



leisure and feminist theory

betsy wearing

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Introduction

Much sociological analysis of contemporary social systems founded on a capitalist economy, industrial and post-industrial production, urban dwelling and nation states has focused on the construction of the self through the disciplinary production-ethic (see Bell, 1978; Berman, 1983; Campbell, 1987; Featherstone, 1991). Such an ethic concentrates on discipline, control, work, 'clock time', deferred gratification, and calculative rationality and the related values commonly understood as the Protestant Ethic. More recently the pursuit of selfhood in such a society has been theorized as equally dependent on the complementary consumption-centred, hedonistic ethic that encourages the pursuit of selfhood through self-expression, leisure, consumer goods and pleasure (Moorhouse, 1983, 1989; Campbell, 1987). Both ethics, it appears, are necessary dynamics in the processes of contemporary capitalism and both contribute to the construction of the self. Leisure theory which surfaced in the arena of sociological analysis in the early 1970s, with a downturn in the productive sphere and an increase in non-work time, remained initially embedded in work-related frameworks but has progressively moved towards the sphere of consumption and pleasure where the multiplicity of postmodern selves are at play (see Rojek, 1985, 1989, 1993a, 1995).

Feminist analyses have critiqued the former excessive emphasis on the productive sphere and the work ethic as the basis of identity construction as a masculine perspective which ignores the everyday experiences of women. Women, they say, depend more heavily on the non-productive sphere of consumption and leisure as a source of some autonomy and sense of individual identity (Wearing, 1990a). Feminist leisure theorists began to shift the focus towards theories of leisure which recognized women's perspectives including unpaid labour, the domestic sphere, consumption and a more diffuse concept of the work/leisure dichotomy. The emergence of these feminist theories coincided with the shift in sociology generally away from work-centred models as convincing explanations for contemporary society. This book examines both feminist critiques of male-orientated leisure theories and the use that feminists have made of particular elements of these theories. There are as many feminist theoretical perspectives concerning leisure as there are sociological and feminist perspectives. Feminist

theory here refers to those forms of analysis which seek to increase understanding of women's experiences in patriarchal, capitalist, modern and post-modern, Western and developing societies with a view to increasing the quality of life of both women and men. A recurring theme throughout the book is the relationship between the self or selves and leisure, where selves refer to both femininities and masculinities.

A second connecting theme which emerges as the book proceeds is that of space. Soja (1993) argues that academic study has, in the modern era, privileged time and history over space and geography. He claims, however, that,

The material and intellectual contexts of modern critical social theory have begun to shift dramatically. In the 1980s, the hoary traditions of a space-blinkered historicism are being challenged with unprecedented explicitness by convergent calls for far-reaching spatialization of the critical imagination. A distinctly postmodern and critical human geography is taking shape, brashly reasserting the interpretive significance of space in the historically privileged confines of contemporary critical thought. (Soja, 1993: 137)

The feminist geographer, Massey, takes the argument a step further by suggesting that space in male-dominated thinking has been coded feminine and aligned with stasis, passivity and depoliticization. She wants to rescue space from this position and make clear the relationship between space, social relationships and identity, with all the implications of dynamism, multiplicity of meanings and power that this implies. The strategy she adopts is to rethink the concept of space in terms of relationships and identity (1994: 6–7).

This shift in thought is reflected in my own reconceptualization of leisure as social space or, in Foucault's (1986) terms, other spaces, 'heterotopias' which allow for constructions of the self which are different from those of the everyday constraints of our lives. The inevitable tension between freedom and constraint in leisure experience, and between individual resistance, negotiation and struggle and structural and cultural constraint, therefore also emerges as a recurring theme throughout the book. Feminist theory for a decade focused on the constraints on women's leisure, but more recently has also explored the possibilities that leisure offers for liberation.

In this book, as the various theoretical perspectives are presented and discussed, it will become obvious to the reader that theories arise in particular socio-political and cultural climates. There are two underlying assumptions in my presentation of the various theories. The first relies on Weber's (1970) notion of 'elective affinity' and Foucault's (1980) concept of 'discourse'. 'Elective affinity' refers to the notion that the ideas that are adopted and propagated at certain historical moments are those which are in the interests of powerful groups. By 'discourse' Foucault means an assemblage of statements arising in an ongoing conversation, mediated by texts, among speakers and hearers separated from each other in time and

space which take on the credibility of 'truth' and which are constructed as knowledge by the powerful. Thus, my first assumption is that power, knowledge and theory are inextricably interlinked. The second assumption is that while no one theory has all the explanations for human behaviour or human selfhood, each has some insight to contribute. In hindsight it is possible then to observe some of the yawning gaps in the functionalism of the 1960s and 1970s, the Marxism of the 1980s and the Western, middle-class feminism of the late 1980s and early 1990s. But this is not to dismiss them – it is to recognize their relationship to power and knowledge and the blinkers thus imposed. It is also to value their contribution to the cumulative uncovering and understanding of, in this instance, the sphere of human endeavour called leisure.

