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COMMERCIAL LEISURE IN HALIFAX

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIALIZED LEISURE PROVISION IN A
NORTHERN INDUSTRIAL TOWN**

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Abstract:

This thesis investigates the development of commercial leisure in a northern community, Halifax, over a period of 200 years. It examines a range of leisure pursuits including the public house, theatre and sports and traces their development during a period of population growth and industrialization which came to be based increasingly around the factory. It analyses whether Halifax was typical in the way commercial leisure developed or whether particular local conditions influenced the development of commercial leisure. During the period, Halifax, an ancient town, developed from an important centre of the textile trade in England into a classic Victorian mill town supporting a broad base of industries. Leisure developed from a leisure culture based around traditional holidays and pastimes to a highly commercialized leisure experience increasingly provided by regional and national companies and a sporting calendar that included structured leagues with professional clubs and games played seasonally.

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