

**WOMEN AND PRIMARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION:
A FEMINIST CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY**

by

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We accept this dissertation as conforming
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Abstract

The purpose of this inquiry was to provide an opportunity for the voices of the women teaching primary physical education to be heard by calling attention to how the lived experiences of these women primary teachers, within a culture in which the ideology of sport embodies patriarchal values and power relations, may have influenced what physical education means to them, and their actions in that context.

Critical ethnography was selected as the method of inquiry and utilized data collected on-site during nonparticipant and participant fieldwork, formal and informal interviews with the participants, and relevant documents collected throughout the course of the inquiry. As part of the collaborative process the researcher taught the primary physical education classes of the women for several months. Reflective data was also collected during this period.

Analysis of the data pointed to three emergent themes. First, that the teaching of primary physical education is practised in a way that provides a degree of comfort for women in physical activity that is consistent with their values. Second, that the amount of time in the gymnasium space for physical education represents both a valuable break from classroom routine and the lower status of primary teachers and primary physical education within the school. And lastly, that time issues surrounding primary physical education reflect its low priority for the women as influenced by the value administrators' and parents' assign to other

subjects but it also is a time when the women have fun with the children in their class.

In these contexts we explored how power relationships between the primary teachers and others permeate the culture and influence the women's practice of physical education. Having identified such relationships those interested can assist in resisting patriarchal values as perpetuated in sport and physical education and create change that is beneficial for the primary teachers, the children they teach and the subject of physical education.

As a result of this inquiry and because of the large number of women teaching primary physical education, it is suggested that professionals in physical education critically reflect on the experiences of both the women and children in this context when designing curricula, implementing professional workshops and assigning value to particular teaching experiences within the discipline.

Examiners:

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Dedication

To Wiep

CHAPTER 1

A STARTING PLACE

Contemporary critical feminist critiques taking 'sport' as their object of study identify sport as a culture that perpetuates patriarchal ideology and its forms of power and knowledge in our society, but in which transformative possibilities exist. Within that larger context, this inquiry sets out to call attention to issues that are normally obscured or disregarded: firstly, how has living within an ideology of sport embodying patriarchal values and power relations affected the women primary teachers responsible for teaching primary physical education; and secondly, what effect does their experience in that context have on the way they teach physical education at the primary level?

Purpose of the inquiry

The purpose of this research inquiry is three-fold. Firstly this inquiry, the research questions and the method selected to travel this journey will provide an opportunity for the voices of the women teaching primary physical education to be heard. Secondly, this inquiry will provide an occasion for various human agencies (i.e., teachers, teacher educators, researchers and professional organizations) with an interest in this area to gain a deeper understanding of the relations between these women and their physical education classes. Finally, this inquiry will call attention to how the experiences of these women primary teachers within a culture in which the ideology of sport embodies patriarchal values and power relations may have influenced what physical education means to them and their

actions in that context.

What is the research method?

Epistemological platform

Collaborative human science research with teachers involves a number of assumptions. This project assumed that teachers have extensive practical knowledge that they are able to articulate, some of it immediately, some of it only after reflection. It is this knowledge that will make them an integral part of the research team while also allowing them the opportunity to communicate and to learn other ways to communicate their expertise.

A second assumption is that teachers, as a group, contribute a unique perspective on learning and teaching. Common individual experiences can reflect different perspectives on what is happening in the physical education class, on the meaning of the data collected, and on the framing of questions as they are clarified during the process of this inquiry.

Third, it is assumed that the presence of the researcher in the gymnasium and school environment is likely to cause some change in the behaviours of the teacher, the children and myself as participant. However, if I am able to blend into the culture by moving from an observer position to a participant observer it is more likely that I will be privy to the everyday, natural functioning of people in the school environment.

A final assumption is that the data collected, how it is collected, and to a certain extent, even the questions that are framed will reflect my personal

practical knowledge, and that these factors will also colour the interpretations made. As this research will be interactive and dialectical, the themes and categories, and possibly the meanings, that will emerge and be described may possibly arise from the process of working together, of talking together, of sharing observations and of asking questions. Since the process is dialectical, several sets of knowledge and experience will interweave, potentially providing a rich description of this experience.

The ethics of disclosure

Human science studies are limited by the integrity and sensitivity of the researcher who is the primary instrument of data collection (Merriam, 1988). The organization and interpretation of the data rely on the feedback from teachers, member checks by peers and the participants in the inquiry, and researcher interpretations. Despite this coming together of researcher and participants, however, there is a precarious relationship inherent in the process. The researcher's prejudices and convictions and errors may become exposed in the process, but she will be vulnerable in that regard primarily to herself. The participants, however, not only make themselves vulnerable in the often difficult process of self-examination, but their convictions and flaws and prejudices will be exposed to the scrutiny of others who do not have the close relationship with them that the researcher had. Such trust as must be established is not something to be taken lightly. As we examine the values, beliefs and knowledge of a teacher we are invading her private life and thus must be sensitive to preserving the

teacher's self-esteem. In that respect, certain kinds of questions and certain directions of inquiry that would have been fruitful might be avoided or abandoned, or other meanings that may be found in this inquiry may be compromised. Ultimately, the researcher must distinguish between what is truly enlightening and what may be personally damaging to a teacher in the inquiry.

Human science researchers recommend explication of the researcher's background in the research report (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Miles & Huberman, 1984). My background as a student in physical education and participant in athletics provided me a different perspective prior to my introduction to academia and elementary teacher education. I was fortunate enough, as a student, to have many excellent female role models and mentors. Unfortunately, that experience makes me more the exception than the rule as many women and men did not have the benefit of experiencing a woman in a position of leadership, whether as teacher, coach or administrator (C.A.U.T. Bulletin, 1996; Mickelson, 1993).

Until I began to teach, I believed that the world was a relatively equitable environment, and I lacked understanding concerning the role women are expected to fulfil in the male preserve of sport and physical education. I did not realize how male-determined the value system that exists in sport and physical education is and how easy it is for that value system to be seen as natural and common sensical. Reflection on my passions and strengths led me to question further the lack of choices afforded various groups of women and girls in the sport and

physical education realms. Feminists describe such limitations of choice as a form of oppression. Until my recent experiences as a professional in physical education, I did not feel oppressed. I had a number of choices in sport and physical education. These choices have directed my destiny to this point. My interest in children and activity led me to focus on the elementary physical education curriculum in my undergraduate training. After graduate work in elementary physical education, I eventually secured a position in teacher education in elementary physical education. Teaching 'mandatory' education courses and conducting workshops in elementary physical education, predominantly to women who did not elect to train in the discipline of physical education, made me aware of my specialist experiences and views. Informal discussions with these groups of women have made it apparent that, though they might share the belief that physical education is valuable, they may have very different expectations, views and practices than specialists do with respect to the teaching of physical education. My enthusiasm for physical activity, physical abilities, and the value system I absorbed without giving it too much thought are not necessarily shared by people who want only to be primary teachers -- and who, incidentally, are responsible to teach physical education. It seemed clear to me that if nonspecialist teachers have a set of attitudes and perceptions about physical education and its curriculum that differs from those of the community of teachers who are committed specialists, we must determine where the points of congruence and divergence are and what impact the experiences, expectations, views and practices

of the primary teacher may have on how physical education is taught to young children. An interest in children, held in common with these women, coupled with this growing sense that my view of physical education was not theirs has led me to a feminist consciousness, an examination of feminist literature, and subsequently to the proposal of this research.

Definitions

Starting from the same place will assist us (writer and reader) in moving along the same path during this project therefore some definitions that may clarify terms often used within this document may be useful and are presented in alphabetical order.

Hegemonic relations are relations, 'silently' maintained without coercion, that produce a narrow range of practices and beliefs as they saturate the common-sense reality of humans. Within such a set of relations, people rarely act or think in ways alternative to those that are legitimated (MacNeill, 1994).

Sports hegemony in Canada includes specific socialization practices.

Although there are obvious differences between individual families in the upbringing of their children, Canadian families have much in common, including notions that result in, reflect and maintain gender stratification.

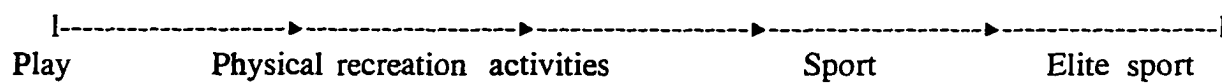
Residual patriarchal ideologies concerning the 'inferiority' of feminine practices seem to be at the basis of female socialization (p. 275).

