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Leisure Capital
Sydney and the Post-war Leisure Boom

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This paper presents an overview of a research project undertaken by the Urban Typologies Research Group within the Faculty of Built Environment at the University of New South Wales. The aim of this project has been to examine urban and architectural typologies devoted to the pursuit of leisure and pleasure within Sydney between the years 1945 and 1970. During this period, leisure time and holidaying became a "mass phenomenon" within Australia, largely facilitated by major changes in legislation in regard to annual leave, the two-day weekend, the 40 hour week and long service leave. This democratisation of leisure not only stimulated the proliferation, enhancement and diversification of existing typologies such as hotels, clubs and restaurants but also the emergence of new leisure-related facilities, such as drive-ins, shopping centres and motels. Some of Sydney's most significant post-war structures, for example, include hotels such as the Wentworth Hotel built between 1962 and 1966, shopping centres such as Roselands opened in 1965 and restaurants such as the revolving Summit atop Australia Square, completed in 1967. Importantly, many of these landmark environments were the products of private enterprise and development, exemplifying the way in which the public desire for well managed and maintained recreational and leisure spaces was met by private interest. Significantly, they also embodied a desire for the modern and the new that was frequently expressed in a modernist idiom.

After introducing the project, the paper will chart aspects of the development of leisure in Sydney during the "long boom" of the 1950s and 1960s. It will then draw upon literature from the field of leisure studies to outline a number of theoretical considerations that inform the investigation.

In June 2011, the NSW Government established its Visitor Economy Taskforce charged with developing a strategy to double the overnight tourist expenditure in NSW by 2020. The Taskforce's report, released in August 2012, recommended that bold action be taken by the government in partnership with industry to achieve this ambitious target. Subsequently, the government released its response in the form of an Action Plan, but the most public reaction came from James Packer who cited the findings of the Taskforce in advocating for the construction of a new world-class hotel resort as part of the Barangaroo development. He stated, "A world-class landmark resort on Sydney Harbour can be the catalyst to help turn the city around, just as Crown assisted in the turnaround of Melbourne."[1] Such a development, in Packer's view, would draw millions of visitors to Sydney by dramatically improving the city's attractiveness as a location for international conferences, conventions and major events.[2]

Captured by John Hannigan in his book *Fantasy City: Pleasure and Profit in the Postmodern Metropolis*, faith in the entertainment and leisure economy to drive investment in cities reached new heights in the 1990s and Packer's view is a continuation of this.[3] The principal forces are in alignment: a government-sponsored growth strategy and the creation of a public-private partnership consisting of powerful entertainment and real estate developers. Packer's argument for a Crown-led Sydney renaissance was soon followed by the release of plans for a new billion-dollar entertainment precinct at Darling Harbour. Consisting of new exhibition and convention centres (replacing the old ones) and more hotel facilities, all will be built by the same developer as Packer's hotel resort.[4]

By no means is this a new phenomenon for Sydney—its modern identity has been fashioned through the construction of large entertainment and leisure-based projects as a means of projecting the city into the future. An early example is the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879.[5] More recently, the campaign mounted in the 1950s for a new international luxury hotel to cater for a burgeoning American tourist market is strongly echoed in present-day arguments that centre on the idea of primary catalysts, such as hotels and casinos, as a means of improving Sydney's international profile and drawing visitors to the city.[6]

1. James Packer, "For the good of Sydney, back this plan," *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 3-4, 2012, 13.

2. Packer, "For the good of Sydney, back this plan," 13.

3. John Hannigan, *Fantasy City: Pleasure and Profit in the Postmodern Metropolis* (London: Routledge, 1998).

4. Leesha McKenny and Nicole Hasham, "Darling Harbour born again," *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 12, 2012, 1.

5. See Peter Proudfoot, Roslyn Maguire and Robert Freestone, eds., *Colonial City, Global City: Sydney's International Exhibition 1879* (Darlinghurst, NSW: Crossing Press, 2000).

