespie et al. (2002), in their study of dog show enthusiasts, write of the "intrinsic tension that a serious leisure pursuit brings" (p. 285), referring to difficulties finding acceptance from family, friends and workplaces concerning their engagement in serious leisure pursuits and the resources such engagement demands. In addition, the assertion that the costs of serious leisure are negligible compared to the benefits it provides suggests that costs are only felt by serious leisure participants themselves. However, the implications for participants' families and communities have received little attention. Among those who have reflected on the costs of serious leisure, Lawrence (2006) questioned the impact of Star Trek enthusiasts who neglect their families, Arai (1997) raised questions about the dark side of volunteering and whether theorizing about serious leisure takes into consideration the impact of participation in white supremacy groups on society and Arai and Reid (2003) raised concerns about the impact of volunteering when it replaces government intervention and thus leaves neo-liberal shifts and fundamental social justice issues unaddressed. These examples suggest that experiences of serious leisure influence and are influenced by the socio-political context in which they occur. A more complex analysis of serious leisure as experience would take into consideration the way individual experiences of serious leisure are socially constructed within ideologies and discourses of gender, sexuality, race and class that are present within institutions and structures of society.

When we move beyond activity and the positive–negative dichotomy and frame serious leisure as *experience*, there is room to explore the complexity of serious leisure experiences, including the simultaneous opportunities for fun, challenge, risk and the formation of new identities in new social worlds. For example, serious leisure participants may take extreme risks in their efforts to advance their career paths or to acquire or demonstrate high levels of skill. While these risks may lead to injury, alienation of friends or other undesired consequences – the potential costs of such engagement – they also allow participants to acquire stories and leisure artifacts that demonstrate involvement in serious leisure, affiliation with its social worlds and progression in its career paths (Kane & Zink, 2004).

Dissolving categories and continuums of serious leisure as distinct from work and casual leisure

Building on notions of the *politics of difference* (Young, 1995), we consider the assumptions inherent in serious leisure when we situate it as distinct from both work and casual leisure. Serious leisure was initially conceptualized as preferable to casual leisure because

the opportunities it offers to develop specialized skills were viewed as a more productive use of leisure time than the hedonistic and short-lived pleasures of casual leisure (Stebbins, 1992). Casual leisure is understood as “immediately, intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to enjoy it” (Stebbins, 1997, p. 18). Casual leisure and serious leisure are often labelled as “good” and “better,” respectively, because of the enduring benefits of serious leisure compared with the transient enjoyment of casual leisure (cf. Stebbins, 1992). Stebbins has since replaced this original hierarchy of understanding with a view that sees balanced participation as ideal in constructing an *optimal leisure lifestyle* (cf. Stebbins, 2007). However, the acquisition of advanced knowledge, skills and abilities remains a defining quality of serious leisure and implies that serious leisure has higher intrinsic value.

Like Hutchinson and Kleiber (2005), we contest the lesser importance typically afforded to casual leisure. Hutchinson and Kleiber found casual leisure participation was linked to health and well-being among people coping with negative life events and high stress. Attempts to situate casual leisure and serious leisure as endpoints on a continuum (Patterson, 2001), or placing casual leisure and work as endpoints along a continuum with serious leisure falling somewhere between (Stebbins, 1992), does little to address this concern. In their critique of positioning serious and casual leisure as endpoints on a continuum, Shen and Yarnal (2010) suggested that this approach focuses attention on extremes of experience and ignores experiences of most people whose leisure typically falls somewhere between these two extremes. Similarly, positioning work and casual leisure at opposing ends of a continuum with serious leisure in between suggests the two are distinct and cannot overlap without compromising the definition of serious leisure. We question whether serious leisure reflects a predominantly Western conceptualization of leisure as distinct from work and does not capture the nature and practice of leisure in some other cultures. For example, Fox (2006, 2007), in advocating for leisure scholarship and praxis relevant to indigenous peoples, notes that the language and concepts commonly used to define leisure and leisure practices are Eurocentric and impede understanding of leisure in other contexts. With respect to the inherently Eurocentric nature of leisure scholarship, she writes:

Regardless of definitions or characterisations of leisure, the concepts of activity narrowly defined, time, and choice are always implicated. An examination of our literature demonstrates that these huge categories and others (e.g. outdoor recreation, camping, soccer, football, sports, idleness, television watching) are used without any detailed descriptions or theorising. A reader must have substantial cultural knowledge to understand these categories.

Furthermore, the assumption that these are implemented the same across all cultures even in Eurocentric nations is illusory. (Fox, 2006, p. 405)

While Stebbins (2000) noted that serious leisure may not apply in the developing world, this is not a topic that has received much research attention. Broadening our theorizing about the experiences of serious leisure in different cultural contexts allows us to explore how it might be shaped in those contexts where the relationship between work and leisure is regarded and valued differently and in political contexts where notions of individual freedoms and collective interests are structured differently than in Western societies. For example, Tirone and Shaw’s (1997) study of the role of leisure in the lives of Indo-Canadian women suggests that they did not desire or value opportunities for personal leisure, but rather found satisfaction and fulfillment in their family responsibilities. While their activities may fall outside the amateur–hobbyist–volunteer typology, their commitment to nurturing family and social ties through hosting and entertaining often provided them with personal and social benefits similar to those associated with serious leisure.

Hence, employing an experience-focused rather than an activity-focused definition of serious leisure would facilitate exploration of aspects of the serious leisure experience as influenced by and played out within the cultural context.

