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Monika Stodolska & Gordon J. Walker

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Ethnicity and Leisure: Historical Development, Current Status, and Future Directions

Monika Stodolska¹
University of Illinois

Gordon J. Walker
University of Alberta

Abstract. This introduction provides a short discussion of the manuscripts included in this special issue and places them in a larger context. It describes the changing socio-demographic makeup of Canada and the U.S.; provides a brief historical overview of the past studies on ethnicity, race, and leisure; discusses various theoretical frameworks employed to study this topic; and, lastly, proposes potential topics ethnicity and leisure researchers might consider in the future.

Keywords. race, ethnicity, immigration, leisure research

Résumé. Cette introduction fournit une discussion courte des manuscrits inclus dans cette édition spéciale et remet c'est enquêtes d'analyse dans leurs contextes. Elle décrit les changements socio-démographiques aux Canada et aux États-Unis ; fournit une brève revue des études passées sur l'ethnicité, la généalogie, et les loisirs ; présente divers cadres théoriques utilisés pour étudier cette matière ; et, pour finir, considère comment quelques approches alternatives de recherche pourraient dans l'avenir, nous aider à mieux comprendre les liens entre les loisirs et l'appartenance ethnique.

Mots-clefs. race, appartenance ethnique, immigration, recherche de loisir

In this introduction to the special issue on ethnicity and leisure we have tried not only to introduce the featured manuscripts but also to place them in a larger context. Consequently, we first describe the changing

Address correspondence to either: Monika Stodolska, Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism, 104 Huff Hall, 1206 South 4th Street, Champaign, IL 61820. Email: stodolsk@uiuc.edu; or Gordon J. Walker, E-488 Van Vliet Centre, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada, T6G 2H9. Email: gordon.walker@ualberta.ca.

socio-demographics in Canada and the United States; second, we outline the various theoretical frameworks that have been employed in past studies in this area; third, we provide a brief discussion of the seven refereed and the two invited manuscripts in this special issue; and fourth, we describe some potential topics ethnicity and leisure researchers should consider in the future.

Canada's socio-demographic composition is undergoing a sea change. In 2001, for example, 13.4% of Canadians were visible minority group members (defined as people who are "non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour," but not Aboriginal), with this percentage being even higher in major urban centres such as Toronto and Vancouver (both 37%; Statistics Canada, 2003a). Although this national figure is much greater than the 4.7% reported in 1981, it is much lower than that projected for 2017, when it is expected that around 20% of Canada's population will belong to a visible minority group (Statistics Canada, 2005a). A second major trend is the growing number of Inuit, Métis, and North American Indian people in Canada. According to Statistics Canada (2003b), the percent of people who self-identified as a member of one or more of these Aboriginal groups grew 22.2% from 1996 to 2001. This increase is due to a number of factors, including better census enumeration, improvements in Aboriginal life expectancy, a higher birth rate than the non-Aboriginal population, and, in the case of Métis people, judicial challenges and constitutional debate resulting in greater group awareness (Statistics Canada, 2003b). Interestingly, the number of people reporting their ancestry as being only Canadian also grew, from 1% in 1981 to 23% in 2001, with a slightly smaller percentage also stating that their ancestry was Canadian and from one or more other ethnic groups (Thomas, 2005). According to Thomas, this "ethnic realignment" may be the result of a variety of factors, including Canada's particular democratic institutions and collective achievements (e.g., the charter of rights, universal health care, multiculturalism), a desire to differentiate ourselves from both Americans and recent immigrants (most of whom are visible minority group members), as well as changes in how the census was conducted.

Similar changes have been taking place in the United States. Today, the U.S. population is significantly more ethnically and racially diverse than it was in 1900 or even 1990. Contemporary immigrants from many developing countries are joining the African Americans and American Indians who have always been part of the U.S. ethnic mosaic (Farnsworth, 2000). While up until the 2000 Census, African Americans were consid-

ered the largest minority group in this country, the latest Census revealed that they had been surpassed by Latino Americans in the last decade of the twentieth century. The most recent Census estimates for 2005 show that Latinos are the most populous minority group in the U.S. (42,081,895 million or 14.2% of the total population), followed by African Americans (36,324,593 million or 12.3% of the total population), and by Asians (12,420,514 or 4.2%) (U.S. Census, 2006). There are two main mechanisms responsible for the observed growth of ethnic minority populations in the U.S. and Canada—natural increase (the excess of births over deaths) and net immigration (immigration minus emigration) (Farnsworth). The growth in the African American and American Indian populations in the U.S. has been the result of natural increases. Latino minority, on the other hand, has risen in numbers mainly due to significant waves of immigration, although high fertility rates have also played a role (Pollard & O'Hare, 1999). A third source of growth, particularly pronounced among American Indian groups, is the change in self-identification (Farnsworth). Similar to Canada, in recent decades the public's increasing recognition of Indian rights has encouraged a growing number of people to claim the American Indian heritage.

