

Pastimes

The Context of Contemporary Leisure

8th
edition

Ruth V. Russell and Rasul A. Mowatt

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SAGAMORE  VENTURE

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Dedication

We dedicate this edition to the people of the world who do not have the freedom to experience leisure.

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Preface

The purpose of this eighth edition of *Pastimes* is to extend the discussion about contemporary leisure to new concepts supported by the latest research findings and scholarly commentary. Throughout the book we have pursued the most remarkable, relevant, moving, and current information possible at this writing. This is not at all difficult; leisure is simply a very intriguing subject.

First, as an introduction to the phenomenon of leisure, the book must be up to date and thorough. Momentous changes, actual and alleged, have always been the root of leisure expressions and experiences. In this edition much of the content is new, including an added discussion on architecture as material culture. As well, we have incorporated more attention to indigenous people within a leisure context. We are particularly excited to present a new chapter that challenges us to look at all things leisure as a fundamental aspect of human rights. The implications of this chapter, we hope, is to aid readers, learners, and instructors to think even more broadly about not only what leisure is but also what it can be.

Second, as a learning tool, this eighth edition teaches more. It contains new illustrations of concepts through field-based cases, new biographical features, new exploratory and participatory activities, and new research study summaries. Each of these ancillary additions provides another set of content to think more intentionally about the history, culture, and provisions of leisure, recreation, tourism, and sport.

More than a textbook, *Pastimes* is very much a point of view. It presents leisure as a human phenomenon that is individual and collective, vital and frivolous, historical and contemporary, factual and subjective, good and bad. Human life and its culture cannot be understood without understanding leisure. Leisure is a complex subject, yet worth knowing.

Ruth V. Russell and ***Rasul A. Mowatt***

May 2023

Acknowledgments

This eighth edition of *Pastimes* is the result of what we have learned from years of engaging with leisure theory, research, and personal and professional practice. Indeed, throughout all eight editions, we have been indebted to many people: families, friends, students (at the bachelor, masters, and doctoral levels), university and practitioner colleagues, and fellow recreation participants.

Most especially Ruth wishes to acknowledge Joe and Peter Bannon, founder and president of Sagamore Publishing, respectively, for their long tenure of confidences in and freedom for *Pastimes*. They both have been superb publishers to work with. I also wish to thank Pat Setser for assistance with the technological requirements of past editions. Pat was also the original conceptualizer and author for Chapter 9, Leisure and Technology.

Rasul also wishes to especially thank the opportunities to instruct a course as a graduate student at the University of Illinois. Who knew that taking over a foundations of leisure class from Dr. Cindy Wachter, lecturer at Illinois, that utilized the second edition of this very book would place him on a path that ultimately led to co-authoring the same book nearly two decades later? This path not only led me to become a colleague of Ruth's at Indiana University but to also take over the foundations of a leisure course that formed the basis for the book, as Ruth transitioned into retirement. The future of *Pastimes* is literally in your hands or on your screens.

Thank you, everyone.

About the Authors

Dr. Ruth V. Russell is professor emeritus in the Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies (now the Department of Health and Wellness Design) at Indiana University. She is a former trustee of the National Recreation and Park Association and has served as president of the Society of Park and Recreation Educators. Her professional experience includes the San Diego Recreation and Parks Department, San Diego-Imperial Counties Girl Scout Council, and Chateau La Jolla Retirement Center. Dr. Russell has authored (and coauthored) four textbooks—all published in multiple editions, and a cookbook. She has also published research in numerous refereed journals and lectured internationally. Presently her pastime pursuits include RVing, hiking, water volleyball, zentangle, beading, dulcimer jamming, bocce, reading, and the culinary arts (she is currently working on a new cookbook).

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Part 1

Leisure as a Condition of Being Human: Personal Context

We are human in large part because of our leisure.

We begin our exploration of leisure by considering its significance for us personally. Leisure helps shape us as human beings—our identity, motives, feelings, learning, work, health, and many other experiences. It is necessary for a flourishing life.

