



The Elusive Leisure Society

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A. J. Veal

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1. Introduction

As this paper on the 'leisure society' is being finalised the world is suffering from the early effects of the Global Financial Crisis, the severity of which increasingly resembles that of the Great Depression of the 1930s. It is ironic, therefore, to note that the earliest discussions of the concept of a leisure society appeared in the 1920s and '30s, prompted partly by the reductions in working hours achieved since the turn of the century but also by the rising level of unemployment brought about by the depression. The latter concerns gave rise to a bill to reduce the standard working week to 30 hours, which was passed by the US Congress but, with the approach of war, was never signed into law by the President.

The paper was not, however, prompted by the Global Financial Crisis but by the theme of the 2007 Leisure Studies Association conference, held at the University of Brighton, which was: 'Whatever happened to the leisure society?' The conference website stated:

Cultural pundits and social scientific forecasters of the earlier post-war period heralded leisure as a form of utopian progressiveness, and predicted a decline in work and the benefits accruing from traditional work activities, alongside an increase in the aspiration to achieve personal, relational and cultural satisfactions in and through leisure. (LSA, 2006)

Implicit in the conference title and this accompanying statement was the proposition that there was belief, apparently widely subscribed to in the early days of leisure studies, in the existence in Western society of a trend towards ever-reducing working hours and increased leisure time, which would eventually result in a 'leisure society'. This was naïve and, since Juliet Schor (1991), we all now know that it was misguided.

The LSA conference organisers are not alone in having recollections of earlier prognostications of a 'leisure society'. A number of other examples is referred to in the next section of this paper. While these recollections refer to statements supposedly made in the growth period of the 1960s and early 1970s, the leisure society idea dates back at least to the 1930s, in the depression years, and it was revived in the 1980s and '90s, when high unemployment reappeared in Western economies. Writings on the leisure society concept in these periods are reviewed below in chronological sections. It is found that discussion of the leisure society, certainly in the academic literature, is more subtle, ambivalent and contradictory than the recollections of contemporary commentators suggest. While a continuing decline in working hours was almost universally expected, the consequences of this were often seen, not as inevitably utopian, but as a serious challenge for society, possibly leading to dystopia rather than utopia.

One of the characteristics of the recollections of contemporary commentators is their selective, disparate and generally brief references to the literature. It was decided that a broader, and deeper, examination of the literature was required to establish what exactly earlier commentators and analysts had said about the leisure society concept and when. The aim of the exercise reported on in this paper was to begin this task. An attempt was made to be as comprehensive as possible in tracking down references to the leisure society in the literature – the on-line working paper format has therefore been used deliberately to facilitate future revisions as overlooked material comes to light. In the event, the search revealed relevant contributions from as far back as the 1920s and continuing up to the current decade. In addition, limited reference is made to related nineteenth century sources. There is also scope for exploration of utopian literature but this has not been pursued here (but see Veal, 1987: 27ff).

As the tracking process developed, it appeared that the 'archaeology' of the leisure society concept was quite complex, with numerous apparently unconnected strands. Clearly, discussion of a leisure society has emerged from time to time in response to the changing economic and industrial environment, thus the timing of contributions is important. Material is therefore presented in strict chronological order. In particular, it is noted that English translations of some

non-English-language publications – notably French – have often appeared many years after publication in their original language, so even the chronology is far from simple. I have also been concerned to document exactly what was said about the leisure society concept, so extensive use is made of direct quotations

The sources consulted almost universally envisaged a continuing reduction in working hours and/or a reduction in the demand for labour in industrial and post-industrial economies, based on historical evidence. It is this phenomenon which Juliet Schor famously challenged in 1991: but what was the available evidence on working hours through the 20th century? In early drafts of the paper it was envisaged that a section would be devoted to what had been written on this topic over the years. This, of course, began to turn into a significant project in its own right, so it has been separated from this paper and will, in due course, appear as a separate paper in the same UTS working paper series.

Different writers use different terms to describe the topic under consideration, but the paucity of definitions means that it is not always clear whether the choice of terms is conscious and significant. terms used include:

- *leisure society*: this is the most commonly used, and unequivocal, term – it implies a society which is at least culturally, and probably economically, focussed on leisure, the equivalent of industrial society or agrarian society;
- *society of leisure*: this should be equivalent to *leisure society* but seems more equivocal;
- *civilisation of leisure*: used only by Joffre Dumazedier – seems equivalent to *leisure society*, but perhaps with the emphasis on the cultural;
- *age of leisure*: used infrequently, but can be seen as close *civilisation of leisure*;
- *leisure-orientated society*: used by Kahn and by Douglas Sessoms (see below), and is more tentative than the other terms;
- *the new leisure*: a term which emerged initially in the 1930s to describe the quantitative and qualitative changes in leisure being experienced at that time.

The title of this paper is *The Elusive Leisure Society*: referring to the apparently elusive nature of the phenomenon: whenever it is appears, to some, to be within reach, it recedes or even disappears, only to emerge again, some years later, as a tantalising, or threatening, possibility. Rather than using the word *elusive*, however, many of the commentators reviewed below would have used the word *illusive*, arguing that the whole idea is an illusion. Perhaps, like other ideas that hitherto have existed only in the human mind, such as the just society, or even paradise, whether it is *illusive* or just *elusive* depends on how it is defined.

2. Recalling the 'leisure society' thesis

A number of contemporary commentators have referred to an earlier period in leisure studies when, they claim, there was a preoccupation with, and a belief in, the advent of a 'leisure society'. Any scholar interested in following up the origins of the idea of the 'leisure society' would naturally rely on the references given in such commentaries: a number of these therefore provided the starting point for this review. Some examples are presented below.

- In their introductory text, *Understanding Leisure*, Les Haywood and his colleagues state that 'For many writers the future is seen as 'the leisure society', while for others, this comes as a shock' (Haywood *et al.*, 1989: 254). Unfortunately, no reference is given to the 'many writers'. The leisure society concept is not discussed further in the text but, in a later summary chart relating to ideas on the future of leisure (p. 271), key writers are listed in a table and associated with particular perspectives. Daniel Bell, Alvin Toffler and Tom Stonier are associated with 'post-industrialism' and 'Leisure society – diversity of life-styles, experience, innovation'. The writings of Bell (1973), Toffler (1980) and Tom Stonier (1983) are reviewed below but are found to be only tenuously associated with the leisure society idea.
- In *The Overworked American*, Juliet Schor notes that, contrary to popular belief, working hours in the USA increased in the post-World War II period, observing that this occurred 'on the heels of the widespread predictions that work was disappearing. ... By today, it was estimated that we could have either a twenty-hour week, a six-month workyear, or a standard retirement age of thirty-eight' (Schor, 1991: 4). The first part of the statement is referenced to a paper by Russell Lynes (1958) and the second part to a *Time* magazine article, which itself refers to an unidentified 1967 US senate sub-committee testimony which it has not been possible to trace. As noted in Section 4 the issues which Lynes addresses are to do with the challenges of the present (the 1950s) rather than future conditions, although he does say, at two points in his paper, but without any supporting evidence, that the four-day week is on the 'immediate horizon'.
- In a 1992 paper, 'Are we running out of time?', Jonathan Gershuny states:

The idea of an emerging leisure society, the sort of society that Keynes wrote about in his essay, 'On the economic prospects for our grandchildren' [see below], and which formed part of the flower-power future of the 1960s, looks distinctly old-fashioned in a post-Thatcher 'New Model Britain'. (Gershuny, 1992: 3)

Gershuny brings a range of historical statistical evidence to bear on trends in paid and unpaid work time and their consequences for leisure time, concluding that, despite the emerging observations to the contrary, the long-term historical trend towards shorter working hours associated with increasing levels of economic development in industrial societies was continuing in the early 1990s. In his concluding discussion, under the heading 'Long-term prospects for the leisure society', Gershuny observes that declining working hours provide increased time for consumption of the growing quantity of commodities made possible by increased productivity, but he does not discuss the idea of a 'leisure society' explicitly.

- In a 1996 collection of conference papers on work and leisure, the editor Chris Gratton, in an introductory paper subtitled 'Whatever happened to the 'leisure age'?', says:

We do not have to go back very far to find many commentators [who] predicted that by the end of the twentieth century (ie. now!) we would be moving towards a 'leisure age'. (Gratton, 1996: 1)

Gratton refers to just two examples of such commentators: Roger Vickerman and John Maynard Keynes. Both are referred to later in this paper and it is found that, despite the use of the term in the title of his 1980 paper, Vickerman makes very little reference to the leisure society while, Keynes, in his well-known 1930 essay, does, in effect, foresee a possible leisure society, but not without some trepidation. Gratton *did* have to 'go back very far' (66 years in fact) to find the latter commentator!

- In the body of a 1998 paper entitled 'The coming of the leisure society? Leisure time use in contemporary Australia', Peter Brown and David Rowe do not mention the 'leisure society' as such, but they do state: 'In the 1970s many social commentators predicted a 'leisure revolution' driven by automation and new technologies in industry and in the home' (Brown and Rowe, 1998: 89). None of the 'many social commentators' are identified. On the basis of statistics on trends in work and leisure time, Brown and Rowe conclude that such a revolution has not taken place in Australia and they are ambivalent about prospects for the future.
- In his 2000 book, *Leisure and Culture*, Rojek argues that Juliet Schor's thesis of the over-worked American was:

... a valuable antidote to the post-industrial society theorists of the 1960s and early 1970s who identified the mechanization of work and the expansion of computer technologies with the coming of the leisure society. (Rojek, 2000: 27-8)

However, later in the book (p. 48), Rojek identifies Schor, along with Aronowitz and Di Fazio (1994) (see below) with the proposition that 'we must move to the leisure society'.

In his 2005 volume, *Leisure Theory: Principles and Practice*, in seeking to summarise the essence of early leisure studies, Rojek states:

Kerr and his associates (1973), Bell (1974), Touraine (1971) and Kaplan (1975), predicted the rise of the leisure society. (Rojek, 2005: 3)

The first three of these authors were not leisure studies scholars but the post-industrial society theorists, as referred to in the earlier quotation. But did they predict the rise of the leisure society? No reference to the 'leisure society' can be found in Alain Touraine's *The Post-Industrial Society*, which is concerned more with the likely negative effects of mass leisure within current industrial in the context of cultural participation in its broadest sense. A brief review of what each of the other three authors had to say on the 'leisure society' is provided below, and it is found that: Kerr *et al.* do not use the term, although in a passing comment they anticipate something close to it; Bell refers, inaccurately as it happens, to another theorist's use of the term; while Kaplan makes only a passing reference. The four authors in fact present far more complex and ambivalent analyses of possible work and leisure futures than Rojek implies.

In an earlier paper on Thorstein Veblen and human need Rojek (1995: 80-81) associates Veblen with the 'evolution of leisure society' and 'mass leisure' – this is discussed under Veblen below.

- In analysing the history of leisure studies, Peter Bramham (2006) sees 'leisure society' as the first of three major 'projects' addressed by the leisure studies field (the other two being:

'leisure as control/resistance' and 'post-modern leisure'). In the 'leisure society project' of the 1970s, he argues that the 'work-leisure couplet was central' and it was characterised by: Fordism; social reformism; the idea of leisure participants as 'clients' of leisure professionals; public leisure services and participation; and leisure shock associated with affluence, optimism and progress. Bramham does not make specific links between individual texts and the 'leisure society' idea, but refers to 'iconic texts' of the period by Stanley Parker, Rhona and Robert Rapoport and Kenneth Roberts. Parker (1971) is reviewed below, but is found to contain no specific reference to a leisure society. Similarly, no such reference can be found in *Leisure and Family Life Cycle* (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1975), although there is reference to others' use of the term 'leisure explosion' and the authors themselves call for a 'new culture' in regard to public policymaking and planning for leisure. Of the three authors referred to by Bramham, only Roberts, who is reviewed below, discusses the leisure society concept. But his views changed radically over time and in the specific text to which Bramham refers, Roberts rejects the leisure society idea as 'misconceived' (Roberts, 1978: 146). Bramham concludes: 'With hindsight, the original project around the mission to develop and manage 'leisure society' can be dismissed as naïve' (Bramham, 2006: 388).

- Chris Bull and colleagues (2003: 282), in their introductory textbook, state: 'In the 1970s ... some pundits were proclaiming that we were on the verge of achieving the *leisure society*, where leisure would replace work as the central motivating force in people's lives ...'. No 'pundits' are referenced.
- Madeleine Bunting, in *Willing Slaves: how the Overwork Culture is Ruling our Lives*, states:

... the predictions of a leisure age have been strangled by the rise of a neo-liberal capitalism which exhausts its workers. Despite all the increases in labour-saving technologies in the home, our [ie. the British] time for leisure has increased by a pathetic twenty minutes a day between 1961 and 1995. ... And it's getting worse: recent figures collected by the Future Foundation show a fall in every kind of leisure activity, from socialising to sports. (Bunting, 2005: 202)

This is a scenario which merits further investigation: an increase of more than two hours a week in leisure time, but a fall in all kinds of leisure activity but, since the Future Foundation's report on *Leisure Time and Leisure Types*, to which Bunting refers, costs £2,500, the details have not been checked.

- John Tribe (2005: 71) states: 'It was the French sociologist Joffre Dumazedier (1967) who wrote tantalizingly about the imminent arrival of the Leisure Society in the 1960s' – but, as indicated in the section on Dumazedier below, this representation of Dumazedier's position is misleading.
- Susan Shaw, in discussing moments in the past when leisure attracted popular debate, states:

One such moment goes back to the 1950s and 60s when there were many predictions about the coming 'Age of Leisure' (eg. Dumazedier, 1967; Larrabee and Meyersohn, 1958), based on the assumption that rapid technological progress would reduce the need for labour and thus for paid employment. When it became obvious that these predictions were not going to be realized, the issue was dropped as a topic of debate, with a surprising lack of interest about why the predictions were so inaccurate and/or why work continued to dominate people's lives despite technological progress and efficiency. What is noteworthy here is that the interest in this debate focussed less on an interest in leisure *per se*,

and more on concerns about unemployment, underemployment, and the resultant social unrest that might occur ... (Shaw, 2006: 40)

As is noted below, Dumazedier's position was more complex than predicting a coming 'Age of Leisure'. Larrabee and Meyersohn's (1958) *Mass Leisure* was an edited volume of 42 papers, which were not primarily about the future but about leisure as it had already become in 1950s America: a commercialised mass phenomenon. The book includes some philosophical papers on what leisure should be, including a reprint of Bertrand Russell's essay, which features below. Four papers, by David Riesman, Harvey Swados, Josef Pieper and Russell Lynes respectively, are included in a section on 'The Future of Leisure'. Two of these are featured below, namely Riesman, who, in the paper referred to, does not mention or endorse the idea of a leisure society, and Swados who does not use the term leisure society, and whose comments on the consequences of reduced working hours are entirely negative. The paper by Pieper is a chapter on 'Leisure as contemplation' reprinted from his well-known book *Leisure the Basis of Culture*, while, as noted in relation to Juliet Schor's reference above, Lynes' (1958) discussion does not discuss future leisure scenarios.

- In his recent book on sport policy, Fred Coalter quotes from a 1966 UK Sports Council document which referred to a 'dramatic evolution in our material progress' and 'more and more people acquiring leisure and the means to enjoy it' (Coalter, 2007: 9). He then comments:

This was a reflection of a more general concern to promote public planning provision and the management for sport to cater for the demands of the new 'leisure age' (Sillitoe, 1969; Blackie *et al.*, 1979; Veal, 1982). (Coalter, 2007: 9)

None of the three references given says anything about a new 'leisure age'.¹

- Amanda Waring has recently stated:

... leisure is typically upheld as the glorious antithesis to work; a period of time where we can make up for the long hours of 'working' (Wilensky, 1962). This positive impression of leisure led many theorists from the 1960s onwards to prophesise (sic) about a future 'leisure society' (see, e.g. Bell, 1973; Parker, 1971; Seabrook, 1988). (Waring, 2008: 296)

The 1962 paper by Harold Wilensky referred to here does not mention leisure; it is in fact an excerpt from a longer 1960 paper by Wilensky with a similar title, as discussed below, which does discuss leisure. But to suggest that this upheld leisure as a 'glorious antithesis to work' is seriously misleading. The contributions of Bell, Parker and Seabrook are discussed below, indicating that it is similarly misleading to suggest that they prophesied a future 'leisure society'.

¹ Incidentally, despite its title, Sillitoe's (1969) Government Social Survey report, *Planning for Leisure*, is not concerned with planning for leisure as such; it is an entirely factual summary of a participation survey; there is not even an introductory or concluding comment linking the data to planning issues. The lengthy subtitle, *An enquiry into the present pattern of participation in outdoor and physical recreation and the frequency and manner of use of public open-spaces, among people living in the urban areas of England and Wales*, is a better reflection of the report's content. Coalter is not unique in assuming that a report entitled *Planning for Leisure* was about planning: Evans (2001: 110) makes the same mistake.

- Ben Carrington, in introducing a special issue of *Leisure Studies* on the relationship between labour and leisure, states:

In Britain at least, the institutionalisation of leisure studies in the 1970s occurred at the same time as the sociology of work was (pre)occupying itself with explaining why the 'leisure society' so eagerly predicted in the 1950s and 1960s failed to materialise. (Carrington, 2008: 369)

This suggests that the leisure society thesis was at least in part the responsibility of sociology of work theorists rather than, or as well as, leisure studies theorists. Later in the paper Carrington refers to 'mid-twentieth century utopian fantasies of the leisure rich society for all' (p. 373). In neither reference does he offer any examples or sources.

- Neil Ravenscroft and Paul Gilchrist (2009), in introducing the novel concept of a 'working society of leisure' (discussed in Section 5) refer to Thorstein Veblen's 'leisure society' thesis' and Joffre Dumazedier's 'vision of an accessible leisure society'. Dumazedier's concept of a 'civilisation of leisure' is discussed in Section 4 below and, as discussed in Section 3 below, it is difficult to sustain the argument that Veblen proposed a 'leisure society thesis'.

Thus the initial explorations in the literature, prompted by contemporary commentators, provide only limited guidance on the sources, precise timing and content of the leisure society thesis. In fact, the inaccuracies in these recollections gave rise to initial suspicions that the leisure society thesis might be no more than a myth.

3. Origins

The dream of a society without work has a long history. The Garden of Eden expresses such a dream, which is shattered by 'Adam's curse': 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread' (*Genesis*, 3: 19). But the authors of *Genesis* record that even before the appearance of the Garden of Eden, the pattern for human work and leisure was set when God created the universe in six days and rested on the seventh. In an irreverent essay on the sabbath, Mark Twain states:

The day of rest comes but once a week, and sorry I am that it does not come oftener. Man is so constituted that he can stand more rest than this. I often think regretfully that it would have been so easy to have two Sundays in a week, and yet it was not so ordained. The omnipotent Creator could have made the world in three days just as easily as he made it in six, and this would have doubled the Sundays. ... If all-powerful Providence grew weary after six days' labor, such worms as we are might reasonably expect to break down in three, and so require two Sundays ... (Twain, 1866/2009: 95)

In folklore the 'Land of Cockayne' epitomizes the common people's fantasy that there exists, somewhere, a land of leisure and plenty. In their study, *Utopia*, Tod and Wheeler quote the folk ballad, 'Song of Cockayne':

In Cockayne we drink and eat
Freely without care and sweat
The food is choice and clear the wine
At fources and at supper time.
I say again, and I dare swear
No land is like it anywhere.
Under heaven no land like this
Of such joy and endless bliss.
There is many a sweet sight,
All is day, there is no night.
There is no quarrelling, nor strife,
There no death but endless life;
There no lack of food or cloth,
There no man or woman wroth ...
All is sporting, joy and glee,
Lucky the man that there be.

(Tod and Wheeler, 1978: 10)

As Sebastian De Grazia (1962: 363) points out, a contemporary version of the same notions is encapsulated in the song, 'The Big Rock Candy Mountain'.

Serious utopian writings have generally envisaged a reduction in the hours of work, but are less celebratory regarding the notion of leisure (Veal, 1987: 27-34). Thus in More's *Utopia* (1516) daily hours of work are reduced to six, but, the daily timetable indicates that the largest component of the leisure time released occurs between rising from bed at 4.00 am and beginning work at 9.00 am. In Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1602), however, everyone works just four hours a day and 'all energetic and sporting activities' are favoured (Tod and Wheeler, 1978: 3).

Serious consideration of work-leisure relations increases with the maturing of industrial capitalism in the late nineteenth century. One of the leading figures in neo-classical economics, Alfred Marshall, examined the issue, as did Thorstein Veblen, who founded the school of 'institutional' economics, which rejected the neo-classical framework.

1890: Alfred Marshall, UK: *Principles of Economics*

Alfred Marshall did not discuss the idea of a 'leisure society', but did consider situations in which increased labour productivity might offer the possibility of reducing working hours. But he was ambivalent on the issue.² He does, however, argue the case for leisure time as a need:

... human nature improves slowly, and in nothing more slowly than the hard task of learning to use leisure well. In every age, in every nation, and in every rank of society, those who have known how to work well, have been far more numerous than those who have known how to use leisure well. But on the other hand it is only through freedom to use leisure as they will, that people can learn to use leisure well: and no class of manual workers, who are devoid of leisure, can have much self-respect and become full citizens. Some time free from the fatigue of work that tires without educating, is a necessary condition of a high standard of life. (Marshall, 1890/1920: 720)

To some extent anticipating Veblen's 'conspicuous waste', he argues that some work time could be saved by dispensing with that substantial proportion of consumer expenditure which contributes little or nothing 'towards making life nobler or truly happier', so:

... it would probably be well that most people should work rather less: provided that the consequent loss of material income could be met exclusively by the abandonment by all classes of the least worthy methods of consumption: and that they could learn to spend leisure well. (Marshall, 1890/1920: 720)

However, in early editions of *Principles of Economics*, Marshall argued that, since the average worker would be incapable of adapting to increased leisure time, it would be preferable to improve the income of workers and hence their material standard of living rather than reduce working hours:

... since adults, whose habits are already formed, are not likely to adapt themselves quickly to long hours of leisure, it would seem more conducive to the well-being of the nation as a whole, to take measures for increasing the material means of a noble and refined life for all classes, and especially the poorest, than to secure a sudden and very great diminution in the hours of labour of those who are not now weighed down by their work. (Marshall, 1890/1961: 720).

1899: Thorstein Veblen, USA: *The Theory of the Leisure Class*

As discussed above, Chris Rojek has associated Thorstein Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class* with the 'evolution of the leisure society' and this was followed by a similar link made by Neil Ravenscroft and Paul Gilchrist. Rojek's (1995: 80-81) reference to the leisure society concept is a passing one and any link there may be between Veblen's theory of the leisure *class* and the concept of a leisure *society* is not discussed in detail. Rojek also suggests that Veblen 'posits mass leisure as a product of industrial society' (p. 81), but it would appear that, while Veblen envisaged conspicuous *consumption* extending from the wealthy élite to other classes, this was not true of conspicuous *leisure*.

² Marshall (1890/1961) comprises notes and annotations on earlier editions of *Principles of Economics* and shows that this section was changed several times between different editions. Thus, for example, the third quotation above was deleted from the fifth (1907) and subsequent editions.

Veblen's 'leisure class', as it evolved in developed industrial capitalist societies of the late nineteenth century, was a wealthy élite. This class was characterised by 'conspicuous' leisure and consumption (ostentatious display of both non-work status and material wealth) and 'vicarious' leisure and consumption (conspicuous leisure and consumption by the wives, children and servants of wealthy men) and which established 'pecuniary canons of taste' which the middle classes, and even the working class, sought to emulate.

One would think that a 'leisure society' would have arrived if the middle and working classes were successful in emulating the leisure class in terms of conspicuous leisure. But this was not fully possible, even for the middle class, because the head of household at least was required to engage in paid work for a living:

... as we descend the social scale, the point is presently reached where the duties of vicarious leisure and consumption devolve upon the wife alone. In the communities of the Western culture, this point is at present found among the lower middle class. ... It is a fact of common observance that in this lower middle class there is no pretense of leisure on the part of the head of the household. Through force of circumstance it has fallen into disuse. But the middle class wife still carries on the business of vicarious leisure, for the good name of the household and its master. In descending the social scale in any modern industrial community, the primary fact – the conspicuous leisure of the master of the household – disappears at a relatively high point. The head of the middle-class household has been reduced by economic circumstances to turn his hand to gaining a livelihood by occupations which often partake largely of the characters of industry, as in the case of the ordinary business man of today. ... It is by no means an uncommon spectacle to find a man applying himself to work with the utmost assiduity, in order that his wife may in due form render for him that degree of vicarious leisure which the common sense of the time demands. ... The requirement of vicarious consumption at the hands of the wife continues in force even at a lower point in the pecuniary scale than the requirement of vicarious leisure. ... [However] This vicarious consumption practiced by the household of the middle and lower classes can not be counted as a direct expression of the leisure-class scheme of life, since the household of this pecuniary grade does not belong within the leisure class. It is rather that the leisure-class scheme of life here comes to an expression at the second remove. ... The basis on which good repute in any highly organized industrial community ultimately rests is pecuniary strength: the means of showing pecuniary strength, and so of gaining or retaining a good name, are leisure and a conspicuous consumption of goods. Accordingly, both of these methods are in vogue as far down the scale as it remains possible; and in the lower strata in which the two methods are employed, both offices are in great part delegated to the wife and children of the household. Lower still, where any degree of leisure, even ostensible, has become impracticable for the wife, the conspicuous consumption of goods remains and is carried on by the wife and children. (Veblen, 1899/1970: 68-70)

Thus conspicuous *leisure* fades as we move down the social scale. But emulation of conspicuous *consumption* remains. What Veblen was describing then, was not the beginnings of a 'leisure society' but of a 'consumer society'.

In contemporary society, as most of the wealthy élite derive their wealth from various forms of highly paid employment (business, entertainment, sport), the leisure class in the strict sense as defined by Veblen, that is as wealthy and not engaged in labour, has almost disappeared. Furthermore, as increasing numbers of women have entered the paid workforce, Veblen's model of middle class vicarious leisure/consumption has become largely obsolete. Leisure time for the masses has, of course, increased since the end of the nineteenth century when Veblen was writing, and it was partly this which gave rise to discussion of a leisure *society* in the 1920s and '30s, but it was not a trend addressed by Veblen.