It is my opinion that as sociologists we do a disservice to our discipline if we rigidly appropriate any one theoretical perspective in our analysis of any human phenomenon. Recent theorizing in the disciplines of physics, philosophy and theology suggest that both the cosmos and the individual human being do not obey the rules previously set down by their disciplines. There is a sense of nature and human nature being more than can be explained by rules. There is an element of wonder and surprise at happenings and behaviour (see O'Shea, 1995, for a more detailed discussion of these ideas). We, in the social sciences, must also be aware that human beings are more than our attempts to explain the patterns of their social behaviour. Individuals, groups, cultures, societies constantly surprise us – they will not fit neatly into our categorization. The current thinking in postmodernism concerning diversity, difference, complexity and eclecticism has reverberations in my own construction and presentation of the ideas in this book. As I have progressed through the various theoretical perspectives, I have taken what I see as valuable insights from each and ultimately developed them in my own way (not always strictly as the original theorist intended) into my own feminized version of leisure which I hope will add some further insights into our understanding of leisure as human experience in today's world. The structure of the book reflects my own thinking concerning leisure, and especially women's leisure, as I have moved from my socialist feminist beginnings (see my *Ideology of Motherhood*, 1984) to incorporate ideas relevant to leisure from feminist poststructuralist and postcolonial writings. The chapters dealing with these perspectives appear at the end of the book. Although this thinking has obviously influenced some of the critique and evaluation included in the earlier chapters, those chapters do not claim to have their bases in poststructuralist theorizing. Rather, there, I have presented the contribution that each perspective has made to leisure theory and some of its weaknesses.

The aim of this book is to provide a critical introduction to the leading positions in leisure theory and to guide the student through their strengths and weaknesses from feminist perspectives. The book is written to draw attention to the various leisure experiences that women encounter and construct in their everyday lives and the meanings that these experiences have

for them. Insights that poststructuralist theories have contributed to the meanings of leisure are included. This means that the predominantly male theorists of the 1970s and the first wave of feminist theoretical reactions to such theorizing are examined from a perspective that takes into account poststructuralist ideas such as: multiple subjectivities of women and multiple femininities; the possibilities of resistance to and subversion of male domination through leisure; possibilities through leisure of rewriting masculine and feminine scripts; access through leisure to alternative discourses which challenge dominant discourses on gender; sites of leisure as culturally gendered enclaves which also offer opportunity for struggle and resistance to hegemonic masculinity; and the productive as well as the repressive aspects of power relations. Women in this work are portrayed not as passive victims of structured inequalities which favour males, but as active thinking beings who can and do challenge some aspects of male domination through leisure. Structural constraints on women's leisure are not ignored – they are placed in tension with opportunities for leisure which women carve out, even in oppressive circumstances. Thus, the selves which women construct in their own political, cultural and discursive spaces are not presented here as completely fragmented or as totally socially determined. To the extent that each woman has the ability to synthesize past and present selves into a cumulative whole, and to resist total domination, I believe that she has an ongoing, if changing, self. In this regard I differ from the poststructuralist feminists whose work I draw on in the book.

The book goes beyond previous leisure texts by providing a feminist critique of the variety of leisure theories based in masculine ways of viewing the world. It goes beyond previous feminist analyses of leisure by giving an overview of the diversity of feminist theoretical perspectives. In addition it applies, not uncritically, some of the insights of Foucault, French feminists and other poststructuralist and postcolonial feminists and masculinists to men's and women's leisure with a view to improving the quality of life of both.