In the United States, in the decade between 1990 and 2000, immigration contributed between one-third and one-half to the total population increase (Martin & Midgley, 2003). During the same period, more than 9 million foreigners were admitted as legal immigrants to this country (on average 900,000 a year) (Martin & Midgley). While in the 1960s 40% of legal immigrants came from Europe, in 2005 over half (53%) of newcomers originated in Latin America, one quarter in Asia, and about 14% in Europe (U.S. Census Bureau News, 2006). People from Mexico accounted for more than 25% of the foreign-born arrivals to the U.S. Until the 1990s, the newcomers settled primarily in the states of California, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas, which accounted for approximately 75% of immigrants residing in the United States. Their share of the immigrant population had decreased, however, and by 2000 these five states were home to only about 66% of the U.S. foreign-born population (Martin & Midgley). Encouraged by new job opportunities, the newcomers had begun to increasingly settle in six states of the South (Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee), and in four states of Central and Western U.S. (Colorado, Nebraska, Nevada, and Utah) (Kochhar, Suro, & Tafoya, 2005; Martin & Midgley). The increase in the minority populations in these areas had been sparked by the robust local economies that added manufacturing, con-

struction, and services jobs. Such conditions were particularly attractive to young, male Latinos who migrated from Mexico and other Central American countries in search of economic opportunities (Kochhar et al.). The rapid growth in the numbers of Latinos occurred concurrently with the strong population increase among African Americans (21%) and Whites (11%), especially in the six states of the South.

As many studies have shown, immigrants in the U.S., on average, have lower education levels, earn less than native workers, and have higher poverty rates (Schmidley, 2001). For instance, in 2000, only 67% of the foreign-born population age 25 or older had at least high school education, compared to 86.6% among the native born Americans (Schmidley). This gap has widened recently as the levels of education among immigrants have declined relative to those of the native-born. "The average educational level of immigrants has been rising, but the educational level of U.S.-born residents has risen faster, which explains the widening education gap and the growing income inequality between foreign-born and U.S.-born Americans and within the foreign-born population" (Martin & Midgley, 2003, p. 31). Especially, immigrants arriving to the new areas of the South and West have relatively little education, poor English skills, and are predominantly young, male, and unmarried. They settle in a large variety of communities ranging from big cities to rural areas, suburbs, and small towns. The impact of this immigration wave on the infrastructure of these communities is likely to be profound, particularly after the new immigrants are joined by their wives leading to an increase in birth rate (and thus impacting the school system), and as they grow older and utilize more health services (Kochhar et al., 2005). This impact is already being seen. "The Hispanic school-age population (ages 5–17) in the new settlement areas of the South grew by 322% between 1990 and 2000. Over the same period, the corresponding white population grew by just 10% and the black population by 18%" (Kochhar et al., p. iv). At the same time, the numbers of Latino preschoolers (four years of age and younger) have increased by 382%.

The effects of the growth in the minority populations are likely to be felt throughout the United States. According to current projections, non-Hispanic Whites will make up approximately 52% of the population by 2050 and will lose their majority status by 2060 (Farnsworth, 2000; Martin & Midgley, 2003). If current fertility, mortality, and immigration patterns continue, the U.S. population is projected to reach 349 million in 2025 and 409 million in 2050. Under these assumptions, in 2050 Hispanics will make up 25% of the population, non-Hispanic Blacks—13%;

non-Hispanic Asians and Pacific Islanders—10%; and American Indians, Alaska Natives, and others will account for less than 1% (Martin & Midgley). Beside immigration and high fertility rates among some ethnic groups, more unions between Americans of different racial and ethnic groups are likely to result in more children of mixed racial heritage who will identify themselves with one or more of minority populations (Farnsworth).