6. See "Hilton Hotels will Bring Prosperity Here," *Hotel and Cafe News* 32, no. 4 (April 1957): 16-17 & 29.

The Urban Typologies Research Group within the Faculty of Built Environment at the University of New South Wales has undertaken an investigation into places designed for leisure and pleasure in modern Sydney. The group consists of a collection of architecture, interior architecture, landscape architecture and planning experts and historians, allowing for an inter-disciplinary discourse on leisure spaces, from planning policy perspectives through to material construction and furnishing. The group chose to focus on the period 1945 to 1970 because of the significant growth in the leisure economy and leisure-related spaces during this time. The high demand for leisure spaces commanded modern design responses involving some of Australia's leading architects and designers. Cultural histories, notably Jim Davidson's and Peter Spearritt's Holiday Business and Richard White's On Holidays highlight the emergence and development of particular typologies to support tourist and holiday activities.[7] Community: Building Modern Australia, edited by Hannah Lewi and David Nichols, studies municipal building types of the post-war period, designed in part for leisure.[8] However, to date there has been no published study that focuses exclusively on leisure-related facilities of the post-war period. Nor has there been a comprehensive investigation into the impact of mid-century modernism on Sydney's built environment.[9] Perhaps most significantly in the context of the study, research on the role and forms of private enterprise involved in the provision of leisure-related environments in post-war Australia is sadly lacking. This paper explores the extent and significance of this involvement firstly through an overview of the social and economic context of the period and secondly through a discussion of several theoretical considerations drawn from the field known as "leisure studies".

Leisure in Sydney during the "Long Boom"

In their book *The Sociology of Leisure*, John R. Kelly and Geoffrey Godbey describe how the daily use of leisure was radically reshaped in the post-war years within North America. A post-war economic boom resulted in a material standard of living that was "the envy of the world."[10] Kelly and Godbey describe how leisure became big business in the post-war period and, within many American states, tourism became the second or third largest industry. The advent of mass leisure marked this period:

7. Jim Davidson and Peter Spearritt, *Holiday Business: Tourism in Australia since 1870* (Carlton, Vic.: Miegunyah Press, 2000); Richard White, *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia* (Melbourne: Pluto Press, 2005).

8. Hannah Lewi and David Nichols, eds., *Community: Building Modern Australia* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2010).

9. The ground-breaking *Modern Times: The Untold Story of Modernism in Australia*, edited by Ann Stephen, Philip Goad and Andrew McNamara, began this process with its investigation of the influence of modernism on Australian design culture from 1917 to 1968. See Ann Stephen, Philip Goad and Andrew McNamara, eds., *Modern Times: The Untold Story of Modernism in Australia* (Carlton, Vic.: Miegunyah Press in association with Powerhouse Publishing, Sydney, 2008).

10. John R. Kelly and Geoffrey Godbey, *The Sociology of Leisure* (State College, PA: Venture Publishing, 1992), 87.

The post-World War II era was one in which leisure opportunity was greatly expanded for millions of people. While poverty and discrimination continued to exist, the majority of the population had a greatly expanded array of leisure opportunities within their grasp. Leisure was becoming more legitimate if earned by work. Leisure, for many, was no longer a short period of catharsis after work but gradually became the quest for pleasure and, eventually, meaning.[11]

11. Kelly and Godbey, *The Sociology of Leisure*, 89.

Richard White's study *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia* identifies a similar shift in attitude and opportunity in the post-war period. According to White, "the hey-day of the holiday" in this country was 1945 to 1975. Before the Second World War "the middle classes had had a monopoly on the holiday, as they used conspicuous leisure to define their identity and assert their privilege."[12] The decades following the end of the war however saw the holiday become "a mass phenomenon."[13]

12. White, *On Holidays*, 118.

13. White, *On Holidays*, 121.

Similar to the United States and other industrialised nations around the world, Australia experienced an economic boom in the post-war period. It in fact began when the depression lifted in 1940 and continued until 1970. As Australian economist, Rodney Maddock, has observed:

> The period of the "long boom" was clearly one of the outstanding epochs in the history of the country. Not only were the people richer as a result, but there were a lot more people. Seven million Australians had become twelve and a half. The economy thus had operated to provide 80 percent more people double the standard of living that had been enjoyed thirty years earlier.[14]

14. Rodney Maddock, "The long boom 1940-1970," in *The Australian Economy in the Long Run*, ed. Rodney Maddock and Ian W. McLean (Cambridge and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 79.