4. The leisure society concept in the 1920s and '30s

Introduction: the problem of leisure

The idea that increasing automation and the consequent increase in labour productivity would reduce the demand for labour in the economy seems to have risen to prominence in the 1920s and '30s. That this could result in reductions in working hours had been demonstrated with the institution of the 8-hour working day. This in turn resulted in increased leisure time for workers, which had been sought-after and welcomed by workers, their representatives, society at large and even, in the end, employers. But a number of commentators pointed out that, while increased leisure time for the masses could be seen as a boon it could also be seen as a 'problem', depending on how the time was used. Given that Western industrial culture had hitherto been work-orientated, with limited leisure time for most, it was believed that many were ill-equipped to make 'good' use of extended periods of leisure.

The experience of the 1930s was suggesting that technological change could result in increased levels of unemployment. Comments summarised below were made against the background of the Great Depression, triggered by the Wall Street crash of 1929. In Australia during this period unemployment reached 23%. Many saw the high levels of unemployment as the inevitable consequence of a speed-up in the process of automation creating a structural reduction in the demand for labour. Thus the 'problem of leisure' became linked in part to the problem of unemployment. But by the end of the decade, the argument of economist John Maynard Keynes, developed in his *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, that the depression was due to the failure to manage demand in the economy and could therefore be overcome by increasing government expenditure, had become widely accepted. However, his comments on 'future economic possibilities for our grandchildren', referred to below, date from before the publication of his general theory in 1936.

Susan Currell notes that, in the United States, leisure:

... took on a new cultural significance with the onset of the Depression. From the arrival of massive unemployment in the 1930s, the meaning of leisure to American society changed dramatically from that of the 1920s and resulted in thousands of books and articles published in the mass media about a new 'problem of leisure'. The debate, however, revealed wider concerns about America during this time, and leisure became a battleground for widespread ambivalence about technology, social change, economic change, and new social habits, as well as a domain in which older ideas about individuality and democracy could be mediated or challenged. Judging from the amount of literature produced on leisure – including some bestsellers of the period – the 'problem of leisure' was a central cultural issue of depression America. (Currell, 2005: 3)

The New Leisure

In addition to 'the problem of leisure', a common term in use at the time was 'the New Leisure', often with capital letters, possibly reflecting Roosevelt's New Deal, which was being implemented at the time to combat the effects of the depression. Currell (2005: 33, 205: n32) indicates that the term was in common use in the United States in the 1930s and Hunnicutt (1988: 351-58) lists numerous references from the period. Examples include the following.

- A 1933 report, entitled *The New Leisure Challenges the Schools*, commissioned by the National Recreation Association (Lies, 1933), refers to reduced working hours and increased leisure time, but does not define the 'New Leisure' used in its title.
- In 1933 Spencer Miller (see below) saw the move for reduction of working hours in the United States as heralding a 'new society' based on the 'new leisure'.
- Lundberg *et al.* (1934: 4), in their classic study of suburban leisure, used the heading 'The New Leisure' in their introductory overview of the quantity and quality of leisure in 1930s America, although the actual text under the heading refers not to the New Leisure but to the *problem* of leisure.
- In *Spectatoritis* (1932 – see below) Jay Nash uses the term 'new leisure' in the sense of newly acquired additional leisure time, which, he argues, should be used differently from the more limited amounts of leisure time available in the past.
- Neumeyer and Neumeyer, devote a whole chapter of their 1936 textbook to 'The New Leisure', but they fail to define the term, leaving that to the second edition of the book, which was not published until 1949:

Several reasons may be given for using the expression 'the new leisure'. The chief ones are: (1) the widespread extension of leisure and the rapidity with which it has developed; and (2) the new uses of free time, especially the new forms of recreation. (Neumeyer and Neumeyer, 1949: 15)

The 'new uses of free time' were all the activities which had become newly available to the masses since the 1920s, including radio listening, movie-going and the use of the automobile for leisure. In the third edition of the book, published in 1958, some 22 years after the first edition, the term 'New Leisure' is still used, and the same rationale is given to justify its use, but examples of 'new' leisure activities are not given: the 1920s as an era of 'New Leisure' is dismissed in a single sentence as a period when 'considerable gains' were made in 'the amount of spare time and in the provision of commercial and communal forms of recreation for the masses' (Neumeyer and Neumeyer, 1958: 9).

- The final chapter of Foster Dulles' 1965 *History of Recreation: America Learns to Play* is entitled 'The New Leisure' Although there is no formal definition, the final paragraph of the book seems to capture the concept:

The people of no other country and no other age had ever had anything like the leisure, the discretionary income, or the recreational choices of the American people in mid-twentieth-century. It was overwhelming. Science and the machine had reshaped traditional patterns into hundreds of new forms. Something had undoubtedly been lost, but also a great deal had been gained. Working men and working women – factory operatives, plumbers, waitresses, bank clerks, farm-hands, stenographers, storekeepers, subway guards, mill-hands, garment workers, office boys, truck-drivers – found countless pleasures and amusements readily available that had once been restricted to the privileged few. The democracy had come into its recreational heritage. It had achieved both leisure and the means to enjoy it. Even though they might not always have used this leisure to the best advantage, the American people had learned to play. (Dulles, 1965: 397)

- Other authors prolonged the use of the term in the 1950s and '60s:
 - Ernst included a chapter on 'Our new leisure and its good uses' in his book *Utopia* (Ernst, 1955: 14-33).
 - Russell Lynes (1958: 347) refers to 'the new leisure', apparently meaning the leisure time newly gained by American workers in the 1950s.
 - Denney (1959: 48) uses the term in a similar way to Lynes.
 - Kaplan (1960) devotes the final chapter of *Leisure in America* to 'the new leisure' (see Kaplan entry below).
 - Blakelock's 1960 paper, 'A new look at the New Leisure', offers no definition of 'the New Leisure', but associates it with an unquantified reduction in work-time among industrial workers.

1922: Alfred H. Lloyd, USA: Ages of Leisure

Alfred Lloyd discusses three 'ages', sometimes 'eras' of leisure. The first seems to use age in a biological sense, since it refers to the leisure associated with youth. The second age/era is historical, referring to ancient Greek and other civilisations where leisure for some was built on the slavery of others. The third, age/era, which is the one that concerns us here, is that based on the automation of industry. With some prescient musings and others sadly mistaken, he considers the new era as follows:

... leisure ... is a pressing problem of the day at least as urgent as that of work. Then it must be faced. With shorter hours and shorter weeks and increasing mechanical efficiency, with – for some so insist – relatively less need of occupational training, with greater wealth and presumably too more general wealth, with the fine arts as well as the practical arts functioning vicariously in machinery, with the at least possible passing of militarism, with standardisation and quantity production and dehumanization [= automation] in so many departments of life, this problem of leisure, I say, must be faced squarely. Man, so it would appear, unless from higher standards of living or from increases in population the demand for production should actually keep pace with increased efficiency, is to have more spare time per capita than ever before in history and is to have this with all the opportunities and with all the dangers. Civilization must look to her defenses even while she awakens to new ideals and purposes. (Lloyd, 1922: 171)

Alfred Marshall quoted above and a number of commentators referred to below are pessimistic about the possibility that the masses could make positive use of significantly increased leisure time but, despite the above note of caution, Lloyd is apprehensive but optimistic:

Of one thing only do I feel confident: The call is for a new culture made possible by the new leisure, and the response must be general or social, the people at large taking part; it must not be confined to a few. ... if the new leisure in amount and importance be what it has appeared to be and if, as might be inferred, the mingled danger and opportunity of it be at all in proportion, then is civilization entering upon an adventure for romantic characters, for need of wisdom and imagination and courage far exceeding anything in the past. Indeed it would seem as if man were being brought to a testing the like of which he has not even distantly approached before. (Lloyd, 1922: 172)

He notes that, in the past, while some members of the wealthy leisured classes have 'spent their time idly and wastefully', it is this class that has supported the development of art, literature,

science and philosophy, or *culture*. The new leisure, enabled by industry, is expected to produce its own, new, culture:

The past shows that with leisure has come culture. Culture, challenging establishment, seeking a new medium, has bred historic adventure, evolution. ... Wherefore, by analogy from the past, what of the third age of leisure ...? (p. 174) ... the new leisure of our era must be bringing its own specific culture, its own mutation of human values. What the new forms may be or how education, of course a new education, the people at large may be brought to meet the new culture to their benefit instead of to their harm, I am still at a loss to say. (p. 176) ... A present culture, surprising and adventurous, serves the inevitable future, awakening the very life it surprises (p. 177). (Lloyd, 1922)

1922: Lewis Mumford, USA: Utopia/Technics and Civilization

In his 1922 book, *The Story of Utopias*, Lewis Mumford reviews utopian literature from Plato's *Republic* to the works of William Morris and H. G. Wells – involving utopian ideas which are 'filtered through an individual mind' and 'grew out of a certain age and tradition of thought'. He contrasts this with 'collective utopias or social myths' which 'have been partly expressed in a hundred works and never perhaps fully expressed in one' (Mumford, 1922/2008: 135). He outlines three such collective utopias of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which he names: Coketown, the Country House and the National State. Coketown embodies the phenomenon of the industrial town, with a factory or mill as its centre and *raison d'être*: a dystopia for many but utopian in its 'supreme esthetic achievement – the Self-Made Man' (p. 150). The Country House and the elites with their distinctive lifestyles which it is created to accommodate is a physical and social embodiment of Veblen's *leisure class*. Regarding the relatively recently evolved, and often artificially delineated, National State and its associated utopia, Mumford states:

The chief concern of the national utopia is the support of the central government, for the government is the guardian of territory and privilege. The principal business of that government is to keep the territory properly defined, and to increase its limits, when possible, so as to make the taxable area larger. By stressing the importance of these concerns, and constantly playing up the dangers of rivalry from other national utopias, the State builds a bridge between the Country House and Coketown, and persuades the workers in Coketown that they have more in common with the classes that exploit them than they have in common with other groups within a more limited community. It would seem that this reconciliation of Coketown and the Country House is little less than miraculous, even as an ideal... (Mumford, 1922/2008: 158)

Coketown represents industrial work, but it is the Country House which concerns us here, because of its focus on the conspicuous leisure and conspicuous consumption of the leisure class. Mumford notes the recurrence of the 'Country House culture' in literature, a culture in which:

... under the care of a tactful hostess, ... everyone does nothing but follow his free will and pleasure, rising out of bed whenever he thinks good, and eating, drinking, and labouring when he has a mind to it. [in the rules of their order] ... there is but one clause to be observed: 'Do as you please'. (p. 140) ... in the Country House possession is based upon privilege and not upon paid work. The titles to land which was historically obtained for the most part through force and fraud is the economic foundation of the Country House existence. In order to keep the artisans and labourers who surround the Country House at their work, it is necessary to keep them from having access to the land on their own account, provision always being made

that the usufruct of the land should go to the owner and not to the worker. This emphasis on passive ownership points to the fact that in the Country House there is no active communion between the people and their environment. Such activities as remain in the Country House – the pursuit of games for instance – rest upon imitating in play activities which once had a vital use or prepared for some vital function, as a child's playing with a doll is a preparation for motherhood. The Country House ideal is that of a completely functionless existence; or at best, an existence in which all the functions that properly belong to a civilized man shall be carried on by functionaries. Since this ideal cannot be realized in the actual world, for the reason that it is completely at odds with man's biological inheritance, it is necessary in the Country House utopia to fill in by play and sport and otherwise desirable vacuity (p. 141-2). (Mumford, 1922/1980)

Mumford argues that the Country House culture had an influence beyond the large houses and estates which the term implies. He observes:

... I know no other pattern which has imposed its standards and its practices with such complete success upon the greater part of European civilization. While the Country House was in the beginning an aristocratic institution, it has penetrated now to every stratum of society; and although we may not immediately see the connection, it is responsible, I believe, for the particular ... direction which industrial society has taken. The Country House standards of consumption are responsible for our Acquisitive Society. (p. 141) ... It does not matter very much whether the Country House is an estate on Long Island or a cottage in Montclair; whether it is a house in Golder's Green or a family manor in Devonshire: these are essentially affairs of scale, and the underlying identity is plain enough. The idolum [associated inner 'world of ideas', possibly 'ethos'] of the Country House prevails even when quarters are taken up in the midst of the metropolis. More than ever the Country House today tries to make up by an abundance of physical goods for all that has been lost through its divorce from the underlying community; more than ever it attempts to be self-sufficient within the limits of suburbia. The automobile, the phonograph, and the radiotelephone have only served to increase this self-sufficiency; and I need not show at length how these instrumentalities have deepened the elements of acquisitiveness and passive, mechanical enjoyment. (p. 147) (Mumford, 1922/2008)

These comments preceded the arrival of the McMansion by three quarters of a century. As an aside, it might be noted that David Selwyn (1999) offers an applied analysis of the Country House culture in his *Jane Austen and Leisure*.

In his 1934 volume, *Technics and Civilization*, Mumford predicted, and called for, a leisure society arising from automation:

When automatism becomes general and the benefits of mechanization are socialized, men will be back once more in the Edenlike state in which they have existed in regions of natural increment, like the South Seas: the ritual of leisure will replace the ritual of work, and work itself will become a kind of game. That is, in fact, the ideal goal of a completely mechanized and automatized system of power production: the elimination of work: the universal achievement of leisure. (p. 279)

... no working ideal for machine production can be based solely on the gospel of work: still less can it be based upon an uncritical belief in constantly raising the quantitative standard of consumption. If we are to achieve a purposive and cultivated use of the enormous energies now happily at our disposal, we must examine in detail the processes that lead up to the final state of leisure, free activity, creation. It is because of the lapse and mis-management of these processes that we have not reached the desirable end. (p. 379) (Mumford, 1934)

While there is an indication in this final remark that transition to a leisure society would present challenges, Mumford's outlook is basically more optimistic about the prospect of such a society than many of the commentators of the time. He does not, however, discuss the nature of a successfully achieved leisure society or link it to his earlier discussions of the Country House..

1923: Bertrand Russell, UK: In Praise of Idleness

In a 1923 book entitled *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization* and a 1935 essay entitled 'In Praise of Idleness', mathematician and philosopher Bertrand Russell contended that all material needs of society could be produced if everyone worked just four hours a day. But he argued that this was unlikely to happen because industrial society placed means above ends:

If every man and woman worked for four hours a day at necessary work, we could all have enough; ... it should be the remaining hours that would be regarded as important – hours which could be devoted to enjoyment of art or study, to affection and woodland and sunshine in green fields. The mechanistic Utopian is unable to value these things: he sees in his dreams a world where goods are produced more and more easily, and distributed with impartial justice to workers too tired and bored to know how to enjoy them. What men are to do with leisure he neither knows nor cares; presumably they are to sleep till the time for work comes round again ... Man's true life does not consist in the business of filling his belly and clothing his body, but in art and thought and love, in the creation and contemplation of beauty and in the scientific understanding of the world. (Russell and Russell, 1923: 50)

1926: George Cutten, USA: The Threat of Leisure

George Cutten's thesis, presented in his 1926 book *The Threat of Leisure*, was that, for Americans:

The somewhat sudden acquisition of leisure has found us unprepared for the correct use of so much spare time. (p. 66) ... The problem before us in the twentieth century is the proper utilization of our leisure; we have taught men how to make money but not how to spend it, we have taught men how to obtain leisure but not how to use it, and the salvation of our civilization depends upon whether we can teach them the latter, if, indeed, we know what to teach. (p. 87) (Cutten, 1926)

The *threat* of leisure is a moral one brought about by commercialization:

... we suddenly find ourselves with an amount of leisure on our hands beyond the wildest dreams of our fathers and have made no provision for the use of it. The people generally may not have recognised the fact of leisure, but the business men have discovered it, for America has turned its leisure over to commerce to be exploited for profit. For this reason the method of spending leisure, so far as amusements are concerned, is dictated by business interests rather than the desires, needs, or benefits of the people. Recent industrial development has created conditions in modern cities which make them too congested and too much lacking in facilities to permit people to enjoy their leisure in their own homes. In most cases recreation must be sought elsewhere, and business enterprise has taken advantage of these conditions. While philanthropic agencies have helped somewhat, the general attitude of the American people has either been total indifference to the problem, or the repressive and negative attitude of the Puritan. Commercial agencies have supplied popular needs which other agencies have not, but in connection with them have developed serious public evils. (pp. 69-70) ... We

should be able to endure the fact that amusements have been commercialized and that the wealth of monarchs is lavished upon the yearly salaries of some of the entertainers, if the amusements were such as should be provided. In many cases they are cheap, enervating, and deteriorating. The best that can be said of some of them is that they are neutral in effect, the worst is that they result in moral and intellectual degradation. The censorship over certain amusements, which some states maintain, is able to eliminate only the grossest examples of moral danger, while the subtly suggestive, and consequently the most harmful, are frequently permitted to appeal to the people. The fact that such censorship is deemed necessary shows the danger of commercializing public amusements. (p. 72) (Cutten, 1926)

The result of our unlimited, unorganized, unled, and uncontrolled leisure is the gravest danger to which any nation was ever exposed. This is the great threat of leisure which we may now see: the fruition of such conditions in the lack of self-restraint as evidenced by the waves of crime with which we are deluged. Our laws and national propaganda have been directed against overwork of people in general and of certain classes in particular. We face a greater danger in underwork – or at least underemployment, for the latter may be even more fatal. ... The keynote of crimelessness may not necessarily be more work, but it is surely a better directed use of time than now obtains in the leisure of our youth. repression alone will not solve the problem; youthful energy bottled up is dangerous; we must secure a proper outlet. (Cutten, 1926: 96)

1928: Herbert May and Dorothy Petgen, USA: Leisure and Its Use

May and Petgen's *Leisure and Its Use* is a report of a study commissioned by the Playground and Recreation Association of America to investigate 'leisure time activities in the principal countries of Europe'. The first chapter is entitled, 'The Leisure Problem – General Observations'. Thus leisure is seen, first and foremost, a *problem*. The chapter includes the following observations:

... by good use of leisure we can here understand not only use of leisure in which the individual avoids psychological and physical harm, but one in which – while satisfying himself – he incidentally 'improves' himself: by enriching memory and imagination, or by developing physical strength and skill. Clearly the *problem* of the use of leisure arises when it becomes apparent that for one reason or another a people or a class tends not to put its leisure to good use. 'Bad' use of leisure, so far as it is subject to observation, usually involves the more widespread and specious forms of commercial recreation. Wherever there is elaborate development of commercial recreation it becomes evident that very few people who can afford to buy their leisure occupation will continue to be content with the simpler forms of unorganised recreation. Therefore it can be said that a problem of the use of leisure results immediately where there is well-developed commercial recreation. (May and Petgen, 1928: 5-6)

1931: John Maynard Keynes, UK: Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren

Paradoxically, it was the economic theories of John Maynard Keynes, published in his 1936 *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, which indicated how the worst excesses of the Great Depression might have been avoided. But in his 1931 essay 'Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren', he seemed to embrace the idea of a permanent potential labour surplus when discussing the reduction in working hours which technology could bring. His predictions were predicated on the assumption of 'no important wars and no important increase in population', but

even though these assumptions have not been met, his hypothetical scenario of a eight-fold increase in real per capita incomes over 100 years is on track. On this basis, he declared that the basic *economic problem* of humankind – that is, material subsistence – would be solved. Because people would feel the need to do *some* work to 'be contented', it would be necessary to:

... make what work there is still to be done to be as widely shared as possible. Three-hour shifts or a fifteen hour week may put off the problem for a great while. For three hours a day is quite enough to satisfy the old Adam in most of us! (Keynes, 1932: 369)

The 'old Adam' is a reference to the biblical curse on Adam: 'in the sweat of your brow shalt though eat bread'.

This would open up the possibility of what might be seen as a 'leisure society' vision of the future:

Thus for the first time since his creation man will be faced with his real, his permanent problem – how to use his freedom from pressing economic cares, how to occupy the leisure which science and compound will have won for him, to live wisely and agreeably and well (p. 367) ... It will be those people, who can keep alive, and cultivate into a fuller perfection, the art of life itself and do not sell themselves for the means of life, who will be able to enjoy the abundance when it comes (p. 368) ... those walk most truly in the paths of virtue and sane wisdom who take least thought for the morrow. We shall once more value ends above means and prefer the good to the useful. We shall honour those who can teach us how to pluck the hour and the day virtuously and well, the delightful people who are capable of taking direct enjoyment in things, the lilies of the field who toil not, neither do they spin. (p. 372) (Keynes, 1932)

However, Keynes was not optimistic about the possibility of achieving such an end.

If the economic problem is solved mankind will be deprived of its traditional purpose. Will this be a benefit? If one believes at all in the real values of life the prospect at least opens up the possibility of benefit, yet I think with dread of the readjustments of the habits and instincts of the ordinary man, bred into him for countless generations, which he may be asked to discard within a few decades (p. 366) ... there is no country and no people, I think, who can look forward to the age of leisure and abundance without dread. For we have been trained too long to strive and not to enjoy. It is a fearful problem for the ordinary person, with no special talents, to occupy himself ... To those who sweat for their daily bread leisure is a longed-for sweet – until they get it ... To judge from the behaviour and the achievements of the wealthy classes today in any quarter of the world, the outlook is very depressing! ... For they have most of them failed disastrously, so it seems to me – those who have an independent income but no associations or duties or ties – to solve the problem which has been set to them. (p. 368) (Keynes, 1932)

The reference to the 'wealthy classes' recalls Veblen's 'leisure class' but, as noted above, Veblen did not explore the issue of declining working hours.

In 2008 a volume of essays, edited by Pecchi and Piga (2008), was published to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the publication of Keynes's essay. provide a twenty-first century evaluation of Keynes's essay.

1932: C. C. Furnas, USA: *The Two-hour Working Day*

The fact that Furnas was a professor of chemical engineering at Yale University and was therefore exploring an area outside his central field of expertise possibly explains the light-hearted, and often humorous, delivery of his thesis on the two-hour working day. The basic premise is outlined quite briefly:

The Socialists have long said that four hours of labor per day person would be sufficient, if everyone worked. I think they are still wrong, but they soon will be right. Then, in the machine-cluttered years to come, three hours will be enough, then two, perhaps. Even two hours may be too many. I use that as a first approximation of the ultimate length of the average working day.

When this two-hour day gets here, our society may have as bad indigestion as in 1931; but the shortened day is physically possible, and it will come eventually, because you and I and all our friends and their friends would welcome the chance to cut life's drudgeries to a minimum.

Many of the honored ideals must change. Hard work will become less of a virtue and idleness will become less obnoxious. The job which supports you will become a rather insignificant chore, and the hobby and the avocation will absorb most of your energies.

The social problems arising from such an age of leisure will be infinite. What to do? How to keep out of trouble? What's the use anyway? Someone will have to answer these questions, and I nominate the educational system. (Furnas, 1932: 13-14)

The only clear solution to the question is seen as being provided by liberal education preparing people for a future of leisure and this is explored in a chapter entitled 'The Pursuit of Happiness'. Without suitable education people would be liable to spend their increased leisure time in anti-social activity:

If a person is going to loaf, it pays the state a great deal better to put five thousand dollars into his education and have him loaf harmlessly than it does to spend one hundred dollars on him initially and then have him loaf viciously. It has been estimated that the depredations of the average crook cost the public one-hundred-sixty times as much as is expended upon the education of the average boy or girl. If liberal education does nothing more than render people harmless, it is worth while in our dangerous, mobile age. (Furnas, 1932: 234)

1932: Jay B. Nash, USA: *Spectatoritis*

In *Spectatoritis*, Jay Nash presents a critique of the tendency of Americans of the 1930s to devote their increasing leisure time to passive leisure activity rather than to what he terms 'creative arts'.

...man's time must be considered in terms of three parts: his work – vocation, his re-creation – recuperation, and his time for creative arts – avocation or time to express his voluntary wants. ... With the reduction of working hours, less time will be needed for re-creation, used purely in the sense of recuperation and restoration. This throws a large part of time into the third part, which is new, and for which we have no symbol in the English language, save what might be called avocation, a time for creation, or a time for pure choice, or ... 'time for creative arts'. The question facing civilization is: What will man do with this machine-formed time? ... There are glaring indications on all sides that, given leisure, man will turn into a listener, a watcher. He will attempt to utilize this new leisure, which should be devoted to creative arts,

in body recuperation. He will rationalize that he needs rest – a let-down far beyond his actual requirement. (Nash, 1923: 8-9)

1933: Spencer Miller, USA: Labor and the Challenge of the New Leisure

Spencer Miller's 1933 article in the *Harvard Business Review* was written against the background of a bill for 30-hour working week in the process of passing through Congress (it was passed but never implemented). The depression was seen as signalling 'revolutionary changes in our social order'. While the 30-hours bill was enacted to address problems of unemployment, the author was more concerned with 'the increase in leisure which is represented by the reduction in working hours'. He notes that the changes will require a transformation in attitudes towards the relative importance of work and leisure:

Leisure gives us something of a clue for exchanging our old objectives for new. It will become a part of the foundations of the new society. If we stand, as I firmly believe we do, upon the threshold of a new age, it will be necessary to reconstruct not only our objective but also our attitude towards that objective. Such a reconstructed objective must inevitably include provisions for the wider leisure-time activities of citizens, not as an end in themselves but as a means toward the cultivation of those qualities which are necessary part of the new society. ... the new leisure is the spiritual frontier which calls for a discipline of the spirit as far-reaching and as penetrating as did the conquest of the physical frontier. (Miller, 1933: 465)

Thus, while the term 'leisure society' is not used, Miller comes very close in speaking of a 'new society', the foundation of which is the 'new leisure'. The key to coping with the consequent social change lies in public education:

The purpose of the State, as Aristotle defined it, is to elevate human life. That is certainly one of the high aims of education. If that be true, I submit that the chief function of this state should be the education of its citizens, not only for the problems of life's work, but of life's leisure as well. Toward that concept of the State, the leisure State if you will, I believe we move. Helping the achievement of that goal is the challenge of the new leisure to labor and to the community at large. (Miller, 1933: 467)

1934: George A. Lundberg et al., USA: Leisure: a Suburban Study

The 1930s study of leisure in an American suburb by Lundberg *et al.* is predicated on the observation that 'the central problem now before us ... [is] .. the prospect of long hours of leisure for the masses of men' who:

... will, to an increasing degree, be relieved and indeed prevented, from occupying a substantial part of their working hours in certain traditional or conventional ways that have hitherto obtained. Consideration of the ways and means of the profitable spending of this new increment of time, whether by the wealthy or by the poor, under any given conditions, is the problem before us. From this point of view, the problems of leisure are in no way secondary or subsidiary to other aspects of social life now much in the foreground of public attention. (Lundberg *et al.*, 1934: 10).