Interest in leisure behaviour among racial and ethnic minority members predates these trends, however, and can be traced back to the early 1960s ORRRC studies (Mueller & Gurin, 1962) that examined participation in recreation activities among populations divided by racial and socio-economic characteristics. Research in this area expanded, however, only after publication of a seminal paper by Washburne (1978), who proposed a marginality-ethnicity framework to help account for differences in recreation participation between minorities and the “White mainstream” (for a more detailed description see Morden & Hopp, this issue). A series of studies that followed in the 1980s employed Washburne’s theory to investigate differences in recreation participation between African Americans and Whites (Klobus-Edwards, 1981; Stamps & Stamps, 1985). This early research has been taken to a higher level by Floyd, Shinew, McGuire, and Noe (1994) and by Shinew, Floyd, McGuire, and Noe (1995), who employed additional variables of social class and gender in their examination of the subject. Moreover, Woodard (1988) brought attention to significant *intra-racial* variations in recreation participation among African Americans. Toward the end of the 1980s and in the 1990s scholars have begun to question the validity of the marginality-ethnicity framework (Floyd, 1998; Hutchison, 1987, 1988; West, 1989) and to propose alternative explanations for minorities’ unique recreation patterns. In particular, West, Woodard (1988), Blahna and Black (1993), Philipp (1999), Floyd and Gramann (1995), and Stodolska and Jackson (1998) maintained that except for cultural differences and marginal position in the society, perceived discrimination might be one of the important factors affecting leisure behaviour of minority groups.

The 1990s and the present decade also witnessed a significant diversification in the topics examined by ethnic leisure scholars and in the ethnic groups that have been the focus of study. While the early research concentrated mainly on African Americans (Klobus-Edwards, 1981; Stamps & Stamps, 1985; Washburne, 1978), in the 1990s and 2000s, the literature in the field expanded to include groups such as American Indians (e.g., Dustin, Schneider, McAvoy, & Frakt, 2002; Lashua & Fox,

2006; McAvoy, McDonald, & Carlson, 2003; McDonald & McAvoy, 1997), Koreans (e.g., Kim, 2000; Kim, Kleiber, & Kropf, 2001; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004), Chinese (e.g., Li & Stodolska, 2006; Marafa & Tung, 2004; Sivan, 2002; Tsai & Coleman, 1999; Walker, Courneya, & Deng, 2006; Walker & Deng, 2003/2004; Walker, Deng, & Dieder, 2001; Yu & Berryman, 1996), South Asians (e.g., Tirone, 1997, 1999; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000; Tirone & Shaw, 1997), and Poles (e.g., Stodolska, 1998, 2000). Interest in recreation behaviour of Latino Americans that began with studies of McMillen (1983) and Hutchison (1987) had continued in the 1990s and in recent years (e.g., Carr & Williams, 1993; Chavez, 1991, 1992, 1993; Dunn, Kasul, & Brown, 2002; Floyd & Gramann, 1993; 1995; Gomez, 2002a; Gramann, Floyd, & Saenz, 1993; Irwin, Gartner, & Phelps, 1990; Juniu, 2000, 2002; Shaull & Gramann, 1998; Stodolska & Santos, 2006). Most, although not all, of these studies had investigated various aspects of recreation participation among Latino Americans in wildland settings, and in the National Forests in particular.

The range of topics examined by researchers studying issues of ethnicity and leisure has significantly broadened in the last 15 years. For instance, a number of studies have attempted to account for the role of assimilation/adaptation in minorities' recreation participation patterns, perceived discrimination, and constraints experienced in leisure (Carr & Williams, 1993; Floyd & Gramann, 1993; Floyd, Gramann, & Saenz, 1993; Gramann, Shaull, & Saenz, 1995; Shaull & Gramann, 1998; Stodolska, 1998). Minority-specific leisure constraints (Ruble & Shaw 1991; Shinew, Floyd, & Parry, 2004; Stodolska, 1998; Tsai & Coleman, 1999) and post-immigration adaptation patterns (Juniu, 2000; Stodolska, 2000; Tirone & Shaw, 1997; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000) have also attracted interest of leisure researchers. Shinew and her colleagues have brought attention to another interesting aspect of leisure behaviour—interethnic/interethnic interactions in leisure settings and the role of leisure in building social capital and alleviating ethnic tensions (Floyd & Shinew, 1999; Glover, Parry, & Shinew, 2005; Shinew, Glover, & Parry, 2004). In the last nine years, ethnic specific environmental attitudes and preferences, environmental justice, meanings ascribed to natural environments, and park visitation patterns have also been frequent subjects of research (Arnold & Shinew, 1998; Cordell, Betz, & Green, 2002; Floyd & Johnson, 2002; Gobster, 2002; Ho et al., 2005; Outley & Floyd, 2002; Payne, Mowen, & Orsega-Smith, 2002; Tinsley, Tinsley, & Croskeys, 2002; Virden & Walker, 1999; Wolch & Zhang, 2004). Beyond these relatively well-established lines of inquiry in the minority leisure scholarship there

