

Professional Constraints

How Our Narrow Professional Alliance Has Stymied Leisure Studies

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Abstract

Noting that our field is minimally relevant to the multitude of ways the American public is engaged in leisure and recreation, Samdahl delves into our history in attempt to understand how this came about. She notes that the recreation movement as canonized in our textbooks ignores parallel efforts that led to community theaters, libraries, and museums. In the 1960s, the narrow focus of our field was formalized through the birth of NRPA and sustained through accreditation standards designed to train public recreation professionals. Shortly thereafter, the 1970s brought a multitude of pressures for research-based scholarly inquiry, and undergraduate practitioner programs expanded by adding doctoral programs that promoted leisure scholarship. Samdahl examines and deconstructs the ensuing binary, arguing that recreation practitioners and leisure scholars are like water and oil—thrown together by circumstance but never able to mix. Stepping back, Samdahl deconstructs that binary to highlight the ways it overlooks other relevant aspects of our field. She concludes by saying that leisure studies never did belong in academic departments committed to practitioner preparation, and the well-intentioned experiment that placed these fields together ultimately stymied the growth of leisure scholarship within our field.

Keywords: *history of leisure studies, recreation movement, National Recreation and Park Association, recreation practitioners, leisure scholars*

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Yesterday I read an article in the *Smithsonian Magazine*¹ that celebrated the 100th anniversary of Rocky Mountain National Park. The article, by a professional travel writer, described how our western expansion coincided with ideals of the Romantic Era, and how Isabella Lucy Bird's chance visit to Estes Park in 1873 initiated a burst of tourism that eventually led to preservation of the surrounding mountains. It reminded me of an article I'd read recently in the *New York Times*² about a team of environmental scientists and psychologists who just reported that a walk in nature improves both cognitive and affective functioning. My inbox brought a link to *MarketWatch*, a personal finance website that had a discussion³ of work-life balance based on a survey by the business managers at Staples, the large office supply store. There was also a link from National Public Radio showcasing their national database of accessible playgrounds,⁴ searchable by ZIP code. As I worked on my laptop, *The Art of Happiness*⁵ by the Dalai Lama lay on the table next to me; he's a religious leader, but you'll find his work in the philosophy section at a bookstore. Beyond reading, my day was filled with games on Facebook, cooking dinner with friends, walking the dogs around my neighborhood, and watching a movie on TV. Before I went to bed, the evening news shared the story of local residents impacted by new zoning laws to promote commercial development along 75 acres at the edge of town, a spot where they had ridden off-road vehicles for years.

As I sit down to write this essay, each of those events is relevant. The American public is deeply engaged with topics central to our field but travel writers, historians, environmental scientists, psychologists, financial advisors, corporate managers, syndicated media organizations, philosophers, religious leaders, urban planners, and television reporters are the people who are responding, not leisure studies. Likewise, my daily life embraces leisure and recreation in a multitude of ways—access to books, television, and computers; informal time at home and with friends; and local politics and development—but none of that is enhanced by the work of recreation professionals. I seem to live in a world where our field is minimally relevant to the leisure and recreation of the average citizen. And yet here we are again, gazing inward to debate a binary that pits leisure scholars against recreation practitioners while ignoring the larger question of the (ir)relevance of our field to contemporary American society.

How did we get to this point?

Some Relevant Background

The history we teach in our textbooks often recounts the recreation movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries, a period during which there was growing public interest in landscaped parks, preserved wilderness areas, and youth recreation programs. Groups of dedicated individuals worked hard to establish public lands and community activities in a fashion unlike anything from their European heritage. Early in this movement, organizations were formed for the direct provision of supervised recreation (e.g., the YMCA in 1851), followed by special interest groups for people working towards preservation of park land (e.g., the Sierra Club in 1892). People in those organizations eventually saw value in creating professional associations that could standardize and enhance their work. This happened initially at the local and regional levels (e.g., the New York Society for Parks and Playgrounds in 1891) and eventually at the national level (e.g., the Playground Association of America in 1906). While the missions of these professional associations varied according to their scope of interest, all were intent on developing a professional stature that would guarantee quality programming and sustained leadership. These professional recreation