Maddock also notes that unlike the normal pattern of the global boom, Australia did not experience rapid growth in the public sector "so that the extension of the boom after the war period is explained best by the development of private industry, although such public policies as high immigration targets were important."[15]

15. Maddock, "The Long Boom 1940-1970," 82.

In an environment of wage growth, high levels of household formation, accelerated population growth and an economy that was operating close to full employment, the demand for goods

and services dramatically increased. According to Greg Whitwell's study of the growth of consumerism in Australia in the post-war period:

> Gone were the days when the income of a relatively large percentage of households covered little more than the basic necessities of life: food, clothing and accommodation. There emerged instead a new situation in which a clear and expanding majority of households enjoyed a disposable income (increasingly) above that needed to provide for the essentials of everyday existence. It was at the discretion of households to decide when and how they would use the "surplus" income.[16]

16. Greg Whitwell, *Making the Market: The Rise of Consumer Society* (Fitzroy, Vic.: McPhee Gribble, 1989), 4.

This is not to suggest that this was a period of universal affluence. Poverty persisted within some segments of society[17] and the "long boom" was not without its recessions.[18] Overall, however, living standards for a large percentage of the population greatly improved and, by 1970, per capita consumption was double what it had been in 1940.[19]

17. Whitwell, Making the Market, 26-27.

18. Recessions occurred in 1957/58, 1961/62 and 1965/66.

19. Maddock, "The Long Boom 1940-1970," 79.

The opportunity to consume leisure along with white goods and motor cars was greatly facilitated by major changes to industrial law. Over the period 1941 to 1965 for example, successive Labor governments in New South Wales largely led the way in legislating for paid annual leave and long service leave as well as a full two-day weekend and a 40 hour week. As White succinctly notes, "The working classes gained access to what had been denied them before the war: not simply more money and more job security but more time."[20]

20. White, *On Holidays*, 121.

The democratisation of leisure inevitably led to increased resources, both public and private, being devoted to the development of leisure-related facilities. Concerned with issues of community health, welfare and accessibility, publicly funded facilities rarely deviated from the traditional offerings of parks, sporting ovals, bowling greens, swimming pools, tennis courts, children's playgrounds, beach pavilions and occasionally golf courses. Private, or at least corporate, investment was more alert to current trends and opportunities and more agile in its response. Its interests were largely directed towards three primary areas: hospitality (including accommodation), entertainment and retail. While many of the associated building types already existed, notably hotels, restaurants, bars and

shops, they became more complex and diverse and occasionally more sophisticated in terms of the range and quality of services accommodated. There was also an expansion of non-commercial but private ventures related to leisure, the dramatic growth in leagues clubs around Sydney being a prime example. There were also the many and various ethnic clubs/centres that were established in the city and suburbs, reflecting the unprecedented level and diversity of immigration to Australia in the decades following the war. New typologies directly imported from America also appeared, such as motels, drive-ins and shopping centres. All were dependent on the mobility that attended the rapid growth of car ownership in Australia after the war, but drive-ins and shopping centres were also a direct outcome of the great post-war drift to the suburbs. As geographer, Clive Forster has observed, "Economic growth, population increase, and a massive rise in automobile ownership interacted, together with government housing and planning policies, to fuel a seemingly unstoppable chain reaction of metropolitan expansion and suburbanisation."[21]

21. Clive Forster, *Australian Cities: Continuity and Change*, 2nd ed. (South Melbourne, Vic., and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 18.