Patriarchy, as defined by Hartmann (1981, p. 14), is 'a set of social relations between men, which have a material base, and which...establish or create

interdependence and solidarity among men that enables them to dominate women'. The major components of patriarchy as women experience them are outlined as male control of institutions, decision making, female labour (domestic and child-rearing responsibility) and sexuality, as well as homophobia, male violence (expressed or threatened) and an ideology of male superiority.

Physical activity is human physical activity in all its forms and types.

Vanderzwaag and Sheehan (1978) suggest there is a continuum theory of physical activity that suggest that individuals partake in a particular type of physical activity, game or sport and that characteristic changes occur to the activity, or a modification of it, that moves the individual from left to right on the continuum below.



Physical education, briefly stated, is the 'educational profession which is responsible for the instruction in physical activities involving sports and games, motor skills and knowledge, physical fitness, and other rhythmic and movement forms' (Anderson, Broom, Pooley, Rhodes, Robertson & Schrodt, 1989, p. 26).

Power, simply put by Kanter (1977), is one's capacity to mobilize resources to get things done, the capacity to act, the ability to choose what will happen or the ability to bring about change. Further discussion concerning power relations can be found in Chapter 2, 'where have we come from?'

A **primary teacher** is a teacher who instructs in the grade range of kindergarten to grade three. This inquiry will focus on those classroom teachers

who are not formally trained in physical education, yet are still responsible for teaching physical education to their primary classes. In my province, a university student in elementary education who has elected not to specialize in physical education is required to complete only one course in this subject area during his or her university experience (Local University: General Calendar, 1992-1993, p. 131). Hence a primary teacher in this province has had approximately 52 hours of instruction in an introductory elementary physical education course (as of September 1993 this is now 39 hours of instruction).

Sport according to Canadian authors Anderson et al. (1989, p. 27) 'is a physical activity which (1) must contain elements of physical prowess and skills, and is vigorous; (2) must include an element of competition or challenge whether that be abstract or concrete in form; (3) is institutionalized, in that it has predeveloped rules, regulations, and strategies of play; and (4) is involved in a socialization process'.

Politics of the research method

This inquiry initially posed the guiding question 'What does the physical education curriculum mean to women primary teachers?' The research design and process of the inquiry are ongoing, however, and can now be regarded as politically oriented since they are premised on the understanding that the teachers not only perpetuate patriarchal power relations and values in their interaction with the physical education curriculum but also resist them. So, as well as describing and analysing the women's practice through an in-depth long-term

study, this critical ethnography has a transformative purpose. Through self-reflection and analysis of and by the inquiry's intertwined living components (the teacher, the researcher, and the data that both generate), the inquiry may enable change in physical education by identifying those elements or aspects of the existing ideology that the teachers resist and those they acquiesce to, in either case knowingly or unknowingly.

This critical inquiry is one that may challenge habitual ways of thinking. Observing and understanding the common realities of daily experience for these women may enable them, or us as professionals in the field, to create an effective program more in accord with a set of values they understand and can give their assent to. The critical ethnographic aspect of this observation and understanding is to make problematic the promulgated knowledge and the structural forces and human agencies that constitute and constrain in a particular way the shape of the teachers' daily experience with physical activity.

Significance and guiding question of this inquiry

The significance of this inquiry is that it will describe the primary teachers' lived world in relation to physical education and it will reflect on and interpret any meanings discovered in this culture. I will attempt to understand the meaning that physical education has for each teacher and what relation that meaning bears to how she teaches physical education, why she teaches physical education, and how physical education relates to her role as a primary teacher. This inquiry will also attempt to identify the cultural assumptions that shape and influence what

physical education means to these women. On the basis of what it attempts and assumes the guiding question for this inquiry has become this:

**What does the practice of teaching primary physical education
mean to the women in this school?**

This research question approaches the issue of the teachers' orientation towards knowledge, power, and identity, and concerns may arise about the relationship between teaching primary physical education and the commitment to transform this experience to challenge cultural hegemony and the taken-for-granted passivity that dominates learning and teaching (Britzman, 1991, p. 11). Within the general context of the primary question, then, more critically-oriented questions asked during this inquiry will be: How do primary teachers, in the physical education context, see themselves as resisting or accommodating cultural hegemony? How can primary teachers critically appraise the adequacy of conceptual beliefs, assumptions and values incorporated in prevailing theories of educational practice? Accordingly, my feeling is that critical ethnography as a method is the most suitable approach to this research question.

Specifically, this inquiry is about three women who are spectators with respect to the sport milieu due to structural forces (i.e., society, media, school, institutions, classroom and curriculum) and human agencies (i.e., youthful and current families, youthful and current role models, current peers, students and authority figures) within our society, but who nevertheless are responsible for teaching primary physical education. Using a critical feminist perspective, the

inquiry provides an opportunity, from the researcher's perspective, to acknowledge and make important the worth of the perceptions and the working realities of the women who have agreed to share their lives in this inquiry.

Power, the means by which an ideology limits and channels thought and action, will provide the framework within which individual actions and struggles with knowledge and the construction or reconstruction of meaning will be observed. Hence, how power relationships intertwine between women primary teachers and other human agencies to influence the teaching of physical education is the framework for this inquiry (see Diagram 1, p. 20) out of which arise many questions. How do these women make sense of physical education as it currently exists? How does 'power' operate directly and indirectly within their experiences as observed through the strategies (pre-plans) and tactics (manoeuvres) used in and through their everyday practices within the school culture? What strategies and tactics are used in each woman's power struggles in light of the promulgated knowledge (recommended components) for 'Quality, Daily, Physical Education' (Q.D.P.E.) that is currently sponsored in the province? What does the use or avoidance of each of the recommended components of this promulgated knowledge by these women in their physical education classes reveal about their response to that knowledge? And lastly, are there strategies and tactics deliberately or unintentionally used by these women in the context of physical education that resist or reproduce the dominant ideology of sport in our society?

Emancipatory potential of the inquiry

The findings in this inquiry could have practical and political ramifications, which can be found below, but the primary significance of this inquiry is personal and relates to the possible emancipatory effects for the primary teachers in this school, the profession of physical education, the researcher and perhaps others reading this inquiry.

The emancipation of the primary teacher

There is the potential that this inquiry could be emancipatory for the primary teachers and children involved. This inquiry may help the teachers become more aware of powers or realities (cultural forces) that determine their lived world. Such awareness may allow them to orient their lives differently in relation to these forces, may allow them to think more clearly about what they believe and why they believe it, and so may allow them to achieve greater satisfaction or contentment for themselves and the children they teach. An anecdote that reflects a primary teacher's first step towards recognition of cultural norms that influenced her attitude and behaviour towards 'physical education' is my experience with Joan. (While the women participating in this inquiry have agreed to share their experiences all their names have been changed to preserve a measure of anonymity).

Joan

As a teacher educator, one of my most vivid memories about primary school teachers is of 'Joan'. Joan is a mother of 2 teenagers and her spouse

is a farmer in a rural area in our province. Joan taught grade 2 and was registered in my undergraduate physical education class at the university because she wanted to get her university degree. Joan had received her teaching certificate years ago at a time when only eight months of post-secondary education was required to become a teacher. She told me that she wanted her degree for herself and because it would move her up the salary grid substantially at a time when farming was experiencing hard times in the province. As a mature student Joan was very studious, but she was very concerned about taking and completing the required physical education course for primary school teachers. She had been attending summer school and off-campus classes for what seemed to her an 'eternity' and she had left this course until 'the very end'.

We had many informal chats during that 52 hour - 1 month course. Near its end Joan told me that she had lost 6 pounds during the course and that it hadn't been nearly as petrifying as she had imagined. The climax to the course was the presentation of a partner sequence in educational gymnastics. Joan joked many times about whether her partner, a twenty-year-old second-year student, could hold her weight, or even a portion of it.

I and two student peers were to assess a grade. Joan and her partner received the highest grade on their gymnastics sequence. On the last day of class, Joan asked me to write a note to her teenage son announcing his mother's 'standing' in gymnastics in the class.

After the course finished I received a nice card from Joan thanking me. She mentioned that she now had a different view of physical education and said she was sure it would greatly improve her p.e. class in the Fall when she would return to teaching.