associations existed independently until 1965 when several of the larger groups merged to form the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Our textbooks give less attention to other equally influential movements of that time that were not directly involved with public parks or supervised recreation. Between 1830–1900, the lyceum movement created a network of debates, located primarily in New England and the upper Midwest, which engaged community members in issues of national and international relevance. At its peak, up to a million people a week attended lyceum talks at local venues,⁶ making it a major intellectual and cultural force of that time. There also were traveling troupes of actors who performed Shakespeare in communities across the nation throughout the 19th and into the middle of the 20th century,⁷ leaving a legacy in rural America of unschooled people who easily cited Shakespeare. This era saw a rapid growth of local and regional community theaters, though they didn't coalesce until the 1950s to become the National Association of Community Theater.⁸ Several decades earlier, theater advocates including teachers formed the American Educational Theatre Association (estab. 1936) to promote theater and stimulate creativity for children; they later expanded with theater programs for the armed forces.⁹ We can add to this the American Library Association (estab. 1876), the American Association of Museums (estab. 1906), and countless other professional organizations whose members provided skilled leadership in activities that enhanced community life. The goals of those groups were clearly parallel to the goals of the associations we claim as our history, but we make no reference to them in our discussions of the recreation movement. In some unclear fashion, they have been labeled *not us*.

Not the zoos, however. When NRPA was formed in 1965 it incorporated four pre-existing park and recreation associations plus the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums. The inclusion of zoos might seem obvious since they face the many of the same management issues as other public parks. However, this alliance was short-lived and the AAZPA broke away six years later, stating that “their vision encompassed more”¹⁰ than parks and recreation as promoted by NRPA.

What was this narrower mission of NRPA? In an editorial in the June 1966 issue of *Parks & Recreation*, Conrad Wirth, then the vice-chair of NRPA's administrative board, articulated his vision for this newly merged association:

I want it to foster: excellence in park and recreation administration; a demand by the public for an adequate national system of parks and recreation areas at all levels of government; provisions for advanced research; planning to improve parks and recreation facilities to meet the public's requirements; public realization of human environmental requirements; a strong human protective instinct for resource use and preservation; and the establishment of a high standard of excellence in professional ability and accomplishments.¹¹

And at this point in my writing, I am stunned. That vision, articulated just months after the formation of NRPA, is exactly on target with NRPA's current activities and mission 50 years later. Why, then, is there so much contention?

The 1970s

The 1970s was a crucial decade for our field. A wave of legislation¹² signaled increased public support for the preservation and management of natural areas, including management of the swarms of people who were flocking to those recreation sites. Unlike many federal

mandates, this legislation was matched with money flowing from the Land and Water Conservation Act as a dedicated source of funding for outdoor recreation resources. Some of this money was channeled into research, often through the National Park Service and the US Forest Service.¹³

At the same time, academic programs on college campuses were undergoing radical restructuring. Since the 1930s, colleges had offered courses and degrees to address municipal park administration and recreation programming.¹⁴ These undergraduate and masters programs worked in strong alliance with practitioners from parks and recreation venues. But in the 1970s, the college atmosphere began to change with increasing emphasis on scientific research and doctoral-level degrees. On campus, our academic programs responded by promoting the interdisciplinary study of leisure. At the University of Illinois, for example, a “leisure behavior research laboratory” was established with faculty whose degrees were in educational psychology, anthropology, sociology, and psychology.¹⁵ The *Journal of Leisure Research*, established by NRPA in 1968, provided a scholarly peer-reviewed outlet for research on leisure and recreation, but early guidelines required each author to include implications for practice. This restriction motivated some faculty to create a second journal, *Leisure Sciences* (estab. 1977), which invited broad interdisciplinary perspectives without the practitioner application valued by *JLR*.

The changes that were happening to park and recreation programs were mirrored in other academic units across campus. All practitioner fields were pressured to develop a research framework and peer-reviewed scholarship, and the entire domain of social sciences was striving to emulate the quantitative hypothesis-testing models that worked so well for the “hard” sciences. Gone were the days of scholarship like deGrazia (1962), Kerr (1962), and Dumazedier (1967) whose writings provided thoughtful reflections on the nature of leisure. In this new world, scholars were expected to collect and analyze data.