Postmodern lives: moving beyond functionality to difference and innovation

Building on the arguments made to this point, we now critically examine issues arising from the functional and normative tones in previous theorizing about serious leisure, and raise the possibility of re-envisioning serious leisure as expressive and creative, thereby nurturing equity and diversity in participants' lives and communities. If serious leisure is to maintain its relevance in our postmodern lives, there is a need to resist and move beyond rigid categorizations that simply distinguish serious leisure from work, casual leisure and, as we shall see, play. These rigid categorizations, we suggest, emerge from functional, gendered and Westernized views of leisure that have traditionally characterized our field more broadly.

Historically, leisure has been viewed as a means of socializing people into appropriate roles and acting as a cohesive force (Parker, 1971). Parker suggested three main functions of leisure: "it helps people to learn how to play their part in society; it helps them to achieve societal or collective aims; and it helps the society to stay together" (p. 55). Further, leisure was valued for its functional benefits to individuals, such as building skills that could be applied in school or work environments. Parker described play and storytelling as forms of leisure that could be used for "teaching young children and reconciling them to school work" (p. 55). This tendency to value leisure for its role in socialization and individual acquisition of skills that translate easily to work environments is embedded within serious leisure's conceptual definition. The functional nature of serious leisure is evident in its defining qualities, particularly the focus on the acquisition of skills and abilities, challenge and persistence as aspects of serious leisure, and the attainment of personal and social benefits. Similarly, Parker identified skills acquisition, ambition and achievement as aspects of serious leisure (Parker, 1996; Parker, Hamilton-Smith, & Davidson, 1993). In critiquing this normative and functional nature of serious leisure, we ask: If serious leisure were to be regarded as experience, what other skills or abilities might be acquired through participation? Would these skills be similarly valued? Would consideration of the nature of serious leisure as experience reveal broader aspects of that experience such as creativity, diversity, inclusion, democracy or power?

For some, engagement in serious leisure has meant participating in marginalized social worlds that inspire lifestyles and devotion to activities and ideas that are outside mainstream experiences. For example, Lawrence (2006) noted in his work on Star Trek fans that they were sometimes stigmatized, referred to as fanatics or freaks by others. Others also have explicitly addressed this form of social marginalization as a cost of serious leisure (cf. Baldwin & Norris, 1999; Gillespie et al., 2002). A broadened conceptualization of serious leisure that embraces challenging aspects of the experience, such as marginalization, necessarily raises questions about deviance and the normative undercurrents within current conceptualizations of serious leisure. In his early work, Stebbins (1979) noted that serious leisure, although marginal in the sense that it did not adhere to popular notions of leisure, was not marginal in a moral sense. He wrote, "in the end, being misunderstood, as an aspect of marginality, is not the same as being labeled a deviant in leisure. The marginal amateur is still within the ambit of respectable society" (Stebbins, 1979, p. 263). Serious leisure typically excluded forms of leisure falling outside the norms of dominant society and were labelled and perceived as deviant (Rojek, 1997). More recently, coincident with

wider acceptance of deviant leisure within the leisure field, deviant leisure pursuits have been envisioned within the scope of serious leisure (Rojek, 1997; Stebbins, 1997; Williams & Walker, 2006). Pursuits including auto theft, sadomasochism, radical body modification, practice of a vampire lifestyle and violent video gaming have been studied recently as serious leisure pursuits (cf. Delamere & Shaw, 2006; Drozda, 2006; Lawrence, 2006; Williams, 2009). As noted, Lawrence's Star Trek fans were labelled by others as freaks and fanatics, causing him to ask: "Who decides what is acceptable where serious leisure is concerned? Upon what is this based and who evaluates?" (p. 76). Broadening the conceptualization of serious leisure to encompass the complexity of experiences, including those that occur on the margins, enables us to move beyond the confines imposed by a narrow view of morality and to embrace the potential role of serious leisure in facilitating social, political and cultural change in community.

Like Fox (2010), we challenge conventional depictions of the margins as "bad" and the centre as "good." The margins, Fox writes, can be viewed as oppressive and discriminatory, but also as flexible, diverse, fruitful and "positive sites for creative explorations" (p. 97). She notes that groups within the margins have particular potential to "usurp the mechanisms of marginalization and initiate moral, social, and political change" (p. 102). A feminist communitarian lens is useful here as it provides a critical perspective that embraces a politics of difference (Young, 1995) and addresses issues of exclusion and marginalization that can characterize traditional societies where communities are nurtured through commonality and normative understandings (cf. Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1996; Etzioni, 2004; Putnam, 2000). Consequently, broadening our conceptualization of serious leisure to encompass complex, marginalized experiences also has the potential to facilitate meaningful social, political and cultural change in community.

Further, we echo Dilley and Scraton's (2010) assessment that values associated with skills acquisition in serious leisure are gendered, reflecting an "androcentric vision at the heart of Stebbins' conceptualization" (p. 126). Dilley and Scraton describe serious leisure as closely aligned with traditional male values such as action and challenge rather than feminine values related to building interpersonal relationships. A feminist communitarian approach to radical pluralism, in Delanty's (2003) words, sees both liberalism and other approaches to communitarianism as oppressive because they create distinctly different opportunities and climates for men and women, as well as among other groups, based on the uses of power. There also is a connection here to Fox's (2010) view of the margins as spaces of play and Shaw's (2001) work on leisure as resistance because these perspectives respond to Hemingway's (1996) concern that when leisure plays just instrumental roles, its ability to foster creativity, innovation, diversity and democracy is compromised.