Chapters

01

Demonstrates leisure's meanings for us through the humanities—those art forms whose sole purpose is to portray humanity.

02

Discusses leisure benefits—those qualities that make us human, including happiness, freedom, pleasure, humor, solitude, ritual, and spirituality. This is because leisure has intrinsic meaning.

03

Traces the ways leisure helps us grow, stay healthy, and age well. Leisure contributes to our physical, social, intellectual, and emotional health.

04

Offers explanations about our leisure choices and behaviors. It asks what is the role of demographic and theoretical explanations?



Chapter 1

The Humanities of Leisure

What is leisure?

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

What are some of the perspectives on leisure's meaning?

There are many and exploring them is the focus of this book. In this chapter we consider leisure's meanings from the perspective of the humanities.

Where do we find meanings of leisure in the humanities?

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

To have leisure is one of the oldest dreams of human beings: to be free to pursue what we want, to spend our time meaningfully in pleasurable ways, to live in a state of grace (Godbey, 2008, p. 1). We all want to be self-actualized—to be all that we can be.

Because leisure is a complex concept with different meanings depending on the people, the place, and the time, understanding it requires journeys to different peoples, places, and times. In this chapter, we set a foundation for understanding the humanness of leisure by exploring its essential meanings in the humanities. The term “humanities” derives from the Latin word *humanitas*, the characteristics of human beings, or human nature (Britannica, 2022a).

The **humanities** can be described as the study of how people process and document the human experience. We use philosophy, literature, religion, political science, art, music, history, language, architecture, and other subjects to understand and record our lives.

Through exploration in the humanities we learn about our world. We learn about the values of different cultures, about what goes into making a work of art, about how history is made. Studying the subjects of the humanities gives us tools to understand the past and imagine the future (Stanford Humanities Center, 2019). For example, learning another language might help you gain an appreciation for the similarities in diverse cultures. Contemplating a sculpture might make you think about how an artist’s life affected her creative decisions. Reading a book from another region of the world might help you think about other meanings of love, and so forth.

This chapter focuses on the humanities of the arts (philosophy, political science, history, and architecture are discussed in later chapters). The word **art** itself comes from the same root as the word *artificial*, meaning something made by humans. In creating a song, songwriters portray their own experiences. So, when we listen to their music, we understand something about the experience of its creator. In these expressions are ideas, images, and words that serve as a kind of self-reflection, telling us who and what we may be.

Curiously, as we move through all the chapters of this book we must question, “What is it about?” In the case of this chapter, what is it about art that “attracts the support of governments, [legitimizes] their place in educational institutions, and demands the attention of the media?” (Belfore & Basingstoke, 2008, p. 2). Does the value of art have an inherent and intrinsic value to it because of its potential or because of its impact? There are no set or correct answers, and the debate has been ongoing for quite some time.

One way to answer these questions about leisure via music, painting, literature, dance, and theatre is by applying what is broadly called **art criticism**. Art criticism is the study, evaluation, and interpretation of the arts—most often a philosophical discussion of art’s goals and methods. This simply means our study and interpretation of the arts as they reflect leisure is based on the ideas of aesthetics and beauty, as well as perception. Art criticism can be both objective and subjective, based on not only personal preferences, but also by social and cultural acceptance.

Literature

Literature, in the broadest sense, is the description of everyday life in written form. Typically found in magazine articles, greeting card verses, Internet blogs, game scripts, poetry, novels, and even this textbook, reading literature is itself a popular leisure expression. While this might

Humanities: Human creations that describe human experience

Art: the expression of human creative skill and imagination

Art Criticism: The evaluation of art on the basis of aesthetic as well as personal, social, and cultural perspectives for the purpose of appreciation

surprise you, according to a Gallup poll (2022), Americans read an average of 12.6 books per year (across all formats). The most popular genre of fiction books is fantasy, while the most popular nonfiction books are memoirs/autobiography (See Figure 1.1) (Errera, 2022).

