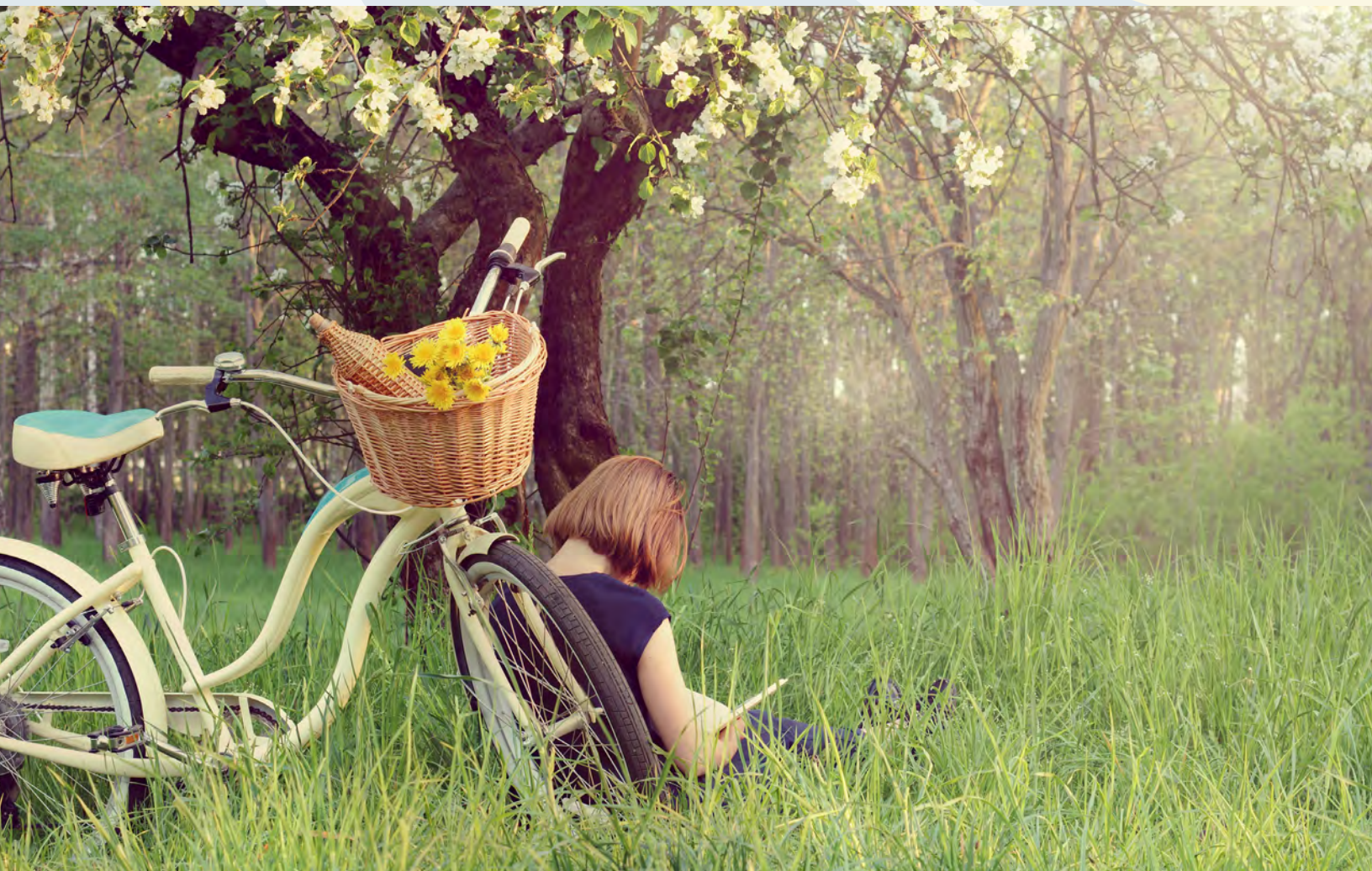


PASTIMES

The Context of Contemporary Leisure

6th Edition



Ruth V. Russell



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For Aunt Ruth

Whose example gave me the original inspiration to get into the recreation field.