They do not use the term 'leisure society' but, as noted above, do discuss the notion of the 'new leisure':

Altogether we confront an age when working for the means of livelihood, which has for a million years been the principal preoccupation of the mind and body of man, is about to be relegated to a minor charge upon his time and activity: in its place we have leisure. The emergence of the new leisure constitutes a major disturbance in the equilibrium of the organism with its environment. (Lundberg *et al.*, 1934: 363)

1934: Arthur Newton Pack, USA: The Challenge of Leisure

Writing at the height of the Great Depression, Arthur Newton Pack surveyed the period of industrialisation and the effects of automation on the demand for labour. In a sweeping analysis, stretching from the height of the industrial revolution and into the future, he states:

.. the steady development of more and still more machines relentlessly raised the sum total of production even higher, and hours of labor have been steadily decreasing, in a frantic attempt to hold the balance static. From sixteen hours a day to twelve hours to eight, eight to seven, six, five, and the end not in sight. It would be a rash prophet who denies the possibility that this generation may live to see a two-hour day. (Pack, 1934: 11)

A number of the later commentators referred to below argued that leisure cannot compensate for loss of meaning in the boring and alienating work brought about by automation. But this is not a problem for Pack. He argued that for many people leisure activities:

... must furnish a prime purpose of existence itself. Machine-tending labor gives no purpose to life, and the more monotonous and repetitive the task, the greater the need to supply a purposeful goal somewhere else. The more a man's working hours become a mere tending of machines, the greater his need for some realistic, creative outlet in his time of leisure. And although such labor will not and cannot create love for the mechanical tasks of life, it can be compensated for, and the guardian of the machine, while giving a fair modicum of attention and service to the demands of his livelihood, will make his real life and find his real satisfaction outside the work itself. (Pack, 1934: 67)

Pack devotes a series of chapters to 'The New Leisure and ...', but the activities discussed are not new leisure forms but a number of traditional activities, such as engagement with nature, active participation in sport and hobbies and appreciation of the arts. Thus his preferred approach can be seen as a counter to the passive, commercial trends of the New Leisure. This is summed up in the following:

Leisure is the opportunity for individualism – the opportunity to live, do and make, according to the dictates of self-expression. In the world of production alone man exists in a vicious, sinister circle, but in the world of leisure he may truly live. It is in leisure that civilization will find its justification. It is the only excuse for civilization, and unless the manifest advantages of leisure outweigh the ills of a machine age, civilization as we now understand it is inevitably doomed. (p. 240) ...Leisure is an indispensable part of both economic and social existence – it is the greatest of all challenges to the leaders of civilization. (p. 244) (Pack, 1934)

1935: C. E. M. Joad, UK: *Diogenes – or the Future of Leisure*

C. E. M. Joad envisaged a society in which material goods would be produced in four or five hours work per day, but was pessimistic about the consequences, although the seriousness of his pessimism is not clear:

... the sheer boredom of life made unendurable by wasted energies, servitude to pleasure and craving for amusement which grows ever more difficult to satisfy, will lead to war, and men will be driven to kill one another in order to kill time. (Joad, 1935: 70)

1938: Henry Durant, UK: *The Problem of Leisure*

Henry Durant's thesis, outlined in his 1938 book *The Problem of Leisure*, is that industrialised, automated work no longer provides workers with the rationale for their existence, and religion, community, and even family, are not able to fill the void. As a result, the worker:

... stands a lonely figure surrounded by his fellows, lacking contact with the world of things and the world of men. What must now suffice to link him with society? The answer is the 'machinery of amusement'. Leisure as produced by the showman, the amusements caterer, the film magnate, must act as the substitute, filling the void which industrialism has entailed. And hence the new task for leisure. Hence, the fresh, outstanding role it must play. Living is no longer to be interpreted in terms of labour, but in terms of the hours spent away from the stool, the machine, and the plough. In stead of being relaxation, leisure has become an effort to secure the meaning and justification of life itself. (Durant, 1938: 17-18)

However, the values, images and goals which the 'machinery of amusement' offers, particularly via movies and the popular press of the time, dominated by the life of the idle rich or screen celebrities (nothing much changes!) is seen as shallow, unattainable and unsatisfying. So the commercial leisure offered to and pursued by the masses fails to fulfil its role:

Failure to satisfy means that leisure fails to fulfil the function assigned to it, means that it does not prove adequate to its task of reconciling people to their lot. Moreover, leisure is unable to do this. ... [therefore] ... Leisure is not merely a problem for the individual – it is a problem for society, just as, for instance, unemployment is a problem. It is something which those who are concerned to maintain the social order are gravely anxious about. (Durant, 1938: 26-27)

Thus leisure has a twofold aspect. To individuals it indicates the difficulties which they experience in attempting to wrest from life a meaning and purpose. They live an unmotivated social life. That is to say, no religious and no rational principle has appointed them to their given place. The society they live in becomes ever more rigid. But their status, fixed by the work they do, leaves them unsatisfied: it determines decisively the shallowness, the incomprehensibility of their lives. They have one hope, their spare time. It should provide the reason for their existence and the satisfaction they are seeking. But their leisure is conditioned by the same society which conditions their work, which means that while their leisure should be a catharsis, it must also complete the industrial training of turning actors into spectators. Hence the 'machinery of amusement', visualized day-dreams of a fully leisured, unproductive life are presented, and for the public which watches, leisure becomes the ultimate goal. But it is unobtainable, because those who have just learned the lesson in the cinema, have to return to the factory and the office. The work seems more dreary after the leisure hour, and the leisure hour is no climax to their work. It is a vicious circle, completed by the 'engineers of

amusement'. Concerned with their financial profit, they seize upon the already blunted tastes of their patrons and proceed further to debase them. (Durant, 1938: 30-31.)

1939: Roger Payne, USA: Why Work? The Coming 'Age of Leisure and Plenty'

Roger Payne, known as the 'Hobo Philosopher', spent twenty years in the 1920s and '30s travelling on foot throughout North America distributing a pamphlet promoting a philosophy of simple living and minimisation of working time. The book, an expanded version of the pamphlet, outlines ideas for simpler living, elimination of waste, improving productivity in industry (to reduce the demand for labour) and increasing the labour participation rate, concluding that in this way the *average* individual employed would be required to work for the equivalent of only one day a week. While he provides extensive references to appropriate literature, he makes no mention of Bertrand Russell's similar 1923 proposal for a four-hour working day, which began this section on the 1920s and '30s. Payne's book does not appear to have been published by a mainstream publisher and it is not known whether his notion of an 'Age of Leisure and Plenty' attracted much attention or played any significant role in promulgating the 'leisure society' idea to the community at large.

5. The leisure society concept in the 1950s, '60s and '70s

The work shortages and high unemployment rates of the 1930s were replaced in the 1950s, '60s and early '70s by rapid economic growth and prosperity and this was accompanied by a continuing reduction in working hours. During the first half of the twentieth century weekly working hours had fallen from around 70 to 40-45 and there was the beginning of paid annual holidays. In the post-World War II period the 40-hour, five day working week and paid annual holidays of two weeks or more became established and commentators, almost universally, assumed that this trend would continue. However, the whole question of what was happening in the background to actual working hours in the Western industrial economies, and what commentators knew about this, is complex and is discussed in a companion paper.

In the previous section we noted Susan Currell's observation that popular interest in leisure resulted in the publication of thousands of articles in newspapers and magazines in the 1920s and '30s. Robert Bendiner suggested that a similar interest in popular and business media may have existed in the 1950s:

From the spate of literature on the coming Era of Leisure it is hard to tell whether we are headed for an Elysium of culture that will put the ancient Greeks in the shade or for a hell of mass boredom modified by home carpentry, hi-fi, plush motels, and ping-pong. By far the most enthusiastic prophets of the New Day are to be found in the world of trade and popular magazines, the most skeptical in the ranks of the sociologists. (Bendiner, 1957: 10)

The period from the 1950s to the early 1970s can be seen as the period of birth of leisure studies as a formal field of academic study. The place of the leisure society idea in this process, how it was conceived and theorised, the evidence on which it was based and the degree of consensus surrounding it, is therefore potentially important in understanding the origins of leisure studies. As noted in Section 2, a number of contemporary commentators have suggested that it was a key part of the early leisure studies project. Passing, unquestioning, references to the idea of the leisure society could be an indicator of its acceptance in the field at the time. A number of such references have been identified and are summarised below. This is followed by summaries of individual substantive contributions.

Passing references

- Orrin Knapp, in a 1969 book on the *Collective Search for Identity*, stated that 'The urgent question of the twentieth century, in its looming age of leisure, is not What can I do? but Who can I be?' (Knapp, 1969: x).
- In his 1975 textbook, *A Guide to Recreation and Leisure*, Donald Weiskopf states: 'We stand at the threshold of a leisure-orientated society, a nuclear age with unlimited possibilities for the enrichment of human life. The potential of recreation and leisure time services for satisfying, creative, and enriched living is limitless' (Weiskopf, 1975: 4). Weiskopf was writing at the time of the early 1970s oil-price crises, so he continues with the following cautious, but still optimistic, remarks: 'While a continued world fuel shortage could result in a major setback to the leisure industry, there have been positive indications that the current crisis will ease in the years ahead. Certainly, the leisure society that this text will describe in the chapters ahead will depend on an abundance of energy and natural resources' (Weiskopf, 1975: 4). The leisure society concept is, however, not explicitly discussed in subsequent chapters.

- Leland Ryken, in *Work and Leisure in Christian Perspective*, states: 'Our own century is surely the age of leisure. Who can doubt it, when several years ago Americans alone spent 262 billion dollars on leisure? This is not to deny ... that in our fast-paced society people have less leisure time than they want or need' (Ryken, 1986: 82).

1945/1955: Georges Friedmann, France: The Anatomy of Work

In *Industrial Society*, published in French in 1945 and in English in 1955, and in *The Anatomy of Work*, published in French in 1956 and in English translation in 1961, Georges Friedmann explored the implications of increased automation in the workplace under capitalism. While a key effect of this development is seen as the reduction in the demand for labour – possibly in the form of reduced working hours and greater leisure – his concern is mainly with the less physically burdensome but increasingly meaningless nature of industrial work and the consequent boredom and alienation of the worker.

In the earlier text he refers to research from the 1920s by Leon Walther, who suggested that the increased monotony of work should be compensated for by 'the shorter working day, reading, and music, if possible, in the workshops' (Walther, quoted in Friedmann, 1945/55: 155). But Friedmann rejects this approach, accusing 'scientists of goodwill' of 'giving up in despair of all hope of humanizing the semi-automatic tasks' in industry, which he believes will not be eliminated very soon. Later in the book he states:

The theory of automation gives hope of the total disappearance of unpleasant work ... But these are technicians' abstractions which the actual evolution of capitalist societies since the beginning of this century has cruelly contradicted. Complete automation is full of wonderful promises: freeing the worker from these subdivided tasks (in which he is half-absorbed by the machine), from assembly-line labor henceforth assigned to mechanical appliances, distributing consumption goods in great quantities, increasing comfort, shortening the working day for all, creating leisure for everybody, and consequently the means for attaining dignity and culture. But here again, technology and the suggestions of the human factor which tend to control its application in industry bring only a magnificent *possibility*; man, alone, through the social and economic organization in which techniques are integrated and oriented, can decide the degree to which this possibility may become actual. (Friedmann, 1945/1955: 384-85)

He returns to the topic in the conclusions to the book (p. 391) where he refers to the view that workers might need to seek compensation for boring and meaningless work in 'culture and leisure-time activities' outside of work as 'disillusioned' and pessimistic; his prime concern, however, is not directly with leisure but with the quality of work and the idea that ways might be found of making work meaningful.

In *The Anatomy of Work* Friedmann expresses scepticism regarding the prospect of a smooth transition to an automated economy:

... when in due course automation has eliminated manual work and has greatly reduced the hours of labour, when it has deprived men of the essential element upon which their mental balance and the possibility of self-realization have been based (the role traditionally assigned to work), the need to find a new centre for human development in the hours thus freed, i.e. in the active use of leisure, will become all the more acute. Automatism does not eliminate the problems forming the core of this book. Its results *may* be as marvellous as its most enthusiastic supporters have imagined, but they may also contribute to man's downfall, should

they occur in a world lacking just institutions, and deprived of liberty and wisdom. (Friedmann, 1961: xv)

Later in the book he seeks to explore the supposed logic of automation under capitalism:

Owing to the advance of automatism, the physical and mental operations that the worker is required to perform are decreasing in number and becoming easier all the time, thus approaching the 'press-button' ideal. ... Since all labour is becoming increasingly easy and for many people working life is losing content and interest, we must look for new content and our interests and efforts must be fixed elsewhere, our life being centred about 'play'. (Friedmann, 1961: 152)

The last sentence here is not Friedmann's own conclusion and recommendation, but his analysis of what the logic of industrial trends seems to be telling us. Under a heading 'A Grave Problem', he states:

... work, when its scope is sufficient and the personality can to some extent be involved in it, has a fundamental part to play in the balance of individual, in fitting him into his social environment, in fact, in his physical and mental health. This is the role it has always played in history in the most varied social and cultural surroundings; although, of course, as ethnographers rightly remind us, it has meant very different things for those performing it. From this standpoint, may not the reduction in the part played by it in human life, the progressive suppression of manual work by automatism, have exceedingly harmful results? Can work be replaced in a psychological sense by 'non-work' and particularly 'free-time' activities? Can they assume the role it used to play in regard to the personality? Can the transference of the centre of personal activity and self-realization to leisure hours guarantee equal benefits, confer comparable psychological advantages? What indeed will happen when men in growing numbers find themselves gradually deprived of 'work' in the traditional sense of the term? Will the active employment of leisure-time be a balancing factor in the whole of an individual's life and aid in the formation and development of his character? (Friedmann, 1962: 154)

He argues that, under the conditions of capitalism, leisure cannot fulfill these roles since it is as controlled and alienated as work:

One of the most alarming of these dangers [those arising from technical progress] seems to me to be *the failure of human beings to participate* in the environment which they can now control from outside by means of increasingly efficient, autonomous and widespread techniques. Needs and desires, capacities and aspirations, which are an essential part of man, remain unused and run to waste. He is present, and listens more or less absent-mindedly, without giving anything of himself. He is acted upon passively, and shows no power of concentration, being influenced more and more by a 'press-button' attitude. And this is true during work as during leisure. (Friedmann, 1962: 158)

Friedmann argues that, under capitalism, 'we must be extraordinarily naïve or blind, if we imagine that the suppression of all manual labour ... will not have as its final result a further alienation of man's spirit' (p. 159). There are three solutions: humanisation of the workplace; the offer of compensatory leisure; or revolution. He favours the third, in calling for the 'working masses' to 'transcend' the 'capitalist régime' with its 'fundamental vices', and replace it with 'communitarian socialism', under which it might be possible to provide guidance to 'prevent

people, when they leave work ... from being debased rather than enriched by their leisure', unlike the 'corrupting anarchy which is too often the sad reality of today' (p. 158).

Friedmann's pessimistic vision of capitalism seems at odds with the quotation given in the section on Jacques Ellul below, from an earlier publication of Friedmann's which it has not been possible to locate. It is also at odds with an interpretation by Phillip Bosserman in which he states that Friedman proposed that 'the only hope for modern workers lay in their leisure: that leisure would have to compensate for dissatisfying, debilitating leisure' (Bosserman, 1989: 163).

In a 1968 paper entitled 'Leisure and technological civilization', Friedmann focusses specifically on leisure. But his primary concern is with analysing the present rather than with speculation about the future.

A kind of hedonism, the principal patterns of which are diffused all over the globe, pervades societies with widely differing traditions and structures: mass exoduses by car, travel, basking in the sun at the seaside or among the mountain snows, 'functional' homes, clothes, comforts etc. ... it is already apparent that the increasingly urgent and feverish pursuit of happiness by the twentieth-century masses is one of the major sociological facts of our epoch.

This quest is by no means always crowned by discovery, achievement and satisfaction. For another significant feature of technological civilization is that, though it holds the key to happiness, though happiness is theoretically possible, neither societies nor individuals are equipped to make it a reality. Modern societies do not possess enough institutions conducive to the realization of happiness, while individuals cannot transform their free time into genuine leisure unless they are able to dominate, master and convert to their own ends (instead of being enslaved by them) all the countless instruments, machines and gadgets of technological civilization. ... the values of mass leisure are not yet capable of filling the void created by the introduction of the 40-hour week. Is it perhaps due to these defects in the organization of leisure that the conquest of spare time seems so precariously founded and is so often challenged? Or should we not mention in this connexion the existence of other handicaps but for which it would be impossible to explain why leisure, so recent a by-product of industrialization, is already threatened on all sides with reduction and decay? (Friedmann, 1968: 511-12)

Friedmann goes on to discuss a number of these sources of 'reduction and decay', including: increased time spent on necessary travel, particularly to work; the detrimental effects of industrial work on workers' mental and physical health; increasing levels of bureaucracy in society; domestic work activities; second jobs; and the lure of material consumption.

It is therefore not surprising, in the last analysis, that in advanced industrial societies, the potential acquisition of spare time should not suffice to create leisure. In order to make leisure a living reality, to transform it, in fact, into really free time, certain institutions must be established, and certain values introduced. This being so, we may well ask whether the prospects of leisure in a technological civilization are not fated to recede for ever in a vicious circle. (Friedmann, 1968: 516)

He discusses the role of the mass media, noting that their prime role was in grooming the population as consumers.

Finally, he looks to education, together with 'institutions where people can pursue their chosen activities at all levels, from pure relaxation on the one hand to creative activity on the other', to help members of technological civilizations to discover themselves 'through the transmutation of time off into free time'.

In *The Lonely Crowd*, published in 1950, David Riesman, one of the founding fathers of leisure studies, does not use the term 'leisure society' and, as far as can be seen, does not directly address the issue of future reductions in work-time, although he speaks of 'the distribution of leisure in America' as having been 'rapid as well as widespread' (p. 276). He does, however, discuss automation and the challenges it presents for the individual's quest for 'autonomy', in work, consumption and leisure. He concludes:

... it may be easier in play than in work to break some of the institutional and characterological barriers to autonomy. Play, far from having to be the residual left over from work-time and work-feeling, can increasingly become the sphere for the development of skill and competence in the art of living. Play may prove to be the sphere in which there is still some room left for the would-be autonomous man to reclaim his individual character from the pervasive demands of his social character. (Riesman, 1950/61: 276)

Despite being later linked with the idea of the 'leisure society' by Daniel Bell (see below), Riesman's rather rambling 1958 essay, 'Leisure and work in post-industrial society' (Riesman, 1958) does not mention the concept of the leisure society as such, but discusses the threat of dystopia which increasing productivity might bring to society. Riesman's thesis was that ever-increasing economic growth and material abundance was driving America and the efforts of its people but that this was socially and culturally unsustainable. The alternative was to use the fruits of increased productivity to pursue non-material goals, such as improved education and public services, more equality, more leisure time, and even a more humane working environment. But this seemed socially, psychologically, culturally and politically impossible in America:

... no society has ever been in the same position as ours, of coming close to fulfilling the age-old dream of freedom from want, the dream of plenty ... millions of Americans, perhaps still the majority, find sufficient vitality in pursuit of that dream: the trip to the end of the consumer rainbow retains its magic for the previously deprived. It is only the minority where, looking further ahead, we can see already the signs of a generation, prepared for Paradise Lost, which does not know what to do with Paradise Found. Regrettably, it will not be given a long time to come to a decision. For, by concentrating all energies on preserving freedom from want and pressing for consumer satiation at ever more opulent levels, we jeopardize this achievement in a world where there are many more poor nations than rich ones and in which there are many more desires, even among ourselves, for things other than abundance. (Riesman, 1958: 382)

This cautious outlook was reflected in the Foreword to the 1961 edition of *The Lonely Crowd*, where Riesman appears to have revised his earlier views on the potential role of leisure. In assessing *The Lonely Crowd* in the light of comments from reviewers and colleagues following its publication, he states:

... we soon realized that the burden put on leisure by the disintegration of work is too huge to be coped with; leisure itself cannot rescue work, but fails with it, and can only be meaningful for most men if work is meaningful, so that the very qualities we looked for in leisure are more likely to come into being there if social and political action fight the two-front battle of work and leisure. (Riesman, 1950/1961: lvii)

Thus, he is arguing, leisure cannot be used to compensate for a dehumanised working environment: quality of life must be found in a balance between work and leisure.

Jacques Ellul's *The Technological Society* was published in French in 1954, but did not become available in English translation until 1964. He rejects the notion that mechanised, alienating work can be compensated for by engaging leisure:

... to call good the fact that the worker thinks and dreams about matters unrelated to his work while his body carries out certain mechanical activities is to sanction the psychological dissociation between intelligence and action which our technical society tends to produce and which is possibly the greatest of human scourges. ... To acquiesce in the thesis that work is 'neutral' is to acquiesce in this profound rupture. Indeed, the individual cannot be 'absent' from his work without great injury to himself. Work is an expression of life. To assert that the individual expresses his personality and cultivates himself in the course of his leisure ... is to accept the suppression of half the human personality. History compels the judgement that it is in work that human beings develop and affirm their personality. Those who set an inordinately high value on sports and gambling are without substance. Only see what leisure has made of the bourgeois classes of society! (Ellul, 1954/1964: 399)

Ellul states that it is 'difficult to understand the hope that many men repose in leisure' (p. 400), including various Christian employers and the churches who see leisure as offering the individual 'certain possibilities of life and self-development'. He then cites, as an example, Georges Friedmann, discussed above:

In commenting on certain essays of Leon Walther, Friedmann writes: 'We must conjure up the prospect of a society in which labor will be of restricted duration, industrial operations automatized, and piecework, requiring no attention, in short, in which culture will be identified completely with leisure. In a leisure more and more full of potentialities, and more and more active, will be found the justification of the humanistic experiment'.³

Friedmann is asserting here that it is impossible to make industrial labour positive. But if we agree to Friedmann's proposition that the human being can develop his personality only in the cultivation of leisure, we are denying that work is an element of personal fulfilment, or of satisfaction, or of happiness. This is bad enough, but the situation is even more serious when we consider that putting our hopes in leisure is really taking refuge in idealism. If leisure were a real vacuum, a break with the forces of the environment, and if, moreover, it were spontaneously utilized for the education of the personality, the thesis of the value of leisure might hold. But neither of these conditions applies.

We see first of all that leisure, instead of being a vacuum representing a break with society, is literally stuffed with technical mechanisms of compensation and integration. It is not a vacuous interval. It is not a human kind of emptiness in which decisions might be matured. Leisure time is mechanized time and is exploited by techniques which, although different from those of man's ordinary work, are as invasive, exacting, and leave man no more free than labor itself. As to the second condition, it is simply not the case that the individual, left on his own, will devote himself to the education of his personality or to spiritual and cultural life. We are perpetually falling into this idealism. ... Who or what is to be his guide in the collective, educative employment of leisure? the employer? the administration? the labor unions? To put the question at all is to recognize its fatuity. What if man's leisure allowed him to judge his own work? What if, in becoming 'cultivated' or, even better, 'a real person', he should rebel against his stupid, mechanized job? Or find his four hours of

³ It has not been possible to locate the source of this quotation.

obligatory servitude an intolerable abasement? It is unimaginable. (Ellul, 1954/1964: 400-401)

Ellul suggests that Friedmann supports a scenario in which leisure can be an acceptable substitute in the absence of satisfying work. Ellul's specific quotation is not referenced and cannot be located but, as noted in our review of Friedmann's work above, this interpretation of his views is misleading.

1955: George Soule, USA: Time for Living

George Soule is another commentator who sees possible danger in the increased leisure of the masses:

What is gradually occurring, apparently with greater speed as the years pass, is that almost everyone is gaining both in economic security and in leisure. The advantages which in less highly productive civilizations could be enjoyed only by a minority ... are now being generally shared. For the first time in the history of mankind there is well on the way not a civilization topped by a leisure class, but a civilization characterized by universal leisure. Indeed, there might even be a complete reversal, by which the power would be held by a small minority of hard workers (the scientists, technologists, and professional executives), while the governed majority would have ample time for whatever they wished to do.

The Peril of Democratic Leisure

The unprecedented bestowal of abundant free time coupled with the means that in any other age would have been regarded as ample, not on a small class but on men and women of all ranks and stations, can be a frightening prospect. Power to allot time and energy as one pleases can give scope to creation, but it can also facilitate destruction. ... It [a society with abundant free time] could, indeed, destroy itself, either literally, or by degeneration to something subhuman. The only possibility of salvage in such a case would seem to be some divine operation like the great flood of Biblical legend, in which a worthy Noah had to be found to repopulate the world. (Soule, 1955: 122-23)

This line of thinking is not pursued further but, insofar as part of the potential problem facing society might be boring and unsatisfying industrial work, as discussed by Ellul and Friedmann above, Soule argues that technology, the new democratic leisure and voluntarism can supply the solution:

Democracy and technology in combination have, almost intuitively and without ever precisely seeing the problem, edged toward a new solution. They have gone a long way, both toward removing the stultifying type of work from the paid worker, and at the same time gradually absorbing him into a universal leisure class by making it possible for him to be free from the job for longer and longer periods. The process will be completed when automatic devices take the place of operators of repetitive machines, clerical drudges, and workers on assembly lines. Paradoxically, our civilization is clearing the way for meaningful and voluntary work by maximising leisure. (Soule, 1955: 129)

'Meaningful voluntary work' is any sort of work, paid or unpaid, which individuals undertake willingly and from which they obtain satisfaction.

