

Lidia Marek  
Poland

## **“You Don’t Have Fun, You Don’t Live” or a Story of a Ludic Fascination Among Students**

### **Abstract**

The paper attempts to describe the ludic dimension of students’ free time. My empirical research focused on **fun as a form of students’ free time activity**. The research question was the following: What is the content of students’ ludic activity? The analysis, conducted in 2004/2005 and 2005/2006, covered 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year students at the pedagogy course of Szczecin University (N=172). The research used the diagnostic survey method (with an auditorial questionnaire), supplemented with qualitative research techniques (interviews and free discussions, and analysis of essays by students). This paper attempts to describe quantitative and qualitative analyses and interpret research materials collected. The paper includes quotations from students’ opinions, which are used as examples showing the way entertainment is perceived as a past time activity.

**Key words:** *entertainment, free time, youth, students.*

We usually associate youth with joy, a carefree attitude, fun, whereas adulthood with boredom, responsibility and stagnation. “You don’t have fun, you don’t live” is a slogan advertised by Polish television stations which address their programmes to *young and active people who obligatorily need to have a sense of humour*<sup>1</sup>. The same slogan creates a sense of obligation among young people (also those “young at heart”<sup>2</sup>) to have fun continuously, and the necessity to join the colourful and

---

<sup>1</sup> WWW.4fun.tv/press\_news.php (of 04.07.2006).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. P. Kozłowska, *Dorośle dzieci (Adult Kids). Przekrój* (of 14.06.2006). P. Górka, *Nie bawisz się, nie żyjesz (You don’t have fun, you don’t live)*. WWW.o2.pl (04.07.2006). *Dzieci Piotrusia Pana (Peter Pan’s Children). Wprost*. 1225 (of 04.06.2006).

happy (sometimes only apparently) procession worshipping Dionysus". The advertising motto suggests that the end of fun is the end of life, the end of "self", and death. How may one remain indifferent to such an alert, to the call to join an area reserved for the contemporary *homo ludens*? Many young people find it hard to resist the temptation of the "mysterious initiation" into magic walks of permanent enchantment with ludic activity. There is a chance to fulfil the myth of free time, namely that "everything can be fun". The question is whether we really want to fulfil the myth and find ourselves in the world of continuous fun, considering the risk of getting lost in the world of the ordinary. There can be many more questions asked concerning the same issue. Therefore, I developed an interest in examining ludic activity among students.

My empirical research focused on **fun as a form of students' free time activity**. The research question was the following: What is the content of students' ludic activity? The research also covered a ludic fascination among students defining the types and content of their behaviour during their free time. The idea of the research is related to an increasing lack of competence among young people to manage their free time in a rational manner and growing irresponsible behaviours among young people while having fun. Such a picture is too often presented by popular and quality press and television programmes. The authors of those programmes diagnose and evaluate ludic behaviour of the young generation<sup>3</sup>.

In my opinion, the most relevant method to respond to the question was a diagnostic survey, since it creates a possibility of exploring a given social phenomenon. The method determined a selection of research techniques: an auditorium survey, a reflective interview, free discussions, and an analysis of students' essays on: "You don't have fun, you don't live", a challenge or reality of the contemporary youth? Apart from the method, my theoretical preferences as a researcher and epistemological position related to it determined the selection of techniques. The phenomena in question were measured from a dialectic point of view, typical of this psychological approach. This way of measurement was based on the assumption that *none of the positions regarding a given phenomenon – neither the one of the surveyed nor that of the surveyor – can enjoy preferential treatment. The opinion of the surveyed about him/herself as well as objective facts are equally important sources of information. At the same time, both categories of information provide*

---

<sup>3</sup> Cf. V. Ozminowski, Nowa bohema (New Bohema). *Newsweek*. 24.03.2002. Student w łóżku i kościele (Student in Bed and in Church), *Przegląd*. 2003. No 40

*a basis for drawing conclusions* (Poole and McPhee, 1985, following: Jakubowska, 1993, p. 87). Therefore, I selected questionnaire techniques typical of carrying out an analysis from the point of view of the surveyed, as well as a reflective interview, free discussions, and an analysis of essays typical of research from the point of view of the surveyor.