Figure 1.1

A series of fantasy novels by British author J.K. Rowling were originally published in 1997 as *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. The novels chronicle the lives of a young wizard, Harry Potter, and his friends, and have found immense popularity, critical acclaim, and commercial success worldwide. Translated into 80 languages, spin-offs include films, traveling exhibitions, merchandise, and three Universal Parks & Resorts in the U.S. and Japan.



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

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

In contrast, Maya Angelou’s (1971) poem “Harlem Hopscotch” uses the rhythm of a children’s street game to express a fundamental problem in society:

One foot down, then hop! It’s hot.
 Good things for the ones that’s got.
 Another jump, now to the left.
 Everybody for hisself.

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

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

Published in 2009, the novel *The Leisure Seeker* by Michael Zadoorian, hits an idea of leisure directly and entirely. Here's one reviewer's comments:

An elderly couple faces down death by taking one last, thoroughly unauthorized vacation. ... They sneak out of the Detroit suburb of Madison Heights, bound via Route 66 for Disneyland in their Leisure Seeker van. ... By day they stop off at cheese-ball tourist attractions, and at night they relive old memories by watching slide shows of their previous family vacations. (Kirkus Reviews, 2010)

Angelou's poem "Harlem Hopscotch" and Zadoorian's *The Leisure Seeker* come from the Contemporary Period of American Literature. Referring to the literary works from roughly 1945 to the present, the main themes of this period include identity, racism, family, and a search for goodness in humanity. Typical characteristics of this period are reality-based stories with believable characters, in current settings (Burgess, 2020). This is why it is so easy to find leisure meanings in these writings.

Painting

Not only is leisure commonly depicted in visual art, but across the centuries, leisure has been the motive for entire artistic movements. Here we focus on the visual art of painting, and we begin with an inclusive concept: **genre painting**. Genre painting includes scenes from everyday life, of ordinary people in work or recreation, often depicted in a realistic manner (Britannica, 2022b). With the decline of religious and historical painting, beginning in the 19th century, artists increasingly found their subject matter in the life around them. Leisure-relevant subjects of genre painting have included home interiors, parties, inn scenes, marketplaces, sporting events, celebrations, mealtimes, street scenes, and specific leisure activities.

For example, in the mid-1800s in the United States, Nathaniel Currier and James Ives headed up a printmaking firm that produced many genre pictorial works promoting outdoor activities, including depictions of the newly popular pastime of ice-skating. In England, a popular genre painter at the time was William Frith, who was a chronicler of Victorian life at the horse races and at the seaside. As well, Japanese ukiyo-e prints, a genre that culminated in the 19th century, were rich in depictions of people at leisure (including erotica).

Genre painting: The pictorial representation of everyday life. The representations may be realistic, imagined, or romanticized by the artist

Perhaps the pictorial artistic movement that best depicts this category of painting is **Impressionism**. Impressionism art is a style (and method) in which the artist captures the image of an object as someone would see it if they just caught a brief glimpse of it. Impressionist paintings can be distinguished by their bright and vibrant color. Drawing inspiration from the pastimes of Parisians in France, some of the best-known Impressionist artists were Edouard Manet, Camille Pissarro, Edgar Degas, Alfred Sisley, Paul Cézanne, Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, and Pierre Auguste Renoir.

For example, Mary Cassatt, an American who also exhibited with the French Impressionists, painted *Woman in Black at the Opera* (Figure 1.2). In Paris at the time, everyone went to the opera. It was the place to see and be seen. Women, knowing they would be looked at, would wear lots of jewelry and dresses that showed only the appropriate amount of skin. Men would wear black to disappear within the opera box so they could look without being seen. In Cassatt's painting, a kind of joke is being played on this pastime. Viewed in profile, the woman looks intently through opera glasses at the stage. Her fan is held sternly as though it is a weapon. She is there to see the play. Yet the man across the way is leaning far over the balcony and using his opera glasses to gaze at the woman (Art History of the Day, 2011).