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Preface

The purpose of this sixth edition of *Pastimes* is to extend the discussion about contemporary leisure to new concepts supported by the latest research findings and commentary. Throughout, I have pursued the most interesting, relevant, exciting, and up-to-date information possible. This wasn't at all difficult; leisure is simply a very intriguing subject.

First, as an introduction to the phenomenon of leisure, the book must be current. Momentous changes, actual and alleged, have always been the root of leisure expressions and experiences. To match, *Pastimes* again reflects a wide range of material from the disciplines of leisure studies, sociology, psychology, economics, political science, history, anthropology, geography, the humanities, and media and cultural studies.

Second, as a learning tool, this sixth edition teaches more. It contains new illustrations of concepts through field-based cases, biographical features, exploratory activities, statistics, and research studies. While the basic organization remains similar, in addition to updated material throughout, some concepts have been extended and broadened. For example, in Chapter 1, a new section on Ancient Egypt is added, and in Chapter 6, more discussion of virtual geography is presented. Also, Chapter 7, on leisure and technology, has been completely rewritten to reflect a new organization, and ever-changing content.

More than a textbook, *Pastimes* is very much a point of view. Leisure is presented as a human phenomenon that is individual and collective, vital and frivolous, historical and contemporary, factual and subjective, good and bad.

This edition is the result of what I have learned from years of engagement with leisure theory, research, and personal and professional practice. Signs of my worldwide wanderings are also evident. Learning is the greatest of joys, and I am lucky to be able to devote my life to it.

Ruth V. Russell

Acknowledgments

Throughout all six editions, I have felt grateful to many people: family, friends, students—at bachelor and doctoral levels, university and practitioner colleagues, and fellow recreation participants. In particular, I have learned a great deal from my IU collaborators: Rasul Mowatt, Trish Ardovino, Boyd Hegarty, Jeff Nix, Debbie Smith, and Agnes Kovacs.

Most especially I wish to thank Pat Setser not only for moral support, but for life-saving assistance with the photo program for this edition. As well, based on a 30-year career in technology in industry, public schools, at the university level, and as a consultant, she is coauthor of Chapter 7 on leisure and technology.

About the Author

Dr. Ruth V. Russell is professor emeritus in the Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies at Indiana University. She is a former trustee of the National Recreation and Park Association and has served as president of the Society of Park and Recreation Educators. Professional experience includes the San Diego Recreation and Parks Department, San Diego–Imperial Counties Girl Scout Council, and Chateau La Jolla Retirement Center. Dr. Russell has authored numerous textbooks (and a cookbook), published research in refereed journals, and lectured internationally. Presently her pursuits include RVing, walking, swimming, reading, watercolor painting, and culinary projects, as well as class enrollments in Spanish.

PART 1

Leisure as a Condition of Being Human: Personal Context

We are human in large part because of our leisure

We begin our exploration of leisure by considering its significance for us personally. Leisure helps shape us as human beings—our growth, health, motives, feelings, and actions.

Chapter 1

Demonstrates leisure's meanings for us through the humanities, in ancient and contemporary histories, and according to today's connotations.

Chapter 2

Discusses benefits of leisure to us, including our happiness, freedom, pleasure, and spirituality.

Chapter 3

Offers some explanations about our leisure choices and behaviors.

Chapter 4

Traces the ways leisure helps us grow and stay healthy.





The Meanings of Leisure

What is leisure?

Leisure is an intricate and dynamic concept with different meanings, depending on context.

What are the contexts of leisure's meaning?

Leisure's meanings can be found in the humanities, history, and today's connotations.

Where do we find meanings of leisure in the humanities?

Perhaps leisure can be best understood through the ideas portrayed in a story, a song, or a picture.

What are the clues to meanings of leisure in history?

From the beginning of human culture, leisure has been part of everyday life—legacies that endure today.

What do we understand leisure to mean today?

Leisure is individually and culturally defined, but most common are the themes of free time, recreational activity, and a special spirit.

CHAPTER 1

To have leisure is one of the oldest dreams of human beings: to be free to pursue what we want, to spend our time meaningfully in pleasurable ways, to live in a state of grace (Godbey, 2008, p. 1). In this chapter, we set the stage for understanding the essential humanness of leisure by exploring its foundational meanings.