The definition of leisure varies as the book progresses, as it is constructed differently within different theoretical perspectives. The methodology adopted by different perspectives also varies in accordance with the definition. For example, in functional theory, leisure is a category separate and different from work, and interpreted as non-work time and activity. Consequently the methodology for empirical research based on this definition relies on the ability on the researcher's part to categorize time spent and activities engaged in as non-work. Quantitative methods are used. In symbolic interaction theory, leisure is an experience, the meaning of which varies from individual to individual. Hence, in empirical research, data is collected concerning the subjective meanings attached to experiences defined by individuals as leisure. Qualitative methodology produces this data. In the final chapters of the book, where insights from poststructuralist and postcolonial feminist theory are the focus, leisure has been re-defined as personal space, making room for the inclusion of a wider range

of experiences, as well as a wider range of participants. Research conducted around this definition asks us to listen to the voices of those who do not belong to dominant groups or cultures and who previously have been invisible in leisure research. Here again qualitative methods are appropriate, with an emphasis on the speaking subject. Throughout the book, however, leisure remains a concept conceived around an element of relative freedom within the very many pressures, constraints and sites of power in contemporary society. It is a sometimes temporary respite or a different space (Foucault's 'heterotopia') within the demands of daily living.

As a feminist text, the author appears within the text, implicitly through the perspective adopted and, at times, explicitly through the incorporation of some of my own experiences and research. Finally I develop my own feminist perspective on leisure, looking to future possibilities for women and men to experience liberating leisure.

The book provides an overview of leisure theories with particular focus on their usefulness for understanding and improving women's leisure experiences. Men's leisure is also considered, in the light of feminist theorizing. As an educational tool this work encourages students to take what is useful from the theories presented and develop and apply the concepts to their own leisure experiences, those of the people they know and those they will encounter as professionals. In addition, it suggests some future directions for leisure research, leisure policy and professional practice.

My own interest in the sociology of leisure began with a study leave spent in Sweden in 1985. I was comparing Swedish and Australian social policy in an attempt to explain the greater convergence in Sweden of men's and women's incomes. The progressive Swedish policy of generous parental leave at the birth of a child and for the care of a sick child up to eight years of age, and the increase in availability of part-time jobs, enabled women to remain in the workforce during the child-rearing years. This was one reason for women's greater access to wages or salaries than in the Australian context. However, as Swedish women talked to me, they said, 'Betsy, by the time we are forty we are exhausted, we stay in the workforce and bear and rear our children and still do 80 per cent of the household work'. I began then to think about what happens to women's leisure under these circumstances. What costs are there for women in having greater access to economic independence?

Returning to Australia I began to read the leisure literature and with one of my sons wrote an article, "'All in a day's leisure': gender and the concept of leisure", which critiqued masculine views of leisure (Wearing and Wearing, 1988). I then embarked on an empirical study of the leisure of mothers of first babies (Wearing, 1990a and 1990b) which coincided with other feminist studies of women's leisure (see Deem, 1986; Wimbush and Talbot, 1988; Henderson et al., 1989). In 1991-2, I was seconded to the School of Leisure and Tourism Studies, University of Technology, Sydney, and began to transfer the application of my sociological knowledge from social work to the teaching of leisure theory and practice. This new area of

study excited my interest and I perceived it as a more holistic, positive and preventative approach to the quality of human living than the problem-oriented approach of social work. At the same time my own socialist feminist theoretical concerns were being challenged by ideas from Foucault and poststructuralist feminism, so the two opened up new avenues of thinking for me. At this stage in my thinking I have tried to position the more optimistic perspectives of microsocial interactionist ideas on the self and post-structuralist ideas on capillary power and resistance within the constraints of the wider power structures of society. My geographical position in Australia influences my own perspective, as does my heterosexual sexual orientation. Through an educational system based largely on the British model, my thinking tends to be theoretical and critical, yet, as the reader will perceive, I have been much influenced by the pragmatism of American symbolic interactionism. Many of the examples in the book draw on the Australian situation and Chapter 8 is chiefly about Sydney, the city of my birth and upbringing. The literature, on the other hand, covers the relevant British, American, Canadian and Australian texts and those French feminisms which have been translated into English. In Chapter 9 there is a conscious attempt to let women of colour and women from developing countries speak for themselves in a book which may otherwise have excluded them. Where I write about the family and interactions in leisure between men and women, my own experience of forty-one years of heterosexual marriage has inevitably influenced my thinking.

The book is structured with an introductory and a concluding chapter and nine chapters which examine the various sociological theoretical perspectives that have been applied to leisure. For the sake of clarity, each chapter begins with an outline of the basic concepts of that particular theoretical approach. The leisure theorists who have drawn on those concepts are then discussed, including feminist theorists and applications. Finally some evaluation of the insights provided by this approach is given.