The research led to two kinds of data: quantitative and qualitative. This fact could be the reason to claim the lack of consequence in research, or even methodological eclecticism. However, a factor justifying this choice is the selection of a correlation procedure as an approach (plan, model) to revising hypotheses (cf. Jakubowska, 1993, p.61), so typical of a nomothetic approach in the explorative investigation – in the phase of developing the theory and initial verification of statements. Additionally, I measured the phenomena in question from a dialectic point of view, which deals with the eclecticism by applying the comprehensive methodological approach (cf. Leppert, 1996, p.63). A tendency to overcome the neo-positivist methodological doctrine in pedagogy can serve as an explanation for eclecticism (cf. Ostrowska, 1998, p.13).

The analysis, conducted in 2004/2005 and 2005/2006, covered 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year students at the pedagogy course of Szczecin University (N=172). The analysis of the data from a questionnaire showed that over 90% of the students surveyed were female, whereas male students accounted for a minor percentage of the whole. This paper attempts to describe quantitative and qualitative analyses and interpret research materials collected.

### **Briefly about fun...**

The definition of fun and analysis of related publications show that "fun", just as "free time", has become an interdisciplinary term (cf. Julia, 1995, p. 431–432; Sil-lamy, 1989, p. 332; Okoń, 1998, p. 456–457; Okoń, 1995, p. 10–29; Sułkowski, 1984). Due to ambiguity in understanding, different scientific disciplines define fun differently *depending on actual research interests and context of theoretical and methodological assumptions, which leads to a variety of ludic concepts* (Grad, 1997, p. 13). All concepts analysed, including philosophical, psychological, sociological and pedagogical ones, have something in common. The majority of researchers claim that fun is a casual and interest free activity which brings satisfaction when implemented and involves hedonistic sensations (cf. also Huizinga, 1985; Sułkowski, 1984; Caillois, 1997, 1973).

Due to the interdisciplinary character of the term, it can only be examined as a cultural phenomenon (cf. Huizinga, 1985; Grad, 1997). J. Huizinga (1985, p. 11)

states that *fun is older than culture; since (...) the notion of culture (...) assumes that a certain society exists, whereas animals did not wait for people to teach them how to play.*

Considering fun as an important element and a cultural factor, J. Huizinga formulated the following definition of the notion referring to it as a *free activity perceived as “mismatched” and remaining beyond the ordinary life, which may still totally absorb the player; an activity which is not related to any material interest or benefits. This activity takes place within one’s time and space, and according to certain order and rules, and thus creating social relations that are often covered with a cloud of mystery and emphasise their difference against the ordinary* (same publication, p. 28).

Yet another researcher dealing with culture and fun is R. Caillois (1973, 1997). He proposed a more precise definition by adding that rules are not required for having fun and that it involves a rule of fiction. Activities undertaken while having fun are often described by children as “pretending”.

The analysis of fun as a semantic category enables to determine that there are actually three terms used to distinguish and describe the ludic sphere of life, namely fun, entertainment, and game. Very often the terms are used interchangeably, in particular, fun and entertainment. When different meanings are involved, entertainment is considered a broader term covering all forms of leisure activity. Thus, entertainment includes all that is giving joy, satisfaction, relaxation and is not related to any other material interest but realized during one’s free time.

A comparative semantic analysis should also be made regarding terms of fun and holiday, where the latter is a permanent element of culture and traditional form of a societal function (cf. Sułkowski, 1984, p. 16; cf. Żygulski, 1981, p. 42, 81, 87, 91). A holiday is a kind of fun, however very special and oriented towards emphasising the value and importance of something. It is also an activity undertaken by members of a community to emphasise and develop the sense of community bonds.

Scientists present different positions regarding the relationship between fun and free time. Some of them associate fun with free time recognising a particular semantic proximity of the two terms (cf. Sułkowski, 1984, p. 18–19). Others, on the other hand, state that fun as a certain form of human activity that may occur beyond free time and, in historical terms, it is a much earlier phenomenon.