1955: Herbert Marcuse, USA: Eros and Civilization

In *Eros and Civilization* Herbert Marcuse observes that a 'progressive reduction of labor seems to be inevitable' (p. xxiii), but that this presents the capitalist system with a tension because, in the space offered by increased leisure, people might acquire a taste for freedom. He uses the terms 'performance' and 'performance principle' to characterise the capitalist industrial system and this is contrasted with the 'pleasure principle':

Man exists only *part-time*, during the working days, as an instrument of alienated performance; the rest of the time he is free for himself. ... This free time would be potentially available for pleasure. ... [But], from the working day, alienation and regimentation spread into free time. Such co-ordination does not have to be, and normally is not, enforced from without by the agencies of society. The basic control of leisure is achieved by the length of the working day itself, by the tiresome and mechanical routine of alienated labor; these require that leisure be a passive relaxation and re-creation of energy for work. Not until the late stage of industrial civilization, when growth of productivity threatens to overflow the limits set by repressive domination, has the technique of mass manipulation developed an entertainment industry which directly controls leisure time, or has the state directly taken over the enforcement of such controls. The individual is not to be left alone (Marcuse, 1955: 48)

The high standard of living in the domain of the great corporations is *restrictive* in a concrete sociological sense: the goods and services that the individuals buy control their needs and petrify their faculties. In exchange for commodities that enrich their life, the individuals sell not only their labor but also their free time. The better living is offset by the all-pervasive control over living. People dwell in apartment concentrations – and have private automobiles with which they can no longer escape into a different world. They have huge refrigerators filled with frozen foods. They have dozens of newspapers and magazines that espouse the same ideals. They have innumerable choices, innumerable gadgets which are all of the same sort and keep them occupied and divert their attention from the real issue – which is the awareness that they could both work less and determine their own needs and satisfactions. ... The repressiveness of the whole lies to a high degree in its efficacy: it enhances the scope of material culture, facilitates the procurement of the necessities of life, makes comfort and luxury cheaper, draws ever-larger areas into the orbit of industry – while at the same time sustaining toil and destruction. The individual pays by sacrificing his time, his consciousness, his dreams; civilization pays by sacrificing its own promises of liberty, justice, and peace for all. (Marcuse, 1955: 100)

Under the 'ideal' conditions of mature industrial civilization, alienation would be completed by general automation of labor, reduction of labor time to a minimum, and exchangeability of functions. Since the length of the working day is itself one of the principal repressive factors imposed upon the pleasure principle by the reality principle, the reduction of the working day to the point where the mere quantum of labor time no longer arrests human development is the first prerequisite for freedom. (Marcuse, 1955: 152)

1956/1991: Erich Fromm, USA: The Sane Society

Erich Fromm covers similar ground to Friedmann, in considering the possibility of a future life of leisure compensating for alienating work. The discussion arises in the context of his proposition that 'communitarian Socialism' should be adopted to ensure that industrial society becomes a 'sane society'. He considers various objections to this proposal, the first coming from those who note

that work is becoming more meaningless and more mechanized, but that this will be tolerable because a working day of four hours, or even two hours is a possibility for the future and work will require less active attention, enabling workers to spend their working hours in 'daydreams and reveries':

Indeed, say the adherents of this point of view, *the complete automatization of work is what we hope for*; man will work a few hours; it will not be uncomfortable, nor require much attention; it will be an almost unconscious routine like brushing one's teeth, and the centre of gravity will be the leisure hours in everybody's life. (Fromm, 1956/1991: 287, emphasis in the original)

Fromm rejects this view, noting evidence that workers do not enjoy automated work environments that do not engage them, and that daydreaming and reveries are not healthy but are a 'symptom of lacking relatedness to reality'. Furthermore, he argues that it would be 'many generations' before the level of automatization envisaged in the above scenario would be realised, so what would happen to the worker meanwhile?

Will he not become more and more alienated and this just as much in his leisure hours as in his working time? is the hope for effortless work not a daydream based on the fantasy of laziness and push-button power, and a rather unhealthy fantasy at that? is not work such a fundamental part of man's existence that it cannot and should never be reduced to almost complete insignificance? Is not the mode of work itself an essential element in forming a person's character? Does completely automatized work not lead to a completely automatized life? (Fromm, 1956/1991: 289)

Addressing the consumption context of leisure, he states:

The alienated attitude toward consumption not only exists in our acquisition and consumption of commodities, but it determines far beyond this the employment of leisure time. What are we to expect? If a man works without genuine relatedness to what he is doing, if he buys and consumes commodities in an abstractified and alienated way, how can he make use of his leisure in an active and meaningful way? He always remains the passive and alienated consumer. He 'consumes' ballgames, moving pictures, newspapers and magazines, books, lectures, natural scenery, social gatherings, in the same alienated and abstractified way in which he consumes the commodities he has bought. He does not participate actively, he wants to 'take in' all there is to be had, and to have as much as possible of pleasure, culture and what not. Actually, he is not free to enjoy 'his' leisure; his leisure-time consumption is determined by industry, as are the commodities he buys; his taste is manipulated, he wants to see and hear what he is conditioned to want to see and hear; entertainment is an industry like any other, the customer is made to buy fun as he is made to buy dresses and shoes. the value of the fun is determined by its success on the market, not by anything which could be measured in human terms. (Fromm, 1956/1991: 132)

He then discusses worker motivation generally and calls for humanisation of work and the workplace, but asserting that:

One cannot separate work activity from political activity, from the use of leisure time and from personal life. If work were to become interesting without the other spheres of life becoming human, no real change would occur. In fact, it could not become interesting. It is the very evil of present-day culture that it separates and compartmentalizes the various spheres of living. The way to sanity lies in overcoming this split and in arriving at a new

unification and integration within society and within the individual human being. (Fromm, 1956/1991: 326)

Thus he proposes what Stanley Parker later termed a 'holistic' approach to work and leisure (see below).

1958: Russell Lynes, USA: Time on our Hands

As noted in discussing Juliet Schor's reference to this paper in Section 2 above, Lynes (1958) states twice in this paper that the 40-hour workweek is on the 'immediate horizon'. But the problem he wishes to address is already being faced as a result of Americans the increased leisure time *already* gained through the reduction in working hours from the 70 or 80 per week experienced at the beginning of the twentieth century. He observes:

Urbanization, the shorter working day and week, and the changing roles of the sexes have, heaven knows, produced tremendous changes in the ways American live. But the premium put on the consuming time of the worker by our economic system presents us with a tidily packaged moral dilemma. When idleness is a public virtue, what becomes of the moral value of work: What are we going to substitute for the old adages on which we were brought up? What are we going to tell our children? What will happen to the economy if we go on saying that virtue is its own reward, that work is good for the soul, and that leisure is only a reward for toil/ what happens to the Calvinist ethic? (Lynes, 1958: 348-49)

This is clearly the same issue as addressed by Friedmann, Ellul, Marcuse and Fromm above. The rest of the paper, more than half of it, is devoted to discussion of the need for more 'dilettantes' in society to assist in resolving the dilemma – not unlike Keynes' people ' who can teach us how to pluck the hour and the day virtuously', as discussed above.

1958: Harvey Swados, USA: Less Work – Less Leisure

In an essay entitled 'Less work – less leisure', Harvey Swados explores the anecdotal evidence on moves to reduce working hours in the 1950s. He notes some of the obstacles to, and difficulties of, such moves, including: the opposition of women and farmers to reductions in working hours for industrial workers, since their own working hours would not be reduced; the difficulty some fear that they would have in dealing with increased leisure time; and the possibility that many workers with reduced hours would be tempted to take second jobs, thus, paradoxically, possibly increasing their overall working hours. There is therefore a clear note of scepticism concerning the prospect of increased leisure time, but Swados nevertheless concludes that:

When the dust has settled – and a good many human beings have suffered in the struggle to achieve it – we will probably find ourselves in the era of the shorter work-week. *Then ...* [the] warning of a populace trained to work but not to live will be seen in all its force – and in all likelihood it may be too late to do anything about it in a missile-maddened, consumption-crazy society premised on lunacy and buttressed by hypocrisy. ... The problem of what two hundred million of us will do in our increasing leisure time ... is so awesome in its magnitude as to be terrifying. (Swados, 1958: 362-3)

1958: David Dempsey, USA: Myth of the New Leisure Class

David Dempsey's 1958 article in the *New York Times* is broadly sceptical in tone, anticipating Linder and the 'harried leisure class' (see below). He speaks of a 'new leisure class' comprising 60 million 'men and women, manual workers and white-collared, old and young, all with plenty of free time (theoretically, at least), a steady income and, most important, an abundance of available credit'. Thus this new class comprises about a third of the adult population of the USA at the time. But he argues that much of the increase of 3000 'mythical' hours leisure time a year supposedly gained from reductions in working hours are taken up in second jobs, more women entering the workforce, and civic duties such as charitable/committee work. Nevertheless he observes that increases in levels of expenditure on leisure constitute 'the biggest strides toward achieving a leisure society' made to date. He describes a harried leisure existence, or what Godbey (1975/1998) was later to call 'anti-leisure', and concludes:

If this is not true leisure, what, then will the Age of Leisure be like, for although we have not yet entered it, we are without doubt standing nervously on its threshold. Automation today is in its infancy, and the thirty-hour week (and even twenty) is by no means an improbability. When this happens, there will be a limit to how many committees we can serve on, just as there must be a limit to our tolerance for watching television. The time may not be too far off when at least 1,000 of those mythical hours may really belong to us. (Dempsey, 1958: 24)

1959: Reuel Denney, USA: The Leisure Society: do we use leisure or does leisure use us?

Reuel Denney, one of David Riesman's collaborators on *The Lonely Crowd*, devotes 14 out of the 15 pages of his paper to recent trends in leisure in the USA and the current problems it poses for employers and government. Despite the title of the paper, at no point is present or future America described as a 'leisure society' – in fact, it is referred to as an 'emporium society' (Denney, 1959: 47), indicating the growth in the economic significance of consumption. The short final section of the paper, 'In the Future', does, however, offer predictions of things to come in the 'world of leisure' and a world 'so strongly influenced by leisure in all its convolutions'. These predictions involve: more informal decision-making by managers and a decline in office hours; more flexible work patterns; increased subsidy for leisure, including an unquantified 'leisure wage to people so as to keep them from the workforce'; imitation of 'upper class' leisure patterns by the masses, for example, when 'industrial workers get a two months' vacation'; policies to protect the environment from leisure impacts; and ethical and legal challenges in new leisure industries and professions.

1960: Clark Kerr et al., USA: Industrialism and Industrial Man

In Chris Rojek's reference to the leisure society, as discussed in Section 2 above, his first source is Kerr *et al.* (1960)⁴. In *Industrialism and Industrial Man*, Kerr and his colleagues put forward a theory of modern industrial societies, which they term 'pluralistic industrialism', which seeks to tread a path between a Marxist theory of conflict on the one hand and an atomistic economic theory of the market on the other. They discuss the issue of whether pluralistic industrial society of the future will offer to the individual more or less freedom and satisfaction in the workplace and conclude: 'For most people, any complete scope for the independent spirit on the job will be missing' (p. 237). However:

⁴ NB. Rojek's reference is to the 1973 Penguin edition of *Industrialism and Industrial Man*, published in the UK, but the book was originally published 13 years earlier in the United States.

Outside his working life the individual may have more freedom under pluralistic industrialism than in most earlier forms of society. ... The great new freedom may come in the leisure-time life of individuals. Higher standards of living, more free time, and more education may make this not only possible but almost inevitable. Leisure will be the happy hunting ground for the independent spirit. Along with the bureaucratic conservatism of economic and political life may well go a New Bohemianism in the other aspects of life – partly as a reaction to the confining nature of the productive side of society. There may well come a new search for individuality and a new meaning to liberty. The economic system may be highly ordered and the political system barren ideologically; but the social and recreational and cultural aspects of life should be quite diverse and quite changing. (Kerr *et al.*, 1960: 237-8)

While increasing leisure time is envisaged in this scenario, it plays a traditional, although increasingly important, role as anti-dote to the effects of increasing regulation of *industrial* society. There is no mention of the idea of a 'leisure society'.

1960: Harold Wilensky, USA: Work, Careers and Social Integration

Harold Wilensky's 1960 paper, 'Work, careers, and social integration', holds an important place in the development of leisure studies because it was the starting point for Stanley Parker's well-known typology of work-leisure relationships. Arguably, Wilensky's analysis of the changing nature of the industrial work-place and its influence on lifestyles is more three-dimensional than Parker's (1971) later treatment of the topic. Wilensky's thesis is that in the contemporary industrial work-place only a minority of workers enjoy 'careers', such that their progress through the organisational hierarchy provides the focus for meaning in their lives. For the rest – the 'non-mobile mass' – work is a relatively unengaging means to the end of earning money. This has implications, via choices made regarding leisure and consumption, for the 'class structure of our society and its level of integration'.

Where ties to occupation and work-place become weak, the quest for alternative ties is intensified. Therein lie both the danger and the promise of the newer patterns of labour and leisure. ... The danger is there, the promise less certain. Withdrawal from work and an intensified search for substitute sources of identity and solidarity may result in new leisure commitments more personally satisfying and socially integrating than the ones usually reported in the sociological news. Or the critics of industrialism may be right: progress may produce a nation of apathetic if reliable workers and ardent consumers – all family locals, seeking life's meaning in the eye-level oven and split-level home, men who in politics are available for anything – anything, that is, but the entanglements of citizenship. (Wilensky, 1960: 559-60)

1960: Max Kaplan, USA: Leisure in America

The first chapter of Max Kaplan's *Leisure in America* is entitled 'An Age of Leisure' and begins as follows:

We are in an age of leisure. When we have as much time during the day away from work as we have in work, what has happened? ... Every facet of American life is included in the phrase that we are in an age of leisure. Our work week is shorter. Our family life has changed in character. Our 'rootlessness' has taken new directions. Our familiar sources of control, such as the church and elders of the community, are no longer in dominance. We move about from

state to state. A whole new world of visual images reaches us in the mass media. We find a large segment of older people among us. We travel to all corners of the country and abroad. Our clothing habits have caused upheavals to that industry. Our houses are being planned differently. The search for a different style of life has led to the 'exurbanite'. A revolution in the price of books has affected the directions of our literacy. Increased material comforts have come to ever larger segments of our people. Retirement comes earlier. Old ideas about social class are modified. Labor union contracts are more concerned with time as an increment.

How deeply does all this affect our fundamental views of life, our purposes and goals, and our sense of direction as persons, as families, and as a nation? Has the age of leisure, at least to this point, modified the values that have been identified with those of a business and industrial society? Can the 'acquisitive society' produce as one of its by-products those developments that, in turn, subvert or convert the values of the technical civilization? (Kaplan, 1960: 3-4)

Thus, rather than predicting a future leisure society/age, Kaplan is arguing that one already exists in the USA in 1960. The bulk of the book is basically a sociology of leisure, discussing such topics as work, personality, family, class, subcultures, community, state, religion and social control. But the final chapter is devoted to 'the new leisure'. He associates the 'new leisure' with a changing culture and with the vision that everyone can make creative use of their time. He dismisses pessimistic commentaries on mass society and suggests that the 'new leisure' 'invites us all to ponder this new source and this new result of wealth – leisure – and to encourage a broader social inquiry' (Kaplan, 1960: 304).

As noted in Section 2 above, Chris Rojek's final reference to predictions of a leisure society was to Kaplan's 1975 volume, *Leisure: Theory and Policy*. Here Kaplan does not use the term 'leisure society' or his earlier term 'age of leisure', but does say the following:

... in the United States the normal extension of automation has reduced weekly work hours roughly from 70 to 37 in the past century, almost four hours per week less each decade; thus an additional reduction of 12 hours by the year 2000 – an oversimplified projection, to be sure – is so intensified that with the help of computerization, the additional time off could be five hours in the 1970s, six in the 1980s, and seven in the 1990s. The result could be a workweek of 20 hours at century's end. (Kaplan, 1975: 4).

Thus, although he does not use the term, Kaplan does present what might be termed a 'leisure society' scenario. The rest of the book is not, however, focussed on this issue. As with other commentators, such as Dumazedier, Roberts and Sessoms, his view was that leisure was *already*, in the 1970s, a major social and economic phenomenon which required serious study. His book outlined an elaborate 'grand theory' of society, including the role of leisure, but, as it happened, this theoretical framework never found favour with the leisure studies mainstream. Towards the end of the book, in discussing the future he, like other authors, does not present a utopian future but discusses the measures he sees as necessary to develop a more civilized 'new culture' out of contemporary Western 'mass culture' (Kaplan, 1975: 395).

1962: Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC), USA

Caution was expressed about future growth in leisure time in early outdoor recreation policy documents produced in the United States. The most significant of them all, the 1962 Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission study, *Outdoor Recreation for America*, stated:

Urbanization and mobility have compounded the impact of the dramatic growth in the leisure time available to Americans. The workweek – 60 hours or more at the turn of the century – had fallen to 40 hours by 1960, and many people believe it may decline to as little as 30 hours a week by the end of the century. Leisure is the blessing and could be the curse of a progressive, successful civilization. The amount of leisure already at hand is enough to have made many Americans uneasy. Ours is a culture that has always been inclined to look upon idle time with some misgivings for reasons that trace to the Puritan tradition of industry, but which spring also from the historic and very practical need for hard work in the building of a nation. Certainly a substantial adjustment in perspective will be required as we move into a period in which the leisure available to all citizens may be greatly increased. (ORRRC, 1962: 22)

The first, 1974, US Nationwide Outdoor Recreation Plan, *The Recreation Imperative*, which followed from the work of the ORRRC but was rejected by the Nixon Administration, stated:

It is inevitable that the trends of increasing population and technological expansion will substantially add to the amount of leisure time as well as to the numbers of people with free time. And leisure, thought by many to be the epitome of paradise, may well become the most perplexing problem of the future. (Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, 1977: 3)⁵

1962: Joffre Dumazedier, France: Toward a Society of Leisure

Perhaps the most notable feature of the presentations at the LSA conference discussed at the beginning of the paper, was the lack of reference to the person with whom the concept of the 'leisure society' has been most clearly identified, namely the French sociologist, Joffre Dumazedier. Nevertheless, as Section 2 indicates, he is frequently referred to when the subject of the leisure society arises, but just as frequently misrepresented.

Dumazedier's book, *Vers une Civilisation du Loisir?* was published in 1962 and the English translation, *Toward a Society of Leisure*, in 1967. It is not known whether the decision to delete the question mark from the title in the English edition was taken by Dumazedier or the American publishers, but it clearly removes the tentative stance of the original. And my knowledge of French usage is not adequate to know whether there is any substantial difference between a '*civilisation du loisir*' and a '*société du loisir*'. With or without the question mark, what did Dumazedier have to say about the 'society of leisure' or the 'civilisation of leisure'?

The term 'society of leisure' is not used in Dumazedier's book and 'civilization of leisure' only rarely, and tentatively. The main basis of Dumazedier's thesis was that leisure was *already*, in the early 1960s, a major component of modern life:

Seen in the complex of its multiple relations to other aspects of our mechanized and democratic civilization, leisure is no longer a minor item, postscript to the major ones, to be studied or not, depending on whether there is time or money left. ... Leisure is, on the contrary, the very central element in the *life*-culture of millions upon millions of workers. It has deep-going, intricate relatedness to the largest questions of work, family, and politics, and these, therefore must now be re-examined and reformulated. No theorizing about our basic social realities can be valid, in the mid-twentieth century, without consideration of the relevancy of leisure to them. (Dumazedier, 1967: 3-4)

⁵ *The Recreation Imperative* was produced in 1974 but not endorsed by the Johnson or Nixon administrations and was only published 'for the use of the Committee on Interior and Insular affairs' of the US Senate in 1977.

But Dumazedier immediately warns about 'the danger of being bedazzled by leisure', referring disparagingly to 'essayists and poets [who] have been misled by the spectacle into thinking that leisure plays an even more autonomous and preponderant role than it does', and dismissing those who foresee an 'era of leisure' and a 'new Golden Age which will witness the magical vanishing of all social problems' (p. 4).

Towards the end of the book Dumazedier poses the question: 'Has the world really entered upon a civilization of leisure?' (p. 236). He does not answer this question directly, but observes:

Many people are still attached primarily to their work . . . slums and inadequate housing create problems requiring solutions far more urgent for a vast number of individuals than the question of knowing how to spend their leisure time. . . . In the underdeveloped countries, leisure problems are secondary to the struggle against hunger or ignorance. Dumazedier, 1967: 236-37)

He then looks to the United States, as the world's most advanced industrial economy, to indicate likely future trends for all industrial societies but, rather than a leisure 'utopia', he sees dangers:

... Americans have plunged in[to] the race for consumption of objects which often satisfy less a personal need than a need for conformity or prestige. . . . The race seems endless. . . . It is in the area of leisure that this race runs the danger of producing the most frightful effects on the social and cultural aspirations of the mass of the people. . . . With the prodigious growth in communications, the planet has become very small indeed. Cultural models are transmitted from one end of the world to the other. Patterns of leisure especially are being determined less and less by local experience alone, and more and more by messages coming in from the civilization that appears to be the strongest, the richest and the most prestigious. There is found the pole of propagation for a civilization that is tending toward universality, a *tele-civilization*. Henceforth, a dangerous social mimicry will threaten to determine the cultural life of every country, each one imitating today or tomorrow the beneficial or malignant aspects of leisure *à l'américaine*. (Dumazedier, 1967: 237-40)

Thus, it would seem, the question mark in the original version of the book was appropriate: Dumazedier was apprehensive about the prospects of a 'civilisation of leisure'. This is exemplified in comments in a 1971 paper, which again raises the Third World issues mentioned above:

According to Kahn and Wiener [see below], the difference between the average yearly incomes in North America and South America is \$2275. By the end of the century, even after extensive development and aid programs, the difference will be \$5563. This means that the 'progress' of affluent society would increase the gap by 100 percent. Would this be a civilization of leisure, or would it rather be a civilization bent on suicide? Is not this dramatic gap as dangerous for post-industrial society as the Chinese having an atomic bomb? We have sought to explain that the passive transformation of leisure time is not the best way to build a more human civilization in post-industrial society. (Dumazedier, 1971: 218)

He addresses the issue of a 'leisure civilization' even more directly in his later book, *Sociology of Leisure*, where he says:

Can one speak of leisure civilisation as looming on the horizon of advanced industrial societies? Some greet this hypothesis with scepticism, many deride it as naïve. Nearly all sociologists ignore it or reject it. It is obviously an unacceptable expression in many respects. Firstly it is arbitrary to characterize a society, a culture or a civilisation, by reference to one

single feature. The type of civilisation which emerges with the predominance of the tertiary sector in the economy may be characterised in various ways ... It is equally legitimate to speak of a neo-technical, an atomic, an electronic or a cybernetic civilisation ... or to single out mass consumption, the sexual revolution, the generational conflict etc. as major features. (Dumazedier, 1974: 211)

He goes on to say that, among sociologists and others in the 1950s, when he decided to write a book on leisure, the subject was not being considered seriously in characterisations of post-industrial society, so:

Under such circumstances, it seemed legitimate to conjure up the idea of a possible leisure civilization, which prompted the gathering together of many scattered facts in order to raise a *general* problem. It was therefore an attempt to remove leisure from the residual position it occupied in collective representation, so as to grant it the same degree of importance as other, allegedly more serious, social facts. Have I succeeded? Although the term I used met with some journalistic and educational success, I doubt it. (Dumazedier, 1974: 211-12)

But he insists that leisure has a potential role in countering the increasing materialism and degradation of cultures threatened by unfettered market forces:

Market laws mould leisure, but increasingly diverse social movements protest against this debasement ... It is these facts which prompted me to speak of the possible advent of a leisure civilisation. This civilisation is not a golden age starting tomorrow. It is a set of new social and cultural problems which, to be solved *tomorrow*, must be seriously considered *today*. (Dumazedier, 1974: 213)

1962: Sebastian De Grazia, USA: Of Time, Work and Leisure

In his seminal text, *Of Time, Work and Leisure*, Sebastian de Grazia was sceptical about the idea of a technology-induced society of leisure:

... many persons today feel we stand on the threshold of a new age of leisure. ... In fact, every half century from the time of the industrial revolution on, we have men of wisdom and vision predicting more time to come. One of the things which bids us be cautious about accepting glowing prophecies for the future of free time is that up to now they have all been wrong about it. Why were they wrong? They all reflected the same dream (more free time) but also, giving rise to the dream there was a common stimulus – the machine. Now, one is on surer ground when talking of the future of the machine than about the future of free time. (De Grazia, 1962: 284-5)

The leisure society theme *per se* is not pursued further by De Grazia, but the basis of it – the decline in working hours – is subject to scrutiny. On the basis of analysis of data on working hours from 1850 to 1960, which is summarised in the companion paper, he concludes: 'The great and touted gains in free time since the 1850s, then, are largely myth' (p. 79).

1964: Denis Gabor, UK: *Inventing the Future*

Denis Gabor opens *Inventing the Future* with what he calls a 'trilemma':

Our civilization faces three great dangers. The first is destruction by nuclear war, the second is overpopulation, and the third is the Age of Leisure. (Gabor, 1964: 3)

He argues that if either of the first two dangers eventuates people will 'know what to do', but:

Only the Age of Leisure will find man psychologically unprepared. Leisure for all is a complete novelty in human history. There have been small earthly paradises before, such as Samoa, Burma, or Bali, where people worked little and were satisfied with what they had. The new technological paradise in which the work of a small minority is sufficient to keep the majority in idle luxury is an entirely different matter. It is not yet with us, but it is coming towards us with rapid strides. This is what J. M. Keynes, casting his eyes a few generations ahead, wrote of ... in 1930. (Gabor, 1964: 4-5)

Here he quotes from Keynes's essay referred to above. He acknowledges that many might consider thoughts of an Age of Leisure untimely, so soon after the horrors of the Great Depression and the Second World War, but asserts that:

They are timely, because, unless civilization is wiped out by nuclear war, the Age of Leisure will be a reality within one generation in the Western countries *and* in the USSR. What is more, in the most highly industrialized countries, especially in the United States, leisure would be with us *now*, were it not for certain powerful defence mechanisms which delay it. (Gabor, 1964: 6-7)

The 'powerful mechanisms' are military expenditure, waste and unproductive working hours, the latter summed up in 'Parkinson's Law', that work expands to fill the time available:

Symptoms such as material waste, Parkinson's Law, and irrational armaments can be interpreted ... as *defence mechanisms* of the social organism to stave off danger – the danger of the Age of Leisure. (p. 18) ... Take it as a metaphor or as a statement of fact: our civilization behaves as if the Age of Leisure were staring it in the face and as if it did not like the look of it. ... In the most advanced countries powerful but unstable defence mechanisms are at work. The intellectuals are aloof or take refuge in the problems of backward countries. All the time technology is progressing, making the problems more acute. (p. 20) (Gabor, 1964)

The nature of the Age of Leisure is not extensively developed and is addressed essentially as an unresolved problem. People's desire to spend more time with their children is seen as an inadequate solution: 'adult people will have to look for other pastimes than playing with young children' (p. 85). The problem is substantially one of culture:

We are here very much on unknown ground. Western object-mindedness and work addiction is one extreme, Eastern quietism and introversion is another; the two seem to mix as badly as oil and water. ... Nobody can really be satisfied with the picture of man in the Age of Leisure nervously filling his spare time with do-it-yourself hobbies which imitate work and getting no nearer to the meditative repose of the east than angling. However unfruitful attempts have been so far, one must not give up hope that we shall be able to assimilate something from the

east which will be better for the restless Western mind than alcohol or opium. (Gabor, 1964: 156)

A couple of pages on education for leisure suggests that it will need to develop in future generations of young people, who will experience lives of material comfort, the self-generated creativity and enthusiasm for life which he sees a characteristic of 'Mozartian man'. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 'had a short, hard, and tragic life' but, unlike the 'great tormented creators' in history, 'his work owes nothing to his sufferings, everything to his innate rich and happy nature' (p. 201).