This introductory chapter has positioned this work within the development of sociological theory and, in particular, leisure theory from the 1970s to the present. In it I have presented my own interest in leisure and feminist theory, my approach to the topic and the underlying assumptions implicit in the book.

Chapter 1 examines functionalist theories. Within the functionalist tradition of Durkheim and Parsons, leisure is posited as an institution in society which performs a beneficial function for society and for individuals. Non-work time and activities provide a balance for workers, both rewarding hard labour and providing recuperation and a sense of well-being so that they can return to their labour refreshed. Theoretical works such as Parker (1983) and Roberts (1983), and empirical time and activity studies such as Szalai et al. (1972) and Veal (1987), adopting this approach, raised awareness of the importance and value of leisure for industrial society. However the (white and middle-class) male experience is assumed to be universal and where women appear they do so as 'other' to this male norm.

Analyses remain descriptive, gender power differentials are not addressed. Equilibrium in society is maintained by adaptations to change.

Chapter 2 explores Marxist and neo-Marxist theories. Based in the Marxian problematic of relationship to the means of production, these theorists analyse leisure time and leisure activity in terms of the profit motive, commodification, exploitation, alienation of labour, conflicts of class interests and an ideological superstructure based on an economic infrastructure. They emphasize constraints on individual leisure, inequalities in access to leisure and leisure as an ideology promulgating 'freedom' but obfuscating economic inequalities and class conflicts. The function of leisure in capitalist society is critiqued by theorists such as Coalter and Parry (1982), Clarke and Critcher (1985), Rojek (1985, 1986) and McKay (1990, 1991). For these writers class is generally prioritized. Where gender is included it is as an additional variable in the causal chain of leisure inequality. Socialist feminists such as Deem (1986) and Green et al. (1990) attempt to chart the control of women's leisure through the interaction of the structures of class and gender. There is an emphasis on women's common experience of oppression as a basis for solidarity and political action.

Chapter 3 is concerned with the implications of interactionist theories for the constraints and freedoms offered through leisure for the development of the self. Theorists such as Kelly (1983, 1987a, 1987b), drawing on the work of Mead, focus on the microsocial experiential aspects of leisure and on individuals as thinking actors (or agents) with an ability to construct leisure experiences which are both challenging and rewarding. The structures of power in wider society such as class and gender are not seen as completely deterministic. Feminist theorists who have adopted this approach, such as Shaw (1985), Samdahl (1988), Bella (1989), Henderson et al. (1989, 1996) and Wearing (1992a), show how the meaning of leisure in the everyday lives of men and women can be different, often (but not always) advantaging men. This approach allows for the development of the self through social space. It provides a foundation for hybrid constructions of the self beyond the structural determinants of gender, but has largely relied on social roles and socialization as explanations for gender differences.

Chapter 4 looks at cultural studies analyses of hegemonic struggles in leisure spaces and subcultures as well as in the media and the sporting arena. Cultural theories with their theoretical bases in Gramsci's civil society and cultural hegemony, rather than in ideological superstructure and economic infrastructure, were applied to working-class leisure subcultures through the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies (e.g. Hall and Jefferson, 1976). Williams's (1983) concept of culture as 'a whole way of life' has been applied to the analysis of cultural leisure spaces such as the beach, the pub and the shopping mall with a masculine bias (e.g. Fiske et al. 1987; Fiske, 1989), as well as to the dance (e.g. Walker, 1988). Feminists who write from this perspective show how girls' and women's experiences of these spaces are different from those of boys and men and involve greater constraint, but also some resistance to domination (e.g. McRobbie, 1978;

Roman, 1988). Hargreaves (1989, 1994), Bryson (1987, 1990) and Hall (1995) apply this perspective to women's sport and the domination of this area by the culture of 'hegemonic masculinity'. Yet here, too, leisure can be a space for struggle and negotiation for women to move beyond cultural prescriptions of femininity.