The field of recreation and leisure studies (a new favored title for these academic programs) initially met this demand with a whirlwind of survey research including needs assessments and user surveys—data that were particularly useful to managers responding to the increased demand for outdoor recreation. Into that mix came a gift, Neulinger’s book, *The Psychology of Leisure* (1974). This book drew upon established social psychological constructs—*intrinsic motivation* and *perceptions*—to decode and explain the leisure experience (note the shift away from behavior). It was the right tool at the right time. Leisure scholars, pressured to produce empirical research, could now legitimize their field through this alliance with psychology, and collectively they began to focus on the measurement of attitudes and perceptions. Unknowingly, Neulinger had given us a paradigmatic framework that would monopolize the next three decades of leisure research.¹⁶

Though extremely significant, this push to establish theory and research had minimal impact on the undergraduate curriculum which remained focused on training students for the recreation profession. Accreditation, first implemented in 1977,¹⁷ ensured that most undergraduate programs provided coursework in recreation administration and programming; over the years the standards have been revised but that fundamental core has remained the same.¹⁸ The shift toward theory and research was felt most strongly at the graduate level with the creation of new doctoral degrees and graduate coursework that drew heavily from research published in the leisure journals. Doctoral students were being trained as researchers with the expectation that their work would provide an ongoing contribution to our expanding understandings of leisure.

The first doctoral students graduating from this revamped curriculum began to appear in the early 1980s; these students had engaged with Neulinger's social psychology of leisure throughout their doctoral studies, and they carried forward an interest in leisure as well as recreation. As these individuals moved into faculty positions, they solidified this focus in graduate programs across the nation. That cohort encompasses the senior faculty members of our community—the generation of faculty who are about to retire.¹⁹

Like Water and Oil

I could probably skip this section—the discussion above makes it apparent that the history and intent of our undergraduate curriculum for professional training is clearly distinct from the history and intent of our doctoral programs that promote leisure scholarship. But there are a few points worth noting.

Ten years after our field expanded its graduate curriculum to embrace leisure studies, Burdge (1985) published a manuscript on the “coming separation of leisure studies from park and recreation education.” Burdge was on the faculty at the University of Illinois where, as described above, a long-standing program for practitioner training had expanded in the mid-1970s by hiring several prominent scholars with social science backgrounds whose task was to elevate the disciplinary study of leisure. From his insider perspective, Burdge could see the clash in missions and the absence of overlap between training students for hands-on roles in recreation settings and training students for the scholarly exploration of issues relating to leisure. Burdge predicted this would fail, claiming the alliance was a disservice to students in both areas.

From my perspective, Burdge was wrong in predicting that a focus on leisure scholarship would diminish the training students receive at the undergraduate level. In many respects, the undergraduate curriculum has remained the same, driven by strict accreditation standards that define the skills and competencies students need to master. One might argue that the theory and research that has been adopted into the undergraduate curriculum enhances students' preparation, but that point is best judged by practitioners. Regardless, faculty with practitioner backgrounds who are committed to the goals of professional development continue to teach in the undergraduate core, and that did not change with expansion of the graduate curriculum.

Of more concern, and this was Burdge's point as well, our current situation provides no pipeline for students to gain the disciplinary perspectives and critical thinking skills necessary to effectively engage with scholarship at the doctoral level. I was reminded of that this summer when a surprising resurgence of popular interest in Pieper's (1952) book, *Leisure as the Basis of Culture*, made me remember the numerous times I forced that book onto unwilling graduate students who saw no relevance to their career goals. How can we prepare students to become extraordinary scholars in leisure if we haven't exposed them to abstract or theoretical ways of thinking throughout their coursework?

The truth is, most students who come into our graduate programs envision working in park administration or recreation programming (using those terms broadly), or teaching on college campuses to students enrolled in that applied curriculum; the shifting culture of the 1970s did little to change this. It is the exception rather than the norm for doctoral students in recreation and leisure studies to enter our programs with a strong background in disciplinary theory, or to produce work of interest to disciplinary scholars outside our field.

From this perspective, the differences between leisure scholars²⁰ and recreation practitioners are well entrenched in our history. Burdge predicted this marriage would not succeed, and it clearly has not; we are like a bickering couple that is unwilling to divorce. The loss, in my view, is most grievously evident in the small role our field now plays in the public discourse about leisure, where visible responses are offered by all fields except our own. The great experiment of the 1970s was a failure: like water and oil, recreation practitioner training and the scholarly study of leisure were thrown together but did not mix.

Troubling the Binary

But to stop there is not enough. It's important to examine this binary more critically in order to understand what it represents.