Because leisure is a complex concept with different meanings depending on the people, the place, and the time, defining it requires journeys to different peoples, places, and times. First, we define leisure through its reflections in the humanities: literature, art, and music. Next, we examine some of the original meanings of leisure in history, and finally, we summarize leisure's contemporary connotations. Throughout the discussion, you'll notice that leisure has multiple, and even contradictory, meanings.

Meanings in the Humanities

First, the complexity of leisure's meanings can be reflected through the **humanities**. The subjects of the humanities include the arts, such as music, paintings, and stories, which convey what it is like to be human. The word *art* itself comes from the same root as the word *artificial*, meaning something made by humans.

Humanities: Human creations that describe human experience

In creating a song or a poem, songwriters and poets portray their own experiences. So, when we listen to a musical performance or read a poem, we understand something about the experience of its creator. In these expressions are ideas, images, and words that serve as a kind of self-reflection, telling us who and what we may be and informing us of our humanness. As well, the humanities introduce us to people we have never met, places we have never visited, and ideas that may have never crossed our minds.

Literature

Literature, in the broadest sense, is widely apparent in everyday life. It is the written art form found in magazine articles, greeting card verses, Internet blogs, as well as in poetry and novels. Reading literature in itself is a popular leisure expression, and to prove it, Americans spent about \$29.2 billion in 2014 on books (both paper and e-book formats) (Association of American Publishers, 2015). Another example of the vitality of literature today is the role-playing literary camps sprouting up across the United States (Otterman, 2010). Structured around children's books such as *Harry Potter*, *Percy Jackson and the Olympians*, *Twilight*, and *Clash of the Titans*, both residential and day camp programs feature kids acting out book scenes and situations.

Like looking into a mirror, literature offers a view of human life, including leisure. For example, American fiction writer F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote many short stories that tell us about the good-time culture of the 1920s. Labeled his "flapper stories," short stories such as "The Camel's Back" glamorized the social life of the young:

Now during the Christmas holidays of 1919 there took place in Toledo, forty-one dinner parties, sixteen dances, six luncheons, male and female, twelve teas, four stag dinners, two weddings, and thirteen bridge parties. It was the cumulative effect of all this that moved Perry Parkhurst on the twenty-ninth day of December to a decision. This Medill girl would marry him and she wouldn't marry him. She was having such a good time that she hated to take such a definite step. (Fitzgerald, 1920, p. 35).

In contrast, Maya Angelou's (1971) poem, "Harlem Hopscotch," uses the rhythm of a children's street game to express a serious problem in society:

One foot down, then hop! It's hot.

Good things for the ones that's got.

Another jump, now to the left.

Everybody for hisself.

*In the air, now both feet down.
 Since you black, don't stick around.
 All the people out of work,
 Hold for three, then twist and jerk.
 Cross the line, they count you out.
 That's what hopping's all about.
 Both feet flat, the game is done.
 They think I lost, I think I won. (p. 100)*

In the poem, Angelou uses the game of hopscotch to vent frustration and a sense of betrayal. Although the poem is about the injustices of race and social class, it makes light of it by putting it into the rhythm of a classic children's pastime. Or does it? What do you think is meant by the game's outcome in the last line: "They think I lost, I think I won"?

Art

People have always had an interest in the beauty of pattern. We enjoy designs of contrast and balance for their own sake. We create our own aesthetic experience every day; we doodle during class, wear jewelry and tattoos, and make figures with the mower in our yard. The use of pattern also has a commemorative function. The most important events in our social, political, and religious lives, for example, are reflected in images and icons. We post photos of our experiences on Facebook, and we hang out flags to celebrate national holidays. In other words, art mirrors what we consider to be both beautiful and important.

Perhaps one of the most readily recognized reflections of leisure in art comes from the paintings of the impressionist period. Impressionism is a style of art that presents an immediate "impression" of an object or event. Impressionist artists try to show what the eye sees at a glance, so the image seems spontaneous. Although painters have created impressionistic works in several periods of history, the term is most commonly applied to the work of a group of painters exhibiting in Paris from about 1870 to 1910. What is the impression of leisure in this art?