Chapter 5 turns to masculine experiences of leisure when analysed using insights gained from feminist theorizing. In response to the feminist theorizing of the 1970s which sought to document and explain women's oppression in patriarchal capitalist societies, masculinist literature seeks to raise men's awareness of the experience of being masculine in such societies, with an aim to liberate males. In the sporting arena, the work of Messner and Sabo (1990) has contributed to an understanding of some of the disadvantages for males of excessive emphasis on 'hegemonic masculinity' through sport. Kimmel (1996), on the other hand, demonstrates the impact of American culture over two centuries on the construction of a hegemonic masculinity which individual men must constantly prove to other men. The most sophisticated theoretical analysis of gender from a masculinist perspective has come from Connell (1987, 1995), with some acknowledgement of the differential power relations extant in gender differences and the cultural construction of hegemonic masculinity based on the inferiorization of women. Connell has also applied his ideas to men's sporting experiences. Nevertheless, this work succeeds in shifting the focus away from male dominance of women, to the dominance of hegemonic masculinity over other forms of masculinity as well as over all forms of femininity. I argue here for the need for some concepts from poststructuralist feminist theory concerning embodiment to restore the balance.

Chapter 6 applies recent sociological theorizing concerning the body and emotions to leisure. An interest in the social construction of the body has resulted in recent years in the emergence of sociological perspectives which place the body within a social and cultural context (e.g. Turner, 1984, 1996; Scott and Morgan, 1993). Implications for men's and women's leisure and sport in terms of aspirations and constraints have been touched on in the leisure literature (e.g. Hargreaves, 1987; Griffiths, 1988; Talbot, 1988; Hargreaves, 1989, 1994). This chapter develops these ideas further with regard to women's leisure. The constraints imposed on the use of the female body by its cultural definition are explored, as are ways of using leisure space to challenge and move beyond these constraints.

Similarly, an interest in the social construction of emotions has resulted in a growing body of literature on the sociology of emotions. Simmel (1978), Elias (1986a, 1986b) and Hochschild (1979) have each made significant contributions to an understanding of the constraints that civilization, living in the city and commodification of emotions place on an individual's emotional expression and ways that leisure may provide a space for emotional release.

Chapter 7 examines the contribution that urban sociology has made to the development of public leisure spaces in the city. For the most part, in

urban sociology, women have remained invisible (Lynch, 1960; Castells, 1977; Harvey, 1985). Feminists such as Saegert (1980), Harman (1983) and Hayden (1984) have attempted to put women and their concerns into the picture. More recently, Sandercock and Forsyth (1992) and Watson and Gibson (1995) have turned their attention to the male world-views incorporated in the very foundations of urban theory. In this chapter the conceptualization of public places in the city as leisure venues for the male gaze of the 'flâneur' is critiqued. Instead I suggest the concept of 'chora' (Grosz, 1995a) as a safe space for social interaction and leisure experience which enhances the self and resists surveillance and control. The city of Sydney is used as an example.

Chapter 8 examines women's leisure from perspectives adapted from post-structuralist theories. To date there has been little attempt to apply ideas from poststructuralist theories to leisure, with a few exceptions such as Hargreaves (1987) and Rojek (1985, 1993a, 1995). In this chapter I develop a feminist perspective on leisure which incorporates ideas from symbolic interactionism and cultural theory, as well as Foucault's concepts of power, discourse, subjectivity and resistance. Ideas from the French feminists such as embodiment, multiple subjectivities, rewriting masculine and feminine scripts and desire and pleasure, and ideas from Australian feminist philosophers such as deconstruction of dichotomies and subversion of male dominance in theorizing as well as in practice, are included. The concept of leisure is rewritten as personal space. Leisure is posited as a potential site for resistance to and subversion of hegemonic masculinity, by men as well as by women, with possibilities also for some challenge to racism and ageism.

Chapter 9 extends the concept of leisure as personal and social space to the leisure experiences of women who do not conform to the theoretical analyses devised by white, educated, middle-class feminists. In postcolonial theory there is a critique of the domination of Eurocentric ideas and experiences as the basis for sociological analysis. Feminist theorists such as hooks (1984, 1989, 1993, 1996) and Spivak (1988a and 1988b) argue for their voices of 'others' to be heard, for their world-views to be incorporated into feminist theory. This chapter suggests some ways in which this may be done with regard to women's leisure experiences.

The concluding chapter draws together the ideas which have been developed throughout the book and makes suggestions for leisure research, leisure policy and professional practice. Recognition of the importance of leisure as a field of study arose in the political/economic context of the prospect of increased non-work time in advanced industrial societies in the early 1970s. In the thirty years or so since this upsurge of interest, various sociological theories have been applied to leisure. This book examines these theories and their usefulness for understanding gendered leisure. An argument is developed for the inclusion of insights from poststructuralist and postcolonialist feminist perspectives which open up possibilities for leisure as a sphere in which hegemonic masculinity can be challenged and the quality of life of both men and women enhanced.