The relationship between free time and fun is emphasised by an educationalist A. Kamiński who treats it as a function and a kind of holiday (1965, p. 111, p. 193). In his opinion, fun is an active recreation undertaken selflessly (it is a goal in itself), an activity saturated with imagination, often occurring in imagined situations. *Fun*

*is the broadest term describing ludic activities covering more or less superficial entertainment, and play which is fun performed according to certain rules.*

Researching ludic activity requires distinguishing types of fun undertaken in free time. R. Caillois describes four main analytic categories of fun with an abstracted spirit, or a pattern of realization in culture, assigned to each of them (cf. 1973, p.363-376). In his opinion man meets his/her ludic needs through fight and competition (*agon*), risky games or gambling (*alea*), imitating and pretending (*mimicra*), as well as looking for ecstasy and stupefaction (*ilinx*). While describing the categories, R. Caillois mentions, however, that in reality pure types of fun can rarely be found. They rather occur in pairs, e.g. *agon* – *alea* (card games), *alea* – *ilinx* (gambling), *agon* – *mimikra* (sporting events).

In the core of agonistic games lies fighting for some sort of mastery. It involves competing using physical and intellectual skills, and at the outset it is assumed that all participants have equal chances of winning. In the opinion of J. Huizinga, the human inclination to compete is the driving force of not only games but all culture creating activities. The agonistic instinct is a source of what is important and valuable in culture (cf. 1985, p. 73–84).

The element of *alea* is typical of activities related to taking chances in gambling. *In particular, people losing in their lives, concerned about force and greed of their competitors, aware of their inferiority will look for compensation in noncommittal games* (Sulkowski, 1984, p. 116).

On the other hand, *ilinctic* behaviour aims at providing stupefaction. It distorts stable perception of reality, and thus leads to the *state of pleasing panic and trance. Entertainment of this type can be found at a fair bar, carnival procession, circus, and in crowded and noisy funfairs divided from the rest of the world with a colourful fence* (cf. p. 117).

The *mimicra* type of fun is related to a human need or will to be someone else. During this type of activity we experience what we believe is other people's feeling; people whom we imitate and pretend to be. Therefore, we create unusual situations and we change our usual behaviour, e.g. participation in role playing games (RPGs), which are currently popular among young people.

The analysis of literature on ludic behaviour indicated that fun can be understood differently and examined from different angles. For the purpose of the paper, I assumed that fun is a form of free time activity performed by students, which provides several functions (rest, entertainment, therapy, integration, prevention, escapism and detrimental effect) and expressed in ludic behaviour such as *agon*, *alea*, *ilinx*, and *mimicra*. It also uses the mass media and events organised by cultural institutions.

## **Fascination or what young people like to dabble in (research findings – description and analysis)**

While looking for areas of fascination among students, I focused on the content and type of ludic activity among young people studying at a university.

The first fascination is the mass media. The analysis of research information collected showed that the most frequently selected type of fun is ludic behaviour involving the mass media (radio, television, Internet, books and magazines). The largest group of the respondents use the radio. There was no respondent who could state that he/she does not use the radio. During free discussions with students (before and after filling in questionnaires) I learned that many of them did not have a TV set (at lodgings or student dormitory), so they listen to radio programmes; these are mainly music programmes (most frequently: ESKA, RMF, RMF MAXX, RADIO ZET). Young people say that the radio accompanies them all the time at home (at lodgings or student dormitory). It is a background to their everyday life. A double activity can be distinguished regarding the use of the radio, namely young people listen to the radio while doing something else. M. McLuhan calls the radio a tribal drum gathering people and sometimes having at least a temporary integrating function (Postman, 2002, p. 7). Observation and findings of the analysis of the respondents' opinions indicate, however, that the integrating function of the radio is currently much less frequently used (we can recall a group listening to the top ten by young people in the 80s).

For many students a TV set is a background to their everyday life (96.5%). They use it very often (57.0%), or not so often (39.5%, mainly those who do not have a TV set on an everyday basis). Only a few respondents admitted that they can live without television. The findings are in line with those of various research on the use of the medium. *For the majority of people television is the most attractive thing available day and night. We are living in the world in which a vast majority of people never switch it off*, wrote G. Gerbner (cf. Postman, 2002, p. 198-199). A N. Postman warns that thanks to television (or because of television) we risk being entertained to death (cf. p. 20). In my opinion, however, the medium itself is not such a big threat, but the lack of competence regarding its rational and wise use. The students surveyed are aware of the addictive influence of television. One of the third-year students wrote in her essay: *“The example of myself and my friends shows that people often do not have time to rest. You return home and the first thing you do is switch on a computer or a TV set. Nowadays, television broadcasts many various films and series that engross viewers. We can hardly even notice that yet another hour has passed and we are just watching the third series, second film or yet another interesting programme, e.g. reality show. We watch television, since we need to know*