Figure 1.1. Claude Monet. Garden at Sainte-Adresse, 1867.
 Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Used with permission.

One answer is in the painting “Garden at Sainte-Adresse” (Figure 1.1) by Claude Monet. Painted in 1867, Monet’s painting depicts vacationers. Out in the water are pleasure boats moored on the left and steamers on the right. In the middle-distance is a fishing boat (just above the parasol). This perhaps represents the transitions from sail to steam, and away from the local and traditional life, with the arrival of tourism. This mirrors what was happening at that time in most of coastal France. Fishing villages were changing into resorts, with broad avenues, sidewalks, formal gardens, and large buildings, just as



Figure 1.2. Mary Cassatt. *Woman in Black at the Opera*. 1879. The Hayden Collection. Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

many waters-edge locations have in the years since. The creation of artificial spaces for the visiting tourists changed forever the lives of the fishermen and shopkeepers who once lived there (Herbert, 1988).

Another impressionist painter of the time, Mary Cassatt, painted “Woman in Black at the Opera” (Figure 1.2). Cassatt presents a woman using her upward-tilted opera glasses to scan the audience. With a bit of humor, Cassatt also placed a man in the distance leaning out of his box to point his glasses in the woman’s direction, emphasizing the fun of spying on others (Herbert, 1988). We can also learn from this painting that leisure defined the upper social class of this era.

Even this brief glance at the western art of the late 1800s reveals clear meanings of leisure. Indeed, idle hours and entertainment greatly expanded during this period, particularly for the upper class. As thousands of paintings by impressionist artists portray, by the end of that century, daily life was dominated by theaters, operas, cafes, restaurants, dances, racetracks, gardens, and parks. Tourism expanded as well, with a focus on the beauty of the seaside.

Box 1.1 Web Explore

Romanticism

Another artistic tradition that provides an interpretation of leisure’s meaning is Romanticism. While Impressionism suggests leisure is a daily life dominated by theaters, operas, cafes, gardens, and racetracks, Romanticism suggests something different. What is that? Explore the web for both images and interpretations of the landscape paintings of Casper Friedrich, Thomas Cole, J.M.W. Turner, and others. Search “Romanticism and nature and emotion” for clues. For example, you might begin with <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Romanticism>.

Music

Music is perhaps the most universal activity of humankind. Beginning as the natural sound of the human voice, music over the centuries has taken many forms and reflected many ways of life. For ex-

ample, people today express themselves through jazz, rock, rhythm and blues, country, rap, gospel, classical, bluegrass, K-pop, Latin, and many other musical styles. In fact, through the purchase of CDs, ringtones, digital downloads, music videos, and other musical recordings, the music industry worldwide saw revenues of \$15 billion in 2015, 45% of which were in digital format (International Federation of Phonographic Industry, 2016).

How might music portray leisure? All forms of music reflect leisure's meanings, but as an initial illustration, we'll consider rock and roll, and Elvis Presley in particular, who remains rock's most indelible image. In Elvis, millions of American young people found more than a new entertainer; they found themselves, or at least an idealized version of themselves, which stood in stark, liberating contrast to the repressed atmosphere of the 1950s.

What was this new identity? In Elvis's "Hound Dog" and the flip side's "Don't Be Cruel," the highest selling single record of that decade, we find a summary of how Elvis's rock and roll represented young people and their leisure of that time. While the straight rock of screaming guitars and drums in "Hound Dog" emphasizes a wild and raucous sound, a light beat and gentler accompaniment in "Don't Be Cruel" highlight a sweet melody and lyrics. This makes for a big difference between the sexually aggressive and the playfully innocent. Thus, just like the two sides of this single record, youth of the 1950s were bumping, although timidly, against the outer edges of a sort of rebellion.

Comparing this image of leisure for young people from the 1950s with a popular music genre today provides some different contrasts. Rap is a genre of popular music of U.S. black origin in which words are recited rapidly and rhythmically over a prerecorded, typically electronic instrumental backing. According to a study of young people by Scott (2008), when rap music uses the word "chillin," the interpretation of leisure is of relaxation and "doing nothing."