have appeared a number of studies on topics that are largely pioneering in the leisure studies literature. They included investigations of leisure of minority children in inner-city neighbourhoods (Outley & Floyd, 2002), ethnic-specific information needs and search behaviours (Thapa, Graefe, & Absher, 2002), the effect of religious beliefs on leisure of minority populations (Stodolska & Livengood, 2006), the leisure experiences of interracial couples (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002), and how Chinese Canadians' subjective leisure experiences (i.e., *rumi*) are both similar to and different from the experiences reported by North Americans in mainstream social psychology of leisure literature (Walker & Deng, 2003/04).

Marginality-ethnicity (Washburne, 1978) has been by far the dominant theoretical framework in the minority leisure scholarship in recent decades. Following the criticisms of Hutchison (1987, 1988), Floyd (1998), and others, alternative theories and models had begun to be utilized to examine various aspects of leisure behaviour of ethnic and racial minorities. In 1995, Shinew et al. employed multiple hierarchy stratification hypothesis and class polarization perspective in their study of interracial differences in leisure preferences between African Americans and Whites of different social class. The same theory was later utilized by Arnold and Shinew (1998) to examine constraints to park use experienced by people of different gender, race, and income level. Interest group theory of class identification was used in 1995 by Floyd et al. to investigate inter and intra-group differences in leisure preferences among African Americans and Whites. Their findings showed significant similarities in leisure preferences among African Americans and Whites who defined themselves as middle class, but a divergence in leisure preferences among people from the two racial groups who belonged to the working class. Differences in leisure preferences have also been the subject of research by Floyd and Shinew (1999). They used interracial contact hypothesis to compare inter-racial (White/African American) and intra-racial differences in leisure preferences among people with different levels of interracial contact. Their findings indicated that African Americans and Whites with high levels of interracial contact shared similar leisure preferences. Moreover, leisure preferences of African Americans with low levels of interracial contact were quite dissimilar from those with high levels of interracial contact, while among Whites, the levels of interracial contact did not seem to affect their leisure choices. In 2004, Shinew et al. employed the same theoretical approach (i.e., interracial contact hypothesis) to study the role of community gardens in fostering integration among African Americans and Whites. Leisure preferences have also

been examined by Ogden and Hilt (2003), who investigated the reasons for “the cultural shift” (p. 213) from baseball to basketball among African Americans. They argued that the change had been brought about, among others, by the process of “collective identity” through which “certain aspects of an individual’s culture become part of that individual’s self-image and self-identification” (p. 214). They later examined factors that are tied to collective identity and that affect African American youths’ preference for basketball.

The concept of transnationalism was utilized by Stodolska and Santos (2006) and by Li and Stodolska (2006) to examine the effect of transnational status on leisure behaviour of temporary Mexican migrants and Chinese graduate students, and on the ways in which leisure fostered the maintenance of their transnational networks. Stodolska and Santos discovered that factors such as specific family status, unique work arrangements, economic, social and cultural networks, and unique legal status, conditioned leisure of transnational Mexican migrants. Li and Stodolska, on the other hand, established that temporary residence in the U.S., coupled with a strong desire to focus on their studies abroad were the most important factors affecting leisure of Chinese graduate students.

Although the theory of planned behaviour has been utilized in a number of research projects in the leisure domain, Walker et al. (2006) were the first to employ it in the context of leisure of minority populations. In particular, they examined the motivations for playing lottery among Chinese and Anglo Canadians. Their study confirmed the cross-cultural applicability of the theory, but also suggested that variables in this theory may vary in importance among different ethnic groups. The concept of self construal was employed by Walker et al. (2001) to compare motivations of Chinese and Euro-North Americans for participation in outdoor recreation. In their later paper (2005), the same authors have advocated for a broader incorporation of this concept into the general leisure research and practice.

In 2002, Hibbler and Shinew employed social network theory to study leisure patterns of interracial couples and families. Their findings showed that race and racism contributed to social isolation of interracial couples in work, family, and leisure, and that couples experienced little comfort when participating in leisure engagements in public spaces. Social capital theory was used by Glover et al. (2005) to investigate how the social relationships formed within community gardens helped neighbourhood leaders access resources. Their findings showed that “leisure

episodes are particularly important in building strong ties, which are a common source of social capital” and that they “serve as the social lubricant for social capital production” (p. 470). In their 2002 study of the effect of parenting strategies on leisure experiences of African American children living in socially isolated, urban neighbourhoods, Outley and Floyd employed family systems theory, leisure socialization theory, and the concept of role flexibility. The results of their study suggested that parents utilized kinship networks, arranged their children’s leisure opportunities, chaperoned, and even isolated or confined their children in order to combat constraints imposed by living in their neighbourhoods and by their poverty.

