

Edginton, C., Hudson, S., & Ford, P. (1999). *Leadership for recreation and leisure programs and settings* (2nd Ed.). Champaign, IL: Sagamore Publishing.

Reviewed by

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Biographical Information

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Leadership for Recreation and Leisure Programs and Settings focuses on direct leadership in delivery of programs and services. The authors state that the intent was to distill both theoretical and practical information concerning direct, face-to-face leadership with an emphasis on human interaction. The text consists of two chapters defining leadership, theories of leadership, and guidelines for general activity leadership. Three chapters focus on specific groups (youth, older adults, and people with disabilities), and the remaining eight chapters deal with the process of leadership in specific activity areas (e.g., social recreation, aquatic activities, the outdoors). The following provides a summary and critique of each chapter.

Chapter 1 defines leadership, examines various theories of leadership, and provides a historical perspective of leadership styles. The authors include references to public, private, and commercial recreation and to a current climate of a service-oriented culture. At the end of this chapter (and subsequent chapters) is a series of discussion questions. After reading the first chapter my impression was positive in that the authors address a variety of leisure delivery settings and the references provided a good balance between recreation-specific literature and other disciplines (human services, education). Much of the information was summarized in tables in a very comprehensive nature.

Strategies for programming and direct leadership are addressed in Chapter 2. Based on the premise that people can be taught to be good leaders, the authors provide guidelines for general activity leadership. The relationship of leadership to programming is discussed. Examples of basic leadership techniques for specific activities range from leading a game or song to being a host or interpreter.

Chapter 3 focuses on leading activities for youth. The authors suggest that a great amount of discretionary time puts all youth "at risk." Chapter 4 addresses activity leadership for "older" people. It includes information on the benefits of recreation, needs of older people, and the need for dispelling stereotypes. An excellent list of questions is provided to help clarify one's perception of older people; these questions are conducive

to generating discussion. Also discussed are the concepts of age-appropriateness and intergenerational programming. Some information is presented which seems incongruent with trying to dispel the stereotypes presented in this chapter. Moreover, the authors suggest avoiding "unusually strenuous events for older persons" (p. 113) and in reference to outdoor programs, "an older person on a loop trail may worry" (p. 160). These statements could apply to anyone who is concerned about their physical stamina. Today we are seeing "older" people participating in marathons, outdoor adventure, and other physically demanding activities.

Chapter 5, which addresses issues related to people with disabilities, is much more comprehensive than the previous two chapters. Twenty (20) pages out of 205 (10%) are devoted to this chapter. The authors describe the concepts of disability (versus handicap), inclusion, mainstreaming, normalization, deinstitutionalization, and least restrictive environment. Missing is any discussion of "person first" terminology except for a statement on page 63 which refers to "talking about people first". In addition, person first terminology is not used throughout the text; for example, there are references to "disabled people."

The authors also provide information on physical and developmental disabilities. While there is mention of drug and alcohol dependency, youth at risk and adult offenders, people who are homeless and destitute, there are no specific suggestions for working with these individuals at the level discussed for the first two groups. In the extensive listing of different kinds of disabilities, there is no mention of chronic illness or HIV/AIDS.

Chapter 6 on leading social activities is the first of eight chapters addressing specific kinds of activities. Included in the chapter are references to holidays, including Christmas and Easter. The authors miss a perfect opportunity to address diversity. The only mention of diversity or multiculturalism is a brief statement on page 170, "inherent is the understanding that cultural arts is also multicultural" and ".the growing diversity of population means that a leader must be aware of great works that span cultures rather than concentration on one group." There is no explanation in the book of what "multiculturalism" means. I find this to be a serious omission in a book addressing leadership.

In Chapter 7, the authors discuss organizing and leading groups (solely in clubs). While this is a comprehensive overview of groups such as 4-H, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts, many youth today seem resistant to the traditional club concept. It would be helpful to address this reluctance and ways to enhance participation by those who are most in need and least likely to join.