The politics of serious leisure

Previously, we argued that when we fail to address assumptions underlying serious leisure and conceptualize it as activity, we also fail to acknowledge the gendered and cultural politics of serious leisure. In this section, we expand on our assertions about serious leisure as a political experience that is gendered and encourages the reproduction of class and culture. We also suggest that serious leisure is inherently consumptive, commodified and stratified, thereby facilitating a discussion of access and equity in relation to serious leisure.

The focus on serious leisure as an individual activity, rather than considering its potential as an experience based in community, is rooted in individualism, which flourished toward the end of the twentieth century when serious leisure was conceptualized. This

perspective continues to dominate political and social theory and functioning today. When we focus on serious leisure as an individual experience and hone in on serious leisure participants, we fail to take a broader view and consider that individuals need access to material goods, time and status to participate in serious leisure; in other words, the experience of serious leisure is inherently political. For example, while financial costs related to serious leisure participation can limit access, discrimination and limited time for leisure also represent significant limitations that contribute to inequitable access to serious leisure.

Serious leisure is characterized by the occasional need to persevere, typically to acquire the skills, knowledge and rewards associated with one's engagement. Stebbins (2007) writes, ". . . commitment is measured, among other ways, by the sizeable investments of time and energy in the leisure made by its devotees and participants" (p. 18). In response, feminist communitarians might ask: "Who has access to serious leisure? Who is able to persevere?" While other literature has documented the relative lack of leisure time and related constraints for women, recent immigrants, people living in poverty and other disadvantaged groups (e.g. Bittman, 2002; Stodolska, 1998; Tirone & Shaw, 1997), few studies have examined serious leisure from an access or equity standpoint. These rare exceptions in the literature provide key insights into the inequitable nature of serious leisure participation (cf. Bartram, 2001; Dilley & Scraton, 2010; Raisborough, 2006), particularly the influence of gender on access and qualities of serious leisure experiences. The serious leisure experiences of women in these studies of kayakers, Sea Cadet Corps volunteers and climbers were shaped by motherhood, family responsibilities, gendered identities, patriarchal structures and others' perceptions of gender. Studies of serious leisure tend to artificially distinguish participation in serious leisure activities from contextual factors such as gender that influence access and participation (Dilley & Scraton, 2010; Raisborough, 2006). In other words, we tend to focus our attention on those participating in serious leisure without examining who is *not* participating and why.

Class and the commodification of serious leisure

The conceptualization of serious leisure evolved at the same time as the tendency to commodify leisure, and, consequently, commodification exemplified leisure as both resource and time-intensive. In the industrial era, leisure came to mean time free from work and other obligations (de Grazia, 1962). This conceptualization effectively quantified leisure and, combined with an understanding of leisure as activity that often required the purchase of goods and services (Critcher, 2006; Parker, 1971; Veblen, 1953/1899), made leisure a commodifiable entity. As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, Veblen suggested that leisure could be used to demonstrate class in a "leisure society" through the *conspicuous consumption* of goods and services. Linder (1970) describes the emphasis on consumption of consumer goods during leisure time as an effort to increase the productivity of leisure time to parallel increases in work productivity associated with industrialization. Increasingly throughout the twentieth and now into the twenty-first century, leisure pursuits are accompanied by fees for registration, admission, membership, equipment and related costs.

Some serious leisure pursuits (though not all) require significant financial commitments. Significant inputs of time also are often necessary to acquire the advanced levels of skill and knowledge that characterize serious leisure participation (Baldwin & Norris, 1999; Bartram, 2001; Ezra & Slater, 2006; Gillespie et al., 2002; Lawrence, 2006; Raisborough, 2006). For example, Baldwin and Norris describe the extensive financial

resources needed by dog sport enthusiasts to train for and participate in competitions; Lawrence describes Star Trek fans who take on part-time jobs and eschew vacations in order to support their fandom and Ezra and Slater describe historical re-enactment enthusiasts' purchases of extra-large vehicles that allow them to haul specialized equipment to weekend events. Further, some serious leisure activities revolve around acquisition of consumer goods or collectibles, such as football fans whose serious leisure involvement was illustrated through their acquisition of replica football jerseys (Fawbert, 2006), or the careful selection and use of equipment by "thru-hikers" (Littlefield & Sindzinski, 2012). These examples suggest that theorizing about serious leisure in such a way that considers factors related to access and equity could provide new insights extending notions of serious leisure into the social and political sphere.

Gendered differences in access to serious leisure

Access to a serious leisure experience is shaped by the gendered and cultured norms of a social group. Attainment of status as a "regular" or "insider" in a social world may be limited by sex- or culture-based discrimination, as Bartram (2001) found in her study of female kayakers who were not fully accepted into the social world of elite kayaking dominated by men. In addition, Bartram's study noted family obligations often prevented women from persevering in serious leisure pursuits. Similarly, female climbers involved in Dilley and Scraton's (2010) study found it difficult to negotiate climbing and family responsibilities, particularly if they had children. Raisborough (2006) noted that time constraints limited access to serious leisure for the female Sea Cadet Corps volunteers. For many women involved in her study, perseverance was required to protect the time required to volunteer. Perseverance was thus needed to simply maintain current levels of participation rather than to acquire higher levels of skill or to advance a serious leisure career. These findings suggest that perseverance as a means of acquiring high levels of skill and knowledge is a privilege available primarily to those with sufficient material and temporal resources.