Joan had expectations and ideas about the course she was going to take with me. Her notions about the nature and content of that physical education class were probably pieced together from her previous experiences in physical education, her interactions with her colleagues in her school, her life on the farm, and more generally, family life and cultural values. Her 'reality' and relationship to the physical education curriculum has been socially constructed. Some evidence for this resides in the questions it is possible to ask about her actions and her comments. Why was it important to Joan that she lost 6 pounds? Why was she self-conscious enough about her weight to make jokes about it? What was it about her physical education class that left it open to such great 'improvement'? Why did she 'fear' the course and imagine it to be a petrifying experience? Why did Joan leave the course until the end of her program? Why is Joan in the program? Why was it important that I write the letter to her son?

Joan learned that the term 'gymnastics' had a certain meaning for her due to cultural forces such as the Olympics. Her fear of having to do what she believed gymnastics to be modified her behaviour. She postponed taking the course. She was afraid, expected to be unskilled, and thought only embarrassment

and perhaps injury could result. On finding out that a different meaning can be given to the word, one that describes an approach to movement that is not recognized by the cultured 'norm' of 'gymnastics', the experience became much more positive than the one she had feared. As noted, Joan's new awareness is really only a first step, but it is one that may enable her eventually to question some of the other values and beliefs (cultural norms and demands) she has regarding physical education and its purposes. While knowledge found in this inquiry may be instrumental in helping to liberate these teachers, a general transformation of society may be needed for holistic liberation of all the teachers and children.

Our professional emancipation

Much of the previous research that has focused on the primary school teacher responsible for elementary physical education has compared this culture to specialists in physical education. Very little attention has been given to the reality and influence of being a non-specialist woman in this experience. That seems an important omission in light of information about the proportion-by-gender of primary teachers (95% are women) in this particular Western Canadian city as given by a local school board representative. This inquiry is important to obtain a better understanding of primary teachers who are women and of what the teaching of physical education means to them. The results of this inquiry could provide new and different information to our national and provincial professional organizations (e.g., Canadian Association of Health, Physical Education,

Recreation and Dance - C.A.H.P.E.R.D., Saskatchewan Physical Education Association - S.P.E.A.) and our local Boards of Education to better assist this group of professionals in the field. Such an inquiry may also uncover impediments that these women believe hinder their effective implementation of Quality, Daily Physical Education (Q.D.P.E.), and also the reasons for what may appear to be their relative lack of participation in, or resistance to, professional workshops, conferences and other professional development opportunities in the area of physical education.

This inquiry may also provide insight for the people in the discipline of physical education generally. Sport and physical education are the preserves of men and are inclined to be a 'chilly climate' for interested women (Lenskyj, 1986). Research in sport and physical education, as with other disciplines, has tended to focus on men and subsequently has compared women to the performances, attitudes and behaviours exhibited by men in this context. Primary teachers responsible for teaching physical education are further marginalized in the research in the discipline since they are peripheral to the 'true' sporting action. Through distribution and sharing of the findings of this inquiry with others in the profession, women and men alike, hopefully a heightened consciousness of the culture will enable the profession to take a proactive role in taking the primary teacher from the margins and recognizing that the primary physical education class is where it all begins.

Lastly, and though this is not strictly emancipatory it does have

implications for primary teachers, this inquiry may also fit in some small way into larger social and political trends. Due to the increasing debt load of governments, much of which is created by expensive health care services, governments and taxpayers are seeking alternatives to existing programs and systems. In this province, for example, there has been much talk recently of an alternative to the present health care system called 'the wellness model'. This model is based on the premise that healthier lifestyles can both create happier, more productive lives and relieve some of the enormous expense of an aging population demanding more and more of the health care system. However imperfectly this model may presently be understood and developed, healthier lifestyles will be heavily promoted, and, once again, the educational system will be expected to contribute to the development of behaviours and attitudes that are consistent with those ideals. Gaining some understanding of the attitudes, frustrations, and expectations of the teachers who will be largely responsible for creating lifelong interest in physical activity in the young may help to provide possible and tentative strategies and guidelines to help meet these new demands.

My emancipation

There are three reasons why I think this research will be personally emancipatory. First, I have felt out of touch with where the teaching of children takes place. As van Manen (1988) described, many researchers adopt a research perspective that draws them away from a pedagogic orientation towards an orientation that is typical of the natural sciences. This has drawn educators away

from the question of the nature of pedagogy and from invaluable dialogue about the meaning of pedagogy in our everyday lives. I want to explore that meaning in the context of teaching children physical education as it is experienced by primary teachers. This desire is not a result of having become 'out of touch' with the experiences of teaching children in primary school but rather of never having been in touch with the experience. Exploring and understanding the lives of women who live that experience daily may aid in my preparation of future teachers moving into that culture. This assistance may provide me greater, or potentially less, peace of mind. I am willing to take the risk.

Secondly, the method will allow more freedom for my unique personal strengths to surface more completely, for them to be less inhibited by the physical education disciplines as I have learned and been exposed to them. This will permit a personal style to emerge in these efforts. Eisner (1991) states that:

qualitative inquiry places a high premium on the idiosyncratic, on the exploitation of the researcher's unique strengths, rather than on standardization and uniformity. Hence, investigators who study schools or classrooms and who engage in that craft called field work will do things in ways that make sense to them, given the problem in which they are interested, the aptitude they possess, and the context in which they work (p. 169).

This method will allow the flexibility to pursue emerging configurations within the data gathered and make appropriate adjustments in order to maximize

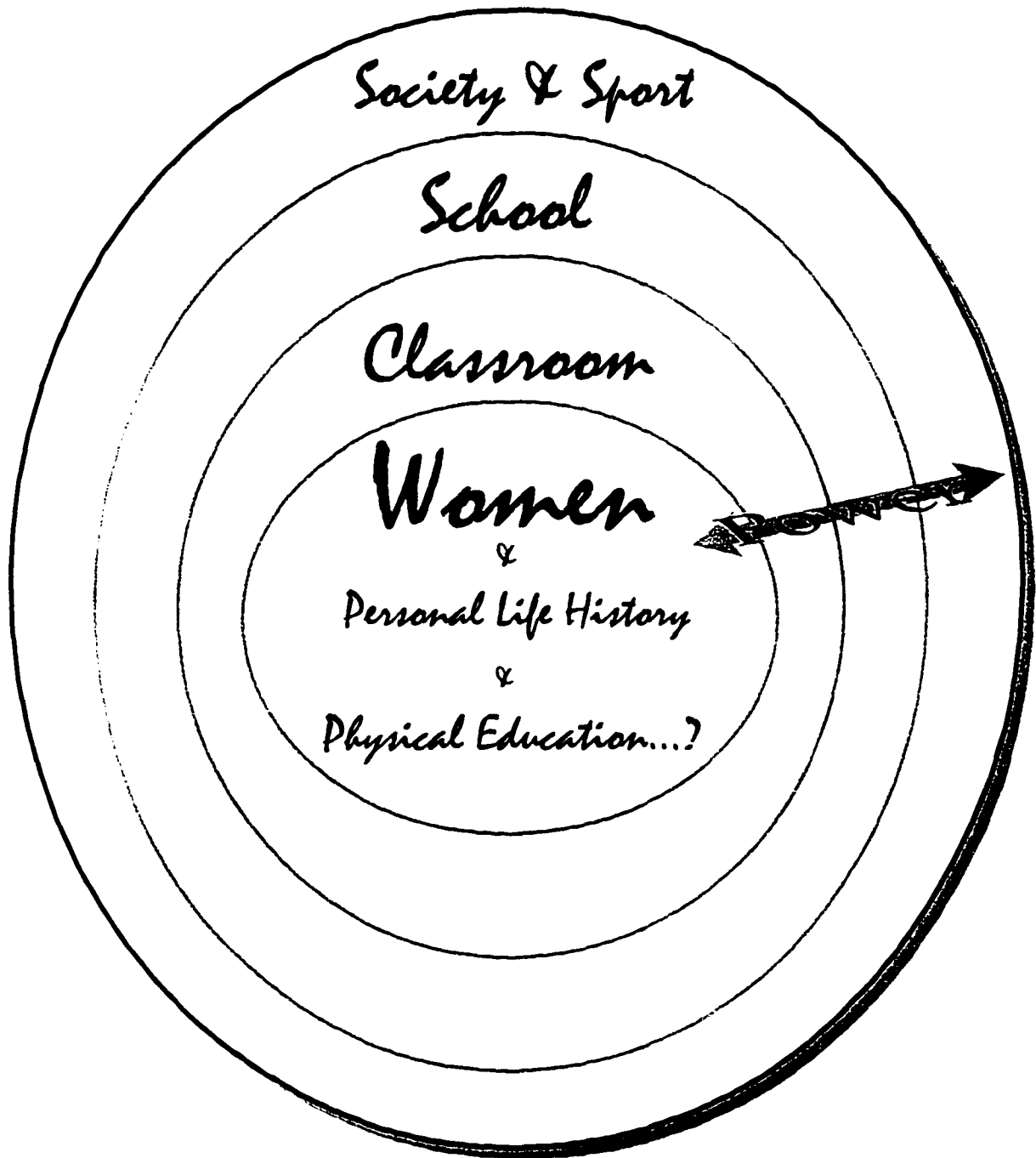
understanding for both myself as researcher and the teacher participants who are sharing in the experience.

