

Leisure and Aging: Ulyssean Living in Later Life. By. F. A. McGuire, R. Boyd, and R. T. Tedrick. Champaign, IL: Sagamore, 1996.

The authors of *Leisure and Aging: Ulyssean Living in Later Life* have attempted to use the Ulyssean concept (McLeish, 1976), to link leisure and aging research. McLeish (1976) developed the concept of a "Ulyssean Adult" to identify individuals who seek new adventures and opportunities in their later years. Throughout, the book "links the aging process and leisure to Ulyssean living" (McGuire, Boyd, & Tedrick, 1996, p. ix).

The authors divided their text into 12 chapters. Chapters one to five address what is aging. Leisure and later life is explored in chapters six to nine. Environments in which older persons reside are featured in chapters ten to twelve. The authors indicated that this text could be used across recreation curricula. Often, in the authors' estimation, aging appears to be related primarily to therapeutic recreation. The authors indicated that this should not be the case as park managers, tourism, commercial, or outdoor recreators could gain from reading this text.

Chapters one to five provide readers with sociological, gerontological, biological, cognitive, and psychological theories of aging. Chapter one provides the conceptual framework for the text. This chapter outlines the relevant issues related to the aging journey. Chapter two reviews the disengagement, activity, and continuity theories of aging, as well as the current social factors that influence experiences in later life. Chapter three reviews the various explanations of aging from the biological perspective. The wear and tear, autoimmune, cross linkage, free radical, and cellular aging theories are elaborated upon in this chapter. The chapter also reviews changes in physical appearance as one ages, and in cardiovascular, respiratory, and sensory systems. Chapter four reviews cognitive processes related to the aging process. Chapter five discusses psychological processes related to aging. These chapters enable readers to gain insights into the various aging theories from a variety of disciplines. The theories reviewed in these chapters are all linked to the Ulyssean Adult concept.

Chapters six through nine provide readers with information on the importance of leisure, the leisure experience, time and activities in retirement, and ethnic and gender influences.

Chapter six reviews the benefits of leisure to older individuals. This chapter illustrates the complexity of defining leisure. When reading about the benefits of leisure to older adults, the reviewer acknowledged the similarities of the benefits of leisure for this population to the benefits other cohorts in today's society derive from leisure. Chapter seven reviews the leisure experience, including motivations for participating, in an effort to help readers understand further leisure in the later years and how it can be used to achieve an a Ulyssean lifestyle. While this section of the text reflects the current literature on leisure and aging, the chapters appeared somewhat fragmented. The material presented could have been collapsed into two chapters: "What is Leisure," which would encompass motivation and time use, and "The Effect of Demographics on Aging," which could include ethnicity, gender, education, and occupation. The current structure of this portion of the text provides insight, but could have been repackaged for easier reading.

Chapters ten through twelve review the literature on the living environments of older adults. The Environmental Press Model (Lawton, 1989) is presented in Chapter ten. This model provides information about how the environment effects persons' selection of leisure opportunities.

Overall, the text provides the reader with a review of the current theoretical concepts and research findings related to leisure and aging. The text would be beneficial in recreation, sociology, or gerontology curricula. The authors' use of the Ulyssean Adult concept (McLeish, 1976) to link their chapters provides readers with a different perspective on leisure and aging. The authors succeeded in establishing the link between the Ulyssean concept and the leisure and aging literature.

Hopefully in the future a text like this will not be necessary to inform and empower recreation professionals regarding the link between leisure and aging. Aging is a process, not a product. One does not become "old" at 65, nor does one become less able due to chronological age. This text provides a foundation for students and professionals to discuss the role of leisure across the lifespan.

Readers should be cautioned, however, that the findings presented in this text are related to the populations that comprised the studies reviewed for this book. The aging cohort, a group of individuals who are between three to five years apart, is constantly shifting as society ages. An example of this would be individuals born between 1945 and 1950 who have experienced the same historical events such as the Vietnam war, the building of the Berlin Wall, the Cuban missile crisis, and Woodstock. Individuals born in 1970 have experienced disco, Nintendo, and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Each group has experienced, or not experienced, these events from differing perspectives. This text provides readers with information concerning how leisure and aging are interrelated, and how these experiences may be different for those individuals who will be turning 65 in the year 2015 and those who turned 65 in the year 1997.

References

McLeish, J. (1976). *The Ulyssean adult: Creativity in middle and later years*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

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