The concepts of assimilation, segmented assimilation, and selective acculturation have been employed in a number of research projects examining leisure behaviour of minority populations. For instance, Gordon’s (1964) assimilation theory was used in Floyd and Gramann’s (1993, 1995), Floyd et al.’s (1993), and Stodolska’s (1998) studies that investigated recreation patterns and perceived discrimination among Mexican Americans in Arizona and Polish immigrants to Canada. In their 2004 research project that focused on the role of recreational sport in the adaptation of Korean immigrants, Stodolska and Alexandris employed Portes and Zhou’s (1993) segmented assimilation theory. The authors concluded that immigrants followed three distinct paths in the adaptation process, including acculturation to the culture of the White American mainstream, assimilation to the sub-culture of their own ethnic community, and preservation of their own ethnic traits. The concept of selective acculturation was employed by Gramann et al. (1993), Shaull and Gramann (1998), and Stodolska and Livengood (2006). Shaull and Gramann used selective acculturation to examine the perceived importance of nature-related and family-oriented experiences in outdoor recreation to Mexican Americans, while Gramann et al. to compare perceived importance of social-psychological benefits of outdoor recreation participation between Mexican Americans and Anglo Americans. Stodolska and Livengood combined this approach with the concept of ethnic resilience to analyze the effect of religion on leisure behaviour of Muslim immigrants to the U.S.

Diverging from the traditional socio-psychological theories employed in other studies of ethnic leisure behaviour, Thapa et al. (2002) looked into the communications literature for an appropriate theoretical framework. They took advantage of the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) framework to investigate various aspects of information use and search

behaviours among ethnic minority members visiting National Forests. The results of their study suggested that Whites utilized all of the available information sources, and maps and guidebooks in particular, to a greater extent than Hispanics or members of other ethnic groups. Hispanic Americans were least likely to seek information from rangers, while members of other ethnic minorities were least likely to pay attention to bulletin boards.

In addition to such theoretical approaches originally developed in other fields of social science, such as sociology, psychology, ethnic studies, or communications, and later applied to study leisure behaviour of minority populations, there exist two theoretical frameworks that were developed specifically with the study of minority leisure in mind. First, Gomez developed (2002b) and empirically tested (2006) the Ethnicity and Public Recreation Participation (EPRP) Model in which acculturation, socio-economic status, subcultural identity, benefits of recreation, and perceived discrimination were affecting recreation participation. In 2005 (a, b), Stodolska modelled the decision-making process leading to discrimination against minority groups and suggested practical applications of the model to leisure settings. In the Conditioned Attitude Model of Discrimination that was based on psychological attitude formation theories (Theory of Reasoned Action and Theory of Planned Behavior), she conceptualized discrimination as a sequential process in which both exogenous factors and intrinsic attitudes could affect the outcome. The validity of this model remains to be tested.

Recognizing the aforementioned socio-demographic trends and the current state of leisure theory and practice in this area, the co-editors proposed a special issue on leisure and ethnicity to the Editor of *Leisure/Loisir*. Support from Yoshitaka Iwasaki led to a call for abstracts being distributed that included the following statement of purpose:

For this special issue, manuscripts that explore a variety of aspects of ethnicity and leisure are solicited. Papers should critically examine and review current theory and empirical research; or report empirical findings (based on qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods); or introduce new insights into theoretical or methodological issues/advancements. Manuscripts that improve our understanding of ethnicity and leisure in Canada, in other countries, or across nations or cultures, are appropriate. Papers that simply describe ethnic/racial differences in visitation or participation rates will not be considered.

The call for papers on ethnicity and leisure resulted in 17 abstracts being submitted for initial review by the co-editors, with 13 of these being selected to undergo further review as full manuscripts. Based on

reviewers' comments and the co-editors' evaluation, nine papers were either accepted with minor revisions or the authors were invited to revise and resubmit. After a second round of review and evaluation was completed, the seven manuscripts in this issue remained. Before briefly discussing these seven papers, we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who submitted to this special issue as well as those who helped with the review process, including (in alphabetical order): Mahfoud Amara, Loughborough University; Jinyang Deng, West Virginia University; Erwei Dong, Pennsylvania State University; Karen Fox, University of Alberta; Ian Henry, Loughborough University; Edgar Jackson, University of Alberta; Richard Lee, University of Minnesota; Heidi Reible, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Bryan Smale, University of Waterloo; Robert Stebbins, University of Calgary; Susan Tirone, Dalhousie University; and Randy Virden, Arizona State University.