While there are multiple types of rap music (i.e., gangsta, East Coast, etc.), a specific example in the lyrics of the metal-rap group Gang of Four (Metrolyrics, 2016) gives us a glimpse of leisure as consumerism:

*The problem of leisure
What to do for pleasure
Ideal love a new purchase
A market of the senses
Dream of the perfect life
Economic circumstances
The body is good business
Sell out, maintain the interest*

Box 1.2 The Study Says

Music Lyrics

Can the lyrics of popular songs reveal something about those who listen to them? Based on a computer analysis of lyrics from three decades (1980-2007) of hit songs, a statistically significant trend toward narcissism and hostility in popular music was found by researchers at the University of Kentucky. The study was controlled for genre to prevent the results from being skewed by the growing popularity of hip-hop and rap. In general, it was found that hit songs in the 1980s were more likely to emphasize happy togetherness (Diana Ross and

Lionel Richie sang of "two hearts that beat as one"), while today's songs are more likely to be about one very special person: the singer (e.g., Justin Timberlake proclaiming "I'm bringing sexy back" and Beyoncé exulting "It's blazin', you watch me in amazement").

Source: Tierney, 2011

Meanings from Human History

It is not known exactly where and when human civilization originated. While glaciers are still retreating today, the most recent glacial period during the Pleistocene Age (when great sheets of ice up to two miles thick covered most of Greenland, Canada, and the northern United States, as well as northern Europe and Russia) began to retreat about 10,000 years ago (Dictionary.com, 2016). At some point afterward, successive periods of cultural evolution began. As people gathered together into communities, more formalized rules of conduct emerged, including governments, religions, work occupations, and of course, leisure.

Our contemporary meanings of leisure have been shaped by the histories of these past societies. Let's explore some of them.

Stone Age: Art

The Stone Age was a broad prehistoric period during which sharpened stone was the major tool. The period lasted roughly until about 2000 BC with the beginning of metalworking. Our understanding of life for these earliest humans is very much conjecture, but recent discoveries made of 50 samples of symbol-based art from 11 caves in northwestern Spain (Wilford, 2012) suggest our earliest ancestors may have given us our notion of leisure as artistic expression.

From these discoveries, an international team of scientists determined that the art in a cave known as El Castillo was part of the earliest known art. The red handprints found in the cave, for example, were probably made from blowing pigment on a hand placed against the cave wall. Thus, the scientists said, this motif “implies that depictions of the human hand were among the oldest art known” (Wilford, 2012, p. 1). Until these discoveries, archaeologists usually saw prehistoric people as incapable of creating artistic works much beyond simple abstract markings and personal ornamentation.



Figure 1.3. Perhaps in the spirit of prehistoric cave art, contemporary sidewalk chalk art, or pavement art, is a similar leisure expression? Numerous festivals held around the world today celebrate chalk artists, some who create 3-D images. Denver, Colorado-June 4, 2011: Chalk Art Festival on Larimer Square.

Ancient Egypt: The Family That Plays Together Stays Together

Ancient Egypt includes several civilizations of northeastern Africa, concentrated along the lower Nile River, that joined together around 3150 BC. Its rich and diversified culture thrived until 30 BC, when under Cleopatra, it fell to the Roman Empire and became a Roman province.

From the study of burial tomb artifacts, it appears that family leisure was vital to the ancient Egyptians. The nuclear family was the core of society and even many of the gods were arranged into such groupings (Brewer & Teeter, 2007). There was tremendous pride in one's family, and respect for one's parents was a cornerstone of morality. Indeed, the most important duty of the eldest son (or occasionally daughter) was to ensure that parents received a proper burial.

The ancient Egyptians expected that life after death would follow the general pattern of life on earth, so they kept in their burial tombs food to eat, clothing to wear, and sport and game equipment (Hamed, 2015). Indeed, excavating ancient Egyptian tomb sites provides clues to common family leisure expressions. For example, all family members played a variety of musical instruments. Popular were flutes made of reed or wood, as well as large floor harps and various percussion instruments, including bone or ivory clappers. Many types of toys have been found at tomb sites, too: balls, horses on wheels, and baby rattles. The board game of Senet is perhaps the most well known, but also dice and other board games have been identified. As well, ancient hieroglyphs depict ancient Egyptians as excellent swimmers and aquatic athletes.