The type, range and proliferation of leisure and pleasure-related facilities in Australia, and particularly in Sydney during the "long boom", were all stimulated by a new emphasis on tourism and its development as an industry. In 1964, the Australian National Travel Association (ANTA) commissioned two New York consultancies to undertake a study of the country's tourism industry. Published in 1966, the study revealed that the volume of international visitors to Australia had increased 147% over the period 1958 to 1964.[22] It also reported that Sydney with "its veritable galaxy of things to do and see" was "a major destination area, the main port of arrival of overseas visitors by air and sea, and a principal business and financial centre of Australia. It is estimated that 90% of all overseas visitors stay in Sydney during part of their visit."[23]

22. Harris, Kerr, Forster & Company and Stanton Robbins & Co., Inc., *Australia's Travel and Tourist Industry 1965* (Melbourne: Australian National Travel Association, 1966), 14.

23. Harris, Kerr, Forster & Company and Stanton Robbins & Co., Inc., *Australia's Travel and Tourist Industry 1965*, 171-72.

Sydney's claim to being Australia's gateway city was reinforced in 1960 with the opening of a new overseas passenger shipping terminal at Circular Quay and a new international air terminal in 1970. Within two years, more than one million overseas visitors and returning Australians were flying into Sydney.[24] But while natural attractions as well as cultural, sporting and retail diversions may have provided sufficient interest for the tourist, by the mid-1960s the supply of accommodation, as well as the number of high quality restaurants and bars in the city centre, were seen to be in need of a substantial boost.[25]

24. Peter Spearritt, *State of Play: 100 Years of Tourism in New South Wales 1905-2005* (Sydney: Tourism New South Wales, 2005), 44.

25. See, for example, Harris, Kerr, Forster & Company and Stanton Robbins & Co., Inc., *Australia's Travel and Tourist Industry 1965*, 151 & 189.

The metropolitan expansion and suburbanisation of Sydney during the "long boom" had a massive impact on the city's heart, not only in terms of its shape and scale, but also its texture. While "opportunities for employment, entertainment and other diversions continued to flourish in the centre,"[26] the resident population dramatically dwindled, moving to the suburbs along with many industries. At the same time, the city's rise as a financial hub was mirrored in the extensive redevelopment of the central business district. As described by geographers Phillip O'Neill and Pauline McGurik:

> Glass, concrete and steel began to shadow the old sandstones, the consequence of property investments from mutual funds societies like AMP, real estate corporations like Lend Lease, US interlopers like IBM and Caltex and a rapidly growing federal government legion of employees in departments like immigration, taxation and social security.[27]

26. Peter Spearritt, *Sydney Since the Twenties* (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1978), 252.

27. Phillip M. O'Neill and Pauline McGuirk, "Reconfiguring the CBD: Work and Discourses of Design in Sydney's Office Space," *Urban Studies* 40, no. 9 (2003): 1751-1767.

28. Davidson and Spearritt, *Holiday Business*, 115.

29. Davidson and Spearritt, *Holiday Business*, 115.

Significantly, the rapacious level of office block development that occurred in Sydney during the 1960s involved substantial destruction of existing and historic fabric. This included the demolition of most of the city's "grand pre-war hotels": the Hotel Australia, Metropole, Arcadia, Adams, Sydney, Ushers and Grand Central.[28]

To counter the shortfall in accommodation for tourists and business travellers, a number of large luxury hotels were erected in the city centre in the 1960s and early 1970s, namely the Menzies Hotel, built by the Project Development Corporation, the Wentworth Hotel, financed by the national airline Qantas, and in the early 1970s, the internationally-backed Sydney Hilton. All met international standards in terms of spatial and functional requirements, including high-end restaurants and bars and a sufficient level of glamour to attract a discerning clientele. Ironically, however, more spacious rooms and suites meant fewer guests per square metre resulting in no net gain in the number of rooms central Sydney could offer.[29]

The largest concentration of hotels and motels could instead be found in Kings Cross-Potts Point, an area conveniently close to the city centre and a traditional tourist haunt. A significant number of these buildings were highly ambitious schemes, beginning with Stanley Korman's ill-fated Sydney Chevron-Hilton, opened in 1960. More successful was the 18-storey, circular shaped Gazebo Motor Hotel opened in 1969. Managed

by the internationally affiliated Master Hosts, the motor hotel was designed by Design and Construction Consultants Pty Ltd, part of the Fischer Group that built it. Representing a new hybrid typology that became common in Sydney and other urban centres, the Gazebo combined all the convenience of a motel, such as on-site parking and fully self-contained suites, with all the sophistication and facilities afforded by a luxury hotel, such as a high-end restaurant, bars and indoor swimming pool.