The community potential of serious leisure

As noted earlier, serious leisure is often celebrated for the enduring benefits it offers for individuals. Stebbins (1992, 2007) describes the benefits accrued from serious leisure as both personal (e.g. self-actualization and self-expression) and social (e.g. sense of group accomplishment and sense of contributing to a group). However, the presumed social benefits of serious leisure are actually individual benefits *of* group activity, rather than benefits *for* the collective or to society more generally. By shifting our perspective of serious leisure to align with benefits for community, we necessarily regard the individual-in-community, as if one were not independent of the other. In keeping with this perspective, feminist communitarians assert that community and general concern are best nurtured within a context where individual goals and selves are also respected and nurtured (Young, 1995). This perspective meshes well with an understanding of serious leisure as nurturing both individual identities and social ties. Indeed, feminist communitarians may view these two aspects of serious leisure as mutually reinforcing. A feminist communitarian analysis of the relationship between individuals and communities suggests that greater attention to the link between individual and collective outcomes of serious leisure is needed, especially because it has received little attention to date. The collective outcomes of serious leisure participation, in particular, warrant consideration and offer the potential for serious leisure

to transcend its current focus on the individual and to become a theory with implications for the social sphere.

Rojek (2001) asserts that serious leisure participation, when it brings participants into contact with other enthusiasts, becomes a source of not only meaning and identity for the individual but also a sense of solidarity with the collective. Broadening their view to a community context, Arai and Pedlar (1997) and Reid and van Dreunen (1996) found volunteering in citizen participation initiatives was empowering at both the individual and community levels. In general, communitarian theory attempts to balance a focus on individual self-interest with emphasis on equity, mutual care and concern, stewardship, inclusion and social justice as the foundation for community, with community as the “context for social relationships not simply the utilitarian context for meeting private ends” (Arai & Pedlar, 2003, p. 187). Arai and Pedlar (1997) note the close link between individual empowerment, manifested as feelings of self-confidence and efficacy, and community empowerment in the form of collective action and the ability to influence change. Referring specifically to career volunteering, they write that serious leisure “provides a context for individual empowerment and community development” (p. 170). In another study, neighbourhood-level civic participation as serious leisure by marginalized individuals led to personal skills and confidence, in turn increasing group capabilities such as decision-making and problem solving (Reid & van Dreunen, 1996). The social benefits of connectedness and empowerment are closely linked to community health, democratic society and social cohesion (Arai, 1997, 2004; Arai & Pedlar, 1997; Henderson & Presley, 2003; Patterson, 2001; Reid & van Dreunen, 1996). Similarly, research with community volunteers found a strong association between the experience of volunteering as serious leisure and volunteer’s perceptions of sense of community and social cohesion (Gallant, 2011). Further, there was a strong association between serious leisure and volunteers’ value orientations of collectivism and individualism, suggesting that serious leisure may provide an avenue for nurturing sense of community within cultures dominated by individualism such as the variations common in North America. There is much opportunity to extend and perhaps re-envision serious leisure as a foundation for community building, celebration and transformation (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Qian & Yarnal, 2010). Borgmann (1992) writes of focal practices that create shared meaning as an alternative to leisure as consumption. Arai and Pedlar (2003), noting that the features of celebration as described by Borgmann align well with serious leisure, describe serious leisure as a potentially powerful form of communal leisure for communities.

Feminist communitarians not only value connection – they also emphasize using a critical lens on diversity and seek to nurture difference as a defining aspect of a healthy community (Young, 1995). Research has provided vivid portraits of the diverse identities and social worlds created, sustained, and nurtured through serious leisure (cf. Baldwin & Norris; Frew, 2006; Gibson, Willming, & Holdnak, 2002; Gillespie et al., 2002; Hunt, 2004; King, 2001; Lawrence, 2006; Raisborough, 2006; Stebbins, 2005; Williams, 2009; Worthington, 2006). The distinguishing qualities of serious leisure assert that such pursuits nurture *strong identification* and *unique ethos*, evident in the shared values and practices that constitute a social world (Stebbins, 2007; Unruh, 1980). Serious leisure participants tend to feel strong affiliation with the social worlds associated with their leisure pursuits, which can provide a sense of belonging and connectedness in an increasingly disconnected world (Tomlinson, 1993). The social worlds associated with serious leisure pursuits are closely tied to the strong identities inspired by serious leisure participation (Baldwin & Norris, 1999; Gillespie et al., 2002; Jones, 2006; Lawrence, 2006). For example, dog sport enthusiasts involved in Gillespie et al.’s research identified strongly both as “dog people”

and as members of a social world of dog sport enthusiasts. In their study, identification as an individual dog sport enthusiast appeared to be enmeshed within identification as a member of dog sport clubs and their associated social worlds.

We envision the social worlds created around serious leisure as a fluid plurality that embraces difference. When social groups form around serious leisure experiences, there is the possibility of movement between groups, exploration of the coming together of social groups, of celebration and of playfulness as groups engage with others. Feminist communitarians might suggest that the diverse groups and social worlds of serious leisure can be accommodated by an accepting and respectful society. Advocating “openness to unassimilated otherness with justice and appreciation” (Young, 1995, p. 254), feminist communitarians conceptualize people as inherently different from one another and unable to fully understand another’s experience, yet capable of accepting one another and celebrating difference. Feminist communitarians, then, critique the reproduction of highly normative and confining practices which limit individual freedoms and expressions of difference and instead envision community as an equitable collective of overlapping groups of multicultural, diverse, empowered and respected individuals. Communities, they advocate, must allow for respectful relationships across time and space and between strangers who, given their diverse histories, are not capable of fully understanding one another (Weiss, 1995).