While genre painting is most typically represented in the 19th century, contemporary painting today continues to depict everyday scenes. Often thought of as the aesthetics of the everyday, genre painting places everyday actions, including leisure, at the center of the composition. For example, the French painter Alain Pontecorvo shows us the everyday activity of reading the newspaper (Figure 1.3). The person reading moves into the background, with the striking focus of the artwork being the newspaper. As in the genre scenes of earlier centuries, this is a perfectly staged composition. We see no background, only a light source from the right. Like the theater stage, the painting emphasizes the aesthetics of the everyday (Konle, 2020).

Figure 1.2

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



Figure 1.3

Alain Pontecorvo, *Lecture du quotidien* (2013). Source: <https://www.singulart.com/en/artworks/alain-pontecorvo-lecture-du-quotidien-3989>.



Impressionism: An artistic style, originating in France in the 1860s; characterized by the visual depiction of a feeling or experience of the moment, especially through the shifting effect of light and color

Box 1.1 Web Explore

Romanticism

Another artistic tradition that provides an interpretation of leisure's meaning is Romanticism. While Impressionism suggests leisure is a daily life dominated by theatres, operas, cafes, gardens, and racetracks, Romanticism suggests something different. What is this? Begin by exploring the Web for both images and interpretations of the landscape paintings of Caspar Friedrich, Thomas Cole, and J. M. W. Turner. Search "Romanticism and nature and emotion" for clues.

Music

Music is perhaps the most universal human activity. Beginning as the natural sound of the voice, music over the centuries has taken many forms and reflected many ways of life. For example, people in Western cultures today express themselves through jazz, rock, pop, soul, blues, lullabies, country, R & B, hip hop, reggae, gospel, classical, bluegrass, Latin, lounge, house, holiday, and other musical styles. In fact, through the purchase of digital streaming, digital downloads, vinyl records, CDs, ringtones, music videos, and other musical recordings, the music industry in the U.S. in 2020 was an \$8 billion industry (music streaming accounted for 65%). And by 2022, the live music concert industry worldwide was predicted to be worth \$31 billion (Gotting, 2022). And yes, people are still buying vinyl records and CDs!

Music functions in every way in everyday life, spanning sports, media, film, art, politics, lifestyle, and identity. Studies have shown that music can have considerable effects on people's cognition, emotion, and behavior. People use music to serve various health functions, from emotion regulation to self-expression to social bonding (Renfrow, 2012). Thus, music is a major source of leisure meaning. For example, can you find a leisure meaning in Pharrell Williams' 2013 song "Happy"—"Clap along if you feel like a room without a roof (Because I'm happy)." Or, how about Debussy's "Jeux (Games)?" Debuted in 1913, this short classical ballet pays witness to three young people searching for a lost tennis ball at dusk, suggesting sporting romantic entanglements.

Making and enjoying music is itself a favorite pastime, and all forms of music reflect leisure's meanings. But, as an initial specific illustration, we will consider rock and roll, and Elvis Presley in particular, who remains rock's most indelible image. It is Elvis who is considered to have given rock music its mainstream style and appearance (Figure 1.4). With Elvis, in the 1950s, millions of young people through broadcasted performances on a new medium of television found more than a new entertainer; they found themselves, or at least an idealized version of themselves, which stood in stark, liberating contrast to the repressed atmosphere of the time.

What was this new identity? In Elvis' "Hound Dog" and the flip side's "Don't Be Cruel," the highest selling single record of that decade (recorded in 1956), we find a summary of how Elvis' rock and roll represented young people and their leisure of that time. While the straight rock of screaming guitars and drums in "Hound Dog" emphasizes a wild and raucous sound, a light beat and gentler accompaniment in "Don't Be Cruel" highlights a sweet melody and lyrics. This makes for a significant difference between the sexually aggressive and the playfully innocent. Thus, just like the two sides of this one single record, youth of the 1950s were bumping, although timidly, against the outer edges of a sort of rebellion.

