

Cohen-Gewerc, E., & Stebbins, R. A. (2007). *The pivotal role of leisure education: Finding personal fulfillment in this century*. State College, PA: Venture Publishing.

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In the introduction of the text the authors indicate that the goal of writing this book was to solicit contributions from well regarded experts in our profession to create a global scope on the primary tenets of a declaration on leisure education. One of the threads of the manifesto is the assertion by the authors that in order to improve the human condition leisure education has to play a pivotal role. Throughout the book the authors emphasize numerous times that leisure education must be vital in the education of all people regardless of age, gender, ability or culture and should be provided in a variety of settings within a community. Exposing individuals to leisure education at an early age would help them develop tools to navigate and understand the world in which they interact. It would assist them in the acquisition of skills such as responsibility, decision-making, cooperation, teamwork and as well as many other vital skills.

One could find very few reasons to argue that there is no benefit from engaging in leisure whether it is casual, serious or project-based. Each provides an opportunity to enhance the quality of one's life through participation in leisure activities. One could argue that if leisure were not such an integral part of life then it would be of no benefit for large corporations to market and capitalize on leisure time activities and associated products that help enhance the individual leisure experience. It appears that the corporate world has figured out the benefits of leisure. Recognizing this importance either on a personal level or a corporate level would benefit individuals, families, communities and corporations to be well educated about leisure.

Leisure education is a lifelong process for all, as we take on different roles in our lives, as our responsibilities shift, as our emotional, social, economical, physical and psychological well-being improve or deteriorate so do our leisure needs. If we could educate our young children about leisure as we would math, history or science our children could grasp the importance and benefits of leisure and this could potentially impact the child's entire life cycle. Leisure provides all of us with unlimited opportunities to enjoy freedom, to gain an understanding of "self" in a variety of contexts, to make choices, to have fun, to experience empowerment and to find self-fulfillment.

Leisure education is a fairly simple concept and it is also a fairly complex concept. As an educator it is actually hard to think about leisure as a complex phenomenon to be taught, but the different perspectives that the contributors offered throughout the book made me realize that something as innate as leisure is really

very complex. Complex because the authors looked at leisure education from many different perspectives, the impact that leisure has on a person, the family and the community and it provoked many feelings in reference to leisure that we often take for granted. I find that the beauty of my leisure is its simplicity because I want it, I need it and it keeps me balanced and healthy. I found that the text made me categorize my personal leisure pursuits; it made me examine my personal and my professional philosophy regarding the introduction of leisure education into elementary, perhaps pre-school education. It also caused me to think about corporations intentionally manipulating consumer marketing messages through well-designed marketing campaigns, it also heightened my awareness about social capitalism and how we as consumers have looked in the direction of large corporations to solve problems that the government could not. This made me want to rise and become a leisure education advocate for all people.

Did the authors achieve their goal stated in the introduction of the text? Yes, but they went far beyond their original intent. About fifty pages into the book I wanted to read the ending, Chapter Nine: Conclusions, the "Summing Up" section; I figured that the summary would alleviate some of the feelings that the text was beginning to evoke within me. This textbook made me realize that as leisure educators we should advocate that all schools incorporate leisure education into elementary and secondary curriculums. Leisure education should be advocated for as a human right from cradle to grave to improve the human condition. The authors and contributors stated and overstated the need to provide leisure education and the benefits derived intra-individually and extra-individually.

Concepts and issues within this text can be introduced and discussed in an undergraduate curriculum, but more intensely examined, discussed, and debated in a graduate curriculum. There is definitely a place for this text in the education of our students and perhaps our students will challenge us to look at leisure education from perspectives not even addressed within this text. I received this text from the publisher to read for this review... It's a keeper.