A final emancipatory possibility relates to the faculty I work with at the university. We have little collective knowledge on qualitative inquiry, which is evident in our refereed publication record. I hope to help to broaden our knowledge in research methodologies and to broaden our research energies, thereby enabling the invitation of questions or problems that were previously subconsidered due to the lack of an appropriate method of confronting the question or problem. This could provide new directions for faculty to explore, particularly those members who find existing methodologies limiting or over-exposed. This form of emancipation is perhaps professionally focused, but it has personal meaning due to my discipline's birthground and research traditions.

Diagram 1

Power Relations

How do power relations structure the women's practice of teaching primary physical education?



CHAPTER 2

WHERE HAVE WE COME FROM?

As presented in the previous chapter, this inquiry is about three women who are spectators within the sport domain of our culture, and who are teachers of physical education to young children. So that the readers might take this journey with the writer, and so that they may understand more fully the experiences of these women as they are presented, they must be aware of the past and current issues regarding four critical areas: women as teachers; women, gender and physical activity; power relations; and, the Q.D.P.E. program.

Women as Teachers

Any attempt to assess the perceptions that people have about women as teachers must take into consideration a number of interrelated factors. These include the competence and subject expertise of the teacher, the behaviour and leadership characteristics of the teacher, and the role of gender biases in assessing women in positions of leadership and as teachers.

The most obvious set of criteria on which a teacher would be judged, whether a woman or a man, would be knowledge of their subject area and their ability to disseminate and share this information with their students. A parent, student or principal's evaluation of the capabilities of a female teacher will necessarily be coloured by their present environment, their past experiences and perhaps their personal biases regarding what traits females possess and what is 'appropriate' feminine behaviour. Since gender biases originate early in our lives,

it is necessary to look beyond the boundaries of teaching to determine the extent of the influence of those biases in the evaluation of women teachers.

Several researchers have examined the possibility that biological sex automatically confers a certain status in the same way that, for example, education level, income level, or race does. In our culture the status of the male is generally regarded as being higher than that of the female. Further, they have suggested that this conferred status affects the degree of influence accorded to an individual in a group setting. In other words, in the absence of some intervention or evidence to the contrary, the work of a male will have more influence than that of a female (Meeker & Weitzel-O'Neill, 1985; Pugh & Wahrman, 1985).

The belief that work done by a male is considered more influential, important and authoritative also finds expression in the hierarchy of work value in the educational system. Women teachers' expectations and perceptions about themselves and their roles are shaped not only by the schools where they work but also by their own experiences as girls, in and outside of school, and by the female role models presented to them. Society's expectations about women and the careers they should pursue also influence women teachers' perceptions of themselves and their treatment by male colleagues. In this context, the work the women do is generally undervalued.

Aspinwall and Drummond (1989) explored the notions that the older and more able the pupils the greater the skill required of the teachers and that therefore women teaching in the primary grades are the least skilled of the

individuals in the profession of teaching. Since women dominate in numbers in the field of primary education and since there is every reason to assume the suggestion that caring for our children is 'women's work', there would be a natural socialization of women into primary teaching. However, the choice of many women to become teachers of young children is so taken for granted that women are often unaware of factors that constrain their career selection. When 30 women in a teacher training program were questioned whether their sex had influenced their selection of a particular program, they felt their program options were quite open. Those women in the secondary education program consistently believed they selected the program because of their interest in a particular subject and those women in the primary education program cited the notion of teaching across all areas of the spectrum as being attractive. The smaller number of men that participated in the study indicated also that teaching in one or several curriculum areas was their reason, but when asked why they did not select primary education (all but one selected middle or secondary years) the men's responses indicated that they were actively socializing themselves out of primary teacher education.

'I never thought of it...I don't think I'd have the *patience*'.

'I don't think I'd have the *gentleness*'.

'I suppose it's stereotyping really but it's *not where you expect men to be*'.

(p. 14).

...In a stereotyped world, if working with young children is a '*natural*'

occupation for women, men who want to work with them must be
'unnatural' (p. 15).

It is assumed that, as caring comes naturally to women, not much training or reward is needed. An article in the Guardian reflected the misunderstood and undervalued importance of the primary teacher:

Little is asked of a five year old save learning to share his toys and eat his lunch in a civilised fashion...We could save about half the number of full-time reception class teachers or even more if we accept that a highly trained teacher is not essential for this age group but could be replaced by a not-so-expensive nursery assistant working under supervision (Dobbin, 1986).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, women hold over 95% of the primary grade teaching positions in the city where this inquiry took place. Aspinwall and Drummond (1989) note that even if the women were trying to resist the stereotypical role associated with being a woman, perhaps a mother, and the teacher of primary children, the working environment is riddled with events and equipment, demands and daily disasters that force confirmation of the traditional role. The cleaning up after art period and play time, being responsible for food (snacks and lunch supervision) and reinforcing appropriate social behaviours blur the distinction between 'caring mother' and 'good primary teacher'. Hence, many beginning teachers enter the primary classroom unaware of the traditional modelling of 'women's work' that inevitably awaits them. And we must remember that not all

women are disturbed by their cooptation into this traditional role.

In summary, women teaching primary grades can be viewed within their working context as reinforcing the ideology of the society in which they live. Paradoxically, the work of these women is undervalued while at the same time they work to reproduce the system of hegemonic relations that causes their work to be seen that way. In the next section we will examine women's place in the context of physical activity in society.

Women, gender and physical activity

Recently studies have been published about women and physical activity and gender issues from legal and feminist perspectives (Birrell & Cole, 1994; Costa & Guthrie, 1994). The exploration of the meaning of physical activity, not just as another demographic variable to add to the research list of those to be studied, but as a framework for analyzing the impact of socialization and gender relations in 'everyday life' for both women and men has given visibility to the study of women and physical activity. For women it has been a long road travelled, one where we are only beginning to understand our potential and at the same time seeking out where exactly we may want to travel.

From a legal perspective in the United States, Title IX was the single most significant piece of legislation to affect the direction and philosophical tenets of female sport (Hult, 1994). This piece of legislation, part of the Educational Amendments passed in 1972, required years of lobbying before it was actually passed. It declared that 'No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex,

be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. ' Title IX was ultimately delayed for five years by men who controlled the powerful athletic programs in high schools and colleges. Eventually in *Grove City College v. Bell* 1984, the Supreme Court ruled that school athletic programs were not included under Title IX because they did not directly receive money from the federal government. At this time there were 800 cases of alleged discrimination under investigation that were dropped or altered. It was not until four years later that the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988 was passed, which mandated equal opportunity in all programs in any institution that received federal funding. This act breathed new life into Title IX and renewed litigation throughout the U.S. (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1994).

Prior to Title IX being passed in 1972, the sport system promoted and rewarded successful elite male athletes and set them on pedestals. The ultimate dream of many young boys was, and still is, to become a highly paid professional athlete and, ultimately, a national sports hero. Community and youth sports groups were conducting training camps and farm teams for professional sports organizations. Should an athlete get his 'shot' at the dream by participating in training camps, the professional organizations were waiting. Those males who were unable to achieve the status of 'professional' became the paying spectators for professional sports, or 'manly' sports as suggested by Nelson (1994).

('Manly' sports include the professional games of football, baseball, basketball,

ice hockey, boxing, wrestling and soccer).

On the other hand, women's involvement in sport from a historical point of view was for enjoyment, healthy recreation and a controlled form of competition, generally speaking more of a physical education perspective. Women were encouraged to participate regardless of ability and the notion of cooperative teamwork was reinforced. Little encouragement was provided to women at this time to strive for levels of physical performance that were equal to men. There were limited professional sport organizations available for women, and few sponsorship proposals awaiting them.