*what will happen in the next episode of a soap opera or a reality show. I myself could tell much about those programmes without watching them, because I keep hearing about them from other people. This shows how much man is attached to the world of television. It is a different world of fiction which slips into our minds and turns us into addicts* (F, 3<sup>rd</sup> year)<sup>4</sup>. The analysis of several answers given by the young people, similar to the one quoted above, enables to conclude that young people often have an impression that despite infinite possibilities, the freedom of contemporary man is only apparent. Excessive stimuli from the media make young people enslaved to messages from the "galaxy of Marconi" (mass media: cinema, radio, television; cf. Postman, 2002, p.7). They give in to colourful sensual stimuli persistently slipping into their consciousness, as something easy to watch. Young people remain mentally indifferent to such impulses and let them in: *"I feel like a sponge absorbing everything that is colourful, easy and nice, and there are many people like myself"*, wrote one of the students (F, 5<sup>th</sup> year) about her experience in using media messages. The messages do not support a responsible maturation process among young people and the use of their freedom. Thus, it limits their freedom and makes choices more difficult.

The young people surveyed have been using TV equally often as they use the Internet (the data analysed indicate that they switch their computers on more often). According to the survey, students' essays, and interviews, the students simply surf the Internet while looking for various, both useful and useless information. Sometimes browsing is random, since according to the young people the Internet absorbs for long hours. And now yet another quotation from one of the essays: *"passive rest and relaxation include sleeping, watching television, walking here and there without any sense, clicking at instant messaging engines or searching in the Internet. In the era of new technologies, "staying in the web" is a decease. I myself have caught the decease, since the number of hours I spend at a computer is growing"* (M, 3<sup>rd</sup>).

The surveyed rarely chat over the Internet and even less frequently flirt. They do not treat the Internet as a typical means of communication, however, they declare a frequent use of e-mail. Very few of the surveyed play computer games, and they do it rather occasionally. It might be that such findings are related to the fact that the survey was conducted among young women (over 90% of the surveyed were female), who are less interested than men in flirting over the Internet and playing colourful computer games.

A popular ludic activity among young people is reading books and magazines (over half of the respondents declared frequent use of messages from the "galaxy

---

<sup>4</sup> Key symbols: F – female, M – male.

of Gutenberg”). Apart from books related to their studies, young people most frequently read publications on psychology and popular science (mainly guides, e.g. “Men are from Mars and women from Venus”, “How to be happy and successful”, “How to worry less and live better”), fiction, crime books, biographies and bestsellers. According to the classification by A. Kłoskowska (1972, p. 169–173), it may be noted that the majority of the surveyed can be described as the third type reader. This type of readers include into their catalogues classical books going beyond school canons, contemporary literature, which is fairly easy to read, prose proper with narration values, a little bit of biographies, reportage and specialist literature. The surveyed students did not include elementary readers (focusing on school books, devotional literature, books for children and youth). A few students, mainly first year ones, can be qualified as popular readers concentrating on literary genres typical of mass entertaining publications (romances, less ambitious crime stories, popular serial publications e.g. describing history of ice-age men). A small group of female students aspires to the readers elite by selecting contemporary and past literary avant-garde, classical literature of different periods and cultures, publications full of philosophical or scientific reflections, as well as poetry, drama, theoretical and empirical publications of various fields of knowledge. A detailed analysis of reading lists showed that the lists contained only some elements of this reader type. The most popular authors among female students included U. Eco, P. Coelho, J. Pilch, R. Kapuściński, W. Szymborska, Z. Bauman, E. Fromm, L. Kołakowski, and, however less frequently, M. Kundera, B. Hrabal, S. Lem, Cz. Miłosz, and V. Nabokov.