Leisure is good for society and the individual: functionalist theories

With the prospect of increased non-work time in advanced industrial societies through the automation of industry, shorter working weeks, increased vacation time, flexitime, more part-time work, job-sharing and early retirement, in the early 1970s there was an upsurge of political interest in leisure. In 1975 the United Nations commissioned a report on world leisure and recreation. The report highlighted these factors and the growing importance of leisure in today's world. It claimed that:

People cannot grow on the basis of physical sustenance alone: they need a cultural identity, a sense of social fulfilment, a regeneration of body and spirit which comes from various forms of recreation and leisure and makes their role one of growing importance on the world's agenda. (World Leisure and Recreation Association, 1975: 2)

Social scientists began to take leisure seriously and incorporated into their theoretical analyses the assumptions of functionalist theory evident in the above quote. That is, that leisure as an institution in industrial society is functional both for the smooth running of that society and for the mental and physical health of individuals within it. Functionalist theory with its origins in the classical sociology of Durkheim and its twentieth-century development by Parsons provided a useful description of relatively stable mid-century, post-war societies such as the USA and the UK where industry was booming and the nuclear family was seen to provide socialization for children and emotional stability for adults. It also provided a useful basis for an increasing emphasis on leisure as an important institution in contemporary society. In this chapter initially I outline some of the basic concepts and assumptions of functionalist theory as developed by Parsons. I then examine the works of leisure writers such as Parker, Roberts and Veal, empirical time and activity studies such as Szalai et al. (1972) and leisure benefits studies such as Driver (1990) where this approach is adopted. Others have criticized Parker and Roberts as purveyors of 'traditional' views (Rojek, 1985) and as blinkered to the domination revealed through class analysis (Clarke and Critcher, 1985: 16–44). I emphasize the

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contribution that this work makes to an understanding of leisure in contemporary society as well as critiquing the strengths and weaknesses of the functionalist assumptions underpinning the views presented. The gaps these works leave in understanding women's leisure are also explored. In relation to the latter, some feminist views of these works are explored.

Parsons's Functionalism

Talcott Parsons (1902–79) was a Harvard professor who incorporated ideas from classical European theorists such as Weber and Durkheim and from his own study of biology into a functionalist account of society as a viable system of interconnected institutions. His ideas remain implicit in much sociological, political, welfare and popular literature today.

The strategies of Parsons's approach are to identify the basic functional requirements of the society or system and to analyse the specific structures through which these functional requirements are fulfilled. The functional requirements include basic human needs such as food and shelter, socialization into the norms of the culture, allocation of scarce resources, social control and reinforcement of shared cultural values. The structures which ensure the fulfilment of these functional requirements include kinship structures, stratification, political organization, legal systems and religious institutions. Parsons likened to society the biological organism as a system made up of interrelated parts that function together to maintain the health and equilibrium of the organism. The concepts of equilibrium and integration of parts and the whole are essential to his theory.

Parsons postulated that in order for systems at all levels of society to operate smoothly there are certain basic functional prerequisites. These are: adaptation; goal attainment; integration; and latent tension management. Leisure, in this scheme, would be an institution whose chief function is tension management, but which also incorporates and reinforces shared cultural values and assists in integrating various types of action such as sport and recreation into the system. Thus leisure would involve values similar to those required in the educational and employment institutions of the society. In industrial society these include individual achievement and competition as well as fitness for work.

One basic assumption upon which structural functional theory depends is that in every society there is substantial agreement over shared moral values and codes. Consensus is the adhesive which binds the society together. The institutions of society, that is, the economic, political, legal, family, educational, health and welfare, religious and leisure systems, reinforce shared values such as honesty, reward for merit and hard work, competition and the right to free time. These basic values are translated into more specific directions to members of society through its norms, the 'oughts' or rules of that society. Status-roles assigned to individuals have a functional, that is, a goal or task objective, as well as a normative dimension

which indicates how the task should or ought to be achieved. Status is the position the person holds in the structure. Role specifies the rules that the person holding that position should follow. Roles in this perspective are prescribed for the individual, not constructed individually in specific situations. Generally, in this view, the basic values of the society such as honesty and reward for hard work, remain unchanged, conflict is transitory, equilibrium is eventually re-established (Cuff and Payne, 1984: Chapter 2).