Chapter 8 is on games, crafts, and tournaments. The authors state that "all games, by nature, are competitive." My questions are "Are they?" and "Should they be?" More discussion of cooperation and group interaction is needed. This chapter is the most extensive one in the book, with 16 pages devoted to various kinds of tournaments. Informa-

tion of this type never really changes and could be accessed from other sources as needed, or perhaps, included in an appendix.

At the beginning of Chapter 9 on "Aquatics," the authors state that this category includes not only swimming but other activities such as canoeing and kayaking. Most of the chapter is on pool programs, with some brief information on other activities at the end of the chapter. A more balanced discussion of aquatic activities is needed especially with the increasing interest in water-based recreation.

In Chapter 10 on leadership in the outdoors, the authors stress the responsibility of an outdoor leader in maintaining natural resources. Then an example is used of "collecting rare butterflies on the tops of glaciers" (p. 155). On page 158 is a statement that an outdoor leader may be warmly dressed in windproof and waterproof garments but should be aware that participants may not be appropriately attired. One of the most essential elements of outdoor leadership is to be sure that participants are adequately attired. This is part of any risk management plan. Making sure participants understand any risk and come prepared for an activity should be included in a list of responsibilities of outdoor leaders. The authors do mention this later in the same chapter.

Chapter 11 on cultural activities uses the concepts of high culture and popular culture from Kando (1977). The references were outdated; the most recent statistics cited in Figure 11.2 were from 1989. While the authors state "it is incumbent upon the leader to know great works of Asian, African American and Hispanic" (p. 170), none of their examples reflects this statement. In the discussion on television, the authors state "in 1978, the eight-day series of Alex Haley's *Roots* had a total of 130 million viewers" (p. 174). It is hard for students to relate to an example of an event that took place before they were born. The impact of television is discussed with little mention of videos, and no discussion of cable access and the use of the internet (and the potential dangers of any of these to youth). The section on music needs to include current interests of youth and perhaps discussion of the controversy over violent and abusive language in popular music.

Chapter 12 is on organizing festivals and pageants. On pages 183-84 there are several sentences on ethnic groups and festivals. *Kwaanza* is mentioned and probably needs to be explained. Under religious celebrations, the only non-Christian example is Hanukkah, a minor Jewish holiday. Part of the recreation leader's role is to understand and promote diversity. This chapter fails to address some important issues.

The final chapter (13) is on tour and travel programs. Many students are interested in this aspect of leisure services and it was good to see the topic included in this text. Under the role of travel and tour leader the following should be included: "promoting understanding and respect for natural areas visited and local inhabitants." "Ethical" travel guidelines and some mention of "ecotourism" would also enhance this chapter. At the end of Chapter 13, the book ends. Some kind of summarizing chapter at the end of the book would be helpful.

I found *Leadership for Recreation and Leisure Programs and Settings* to be well organized and well written. The authors have included some topics not usually covered in leadership and programming texts. These include information on private and commercial recreation, and tour and travel programs. From a teaching perspective, I would rather see a general section on needs assessments and developing objectives for activities based on identified needs rather than lists of characteristics of groups. The authors tend to use "listing" extensively. While "listing" is a good way to organize information, it encourages students to memorize rather than use critical thinking skills. The discussion questions included at the end of each chapter are helpful in understanding the material covered.

The authors miss many opportunities to include issues that have been addressed by our profession in recent years. There was no mention of "sex-role stereotyping" and the authors even mention "separating males and females in games involving hard physical contact" (p. 81). Many of today's young females involved in "hard physical contact," and in some cases, fighting for the right to do so in court, would react negatively to such action. There also seems to be an avoidance of certain issues. There is no mention of sexual behavior of today's youth, "safe sex," gang behavior, violence in schools, issues of social justice, and diversity. Some might argue that these issues should be addressed in courses beyond the initial discussion of leadership. But it is essential that we begin to include references to certain issues in basic leadership courses and build on this knowledge progressively through more advanced courses in our curricula. Inclusion of some of these issues would have enhanced this text.