Another fascination includes nature and leisure. Many of the surveyed (69.2%) indicated that they are very eager to have a walk and spend their free time outdoors. During the interviews, the students added that this way of spending free time “does not cost anything”, it is the cheapest, and we need to remember that students are not very affluent. The respondents stated that Szczecin is a beautiful city with a lot of green spaces and locations excellent for having a walk. The mere fact that the Institute of Pedagogy is situated next to a park often makes it tempting for students to go for a walk instead of attending lectures. The students surveyed quite often (42.4%) select sleeping and passive recreation as basic forms of spending their free time. They excuse themselves by saying that they are tired after lectures and often after their work.

Elements of entertainment (*ilinx*) fit into students’ ludic fascination leading to relaxation and reducing emotional tension. The students surveyed are often (50.6%) involved in these activities (e.g. meeting friends combined with dancing, parties, meetings in clubs or discos), and in case of more or less half of those (25.0%) the activity is combined with drinking alcoholic beverages and/or taking drugs. Nearly



the other half of the respondents are involved in *ilinctic* meetings, however not so frequently. Only one fifth of the respondents (22.1%) declared a negative attitude towards meetings accompanied with alcohol and/or drugs.

The *ilinx* type of games are not strange to students. Reduction of emotional tension is often associated by young people with intoxication from alcohol and/or drugs, or trance inducing dancing. Drugs have become an element of everyday life for many students. *Drugs are used when cramming for exams, during home parties, in clubs, during meetings with close friends, for curiosity, to show off, with the hope to cheer up*", wrote a third year student in his essay. Perhaps the interest in strong emotions (and incomplete capacity of experiencing them in a "natural" way) has become one of the major reasons for resorting to artificial excitement, namely drugs.

Few young people (11.0%) reduce their emotional tension by religious contemplation (meditation, praying, participating in church services). One third of the group surveyed (35.5%) declared occasional use of this method of abreacting emotions. The results are in line with indicators showing a declining interest among Poles in religion and religious practices.

A much less attractive area of ludic fascination among students is participating in various cultural events. Permanent interest in attending events organized by cultural institutions has only been declared by one third of the students (34.3%), whereas more than half of them (61.6%) wrote about their occasional participation in such events. There are, however, respondents (about 3%) who have never attended cultural events at all. Students involved in cultural activity most often select movies in cinemas, art exhibitions in museums and galleries, and youth music concerts. Much less frequently they go to theatres and classical music concerts. Their involvement in culture is mainly concentrated on receptive forms with a minor share (about 20%) of their own artistic output (interests in choreography, floristic activity, plastic arts, music, photography).

Less popular than the *ilinx* type games were fascination type ones or *agon* ones (based on competition). Less than one fourth of the respondents (23.8%) frequently exercise sports and participate in sporting competitions. Still fewer students go to a club to play pool, for bowling (10.5%) and to play computer games (6.4%). Competition does not seem to be very popular among the surveyed, however, this may be only apparent. One of the students described his negative attitude to resorting to *agon* in his free time as follows: *"We need to constantly compete at work and at school. I am forced to participate in the rat race and procession of young wolves, and I do not feel like exercising sports or any other form of competition. Sometimes I execrate it because I can't stand looking at my friends as rivals on my way to success, position at work, or better opinion among lecturers."* (M, 3<sup>rd</sup>).

The least popular seems to be the *alea* type of fun (containing elements of risk). Few students (6.4%) often need an increased level of adrenaline while playing. Less than half of them occasionally participate in risk involving games and plays. During discussions, the students indicated that they usually play lotto and card games (exchanging prizes instead of money). Much less frequently students get involved in extreme sports. They associate risk with the feeling of uncertainty and do not treat it as a pleasurable experience. Thus, it is difficult to accept risk while having fun, which by nature is related to a hedonistic experience. *"I don't like risk and do not feel the need for it. My level of adrenaline is raised by another exam or sex with my boyfriend. I sometimes play lotto but I risk little, just petty money, and I rather do it for fun without counting on winning. However a little hope is always there"*, wrote one of the third year students in her essay.