Margerison's (1967) paper, 'Hopes and fears for the age of leisure', supports Gabor's analysis, but adds little to it, concluding that governments should facilitate the move to shorter working hours in order to spread the diminishing demand for labour, particularly relatively unskilled labor, as equitably as possible.

1964: Robert Lee, USA: Religion and Leisure in America

While many pre-World War II volumes on leisure frequently adopted pronounced moral positions on appropriate and inappropriate use of leisure, such a stance is rare in post-war contributions. Robert Lee's *Religion and Leisure in America*, written by a theology professor, is one of the few exceptions. A chapter entitled 'The New Leisure Society: Facts and Trends', opens with the comment: 'A resounding chorus of voices now proclaims that we are headed toward an unprecedented era of leisure in American life' (Lee, 1964: 36). Lee's own perspective is, however, not that the leisure society lies in the future, but that it already exists in 1960s America, as evidenced by reduced working hours, the growth in the leisure market and growth in participation in a wide variety of leisure pursuits. Among his comments on the leisure society are the following:

A century ago the industrial workweek was seventy hours. Now with new labor-saving devices in factory, office, and home, and with the onset of automation, we are becoming a new leisure society. ... The twenty-five or thirty hour workweek is more than a wild dream – it is a definite threat. (pp. 18-19) ... Many and varied are the ways of appraising and evaluating the problems which a new leisure society poses. One approach – thus far largely neglected – is to consider the moral problem and the role of religion and theology in relation to leisure. (p. 20) ... American society is shifting from a primary focus on work to one on leisure, from production-oriented to a consumption-oriented economy. As Protestants who seek to be relevant to contemporary culture, we dare not remain silent about our new leisure society. (pp. 22-3)

Increasingly it is in our leisure time that either the meaningfulness or the pointlessness of life will be revealed. Leisure today may be a challenge or a threat, a hazard or an opportunity, a vice or a virtue, a bane or a blessing. Whether it will be a boring nuisance or an unmatched opportunity may well depend on the perspectives and resources we bring to bear upon the problem. The choice before us is clear: A new age of leisure or a new barbarism! (p. 26) (Lee, 1964)

1965: Michael Dower, UK: The Fourth Wave

Another publication which one might expect to have been mentioned in recollections at a British conference on this topic is Michael Dower's 1965 essay: *The Fourth Wave: The Challenge of Leisure*. Its famous opening statement was:

Three great waves have broken across the face of Britain since 1800. First, the sudden growth of dark industrial towns. Second, the thrusting movement along far-flung railways. Third, the sprawl of car-based suburbs. Now we see, under the guise of a modest word, the surge of a fourth wave which could be more powerful than all the others. The modest word is leisure. (Dower, 1965: 123).

Despite this somewhat sensational start, and a prediction that the 'basic industrial working week' would fall to 30 hours by the year 2000, Dower's thesis was not utopian, it was concerned with the growing *threat* of leisure to the countryside, mostly in the form of 'battalions of cars', and how to cope with it. Dower later became Director of Britain's Countryside Commission, now the Countryside Agency.

1967: Herman Kahn and Anthony Wiener, USA: The Year 2000

Herman Kahn was one of the earliest and most well-known of the 'futurists'. In considering trends in work time, Kahn and Wiener note De Grazia's criticism of conventional statistics on working hours (see above), and observe that 'Since the war, very little of the increased productivity has been taken up in increased leisure' (p. 125) – that is, since World War II, production and incomes in the USA had risen but working hours had not declined by as much as this would warrant. The conclusion in regard to future working hours is then stated as follows:

... the average American who works more or less full-time works an average of 2,000 hours a year. If we extrapolated postwar trends, this should drop to something between 1,700 and 1,900 hours a year by the year 2000. If, as seems probable, there is a renewed tendency to take up the increased productivity in increased leisure, one can imagine the hours dropping substantially below 1,500; possibly even below 1,000. (Kahn and Wiener, 1967: 125)

The basis for identifying this as a 'probably renewed tendency', against the empirical evidence, is not given.

In seeking to describe a 'plausible and culturally consistent projection of culture, values, and style of life' (p. 193) for the year 2000, Kahn and Wiener note the difficulties of 'psychological and sociological speculation' including, for example, such issues as whether work will become more or less important in people's lives. Nevertheless, in one scenario they show annual working time in the year 2000 of 1600 hours (p. 173) – a reduction of 25% from 1965 (despite the reduction in the previous 15 years being less than 10% – see also Kando below) and in another scenario, for a 'Leisure Orientated Society', the figure is just 1100 hours, involving 147 working days a year and 218 days off (p. 195).

This is, of course, just a 'scenario', which is assessed as being technically consistent with other features of Kahn and Wiener's 'surprise free' projection, which includes assumptions about growth in productivity, labour force participation rates and per capita incomes. Although it is not clearly stated, it would seem that the reduction in working hours is predicated on projecting growth in productivity into the future at 3% a year. With constant working hours this would have produced an increase in real output and incomes of 150% by the year 2000. It seems reasonable, in such circumstances, for Kahn and Wiener to have expected some of this growth to be sacrificed for reduced working hours as it had in the past. In practice, productivity growth of the United States economy slowed to less than 2% a year from the 1970s onwards, giving growth of only 85% up

to the end of the century⁶. This may explain the subsequent failure of the reduction in working hours to materialise.

At least one leisure theorist expressed doubt about Kahn and Wiener's projections at the time. Dumazedier stated:

The predictions of physicists such as Kahn or of economists need to be based on projective and comparative research of all the social sciences working together. Many factors, not only technological and economic, but also social and cultural are involved. To a sociologist, such anticipations as those of Kahn seem too linear and also too optimistic. (Dumazedier, 1971: 193-94)

Nevertheless Kahn and Wiener's work stands as one of the few actual projections of a 'leisure society' identified in the literature in this review. But there is little evidence in the leisure studies literature that this particular source was known to mainstream leisure studies scholars of the time (with the exception of Dumazedier), let alone being influential.

Kahn and Wiener are even more exceptional in discussing the likely shape of a leisure-orientated society. The scenario they present is not, however, seen as unproblematic: they devote considerable space to discussion of 'alienation'. They first discuss the likely cultural and moral consequence of life appearing to be too easy in a context of falling working hours. Second they discuss possible consequences for the social structure, particularly further racial segregation in cities. They then turn to leisure scenarios of various social classes.

The *lower middle classes*, they suggest, might be tempted to spend some of their additional free time in extra paid work, in the form of moonlighting by men and additional paid work by women. But in the main they would:

... provide a tremendous market for all kinds of sports and fads and particularly for various forms of mass entertainment. Year 2000 equivalents for the bowling alley, miniature slot-racing car tracks, and the outboard motor, would be everywhere. The drive-in church, the 'museum-o-rama', and comparable manifestations of pressures toward a general degradation and vulgarization of culture would be a likely result of the purchasing decisions of this group. At the same time, these people might militate politically against civil rights and against the poor and relatively poor nonworking classes that they must support, and they would likely provide the primary support for both conservative national policies and political jingoisms. (Kahn and Wiener, 1967: 206-7)

The upper middle class:

... by contrast, would, in many ways, be emulating the life-style of the landed gentry of the previous century, such as emphasizing education, travel, cultural values, expensive residences, lavish entertainment, and a mannered and cultivated style of life. ... Effete attitudes might be combined with contempt for the lower middle classes and fear of the poor and their propensity for violence. There may also be some romanticization of the 'noble savage' (or 'hippy') who lives outside the values of the society, in voluntary poverty and/or minor or even major criminality. (Kahn and Wiener, 1967: 207).

⁶ Productivity growth in the USA averaged more than 3% a year during the 1950s and '60s but less than 1.5% a year from 1970-2000 (see FRBSF, 2007). Kahn and Wiener were not alone in building their projections on assumptions of continuing high productivity growth: as late as 1980, Fred Best, in *Flexible Life Scheduling*, developed future work/leisure scenarios on the assumption of 3.3% annual growth (Best, 1980: 17). Productivity growth is just one indicator, possibly more relevant is workers' incomes; Kroch (1991) shows that real wages and salaries in the USA were static in the period 1973-1990.

The *very wealthy* would be able to:

... buy considerable protection from these exigencies – that is, from all the cultural confusion and normative conflicts. Because of their social power, many would have responsibility and there might be, in some groups, a sense of noblesse oblige, which would be shared by many in the upper middle class. (Kahn and Wiener, 1967: 207).

Regarding *youth*: they 'could be especially self-indulgent or alienated, as the identity confusion typical of adolescence is exacerbated by the confusion, normlessness, and anomie of society' (p. 207).

Kahn and Wiener discuss the challenges posed by the loss of centrality of work, suggesting that:

Many of the benefits of work could be derived from other forms of activity, provided they were available and, preferably, institutionalized. The model of the cultivated gentleman, for example, is likely to be available and possibly generally usable in a democratic and upward mobile society like the United States. (Kahn and Wiener, 1967: 209)

It is suggested that an 'affluent, humanistic, leisure-orientated, and partly alienated' society could be quite stable. Some '70 or 80 per cent of people [would] become gentlemen' (presumably including women!) and there would be 'a very serious emphasis on sports, on competitive "partner" games (chess, bridge) on music, art, languages, or serious travel, or on the study of science, philosophy, and so on' (p. 217). All this was seen as a 'plausible' future for the year 2000!

In a later volume, *The Next 200 Years*, published in 1976 to mark the bicentenary of the United States, Kahn and his associates did not pursue the 'leisure-orientated society' theme, but developed the concept of 'quaternary activities', which they saw as dominating 'truly post-industrial societies'. Quaternary activities were listed as:

1. Ritualistic and aesthetic activities.
2. The creation of taboos, totems, demanding religions, traditions and customs.
3. Reading, writing, painting, acting, composing, musicianship, arts and crafts.
4. Tourism, games, contests, rituals, exhibitions and performances.
5. Gourmet cooking and eating.
6. Hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, boating.
7. Acquisition and exercise of nonvocational skills.
8. Improving property – gardening, decorating.
9. Conversation, discussion, debating and politicking.
10. Other cultural and social activities.
11. Most welfare and social security functions.
12. Other 'recreations', including search for adventure, excitement, amusement.
13. Many public works and projects. (Kahn, Brown and Martel, 1976: 23)

The term 'leisure society' is not used, but it can be seen that the majority of the items on the list are leisure or leisure-related activities.

1967: John Kenneth Galbraith, USA: The New Industrial State

John Kenneth Galbraith rejected the conventional notions of increasing leisure time under the current industrial system:

The industrial system has long held out one rather striking promise to its participants. That is the eventual opportunity for a great deal more leisure. The work week and the work year will be radically reduced. There will be much more free time. Over the last quarter-century, a reputation for cerebration beyond the reach of run-of-the-mill minds has been most easily achieved by speculation on how, when this day comes, men will employ what is invariably called their new-found leisure. It is agreed that the question deserves the most careful study. There are dangers of abuse. Over the last thirty years, the average work week in industry [in USA] has remained almost constant. The standard work week has declined but this has been offset by increased demand for overtime work and the companion willingness to supply it. During this period average weekly earnings adjusted for price increases (but not allowing for taxes), have nearly doubled. On the evidence, one must conclude that, as their incomes rise, men will work longer hours and seek less leisure.

The notion of a new era of greatly expanded leisure is, in fact, a conventional conversation piece. Nor will it serve much longer to convey an impression of social vision. The tendency of the industrial system is not in this direction. (Galbraith, 1967: 357)

Galbraith exaggerates his case, since his limited empirical evidence suggests that incomes rising by about 2.5% a year are consistent with no change in working hours. Carter (1970-71), using more extensive data, confirms this basic premise.

Galbraith goes on, however, to explain the state of affairs he describes as being the result of 'demand management': the process by which industry, through advertising, product innovation and built-in obsolescence, stimulates demand to consume the products it produces. He suggests that, in the absence of such manipulation, many would change their preferences in favour of more leisure time. He argues that 'the monopoly of the industrial system on social purpose be broken' (p. 372). This is necessary to achieve:

... the expansion of public services that are not sponsored by the industrial system, the assertion of the aesthetic dimensions of life, widened choice as between work and leisure, [and] the emancipation of education. (Galbraith, 1967: 372)

1970: Gilbert Burck, USA: Less Leisure than you Think

The title of Gilbert Burck's (1970) *Fortune* magazine essay, 'There'll be less leisure than you think', indicates his sceptical stance regarding the prospect of a leisure society. Like a number of commentators in this review, he refers only in general terms to an anonymous group of people who were predicting a leisured future at the time, labelling them the 'prophets of Automatic Abundance', or A.A.'s:

The prophets of Automatic Abundance assure us that the economy of the 1970s will grow as effortlessly as crabgrass in a lawn, that technology has solved the classic problem of scarce resources. The big tasks of the 1970s, the A.A.'s aver, will be to distribute production equitably, to improve the physical and spiritual quality of life, and to gain more leisure. ... many A.A.'s believe that the day is near when people will no longer be condemned to long hours on life's treadmills, and that ambitious labor leaders who are warbling about the four-

day and even the three-day week are only anticipating the inevitable. .. Unfortunately, most of this is nonsense, illusion or both. (Burck, 1972: 336)

His rationale for rejecting the thesis of the A.A.'s is based on an analysis of trends in labour market productivity and consumer demand:

The basic reason why carefree abundance and leisure are not likely to fall into our laps like ripe fruit may be put very simply. The more time we save in making goods, the more time we spend providing services. ... (p. 337) The leisure society is a myth because more and more man-hours will be needed to provide ever-expanding services. (p. 343) ... Even if the performance of the services gets better, the prospects for reducing the hours on life's treadmills very much will keep receding into the future. (p. 351) (Burck, 1970/72)

Burck thus offers a unique contribution to the debate in observing that labour in service occupations, especially in the government sector, has less scope for productivity increases⁷ therefore increasing demand for services could rapidly absorb any labour resources not required in the manufacturing sector. He projected an increase of 20 million, or 25%, in the US labour force from 1968 to 1980, with 6 million of the increase going into government services and 11 million into private sector services. If anything, Burck's predictions of the growing significance of services were conservative, and similar trends can be found in other industrialised countries, including Australia.⁸

1970: Kenneth Roberts, UK: Leisure

In the first edition of his book *Leisure*, published in 1970, in a chapter entitled 'A Society of Leisure', Ken Roberts stated:

.. the information we have at our disposal does suggest that, along with other modern societies, Britain has become a society of leisure in that activities in which people elect to participate during their free time play a significant part in the development of their sense of self-identity, and leisure thereby is accorded the power to reciprocate the influence that other institutions have upon it. ... The influence that leisure exerts upon people's lives and upon other institutions is specific to advanced industrial societies, which is why it is justifiable to call them societies of leisure. (Roberts, 1970: 101-02)

Three points should be noted about this statement:

1. Roberts did not see the 'society of leisure' as something which advanced industrial societies were heading *towards*, but as a state that was already in existence in 1970;

⁷ This point reflects the work of Baumol and Bowen (1968) on labour costs and productivity in the performing arts.

⁸ According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov), of the growth of 22 million in the US labour force between 1968 and 1980, 21 million was accounted for by growth in service employment. Extending the analysis to 2007, of the growth in the labour force of 68 million between 1968 and 2007, all 68 million was accounted for by growth in services employment. In Australia, between 1988 and 2006 the employed labour force grew by 2.8 million; in that time the manufacturing labour force was static, while the numbers employed in services rose by 2.5 million. (source: *Social Trends*, annual, ABS).

2. the main criterion for judging industrial societies to be societies of leisure was not the quantum of leisure time *per se*, but the significance of leisure activities in the development of individuals' 'sense of self-identity' and the influence leisure 'exerts upon people's lives'; and
3. the 'leisure society' was not necessarily something to be unquestioningly celebrated as 'utopian' but it was, if anything, seen as problematical: the final chapter of Roberts' book was entitled: 'Is Leisure a Problem?' – and he cautiously concluded that it was.

Roberts' acceptance of the current existence of a 'society of leisure' was, however, short-lived. In a 1975 conference paper discussing the 'myths and realities' of the concept he asked, 'Are we verging on a golden age of leisure or threatened by a wilderness of boredom?' (Roberts, 1975/2006: 18) and spoke of 'any society of leisure that we *might be entering ...*' (Roberts, 1975/2006: 20, emphasis added). In his 1978 book, *Contemporary Society and the Growth of Leisure*, in a chapter entitled 'A post-industrial society of leisure?', he is more emphatic:

The growth of leisure is affecting the quality of life, but leisure is not becoming the whole of it. Talk of a leisure civilisation or a society of leisure is misconceived. ... Leisure is no longer a shadowy, residual substance that only becomes a matter of public concern if used in harmful ways. But leisure has not become and is not becoming synonymous with or the basis of modern life in general. ... there are limits to how widely the influence of leisure is spreading throughout the social structure. Work and politics are two areas of life where its impact is slight and, while this remains so, talk of a society of leisure is ill-advised. (Roberts, 1978: 146-8)

In the second edition of *Leisure*, published in 1981, there is no reference to the idea of a society of leisure and it has not re-emerged in Roberts's subsequent books.

1970: Staffan Linder, Sweden/USA: The Harried Leisure Class

The Harried Leisure Class, was written by Swedish economist, Stafan Linder, while on sabbatical at Columbia University in the United States. He does not discuss the leisure society as such, but opens the book with the following observation:

We had always expected one of the beneficent results of economic affluence to be a tranquil and harmonious manner of life, a life in Arcadia. What has happened is the exact opposite. The pace is quickening, and our lives in fact are becoming steadily more hectic. (Linder, 1970: 1)

He advances the proposition that, given the fixed number of hours in the day, the effect of increasing productivity of labour and growing real incomes is a sense of 'harriedness': time becomes increasingly scarce. The increasing range and quantity of consumer goods require time to use and time to maintain. Furthermore, he questions the whole 'so-called 'leisure problem':

What in fact is this much publicized but undefined leisure problem? Does it mean that people, because of the shorter working week, have got so much time on their hands that they do not know what to do with it? ... If we take the position, like most economists, that consumption is instantaneous and that free time is some entirely isolated utility, then it is possible to draw peculiar conclusions. We can imagine, in this case, that we now have so much free time that we do not know what to do with it, and that certain parts of this time are reduced to what we have called economic free time. It may be that some people are in such a situation. They have a job, and they make a certain amount of money. This is used to purchase consumption goods, the enjoyment of which takes a certain time. When they have consumed these goods, people

spend the rest of their time in complete passivity. Such a mode of life, however, would seem uncommon. If people have more time left over for consumption than they think they need, most of them surely take some form of extra work. This gives them more money which they can use in consumption and thus absorb consumption time. Insofar as they do not do this, it must mean that they have reached a maximum for their consumption. The existence of such a ceiling, however, is energetically denied, at least by economists and by psychologists interested in economics. (Linder, 1970: 11)

Linder then deals with the contention that the so-called 'problem' of leisure lies not in people not knowing what to do with their leisure time, but in concerns with the nature of the activities they choose to engage in during that time:

... it is probable that many people choose to expend their increasing resources in a manner injurious to themselves and their environment. Such individuals are not idle. They can be extremely busy in all sorts of mischief. This is a very real problem, but it is obviously no leisure problem, in the sense that people do not know what to do with their time. It is a social problem. ... It is possible also to worry over the fact that so many people occupy themselves, if not with mischief, at least with such vacuous practices as reading comics and drinking Coca-Cola. This too is something that can lead people to talk of a leisure problem. For moral, ethical, cultural, or other reasons, they cannot accept the way others choose to use their time. Here again; we have a problem relating not to economic free time, but to the quality of our civilization. (Linder, 1970: 12)

1970: Alvin Toffler, *USA: Future Shock*

One of the most popular of the popular futurists, Alvin Toffler published *Future Shock* in 1970 and *The Third Wave* in 1980. In the first book only passing reference is made to leisure, for example, in the chapter on 'A Surfeit of Subcults', under the heading 'The Fun Specialists', he states:

Even if technology were to free millions of people from the need to work in the future, we would find the same push towards diversity [as seen in professions discussed earlier] operating among those left free to play. For we are already producing large numbers of 'fun specialists'. We are rapidly multiplying not merely types of work, but types of play as well.

The number of acceptable pastimes, hobbies, games, sports and entertainments is climbing rapidly, and the growth of a distinct subcult built around surfing, for example, demonstrates that, at least for some, a leisure-time commitment can also serve as the basis for an entire life style. The surfing subcult is a signpost pointing to the future. ...

Leisure-time pursuits will become an increasingly important basis for differences between people, as the society itself shifts from a work orientation towards greater involvement in leisure. In the United States, since the turn of the century alone, the society's measurable commitment to work has plummeted by nearly a third. This is a massive redevelopment of the society's time and energy. As this commitment declines further, we shall advance into an era of breathtaking fun specialism – much of it based on sophisticated technology. (Toffler, 1970: 262-63)

Toffler appears to be much more interested in the 'breathtaking', 'sophisticated technology' and 'subcult' aspects of this projected future than in its economic and social basis and implications, which are not expanded upon.

In *The Third Wave* work and leisure futures are no longer related to subcults and 'fun-specialists' but are discussed in the context of 'Prosumer lifestyles', a concept with some similarities with Gershuny's 'self-service economy' and Robertson's 'ownwork':

... we are moving towards a future economy in which very large numbers never hold full-time jobs, or in which 'full-time' is redefined, as it has been in recent years, to mean a shorter and shorter workweek or work year. ...

This casts the whole question of leisure into a new light. Once we recognise that much of our so-called leisure time is, in fact, spent producing goods and services for our own use – prosuming – then the old distinction between work and leisure falls apart. The question is not work versus leisure, but paid work for Sector B [the formal economy] versus unpaid, self-directed, and self-monitored work for Sector A [the domestic economy]. (Toffler, 1980: 287-88)

1971: Stanley Parker, UK: The Future of Work and Leisure

As we have seen, at least one commentator (Waring, Section 2 above) has associated Stanley Parker, and his seminal work *The Future of Work and Leisure* (1971), with the prediction of a 'leisure society'. Parker was concerned with the *balance* between work and leisure. In one passage (pp. 118-120) he is critical of a proposal by Georges Friedmann to make leisure a 'new centre of human development' (although he fails to convey the caution in Friedmann's comments – see above). He refers approvingly to Jacques Ellul's negative comments on leisure society ideas (see also above). Parker, Friedmann and Ellul focus on the trend towards increasing automation of industrial work, which is seen to have the effect of both shortening working hours and making work increasingly boring, meaningless and alienating. But they are concerned as much, arguably more, with the latter effect as with the former and this is certainly true of the bulk of Parker's final chapter on implications for social policy, in which he supports an 'holistic' approach to work and leisure. At no point does he mention, let alone envisage, a 'leisure society'.

1971: Frederick L. Bates, USA: Social Trends in a Leisure Society

The term 'leisure society' is used in the title but not in the body of the text of Frederick Bates's article. Bates asserts that automation will result in:

.. an expansion of the number of people not working in the production and distribution of agricultural and industrial goods. This will occur both by withholding large numbers of people from any form of employment in society and by expanding the categories of individuals whose work involves 'nonproductive or non-economic service activities'. (Bates, 1975: 265)

How, and at what level, the non-workers will be supported is not explained, neither is the logic in seeing an increase in service employment as part of a 'leisure society'. Bates goes on to predict expansion in a number of 'categories of non-work activities', including an increase in 'narcissistic activities', such as personal grooming and plastic surgery, and the multiplication of 'religious and philosophical cults'.

In a 1972 paper, the late H. Douglas Sessoms, a prominent academic in the early days of leisure studies, stated:

According to some we are in the Age of Aquarius. Others tell us we are in the Age of Space; then there is the Age of Crisis, the Age of Protest, the Age of Pollution. You name it and we have an age for it. May I add another one to that long list and one which I think has a great deal more validity than some of the other descriptive phrases given to identify where we are in the continuum of history. I believe we are entering the Age of Leisure and that for the first time since the days of ancient Greece and Rome, man has the freedom to enjoy his own pursuits, at his own pace. (Sessoms, 1972: 311)

The Age of Leisure is not, Sessoms asserts, some future state but one which was already being experienced in the early 1970s, although some of the evidence appears to relate not to leisure as such but to what most would see as evidence of the existence of a post-industrial economy:

There is much evidence to support the view that we are entering the leisure age. Our advances in technology have freed many from the drudgery of routine work. We are moving from a hard industry-based economy to a service-based one. For the most part we no longer hold work to be the central interest of life, that man was born to be a work animal. In fact we are rediscovering the concept of *homo ludens*, man the play animal. For the majority of us work is not a reality. We have the basic necessities and enjoy a rather comfortable standard of living ... We enter the work force at a later stage in life than did our forefathers and we look forward to years of retirement. The work week has shrunk considerably in the last decades and we now have time and the need to discover self. (Sessoms, 1972: 312)

For the most part Sessoms is upbeat about the Age of Leisure, but he does strike the occasional cautionary note:

For those who are unprepared for this adventure, it is frightening and overpowering. Consequently, we demean the importance of recreation and fill our free time with busy work, neurotic phobias, and narcotic consumption. (p. 312) ... Although the new generation of workers are affected by the residue of our previous [work ethic] attitudes, they are creating a set of their own. To them, free time is a right and they want to enjoy it. Unfortunately, they are not always sure how to achieve it, so like lemmings, they scurry the countryside seeking fulfilment. Often this leads to the destruction of self and the eroding of our natural resources. (p. 313) (Sessoms, 1972)

He has no difficulty with increased leisure time compensating for monotonous or meaningless work:

With the decline of work as a means of providing expression and satisfaction, the need for recreation becomes more critical. If the job is monotonous, then our recreation must be meaningful or else both social and individual pathologies may develop. (Sessoms, 1972: 316)

In a further paper, Sessoms (1974) uses the terms 'leisure-orientated society' (in the body of a paper but not in its title) and 'non-work-centred' society, and explores the values which would be compatible with such a society.

1973: House of Lords, UK: Sport and Leisure

The House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure was appointed in 1971 and published its final report in 1973. It can hardly be said to have been a prophet of a leisure society. In regard to working hours, the Committee noted that 'Since 1945 there has been no consistent trend which can be projected with any certainty' (House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure, 1973: x). Having noted a number of likely influences on the level of weekly working hours, including the practice of working overtime, the trade union campaign for a 35-hour working week, the inconsistency in post-war trends, and the effect of unemployment and income levels, the Committee concluded:

These ... factors may in the short term depress the number of working hours. In the longer term, they are unlikely to go on having this effect. The Committee think that built into human nature there is a need for work which will resist movements towards a very short working week. ... The long term trend will not be constantly downwards. The Committee infer that, during the next decade, the working week will continue to decline slowly in length as it has done since 1959. This decline will not involve any dramatic changes; nor will it go on indefinitely: but it should make one or two hours a week available for leisure. (House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure, 1973: xii)

The Committee nevertheless believed that holiday entitlements would increase beyond the annual two weeks which 72% of the workforce was then entitled to. This observation, together with their cautious comments on weekly working hours led to the following conclusion regarding future leisure time trends: 'Although the Committee cannot predict the speed at which leisure time will increase, they regard a reduction in working hours as inevitable' (House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure, 1973: xv). But the implications of this were somewhat mundane. Since the 'pattern of work within the week' and the timing of holidays were unlikely to change, this implied increased pressure on leisure facilities during the existing periods of 'greatest congestion' and in the 'same over-crowded months of the year'. Hence the need for more planning to cater for these peak demands.