Rather than using a normative lens to judge individuals and social worlds as deviant or marginal, feminist communitarians celebrate the diversity and social ties introduced by such groups. The diversity that serious leisure inspires, combined with its tendency to nurture feelings of connectedness and group belonging, together provide significant opportunities to build social ties that are not rooted in homogeneity. Feminist communitarians in advocating a “politics of difference” suggest that community should not be equated with unity or sameness (Young, 1995). Rather, community comprises unique individuals who accept, respect and celebrate the differences among them. Frye (1995) wrote of community as a space for affirming diversity rather than something built on commonality. She suggests that leisure can create space for people to come together and provide alternatives to the structures that have traditionally marginalized people. Serious leisure, with its opportunities for empowerment, identity and membership in social worlds, has the potential to contribute to this vision of community. In Dillely and Scraton’s (2010) study with female climbers, climbing and its associated social world provided a refuge from normative ideas of femininity and created space for belonging, particularly as women ceased to value the judgements of mainstream audiences.

In this article, we have critiqued the contemporary relevance of serious leisure due to limitations imposed by its formation within ideas of an earlier social and historical context. We also have acknowledged the potential of serious leisure to nurture and celebrate diversity and to build community. Based on these discussions, we offer a re-envisioned definition of serious leisure incorporating these ideas. This definition is intended as a starting point for further discussion, debate and critique of serious leisure as a theory and phenomenon.

Serious leisure: a definition reflecting our vision

We have asserted that serious leisure is based more on experience than on the arbitrary prescription of activity, that it has implications for communities as well as for individuals, that it is shaped by social, political and economic factors and that experiences of serious leisure may be complex and nuanced, including (sometimes simultaneous) costs and

benefits that extend beyond the individual. Within these assertions are rich opportunities to explore the potential for serious leisure for communities, for nurturing diversity and for creating linkages to other key aspects of our research in leisure.

Therefore, based on these perspectives, we offer the following re-envisioned definition of serious leisure:

*the committed pursuit of a **core** leisure **experience** that is substantial, interesting, and fulfilling, and where engagement is characterized by unique identities and leads to a variety of outcomes for the person, social world, and communities within which the person is immersed.*

This definition takes as a starting point Stebbins's slightly revised current definition of serious leisure, which he shared in 2007:

the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer core activity that people find so substantial, interesting, and fulfilling that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a (leisure) career centred on acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge and experience. (p. 5)

Our definition builds on and extends Stebbins's foundational ideas by embedding a new conceptual aspect to serious leisure and updating language that no longer corresponds with our evolving understanding of leisure. For example, the idea of the "systematic pursuit" of leisure implies somewhat rigid, structured interaction. Instead, we suggest characterizing serious leisure as *committed*, allowing for the possibility for interruptions due to personal circumstances shaped by social, political and economic contexts. We introduce *immersion* in the latter part of our definition, which flows from our vision of serious leisure as committed, implying that serious leisure is associated with strong personal interest, nurturing highly engaging social worlds and identities.

Further, the removal of specifying serious leisure pursuits as "amateur, hobbyist or volunteer" suggests movement away from the prescriptive aspect of serious leisure and activity-based definitions of serious leisure to an understanding of serious leisure as a *core* leisure experience. The removal of "(leisure) career" as a central aspect of serious leisure experience reflects an effort to distance serious leisure from the work/leisure and serious/casual leisure dichotomies critiqued earlier. Instead, the focus shifts to *social worlds* and *identities* as key concepts related to serious leisure experiences. These concepts position serious leisure as both individual and community-based and individual-in-community oriented.

Finally, the focus on "special skills, knowledge and experience" in the original definition is replaced with a focus on *outcomes for people, social worlds and communities* to recognize the possibility of outcomes that could be either both positive and negative (as well as those which have simultaneously positive and negative aspects and those which defy categorization using these dichotomous labels). Further, speaking to outcomes for *people, social worlds and communities* recognize that outcomes extend beyond the individual to families and broader communities.

Serious leisure: a challenge and conclusion

Given the complexity of human experience, we suggest when considering serious leisure, we shift our focus to it as an experience embedded in social and community processes rather than as an activity with individual outcomes. In re-positioning serious leisure as

experience in social context, we are advocating for an acknowledgement of the complexities that together define serious leisure experiences and for an extension of its application from the study of individuals to a consideration of it within the social sphere. With such a repositioning of thought concerning serious leisure, many avenues of inquiry can be explored further or delved into for the first time. For example, issues related to the role of commodification, influences of equity in the access to and experiences of serious leisure, contrasting and complex notions such as risk and marginality rather than dichotomous benefits and costs, and influences of serious leisure on groups and communities are areas rich for deeper exploration. Further, as we delve into serious leisure as an experience, our expanded understandings can be embedded within its conceptual definition, thereby keeping our theorizing about serious leisure current and responsive.

Some questions that explore how serious leisure theory might be expanded to encompass contemporary sociopolitical realities include:

- *How do we embrace alternative forms and experiences of serious leisure?*
- *How might some experiences be understood as serious leisure when they stray into normatively marginal activities such as protests?*
- *How might we understand serious leisure as a class or culturally based experience?*
- *How does serious leisure influence collectives such as groups, communities or societies?*
- *What role might serious leisure play in fostering diversity, creativity and democracy?*
- *What is the interplay between marginality and serious leisure?*

Reflective questions such as these challenge us to think more broadly and critically about serious leisure. Doing so may yield new insights and will nurture the evolution of serious leisure as a concept with continuing relevance to the field of leisure studies.