Art is predicated on both inspiration and reaction. And while Elvis was directly inspired by the Las Vegas performance of "Hound Dog" by Freddie Bell and the Bellboys, his performance

Figure 1.4

Elvis performing live at the Mississippi-Alabama Fairgrounds in Tupelo, Mississippi, on September 26, 1956. (Source: Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain)



was a rewriting of the tune that was first recorded by Willie Mae “Big Mama” Thornton 4 years before Elvis’ recording. It was the reaction to Elvis’ rendition, however, that propelled his career and that of the broader genre of rock and roll.

Box 1.2 Web Explore

Hound Dog

Music expresses many different things about a society, as well as the same things about a society differently. To illustrate this fun juxtaposition, listen to Freddie Bell and the Bellboys’ version of “Hound Dog”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjQ-fDb4M4s>

Now watch and listen to Elvis’ version (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNYWI13I-WhY>).

Coming on up out of the 1950s, check out American rapper Doja Cat’s 2022 sampling of “Hound Dog”: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZp2bijul1c>).

But who was Doja Cat and Elvis and Freddie Bell possibly sampling? Check out Big Mama Thornton’s 1952 version (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoHDRzw-RPg>).

Are there meanings for leisure in all this?

Comparing this image of leisure for young people from the 1950s with a popular music genre beginning in the 1980s, provides different contrasts. MCing (or more commonly referred to as rapping) is a form of vocal delivery that incorporates rhyme, rhythmic speech, and street vernacular—usually with an instrumental backbeat. It is the primary public ingredient in hip-hop music and culture, but its origins predate this. The earliest precursor to contemporary rap is the West African *griot* tradition, in which oral histories were spread through rhyme. Often

characterized as having a potential for political advocacy, today's rap can perhaps be traced to Afro-American rhyming games as forms of resistance to systems of slavery (Blanchard, 1999) (Figure 1.5).

Figure 1.5

Chuck D, the lead MC of the group Public Enemy performing at the Slakthuset club in Malmö, Sweden, 1991. (Source: Wikimedia Commons/John Leffman)



Jay-Z, who heralds from the East Coast, still reigns as the most renowned MC, but Kendrick Lamar of the West Coast is emerging as a contender. While there are multiple types of hip hop music (boom-bap: DJ Premier; bounce: Big Freedia; Christian: DC Talk; country rap: Lil Nas X, crunk: Three 6 Mafia; drill: Young Chop; G-funk: Snoop Dogg; hyphy: Keak da Sneak, international: Sampa the Great; Latin: Chino XL; Lo-Fi: Madlib; political: Public Enemy; Southern: J. Cole; trap: 21 Savage; and others, a specific example in the lyrics of the metal rap group Gang of Four (1979) gives us a glimpse of leisure as consumerism:

The problem of leisure
 What to do for pleasure
 Ideal love a new purchase
 A market of the senses
 Dream of the perfect life
 Economic circumstances
 The body is good business
 Sell out, maintain the interest
 (From *Natural's Not in It*, released in 1979)

And a fondness for leisure settings also highlights the origins of hip hop culture and music in New York City as displayed in the lyrics of the Tragedy, Intelligent Hoodlum (1990):

I wanna tell you a story, so sit and wait
 Gonna take you to a time when I wasn't so great
 When I used to run the street with miss-matched socks

And the summer of 1984 was hot
 The jams in the park were really dope
 And the girls on the block were playin jump rope
 But I couldn't hang out with the guys who hung
 Cause my mother always told me I was just too young
 But she couldn't understand what it meant to met
 That the parties in the park is where I had to be
 But way back then I couldn't see—
 Back to reality . . .
 (From *Back to Reality*, released in 1990)

Box 1.3 The Study Says, Part One

Hip Hop Lyrics

In a study, researchers examined the lyrics in the songs of hip hop performers. The Facebook posts of favorite lyrics from a panel of 600 self-professed rap lovers were compared to the lyrics in the tracks from the Billboard Top 100 list at the time. It was found that the songs shared on Facebook contained more “pro-social” lyrics—they more frequently promoted positive themes such as gratitude, faith and spirituality, community building, the power of education, and political engagement. Meanwhile the lyrics of the Billboard Top 100 songs, which is made up of rap musicians with traditional record company backing and promotion, leaned toward more “antisocial” themes, including aggression, criminal activity, derogatory language about women, references to illegal drug use, and materialism.
 Source: Epps & Dixon, 2017

