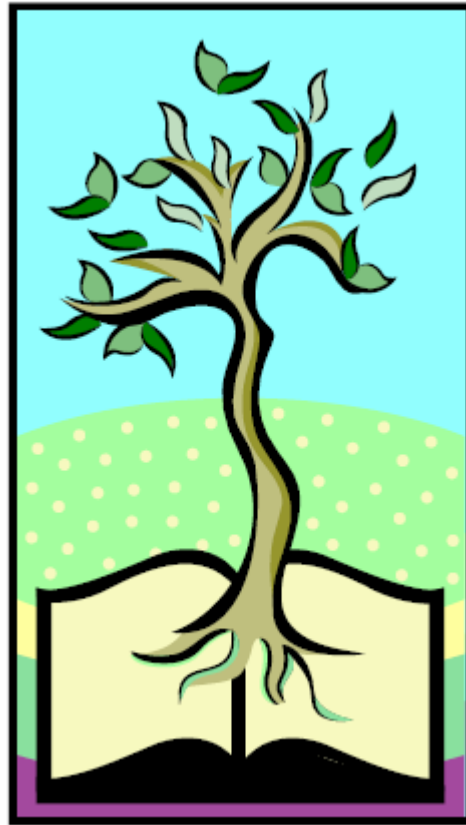


INFORMED LEISURE PRACTICE:

**CASES AS CONDUITS
BETWEEN THEORY AND
PRACTICE**



Nicole L. Vaugeois, Ph.D.
Editor

Volume 1

11th Canadian Congress on Leisure Research

May 17-20, 2005 at Malaspina University-College in Nanaimo, British Columbia

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Informed Leisure Practice:

Cases as Conduits Between Theory and Practice

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The Recreation and Tourism Research Institute

ISBN: 1-896886-06-X

For additional copies please contact:

The Recreation and Tourism Research Institute

Malaspina University-College

900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5S5

Canada

Phone (250) 740-6396

Email: Vaugeois@mala.bc.ca

Preface

As a student in leisure, I had the opportunity to learn in a College environment in small classes where my instructors were student centered and focused on applied learning. This was helpful for a young rural girl who was more intent on experiencing the "College scene" than learning. I can honestly say, that it wasn't until I was able to apply programming theory in the real world that I began to have a real appreciation for the depth and complexity of leisure. All of a sudden, I was empowered as a learner to know that even my instructors and supervisors in the field were perplexed about real world scenarios and sought input from new minds to find potential solutions. This type of learning, through real world examples, was empowering and instilled in me the life long passion for all that embodies this multifaceted discipline called leisure.

As a new professor, I found myself wanting to create opportunities for my learners to engage in similar experiences. In my early experiences I often struggled to find recent, relevant or suitable cases to introduce to my students. In some areas one can pull from their own experience, but this is unlikely for the diversity of classes that I was teaching in. Even with the newfound access to cases on the Internet, my search has resulted in little that I can use in the classroom. Without much to work with, I resorted to new strategies. In some courses I have requested cases from those working in the field as a way to peek students interests. For some reason when I say "these are real life scenarios from managers in the field – they would like your advice" students seem to perform at a higher level than usual! In senior level courses I have had students actually write a case. This experience allowed them to experience "deep learning" but it also supplied me with excellent case studies for future years, and a small publication for students. In my programming course, I write and use a case study as a final exam. The cases are always based on programs or events that I have collected information on, and when analyzing, I find that students have to demonstrate comprehension of all the course material.

As our Congress Organizing Committee for CCLR 11 began to develop the theme "Two solitudes: Isolation or Impact" to explore the level of collaboration between research and practice, I again thought of the case study method. In my opinion, if there is one way that researchers and practitioners can collaborate, it is in the development, sharing and teaching of case studies. Practitioners are busy people with all kinds of real life scenarios that are complex, engaging, and could provide excellent learning for students. They often however, do not have the time to write up case studies or publish them where academics might find them. While academic journals contain some cases, there is limited readership by practitioners and the language use is not necessarily always "user friendly" for students. Perhaps as researchers, we can play an important role to assist in analyzing practitioner cases with our students, in writing up cases to share with

one another, and in documenting innovative practices to advance our understanding of the field.

It is this context that has resulted in this publication. With funding support from Malaspina University-College, I set out to see if academics and practitioners would be willing to share their cases. This first volume contains ten case studies from all sectors of the leisure field including community development, therapeutic recreation, sport delivery, parks, commercial recreation, tourism and the arts. They are written in "student friendly" language and they introduce complex scenarios that should engage learners in deep learning. Many are written with students and with practitioners demonstrating links between research and practice but also research and teaching. Most demonstrate how research was used to make decisions, or point to the lack of research and query students on how information would have enhanced practice. Each contains a series of discussion questions to help extract the key points from the case.

This will be the first in an annual series of case studies. I hope that you find these cases useful in your teaching, and that you perhaps initiate writing a case for future compilations.

Nicole L. Vaugeois

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CASES AS CONDUITS BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

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