Ancient Greece: The Leisure Ideal

Although much has been debated about Greek concepts of leisure (see Sylvester, 1999), one constant theme from this ancient culture seems to be its focus on leisure as a means to the good life. The philosopher Plato, for example, believed there were spiritual as well as physical rewards from participating in gymnastics. Further, throughout his writings, Aristotle considered the power to think to be the most unique of human qualities and thus was convinced that a life of contemplation was the proper use of leisure. Yet, to him, life should be devoted not only to thinking noble thoughts, but also to doing civic and productive deeds (Hemingway, 1988).

Leisure scholars have labeled Aristotle's and Plato's philosophical ideas the "leisure ideal." That is, leisure is a force that can ignore us. This interpretation comes from the Greek concept *σχολή*, which was translated as **schole**. This word is also related to the Latin (*licentia* and *licere*) and French (*loisir*) and English (leisure and school) words. Extending these associations, then, the ideal pastime was in pursuit of scholarship: reading, thinking, debating, discussing, and studying.

Schole: An ancient Greek term for scholarship that is translated today to the word leisure



Figure 1.4. An artist's rendering of Olympia in ancient Greece. Source: Pierers Universal-Lexikon, 1891. Source: Public domain

How this society interpreted this advice from the philosophers into daily life provides a legacy for leisure's meaning today. For ancient Greeks, such intellectual pursuits as mathematics, poetry, and music, as well as dance, drama, and sport were exalted as part of an ideal of religious expression. For example, excavation of the ancient Olympic site in western Greece shows that the first formalized Olympic Games took place in 776 BC as worship to the god Zeus.

While originally the games owed their purity and importance to religion, later the games incorporated a mixture of not only religious festival, but also athletic and artistic competitions and politics.

Held every four years (or Olympiad), the Ancient Olympic Games continued for nearly 12 centuries. They were a series of mostly athletic contests among representatives of the city-states, intended to encourage good relations, but ultimately became a political tool used by them to assert dominance. Politicians would announce political alliances at the games, and in times of war, priests would offer sacrifices to the gods for victory. Sculptors and poets would also congregate at each Olympiad to display their works of art to potential patrons.

At the first Olympiad, a footrace of 180 meters was the only event. Later, longer running races, as well as horse races, chariot racing, jumping, discus throwing, weight lifting, and running with armor were added. One particularly savage sport, called pankration (which translates as “all of might”), was introduced in 648 BC and combined boxing and wrestling. Scholars tell us that in pankration, all types of empty-handed physical attack were encouraged, with eye gouging and biting the only hits not allowed.

The athletes in the games were the aristocratic young men who had the privilege of leisure. Indeed, social distinctions were prominent in all of ancient Greek life. What Plato and Aristotle taught about the leisure ideal was available only to native-born males who were citizens. Their control of a system of slaves and the limitations on women empowered their lives of leisure.

Yet, within this contradiction to the leisure ideal, there is another contradiction. There is some evidence that women had their own games in Olympia (Pausanias, 1918). These were the Heraean Games, also held every 4 years to honor the goddess Hera, the consort of Zeus. Here, unmarried women competed in foot races, with the winners receiving the traditional olive branch garland.

Putting all this rich complexity of leisure meaning together, we can conclude that for the ancient Greeks, leisure meant developing the mind and the body through participation, learning, and noble actions. The good life of leisure for the Greeks was a privileged “ideal” of maintaining knowledge and physicality toward virtuous choices and conduct, which in turn lead to true pleasure.

Ancient Rome: Mass Leisure

Films often portray the ancient Romans as military conquerors as well as ardent pleasure seekers. While there is some accuracy in these images, this civilization also shaped many other cultures with important advancements. These included legacies of language, astronomy, religion, politics, and architecture.

