Special Issue Editor(s)

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Leisure and the Far Right: Critical Interdisciplinary Interventions

In less than a year, the current US administration has taken significant steps to consolidate and institutionalize far-right authoritarian power. Far from being an exception, however, Donald Trump is in the company of a long list of political leaders, including Orbán in Hungary, Meloni in Italy, Milei in Argentina, Modi in India, and Bukele in El Salvador. This ultraconservative wave is indeed transnational, and it goes beyond electoral gains: in what can be described as a Gramscian turn, these movements, leaders, and political parties are effectively disputing the terrain of culture and common sense (Ravecca et al, 2022; Ravecca et al, 2024). This means that a narrow conception of politics, which only focuses on formal institutions, cannot grasp the multidimensionality of this new political landscape (Ravecca, 2019). In fact, the production of cultural artifacts like videos, images, and narratives, and their circulation on social media, are having a significant impact on the quality of the public conversation and on the everyday life of large sectors of the population. In this context, it can be argued that leisure, broadly understood, is at the core of far-right discourse and practice. For this reason, global leisure studies are particularly well-placed to engage with this complex and urgent landscape.

While most research has focused on how leisure can be a positive force for change, inclusion, and belonging (e.g., Fortune et al., 2021, among many others), scholarship in the field also shows how leisure activities can be a vehicle for hate (Spracklen, 2013; Woolley & Luger, 2023), prejudice (Mowatt, 2018), surveillance (Rose et al., 2023), and violence (Mowatt, 2012). In complement to feminist (Henderson, 1990; Shaw, 1985), racial justice (Bixler & Floyd, 1997; Floyd et al., 1994), and social justice (Arai & Kivel, 2009; Mair, 2011; Parry et al., 2013) research in leisure studies, researchers like Rasul Mowatt (2012, 2017, 2018), A.J. Veal (2021), DJ Willams (2009, 2017), and Karl Spracklen (2013, 2015) have long called for leisure research to illuminate groups, activities, and settings that are uncomfortable and even dangerous - including those associated with the far right.

Now more than ever, we need to heed these calls and turn the focus of critical leisure studies, along with the theoretical and explanatory power of this discipline, toward critical inquiry of the ways far-right ideologies are couched (and cloaked) in leisure practices. Far-right scholars have engaged with these important topics from a variety of

perspectives and across disciplines. These include the development of collective identity (Devries, 2021; Leman-Langlois et al., 2024; Mondon, 2025; Yoshida & Demelius, 2024), the role of women (Dickel & Evolvi, 2023; Ebner & Davey, 2019; Gordon, 2018; O'Brien, 2018; Proctor, 2022), narratives of gender supremacy (Copland, 2021; Koulouris, 2018; Pearson, 2019; Winter, 2019), the geographies of far-right ideology (Luger, 2022), and masculinities (Christley, 2021; Cousineau, 2021; Linders et al., 2022; Roose et al., 2022). However, this work has been done almost exclusively outside of leisure studies, which implies a loss of knowledge. This special issue aims to open a space for leisure scholars to contribute their insight, research, and wisdom on the landscape-altering forces and movements of the far right.

Papers will examine how leisure forms an integral part of far-right narratives and practices. This encompasses a wide range of possibilities - from exploring the recruiting power of supremacist ideology woven into leisure settings and communities, to analyzing localized movements with transnational implications, such as neo-Nazi music cultures and festivals, combat sport clubs, and gaming communities. Thus, manuscripts can address, among other topics:

- *How far-right leisure activities can be reactionary to perceived socio-political change (e.g., as defence mechanisms against the perceived "undoing" of the white heteronormative nuclear family),*
- *Far-right leisure located in established mainstream structures (e.g., la Corcade Etudiante in France),*
- *The early colonization of internet spaces by far-right groups (e.g., Stormfront, a major white supremacist digital space that was an early colonizer of networked digitality and remains an active space of online leisure participation and recruitment to hate groups),*
- *The ongoing far-right presence and influence in digital space (e.g., the "momosphere," digital gaming, tradwives, and other internet cultures),*
- *The impact that far-right rhetoric, hate speech, and misinformation have on 'expert-guided' advice consumed in leisure-time media consumption.*

This special issue is part of a larger and ambitious interdisciplinary project that aims to bring together leisure scholars with researchers from other disciplines (e.g., political science, internet and media studies, anthropology, sociology, and others) exploring the far right. Writing in dyads or teams working across disciplines (either on papers proposed as a team or connected by the editors), manuscripts will build on the small body of existing leisure research on the topic (e.g., Cousineau, 2025; Spracklen, 2013; Woolley & Luger, 2023) to take on different elements of how leisure is used in the making, maintaining, exposing, and combating the far right.

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Submission Instructions

This special issue is a necessarily interdisciplinary endeavour, and we therefore seek submissions authored by interdisciplinary teams. The following is true for all submissions:

- Abstracts up to 300 words (excluding any references) submitted to the Special Issue Editors by email at Luc.Cousineau@dal.ca.
- Papers based on empirical research and theoretical papers will be accepted.
- Timeline:
    - Abstract Submission Deadline - December 15, 2025
    - Author Notifications - January 2026
    - Initial full submissions - April 2026
    - Publication - early 2027

Manuscripts should follow the T&F formatting guidelines as listed on the World Leisure Journal website.

We will accept abstract submissions in the following formats:

1. **Teams formed at the time of submission**
These authorship teams will be formed by authors before submission, with abstracts crafted together. These abstracts should include a brief explanation of the team's interdisciplinary makeup and how leisure studies/theory is represented in their team.
2. **Individual submissions**
Authors who submit accepted individual abstracts will be paired or teamed with other individual submissions with similar topics to form interdisciplinary authorship teams. This will allow for new partnerships as well as interesting interdisciplinary research development.
Authors of individual submissions should also include a brief outline of their area of expertise with their submission.

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