There were several positive effects of Title IX as several liberal feminists suggest (Costa & Guthrie, 1994). There were opportunities for women to lobby for equal training time, practice time and equal access to facilities for female athletes. American women were very successful in the 1984 Olympic Summer Games, which many proponents believe was a direct result of Title IX. (Successful results may also be attributed to the boycott of the Los Angeles Games by the athletically-strong Communist countries). Efforts, as a result of Title IX, did dramatically increase the number of female participants in sport and physical activity. However, attempts to merge female and male athletic departments, which was required by Title IX, resulted in the women's programs and administrators being assimilated with men. Women were explicitly encouraged to 'fit' into the sport choices, participation levels and career patterns of men, and if they did not they were marginalized in the role of cheerleader for men in sports. Some

feminists still question how far women have actually come since the implementation of Title IX.

In Canada, legislation relating to gender discrimination that would apply to sport organizations includes federal human rights legislation such as the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. According to Corbet and Finlay (1994, p. 5) in An Introduction to the Law, Sport and Gender Equity in Canada, a landmark case for gender equity in the sport culture was *Blainey v. Ontario Hockey Association*:

This case achieved two important results: it eliminated an exemption in the Ontario Human Rights Code which until 1986 had allowed sport organizations in Ontario to discriminate, and it established that a private sport organization was discriminating against girls in not allowing them to participate in its programs. This case has made it possible for many girls to participate on boys' sports teams, when and where the opportunity to play on a girls' team does not exist.

That there would be a need and a market for such a document indicates that women in Canada do experience an uneven playing ground in the sport and physical activity culture. Several topics discussed in this document include: equitable allocation of facility space and equipment, discipline and sexual harassment policies, employment discrimination and discrimination on the basis of gender or marital or family status.

From a legal perspective, by challenging organizations that marginalize

women's efforts, women are now able to validate their belonging in the sport and physical activity culture. Another very important step in the validation of women's participation is in the production of knowledge or research regarding women in sport and physical activity. Henderson (1994) cites a feminist phase theory that is helpful in describing research on women and physical activity. The 'male scholarship' phase, or the *invisible woman* phase, identifies the initial research in physical activity that assumed that a universal physical activity experience existed and that women's physical activity experiences were similar to men's. Little or no consciousness existed that women required additional, further or different study as their experience might vary from the male experience. Following from the invisible woman phase was the emergence of the 'compensatory scholarship' phase, or the *add women and stir* phase, that focused on the notion that some women ought to be acknowledged but that they also needed to be judged in terms of their contributions based on typical male standards. The third phase, identified as 'dichotomous differences scholarship' (*sex differences*), emerged with the realization that women were in some ways different from men. But this form of scholarship showed that although the exploration of differences could be helpful in understanding behaviour, studying differences between the physical activity experiences of women and men was proving to be divisive. 'Feminist scholarship', or *women-centered* research, focused on examining a theoretical universal female experience. Understanding the experience of women, we can create a new world of meaning that has been hidden by androcentric (male)

thinking. The last phase, '*gender scholarship*', explores how gender, as socially learned expectations, defines human behaviour. Gender can be applied to different facets of physical activity such as constraints, definitions, benefits, participation, and satisfactions. Gender scholarship addresses the complexity of expectation, roles, and behaviour associated both with being female and with being male. This type of scholarship has required that researchers move beyond observations to analysis and interpretation. And, while this type of scholarship is very complex it is never static or unchanging but perpetually in a transformative mode.

In order to briefly review the type of scholarship that may be indicative of the place of women in physical activity, Lock (1993) examined over 7,000 articles published in five prominent journals in physical education. During a twenty-year period of investigation from 1972 to 1991, only 4% of the individual articles or feature sections focused on women or women's issues in sport, physical education, and recreation. Next, using Kathleen Weiler's analysis of critical feminist theory, Lock classified each journal article into one of two paradigms:

feminist reproduction theory that focuses on the connection between women's oppression in the workforce and the sexist practices in schools which reinforce patriarchal hegemony through the reproduction of gender divisions and preparation of girls for unpaid work. The analysis includes an examination of the process by which hegemonic ideological views become actual educational policy and practice in schools (p. 24-25); or

feminist production and resistance theory that centres *the personal power of individuals to contest dominant ideologies in the context of their own intellectual, emotional, social, and material needs...and examination of girls' and women's experience and interpretation of experiences as they resist domination and oppression while trying to negotiate social forces to meet their own needs* (p. 25).

Examples of research using the reproduction theory include articles that examined authority and staffing patterns within the school, the methods of teaching physical education in the school, the curriculum and what content is deemed to be worth knowing, and sex role stereotyping that reinforces feeling, caring and nurturing as belonging exclusively to women. Examples of the production and resistance theory include the exploration of power relationships as portrayed or acted out within the physical education class, an examination of what is considered to be excellent performance and why, or a critical analysis of the exclusive and inclusive patterns of students within various physical activities.

Eighty-eight per cent of the 280 articles focusing on women that Lock (1993) examined served to describe or promote the existing ideology of dominant power relations in sport and physical activity while only 12% of the articles represented feminist production and resistance theory. Hence, not only has very little knowledge been generated that focuses on women in our physical activity journals, but those articles focusing on women that were published overwhelmingly reinforced the patriarchal hegemonic relations in our professional culture.

The nature of this inquiry would be deemed as 'production and resistance' as it explores the power relationships within and around the primary physical education culture. Within the context of that intended direction however, I do not mean to suggest that at this time the women in this project teaching physical education knowingly resist domination and oppression; rather, they do acknowledge negotiating with human agencies in order to meet their own personal and the children's needs even if they do not consciously recognize that there is resistance in their actions. Thus, even though their behaviours may in the main seem to exhibit 'reproduction' of hegemonic ideological actions and views in their physical education classes, a closer, more critical analysis of the patterns and interactions of these women will allow them to clarify and hopefully to understand why such actions exist.

Power relations

The term power is used quite often in our everyday language and yet the set of relations comprising power does not yield to quick and easy classification. Power is usually described as the ability to get things done, the capacity to act or the ability to choose what will happen (Strachan & Tomlinson, 1993). This section will explore a theoretical basis for analyzing power relations using 10 sources of power that individuals may employ to bring about change. Lastly I will share my perceptions of my personal power in the nexus of this project.

Theoretical basis for analyzing power relations

Contemporary critical feminist critiques taking 'sport' as their object of

study identify sport as a culture that perpetuates patriarchal ideology and its forms of power and knowledge in our society. Patriarchal ideology, whether as a set of social relations between men, women or both, perpetuates dominance of one group over another. Nelson (1994) has suggested that women who participate in sport and are physically active are involved in a feminist act. She submits that our sport culture is inundated with messages that place women on the periphery of the movement experience. For women to resist the messages that they belong in the margins and to participate in sport and physical activity is to resist the hegemonic notion of the sport world. Women who resist the status quo as perpetuated by the male myth of power, strength and masculinity as the sole domain of men as an inherently privileged group are exhibiting behaviour consistent with Weiler's (1988) *feminist production and resistance theory* (definition on p. 24). Behaviours consistent with this paradigm centre on the personal power of individuals to contest dominant ideologies in the context of their own intellectual, emotional, social and material needs. The second paradigm by which the women's actions will be critiqued is *feminist reproduction theory* that focuses on the reinforcement of patriarchal hegemony and maintaining the current distribution of power and the construction of gender in this culture. Feminist theories in sport are concerned with the production and reproduction of gender under a system of patriarchy that is embedded and thriving in our sport culture and permeates other related aspects of the wide spectrum of physical activity, including the teaching of primary physical education. How power is distributed

within our culture at large, in the culture of schooling and in the culture of sport is an integral aspect of this feminist critique.

Sources of power

The word 'power' has both positive and negative associations. From a leadership and feminist perspective, power, viewed in its positive light, enables change. What follows is a classification of sources of power collected by the Tait Institute in Ottawa (Cuming, 1981; Greenfield & Ribbens, 1993; Kitzmiller, 1991; Tavis, 1992). It may help to shed some light on the variety of ways that women teaching primary physical education may challenge, or acquiesce to, the more ideologically dominant view of physical education, and its relationship to sport. This, in turn, may bring about change that is beneficial for the discipline and the people (children, other teachers, principals, researchers, etc.) working within its confines. The classifications are useful because they may enable the women first to recognize forms of power that others use to influence and control the teachers' behaviour and values and second to realize the forms of power that they themselves are using, or perhaps can use, for their own purposes.