Designed in a range of modernist or modernist-inspired idioms, the Gazebo Motor Hotel together with restaurants such as Oliver Shaul's revolving Summit atop Australia Square, and suburban icons such as Roselands Shopping Centre and the St George's Leagues Club, constitute some of Sydney's most significant post-war structures and environments. They provide a small sample of the varied leisure and pleasure-related typologies that came to populate the urban and suburban landscapes of the boom years. Importantly, these projects also serve to indicate the diverse nature of private investment in leisure and pleasure-related space over this period, their impetus and financial backing being variously derived from suburban families, corporations and high profile entrepreneurs.

Theoretical Considerations

The private sector of leisure provision is generally understood to consist of both commercial and non-commercial (i.e. non profit-making) providers. In order to further explore this type of leisure provision, the next section of the paper draws upon literature connected to the field known as "leisure studies", an area of research and discourse that emerged in the 1960s springing from the study of leisure and work relations by social scientists. The growth of a number of academic associations and research centres in the 1970s and 1980s broadened the range of theoretical interests and perspectives brought to bear on the interpretation of leisure.[30] Delving into this literature has been an informative and fruitful exercise not only for understanding the intellectual history of leisure studies and the various disciplinary influences on it but also for the more specific purpose of building a theoretical context for the investigation.

30. See Lesley Lawrence and Stan Parker, eds., *Leisure Studies: Trends in Theory and Research* (Eastbourne, UK: Leisure Studies Association, 2002) for reflections on disciplinary interactions within the field of leisure studies.

1. **The Commercial Provision of Leisure**

Unlike the public provision of leisure, the attention and value given to the commercial provision of leisure within theoretical discourse is less than appropriate or deserving. This is the view of Fred Coalter, professor of sports policy at the University of Sterling, who has reviewed leisure studies literature in this context. In 2000 he claimed, "the various perspectives in leisure studies have largely concentrated on providing a negative critique of ideologies of consumerism and the supposed 'passivity' of commercial leisure, often juxtaposed to the supposedly more 'participatory' and inclusive nature of public leisure provision."[31] This bias toward public leisure provision has meant "that the nature and the importance of commercial provision of leisure have largely been ignored."[32] One of the main reasons is its association with the profit-making imperatives of business in the production and reproduction of consumer demand. Coalter states that critical assessments of commercialised leisure tend to be made through the "ideology of consumption" rather than the systematic sociological analysis of experiences that are "significant components of human life."[33] He has summarised the different perspectives within leisure studies that share a "common aversion" to commercialised leisure. He begins with Marxist theory that sees leisure in terms of the capitalist economy and cultural domination where leisure, being in the service of consumerism, acts as a form of social control in the creation of "false needs" and an illusionary sense of freedom and free choice.[34] Even if consumerism provides real satisfactions and enjoyment, it does so within the constraints of the capitalist system.

Along with this "pessimistic Marxism", Coalter discusses the more optimistic neo-Marxist cultural studies argument that for certain consumers and consumer groups, consumption can function as "counter-hegemonic practice." Here consumers are not considered as "cultural dupes" but engaged in a process of identity formation which can involve the subversion of, and resistance to, traditional meanings associated with commodities.[35] Coalter provides the example of how young people, often the primary users of commercialised leisure, engage in commodity appropriation "at a time in the life course when identity crystallisation outside the constraints of adult institutions

31. Fred Coalter, "Public and Commercial Leisure Provision: Active Citizens and Passive Consumers?" Leisure Studies 19, no. 3 (2000): 163.