Few young people (10.5%) are frequently involved in the *mimicra* type of activity in their free time. It is usually based on pretending or dressing as someone else. The respondents most often participate in role playing games (RPGs) organized by groups of their acquaintances. Sometimes they participate in masquerades but in their opinion such events are rarely organised. Nearly half of the surveyed occasionally resort to "mimicra" as a form of a ludic activity, usually participation in RPGs, theme balls organised by young people themselves or "pretending someone else" while chatting over the Internet and in a disco together with other unknown participants. During the interviews, the surveyed students stated that *"it is nice to pretend someone else from time to time while staying with people you do not know"*. They recognised, however, a danger of being discovered as well as the threat that others may be dishonest and also pretend to be someone else. During the interviews the female students talked about their interest in RPGs which are still not very popular among young people (some respondents did not know the games). One student described his fascination with the *mimicra* type activities as follows: *"Another sport or a sporting activity I like is ASG (Air Soft Gun), which is a lighter form of Paintball. (...) There is one more hobby of mine related to it, namely military reconstructions. To put it simple, these are sort of dress events where one group is wearing German uniforms and the other uniforms of allied forces and we reconstruct events of the Second World War."* (M, III).

An interesting phenomenon is students' ludic activity during weekends. I asked the surveyed about the way they had spent their last Sunday. The majority of them wrote that their Sunday morning had started around noon. In general, students reserve Sundays to sleep longer and compensate their getting up early during week days as well as to rest after Saturday parties in discos or homes. After a longer sleep, young people frequently spend their time with families (some of them leave Szczecin and visit their families only during weekends). They go together to church, have

dinner together and watch TV while having coffee and cookies. Students living with their parents and those staying in Szczecin during weekends (at lodgings or dormitory) go out with their boyfriends and girlfriends, have dinner together, go to church and for a walk. An important activity on Sundays is learning. Many students (ca. 60%) wrote about preparing for Monday classes, tests and exams. The fifth year students mentioned writing their MA theses and participating in extramural classes at post-graduate courses. For the students Sundays are frequently associated with media fascination type activities. Young people frequently go to DVD rentals, watch TV programmes, and go to cinemas. Many first year students often do shopping in supermarkets on Sundays. According to observations, “visits to supermarkets” are often a regular free time activity not only for students but also families with children, who treat a Sunday visit to a large shop as an excellent and obligatory form of entertainment.

### **“You don’t have fun, you don’t live” a challenge or reality of contemporary youth? – instead of summary**

I asked the students to respond to the question by writing an essay. The majority of the essays did not provide a clear cut answer to my question. The students indicated a difficulty in answering the question due to the ambiguity of situations faced by young people belonging to different social groups or youth subcultures. *“Young people vary. There are those who may treat it as the wisest slogan from a colourful billboard, and those who will not consider it at all. Some of them may adopt the slogan as their ultimate goal for the future, others have already implemented it with a call “carpe diem”, wrote a fifth year student. “For me these words are a mere slogan. I know the words but I do not relate to them. I have more important and interesting things to do. For my younger brother the slogan is probably a challenge. At least it seems to me like that because he keeps repeating that parents spoil his fun by preventing him going out with friends. This is so important for teenagers. (...) These words are the reality for many of my fellow students, mainly studying agriculture, navigation, and fishery. They can party from dusk to dawn. It seems that there is no life for them without having parties, girls, alcohol and drugs. I don’t think they should refrain themselves. (...) but I don’t fell like doing it”,* responded a fifth year female student.

The students who decided that the slogan was the reality of the contemporary youth do not identify themselves with those young people. In their opinion, they do not share such a reality. It is the experience of others, from other courses, other students (but not me), those who do not study, teenagers, pop culture fans, second-

ary school students, and dope smokers. The answers given by those students reveal a certain form of escapism from being associated with people involved in continuous fun, since this label is considered clearly pejorative. *“It is the reality for many of my male and female friends, those I know from primary and secondary schools. They have always liked having fun and spending their free time partying. The parties are total rave – strong alcoholic beverages, soft drugs (or hard ones), chicks, sex, and unconsciousness until morning”*, wrote a first year student in his essay. *“For many students, it is the reality. Some of my female friends from the dormitory also like such fun. I was shocked when they told me about participating in a group sex taking place in a dormitory next door. It is not all. They experiment with everything. We had to take one of my friends to an out-patient clinic because she collapsed after taking pills. I don’t even know what kind of pills. They live only to have fun and always have company to organise parties”*, wrote a first year student presenting the ludic reality of her friends.