1973: Daniel Bell, USA: The Coming of Post-Industrial Society

Rojek's second source noted in Section 2 above is Daniel Bell's *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*. In this volume there is one indexed comment on the 'leisure society' which states:

David Riesman, when he first used the term 'post-industrial society' in 1958, was thinking of a 'leisure society' and the sociological problems that might arise when, for the first time in human history, large numbers of persons had to confront the use of leisure rather than the drudgery of work. (Bell, 1973: 456)

As noted above, this linking of Riesman with the idea of a leisure society is hard to justify, particularly in the light of his comments in the foreword to the 1961 edition of *The Lonely Crowd*.

Bell goes on to review the writings of numerous other futurologists who had anticipated that increasing automation and 'cybernation' would solve the problem of economic scarcity, referring to them collectively as examples of 'technological euphoria'. However, he concludes with the questions: 'Has the economic problem been solved? Will scarcity disappear? Put in the terms which socialist and utopian thinkers have used – nineteenth century terms – the answer is no, or not for a long time' (Bell, 1973: 463).

He goes on to discuss the reasons why, in futuristic commentary at the end of the 1960s, 'the vision of Utopia was suddenly replaced by the spectre of Doomsday'. The Doomsday scenario was, Bell states, brought about by a number of factors, including the recognition of environmental constraints, the increasing complexity of post-industrial societies, the apparently insatiable desire for status and 'conspicuous consumption' and, most relevant to leisure studies, the increasing constraints of time:

The end of scarcity, it was believed – the leap from the kingdom of necessity – would be the freeing of time from the inexorable rhythm of economic life. In the end, all time has become an economic calculus. As Auden put it. 'Time will say only, I told you so'. (Bell, 1973: 475)

Bell clearly does not endorse the idea of a utopian leisure society.

1975: Thomas Kando, USA: Toward a leisure society?

'Toward a leisure society?' is the title of a chapter in Thomas Kando's 1975 book, *Leisure and Popular Culture in Transition* (and it remained substantially unchanged in the second edition of the book, published in 1980).

Kando provides, arguably, the most extensive critical analysis available of the leisure society concept. At the conclusion of the first chapter of the book he declares:

... the coming of automation, cybernation, and affluence would logically seem to produce the leisure society. However, this does not occur because of two developments. First, society's value system is such that the new status hierarchy places an increasing premium on work; secondly, the society's economic structure – corporate capitalism – demands costly mass consumption and spectacular mass recreation rather than freedom in leisure. (Kando, 1980: 15).

He addresses two questions in regard to whether the United States of the 1970s was 'moving toward' the leisure society. First he asks whether the *conditions* had been created that could make widespread leisure possible, to which he answers 'yes'. Second, had this opportunity been actualised, to which he answers a 'qualified no'. While technology is seen to have provided the economic conditions for greater leisure, Kando summarises a range of critics of other features of technological society, notably Ellul (see above), who condemn its effects on work, bureaucracy, consumption and human relationships. In this environment, following De Grazia (see above), he notes how Americans have failed to, or been prevented from, embracing genuine leisure, as opposed to bureaucratised consumption. He concludes:

The dilemma is this: the same elements that were instrumental in creating the prerequisites for leisure – a materialistic and aggressive civilization able to develop technology and willing to use it – are now the obstacles to reaping the logical and beneficial outcome of these conditions. It may be that a civilization capable of creating the conditions necessary for true leisure, an affluent material base, has no use for leisure itself; and conversely, a culture whose ideology is supportive of leisure may not be able to erect leisure's material foundation. (Kando, 1980: 136)

In *After Industrial Society?* Jonathan Gershuny develops the thesis of the 'self-service economy' which is seen as a solution to a future with a 'high and unsustainable rate of technological unemployment' (Gershuny, 1978: 136) in the formal economy. He sees many of the consumer goods produced in the formal industrial economy as a form of capital goods used by households to implement the final stages of consumption – eg. kitchen equipment to cook meals, washing machines to wash clothes, gardening tools to grow flowers and vegetables. The home is therefore the location of the increasingly significant 'informal' sector of economic production. Recognition and encouragement of this sector would provide a solution to the emerging problems of the formal economy:

... economic activity in the formal sector is increasingly concentrated in intermediate production – that is, in the production of consumer durables which are in essence capital goods – and that these capital goods are invested in the informal sector of the economy for the production of final commodities. The 'dual economy' strategy would not seek to discourage the continuing drive for efficiency, with accompanying unemployment, in the formal sector. Instead it would seek to improve the quality of both work and leisure in the informal sector; indeed, since in this sector production and consumption activities are based on the same social unit [the household], the distinction between work and leisure might itself become less clear-cut. As a result of this strategy the complex of activities including recreation, education, housework and other production activities which might in the future be transformed to the informal sector, might become a viable alternative to employment in the formal sector. (Gershuny, 1978: 151)

The self-service economy is similar to Robertson's 'ownwork' ideas and Gorz's proposals for contracting out of the formal capitalist economy (see below).

In a later publication, Gershuny (1980: 60-61) briefly traces the leisure society thesis through the writings of Veblen, Keynes, Dumazedier, Huizinga and Kahn *et al.* He does not specifically claim that Veblen envisaged a society of leisure as such, but that he discussed leisure time becoming 'more widely diffused across the society'. But, as noted above, while Veblen describes a process by which the middle and lower classes seek to emulate the wealthy leisure class lifestyle, this does not admit them to the leisure class, who remain an élite. A very curious reading of Dumazedier, Huizinga and Kahn *et al.* equates them all with a view of the leisure society as 'high-technology play' and with 'leisure as escape from responsibilities, a reversion to an infantile state in which *we just don't have to work*' (Gershuny, 1980: 61, emphasis in the original). Dumazedier and Kahn *et al.* are discussed above; but with regard to Huizinga, associating *Homo Ludens* with 'high-technology' play could hardly be more inappropriate: he adopts a highly philosophical and cultural approach to play and is even dismissive of modern sport (ie. in 1944 when the first German edition was published) as unplayful. He concludes: 'More and more the sad conclusion forces itself upon us that the play-element in culture has been on the wane ever since the 18th century, when it was in full flower. Civilization to-day is no longer played, and even where it still seems to play it is false play' (Huizinga, 1950: 206).

Gershuny goes on to declare:

One central strand of modern notions of the leisure society sees leisure activities as the residue, simply what is left behind when we take away work. We solve the economic problem, and what is left is leisure. There are connections with the concept of diminishing marginal utility of income, which reaches its end point in the notion of post-materialist society, the society in which there is nothing left to work *for*. (Gershuny, 1980: 61)

While the considerations outlined might be described as a 'central strand' of leisure society thinking, they would be more appropriately described as the starting point. For Keynes, Dumazedier and Kahn *et al.*, at least, conditions of greatly reduced work time and therefore increased leisure time are the starting point for consideration of the key issue of how people might and/or should spend their time in such conditions and for Dumazedier, the question of the associated political and social infrastructure.

6. The leisure society concept in the 1980s, '90s and 2000s

Introduction

The massive oil price increases in 1973 and 1977 caused shocks to the Western economic system, resulting in inflation and rising unemployment. All talk of continuing gradual reductions in working hours arising from growth and prosperity ceased. Instead, moving into the 1980s, concerns similar to those of the 1930s emerged, namely how the reduced quantum of available work might be equitably shared to relieve unemployment.⁹ As in the 1930s, there was no shortage of commentators willing to argue that, born of technology, a new age had dawned, which called for significant policy responses. As in the 1930s, such calls were largely ignored; for policymakers it was mostly 'business as usual', a position which, with the passage of time, was, in its own terms, largely vindicated by a return to full employment in some countries in the new century, although with a higher level of unemployment than had been seen in the 1960s. Thus, as in the 1930s, the arguments were generally ignored rather than actively countered.

An exception to this was a critique by economist Peter Dixon on Australian commentator Barry Jones' view that technological change was responsible for increasing levels of unemployment in the 1980s. Dixon (1986) observed that productivity levels had not been increasing at a particularly fast pace over recent decades and that high unemployment was due to large increases in the labour force as a result of the maturation of the 'baby boomer' generation, the relatively high cost of labour and the aftermath of the oil price shocks of the 1970s.

Passing references

- *Transitions to Leisure*, edited B. G. Gunter, Jay Stanley and Robert St Clair (1985), is a collection of papers, by authors from the social sciences and the humanities, predicated on the proposition that major social changes are in progress and in prospect, which will require significant adaptations in patterns of work and leisure and in values in advanced industrial societies and which will require greater breadth of vision than had been seen hitherto. The editors begin with the statement:

There is much talk in the leisure literature about the growth of 'leisure society' in post-industrial societies. With neither refutation nor endorsement, it is reasonable to assume that changes in discretionary time and the corresponding growth in recreation and leisure facilities and activities. ... Added to these is the slow but steady emergence of an ethic of pleasure in personal values. (Gunter, Stanley and St Clair, 1985: 3)

No specific references are given to the 'much talk in the leisure literature'. In general, the 21 contributed papers do not address the 'transitions' theme, one exception being the paper by Novek (1985), which is included as an entry below.

- In a survey of Australian attitudes towards 'life priorities', Bruce Headey states: 'The two closely related domains of 'spare-time activities' and 'friends and friendships' contribute very

⁸ Unemployment in Britain rose to 5.1% in 1976, passed 10% in 1981 and peaked at 11.5% (3.1 million people) in 1986; it fell to 7.1% in 1990, peaked again at 10.7% in 1992 then fell below 5% in 2004; it has stayed between 5% and 6% since 2005.

substantially to life satisfaction, confirming earlier research that Australia is a leisure-orientated society' (Headey, 1988: 167-68).

- The above quotation is the main source referred to by David Rowe leading him to assert: 'Australia does have both an internal and external reputation as a leisure society, in spite of recent evidence that time devoted to leisure has on average decreased since the mid-1970s, particularly for women' (Rowe, 1993: 258)

1979-86: Clive Jenkins and Barrie Sherman, UK: The Collapse of Work

While Clive Jenkins and Barrie Sherman's book, *The Collapse of Work*, was published in 1979, it was followed by *The Leisure Shock* in 1981 and, in 1986, by *Working at Leisure*, by Sherman alone. These books attracted considerable attention at the time of their publication, partly as a result of the new industrial context and partly because of Jenkins's role as a high profile trade union leader (Sherman was the research officer in the same union).

Despite the broad sentiment of the books, which is implicit in their titles, their precise thesis in regard to leisure is difficult to pin down. Their analysis of work is clearer: while unemployment levels were already high, this was not seen as a temporary situation:

... we now stand on the threshold, indeed are just passing beyond that, of a new industrial revolution, based on developments in micro-electronics. It will have the most profound effect on jobs and employment prospects since the introduction of the electric motor and before that of the steam engine, because as with those two previous breakthroughs no production process will be immune from its impact. Indeed it may even be more potent since it will affect not only processes and components but also commercial activities, and office, clerical and information methods in both the public and private sectors of the economy. This quantum leap in technology will accelerate the structural changes in the pattern of employment which have been steadily advancing over the past decade and will exert an immensely destructive impact on both existing jobs and the future supply of work.

Unemployment, which has been synonymous with slumps and low investment will, for the next few decades, be equally the product of high investment and booms. (Jenkins and Sherman, 1979: viii)

Such sentiments had last been expressed during the Great Depression – for example, in 1936, Martin Neumeier had stated that 'it has been pretty well established that no matter how complete the recovery may be we will never be able to make full-time jobs for the entire working population of the country' (quoted in Currell, 2005: 33).

In response to these circumstances, Jenkins and Sherman put forward a variety of proposals, designed either to adapt to the current and predicted circumstances (eg. more provision of leisure facilities for the unemployed) or to avoid them (eg. increased investment in technology to create more jobs and reduce unemployment).

The term 'leisure society' is not used, but the terms 'leisure shock' and 'leisure revolution' are. The term 'leisure shock' pays homage to Alvin Toffler's 'future shock' which, in the 1960s, described the situation in which Western society was faced with such rapid technological change that the effect was to *shock* society and its institutions. Jenkins and Sherman saw the rapidly growing significance of leisure as delivering a similar shock. Whether the case for using such a term is effectively made is, however, debatable. In *The Leisure Shock* they state: 'The shock comes from having to abandon an attachment to the work ethic' (Jenkins and Sherman, 1981: 16). But how this is to come about, and precisely what it would achieve is difficult to determine. In *Working at Leisure* Sherman devotes a chapter to the 'leisure revolution' intended to outline 'newly

emergent and different leisure needs', but it is difficult to locate anything particularly new in his overview of leisure in Britain; all the trends and changes to which he refers – eg. reductions in working hours, increased numbers of unemployed and elderly, changing shift-work patterns – had been in train for decades.

1979-89: Various authors, UK: Replacing the Work Ethic

During the 1980s, a number of commentators, noting the rise in unemployment,¹⁰ but rarely if ever referring to a leisure society as such, argued that one of the problems preventing adjustment of society and the economy to the new labour environment was the persistence of the Protestant work ethic and that some sort of new ethic was required. Some examples are outline below.¹¹ All but the first contribution listed, were from British commentators.

In a brief exposition, American Gary Gappert puts forward the concept of a 'leisure ethic', expected to emerge in the 1980s:

In a somewhat paradoxical fashion, both the increase of affluence ... and the rise of economic dislocations will lead to the evolution of a leisure ethic, which will receive equal if not greater attention than the work ethic. The new leisure ethic will be reflected in a trend towards three days of work and four days of play. (Gappert, 1979: 41)

Denis Pym, an economist, detected a 'retreat from employment' in Britain and the emergence of a 'dual economy' in which the most appropriate ethic would be a 'resourcefulness ethic' (Pym, 1980: 236).

Trades unionists Clive Jenkins and Barrie Sherman, referred to above, argued for a 'usefulness' ethic:

If it appears, as we suggest that it does, that society, both individually and collectively, would be happier, would be more harmonious and would have fewer problems of the work ethic were either destroyed or reconstructed, then why should it not be done? ... The need to be wanted is, we believe, the true human condition; the need for formal work is but a perversion of this, so that the concept of usefulness rather than work must be the future ethic. (Jenkins and Sherman, 1981: 15, 185)

Two Labour politicians, Ivor Clemitson and George Rodgers, used the term 'life ethic':

In short, we need to develop a 'life ethic' rather than a work ethic and the corresponding concept of 'full life' rather than 'full employment'. Such an ethic would be concerned with the full development of human beings and human potential ... a life ethic would cease to see a person's only and major contribution to society as being made through his or her employment. (Clemitson and Rodgers, 1981: 13)

Roger Clarke, a worker priest, coined the term 'contribution ethic':

Perhaps out of the ashes of the Work Ethic, which is seriously challenged by the loss of the ideal of Full Employment, there will emerge the concept of a Contribution Ethic - a belief that our humanity does find fulfilment in doing things for others. That God is glorified through our

¹⁰ See footnote 8, p. 45.

¹¹ This review draws substantially on Veal (1987: 63ff).

being of service to our fellows whether that be through employee/customer relationships in the paid economy or whether that service, that giving of ourselves, is manifested in some other way quite outwith the paid economy. (Clarke, 1982: 196)

In a paper on the development of a 'leisure ethic', leisure forecasting consultants Bill Martin and Sandra Mason stated:

Now at the end of the twentieth century, a new set of values is needed, one which recognises both the changing role of work and unemployment in the Western World and the parallel changes that are taking place in the amount and nature of our leisure ... such a new ethic should be based on a view of leisure as a part of life that is of value in its own right. (Martin and Mason, 1984: 1)

Martin and Mason elaborated on this approach in a follow-up study, *Transforming the Future Quality of Life: Rethinking Free Time and Work*, published in 1989.

Lord Ritchie-Calder, addressing an education conference, called for a 'non-work ethic' in the following terms:

What we need is a non-work ethic. It is heretical but it is logical ... I use the term 'non-work' deliberately. It comprises retirement, redundancy, unemployment, a shorter working week, a shorter working day, longer holidays, with pay. It is not slothfulness, that deadly sin in terms of the work ethic. It removes the stigma which has become attached to compulsory idleness – unemployment giving the victim robbed of the use of his skills a demoralising sense of inadequacy. It is usually called 'leisure', doing what one wants to do, which might be personally productive like do-it-yourself, or creative, like inventing or painting, or writing, or music or physical recreation. (Ritchie-Calder, 1982: 16)

Finally, André Gorz, referred to below, did not give a name to an alternative to the work ethic, but argued for the abolition of the latter as follows:

For 200 years or so societies have been dominated by the productivist ethic which has sanctified work as mortification and sacrifice, as a renunciation of life and pleasure, of the freedom to be oneself. It will certainly not be an easy matter to destroy it and replace it with an ethic which privileges the values of voluntary cooperation, self-determination, creativity and the quality of our relations with each other and with nature. (Gorz, 1985: 107)

Gorz's cautionary comment on the likely difficulty to be faced in seeking to displace the work ethic was clearly wise. A number of the above commentators placed their faith in education as a vehicle for achieving such change but, arguable, in the intervening 20-30 years the education system has, if anything, become more work-orientated. On the other hand, the relative strength of the work ethic in different cultures remains a matter for debate (see Schor, 2006).

1980: Roger Vickerman, UK: The New Leisure Society

Roger Vickerman's 1980 paper is one of the examples of leisure society predictions referred to by Chris Gratton (1996), as noted above. Despite the title of Vickerman's paper, and the fact that it was published in the journal *Futures*, it does not predict a leisure society, nor does it refer to such predictions by others. In fact, the idea of a leisure society is barely mentioned. Vickerman states that the premise of the paper is to provide an 'analysis of a society with more leisure than in the recent past (ie. the previous 200 years or so)' in order to 'understand ... the economic problems

which face us'. Basically, he explores the implications of increasing leisure time, without spelling out the concept of a leisure society as such.

He makes a single reference to a 'society of leisure':

It seems unlikely that there will be a return to the pleasures of the table and the bed on the same scale as enjoyed by our more leisured forefathers in the late 18th century. Maybe this is an indication that economists' puritanism is only a reflection of a wider view held by society, of leisure as idleness. (Vickerman, 1980: 196)

And there is just a single reference to a 'leisure society':

In a leisure society the range of choice desired will not necessarily increase but the opportunity, and possibly the desirability, of acquiring information about alternative technologies will certainly increase. (Vickerman, 1980: 197)

The conclusions of the paper do not mention leisure, but refer to the need for education to enable people to cope with change resulting from the transition to a post-industrial society.

1980: André Gorz, France: Farewell to the Working Class

During the 1980s and '90s, French sociologist André Gorz published a series of books – *Farewell to the Working Class* (1982), *Paths to Paradise: on the Liberation from Work* (1985) and *Reclaiming Work: Beyond the Wage-based Society* (1999) – in which he argued that, given the highly productive nature of modern industry, the working class could substantially reduce its labour input to, and dependence on, the formal capitalist economy and still live comfortably. He notes that historically, the struggle between capital and labour has been about freedom and autonomy and that workers could now achieve this by partially contracting out of the formal labour market. But the aim is not a society of leisure:

The demand to 'work less' does not mean or imply the right to 'rest more', but the right to 'live more' ... The outlines of a society based on the free use of time are only beginning to appear in the interstices of, and in opposition to, the present social order. its watchword may be defined as: let us work less so that we may all work and do more things for ourselves in our free time. Socially useful labour, distributed over all those willing and able to work, will thus cease to be anyone's exclusive or leading activity. Instead people's major occupation may be one or a number of self-defined activities, carried out not for money but for the interest, pleasure or benefits involved. The manner in which the abolition of work is to be managed and socially implemented constitutes the central political issue of the coming decades. (Gorz, 1982: 121-2)

Gorz' concept of a 'multi-activity' existence is in effect a politicised version of Robertson's 'ownwork' and Gershuny's 'self-service economy'.

1981: Ecology Party, UK: Working for a Future

While the UK Ecology Party of the early 1980s envisaged that technology was likely to reduce labour requirements and working hours in the formal economy, it anticipated that this would release workers to engage not in leisure activities but in the 'informal economy', involving self-help, voluntary and community activity. They declared:

We need therefore to be suspicious of those who push the 'self-evident' merits of a self-sustaining post-industrial 'Leisure Society'. Leisure itself does not create wealth, neither real wealth, nor the phoney substitutes that people use to measure wealth today. The notion that technological advances will provide an opportunity to increase the amount of leisure time, without a relative loss of conventionally assessed income, is sadly mistaken. (Ecology Party, 1981: 18)

1982: John R. Kelly, *USA: Leisure and the Future*

'Leisure and the future' is the title of a chapter in John Kelly's textbook, *Leisure*. In it he sets out to debunk the idea of a leisure society. As is common, he opens with a reference to anonymous, unsourced predictions:

A number of exotic scenarios for the future of leisure in a technologized tomorrow have been written. All assume that no limits in energy resources, raw material, and productivity will keep economics from actualizing whatever is technically possible. They ignore political and social conflicts and assume that problems such as air, water, and soil pollution are temporary and will be overcome by new technologies. They further project the emergence of a new consciousness that will embrace leisure as worthwhile in its own right. The possible conflict between the production of endless consumer resources for leisure and the reduced productivity of a 'leisure age' are seldom mentioned. (Kelly, 1982: 276)

Of course, Kelly's arguments apply to economic growth generally, not just to growth devoted to production of leisure-related consumer goods. However, he refers to 'reduced productivity' of the 'leisure age', which presumably refers to reduced working hours envisaged in 'leisure age' scenarios, but seems to fail to recognise the converse, that if a society were to devote the dividend from increased productivity to increased leisure time rather than increased production, this would reduce the demand on material resources. The chapter explores the many social, political and environ-mental uncertainties which surround any discussion of the future of leisure.

In 1987 Kelly published a volume, *Recreation Trends: Toward the Year 2000*, which comprised, for the most part, projections of US demand for specific leisure activities aimed at the professional reader. But in the introduction he stated:

It was fashionable in the 1950s and 60s to forecast a fast-approaching 'leisure age' in which the former domination of productive work would give way to lifestyles with more free time and emphasis on nonwork activity. In fact, the future of leisure was defined as a problem by many who were sure that demand would overwhelm resources and that many workers would be unprepared to use this abundant time constructively. (Kelly, 1987: 1)

No references were given to the fashionable forecasts referred to.

Kelly offers a six-point explanation of why the 'leisure age' had not come about as predicted;

1. predictions of falling working hours, based on trends since the 1880s, had not come about, with weekly working hours levelling off at 40 and rising cyclical unemployment since the 1960s;
2. globalization meant that change in the USA was constrained by the nature and pace of change in the rest of the world;
3. predicted rates of economic growth in the USA had not materialised (see Kahn and Wiener above);

4. data on average working hours hides the wide variation in working hours, especially in the growing service sector;
5. other calls on time use increased, notably travel time;
6. most gains in non-work time were absorbed by at-home activities rather than by 'organized recreation'.

1982: Barry Jones, *Australia: Sleepers Wake!*

Barry Jones was Minister for Science in the Australian federal government during the 1980s. The subtitle of his *Sleepers Wake* is *Technology and the Future of Work*. Thus, while the reshaping of work, including falling working hours, is the focus of his study, the implications for leisure are hinted at rather than seriously explored. His single reference to anything like a 'leisure society' appears under the heading 'IQ and an age of leisure?'. With a diagrammatic representation, he states:

In past golden ages of leisure – including Periclean Athens, some Italian city states during the Renaissance, France under Louis XIV and the Netherlands for much of the eighteenth century – the privileged classes pursued the arts, travelled, hunted, built, gardened, and discussed politics and history. The 'lower orders' supported them by providing routine services. We may face the problem of adjusting to an inversion of that historic model – a social pyramid of which the top part largely comprises a skilled meritocracy which works hard for high wages, and the lower part consists of the unskilled and semi-skilled who live in a condition of involuntary and unsought leisure because routine and repetitive work has been eliminated or significantly reduced. (Jones, 1982/1995: 205-6)

It seems that the superfluous 'unskilled and semi-skilled' are not expected to 'pursue the arts, travel, hunt, build, garden and discuss politics and history', although this is not explicitly canvassed either way. Rather, four 'moves on the part of society' are seen as immediately necessary:

1. Recognition that work need no longer be the primary mechanism for the redistribution of wealth.
2. Education based on the personal needs of each individual rather than the industrial needs of the community.
3. Encouraging individuals to recognise the value of individually determined time use.
4. Developing new forms of participation and recognition. (Jones, 1982/1995: 206-7)

In regard to item 1 Jones discusses the concept of a 'guaranteed minimum income and national superannuation'.

Item 2, regarding education, had previously been discussed in a whole chapter, where education for the 'inner life' was extolled. In his final chapter, 'What is to be done?', the eighth education-related recommendation is:

Emphasises education as a means of achieving self-knowledge, personal development, the strengthening of self-image and creativity, and effectual time use (including leisure studies), and place less emphasis on education for vocational or specialist purposes which can be picked up relatively quickly. (Jones, 1982/1995: 247)

It is suspected that 'leisure studies' here refers to 'education for leisure' rather than the academic study of leisure.

Regarding item 3, in his chapter on education Jones sees 'time budgeting: self-management of time' as one of 22 'challenges' for education, and adds:

Many social problems – vandalism, violence, alcoholism, drug dependence, loneliness, suicide – are closely related to boredom and the inability to cope with the self-management of time. Accordingly, the prospect of major reductions in time spent at work threatens many people, since work is the major factor in determining who they are. If it was a good thing in the 19th Century for weekly working hours to be reduced from 80 to 60, and in the first half of the 20th Century from 60 to 40, would it be good or bad for hours to be reduced to 20 in the last quarter of the 20th Century? To many, perhaps most, people the answer would be 'bad', because if the next step was to be a reduction to 10 or 5 hours then the whole structure of order, discipline and authority starts to look ridiculous. ...If work contracted sharply, what then? There is an urgent social need to encourage a philosophy of 'time-use value'. (Jones, 1982/1995: 209-10)

The issue is not, however, explored further.