POSITIONAL power is probably most often identified by people as being 'power'. It is the capacity of an individual to act and influence others based on the rights, privileges and authority of the position held and legitimated in an organization. PERSONAL power, also known as charisma, is the ability to act and to influence others arising out of a sense of personal commitment and feelings of self-worth and self-efficacy. People respect your values and personal beliefs and

you are seen to manage stress well when a situation is tense. Individuals with personal power are seen as enthusiastic and able to communicate values of the culture clearly and positively. REWARD power is the capacity to influence others based on ability to provide compensation or awards to those individuals. Rewards can range from a simple smile of encouragement to grades to raises at work. COERCIVE power is based on achieving compliance through fear or guilt in others. Coercive power is often associated with repressive and/or competitive environments such as families, businesses, sports, prisons and some schools. People who use coercive power are often seen as manipulative; they may invoke fear or guilt in others via explicit or implicit threat to the respondent of some form of retribution or punishment. ENABLING power is the degree to which an individual can act and influence others based on the ability to facilitate others in making good choices. Enabling power is associated with nurturing the development of individuals and an atmosphere of mutual trust. It involves empowering others, the use of appropriate positive and critical feedback in working with others and celebrating the accomplishments of those with whom you live or work. EXPERT power is usually associated with formal training or technical expertise. Others depend on your expertise to do their work, solve problems and address issues. However, personal insight and experience can also provide an individual with expert power or wisdom. INFORMATION power is evident everyday in my workplace. Possession of this type of power makes you able to act, and to influence others, based on valuable information you possess or have access to that

may enable others to do their work. RESOURCE power is your capacity to act and influence others based on access to a variety of resources. Examples of resource power include budget signing authority, establishing priorities, having the staff or volunteers to carry out projects and having access to key people who can help you accomplish your goals. ASSOCIATIVE Power is possessed by individuals because of 'who they know'. Associative power develops through relationships established through previous work experience, shared views and values, family connections, etc. that provide access to different sources of power than those you possess. NAMING Power, which involves the skilful use of language, is the capacity to act and influence others based on naming what is important to a group. Leaders are involved in naming issues, heroes, beneficial and harmful social forces, key concepts, meanings of words, organizational visions, etc.

Where does the power lie?

The use of a human science approach has given me a different understanding of the power relations involved in inquiry, not least by making me reflect on the issue at all. The critical ethnography method seeks to discover the contradictions and disparities between what is involved in the lived experience of the primary teacher and what should be and to discover emancipatory possibilities within that experience. I negotiate with the teachers to present a shared meaning of our understanding of the authentic experience of the teachers. Therefore, the power in this research ultimately lies in our shared responsibility and task of presenting as accurately as possible the true meaning, through authentic

descriptions and critical analysis, of the teaching of physical education in the daily lives of the teachers in this school, although as chapter 3 recognizes, I must be vigilant about my power as researcher and writer. The women participants exert power in their personal ways since they are the source of information, data collection and reflection that are the keys into exploring the questions raised in this inquiry. What they decide to disclose or to protect is under their control. In employing a critical analysis with respect to this cultural experience, the idea is not to ignore what is authentic and good that already exists in the daily lives of these women but rather to ask what may be improved. A perspective including the question 'what can improve?' could lead to reflective practice for these teachers and for others and, ultimately, to positive educational change that will benefit the teachers and children alike.

The inquiry is also affected by sources of power external to the immediate task of the researcher and core group of collaborators. In addition to my desire to generate change by showing the world of these teachers, my responsibilities as an academic require me to generate and disseminate research findings. As a teacher educator, my motives also extend to my own practical realities. Since I have never actually taught in the elementary system, additional knowledge about this culture is exciting and will help to shape the task of preparing future primary teachers for the work that they will be responsible to do.

The members of the supervisory committee and the host university are also sources of power. Positional, reward, coercive, enabling, expert, etc. are all

sources of power that influence the format, content and completion of this dissertation. But in the final analysis it is my responsibility to negotiate the outcome of this endeavour using the sources of power I have at my command. One proviso, in this respect, is that findings will not be presented as if they are representative, but rather in the sense that Erickson (1986) and Merriam (1988) advocate that the findings are not directly transferable, but they do display universal properties of teaching.

Quality, Daily Physical Education (Q.D.P.E.)

Often the primary school years are considered of the utmost importance in formulating young children's lifelong attitudes towards physical activity and wellness. In a brief to the Ontario Royal Commission on Learning, Kirk Bamford, Director of Quality Daily Physical Education for the Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD) states:

[The] specific focus [of the brief] is on the role that physical education can play in enhancing learning and promoting the growth and development of the total child. Recommendations are offered that will ensure our students become healthy, productive, actively contributing members of society.

CAHPER[D] recognizes that it is the responsibility of schools to create the conditions for optimal learning and to encourage the peak academic performance in each child so that our graduates can take their place in the competitive global job market. Based on our conclusive research and numerous studies, we believe that physical education is an integral part of

total education and that quality daily physical education is an essential ingredient in meeting the needs of every student throughout their academic experience (1993, p. 2).

CAHPERD's 10 recommendations for a comprehensive quality daily physical education (Q.D.P.E.) program include:

- 1) a minimum of 150 minutes per 5 day week for elementary students where two-thirds of the time is devoted to skill development and the remaining one-third to vigorous physical activity;
- 2) a wide variety of movement experiences that provide for maximum participation;
- 3) programs that consider the needs of all children regardless of gender, age, ability, ethnicity or socioeconomic level;
- 4) an environment where a positive attitude towards physical activity can be nurtured;
- 5) an evaluation process that incorporates a student evaluation process that is fair and focuses on individual progress and achievement rather than comparison to others;
- 6) teachers must be qualified;
- 7) support services must be provided for teachers for monitoring, training and resource materials;
- 8) equipment and facilities must be adequate;
- 9) a fitness component must be incorporated; and

10) teacher training institutions must ensure appropriate qualifications.

The benefits of physical activity have been clearly documented (Bamford, 1993; Fishburne & Harper-Tarr, 1991). However, what has not been clarified are the practical realities of these 10 recommendations for the primary teacher (kindergarten to grade 3) responsible for her own Q.D.P.E. class. Bamford addresses this participant group briefly within recommendation #6 'teachers must be qualified':

Physical education programs should be taught by qualified teachers representing inclusive and equitable role modelling. If boards are going to continue to assign physical education teaching duties to generalists [primary teachers], then teacher training programs must require all generalist [primary] teachers to take a minimum of at least one comprehensive physical education course to meet certification requirements. Generalist [primary] teachers at the elementary level also need administrative support to coordinate program scheduling and ensure the best use of school facilities. Ideally, a specialist should be in every school. At the very least, one interested staff member should be assigned responsibility for coordinating program planning for the school (p. 11).

Though the importance of the physical education teacher's qualifications is generally accepted, research results comparing benefits for the child when taught by a specialist as opposed to a generalist primary teacher are inconclusive. And while I reviewed many studies that compare the elementary specialist to

generalist, each naturally not perfect in its research design, very few of them focus on understanding better the experience of the primary teacher with limited training in physical education (see Appendix A, p. 276).

This inquiry will expose the reality of these women primary teachers' experiences with physical education. If appropriate, the promulgated knowledge that will be read up against the lived experiences of the women teaching primary physical education is CAHPERD's set of recommendations for a Quality, Daily Physical Education Program (see Diagram 2, p. 44). Through the experiences of these women and the particular agents that influence each of them (her personal life history, her classroom position as teacher, her school position in the primary division and her position as an active member in society), we may gain a deeper understanding of the meaning that physical education class has for her. Also from a critical perspective we may explore how power relations, the generation of knowledge, the historical context of experience and oppressive circumstances (lack of choices that may be perceived or real) intertwine the influencing agents with the teachers' attitudes and actions. This inquiry describes the primary teachers' lived world in relation to power relations evident and compares the meanings with the promulgated Q.D.P.E. recommendations if at all relevant. Intertwined with the description will be interpretive and reflective analysis of any meanings discovered in this culture. I will attempt to understand the meanings that physical education has for each teacher and what relation that meaning bears to how she teaches physical education, why she teaches physical education, how physical education

relates to her role as a primary teacher, and how the children perceive their physical education experiences. This inquiry will also attempt to identify the cultural assumptions and power relations that shape and influence what Q.D.P.E. may mean, if at all relevant, to these women. Within the larger purview of the guiding question of this inquiry, then, an additional question may be posed that recognizes the promulgated knowledge within our power relations framework, as outlined in Chapter 1:

**How do power relations structure the women's practice of
teaching primary physical education?**

This question may in turn be illuminated by the other more specific questions that arise out of the power relations framework.