In the opinion of some students, “you don’t have fun, you don’t live” is an advertising slogan which may become a challenge for many young people identifying themselves with pop culture stars, who select “extremely ludic” (Dionysian) style of living. Having fun to oblivion, continuous consumption and lack of moderation in anything you do are determinants of this style of living. The students frequently mention that representatives of the Dionysian hierarchy of values include Doda, a female vocalist of pop band Virgin, Michał Wiśniewski from “Ich Troje”, and Paris Hilton, a scandalizing heir of Hilton’s fortune. *“What they advertise on TV and in newspapers can be dangerous. Doda constantly talks about having sex with her boyfriend and has fun talking about it. She is an idol for many young girls who would eagerly change places with her to have fun too”*, wrote a first year student. Yet another similar opinion was expressed: *“It is a slogan, but a dangerous one. What they say in the media young people take emotionally instead of rationally. The slogan may quickly become a challenge and then the reality for confused young people. They fall into the trap and a vicious circle of great fun which may be tragic in its consequences”* (F, 3<sup>rd</sup>).

Several answers suggest that the students place fun among advantages of youth and do not see anything wrong in it. They emphasise, however, that such fun needs to be combined with predicting and understanding of consequences. The students call this form of free time activity a “fun with class”, “high level fun”, “responsible entertainment”, “fun proper”, “cultural fun”. *“Fun is pleasure and young people deserve it, but it must be at a certain level, a cultured one. One cannot behave against generally accepted rules. People need to have fun and it is really needed, though there are moments in our lives when we do not even think about having fun, e.g. death of a close friend or a family member”*, wrote one of the female students (F, 3<sup>rd</sup>).

The quoted statements clearly indicate that young people recognise the danger of the Dionysian attitude towards ludic activity and realising this model of living. They understand the value of fun and highlight its meaning for individuals and society. However, they advise moderation in having fun. First and foremost, they point at threats resulting from apparently innocent slogans that may get to a fertile soil of still non-matured and unprepared youth and lead to inappropriate behaviours. The surveyed do not find the realisation of such unwanted slogans in their activities and do not identify themselves with groups taking up such challenges and getting involved in a certain type of activities.

\* \* \*

I am not going to insist on finding a clear answer to the question asked in the title of the paper. Looking for further solutions and asking questions will comprise my future research **challenges**, and they will be far from being **slogans** only. I hope to **realise** them in the future.

## **Bibliography**

- Babbie, E. (2004): *Badania społeczne w praktyce*. Warszawa.
- Braun-Galkowska, M. (1994): *Którzy bez wiosny rok by mieć chcieli?* In: Ożóg, T. (ed.) *Nauki społeczne o młodzi*. Lublin.
- Burszta, W., Kuligowski, W. (2005): *Sequel. Dalsze przygody kultury w globalnym świecie*. Warszawa.
- Caillois, R. (1973): *Żywiół i ład*. Warszawa.
- Caillois, R. (1997): *Gry i ludzie*. Warszawa.
- Grad, J. (1997): *Zabawa jako zjawisko kulturowe*. In: Zamiara, K. (red.) *Szkice o partykypacji kulturowej*. Poznań.
- Huizinga, J. (1985): *Homo ludens*. Warszawa.
- Jakubowska, U. (1993): *Czynności badawcze w psychologii i pedagogice*. Bydgoszcz.
- Julia, D. (1995): *Słownik filozofii*. Katowice.
- Kamiński, A. (1965): *Czas wolny i jego problematyka społeczno-wychowawcza*. Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków.
- Kłoskowska, A. (1972): *Społeczne ramy kultury*. Warszawa.
- Leppert, R. (1996): *Potoczne teorie wychowania studentów pedagogiki* Bydgoszcz.
- Okoń, W. (1995): *Zabawa a rzeczywistość*. Warszawa.
- Okoń, W. (1998): *Nowy słownik pedagogiczny*. Warszawa.
- Ostrowska, U. (1998): *Doświadczanie wartości edukacyjnych w szkole wyższej*. Bydgoszcz.

Postman, N. (2002): *Zabawić się na śmierć*. Warszawa.

Sillamy, N. (1989): *Słownik psychologii*. Warszawa.

Sułkowski, B. (1984): *Zabawa. Studium socjologiczne*. Warszawa.

Żygulski, K. (1981): *Święto i kultura. Święta dawne i nowe. Rozważania socjologa*.  
Warszawa.