

# Call for Critical Commentaries: Leisure in the time of coronavirus

Deadline: 6 April 2020



## Call for Critical Commentaries – A Rapid Response Special Issue of Leisure Sciences: An Interdisciplinary Journal

### Leisure in the time of coronavirus

Guest Editors:

Brett Lashua, PhD. *University College London*  
[b.lashua@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:b.lashua@ucl.ac.uk)

Corey W. Johnson, Ph.D. *University of Waterloo*,  
[corey.johnson@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:corey.johnson@uwaterloo.ca)

Diana C. Parry, Ph.D. *University of Waterloo*,  
[dcparry@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:dcparry@uwaterloo.ca)

As the world grapples with the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, on almost every news website, across social media, and also in its (many) absences, leisure has taken on new significance in both managing and negotiating a global crisis. Amidst the inconvenience, illness, fear, tragedy and loss from this disease, there is also an opportunity for leisure scholars to generate discussions and to learn, to engage with wider debates about the crucial role of leisure in people's lives—during this pandemic, and beyond. Abstracts between 250 words are invited by **April 6, 2020** for a rapid response special issue that will feature short essays (2000-3000 words maximum) highlighting the significance, urgency, or key debates, of “leisure in the time of coronavirus.”

As of March 25, 2020, [BBC News](#) reported:

at least a quarter of the world's population of 7.8 billion is now living under tough restrictions on movement and social contact. From Rwanda to California and New York to New Zealand, the coronavirus has shut down large parts of our planet – leaving normally heaving streets deserted and towering office blocks empty. And there's more to come – about half the US population are believed to be living under

stay at home orders and measures are expected in further states. From midnight on Thursday, all South Africans will have to stay at home for a 21-day period.

This is an extraordinary moment! Most schools and workplaces are closed; indeed, almost all places outside the home – restaurants, pubs, bars and nightclubs, leisure centres and gyms, arts venues, theatres, museums and galleries – are not open; most sports events have been cancelled and the upcoming 2020 Olympic Games postponed. Borders are closed, with tourists and travellers ordered to return immediately to their countries of origin. Parks, beaches and monuments are closed too. In view of social distancing rules (e.g., in the UK, U.S., Canada and elsewhere), there is a ban on groups of people meeting in public; citizens have been ordered to “stay home.” As a consequence, in only a matter of months, this pandemic has raised immediate questions about how our societies are organised and function, and what we value and why. We continue to be curious about the response of leisure scholars in this moment, and the importance (or not) of leisure in this crisis?

Faced with difficult questions and radical changes to almost every facet of everyday life, examples abound of the central significance of leisure, e.g., people reacting and adapting to this crisis in creative and extraordinary ways (or perhaps reinvigorating ‘older’ ideas): balancing work-leisure demands while working-from-home; connecting with family and friends (and strangers) through social media; celebrating communities and neighbourhoods by singing from balconies; fitness sessions from rooftops; birthday parades, or volunteering to help neighbours. Yet, other examples highlight increased friction, e.g., people leaving cities and overcrowding rural areas and parks; the absence of relief for the homeless who cannot “stay home”; increased domestic violence; risky sex practices; and there are also numerous reports of increased xenophobia around the world such as the heightened racism enacted toward Chinese people.

## Special Interest Areas:

Essays in this special issue might focus on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on leisure and:

- freedom during a lockdown,
- work/leisure when working-from-home,
- volunteering,
- public spaces,
- aging and older adults,
- physical activity, exercise, health,
- children and young people,
- social media use,
- music, arts, theatre, etc.
- pets,
- gender,
- kindness of strangers,
- humour,
- tourism and travel,

- lessons from the history of leisure,
- families,
- sports, sport histories,
- e-sports, gaming, etc.
- homelessness,
- sexual violence,
- changing sex practices,
- democracy,
- the environment/green (and blue) spaces,
- isolation, solitude,
- inclusion/diversity,
- racism/xenophobia
- teaching and learning,
- higher education.

We welcome other topics/foci or commentary about leisure at this time. We ask that writers consider their topic vis-à-vis (1) relevant examples, e.g., in the news/social media; (2) scholarship that informs or challenges current understandings of the topic; (3) lessons to be learned and taken forward; or (4) personal stories that inform theory or methodology.

## Key Dates and Deadlines

Timeliness is key, with as short of a turnaround as possible.

**April 6:** Abstracts due (250 words)

**April 10:** Authors notified of abstract acceptance.

Accepted Authors should expect to review at least one other submission.

**April 24:** Critical Commentaries due. Firm; no extensions. In these turbulent times, please consider your obligations, family, health, etc.

**May 1:** Peer review completed and any requested revisions due within *one week*.

**May 8:** Revised essays due.

Online publication in **late May**.

## Submission Instructions

Please send abstracts directly to [b.lashua@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:b.lashua@ucl.ac.uk) by **April 6, 2020**.

Accepted submissions will be received through Scholar One with all instructions for preparation and submission located at:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?show=instructions&journalCode=ulsc20>