

Municipal Recreation and Theories of the State

Don Dawson, Department of Leisure Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5

Caroline Andrew, Department of Leisure Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5

Jean Harvey, Department of Leisure Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5

The study of municipal recreation has been and continues to be a vitally important contributor to the understanding of leisure in modern society. The role of government in leisure policy formation and in the delivery of recreation services is crucial to any appreciation of contemporary leisure.

However, a good number of studies of the role of the municipality in the field of leisure have neglected to adequately situate the municipal government within a broader theoretical framework of the state. How do, for example, municipal recreation departments, as branches of the local state, relate to the central state? Also, what role does the local state play as a part of the overall welfare state in liberal, capitalist nations such as the U.S.A., Canada, and the U.K.?

The aim of the present paper is to review some of the models of the local state and theories of the welfare state with a view toward providing those concerned with understanding municipal recreation a series of theoretical orientations from which to choose.

The first part of the paper outlines the leading models of the local state. Two liberal models, the *pluralist* and the *elite*, are first discussed, followed by a review of the *corporatist* and *dual state neo-weberian* models. This review of the models of the local state is concluded with an examination of three *neo-marxist* models; the *instrumental*, the *structuralist*, and the *urban social movements* model.

The second part of the paper provides an overview of the theoretical approaches to the welfare state which are aligned with the various models of the local state discussed in the first part. Initially, a brief look at liberal theories of the welfare state is undertaken, followed by the neo-weberian and neo-marxist approaches. For each, an attempt is made to summarize the corresponding theories of the welfare state and, most importantly, to explain the role of the local state in each.

In conclusion, the paper presents a summary of the models of the local state with special reference to how it relates to the central state as an arm of the welfare state apparatus. A review of some of the more informative studies of municipal recreation which have attempted to incorporate some of these models and theoretical concepts is also presented. It is hoped that this paper will suggest several useful approaches to the analysis of municipal recreation that will lead to a greater understanding of the role of municipal government and leisure in the welfare state.

PROCEEDINGS
Sixth Canadian Congress on Leisure Research
May 9-12, 1990

COMPTE RENDU DU
Sixième Congrès Canadien de Recherches en Loisir
Le 9-12 mai, 1990

University of Waterloo

***Leisure Challenges:
Bringing People, Resources and
Policy into Play***

***Les défis des loisirs:
agencer les personnes,
les ressources, et les décisions***

Editor/Le rédacteur: Bryan J. A. Smale

©Ontario Research Council on Leisure 1990
©Conseil Ontarien de Recherche en Loisir 1990

Copyright © 1990 Ontario Research Council on Leisure/Conseil Ontarien de
Recherche en Loisir

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or used
in any form without written permission of the editor or ORCOL.

Printed and bound at Graphic Services
University of Waterloo



Appropriate Use of Documents: Documents may be downloaded or printed (single copy only). Please note that this document is copyrighted and CREDIT MUST BE PROVIDED to the originator of the document when you quote from it. You must not sell the document or make a profit from reproducing it. You must not copy, extract, summarize or distribute downloaded documents outside of your own organization in a manner which competes with or substitutes for the distribution of the database by the Lifestyle Information Network (LIN). <http://www.lin.ca>