Box 1.4 The Study Says, Part Two

Hip Hop Lyrics

In looking at the intricacies of hip hop lyrics, we can actually see the humanities in play. We know what you are thinking, sure. But no, the quick popular tunes that you may be more familiar with may not provide much of an example, but across the genres and years there have been some remarkable levels of complexity and sophistication. Lyrics, when pulled away from what may or may not make you dance, contain layers of flow, word play, messaging, entendre/double entendre/triple entendre, and other aspects. One study analyzed the number of unique words from the 35,000 lyrics of 85 artists using Shakespeare as a benchmark. Whereas Shakespeare introduced and used some 5,170 unique words, so too, has Andre 300 of OutKast, MF DOOM, Redman, and E-40. Eminem is well below this mark at 4,492 words. The study also used the literary masterpiece, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, as a benchmark of beyond exceptional word usage since it used 6,022 unique words. Surprisingly (or not) the bulk of the members of the Wu-Clan and Black Thought of the Roots come just under this. But exceeding this are the GZA/The Genius of Wu-Tang Clan at 6,426 words. The Aesop Rock (not A&AP Rocky) is the undisputed champion and comes in at 7,392 unique words.
 Source: Daniels, 2017 (<https://pudding.cool/2017/02/vocabulary/index.html>.)

Theatre

Theatre is a collaborative form of art that uses live performers to present the experience of a real or imagined event or situation before a live audience. The performers may communicate the experience through combinations of speech, gesture, song, music, and dance. The art forms of ballet and opera are also theatre and use many in-common conventions such as acting and staging. The visual arts are likewise brought into play with painted scenery, lighting, costumes, and stagecraft. The specific place of the performance is also named by the word *theatre*.

The types of theatre are categorized as: drama, musical theatre, comedy, tragedy, and improvisation. Each of these categories can be subcategorized. For example, within the comedy form there is slapstick (physical), farce (ridiculous situations), satire (mocking), dark humor (makes fun of serious subjects), and others. The improvisation form, or improv, also often results in a comedy. Improv is where what is performed is unplanned and unscripted. It is created collaboratively and spontaneously by the performers. Theatre, as the most public of art forms, embracing the other arts under its hat, can become a form of remodeling a society, using our imagination (Haisan, 2020).

Box 1.5 What Do You Say?

Improv Theatre

Improv theatre, or Improvisational theatre, is the form of theatre (often comedy) in which most or all of what is performed is unplanned and unscripted. The performers spontaneously create the dialogue, action, story, and characters.

There is no prepared, written script. In some versions of improv theatre, an interactive relationship with the audience is encouraged, such as soliciting suggestions from the audience as a source of inspiration. At its root, improv theatre draws on many elements of games and playfulness.

For example, here is a sample improv theatre performance played like a game: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ulQagTusNVg>

But the form can go beyond entertainment. The skills performers learn in improv—teamwork, collaboration, listening, communication, and the ability to adapt and problem-solve—can translate to social and professional skills sought after in many workplaces.

1. Perhaps in your younger days at camp or in other recreation settings you've performed in skits, pantomimes, and other casual games of "play-acting." What can you remember learning, feeling, and/or recognizing about yourself from these experiences.
2. How might learning the skills of improv help you with the skills needed for success in your chosen career? Can you think of a specific example?
3. Does the improv stage present a diverse mix of ages, nationalities, body types, skin tones, gender identities, sexual orientations, and even political affiliations? Do some investigating on your own to answer.

The word *theatre* is derived from ancient Greek, meaning a place for viewing, as well as to watch, to observe. Also, from ancient Greece are the theatrical genres of tragedy, comedy, and satyr (Pavis, 1998). In fact, Greek theatre, as mostly developed in Athens, is considered the root

of the Western theatre tradition. In ancient Greece, theatre included festivals, religious rituals, politics, law, music, poetry, weddings, and funerals (Goldhill & Osborne, 2004).