Note

1. Although reflections on the leisure of amateurs, hobbyists, and volunteers can be found in Stebbins's earlier works (see, in particular, Stebbins (1977) and (1980)), it is his 1982 paper that laid out the basic tenets of serious leisure and is used as the foundation for much of what followed. Nevertheless, the works preceding his 1982 paper are revealing in understanding the theory's conceptual roots and contextual influences.

References

- Arai, S. M. (1997). Volunteers within a changing society: The use of empowerment theory in understanding serious leisure. *World Leisure and Recreation*, 39, 19–22.
- Arai, S. M. (2000). Typology of volunteers for a changing sociopolitical context. *Society and Leisure*, 23, 327–352.
- Arai, S. M., & Pedlar, A. M. (1997). Building communities through leisure: Citizen participation in a healthy communities initiative. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 29, 167–182.
- Arai, S. M., & Pedlar, A. M. (2003). Moving beyond individualism in leisure theory: A critical analysis of concepts of community and social engagement. *Leisure Studies*, 22, 185–202.
- Arai, S. M., & Reid, D. G. (2003). Impacts of a neo-liberal policy shift on citizenship and the voluntary sector: A policy Delphi with social planning organizations. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 52, 67–92.
- Baldwin, C. K., & Norris, P. A. (1999). Exploring the dimensions of serious leisure: "Love me – love my dog!". *Journal of Leisure Research*, 31, 1–17.

- Bartram, S. A. (2001). Serious leisure careers among whitewater kayakers: A feminist perspective. *World Leisure, 43*, 4–11.
- Bellah, R. N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W. M., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. M. (1996). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life* (Updated). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Benoit, J., & Perkins, K. B. (1997/1998). Volunteer fire-fighting activity in North American as serious leisure. *World Leisure and Recreation, 39/40*, 23–29.
- Bittman, M. (2002). Social participation and family welfare: The money and time costs of leisure in Australia. *Social Policy and Administration, 36*, 408–425.
- Borgmann, A. (1992). *Crossing the postmodern divide*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Brightbill, C. K. (1960). *The challenge of leisure*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Cheng, T., & Tsaur, S. (2012). The relationship between serious leisure characteristics and recreation involvement: A case study of Taiwan's surfing activities. *Leisure Studies, 31*, 53–68.
- Chun, S., Lee, Y., & Heo, J. (2008). The benefits of serious leisure following traumatic spinal cord injury. In P. A. Morden, S. Hebblethwaite, & R. Hopp (Eds.), *Book of abstracts of papers presented at the Twelfth Canadian Congress on Leisure Research* (pp. 68–72). Montreal, QC: Concordia University.
- Critcher, C. (2006). A touch of class. In C. Rojek, S. M. Shaw, & A. J. Veal (Eds.), *A handbook of leisure studies*, (pp. 271–287). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cuskelly, G., Harrington, M., & Stebbins, R. A. (2002/2003). Changing levels of organizational commitment amongst sport volunteers: A serious leisure approach. *Leisure/Loisir, 27*, 191–212.
- de Grazia, S. (1962). *Of time work and leisure*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Delamere, F. M., & Shaw, S. M. (2006). Playing with violence: Gamers' social construction of violent video game play as tolerable deviance. *Leisure/Loisir, 30*, 7–26.
- Delanty, G. (2003). *Community*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Dilley, R. E., & Scraton, S. J. (2010). Women, climbing, and serious leisure. *Leisure Studies, 29*, 125–141.
- Drozda, C. (2006). Juveniles performing auto theft: An exploratory study into a deviant leisure lifestyle. *Leisure/Loisir, 30*, 111–132.
- Dumazedier, J. (1967). *Toward a society of leisure*. New York, NY: The Free Press.
- Dumazedier, J. (1974). *Sociology of leisure*. New York, NY: Elsevier.
- Etzioni, A. (2004). *The common good*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Ezra, D., & Slater, A. (2006). Similarities and differences between practitioners of serious leisure pursuits. In S. Elkington, I. Jones, & L. Lawrence (Eds.), *Serious leisure: Extensions and applications* (pp. 33–46). Eastbourne: LSA Publications, University of Brighton.
- Fawbert, J. (2006). Replica football shirts: Serious or casual leisure. In S. Elkington, I. Jones, & L. Lawrence (Eds.), *Serious leisure: Extensions and applications* (pp. 123–144). Eastbourne: LSA Publications, University of Brighton.
- Fox, K. (2006). Leisure and indigenous peoples. *Leisure Studies, 25*, 403–409.
- Fox, K. (2007). Aboriginal peoples in North American and Euro-north American leisure. *Leisure/Loisir, 31*, 217–243.
- Fox, K. (2010). Hold gently people who create space on the margins: Urban Aboriginal-Canadian young people and hip-hop rhythms of "leisures". In H. Mair, S. M. Arai, & D. G. Reid (Eds.), *Decentering work: Critical perspectives on leisure, development, and social change* (pp. 229–250). Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press.
- Frew, E. A. (2006). Comedy festival attendance: Serious, project-based or casual leisure?. In S. Elkington, I. Jones, & L. Lawrence (Eds.), *Serious leisure: Extensions and applications* (pp. 105–122). Eastbourne: LSA Publications, University of Brighton.
- Frye, M. (1995). Lesbian community: Heterodox congregation. In P. A. Weiss & M. Friedman (Eds.), *Feminism and community* (pp. 155–158). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University.
- Gallant, K. A. (2011). *Feelings of obligation related to volunteering as serious leisure within a communitarian context* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Waterloo, ON: University of Waterloo.
- Gallant, K. A., Smale, B., & Arai, S. (2010). Civic engagement through mandatory community service: Implications of serious leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research, 42*, 181–201.
- Gibson, H., Willming, C., & Holdnak, A. (2002). "We're Gators . . . Not just Gator fans": Serious leisure and University of Florida football. *Journal of Leisure Research, 34*, 397–425.