Let me start with the very terms we use to label these two factions: *academics* (or *scholars*) and *practitioners*. I've already been loose with that language in writing this essay; are academics the same as scholars? On campuses that are not research intensive, faculty members are typically hired to teach the undergraduate core with less emphasis on research; the label *academic* clearly fits those appointments. But even at institutions where faculty are pushed to actively engage in research, there are differences between those who engage in applied research of interest to practitioners and faculty who engage with theoretical concepts and the more abstract dimensions of leisure. Does the label *leisure scholar* apply equally to both? And while my discussion emphasized the importance of disciplinary theory drawn from the broader social sciences as central to leisure scholarship, one might argue that our field now has its own theoretical core so links to disciplinary theory are no longer necessary; if so, does the term *scholar* include those whose primary sources are entirely within the recreation literature? What about faculty in the arena of tourism or sports or youth development, who have merged with traditional recreation programs on campus but do not have a professional alliance with the recreation professions? Clearly, we need to be more precise in positioning a subset of faculty to act as the straw man pitted against practitioners.

Likewise, the term *practitioner* has its own problems. As noted above, faculty members who teach in the undergraduate curriculum have often worked in applied settings; how far from that history must they be before they are labeled *academics*? And when we hire college-educated professionals from local recreation agencies to teach as adjunct faculty in our programs, do they become academics rather than practitioners? The defining edges of this academic-practitioner binary are just as unclear when viewed from the perspective of practitioners.

The problem becomes even more complex when I announce that I view myself as a practitioner. My background is sociology and my work experience in parks was as a researcher; terms like *practitioner* were alien until I entered my doctoral program in leisure studies. And yet, I tell my students that my practice is to teach and they are my clientele. My point, of course, is to challenge their narrow definition of *practitioner* when applied to only a small subset of careers. We might all agree that park directors and camp administrators are practitioners, but so are corporate managers and financial advisors and TV reporters and the travel writer who explored the cultural history of Rocky Mountain National Park, and even people like me, none of whom studied our undergraduate curriculum. Likewise, what about practitioners in parallel fields who promote community theaters and libraries and museums and zoos? Our blinders are so strong that we isolate ourselves from an entire community of professionals whose work contributes to and complements our field.

So what *is* it that binds us together and distinguishes jobs within our field from other professions that claim a similar mission? We might initially think it's our heritage in outdoor recreation and environmental preservation. An argument against that, however, is to note the departure of natural resource recreation from our collective teaching and research agenda. Those faculty have migrated toward their own research conferences and professional associations (the North American Association for Environmental Education held its first conference in 1972; the Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals was established in 1983), and on some campuses they exist in other units where they can develop curricula unrestricted by our accreditation. Ten years after *Leisure Sciences* was created to promote the disciplinary study of leisure, a new journal, *Society and Natural Resources* (estab. 1988), emerged to serve this specific branch of study. Our field might have initially been built on an interest in and protection of the outdoors, but that no longer characterizes our core.

I have long argued that a distinguishing factor at the heart of the recreation profession is a belief in direct intervention for the sake of enhancing someone else's recreation experience. We see this most clearly in therapeutic recreation (which, ironically, no longer falls under the scope of NRPA) where leisure becomes a modality for therapeutic intervention. But we employ this same premise when we train students to work in summer camps, youth sports, senior centers, and similar programs—venues where our students are responsible for guiding other people's recreation choices and outcomes. This has its roots in the early playground movement when people like Jane Addams created safe places for children to play, especially immigrant children who could be socialized to American ways. It also draws from a fear that unsupervised recreation might lead to unruly behavior, evident in the early mission of the YMCA but articulated more broadly during the 1920s in publications such as Cutten's book (1926), *The Threat of Leisure*. This legacy means that recreation practitioners work primarily in places and programs where people *attend*—that is, where we can directly facilitate their engagement in select recreation activities. This perspective creates a clear role for the professional but means we are not responsible for the myriad of other places and spaces where leisure and recreation are woven into the fabric of peoples' lives.

If we were to remove that central element of intervention, would the recreation profession more easily embrace history and journalism and urban planning? Would we create alliances with community theaters and libraries? Would we push for a reduction of violence on television and work to assure that the Internet is available in rural communities? My point, of course, is that the issue of who we are is much deeper and more complex than what is captured in the language of a binary between leisure scholars and practitioners.

