

# **Serious Leisure, Information Practices and Embodiment: A Study of Amateur Classical Musicianship**

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## **ABSTRACT**

People enjoy leisure activities, like sports and the arts, because lifelong learning enhances well-being. However, many physical activities cannot be learned from a book and require learning from others in a community of practice. These observations motivate my research questions: What are the information practices and role of the body in physical activities, and how are information practices in physical leisure both embodied and socially constructed within a community of practice? I analyze the case of amateur classical musicians, making theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions to library and information science. First, my dissertation's theoretical framework advances library and information science by connecting recent literatures on information in everyday life to sociological explanations of leisure as fields of practice with their own contextualized information meanings. Second, my dissertation highlights the need for methodological innovations to study information practices in physical activities. While few information science studies of embodied activities use methods to capture physical information, sociology of sport research emphasizes observant participation and use of media-enhanced interviewing. My observant participation and interviews with amateur classical musicians confirm the promise of these methods. Finally, my dissertation is the first study of the information practices of amateur classical musicians that considers both exosomatic and embodied information as well as the social world meanings in musical information practices, including musicians' use of new media and technology. I find that not only are musicians' information activities embedded in a community of practice with shared meanings and expressions of identity, status, and membership, but that musicians are more likely to use video as an information source compared to those who are engaged in non-physical recreational activities. This dissertation adds to library and information studies and the interdisciplinary literature around physical leisure activities by making new connections between these two areas.

## **TOPICS**

information needs; information seeking; information use; social media; sociology of information