Models of Change in Municipal Parks and Recreation: A Book of Innovative Case Studies. Edited by Mark E. Havitz. State College, PA: Venture Publishing, 1995. 197 pp. ISBN 0-910251-77-0.

Models of Change in Municipal Parks and Recreation is the result of the 1993 Models of Change Conference organized by the staff of the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation. The book includes 16 case studies from 16 different authors, grouped under three sections: facilities and land-use policies; societal and political change

models; and neighbourhood-based programs. The cases are from communities in ten states and include five cases from Indiana. Each case begins with a map showing that city's location within the state and information about the city's 1990 population, the median age, and the household composition as defined by the percentage in families. The cases that focus on neighbourhood-based programs also include data about race/ethnicity, single-family household heads or single-parent families with children, and education level or poverty level. All cases are presented using a 10-point outline, including the following sections: the situation, vision, objectives, management paradigm shift, key players, processes undertaken to accomplish change, impact of change on the agency, impact of change on the community, and measurement of change. Twelve cases also include a selection of the author's suggested readings and references. Two cases are supplemented by appendices that are located at the end of the book. The book finishes with a concluding essay from the editor, with its own list of editor's references and suggested resources, and a map of the United States showing the states from which the cases came.

The three sections of the book range from policy to agency structure to local programs. The facilities and land-use section emphasizes management partnership arrangements in six settings—two indoor/outdoor facilities (Columbus, Indiana, and Clearwater, Florida), two open space and maintenance arrangements (Kansas City, Missouri, and Indianapolis, Indiana), and two golf courses (Indianapolis and Baltimore, Maryland). The societal and political change models section includes four cases dealing with social change, including changing attitudes about the environment (Lake County, Ohio) and quality of life (Indianapolis), and about facilitating programming between generations (West Des Moines, Iowa) and for youth (Indianapolis). The two political change cases look at changes to structure (Waco, Texas) and to management philosophy (Arlington Heights, Illinois) in order to improve services. The section on neighbourhood-based programs illustrates four cities that developed programs to improve living conditions in inner-city neighbourhoods (Anaheim, California; Austin, Texas; Denver, Colorado; and Des Moines, Iowa).

The intent of the book is to present cases that deal with change within an organization. This change may come from a left-wing or right-wing ideology, may mesh old and new ideas, may have a short- or long-term effect upon the community, may have a positive or negative

impact, and may represent small-scale or large-scale fundamental impact upon the agency's services. The stated emphasis of the book is on the process that the community went through in its efforts to achieve change, rather than on the cause or the outcome of the change process. The editor concluded that the cases were innovative, that most moved quickly into action, and that "emphasis was placed on service to community over service to agency." The editor also concluded that the emphasis in the cases on process rather than to the measurement of outcome is reflective of the recreation profession as a whole, not just of the 16 cases. In this vein the editor calls for both more evaluation research in the profession and for opportunities for researchers to apply their theoretical models in the field. Through that call "for bridging the research-practice gap," the editor continues a well-documented line of authors who have presented researchers and practitioners with such a challenge.

The Venture Publishing catalogue presents potential users of *Models of Change in Municipal Parks and Recreation* with the following introduction:

> these case studies provide cutting edge information about innovative programs, facilities and management practices that are setting the pace in municipal recreation and park services. From successful "contracting out" to creative partnerships to new ways to reach at-risk youth, this book provides up-to-the-minute information about where municipal recreation and park services are headed and how to get there. Must reading for any municipal recreation and park professional.

This review is written from two perspectives: the first perspective is that of a university professor who used the book in a senior administration class; and the second is that of a recreation professional who is the manager of a division working primarily in community development.

The Professor's Perspective

Models of Change has the potential to provide students with valuable insights into the operation of municipal parks and recreation agencies. However, it needs to be supplemented with other materials for it to reach its full potential as a valuable learning tool. At the very least, I would suggest that future books like this come with an optional set of course materials that would assist instructors and students. Each case

includes some preliminary material about the geographic location and demographics of the city, but this does not give enough data about the city. The maps showing each city's location within its state and the various states represented in the cases could have been omitted with little loss to the usefulness of the book. The two appendices provide some detail but not enough, and would have been better placed within the cases for which they are companion information.

This book of cases would be a splendid opportunity for a computer disc or web-based publication using hypertext technology. Using such technology, the detailed documentation about the community's situation or the organizational structure of the key players or the agencies' policies or the program details or the minutes of meetings or the marketing efforts or the data gathered in outcome measurement could be available for students to use as part of the discussion and understanding of the processes. Another potential addition to such a package would be the references and resources that are noted at the end of each case. This would certainly add to the presentation and usefulness of these cases in a classroom setting as it would enable students to dig much deeper into the material as part of the learning process.

I believe that *Models of Change* would have been better published as a series of articles in a professional journal or as a soft-cover monograph that could enjoy wider distribution than a hard-cover book which retails at about $35 (Cdn.) before taxes. I also believe that, from the perspective of learning, a companion case-study publication that details situations that have not been successes would be just as valuable. One comment from a student in the courses that used the cases was that she wanted to know about situations that were not success stories.

From the Professional's Perspective:

There is a lovely coincidence involved in Dr. Markham and I writing this book review together. The day she approached me to participate with her in the review, I was calling to ask her if she had yet seen the book. If she hadn't, she was to buy it!

As a manager of a division working primarily in community development I devoured *Models of Change* like a box of chocolates. I gorged on the ideas that fit our needs, bit into and threw aside some case studies which had little relevance, and tasted others with a degree of wariness. Within an hour of opening the book I had earmarked

specific cases for various staff: "Night Moves" for supervisors work-
ing with youth; "Neighborhood Revitalization" for a policy developer
working on a Council report on Public Safety; and "The Indiana Sports
Corporation and Its Partnerships" to a staff person working on the de-
velopment of an event-hosting strategy for the city. The Parks Division
quickly read the chapter on "Private Management of Golf Courses,"
and the "Intergenerational Read-to-Me Program" was used as a point
of discussion with community leaders developing a Fairstart Preven-
tion program for kindergarten-aged children. The case studies were
well chosen and structured by the editor and were very easy to read.

What I and others got from this book was ideas, not answers—
ideas with which to mould, shape, and integrate plans already evolving
in the department and the community. The book gave us a broader net-
work in which to communicate—someone else to contact outside our
usual frame of reference.

I do not believe that many staff read the book cover to cover. They
simply and gratefully took what they needed. This may make the editor
and contributors cringe, but in a way it reflects how well the choice of
material fit the realities of the workplace. Diverse needs, little time,
complex issues are our reality. It would be great if the book became a
series of editions arising out of conferences similar to the 1993 Models
of Change Conference, which provided the forum for the case studies
presented here. Unlike my colleague who recommended a web-based
publication as an alternative for future distribution of this type of infor-
mation, I still value the text in my hand or at my side—something to be
thumbed through or passed on to a friend or colleague. However, the
reason the book was so useful to us when we purchased it over a year
ago was its topicality. It reflected the key concerns of our field. A year
from now it would probably be of passing interest to me—more of a
reference than a catalyst.

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