- Gillespie, D. L., Leffler, A., & Lerner, E. (2002). If it weren't for my hobby, I'd have a life: Dog sports, serious leisure, and boundary negotiations. *Leisure Studies*, 21, 285–304.
- Gravelle, F., & Larocque, L. (2005). Volunteerism and serious leisure: The case of the francophone games. *World Leisure*, 47, 45–51.
- Hemingway, J. L. (1996). Emancipating leisure: The recovery of freedom in leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 28, 27–34.
- Hemingway, J. L. (1999). Leisure, social capital, and democratic citizenship. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 31, 150–165.
- Henderson, K. A., & Presley, J. (2003). Globalization and the values of volunteering as leisure. *World Leisure*, 45, 33–37.
- Heo, J., Lee, I., Kim, J., & Stebbins, R. A. (2012). Understanding the relationships among central characteristics of serious leisure: An empirical study of older adults in competitive sports. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 44, 450–462.
- Holmes, K. (2006). Volunteering, obligation and serious leisure. In S. Elkington, I. Jones, & L. Lawrence (Eds.), *Serious leisure: Extensions and applications* (pp. 5–18). Eastbourne: LSA Publications, University of Brighton.
- Hunt, S. (2004). Acting the part: “Living history” as a serious leisure pursuit. *Leisure Studies*, 23, 387–403.
- Hutchinson, S. L., & Kleiber, D. A. (2005). Gifts of the ordinary: Casual leisure's contributions to health and well-being. *World Leisure*, 47, 2–16.
- Jones, I. (2000). A model of serious leisure identification: The case of football fandom. *Leisure Studies*, 19, 283–298.
- Jones, I. (2006). Examining the characteristics of serious leisure from a social identity perspective. In S. Elkington, I. Jones, & L. Lawrence (Eds.), *Serious leisure: Extensions and applications* (pp. 47–60). Eastbourne: LSA Publications, University of Brighton.
- Kane, M., & Zink, R. (2004). Package adventure tours: Markers in serious leisure careers. *Leisure Studies*, 23, 329–345.
- Kim, J., Dattilo, J., & Heo, J. (2011). Taekwondo participation as serious leisure for life satisfaction and health. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 43, 545–559.
- King, F. L. (2001). Social dynamics of quilting. *World Leisure*, 43, 26–29.
- Kivel, B., Johnson, C. W., & Scraton, S. (2009). (Re)Theorizing race, experience, and leisure: Using critical ethnography and collective memory work. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 41, 471–492.
- Kuentzel, W. F., & Heberlein, T. A. (2008). Life course changes and competing leisure interests as obstacles to boating specialization. *Leisure Sciences*, 30, 143–157.
- Lawrence, L. (2006). To obsessively go . . . exploring serious leisure and the “other” side of leisure in cult fandom. In S. Elkington, I. Jones, & L. Lawrence (Eds.), *Serious leisure: Extensions and applications* (pp. 33–46). Eastbourne: LSA Publications, University of Brighton.
- Lee, J. H., & Scott, D. (2006). For better or worse? A structural model of the benefits and costs associated with recreational specialization. *Leisure Sciences*, 28, 17–38.
- Linder, S. B. (1970). *The harried leisure class*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Littlefield, J., & Sindzinski, R. A. (2012). “Hike your own hike”: Equipment and serious leisure along the Appalachian trail. *Leisure Studies*, 31, 465–486.
- Mair, H. (2002/2003). Civil leisure: Exploring the relationship between leisure, activism and social change. *Leisure/Loisir*, 27, 213–237.
- Major, W. F. (2001). The benefits and costs of serious running. *World Leisure*, 43, 12–25.
- Misener, K., Doherty, A., & Hamm, S. (2010). Learning from the experiences of older adult volunteers in sport: A serious leisure perspective. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 42, 267–289.
- Neulinger, J. (1981). *The psychology of leisure* (2nd ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Book.
- Parker, S. (1971). *The future of work and leisure*. New York, NY: Praeger Book.
- Parker, S. R. (1996). Serious leisure – A middle class phenomena?. In M. Collins (Ed.), *Leisure in industrial and post-industrial societies* (pp. 327–332). Eastbourne: Leisure Studies Association.
- Parker, S. R., Hamilton-Smith, E., & Davidson, P. (1993). Serious and other leisure: Thirty Australians. *World Leisure and Recreation*, 35, 14–18.
- Patterson, I. (2001). Serious leisure as a positive contributor to social inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities. *World Leisure Journal*, 43, 16–24.
- Perkins, K. B., & Benoit, J. (2004). Volunteer satisfaction and serious leisure in rural fire departments: Implications for human capital and social capital. In R. A. Stebbins & M. M. Graham (Eds.),