The ancient Roman Empire centered in the city of Rome, in what is now Italy. It was the most extensive western civilization of ancient times, beginning around 753 BC and lasting for over 1,000 years. During that time, the Empire grew to rule much of Europe, Western Asia, and Northern Africa. It owed its prosperity to a policy of expansion backed by both military and political methods. Although the ancient Romans borrowed a good deal of Greek philosophy and copied Greek art and architecture, they had a unique notion about leisure.

For example, as Rome conquered its neighbors, the problem of overseeing an immense empire began to require control of the social order. Discipline and careful regulation of a growing middle class of people were required. They accomplished this by what today we would refer to as **mass leisure**. There were heated public baths, parade grounds for various ball games, buildings for gymnastics, wrestling rooms, and grand athletic stadiums.

Mass leisure: Leisure expressions adopted by the collective of many people in a culture; mass entertainment is an example today

Often the middle-class masses of people were spectators to professional gladiators fighting each other—often to the death, and to political prisoners, criminals, and slaves being thrown to wild animals. Based on the policy of “bread and circuses,” leisure as mass entertainment was used as a form of social control and appeasement, and as a means whereby rulers and officials could win popular favor. For example, beginning about 31 BC, **ludi**, or public games, became annual events in the Roman calendar (Ibrahim, 1991). By the end of the Roman Empire, each year included 175 official holidays, with 101 of them for theatrical entertainments, 64 devoted to chariot races, and 10 for gladiatorial combats (Roberts, 1962).

Ludi: A Latin word for public games and festivities

Specialized facilities were provided for these events. The oldest of these, the Circus Maximus, was built for horse races, trick riding, mock cavalry battles, and chariot races. Amphitheaters hosted gladiatorial combats, with the largest, the Colosseum, holding thousands of spectators. The Colosseum also sponsored the *naumachia*, a ship battle requiring the flooding of the Colosseum floor. However, the

greatest of all *naumachiae* is believed to be that staged by Claudius outside Rome in Lake Fucine. A total of 19,000 men boarded a fleet of 50 ships and battled each other beginning at 10 a.m., and by 3 p.m., 3,000 of them were dead (Butler, 1971).

As the mass entertainments became more popular, and more widely used by emperors to gain support from the people, they also became more lavish and depraved as each tried to outdo his predecessor. Enormous amounts of money and human resources were spent on the *ludi*, which many historians conclude ultimately degraded the Roman culture. Restrictions began to be imposed on these practices. For example, gladiator fights ended in the east of the empire at the end of the fourth century, and in the west at the end of the fifth century.



Figure 1.5. Artist's rendering of Naumachiae, the staging of naval battles as mass entertainment. Source: Public domain www.albion-prints.com

Early Polynesians: Tourism

Today, Hawaii is one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. Ironically, its early settlement can perhaps be viewed as the effect of tourism itself. Polynesian seafarers were skilled ocean navigators and astronomers who traveled long distances at a time when boats rarely went out of sight of land. While scholars still debate the founding history of Hawaii, some believe the first Polynesians arrived there around 200 AD from the Marquesas (Kamakau, 1992).

These Polynesian voyagers (sometimes an entire village) loaded up their double-hulled canoes with animals, plants, food, and water and headed out into the middle of the Pacific Ocean. They had more than 2,000 miles to go before they would reach the Hawaiian island of Kauai (Howe, 2006). Ultimately, archaeological evidence suggests that by 1280 AD, the Polynesians had settled the vast Polynesian triangle with its northern corner at Hawaii, the eastern corner at Easter Island, and the southern corner in New Zealand (Lowe, 2008).

What was their motive? Were they trying to colonize or to escape famine, drought, or overpopulation? Were they exploring? No one really knows, of course, but given the great dangers and unknowns about the trips, we can at least conclude their actions reveal an adventuresome spirit, a yearning for travel.

Muhammad's Early Empire: Relaxation

Muhammad, which means "praised one," was the founder of the religion of Islam and one of the most influential people of all time. Within 100 years of his death, in 632 AD, Muslims had carried his teachings into parts of the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and Asia. Today, Islam is the second largest world religion with 1.6 billion followers, or 23% of the world's population (Pew Research Center, 2013).