Stepping Away from that Binary

We might better understand what fuels this debate by stepping outside of the binary and listening to the underlying concerns. But as soon as I try to do that, I am stymied. Many people (including myself) have spoken about the disconnect between leisure scholars and practitioners but other than pointing out the fact of this disjuncture, there's been no clear articulation about why this is problematic. From the scholar's perspective, there might be frustration at being asked to train practitioners, though I've never heard that complaint. Besides, academics receive credit for manuscripts published in any journal, so their scholarship is acknowledged and valued even when it doesn't apply to practitioner concerns. More important, perhaps, is the lack of support NRPA showed for teaching and research, the activities most central to academic careers. Even before 2010 when NRPA

disbanded the Society of Park and Recreation Educators (the branch that had served academic faculty), educators and scholars felt an ongoing disenfranchisement from the core policies and resources of NRPA, which was their primary professional affiliation. The exclusion of academics and leisure studies from the mission of NRPA has been a clear and undisputable fact, but that grievance is most appropriately directed at NRPA itself, not at practitioners.

I'm less confident about articulating the concerns this binary creates for people who work within the recreation professions. There is intermittent discussion about whether students have adequate preparation as they are hired into the field. If this is the concern, we should determine whether it stems from the substantive nature of the curriculum or from the faculty who teach those courses. Are practitioners suggesting that leisure theory has displaced more important practical skills in the undergraduate curriculum, or that undergraduate instructors give inadequate attention to students because they are distracted by their research? If not, these concerns about the strength and relevancy of undergraduate preparation, while certainly important, do not indict the scholarship branch of our field.

A more legitimate complaint from practitioners might be their claim that too little research is produced that is relevant to their immediate management concerns. Sadly, the fact that this has been a perennial concern suggests that the desired research is never going to come from academic faculty. The faculty members most strongly engaged in the undergraduate professional curriculum are not those with a prolific research agenda; the demands of teaching more than fill their time. And the faculty members who publish most often are the products of a system that values disciplinary research and peer-reviewed scholarship. The relevance and utility of applied research, while undoubtedly a source of personal fulfillment for some researchers and of significance to practitioners, has never been a criterion for merit and promotion on college campuses. In the 1970s, when the federal government faced a similar need for data relevant to outdoor recreation management, it funneled money to the National Park Service and the US Forest Service to hire researchers assigned to meet this need. Perhaps NRPA needs to do the same, funding a research center that employs full-time researchers for applied studies relevant to municipal park administration and programming. Indeed, support for applied research was part of Conrad Worth's vision when NRPA was first formed.

And there we have it: academics who sometimes serve the recreation profession but feel their other responsibilities are discounted by NRPA, and practitioners who can live with or without the broader leisure scholarship but want applied research to aid their management and planning. This is clearly much more than a binary; it encompasses the cultural milieu of campus politics, the scope and mission of NRPA, and eccentric twists of history.

Two additional points are relevant to this examination of the scholar-practitioner debate. First, we need to acknowledge that many people who successfully work in recreation venues do not hold degrees from recreation and leisure studies. Are those employees any more or less prepared for their jobs than our own graduates? Examining that topic might offer good insight into concerns about how we prepare students for that set of professional responsibilities. And second, we need to acknowledge that the majority of students who graduate from recreation and leisure studies programs move on to careers outside the recreation profession, and that the recreation profession itself might look very different in the future. In addition to preparing students for current job openings, academic faculty are responsible for delivering a well-rounded education that provides foundational skills for whatever careers our graduates pursue. A strict curriculum of professional training

driven by the requirements of small slice of today's job market might not serve the best interests of our students (who are frequently ignored in these discussions about academics and practitioners).

Where Are We Now?

As I write this essay, I'm aware of its many inadequacies. For the sake of simplicity, and influenced by the binary that frames this issue of *Scholé*, I've overlooked things such as NRPA's political lobbying to support laws and policies that promote public recreation. Neither have I addressed the Academy of Leisure Sciences, a professional association that is struggling to step in after NRPA made it clear in 2010 that it did not serve the professional needs of academics and scholars. Likewise, administrative changes on campus mean that contemporary departments now embrace fields like sports and tourism in addition to the traditional recreation professions, and those fields bring their own histories unrelated to the events outlined here. This essay makes it clear that I am unable to talk about the academic-practitioner debate without framing that discussion in history—in many respects, this topic is past its prime. And yet, there are some relevant insights to be gained by revisiting it.

The history of the recreation movement that is canonized in our textbooks provides solid rationale for the traditional curriculum that prepares students for recreation administration and programming. However, contemporary American society is unlike anything that was envisioned when those professional organizations were first formed. The accreditation standards, developed to assure quality across all campuses, have been modified but not substantively questioned since they were first implemented almost 40 years ago. To what extent have those accreditation standards and the old allegiance to a narrow set of careers prevented the recreation profession from developing broader relevance in contemporary American society?