A perusal of the seven refereed manuscripts in this special issue quickly shows the great diversity in terms of the topic areas being discussed, the ethnic/racial group(s) being examined, and the methods being employed. For example, there are two papers on Asian university students in the U.S., one focusing on leisure constraints (Li & Stodolska) and the other on serious leisure (Heo & Lee); one paper on leisure and trans-racial adoptees, and another on the role of sport in the adaptation of immigrant high school students, both in Canada (Morden & Hopp; Doherty & Taylor; respectively); one paper on Puerto Ricans' leisure, and another on American Indians' recreation use of national forests, both in the United States (Gomez & Malega; Flood & McAvoy; respectively); and one cross-cultural paper that compares Australian and Hong Kong Chinese university students' constraints to active recreation (Tsai & Coleman). Moreover, of these seven manuscripts, three employ in-depth interviews (Flood & McAvoy; Heo & Lee; Li & Stodolska), one uses focus groups (Doherty & Taylor), one uses self-administered questionnaires (Tsai & Coleman), one uses geographic information systems (GIS) (Gomez & Malega), and the last synthesizes existing research (Morden & Hopp). In spite of this topical and methodological diversity, three research trends seem apparent: (1) a preference for qualitative methods (i.e., three papers using in-depth interviewing and another using focus groups, for a total of four of the six empirical papers); (2) a preference for studying students (i.e., four of the seven papers); and (3) a preference for single, versus multiple, group studies (only one of the six empirical studies, that being Tsai and Coleman's, was comparative).

In addition to these refereed articles, papers were invited from two leading scholars, Karen Fox (University of Alberta), whose research focuses on indigenous people's leisure, and Myron Floyd (North Carolina State University), who is a recognized authority on ethnicity and leisure and who edited a 1998 special issue on this topic in the *Journal of Leisure Research*. Our rationale for these invitations was simple; in the former case, research involving indigenous people's leisure is often found outside our field and, therefore, is relatively unknown; while, in the latter case, the opportunity to examine what progress has been made in the study of ethnicity and leisure since Floyd edited his special issue was considered to be highly beneficial. Moreover, as both authors make evident, although there has been an increased diversification in topics examined by ethnic leisure scholars and in theoretical frameworks employed in such research, it is likely that broader societal trends taking place in Canada and in the U.S. may lead minority leisure scholarship into uncharted territories in the near future. Beyond this new range of topics worthy of examination it seems clear that the existing ethnic leisure scholarship still has some shortcomings that affect our level of understanding of the ethnic leisure phenomena.

In particular, the majority of the existing leisure research either focused on leisure behaviour of well established minority groups or examined leisure of other minority populations without explicitly acknowledging the role of their immigration status, generational tenure, or legality of residence in the U.S. or Canada. It was assumed that minorities' "ethnic distinctiveness" or "cultural patterns" were primarily responsible for their differences in leisure behaviour. Although, similar to marginal socio-economic position and discrimination, specific cultural factors play an important role in minorities' leisure choices, their immigration status is likely to bring with itself a distinct set of challenges (and possibly opportunities) that should be acknowledged by leisure scholars. For instance, immigrants face a new set of obstacles or constraints they must overcome in their leisure participation. These include new language, lack of familiarity with the local environment and available leisure opportunities, limited social networks, family separation, and restricted mobility due to fear of discovery among undocumented immigrants, just to name the few (Stodolska & Yi-Kook, 2005). Similar, leisure behaviour of ethnic and racial minorities, and immigrants in particular, is shaped not only by their individual characteristics (e.g., gender, social class, cultural background, immigration status), but also by the broader societal trends at the place of settlement. The presence or absence of discrimina-