- Volunteering as leisure/Leisure as volunteering: An international assessment* (pp. 71–86). Wallingford: CAB International.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.
- Qian, X., & Yarnal, C. (2010). Benefits of volunteering as campus tour guides: The rewards of serious leisure revisited. *Leisure/Loisir*, 34, 127–144.
- Raisborough, J. (2006). Getting onboard: Women, access and serious leisure. *Sociological Review*, 54, 242–262.
- Reid, D. G. (1995). *Work and leisure in the 21st century: From production to citizenship*. Toronto, ON: Wall & Emerson.
- Reid, D. G., & van Dreunen, E. (1996). Leisure as a social transformation mechanism in community development practice. *Journal of Applied Recreation Research*, 21, 45–65.
- Rojek, C. (1997). Leisure theory: Retrospect and prospect. *Loisir et société/Society and Leisure*, 20, 383–400.
- Rojek, C. (1999). Abnormal leisure: Invasive, mephitic, and wild forms. *Loisir et société/Society and Leisure*, 22, 21–37.
- Rojek, C. (2001). Preface. In R. Stebbins (Ed.), *New directions in the theory and research of serious leisure* (pp. i–iv). Lewiston, NY: Edward Mellen Press.
- Rojek, C., Shaw, S. M., & Veal, A. J. (2006). Introduction: Process and content. In C. Rojek, S. M. Shaw, & A. J. Veal (Eds.), *A handbook of leisure studies* (pp. 1–21). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sandel, M. J. (1998). *Liberalism and the limits of justice*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Schor, J. B. (2006). Overturning the modernist predictions: Recent trends work and leisure in the OECD. In C. Rojek, S. M. Shaw, & A. J. Veal (Eds.), *A handbook of leisure studies* (pp. 203–215). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Scott, D. (2012). Serious leisure and recreation specialization: An uneasy marriage. *Leisure Sciences*, 34, 366–371.
- Shaw, S. M. (2001). Conceptualizing resistance: Women's leisure as political practice. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 33, 186–201.
- Shen, X. S., & Yarnal, C. M. (2010). Blowing open the serious leisure-casual leisure dichotomy: What's in there?. *Leisure Sciences*, 32, 162–179.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1977). The amateur: Two sociological definitions. *Pacific Sociological Review*, 20, 582–606.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1979). *Amateurs: On the margin between work and leisure*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1980). "Amateur" and "hobbyist" as concepts for the study of leisure problems. *Social Problems*, 27, 413–417.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1982). Serious leisure: A conceptual statement. *Pacific Sociological Review*, 25, 251–272.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1992). *Amateurs, professionals, and serious leisure*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1997). Casual leisure: A conceptual statement. *Leisure Studies*, 16, 17–25.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1998). *The urban francophone volunteer: Searching for personal meaning and community growth in a linguistic minority* (Vol. 3, No. 2). (New Scholars-New Visions in Canadian Studies quarterly monograph series). Seattle, WA: University of Washington, Canadian Studies Centre.
- Stebbins, R. A. (2000). A contextual analysis of the idea of serious leisure: A study in the sociology of knowledge. *World Leisure and Recreation*, 42, 4–9.
- Stebbins, R. A. (2005). Inclination to participate in organized serious leisure: An exploration of the roles of costs, rewards and lifestyles. *Leisure/Loisir*, 29, 183–202.
- Stebbins, R. A. (2006). Mentoring as a leisure activity: On the informal world of small-scale altruism. *World Leisure Journal*, 48, 3–10.
- Stebbins, R. A. (2007). *Serious leisure: A perspective for our time*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press.
- Stebbins, R. A. (2011). The semiotic self and serious leisure. *American Sociologist*, 42, 238–248.
- Stodolska, M. (1998). Assimilation and leisure constraints: Dynamics of constraints on leisure in immigrant populations. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 30, 521–551.

- Tirone, S. C., & Shaw, S. M. (1997). At the centre of their lives: Indo Canadian women, their families and leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 29, 225–244.
- Tomlinson, A. (1993). Culture of commitment in leisure: Notes towards the understanding of a serious legacy. *World Leisure and Recreation*, 35, 6–9.
- Unruh, D. R. (1980). The nature of social worlds. *Pacific Sociological Review*, 23, 271–296.
- Veblen, T. (1953/1899). *The theory of the leisure class*. New York, NY: The New American Library.
- Weiss, P. A. (1995). Feminism and communitarianism: Comparing critiques of liberalism. In P. A. Weiss & M. Friedman (Eds.), *Feminism and community* (pp. 161–186). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University.
- Williams, D. J. (2008). Contemporary vampires and (blood-red) leisure: Should we be afraid of the dark?. *Leisure/Loisir*, 32, 513–539.
- Williams, D. J. (2009). Deviant leisure: Rethinking: “the good, the bad, and the ugly”. *Leisure Sciences*, 31, 207–213.
- Williams, D. J., & Walker, G. J. (2006). Leisure, deviant leisure, and crime: “Caution: Objects may be closer than they appear”. *Leisure/Loisir*, 30, 193–218.
- Worthington, B. (2006). Getting steamed up. In S. Elkington, I. Jones, & L. Lawrence (Eds.), *Serious leisure: Extensions and applications* (pp. 5–18). Eastbourne: LSA Publications, University of Brighton.
- Yarnel, C. M., & Dowler, L. (2002/2003). Who is answering the call? Volunteer firefighting as serious leisure. *Leisure/Loisir*, 27, 161–189.
- Young, I. M. (1995). The ideal community and the politics of difference. In P. A. Weiss & M. Friedman (Eds.), *Feminism and community* (pp. 233–258). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University.
- Young, I. M. (2000). *Inclusion and democracy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Zuzanek, J. (2007). Beginnings of leisure research in North America: A forgotten legacy? In R. McCarville & K. MacKay (Eds.), *Leisure for Canadians* (pp. xvii–xxvi). State College, PA: Venture.