These ideas are exemplified in Parsons's influential analysis of gender roles in the family. According to Parsons the system of the nuclear family is made up of two sub-systems: husband/father, or 'instrumental' leader; and wife/mother, or 'expressive' carer. These sub-systems have assumed benefits for wider society and for individuals within the family. Each of the sub-systems has a part to play in preparing the child for its participation in society. In the early years it is the mother who has a special relationship to the child as emotional carer and supporter. However in due course the family also has a function in emancipating the child from dependency to take its part in the wider world. The occupational role of the father provides a role model for this. The mother as 'expressive' carer and 'helpmate' releases tension within the family and acts as a support for the father as provider. The father as 'instrumental' leader guides the family through the rocks and shoals of the world outside the family. Lack of competition between the two sub-systems is an important aspect of family solidarity (Parsons and Bales, 1955: 19–21).

Summarizing the basic assumptions of functionalist theory, Cohen (1968: 167) posits the following:

- 1 Norms and values are the basic elements of social life.
- 2 Social life involves commitments to agreed norms and values.
- 3 Societies are necessarily cohesive.
- 4 Social life depends on solidarity and generates harmony.
- 5 Social life is based upon reciprocity and co-operation.
- 6 Social systems rest on consensus.
- 7 Society recognizes power as legitimate authority.
- 8 Social systems are integrated and stable.
- 9 Social systems tend to persist – conflict is temporary until equilibrium is re-established. Change is functional adaptation.

Leisure, then, in this view, would reinforce the norms and values of the society as a whole, would include acceptable roles and generally contribute to the consensus, harmony, stability and equilibrium of the society as well as bring benefit to individual members. Caldwell (1977), for example, writing from this perspective about leisure in Australia in the 1970s describes Australian's chief leisure pursuits as sport, gambling, drinking and watching television, in line with the generally hedonistic and egalitarian values extant in Australian society. These pursuits are, according to him, generally open to all and enable Australians to enjoy both competition and

co-operation, the great outdoors as well the clubs, pubs and lounge rooms that are available to them, and so contribute to individual satisfaction and to the integration of Australian society. From the view of the 1990s, his description appears rather utopian, to say the least.

Functionalist Leisure Analyses

In their analyses of leisure in industrial society, writers such as Parker (Parker, 1983, 1988; Parker and Paddick, 1990), Roberts (Roberts, 1983, 1997; Roberts et al., 1991) and Veal (Veal, 1987, 1989, 1993; Cushman and Veal, 1993; Lynch and Veal, 1996) have incorporated these ideas and have demonstrated leisure's contribution to the functioning of modern industrial society.

Parker

In *Leisure and Work* (1983), Parker added a sociological perspective to the predominantly psychological writing on leisure at the time. He criticizes psychologists and others who simply slot people into certain psychological types and presents leisure as one situation through which people are shaped, changed, developed or retarded. In functionalist fashion he presents the interrelation between the systems of work and leisure, and in the tradition of male theory he sees leisure in relation to work (which for him is paid labour) and generally defines leisure as non-obligatory time and activity 'chosen for its own sake' (1983: 10). At the time of writing the potential for increase in leisure time was constructed as the leisure 'problem'; people would not know how to use this time beneficially for themselves or for society. So Parker addresses the 'problem of leisure'.

Parker sees the problem of leisure as also the problem of work; people who are exploited in their work may find it hard to avoid being exploited in their leisure and he sees the quantity of leisure time as increasing because working time is getting less. He is concerned not that people may be acquiring too much leisure but that leisure time may be unsatisfactory or of sub-standard quality. This problem arises because people polarize their work and leisure spheres in a physical sense and regard one as 'bad' and the other as 'good'. At a metaphysical level he claims they remain naturally and inextricably linked. For him, both 'work and leisure are necessary to a healthy life and a healthy society' (1983: xi–xii). Successful socialization into leisure roles will ensure that people know how to behave in leisure activity, assist in the achievement of collective societal goals and maintain and reproduce integration in the social system. Parker's model relies on a work/leisure distinction which posits leisure as time and activity away from paid labour, either as a compensation for labour or as an extension of some of the satisfactions an individual gains from his labour. The male working experience is posited as the norm, women's experience is 'other' to this. His

work has been criticized elsewhere for its exclusion of women's life experiences (e.g. Griffin et al., 1982), for its neglect of power in social relationships which allows the male norm to predominate and for its lack of possibilities for social change (Rojek, 1985: 95).