1983: Otto Newman, UK: *The Coming of a Leisure Society?*

Otto Newman begins the abstract of this essay with the following: 'It may be too early to speak of the advent of a leisure society, though the breakthroughs of technology are bringing it very close' (Newman, 1983: 97). He does not explicitly provide any further advice on the conditions which would signal the arrival of the leisure society.

In the first part of the paper he explores, the 'leisure compensation' thesis and, like the earlier authors, Friedmann, Marcuse and others, as referred to above, but without any reference to them or any other sources on the matter, he rejects it, on two grounds. First, he sees leisure in contemporary society as consumption-related and:

... conforming to 'technological' values and hence, as is widely projected, not the supreme vehicle for self-actualization, but rather one of the prime instruments for social control. Indeed, for all the 'fun morality' it tends to project, it is a particularly effective tool for instilling the values of social conformity plus self-correction. (Newman, 1983: 101).

Second, he refers to those who are, apparently, nevertheless enjoying the emerging work-leisure-consumption balance, as reflecting 'The 'new leisure class' image coming out of recent social enquiry' (p. 102), but such enquiry is not referenced. He suggests that only the middle class have the resources to enjoy this lifestyle. So, 'To rank the working classes as equal members of 'leisure society' is clearly absurd' (p. 102). Thus, by inference, a *leisure society* is defined as one in which people enjoy the *new leisure class* lifestyle which was being enjoyed by members of the middle classes in Britain in the early 1980s.

The working classes are excluded from this, but they are nevertheless 'caught up in the incipient leisure explosion' and 'appear as the forerunners of the leisure society to come' (p. 102). But the latter observation appears to be based on the advent of 'mass unemployment'. So a 'leisure society', under this definition, is one with high levels of unemployment. But rather than rejecting this scenario, Newman appears to slip into prescriptive mode, arguing that its emergence should be addressed by a 'thoroughgoing normative revaluation':

The historically ingrained 'work ethic' must make way for a 'leisure ethos' incorporating a greater emphasis on leisure experience, a broadening of social options, the acknowledgement that non-work is a worthwhile activity, and a shift away from activism or the intensive

reevaluation of it. On present evidence this is a highly remote prospect. yet it is essential, if only in the interest of social stabilization. (Newman, 1983: 103)

The implications are for the emergence of a leisure society which includes a portion of the middle classes and the employed section of the working classes, who would enjoy the 'new leisure class' lifestyle, and a large section of permanently unemployed working class who will be content with their lot on the basis of newly imbued values, including 'a shift away from activism', or, if this doesn't work out, will be the source of social instability.

In his conclusions Newman argues that the leisure society thesis is flawed because it occurs within a 'sociological vacuum', so it could be that these definitional implications are intended to be his summary of the results of following the logic of the leisure society thesis as propounded by others, but since he provides no references to such proponents, it is difficult to be sure.

The second part of the paper presents a critique of two variations on the 'post-industrial thesis', the 'work-centred' and the 'convivial'. He uses Daniel Bell as an example of the former and, as noted above, shows that his work-centred vision of the post-industrial society does not include an enhanced role for leisure. The 'convivial' view of post-industrialism refers to what we have here termed the 'self-service economy', in which unpaid work rather than leisure absorbs future reductions in paid work (see Toffler, Gershuny, Robertson, Gorz, Beck). Newman rejects both of these scenarios on the grounds that 'the emergence of the leisure ethos as a partner to the work ethic seems unavoidable' – even though, earlier in the paper, as quoted above, he argues that this is a 'remote prospect'.¹²

1983: Phillip Ruthven, Australia: Future Economic and Social Environment

In his contribution to a government-sponsored National Seminar on leisure, consultant Phillip Ruthven observes: 'The emergence of new industries (including growth in leisure and other industries) cannot fully employ the extra three million persons seeking work in sixteen years time at the end of the century'. He therefore concludes:

We will, therefore, move to change work patterns. Such developments will include:

1. a 4-day week becoming the normal full-time working week
2. the acceptance of the concept of permanent part-time work
3. an increase in the proportion of our workforce in part-time work from one in six workers to one in five at the end of the century
4. the dismantling of the now anachronistic penalty rates pay system
5. flexibility of work patterns ... (Ruthven 1983: 117)

Ruthven's predictions of the inability of the Australia economy to absorb labour proved incorrect, with total employment rising as follows:

1983: 6.3 million (5.2 million full-time)
2000: 9.6 million (7 million full-time)
2006: 10.6 million (7.6 million part-time) (Source: ABS *Social Trends*).

¹² A version of Newman's paper, which is virtually word-for-word identical to the *Leisure Studies* paper, appeared in Volume 1, Number 1 of *Education and Society* (Newman, 1983a) under the title 'Leisure and social change', but on page 50 of the same issue, immediately following Newman's article is a promotion for the journal listing the 'Contents of Volume 1, Number 1, 1983' where the article is listed with the title 'The coming of the leisure society'.

Regarding his other predictions:

- the 4-day week clearly did not come about;
- *permanent* part-time work was probably no more common in 2000 than it had been in 1983, but the proportion of part-time employees was 1 in 4, and 1 in 3.5 by 2006;
- the 'penalty rates system (for working unsocial hours) had largely been dismantled; and
- the workforce could be said to be more 'flexible' as a result of measures taken by both the Labor government of 1982-96 and the Liberal government of 1996-2007.

Ruthven outlines a series of future leisure 'lifestyle'-related developments, for the most part unquantified, so difficult to test. He stops short of predicting a 'leisure society' but concludes: 'The post-industrial era will ultimately yield a higher standard of living for all. Leisure, in its plethora of forms, will be a feature of this new age' (Ruthven 1983: 130).

1983: Tom Stonier, UK: The Wealth of Information

Stonier develops the thesis that information is emerging as the basic commodity of the post-industrial society. Writing at a time of high unemployment in the UK, he also addresses the problems of displaced labour and alternative solutions for Britain to cope with the consequent unemployment. Such solutions include: policies to aid workforce mobility; a 'New Deal' type of major government investment in infrastructure; developing London as the 'office capital' of the world; development of the tourism and food export industries; a range of education policies; and work sharing. Just one page is devoted to the last idea, in which Stonier proposes a 10 per cent reduction in weekly working hours every five years, resulting in 'a standard 36-hour week by 1985, 32½ by 1990, 29 by 1995, 26 by the year 2000, 23½ by 2005 and 21 by 2010' (Stonier, 1983: 158). At no point does he discuss the leisure implications of such changes.

1984: Charles Handy, UK: The Future of Work

In *The Future of Work* Charles Handy (1984) considered the prospects for employment in an environment where unemployment in Britain was running at over 10%. Like many commentators at the time he predicted that 'The full-employment equation of full-time, life-time jobs for all at good rates of pay is not viable' (Handy, 1984: 179). He discusses four alternative scenarios for dealing with an excess of labour in the future: the unemployment, leisure, employment and work scenarios. In the 'leisure scenario' Handy concentrates on the model of a professional/managerial elite working full-time, with the majority living a life of leisure, but describes this as 'hopelessly unrealistic'. While at various points in the book he discusses the idea of a trend from the current 100,000 hour working life (eg. 40 hours x 48 weeks x 52 years) to a 50,000 hour working life (eg. 30 hours x 42 weeks x 40 years) spread across the whole workforce, he does not discuss the leisure implications of this scenario. His preferred 'work' scenario (described in a single paragraph) appears to involve an increase in voluntary and self-service work. At no point does he predict, let alone welcome, the idea of a future leisure society.

1984: Jonathan Porritt, UK: Seeing Green

In his 1984 book, *Seeing Green*, Jonathan Porritt, CEO of Friends of the Earth and leading member of the UK Ecology Party, comments critically on the Labour Party's proposals to 'create millions of jobs' in Britain through government expenditure programs, and adds:

And when scorn is rightly poured on this fantastical hotch-potch, out comes the big one, the mega-fantasy of the 'leisure society'. 'We do not believe that work *per se* is necessary to human survival or self-esteem', says no less an authority than Clive Jenkins [trade union official – see above]. (Porritt, 1984: 68)

Later, Porritt predicts that the formal economy will see increasing numbers of 'impoverished and demoralized unemployed', whether it is run as an 'extension of the welfare state' or by a 'capitalist technocracy'. These two systems would have much in common, including:

... centralized economic and political power; an obsession with technology as a panacea for life's ills; the dominance of a bureaucratic elite; and the imperatives of dehumanized materialism. This, I suspect, is what people really mean when they talk about the 'leisure society'. To me, such a society bears an uncanny resemblance to the 'dual economies' of the Third World, where those fortunate enough to be part of a modern, Westernized money economy lord it over those stuck in the traditional subsistence economy. The split between work and leisure would be accentuated, and without work how would people be able to afford leisure? Enforced leisure on an inadequate income is a most unattractive proposition, and pays no attention to all the problems of how the social and psychological functions of work are to be reinterpreted in this brave new technological world of ours. To call such a society a 'post-industrial society' is quite absurd: for it is no more than the terminus of industrialism, where technological determinism finally replaces the political process. It will not be the leisure of affluence that awaits us, but the leisure of poverty and political subservience. (Porritt, 1984: 132)

1985: James Robertson, UK: *Future Work*

James Robertson wrote *Future Work* at a time, in the early 1980s, when unemployment in Western economies had been obstinately high for a number of years. The book opens with the following observations:

In Britain today, several million people are unemployed. In the industrialised countries as a whole the number runs into tens of millions. For third world countries the situation is even worse. ... Most conventional politicians and economists still seem to claim, though with diminishing assurance, that their particular policies will bring back full employment in the long run. But year by year, more and more people see these claims as utopian wishful thinking, if not downright deception. The impact of labour-saving technology, the competitive pressures of international trade, and the reluctance of taxpayers to finance more public service jobs, clearly suggest that, if substantial economic growth ever does come back as we still understand it, much of it is likely to be jobless growth. (Robertson, 1985: 1)¹³

Robertson rejects the idea that leisure can replace work in people's lives:

The idea that in a post-employment society employment could be largely replaced by leisure activities, and that increasing numbers of people could live lives of leisure, is open to serious question from two points of view.

First, many people without employment would resist the idea that they were expected to make no useful contribution, either towards meeting their own needs or towards meeting those

¹³ See footnote 8 for details of trends in unemployment in Britain..

of other people, and were merely expected to keep themselves amused and out of trouble. ... Second, many of the people still in employment would resent the idea that they were expected to support large numbers of idle drones. ...

The question of how to finance the leisure of the unemployed in a leisure society would thus be a difficult one.

Finally, if anything resembling the leisure society did come about, one thing is sure. Many of those at leisure would in fact use their time for useful activities of many kinds. In other words, they would find ways of working on their own account, to provide useful goods and services for themselves and for one another. A leisure society would automatically transform itself, at least to some extent, into an ownwork society.

In short, the prospect of moving towards a leisure society cannot be accepted as providing any more realistic a solution to the present crisis of unemployment and work, than the hope of an eventual return to full employment. (Robertson, 1985: 24-26)

'Ownwork' is Robertson's solution to the failure of the formal economy to return to full employment: it is a combination of voluntary and self-servicing work, similar to that put forward by proponents of the 'self-service economy' (see, for example, Gershuny, 1978).

1985: Michael Rose, UK: Re-working the Work Ethic

Michael Rose makes a brief, but pithy, contribution to the debate as follows:

Leisure, it is said, whether enforced or chosen, must increase in the next half century, thus taking over the central cultural importance of work. This is fashionable nonsense. For the foreseeable future, the greater part of the population will spend the greater part of their lives in paid employment, and nearly everybody will spend an additional period active in the informal economy or performing domestic tasks. Major modifications in economic organisations are, of course, occurring, but their consequences will be debated primarily in relation to work, not leisure. (Rose, 1985: 39-40)

1985: Joel Novek, USA: Is the Automated Paradise Possible?

Joel Novek provides a brief historical overview of 'technological optimism', from John Maynard Keynes (see above) onwards, noting its decline since the 1970s, with rising concerns about the environmental effects of growth and technological unemployment. He then notes a new phase of commentary and analysis associated with the rise of information technology, which was expected, finally, to produce the demise of the centrality of human labour in the industrial economy. This had been accompanied by calls for a social wage, independent of any contribution of labour to the economy. But Novek expresses scepticism:

Can we envision the kind of Paradise ... in which the fruits of technological abundance are distributed to individuals in the form of greatly expanded leisure time plus substantial new income transfers? The answer is that we can but only if we make two assumptions, neither of which appears certain or even probably from the present vantage point. The first assumption is that governments in advanced industrial countries will demonstrate a commitment to initiate far more comprehensive redistributive policies than are currently in force. ... The second assumption is that a large proportion of the population in the industrial nations, having been denied access to conventional employment through automation, will be able to make constructive use of their new-found leisure time. On this point we have little positive evidence

to guide us. The evidence we do have mainly points in the negative direction. We see problems of alcoholism, drug abuse, crime and family breakdown linked to contemporary patterns of involuntary unemployment. What ... analysts mainly concerned with redistributing income to the unemployed tend to ignore is that work is not only a source of remuneration for most people but is a primary mechanism of social participation and integration. Without this integrative mechanism in people's lives, sentiments of alienation and social isolation will surely increase as individuals are deprived of the opportunity for socially productive activity. Proposals for a leisure-based utopian society which are to merit serious consideration must come to terms with the need for alternative mechanisms of social participation. (Novek, 1985: 241-42).

1987: A. J. Veal, UK: Leisure and the Future

In my own book, *Leisure and the Future* (Veal, 1987), I mention the idea of a leisure society at two points. First, the change in Kenneth Roberts' views over time, is noted, as discussed above. I then add: 'But compared with the lives of some of our forebears the lives we lead now could be described as lives of leisure' (p. 1). This is illustrated with examples of the long working hours of the past, such as that of children in the nineteenth century working 72 hours a week in a steelworks. The proposition is supported quantitatively later in the book, in an analysis of contemporary life-time allocations of time to leisure, paid work/education, sleep and personal/domestic tasks, showing that leisure accounted for between 27% and 31% of time while paid work/education accounted for only between 12% and 17% for full-time workers.

Later in the book, in a short section entitled 'A post-industrial leisure society?', Herman Kahn's concept of 'quaternary activities' predicted for the future, 200 years hence, as discussed above, is presented. My rather inelegant comment on this list was: 'Apart from items 11 and 13 (which one would have thought would have remained largely in the tertiary sector), this is entirely a list of leisure activities. So why not go the whole hog and call it the 'leisure society'?' (Veal, 1987: 61).

1988: Jeremy Seabrook, UK: The Leisure Society

In *The Leisure Society* Jeremy Seabrook (1988) adopts a sceptical stance towards his subject. The predictions of a future leisure society to which he refers come not from Seabrook but from unnamed others:

Leisure as time taken from work, as occupation entered into in contrast to it for relaxation and pleasure, is far from the proposition that leisure may become a primary purpose of our lives. Our natural suspicion of this sudden reversal is intensified by the exhortations that we must also work harder, increase productivity, become competitive in the markets of the world. The leisure society – with all its aristocratic associations – belongs securely to the future. The three groups (apart from children) who have the most leisure now are the rich, the retired and the redundant ... The main experience of leisure is of a particular absence of work, with minimal income; a caricature of the ease and comfort which the fluent proponents of the leisure society hold out to us. (p. 2) ... Leisure, then, is often discussed as though it were anticipated free time: certainly for those who work there has been little decrease in the actual number of hours worked. The promise of a leisure society acts as a comfort and distraction in a present that is often hard to bear; it eases painful transitions and, more important, gains our acquiescence in necessary changes. (p. 3) ... It is worth noting that the most persuasive advocates of the leisure society are themselves in little danger of finding themselves suddenly bereft of function. These are, for the most part, busy economists and futurologists, entrepreneurs who have

considerable stakes in leisure industries ... The path-finders of a leisure-dominated future are in no danger themselves of being overwhelmed by an excess of it. (p. 4) (Seabrook, 1988)

Seabrook discusses Veblen's concept of a 'leisure class' and notes that:

The existence of such a class has been replaced in recent years by the promise of a more generalized 'leisure society'. This implies that the advantages that were once the prerogative of a small minority are now going to be extended to all the people. (Seabrook, 1988: 9)

Seabrook is a journalist, so does not write in an academic style, with detailed references to the literature: indeed, there are only 16 such references in the whole book. Thus at no time does he indicate, even informally, who the proponents of the leisure society are. In the paragraph from which the last quotation is taken, Seabrook refers to Charles Handy and André Gorz as authors who have predicted reductions in the lifetime number of hours people will be required to be involved in the formal labour force; but, as noted above, these two do not espouse the idea of a 'leisure society'.

Finally, Seabrook states:

The promise of leisure is industrial society's response to all the contesting visions that have been evolving since the 1960s. It belongs securely to the growth-and-expansion dynamic of capitalist society and it is an appealing prospect to people whose lives have for so long been shaped by labour. This is why those of us who are sceptical of its liberating possibilities – who suspect that it is yet another mechanism whereby economic processes that are increasingly disarticulated from human need may survive – must be able to offer living versions of how we propose to transcend these plausible versions of a future leisure society. (Seabrook, 1988: 182)

The 'living version' offered by Seabrook is an 'alternative', anti-materialist, simple way of life, as proposed by the 'Life Style Movement', a UK-based organisation, now apparently defunct, which was devoted to developing of simpler lifestyles which made less use of the earth's resources.

1994: Stanley Aronowitz and William DiFazio, USA: The Jobless Future

As noted above, Rojek (2000: 48) attributes the idea of a leisure society to Aronowitz and DiFazio, in their book *The Jobless Future*. It has not been possible to find the expression 'leisure society' or 'society of leisure' in this book, and the authors' prescriptions for life in the 'jobless future' stop well short of such an idea. They seem to place much more emphasis on 'quasi work' than on leisure, as the following passage suggests:

If there is work to be done, everyone should do some of it; additional remuneration [over and above a 'national guaranteed income'] would depend on the type of work an individual performs. But shorter working days, longer vacations, and earlier retirement imply that most of us should never work anything like 'full time' as measured by the standards of the industrializing era. ... [but] ... Everyone would assume the responsibilities of producing and maintaining public goods, so no able citizen would be freed of the obligation to work. (Aronowitz and DiFazio, 1994: 353)

A curious passage concerning new roles for the social services, veers in the direction of 'leisure education', for children, but then seems to prescribe a mix of only vaguely defined, leisure-related and work-like activities:

Services such as health care..., education and social work would expand and be paid for through general tax levies, but, assuming a new perspective on 'jobs' and the division of labor, would shift their emphasis from work toward solving problems, exploring possibilities, and finding new ethical and social meaning.

School curricula, for example, could concentrate on broadening students' cultural purview: music, athletics, art, and science would assume a more central place in the curriculum and there would be a renewed emphasis on the aesthetic as well as the vocational aspects of traditional crafts. We suppose this would lead to a revival of what has become known as 'leisure studies': psychologists and sociologists would study, prescriptively as well as analytically, what people do with their time. Concomitantly, space and time themselves become objects both of knowledge and, in the more conventional science fiction sense, of personal and social exploration. Consequently, lifelong learning, travel, avocations, small business, and artisanship take on a new significance as they become possible for all people, not just the middle and upper classes. (Aronowitz and DiFazio, 1994: 353-54)

1995: Jeremy Rifkin, USA: The End of Work

Jeremy Rifkin's *The End of Work* was written in the early 1990s, at a time when 'the ranks of unemployed and underemployed' were 'growing daily in North America, Europe and Japan' (p. 5). In a reprise of some of the sentiments expressed by commentators in the 1930s, he observes:

Now, for the first time, human labor is being systematically eliminated from the production process. Within less than a century, 'mass' work in the market sector is likely to be phased out in virtually all of the industrialized nations of the world. A new generation of sophisticated information and communication technologies is being hurried into a wide variety of work situations. Intelligent machines are replacing human beings in countless tasks, forcing millions of blue and white collar workers into unemployment lines, or worse still, breadlines. Our corporate leaders and mainstream economists tell us that the rising unemployment figures represent short-term 'adjustments' to powerful market-driven forces that are speeding the global economy into a Third Industrial Revolution. They hold out the promise of an exciting new world of high-tech automated production, booming global commerce, and unprecedented material abundance. Millions of working people remain skeptical. (Rifkin, 1995: 3)

While acknowledging Juliet Schor's findings on the static or increasing level of working hours of American workers over the previous 40 years, Rifkin produces an array of evidence to suggest that there is an American, and worldwide, movement to reduce working hours and restore work-life balance, and concludes:

With millions of Americans facing the prospect of working fewer and fewer hours in the formal market sector in the coming years, and with increasing numbers of unskilled Americans unable to secure any work at all in the automated high-tech global economy, the question of the utilization of idle time is going to loom large over the political landscape. The transition from a society based on mass employment in the private sector to one based on non-market criteria for organizing of social life will require a rethinking of the current world view. Redefining the role of the individual in society absent of mass formal work is, perhaps, the seminal issue of the coming age. (Rifkin, 1995: 235)

By 'non-market criteria for organizing of social life' Rifkin is referring to the increased role for the 'third sector' or voluntary sector of society, which he sees as increasing in importance and thus absorbing time released from formal employment:

In the future, a growing number of people around the world will be spending less time on the job and have more time on their hands. Whether their 'free' time will be coerced, involuntary, and the result of forced part-time work, layoffs, and unemployment, or leisure made possible by productivity gains, shorter workweeks, and better income remains to be worked out in the political arena. If massive unemployment of a kind unknown in history were to occur as a result of the sweeping replacement of machines for human labor, then the chances of developing a compassionate and caring society and a world view based on transformation of the human spirit are unlikely. The more likely course would be widespread social upheaval, violence on an unprecedented scale, and open warfare, with the poor lashing out at each other as well as at the rich elites who control the global economy. If, instead, an enlightened course is pursued, allowing workers to benefit from increases in productivity with shorter workweeks and adequate income, more leisure time will exist than at any other period of modern history. The free time could be used to renew the bonds of community and rejuvenate the democratic legacy. A new generation might transcend the narrow limits of nationalism and begin to think and act as common members of the human race, with shared commitments to each other, the community, and the larger biosphere. (Rifkin, 1995: 248)

While Rifkin's predictions refer to the next 100 years, in the short term they were off the mark. The United States economy showed a remarkable ability to absorb labour, with the employed labour force growing from 126.5 million in 1995 to 146.9 million in 2008, while the unemployment rate grew barely at all, from 5.9% to 6.0%, in the same period, having bottomed at 4.2% in 2000 (Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics).

1999/2000: Ulrich Beck, Germany: The Brave New World of Work

In *The Brave New World of Work*, first published in German in 1999, Ulrich Beck, writing from a European perspective, describes what he terms, 'the Brazilianization of the West'. This involves a move from traditional full-time employment to the 'patchwork quilt of the South', characterised by high levels of unemployment, part-time work and insecurity (Beck, 2000: 1). Thus 'As global capitalism, in the countries of the West, dissolves the core values of the work society, a historical bond is broken between capitalism, welfare state and democracy' (Beck, 2000: 1). He presents 10 'future scenarios of work' which have been put forward by others and a final favoured one of his own:

1. the knowledge society
2. capitalism without work
3. the neoliberal jobs miracle
4. fixed location of work – a globalization of risk
5. sustainable work – the ecological miracle
6. global apartheid
7. the self-employed – freedom of insecurity
8. individualization of work – disintegration of society
9. multi-activity society
10. free-time society
11. post-national and political civil society.

Beck does not provide references to any proponents of the 'free-time society'. In this scenario he envisages 'a real danger that ... a new class division will emerge between the active and the passive'; the latter are people 'evicted from the labour process' who will be 'increasingly "degraded" by the culture industries into "entertainment patients totally in need of care"' (pp. 61-2).

He argues that the 'leisure society which appears alongside the work society ... should rediscover and develop "the art of squandering time"' (p. 62), but asserts that 'leisure and play are unthinkable without work (or anyway without social activity). ... In the absence of activity, compulsory leisure might easily become hell on earth' (p. 62).

Beck's favoured solution, the communitarian-sounding 'post-national and political civil society', is described as follows:

The counter-model to the work society is based not upon leisure but upon political freedom; it is a multi-activity society in which housework, family work, club work and voluntary work are prized alongside paid work and returned to the centre of public and academic attention. ... Those who wish to escape the spell of the work society must enter political society (in a new historical meaning of the term) – a society that gives material form to the idea of civil rights and transnational civil society, and thereby democratizes and gives new life to democracy. This is the horizon and the programmatic essence of the idea of civil labour ...' (Beck, 2000: 125)

2005: John Tribe, UK: *Trends in work and leisure: a leisure society?*

In his textbook, *The Economics of Recreation, Leisure and Tourism* (2005: 71-75) John Tribe presents a brief discussion entitled: 'Trends in work and leisure: a leisure society?' Using Joffre Dumazedier as a starting point (see Section 2 above), he addresses the question: 'Have we become a leisure society?' He describes the recent growth of commercial leisure products and industries, notably in entertainment and tourism, but highlights certain paradoxes.

1. The question as to whether leisure is becoming more solitary or more social.
2. The problems implicit in the idea that a 'Leisure Society' implies 'leisure for all', namely:
 - a. the involuntary leisure of the unemployed and poverty;
 - b. the lack of leisure in developing countries;
 - c. ambivalent data concerning working hours in the 'money rich, time poor' developed world.
3. The 'unleisurely' nature of much modern leisure – a reference to Linder's 'harried leisure class' (see above).
4. Individualism versus massification, related to the process of globalization (although).

The first of these seems to be an empirical question rather than a paradox and, like the last item, it is not clear how it is related to the leisure society idea. Item 2a. simply points to the ambivalence in the concept of 'we' in the initial question: the 'leisure society' idea is always seen as a feature of developed/post-industrial societies. Tribe concludes:

We are surrounded by the symbols and signals of a Leisure Society. Our economic circumstances surely permit us to live in a Leisure Society. That we do not always claim our leisure or feel the full pleasure of it is due partly to personal and partly to political choices. It is the latter which must cause some worry. Perhaps as leisure has displaced religion it has also become the new opium of the people. Where we used to work and pray we now work and play. This leaves insufficient time for participation in the politics of leisure and decisions about what kind of Leisure Society we want to create. For despite the obvious richness, diversity and accessibility of leisure experiences available we do not appear to be a Society of Leisure. Time seems ever more at a premium. We are not a calm or contemplative society. Rather we are a frenetic society that not only still works remarkably hard but now plays hard too. (Tribe, 2005: 74-75)

2009: Neil Ravenscroft & Paul Gilchrist, UK: *Emergent working society of leisure*

Neil Ravenscroft and Paul Gilchrist (2009) are unique in this review in appearing in Section 2 as a source of a contemporary recollection of the leisure society idea and appearing in one of the subsequent sections as a substantive contribution. Their research is presented in the context of Richard Florida's (2003) thesis on the rise of the 'creative class' and associated urban development strategies based on the stimulation of creative industries. In theory this gives rise to a new lifestyle – termed the *working society of leisure* – in which leisure is work-related (eg. the creative artists uses holiday experiences as a sources of inspiration) and less emphasis is placed on material consumption. On the basis of interviews with creative workers and graduates in a small English towns, Ravenscroft and Gilchrist conclude that the working society of leisure lifestyle is viable only for a few, those with sufficient resources to take the economic risk involved in embarking on the lifestyle. To some extent this reflects Newman's view (see above) of the 'new leisure class'. As with Newman, the nomenclature raises questions about what constitutes a type of *society* as opposed to a *class*, *class fraction* or *lifestyle*.