tion is only one, although very important, factor. Others, that often escape the attention of leisure researchers, may include local policies and laws that govern the degree to which immigrants are expected/required to follow the norms of the host society as opposed to being allowed/encouraged to preserve their ethnic traits (e.g., Canadian policy of multiculturalism vs. French ban on wearing headscarves in schools). Moreover, socio-economic opportunities for the newcomers or general attitudes on the part of the host society toward minority populations are likely to shape the experience of immigrants. The existence of a large, well-established ethnic group in the place of settlement that is a prerequisite for the development of ethnic schools, churches, sport clubs, and other organizations that may foster preservation of ethnic traits and retention of ethnic leisure could also be of significant influence. We would argue that, without losing sight of the individual culturally and economically determined factors, it is important that such broader societal issues are acknowledged by researchers studying leisure behaviour of ethnic and racial minority groups in the future. Moreover, it would be highly desirable if cross-national comparison studies that would examine the interplay between leisure and integration of minorities in societies with different political systems and different attitudes toward immigration on the part of the mainstream society (e.g., Russia, France, the U.K., Korea, Persian Gulf countries, Australia, Canada, and the U.S.) were conducted. Equally desirable would be studies that compare the leisure of ethnic group members who have immigrated with those who have not (e.g., "overseas" Chinese and Mainland Chinese), as much can be learned through such comparisons. Finally, cross-cultural comparative leisure research as a whole is clearly lacking (Chick & Dong, 2005) and, if we hope to ever understand leisure's cultural specificity *and* its universality, this type of research is sorely needed.

New demographic trends in Canada, where in 2001 18.4% of the total population were foreign-born (Statistics Canada, 2005b) and the U.S., where in 2004 34.2 million or 12% of the total population were foreign-born (U.S. Census Bureau News, 2006), are also likely to lead to rapid changes in the minority group dynamics and to the creation of a new racial and ethnic structure. In this new structure, the relations between the first generation immigrants, the "White mainstream," and the established ethnic minorities are yet to be negotiated. As the events of the early 2006 had demonstrated, growing numbers of immigrants and problems with securing American borders have a potential to spark an anti-immigration backlash among the established population. As such, they may create

new sources of conflict, discrimination, and exclusion by those fearful of losing their jobs, economic security, or simply the “traditional American (or Canadian) way of life.” Such conflicts may occur between the new arrivals and the “White mainstream,” people from other ethnic groups, and better-established members of their own ethnic communities (Abelmann & Lie, 1997; Juniu, 2000). They may be exacerbated at the times of national or global crisis (such as the post 9–11 period), when lack of control over the influx of immigrants and overt manifestations of cultural distinctiveness on the part of some groups may be equated with a security threat. Such conflicts may play out in leisure settings, concern recreation space and resources, or affect people’s ability to participate in free time activities (Gobster, 1998; Gramann & Allison, 1999; Livengood & Stodolska, 2004). On the other hand, leisure may serve as a site and the means for alleviating racial and ethnic tensions, for breaking boundaries, and for building connections and mutual understanding (Doherty & Taylor, this issue; Shnew et al., 2004).

Beyond the changing makeup of ethnic and racial minority groups in Canada and the U.S., globalization of the world’s economy and cultural and social relations is likely to have a profound impact on people’s (including minorities’) leisure patterns and, as such, should be acknowledged in leisure research. In 2000, at least 160 million people were living outside of their country of birth or citizenship, a 40 million increase from 1990 (Martin & Widgren, 2002). Aided by the developments in technology and communications, significant portions of the world’s population are no longer tied to their place of origin. They are increasingly mobile, tend move freely between countries, maintain residence in several places, speak multiple languages, and develop cross-national economic, social, political, and cultural ties (Al-Ali, Black, & Koser, 2001; Nagel, 2002; Portes, 1997; Portes, Guarnizo, & Landolt, 1999; Vertovec, 2001). Such transnational lifestyles are no longer limited to the rich elite (Rojek, 2000), but are a *modus operandi* of people ranging from seasonal farm labourers, factory workers, and seafarers, to graduate students and employees of the IT industry. Transnational migrations can be poverty driven and skill driven. Poverty driven migrations encompass movements of those who struggle to sustain their lives in their home countries and seek a “better life” in the well-developed countries of Western Europe, Australia, Asia, Canada, and the United States. They include circular cross border migrations of industrial workers, traders, domestic help, farm labourers, and other blue-collar workers from countries such as Bosnia, Eritrea, Senegal, Pakistan, India, Philippines, Mexico, Salvador, or

Guatemala (e.g., Al-Ali et al.; Bailey, Wright, Mountz, & Miyares, 2002; Pries, 2001; Riccio, 2001; Roberts, Frank, & Lozano-Ascencio, 1999). Skill driven migrants include those who move across borders in pursuit of education for themselves or their children, to manage their capital investments, or to better utilize their highly specialized and sought after skills (e.g., Li & Stodolska, 2006; Waters, 2002). Although marked socio-economic differences divide these two groups of transmigrants, they share some important characteristics such as high mobility and temporary stays at the destination, family separation, challenges to their personal identities and place attachments, orientation to the future, and extremely hard work. It would be a great challenge for researchers to try to unravel the ways in which leisure is affected by the transnational phenomena and how it shapes the life of transnational populations. Issues such as the role and the place of leisure among families separated for prolonged periods of time, how the financial and work-related decisions affect quality of people's leisure time, and how leisure contributes to identity creation among highly mobile transnational migrants would be worthy investigation.