In an attempt to redress the former, Parker suggests that women at home 'constitute the polar opposite case to the full-time employed' (1983: 62). Although he acknowledges the socially held belief that married women do not need or even have the right to follow their own interests or to develop any kind of social life outside their family and are led to feel guilty about taking time off to pursue their own interests, he does not perceive gender per se or gender power differentials as significantly disadvantaging women's leisure time or activity. Rather, adopting a functionalist view of the complementarity of family roles, some women at home are able to develop 'values and cultures different from those of full-time employees and which benefit themselves and society'. Notably these are nurturing/caring activities such as 'the development of growing relationships within the whole family' (1983: 65). In line with the central position of paid work to his model, the biggest influence on women's leisure time and activity is perceived to be whether they have full-time work or not.

In a later paper (Parker, 1988) he addresses some of the criticisms of his work. In this paper he finds some common ground between his own ideas on leisure and those of critical theorists such as Rojek (1985) and Clarke and Critcher (1985) and feminists such as Deem (1986). Examples of the common ground are:

- 1 The need for leisure theory that begins neither with the individual nor society but with the multifaceted dynamic relations that people have with each other. Nevertheless Parker wishes to retain his functional tenet that society is more than 'relations' – 'it is also a set of institutions and associations ultimately composed of individuals in complex interrelations' (1988: 4).

- 2 Two sets of tensions which are the central contradictions of contemporary leisure. These are between the institutional control of leisure and the highly individualized model of leisure choice, and between change and continuity. These, he sees, along with Clarke and Critcher, as the forces within capitalism that determine the nature of contemporary leisure. Yet he retains the concept of adaptation to these forces so that even if change occurs equilibrium will be established. He does not tangle with asymmetric issues of power.

- 3 The significance of work in helping to determine the nature of leisure and the role of social structure in influencing leisure opportunities by restricting or providing access to necessary resources. He claims that work is but one of the influences on leisure maintaining a functionalist concept of the interrelatedness of the institutions of society. Yet his own work continues to prioritize work as the major influence on leisure and to include class and gender as secondary influences.

In applying his ideas to the Australian situation (Parker and Paddick,

1990), the assumptions of functionalism continue to surface. Parker again addresses the relationship between work and leisure, prioritizing work. He suggests the various ways in which work and leisure are related as: extension (work spills into leisure); recuperative (leisure as therapy); calculative (work as a means to leisure); and neutral (work and leisure as separate spheres of life) (1990: 2). In Chapter 1, 'Social changes and their consequences for leisure', the longest section deals with 'Work changes which affect leisure'. One of these is the vast increase of married women in the workforce, but the analysis remains at the level of 'For such women the world of work continually invades the stock of free time' (1990: 11). In spite of recognition of the limitations imposed on women's leisure by their responsibility for childcare and domestic work (even when in full-time employment) and their own feelings of guilt and selfishness if they take time out for themselves, there remains no discussion of the gender power relationships which make this possible.

Parker's functional assumptions concerning the complementarity of family roles continue to underpin the analysis of the leisure activities of men and women. In Chapter 2, national statistics and case study material are used to examine what Australians do in their leisure time. Here there is recognition that 'female recreation is clearly home and family based, especially while children reside in the home' (1990), but there is no questioning of unequal access to leisure space either at home or in the public sphere for these women compared with their partners. The case material furthers this perception. For example, Neville presents a very masculine example of the mix of sport and leisure,

When I was young I was very active in sport as a form of leisure. I used to enjoy team sport – there was a sort of a bond, a spirit of unity in the team . . . I hope to play a few more years of football – I find it a great outlet, particularly because of the social side. I get to do exercise and enjoy myself in the sport, *my wife gets to meet people and socialize and it is good for my kid.* (Parker and Paddick, 1990: 30; added emphasis)

The authors comment: 'Neville enjoys his team sports, but it seems nowadays his enjoyment is derived more from the social and family aspects than from competition' (1990: 30).

On the other hand, three mothers are quoted:

. . . we like to do things as a family and we spend our leisure time together.

My main leisure is playing with the baby at the moment . . .

I take my small son for bike rides, that is for his own leisure . . . sometimes it gets very boring because I have not got another adult to talk to. But still in a way I am enjoying it because I am watching my son having fun. (Parker and Paddick, 1990: 31)