7. Summary and concluding observations

This paper was prompted by the 2006 Leisure Studies Association conference organisers' recollection of pronouncements on the subject of the 'leisure society' associated with the field of leisure studies in the 1950s and 1960s. This, and other recent recollections in the literature, as outlined in Section 2, observed that commentators of the 1950s and '60s, and later, conceived of a future 'leisure society' characterised by significantly reduced working hours for all, and a corresponding increase in leisure time, which would be unproblematically – indeed idyllically – absorbed by fulfilling leisure activities. Such a vision was now seen, in retrospect, as naive.

The paper comprised a review of a total of 68 contributions to what might loosely be called the leisure society debate. Table 1 draws together some of the features of these contributions. Some 18 authors considered to be leisure studies specialists are designated (L).

The notion of a leisure society did not arise in the literature until the 1920s, nevertheless two nineteenth century sources are cited. Alfred Marshall was included to show that the trade-off between working hours and leisure time were being considered at that time. Thorstein Veblen was included because some commentators have associated him with the leisure society concept, although he is known for his analysis of the *leisure class*. Clearly a leisure *society* is inconsistent with the idea that substantial leisure is confined to a single class. While Veblen saw the middle and working classes as emulating the wealthy leisure class, this was largely confined to *conspicuous consumption* rather than leisure.

Susan Currell, quoted in the introduction to Section 4, points out that increased leisure time was a topic of considerable popular interest in the United States during the 1920s and '30s and it would seem it is in this period that the origins of 'leisure society' thinking lie. Nevertheless, of the 11 sources reviewed from this period, six are concerned, not with some future state, idyllic or otherwise, but primarily with contemporary social and moral problems of increased leisure time already being observed. Only four sources speculate about the nature and possibility of a future with substantially increased leisure, and of these, three (Russell, Keynes and Mumford) express severe doubts about the preparedness of Western society to embrace or cope with such an eventuality. Only one commentator, Payne, promotes the idea of a leisure society (his 'Age of Leisure and Plenty'), but it should be noted that he was not an academic or a member of the commentariat, but was a somewhat eccentric one-man campaigner for a 4-hour working day and a non-materialistic lifestyle, whose pronouncements appeared to have had no influence on subsequent debates. Indeed, it would seem that only Keynes's comments provided a contribution to debates on work and leisure futures in later years.

Thirty of the sources reviewed, almost half the total, appeared in the period 1950-1979 and of these just 10 were from leisure specialists. The comments and analyses in this period emerged against the background of post-World War II economic growth and low unemployment and can be summarised under six headings: 1. future leisure society prediction; 2. the existing leisure society proposition; 3. the leisure civilisation challenge; 4. the leisure compensation thesis; 5. leisure time scepticism; 6. the self-service economy; 7. work ethic reform; and 8. practical considerations. These are discussed briefly below.

In the 1980s, '90s and 2000s the series of publications by British trade unionists Clive Jenkins and Barrie Sherman (their first book actually appeared in 1979) marked a new generation of commentators prompted not by the evolutionary growth of productivity and prosperity of the 1960s and early '70s, but by the crisis of rising unemployment brought about by the instability caused by the OPEC oil price rises of the 1970s. Despite the growth in the field of leisure studies, of the 21 sources reviewed from this period, only four are from leisure specialists. Perhaps because the concept had been associated with the earlier era, none of the commentators in this period predicted a forthcoming leisure society, indeed, seven reject the concept outright. It has been noted

Table 1. Summary of sources

Author	Date	Country	Title	Main argument
Marshall	1895	UK	Principles of Economics	The concept of a 'leisure society' is not discussed, but the issue of reduced working hours is. Marshall is in favour if reduced wages corresponded to reduced expenditure on 'superfluities', but generally against on the grounds that workers would not adapt easily to increased leisure.
Veblen (L)	1899	USA	The Theory of the Leisure Class	The 'leisure class' is an élite, characterised by 'conspicuous leisure' and 'conspicuous consumption'; in middle class households with working heads, emulation of both practices can be carried out vicariously by wives and children; but among the working class may be confined to emulation of conspicuous consumption only.
Lloyd	1922	USA	Ages of Leisure	Previous eras/ages of leisure were associated with youth or based on slavery: the new, third era/age is based on automation. In the past the wealthy, leisure elite have facilitated the development of art, literature, science, philosophy: the new leisure age can be expected to develop a new culture.
Mumford	1922/34	USA	Utopia/Technics and Civilization	1922: The Country House is analysed as a utopian phenomenon involving conspicuous leisure and consumption of the leisure class. 1934: A leisure society is a possibility – but society is not organised to achieve it.
Russell	1923	UK	In Praise of Idleness	A 4-hour working day would be possible if everybody worked – but not likely to be achieved.
Cutten	1926	USA	The Threat of Leisure	There is a moral problem in the inappropriate use of leisure – especially in the case of commercial provision driven by profit.
May & Petgen	1928	USA	Leisure and its Use	Inappropriate use of leisure = the problem of leisure.
Keynes	1930	UK	Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren	Reduced working hours offer possibilities for positive use of leisure, but society is ill-prepared.
Furnas	1932	USA	The Two-hour Working Day	Working hours will be greatly reduced in future and society should educate people to cope accordingly.
Nash (L)	1932	USA	Spectatoritis	Americans are using increased free time for passive recreational pursuits; they should be using the time to engage in 'creative arts', but seem ill-equipped to do so.
Miller	1933	USA	Labor and Challenge of the New Leisure	In the context of reduced working hours in the United States, a 'new society' is envisaged, founded on the 'new leisure': public investment in education for leisure as well as work is called for.
Pack	1934	USA	The Challenge of Leisure	Automation will reduce work but also make it increasingly repetitive and boring – leisure is the anti-dote/compensation.
Joad	1935	UK	Diogenes – Future of Leisure	A society without work is likely to lead to boredom, social instability and conflict.

Durant	1938	UK	The Problem of Leisure	As work in industrial society offers people less and less meaning and purpose, they look to leisure; but what is on offer from commercial providers is shallow and unsatisfying.
Payne	1939	USA	Why Work?	An 'Age of Leisure and Plenty' is possible, with a 4-hour working day and simpler living.
Friedmann	1956	France	The Anatomy of Work	Leisure cannot compensate for alienating work required by industry.
Riesman (L)	1950	USA	The Lonely Crowd	Initially suggests that leisure might offer scope for autonomy and meaning as this disappears from industrial working life, but later rejects this view, calling for humanisation of both work & leisure.
Ellul	1954	France	The Technological Society	Leisure is no solution to alienating work since leisure is also controlled by the industrial system, and any attempt to exercise real freedom in leisure would be frustrated by the system.
Soule	1955	USA	Time for Living	'Democratic leisure' is seen as potentially destructive but is also put forward as part of a 'new solution' to reduced working hours.
Marcuse	1955	USA	Eros and Civilization	Reflects Ellul in arguing that leisure is controlled by the industrial system, rather than being a realm of freedom.
Fromm	1956/91	USA	The Sane Society	Rejects the idea that leisure can compensate for alienating work in automated society; indeed, leisure itself would become equally controlled and alienated in such circumstances.
Lynes	1958	USA	Time on our Hands	Notes that the decline in working hours and increased leisure are posing problems for American society: a 'dilettante' approach is required to counter the work ethic.
Swados	1958	USA	Less Work – Less Leisure	Achievement of reduced working hours will not be as easy as most commentators suggest, but is inevitable in the long run – but society is ill-equipped to cope with the consequences.
Denney (L)	1959	USA	The Society of Leisure	The increased significance of leisure in American society is already posing challenges, with more to come: 'leisure society' not discussed explicitly.
Kerr <i>et al.</i>	1960	USA	Industrialism & Industrial Man	In a future 'pluralistic industrial society' work will not present challenges for most people but leisure will become 'the happy hunting ground of the independent spirit'.
Wilensky	1960	USA	Work, Careers and Social Integration	For the mass of workers, who lack 'careers', work is not engaging so meaning is sought outside of work; while the possibility of satisfying leisure is a promise, the danger is of an apathetic, materialistic lifestyle disengaged from the wider society.
Kaplan (L)	1960 & 1975	USA	Leisure in America & Leisure: Theory and Policy	Observes that the 'age of leisure' is already in existence in the USA in 1960. Paints an optimistic picture that the 'new leisure' will be used creatively. Speculates on a likely substantial reduction in working hours by 2000, but does not predict a leisure society.
ORRRC (L)	1962	USA	Outdoor Recreation for America	Reduced working hours and increased leisure time pose serious challenges for society.
Dumazedier (L)	1962	France	Toward a Society of Leisure	Leisure was already (in the 1960s) a major part of people's lives in developed economies. Future economic development, as exemplified by the USA, suggests increasing materialism, but leisure has the potential to counter such tendencies.

De Grazia (L)	1962	USA	Of Time, Work and Leisure	The idea of an imminent 'new age of leisure' is dismissed, and the basis for the prediction – increased leisure time resulting from reduced working hours – is challenged.
Gabor	1964	UK	Inventing the Future	Predicts an imminent 'Age of Leisure', but notes a number of 'defence mechanisms' which seek to resist it. The challenge in the Age of Leisure will be for the masses to use their time in creative pursuits.
Lee	1964	USA	Religion and Leisure in America	The 'new leisure society' is already upon us; the meaning of life will increasingly be found in leisure rather than work. This presents a moral challenge to which Protestants should respond.
Dower (L)	1965	UK	The Fourth Wave	Leisure is seen as the 'fourth wave', following three earlier waves which have broken across Britain: industrial urbanisation; railways; and car-based suburbs. Coping with demand for leisure in the countryside presents challenges to planners.
Kahn & Wiener	1967	USA	The Year 2000	A 'Leisure Orientated Society' is put forward as a plausible scenario for the year 2000, based on assumptions of a level of productivity growth in USA (3% pa) which did not eventuate. In later, 1976, projections the idea of a 'Leisure Orientated Society' is not mentioned but the growth of 'quaternary [largely leisure] activities' is discussed.
Galbraith	1967	USA	The New Industrial State	Under current conditions of 'demand management' by the industrial system, the evidence suggests that increasing productivity (and wage rates) will not result in more leisure but more consumption.
Burck	1970	USA	Less Leisure than you Think	Argues that the idea of a leisure society is a myth because 'the more time we save in making goods, the more time we spend in providing services' where scope for productivity growth is more limited. Provides projections of growth in services employment which were, if anything, conservative.
Roberts (L)	1970	UK	Leisure	Argues that, compared with earlier generations, Britain was already, in 1970, a 'society of leisure'. But in a later book he argues that 'talk of a leisure civilisation or society of leisure is misconceived'.
Linder	1970	Swed./US	The Harried Leisure Class	Rather than creating more leisure, the consumer society creates time scarcity caused by the need for time to consume and maintain the proliferation of consumer goods.
Toffler	1970/80	USA	Future Shock/Third Wave	<i>Future Shock</i> anticipates the growth of new technology-enabled leisure activities. <i>The Third Wave</i> ignores this, but discusses time spent in 'pro-suming'.
Parker (L)	1971	UK	The Future of Work & Leisure	Concerned with a balance between work and leisure ('holistic' approach): does not mention the leisure society.
Bates	1971	USA	Social Trends in a Leisure Society	Despite the title, the leisure society is not mentioned in the body of the paper.
Sessoms (L)	1972	USA	Recreation	The Age of Leisure is <i>now</i> (1972). Expresses apprehension about the mis-use of increased leisure time.
House of Lords	1973	UK	Sport and Leisure	A continuing slow reduction in working hours is anticipated, but this will not alter the main challenge to leisure providers because demand will still be concentrated in peak periods.

Bell	1973	USA	Coming of Post-Industrial Society	Inaccurately associates Riesman with the leisure society but does not himself predict a utopian leisure society.
Kando (L)	1975	USA	Toward a leisure society?	Conditions (prosperity etc.) exist for a leisure society, but US society is incapable of embracing it.
Gershuny	1978	UK	Self-service Economy	Reduced demand for labour in the formal economy will be taken up by domesticated work in the 'self-service economy'. (see also Toffler, Gorz, Robertson)
Jenkins/Sherman	1979-86	UK	The Collapse of Work	Predict a continuing reduction in working hours and call for leisure planning and provision to be taken seriously, but do not predict a leisure society.
Various	1979-89	UK	Alternative 'ethics'	A number of authors argue for the replacement of the work ethic with a variety of alternative ethics, to enable society to cope with an era of lower labour requirements.
Vickerman (L)	1980	UK	The New Leisure Society	Despite the title, the concept of a leisure society is not discussed.
Gorz	1980	France	Farewell to the Working Class	The working class have the opportunity to reduce their working hours in the formal, capitalist, economy and devote their time to 'self-defined activity' – much of it domesticated work (see also Toffler, Gershuny, Robertson)
Ecology Party	1981	UK	Working for a Future	The idea of a 'self-sustaining post-industrial 'Leisure Society"' is dismissed.
Kelly (L)	1982	USA	Future of Leisure	Is dismissive of the concept of an 'age of leisure', partly because of environmental limitations to material production.
Jones	1982	Australia	Sleepers Wake!	The idea of an 'age of leisure' is introduced, with a question mark added, but not pursued in detail. Education is put forward as a solution to the possible negative effects of reduced work and increased leisure time.
Newman	1983	Australia	The Coming of a Leisure Society?	Rejects the thesis that free and creative leisure can compensate for controlled work and consumption on the grounds that leisure is controlled too and that a balanced work-consumption-leisure lifestyle (equated with 'leisure society') is not available to the working class.
Ruthven	1983	Australia	Future Economic & Social Environment	Predicts changes in leisure patterns by 2000, based on an excess of labour in the Australian economy, to be absorbed by reduced working hours, but these predictions proved inaccurate.
Stonier	1983	UK	Wealth of Information	Information is seen as the emerging new basis for advanced economies. Projects a fall in working hour, but does not explore the leisure implications.
Handy	1984	UK	The Future of Work	Argues that continued full-employment conditions will not be viable, so predicts a reduction of 50% in hours in a working life for the masses. Describes a possible future 'leisure scenario' as unrealistic, but does not explore the leisure implications of reduced working hours.
Porritt	1984	UK	Seeing Green	Dismisses the 'mega-fantasy of the 'leisure society"' and rejects the possibility that capitalist society could develop or sustain a leisure society.

Robertson	1985	UK	Future Work	Rejects the possibility of a leisure society because: 1. people want to contribute; 2. those in work would resent those at leisure; 3. funding those at leisure would be problematical; 4. people at leisure would inevitably look for work of various kinds. His solution is the development of 'ownwork'.
Rose	1985	UK	Re-working the Protestant Ethic	The idea that leisure might take on the 'central cultural importance of work' is 'fashionable nonsense'.
Novek	1985	USA	Is the Automated Paradise Possible?	Expresses doubts that, in an automated economy in which the labour of the masses is not required, income transfer to a non-employed population is plausible because non-work cannot replace the role of work as a medium of social integration and participation.
Veal (L)	1987	UK	Leisure and the Future	Suggests that, compared with the beginning of the 20 th century with its 70-hour working weeks, today's economically advanced societies could be called leisure societies.
Seabrook	1988	UK	The Leisure Society	Dismisses predictions of a leisure society as a cynical unfulfillable promise to the worker. Offers an 'alternative', anti-materialist future lifestyle.
Aronowitz & DiFazio	1994	USA	The Jobless Future	'Shorter working days, longer vacations and earlier retirement' are envisaged and education is envisaged as being more culturally orientated, but the 'leisure society' idea is not mentioned.
Rifkin	1995	USA	The End of Work	Predicts a marked reduction for labour in the formal economy, to be absorbed by increased involvement in the voluntary sector.
Beck	1999/00	Germany	Brave New World of Work	The 'free-time society' is one of a number of future scenarios discussed. But his favoured solution to the reduction in demand for labour in the formal economy is not leisure but the communitarian 'multi-activity society'.
Tribe	2005	UK	Trends ... a leisure society?	The idea of a Leisure Society involves a number of paradoxes, and while the economic circumstances exist for a Leisure Society, individual and political factors have resulted in society being more rather than less work-orientated.
Ravenscroft & Gilchrist (L)	2009	UK	The Emergent Working Society of Leisure	Observes that some with careers in creative industries may be seen as adopting a lifestyle which might be termed a 'working society of leisure', but this is class-based rather than democratic.

(L) = Leisure studies specialist

above that a number of the contributions from this period can be associated with the 'self-service economy' idea: the others can be summarised broadly under two further headings: 9. leisure time ambivalence; 10. leisure society rejection. The ten topics are discussed in turn below.

1. The leisure compensation thesis

In the 1950s, a sequence of commentators – Friedman, Ellul, Marcuse, Fromm, Wilensky – discussed the proposition, put by others, that ever more monotonous and alienating industrial work could be compensated for by a reduction in working hours and therefore substantially more leisure time and the attachment of increased meaning to leisure. However, even with reduced working hours, these writers concluded that this was not possible or appropriate and that, in any case, under capitalism, leisure would be equally controlled and alienating. Unlike the above commentators, Kerr *et al.*, although discussing the issue only briefly, seem to be content with the idea of leisure as compensation, or the 'happy hunting ground of the independent spirit'. The appropriate response was to resist the dehumanisation of work. David Riesman, also writing at this time, and the only leisure specialist among the group, at first cautiously suggested that leisure might play this compensating role, but later (in 1961) rejected this view. Lynes discusses this issue and implies that leisure could assume a new role with the assistance of 'dilettantes' to lead the change in values. Newman also addresses the issue but does not pursue it.

2. Future leisure society prediction

Just three commentators actually predicted a *future* leisure society:

- in 1922 *Alfred Lloyd* argued that industrial society was facing a new 'age of leisure' which, despite possible dangers, offered the possibility of developing a new culture;
- journalist, *David Dempsey*, while sceptical about the reality of claimed increased leisure time in the 1950s, asserted that American society was 'standing nervously on the threshold' of the 'Age of Leisure'; and
- *Denis Gabor*, in 1964, predicted an imminent 'Age of Leisure', although he noted considerable systemic resistance to such a development in Western societies.

Also in the 1960s, futurists Herman Kahn and Anthony Wiener came close to predicting a future leisure society when they designated one of a number of possible 'future scenarios' for the year 2000 as the 'leisure-orientated society'. They are alone in exploring possible implications for leisure behaviour, which they did in relation to various social classes. But the scenario was predicated on 3% annual growth in productivity in the USA economy for the rest of the century and this never eventuated. As noted above, had the 3% growth rate been achieved, productivity would have increased by 150% by the end of the century, but at 2% per annum the increase was only 85%. Experience earlier in the century had shown that in conditions of high productivity growth, part of the 'dividend' had been taken in reduced working hours, while wages and profits had simultaneously increased. Kahn's later predictions, published in 1976, did not include the 'leisure-orientated society', but neither did he explain why the 'leisure-orientated society' was no longer a realistic prospect.

3. The existing leisure society proposition

Four contributors, Max Kaplan, Kenneth Roberts and H. Douglas Sessoms, both leisure specialists, and Robert Lee, asserted that the 'society of leisure' (or the 'Age of Leisure' in the words of Kaplan and Sessoms) was *already* being experienced in Western societies. This was also implied, but not explicitly stated, by Denney. But Roberts, having asserted this in 1970, was expressing caution by

1975 and in 1978 he rejected the idea entirely. Similarly, Kaplan gave considerable prominence to the proposition that an Age of Leisure was already in existence in 1960, but did not use the term in his 1975 book. The proposition that current society might be termed a 'leisure society', compared with the beginning of the twentieth century, was also mentioned in a 1980s contribution (Veal).

It is curious that these pronouncements were not a matter for debate at the time they were made, or since. Can a society in which the paid workforce enjoy a 35-40 hour working week, four weeks annual holiday, ten or so public holidays and retirement at 60-65 be described as a 'leisure society' or not? If not, to what level would paid (and unpaid) work have to fall for the term leisure society to be appropriate? This has never apparently been discussed. Alternatively, to use Kenneth Roberts's qualitative definition: did the leisure activities in which people participated in advanced industrial societies in the 1960s play a sufficiently 'significant part in the development of their sense of self-identity' for society to be designated a leisure society or not? If not, how much more significant would it have to be (and how would this be assessed?), or should some other criterion be used? This also has never been discussed, even by Roberts himself.

A variation on the theme of an existing, or pre-existing, leisure society is the frequent reference to ancient Greek civilisation as a leisure society facilitated for citizens by the existence of slavery. Lewis Mumford's analysis of the Country House culture depicts a leisure society enjoyed by a privileged leisure class displaying conspicuous leisure and conspicuous consumption, and suggests that the culture developed in such an environment had considerable influence on the wider and subsequent consumer culture.

4. The leisure civilisation challenge

Despite the title of the English translation of his most famous book, Joffre Dumazedier dismissed utopian notions of a 'leisure society' but spoke of the 'possible advent of a leisure civilisation' which is 'not a golden age starting tomorrow' but 'a set of new social and cultural problems which, to be solved *tomorrow*, must be seriously considered *today*'. The civilisation of leisure was a changed set of values and institutions required to deal with a phenomenon, leisure, which was already 'the very central element in the *life*-culture of millions upon millions of workers'.

While Arthur Lloyd's 1922 essay did predict an 'Age of Leisure', his concern was with the need to develop a 'new culture' as a product of, and to complement, the 'new leisure' and similar sentiments were expressed by Spencer Miller in 1933.

5. Leisure time growth scepticism

On the basis of observations of past trends in working hours, typically from the beginning of the twentieth century, the majority of commentators accepted the view that working hours would continue to fall in future, but a number questioned even this proposition:

- Swados suggested that reducing working hours would be slower and more difficult than generally assumed;
- De Grazia, supported later by updated data from Kando, challenged the view that leisure time had been increasing since World War II;
- Linder argued that any fall in working hours had been absorbed by the time demands of modern living;
- Burck predicted the massive growth in service-sector jobs which coincided with the reduction in demand for manufacturing labour; and
- Galbraith predicted that, as a result of 'demand management' in industrial societies, people would continue to preference incomes and consumption over increased leisure time.

6. The self-service economy

Two contributions, Alvin Toffler and Jonathan Gershuny, see reduced demand for labour in the formal as being taken up not by leisure, but by unpaid work in the home or in the voluntary sector. This is also taken up by later commentators in the 1980s and '90s: André Gorz, uses the term 'self-defined activity' and sees it as a way for workers to disengage from capitalism; James Robertson, uses the term 'own work'; Jeremy Rifkin, who refers to traditional voluntary work; and Ulrich Beck, proposes a communitarian 'multi-active society'.

7. *Work ethic reform*

A number of British commentators in the 1980s suggested, in the context of continuing high unemployment, that in order for society and the economy to cope with the changed labour market situation, the *work ethic* would need to be replaced, somehow, with an alternative 'ethic', such as a 'usefulness ethic', a 'resourcefulness ethic', a 'life ethic', a 'non-work ethic' or a 'leisure ethic'. The education systems was expected to achieve this.

8. *Practical concerns*

In three cases (ORRRC, House of Lords, Dower), the reduction in work time and predicted increase in leisure time is not explored in sociological terms but in terms of relatively narrow policy and planning concerns, particularly the increased pressure on countryside recreation infrastructure.

9. *Leisure time ambivalence*

A number of commentators predict continuing reductions in working hours and increased leisure time, but provided only a limited, if any, exploration of the consequences of this. Among these are:

- Jenkins and Sherman, who do call for more leisure service planning and provision;
- Barry Jones, who appears to see education as filling the additional leisure time hours;
- Charles Handy, who envisages a 50% reduction in working hours but sees a future 'leisure scenario' as unrealistic; and
- Aronowitz and DiFazio, who envisage shorter working days, longer vacations and earlier retirement in future, but do not explore this either quantitatively or qualitatively.

10. *Leisure society rejection*

The leisure society concept is rejected by different groups of commentators on different grounds:

- the self-service economy proponents, as above, basically give preference to a society based on some form of work, rather than leisure;
- the debates of the 1950s and '60s as to whether leisure could replace work as a source of meaning in people's lives provides the grounds for rejection by Jeremy Seabrook, Michael Rose, Joel Novek and James Robertson;
- representatives of the green movement appear to equate leisure with material consumption, and Jack Kelly rejects the concept largely on similar grounds;
- a number of the commentators referred to in Section 2, and some of those listed as 'passing references' dismiss the concept on empirical grounds: that is, on the grounds that the anticipated reductions in working hours have not materialised.

We began with a two-part proposition: 1. that early (1960s?) leisure studies was preoccupied with the concept of a predicted future idyllic leisure society; and 2. that the prediction of continually falling working hours and increasing leisure time was faulty.

Regarding the first proposition, this review has established that this was an exaggeration. It is true that, with few exceptions, it was widely accepted among leisure scholars in the post-World War II period – through to the 1980s – that reductions in working hours would continue into the future. But the relationship between this belief and the idea of a 'leisure society' was complex. Furthermore, the leisure society concept seems to have had more salience outside of mainstream leisure studies than within it. In the social sciences, accounts of the history of the development of a field of study, such as leisure studies, are important because the key debates about concepts and competing theories which constitute that history often embody the very essence of the field. While any human activity can, of course, be said to have a number of *histories*, which vary depending on the point of view or purpose of the recorder, we should at least attempt to record events as faithfully as possible. Thus to characterise early leisure studies as being significantly concerned with the idea of a utopian 'leisure society' is misleading.

The second proposition relates to empirical evidence and the evidence is unclear and open to multiple interpretations – hence the proposal to prepare a companion paper on the evidence regarding trends in work/leisure time. One of the difficulties in relating such evidence to the leisure society concept is that no definitive models of a 'leisure society', whether quantitative or qualitative, emerge from the literature, so the parameters with which empirical evidence might be compared are non-existent.

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