32. Coalter, "Public and Commercial Leisure Provision," 163.

33. Here Coalter cites Colin Campbell's essay "The Sociology of Consumption" published in *Acknowledging Consumption: A Review of New Studies*, ed. Daniel Millar (London: Routledge, 1995), 100.

34. Coalter, "Public and Commercial Leisure Provision," 165-166.

35. Coalter, "Public and Commercial Leisure Provision," 168.

was their central life interest."[36] He notes, however, that studies of this phenomenon have been accused of over-interpretation and gender-bias.

Coalter advocates for a "re-invigorated" sociology of leisure that would shift focus away from production and access and concentrate on the nature of delivery as well as the experience and enjoyment of consumption.[37] This would highlight how "consumption is eminently social, relational and active rather than private, atomic or passive."[38] Among the theorists who support this approach, Coalter cites the work of Leslie Bella, who, in her study of women and leisure, states, "The significant questions … have to do with the relationships served through an activity, not whether that activity can be described as 'leisure' [or consumption] … The meaning of the activity is in the relationships served through that activity, not in the activity itself."[39]

The present study shares an interest in the social and active dimensions of commercialised leisure as a site of consumption. It does not prejudge the social value of these sites but allows research to reveal the relationships and encounters that leisure sites have to acts of consumption, or in the case of shopping centres, for example, how spaces of consumption double as leisure environments. There is a strong interest in the users of these sites, the different groups and communities catered for and the types of activities that were promoted. The importance of these sites as spaces for genuine socialisation in the 1950s and 1960s cannot be understated. They played a significant role in fostering and supporting social and community life during this period. The study, however, is not a sociological one but deploys the tools of historical analysis in the investigation of the planning, design and construction of spaces and places of leisure. The production of these spaces and how they func-tioned as venues for greater social participation in leisure is a key theme, along with the commercial context of this produc-tion and, where relevant, the consumerist practices involved. It is recognised that design can facilitate consumption in many ways, and that the objects of consumption can take various forms. Design can not only facilitate the consumption of such things as entertainment, food and leisure goods, but also the consumption of the landscape, visually and physically.

36. Coalter, "Public and Commercial Leisure Provision," 168.

37. Coalter, "Public and Commercial Leisure Provision," 176.

38. Coalter, "Public and Commercial Leisure Provision," 176.

39. Coalter's brackets. Here Coalter quotes from Leslie Bella, "Women and Leisure: Beyond Androcentrism," *in Understanding Leisure and Recreation: Mapping the Present, Charting the Future*, ed. Edgar L. Jackson and Thomas L. Burton (State College, PA: Venture Publishing, 1989), 173.

2.   Private, non-commercial leisure provision

Another form of leisure provision investigated is that offered by private but largely non-profit-making clubs and organisations. These include, for example, leagues clubs and golf clubs, and also ethnic clubs and centres. The nature of these clubs can vary from the small, localised and loose-knit to the highly selective. Typically though, across the range, these clubs are self-funding entities dependent mostly on revenue generated by membership subscriptions, benefactor donations and fundraising to support their activities and develop and maintain facilities. A characteristic of many private membership clubs and organisations is their social exclusiveness.[40] Richard Krauss points out that membership policies can function to "screen out certain prospective members for reasons relating to their expected compatibility with current members."[41] In reference to American private member country clubs, golf clubs and tennis clubs in the 1970s, Krauss argues that these policies functioned to discriminate against members of certain races and religions.[42] He has also argued that there were significant social, political and economic privileges attached to access to membership of these clubs as they provided settings for powerful members of the community to meet regularly to discuss and consider business or political matters. He says, "those who are barred from membership in such clubs are thus excluded also from this behind-the-scenes, establishment-based process of influence and power."[43]