Since classical Athens in the 6th century BC, vibrant traditions of theatre have flourished in cultures around the world (Goldhill, 1997). For example, the earliest form of Indian theatre was called Sanskrit theatre. It emerged sometime between the 2nd century BC and the 1st century. A classical Sanskrit drama uses stock characters, such as the hero, heroine, or clown. It also uses two languages: Sanskrit and Prakrit (Baumer & Brandon, 1993). Sanskrit is the ancient language of India, and later it became the language of high culture, including in literature, poetry, as well as in theatre. During this early time, hundreds of plays were written (Richmond et al., 1993). Although very ancient, many of these plays established foundations that have influenced Indian culture for millennia.

Over these 2,500 years since, theatre has evolved into a wide range of ideas and practices. Some are related to political or spiritual ideologies, while others are intended to be based purely on “artistic” concerns. For example, some contemporary theatre focuses on a story, some on theatre as event, and as just explored above some on theatre as catalyst for social change. Regardless, the art of theatre is essentially one of make-believe, or **mimesis**. However, in every theatrical performance there also must be realism to some degree.

Here are two examples of this: the plays “The Cherry Orchard” and “Leisure, Lust, and Labor.” Anton Chekhov’s play “The Cherry Orchard” was first produced at the Moscow Art Theatre in 1904. Chekhov described the play as a comedy, with some elements of farce. However, the director Konstantin Stanislavski treated it as a tragedy. Since then, directors have contended with this duality. The play is about an aristocratic Russian landowner who returns to her family estate (which has a large and famous cherry orchard) just before it is auctioned off to pay the mortgage. As the sale to a former serf is completed, the play ends with the sound of the cherry orchard being cut down. Is this a tragedy or a comedy? The story presents the themes of aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, and newfound materialism in dramatizing the socioeconomic forces in Russia at the turn of the 20th century, including the rise of the middle class. What is the leisure reflection in this story?

Much later, another play helps illustrate the dueling role of realism and imagination, and the tug between ideology and art in theatre. Written by Sara Farrington, “Leisure, Labor, Lust” is a three-part triptych presented in one performance (Figure 1.6). Opening in 2018 at The Tank theatre in New York City, critics have concluded it is about everything America was and still is, cleverly disguised in a corset and gown (Regina, 2018). Set in turn-of-the-century New York, and exploring topics rare to American theatre, each part of the triptych portrays each word in the title. For example, “leisure” takes place in the boudoir of an independently wealthy novelist. It is about a lavish dinner party, and the etiquette of the proper type of stationery. Does this reflection of leisure share that of “The Cherry Orchard”? Intertwined into this is a portrayal of the horrors of mental illness and immigrant lives, as well as a gothic-style gay romance.

One of the most notable examples of impact from the global COVID-19 pandemic beginning in 2020, has been live theater. In just the first year (2020–2021) the loss to U.S. arts organizations was \$15.2 billion (Americans for the Arts, 2022). Indeed, theatres and performance venues around the world closed, some for prolonged periods of time. Data show that in the European Union, for example, the arts and recreation sectors were the second worst hit by COVID-19 restrictions in terms of people employed and hours worked (Chatzichristodoulou et al., 2022). Some of these theatres had presented live performances for centuries. Many have since reopened, but conditions continue to be fragile.

Mimesis: Representation or imitation of the real world in art and literature; another term for mimicry

Dance

Lastly, we consider dance. Dance is an art form created from human movement. This movement has aesthetic and symbolic value to understanding the culture within which it is expressed. Thus, we could describe and categorize dance in different ways—according to its choreography, certainly, but also according to its historical period or its place of origin. At the same time, dance is accompanied by emotions as an effect of expression. The dancing body can bring the dancer closer to his or her emotionality and even spirituality (Gronek et al., 2021).