Likewise, the adoption of Neulinger's proposition that leisure is a personal experience made the field turn away from its earlier focus on leisure behavior, even though behaviors are a very real aspect of recreation administration and programming. Of even greater concern, the focus on personal experiences (or behaviors) has kept this field from embracing cultural perspectives that reveal systemic forces that impact people's lives, and has kept us from claiming responsibility for any forms of recreation or leisure that aren't amenable to professional intervention. Our allegiance this narrow view of our profession keeps us from addressing social change in ways that might have a greater impact than any individual recreation program.

Some of these issues are captured in the ongoing debate about whether our field's mission is to address *recreation* or *leisure*.²¹ That issue became increasingly relevant with the expanded mission of academic departments in the 1970s. The fact that it remains unresolved confirms my belief that *leisure* was an unwelcomed intruder on a field deeply committed to professional practice. While we look inward to debate the vocabulary that describes us, and give credence to an arbitrary binary that hides the true issues that divide us, other fields have taken leadership in studying and reporting on the broad spectrum of leisure in our lives.

The truth is, leisure studies never *did* belong in academic departments committed to practitioner preparation. The well-intentioned experiment of the 1970s that brought the disciplinary study of leisure into our departments, that attracted students like me with the promise of an academic home that would play a leading role in scholarship relating to leisure, that vision was an aberration. As the generation of faculty retires who were germane

to this push for leisure studies, the field can settle back into an amalgamation of professions with a weak common link to free time. In the contemporary campus climate that values employable graduates and grant-funded research, those departments might flourish better than one that promotes leisure studies.

After journeying through this discussion, I feel the need to return to something I mentioned earlier: my surprise at realizing that NRPA has not wavered in its core mission for 50 years. Though my prolonged frustration with NRPA was very real, I see now that my expectations were not. NRPA has a clearly defined mission to support park and recreation services in the public sector; I wanted it to serve the needs of academics and leisure scholars, but that never was its intent. And now, at this late stage in my career, I join the zookeepers in understanding that “my mission encompassed more,” though zookeepers had the foresight for a quicker departure from NRPA than I did. After all these years of complaining, I’ve come to understand that the problem was never with NRPA, the problem was with me.

Notes

¹ Perrottet, T. (2015).

² Reynolds, G. (2015).

³ Fortrell, Q. (2015).

⁴ <http://www.playgroundsforeveryone.com/>

⁵ Though expressing the teachings of the Dalai Lama, the book was written with assistance from Cutler.

⁶ Wright, T. F. (2013).

⁷ National Endowment for the Arts. (n.d.).

⁸ American Association of Community Theater. (n.d.)

⁹ George Mason University Libraries. (n.d.)

¹⁰ Quantum Conservation e. V. (2012).

¹¹ Wirth, C. (n.d.), cited by Taylor (2015).

¹² For a good review of environmental legislation, see the timeline produced by Public Broadcasting Services American Experience. (n.d.).

¹³ The USFS has a long history of recreation research extending back to the 1940s. For a good review, see Camp, H.W. (n.d., c1983).

¹⁴ For a good review of curriculum development at the University of Illinois, see the series of historical notes written by Sabora (n.d.).

¹⁵ Faculty members of the UIUC Leisure Behavior Research Laboratory included Drs. Lynn Barnett (Educational Psychology), Garry Chick (Anthropology), John Kelly (Sociology), and Doug Kleiber (Psychology).

¹⁶ Much of the early research in *JLR* came from sociology including Kelly (1972) who proposed a sociological model that competed with Neulinger’s. Kelly (1983) also published a book that drew heavily from sociological theory to understand leisure in relation to identity. Subsequent history shows that Neulinger’s psychological framework was adopted more widely.

¹⁷ For an overview of the accreditation process, see National Recreation and Park Association (2015).

¹⁸ Designated learning outcomes for accredited programs are listed in Section 7.0 in the Standards. See Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (2014).

¹⁹ To position myself in relation to this discussion, I was among that early generation of scholars. I had studied sociology in my undergraduate and master's degrees, and received my Ph.D. in recreation and leisure studies in 1986. I was a faculty member in leisure studies programs for my entire career, and I retired in 2014.

²⁰ In the call for papers, the editors of this special issue of *Schole* used the term *academics* but I have used the term *scholars*, though sometimes I use those terms interchangeably. I address this more directly in a later section of the paper.

²¹ For a recent discussion of this, see Henderson (2015).

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