Once the explicit and implicit values of the physical education program have been identified and interpreted, it is necessary to revisit the context of these values to explore how the primary teacher reproduces and/or resists those values and the way she actually teaches the various components of the physical education program. Examining how the teacher personalizes the program is to discover how she makes it her own. After the values have been identified, how is the product transformed after she has internalized it according to her values? The concomitant exploration of the primary teachers' resistance is intended to suggest not a complete departure from or disavowal of the Q.D.P.E. program but rather actions of opposition or defiance directed overtly or subtly towards circumstances surrounding the teaching of physical education. This is the focus of my inquiry as

it has evolved to this point in time.

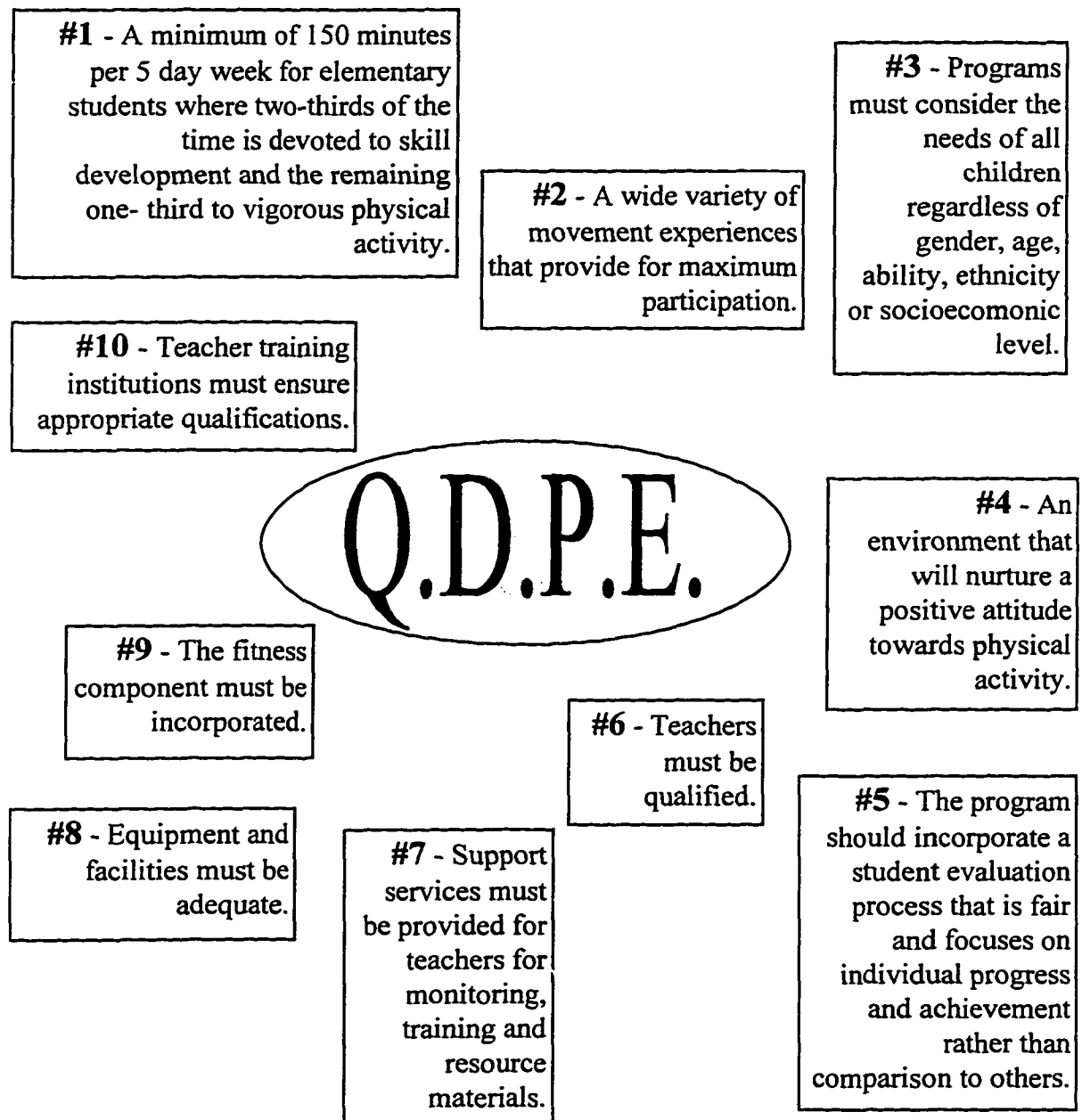
My experience during this inquiry has reinforced both my feeling that the critical ethnographic method is the appropriate one for this inquiry and my recognition that the inquiry focus and conditions are not static but ever-evolving. This flexibility of focus and the ability to deal with conditions as they arose allowed for authenticity within the pedagogical/political inquiry because questions are continually evoked that must in their turn be opened up to reveal other authentic human existences and experiences. As this inquiry is about meaning, the guiding questions that form its basis are of a special kind that cannot be objectively and expediently answered, thereby quickly closing the case. These are particular human existences and experiences that I experience and in which I partake throughout my fieldwork, and I propose to share them with you, the reader, as the authentic lived experiences of these particular primary school teachers as they teach their physical education classes.

This critical inquiry is one that may challenge 'our' habitual ways of thinking and therefore we may question the findings. However, observing and understanding the common realities of daily experience for these women, and problematizing promulgated knowledge and the structural forces and human agencies that constitute and constrain in a particular way the shape of their daily experience with physical activity may enable them to create an effective program more in accord with a set of values they understand and to which they can give their assent.

Diagram 2

Promulgated Knowledge

C.A.H.P.E.R.D.'s 10 Recommendations for Quality Daily Physical Education



CHAPTER 3

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Choosing human science research

Previous studies regarding generalist teachers and physical education have not explored the implications of gender--the socio-cultural restraints on the teachers--on the experiences within the gymnasium. To help to redress this omission on the part of previous research, this project will be grounded in a gender scholarship/research perspective as identified by Henderson (1994). This inquiry focuses on how gender, as socially learned expectations, defines human behaviour. Gender can be applied to different facets of physical activity such as restraints, definitions, benefits, participations and satisfactions. Gender scholarship addresses the complexity of expectations, roles, and behaviour associated both with being female and with being male. It is not static and aims at transforming the current condition in society. While the inquiry focus is on gender scholarship, feminist scholarship was also embedded in the nature of the evolution of the research question.

Hall (1990) states that feminism and feminist scholarship are political and that, whether through praxis or theory, the feminist project is to change the world, not merely to describe it. She argued as early as 1985 that

feminists challenge the notion of an objective reality that is 'out there' and can be studied, grasped, and researched by anyone using universally applicable rules of inquiry. It is this sort of objectivism and the norm of

objectivity that a feminist epistemology challenges. What the feminist challenge reaffirms, on the other hand, is that knowledge claims of women, at least those engaged in liberatory struggles, are indeed more objective because they place far more importance on moral and political truths than they do on scientific rationality. In this sense a feminist epistemology rejects objectivism and positivism but reaffirms a new concept of objectivity (p. 233).

To overcome the limitations in the methods of previous studies in elementary physical education classes to try to capture a deeper understanding of 'life in the gymnasium' and to position the research participants in a gendered and feminist perspective, this project will be conducted in a naturalistic setting using qualitative methods (Erickson, 1986) as proposed in the sections with the headings 'methods of data collection', 'trustworthiness of the data', 'data analysis' and 'report writing'.

Critical ethnography

There are two current human science approaches to inquiry that have generated the approach that I took in this project. The *interpretive* method or the attempt to gain an 'understanding' of human experience is premised on the subjective-reality that is constructed and sustained through meaning and action. The second approach, identified by Carr & Kemmis (1986), Fay (1987) and Lather (1991), is the emancipatory approach of *critical* theory or critical social science. The philosophical assumption underlying this approach is the uncovering

of the operation of various ideological processes that render the human being powerless and oppressed. The dialectic-reality is structured by intersubjectivity, meanings and actions and through what van Manen (1988) calls 'critical tales', which ask questions of or about power, economy, history and exploitation. To provide some sense of the spectrum of approaches and the goal or intention of each, the following is offered: the epistemological basis for the empirical or natural science approach (today still the most usual) has theory driving practice and that of the interpretive approach has theory revealing practice. The emancipatory critical theory approach, however, has theory and practice mutually modifying one another, an approach that is more conducive to arriving at an awareness of one's circumstance.

Using a critical ethnographic method will combine the *interpretive* and *emancipatory* human science approaches in developing an understanding of the meaning of teaching physical education for primary teachers. That meaning may reside in my politicizing or making 'overt how power permeates the construction and legitimation of knowledges' (Lather, 1991, p. xvii) that the women who are primary teachers in this school may have with respect to the teaching of physical education.