There are basically two contexts for dance: performance and participatory. Performance dance, also called theatre or concert dance, is usually performed by expert and even professional dancers. It is often accompanied by music, costumes, and scenery. Usually its purpose is to tell a story or interpret a human idea or situation. Examples of performance dance include ballet and contemporary dance. Performance dance also can be incorporated into musical theatre and opera.

Participatory dance, on the other hand, usually carries a recreational motive. Folk dance, social dance, line dancing, square dancing, Western swing, and other forms usually support a social interaction or exercise purpose. Some forms of social dance require a partner (such as the waltz or a salsa dance) while other forms are enjoyed in a circle, square, or line. Other participatory dance expressions are meant as declarations of identity, such as the postings on Instagram. Social dancing can be further sub-categorized according to its origin, such as the hora from the Balkan countries and clog-

Figure 1.6

Scene from the play “Leisure, Labor, Lust” by Sara Farrington, performed at The Tank theatre in New York City. Source: Broadway World, 2018, <https://www.broadwayworld.com/off-off-broadway/article/Sara-Farringtons-LEISURE-LABOR-LUST-To-Play-The-Tank-20180306>



Box 1.6 In Profile

Contemporary Dance

Dance has often been described as that art form that disappears as soon as it is created. Perhaps the best illustration of this is contemporary dance. What does this form of dance produce? What does this dance form interpret about being human?

Contemporary dance is a type of dance performance that developed during the mid-20th century and is particularly popular in the U.S. and Europe. Usually performed by trained dancers, originally it borrowed from classical, modern, ballet, and jazz dance styles. As well, elements from African dance (i.e., bent knees) are often incorporated in the choreography. It doesn't follow any strict rules as in ballet, but instead focuses on flow of movements to express emotions and stories. It is a very present-tense experience that addresses the time in which it is being made. Watch an example here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Zc5_WcaBkQ.

ging from Ireland and Appalachia. The ceremonial dances of the original Polynesian settlers in the Hawaiian Islands can be illustrated with the hula. The hula portrays the words of “mele,” or chants set to music.

Returning to hip hop culture, another pillar of its founding is the dance moves of B-Boys and B-Girls, often incorrectly labeled as breakdancing. Some of the basic types of movements are toprock (what you do while standing), the footwork (moving laterally), the drops (moving down/crouching down and rising back up), the floor rock (all moves while on the ground), the power moves (any movement done with force like kicks or punches), the freezes (the sudden stops or pauses to emphasize drama), and the suicides (moves of high risk to show skill level that concludes a set of dance moves). Puerto Rican dancers have incorporated moves representing their indigenous Taino histories. And in China, many aspects of assorted styles and forms of martial arts have been integrated into some of the power moves and freezes. Nigeria and Ghana hold the distinction of having dance forms using dance cypher (circle around a dancer performing in the middle) in their culture decades before the first B-Boys and B-Girls started to dance in the Bronx. After the 2018 debut at the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, this style of dance is now slotted as a feature in the 2024 Paris Olympic Games (Figure 1.7).

Figure 1.7

A B-girl performs some floorwork at a dance battle in Ghana, 2017. (Source: Wikimedia Commons/Aubry Arihona)



Other forms of human movement are sometimes dance-like in their quality. For example, martial arts, gymnastics, cheerleading, figure skating, synchronized swimming, and other forms of athletics contain the use of dance movements and interpretations.

What We Understand About Leisure's Meaning in the Humanities

Leisure is a complex concept. To understand its varied meanings, in this chapter we explored definitions from the perspective of the humanities. Other humanities subjects could also be used to see leisure's reflection, but after studying this chapter, you should know the following about the humanities category of the arts:

- Leisure is contextual. That is, its meaning depends on the place, the time, and the people. One context is the humanities.

How are the humanities in general uniquely able to reflect leisure's meanings?

- Literature, art, theatre, dance, and music offer interpretations of leisure as integral to the human experience.

Give an example of five different interpretations, one each from literature, art, theatre, dance, and music.

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