Globalization of the world's economy, trade, and social relations has also lead to globalization of leisure culture. Although a phenomenon that can be traced to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Cross, 1990), it has recently taken an entirely new dimension. At the dawn of the new millennium, migrants are being exposed to American leisure trends even before they settle in the new country (Li, 2006), while returning transnationals contribute to the spread of American (or "Western") leisure culture abroad. Such global trends also play a role in re-defining the traditional notions of community and its relation to leisure. Many minority communities can no longer be seen as static, local, with relatively stable populations, and assigned to a specific geographic space. Their new residents are highly mobile and they are entangled in a web of connections with communities across the continent or in entirely different parts of the world. As a result, events that transpire in little villages in the Mexican states of Guerrero, Jalisco, Zacatecas, Guanajuato, or Michoacán can have as much influence on the life of Mexican communities in the City of Chicago as the decisions of the local government. Similarly, a fact that often escapes the attention of leisure researchers is that many members of minority groups in the host country do not make decisions regarding their work and leisure patterns based solely on their personal preferences and the needs of their families in the U.S. In fact, they often consider the welfare of their extended families and commu-

nities in the country of origin and their future lives in case they decide to make the return migration home (Conway & Cohen, 1998; Durand, Parrado, & Massey, 1996).

Research that investigates issues of race and ethnicity in the foreseeable future will have to overcome some of the challenges that were known to us for quite some time (Hutchison, 1988), but will also face a variety of new ones. They will be related to the demographic realignment of our communities of interest, the increased complexity of factors that affect leisure behaviour of minority groups, and the problems with accessing and conducting research among populations that are highly mobile, diverse, and distrustful of outsiders. For once, we, as researchers, need to continually guard ourselves against tendencies to homogenize minority populations that are highly variable not only in terms of their cultural background, gender, generational tenure, or socio-economic status. The additional variables that increase the diversity of minority groups (even from the same country) include the extent of ties to their families back home and to the communities of origin, long-term plans for the future (permanent stay in the host country vs. return migration home), legality of status, length of residence in the host country, and the resulting levels of integration.

Studying minority populations, and conducting survey research in particular, will become increasingly problematic in the future given the fact that many minority members are known to frequently change their place of residence, often do not have stationary phones but rely on cell phones, and have unlisted telephone numbers or use various screening devices to monitor their calls. Undocumented status of many members of ethnic populations makes them distrustful of outsiders, while ethnic telemarketing decreases already very low response rates in survey research. Trust issues are also related to reciprocity in research. Many members of minority groups and ethnic organizations are becoming resentful of scholars employing their help in the research process only not to be ever seen again after the data collection has been completed. Thus, ascribing to the highest ethical standards in research and making sure that ethnic communities are equal partners in scientific investigations, that the relationships with the communities are maintained even after the research process has ceased, and, if possible, that they see some tangible benefits of their co-operation, are important to take into account in future studies.

It would also be highly desirable in the future to improve the information exchange between leisure scholars researching issues of recreation

behaviour of ethnic and racial groups and practitioners responsible for providing recreation services to minority populations. While quality research is being conducted and published in mainstream leisure journals, recreation practitioners in cities and towns with high concentration of minorities are struggling to find the best ways to serve their diverse clientele. Provision of recreation services to immigrants who often do not speak the English language, are difficult to access, and who have different needs and styles of participation than the "traditional" customers is proving to be a serious challenge to mainstream recreation providers. Such information exchange between the researchers and the practitioners should be reciprocal, as there is much that scientists can learn from those who are at the forefront of serving recreation needs of minority customers.

In conclusion, this introduction to the special issue on ethnicity and leisure has tried not only to introduce the featured manuscripts but to place them in a larger context. We hope you have found it helpful in this regard.

Note

- 1 The co-editors/co-authors contributed equally to this special issue and, therefore, are listed alphabetically.

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