The role played by private membership clubs in the spatial and social production and reproduction of the interests and powers of their members extends to the construction of social and cultural identity. This pertains to both highly controlled club membership and to more open and inclusive types of organisation. The latter type is the interest of John Kelly, Jeff Bishop and Paul Hoggett who have examined the existence of "leisure subcultures", the shared leisure interests and pursuits of people who do not register prominently in statistical samples, within which Kelly includes first-and-second generation immigrant cultures.[44] These subcultures exist within "the world of the informal economy, of everyday, non-market forms of exchange, of self-organisation and mutual-aid."[45] They are said to be characterised by the values of reciprocity and interdependence, collectivism as opposed to individualism, the importance of loyalty and a sense of "identity" and "belonging."[46]

40. Richard Krauss, Recreation and Leisure in *Modern Society*, 3rd ed. (Glenview, IL, and London: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1984), 242.

41. Krauss, *Recreation and Leisure in Modern Society*, 242.

42. Krauss, *Recreation and Leisure in Modern Society*, 242.

43. Krauss, *Recreation and Leisure in Modern Society*, 242.

44. John R. Kelly, Leisure (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982), 240.

45. Paul Hoggett and Jeff Bishop, *Organising Around Enthusiasms: Patterns of Mutual Aid in Leisure* (London: Comedia Publishing Group, 1986), 53.

46. Hoggett and Bishop, *Organising Around Enthusiasms*, 53.

As with commercial providers, the current study examines the production of space by and for private, non-commercial leisure providers and users. The themes of social exclusion and identity are considered as being pertinent to the study of these types of providers and carry spatial and architectural implications in terms of physical presence in the urban environment, the design of grounds and facilities, aesthetic considerations and symbolism.

3. **Leisure space**

Within the leisure studies literature there is a discernable tradition of studying leisure history that focuses on building types (for example, the music hall, the saloon). It is the modification and transformation of building types that register the introduction of new technologies, new concepts of spatial organisation and new methods of service provision, all aimed at enhancing the entertainment, leisure and consumer experience. Organised around the study of various building types and urban-based places, the present investigation is situated within this tradition. There is, however, another stream to the literature, of more recent vintage, that presents a less conventional approach to the study of leisure environments and one that allows for the consideration of broader themes. This comes from the incorporation of the "new cultural geography" into leisure studies discourse, promoted by theorists such as Cara Aitchison who has argued that the new cultural geography enhances "the 'geographical imagination' by providing alternative 'ways of seeing' leisure."[47] The emphasis of the new cultural geography is not so much on the physical and absolute nature of space but the socio-cultural and relative nature of space including the symbolic meanings and interpretations that belong to the "social and cultural construction of spaces, places and landscapes."[48] Adopting an interest in the productive social meanings of consumption is one way in which the present study finds resonance with concepts promoted by the new cultural geography. Another is the consideration of how leisure and leisure-related spaces are made visible within the public realm through representation in the media. There is an interest in the agents of this visibility, those involved in the discourse, both visual and textual, and how leisure spaces and their locations within the city and suburbs are inscribed with social and cultural significance.

47. Cara Aitchison, "New Cultural Geographies: The Spatiality of Leisure, Gender and Sexuality," *Leisure Studies* 18, no. 1 (1999): 19-39. See also David Couch, ed., *Leisure/Tourism Geographies: Practices and Geographical Knowledge* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).

48. Aitchison, "New Cultural Geographies," 34.

In summary, the aim of this research project, with its specific geographical and chronological focus, is to examine leisure-related typologies in relation to not only their modes of delivery – their planning, design and construction – but also the socio-cultural context of their production and representation. The range of typologies individually investigated is deliberately broad in terms of purpose, financial backing, location and user groups: tourist bureaus, hotels, motels, restaurants, bars, shopping centres, drive-ins, golf clubs, league clubs, ethic clubs, and holiday houses. Brought together into the one study, the fine grain of differences and commonalities emerges. Most importantly however, through an investigation of the conditions that served to stimulate the proliferation of these building types and facilities in Sydney during the period from 1945 to 1970, a more informed understanding of their social and cultural significance can be derived.