Lather (1991, pp. 63-4) gives five suggestions for making reflexivity operative in critical inquiry that are essential during this inquiry with primary teachers. First, I need to develop an understanding of the primary teachers' world. The purpose of this phase is to provide accounts for further exploration and to

dispel any preconceived notions I have concerning the primary teachers' world. For example, a notion I had going into my fieldwork was that everyone changed into active wear to participate in gymnasium activity. On reflection my supposition that appropriate gymnasium wear was necessary or realistic given the time lines for the primary physical education classes itself came from my own much more rule-defined teenage and adult experiences. In the primary context, the children wear whatever they have on and the closest thing to changing that occurs is discarding shoes if footwear poses a safety hazard. The active wear of the teachers will be discussed in greater detail and analysis at a later point, but let me leave you with the comment that early on I began recording in my fieldnotes the apparel of the teachers. The existing situation, then, suggests an inconsistency between what is promulgated in Q.D.P.E. -- that adequate equipment, which I had previously considered to include appropriate clothing for vigorous physical activity, is necessary -- and how the teachers negotiate a path between these recommendations and the realities of time limitations and class management.

The second suggestion focuses on the collaborative research efforts of both myself and the primary teachers. It is important that we remember that this inquiry is dialogic and mutually educative. While I have constantly reminded these women that I am a student of their experiences and have passed notes and shared reflections, I am invariably introduced to newcomers as 'June, from the university who is here watching my phys. ed. and then I'm going to use her as my personal resource person and get lots of great ideas.' Thirdly, we should focus on the

contradiction between what we see occurring in this culture and what actually does occur. This aspect must obviously proceed from our current understandings of power, knowledge and identity. I have focused my inquiry on these women to get to the heart or meaning that influences their human experiences; however, I have had to step back from the culture at times to critique the data from my feminist stance in the world. This action acknowledges that I recognize that inequity and oppression are prevalent in our society and that we need to be more aware of and more attentive to inequities in order to emancipate ourselves. The fourth suggestion is to provide a dialogic environment necessary for the teachers' critical reactions to my account of their experience. Lather's final suggestion for reflexivity in critical inquiry is for me to join the primary teachers in creating a self-sustaining process of critical inquiry and greater emancipation. Van Manen (1990) identifies inquiry that has a critical theory thrust to be one that:

...aims at promoting critical consciousness, and struggles to break down the institutional structures and arrangements which reproduce oppressive ideologies and the social inequalities that are sustained and produced by these social structures and ideologies (p. 176).

In designing the inquiry, I have proposed a method that I believe is most appropriate for the kind of question(s) asked and the information needed, and that is most likely to generate answers that are persuasive to a particular audience. As I have stated, critical ethnography will help me to 'understand' the meaning of the experiences of these women who are primary teachers and the

way power relations shape those experiences so that the inquiry may have 'emancipatory' benefits for all the participants.

Fieldwork in ethnography and other forms of interpretive research is the work of describing a culture. Spradley claims that 'instead of collecting data about people, the ethnographer seeks to learn from people, to be taught by them' (1979, p. 4). The proposed research questions are 'holistic' and 'seeking', and therefore ethnographic methods would best suit these needs as they seek to make sense out of the 'daily' experiences of these primary teachers. Ethnographers make cultural inferences from three sources: 1) from what people say; 2) from the way people act; and 3) from the artifacts people use. Although none of these sources for making inferences, nor necessarily the inferences themselves, are entirely foolproof, they can lead to meaningful cultural descriptions (Spradley, 1979).

Spindler (1982) offers an operational definition of ethnography as it is commonly applied to the study of education where the researcher's prolonged and repetitive observations are contextualized. The hypotheses and questions for the inquiry are not stagnant but evolutionary, and are further crystallized and clarified by the researcher during participation within the culture. Through a variety of data-gathering techniques and cultural artifacts, the researcher attempts to 'understand' and make explicit the implicit sociocultural knowledge the participants bring to and generate in the social setting they inhabit.

What I am trying to come to understand is the whats, hows, whens, wheres

and whys associated with a primary teacher teaching her physical education class. The selection of a human science method and an increasing comfort with myself as the primary instrument of investigation provide the tools to explore these questions in a collaborative, trusting, unobtrusive manner. Learning about the daily lives and experiences of these women has solidified my desire to articulate those experiences eventually, through various avenues, in order to make a new understanding of that world available for those who care to explore it.

Ethnographic research strategies employed as a form of research into what goes on in classrooms offers the avenue to engage primary teachers and me in a dialogue leading to a collaborative perspective (Erickson, 1986; Cherland, 1991). Since I am also receptive to an understanding of a feminine/feminist epistemology and ontology generated through a critical perspective applied to the existing situation, it is possible that I and the primary teachers have, by collaborating in the scrutiny of that situation, participated in our own 'emancipation' from some of the restraints or problems inherent in our respective situations. Traditional ethnography thus becomes a critical ethnography, a method for change and self-discovery.

What this inquiry attempts is an understanding (*verstehen* - 'to understand' - Geertz, 1973) of the meaning the practice of teaching primary physical education has for the three women involved. As indicated, this inquiry has a feminist aura as I am particularly interested in the power relationships that may be implicit in the actions of the primary teachers in this school. In review of the term feminist,

Acker, Barry & Esseveld, (1991) state that:

feminist refers to diverse groups of people who take varying positions on particular issues and who identify with a range of political positions. In our usage here feminist refers to a point of view that

- 1) sees women as exploited, devalued, and often oppressed,
- 2) is committed to changing the condition of women, and
- 3) adopts a critical perspective toward dominant intellectual traditions that have ignored and/or justified women's oppression (Acker, et al., 1991, pp. 150-151).

Feminism and feminists are, historically speaking, relative newcomers as active participants in society's various institutions. Though it is difficult to set out precisely a particular group of people, set of principles, or specific approach that can definitively be associated with those terms, there are, nevertheless, certain characteristics shared by almost all those who profess to be feminists or to work in that field. One of those general characteristics is dissatisfaction with entrenched traditions, hierarchies, forms of knowledge and their transmission, and institutions. More specifically, within the institution of academia this has meant a questioning both of accepted forms of knowledge and of the accepted methods used for the acquisition, transmission, and refinement of those forms of knowledge (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986). Implicit in this critique is the idea that there may be other forms of 'knowing', other ways of gathering information and ideas that may be useful to and serviceable in educational research that have not

been particularly well served by existing and entrenched institutions and research methods. Some of these other methods or means of acquiring knowledge, can and have proven valuable and emancipatory. The difficulty lies in the lack of recognition accorded to these 'emancipatory' research methods that has its origin in ongoing disputes between human science and positivistic paradigms.

Hammersley (1992) challenged the idea that the distinction between the two paradigms is clear cut and suggests that it is, in fact, misleading. He identified seven issues that fuel the debate surrounding the attempt to distinguish human science from positivistic methods. He argues that allocating methods to the two camps based on these seven issues is misleading and obscures the breadth of arguments involved in the methodology of social research. The allocation of issues such as numerical data, artificial settings, focus on behaviour, the natural science model, theory generating, discovery of scientific laws and the epistemological position as realist to one particular research paradigm is as limiting as is the claim that another paradigm is consistently verbal in form, truly natural in its setting, solely focused on meanings in the data, divorced from the natural science model, solely inductive in approach, seeking of cultural patterns and idealist in its epistemology. It is not as simple as setting up a dualism in which one model is good and the other bad. It is not a simple case of two opposed standpoints but more one of a 'range of positions sometimes located on more than one dimension'. Reliance on the distinction creates a situation in which the 'prevalence of the distinction between qualitative [human science] and

quantitative [positivistic] method tends to obscure the complexity of the problems that face us and threatens to render our decisions less effective than they might otherwise be' (Hammersley, 1992, p. 172). Hammersley suggests that we should liken the two approaches not so much to a cross-roads at which we must turn either right or left as to a complex maze in which researchers are repeatedly faced with decisions and the paths in the discovery process wind back on one another. The key is for the research community to recognize the multitude of options and angles from which to view the world of inquiry.

Jayaratne and Stewart identified specific feminist criticisms directed towards traditional positivistic research methods that are the common tools of research in my discipline of physical education. As the majority of scholars in physical activity studies are men, many research projects focus on concerns of importance to men and the sporting world. Hence, there is a tendency to select sexist and elitist research topics that exclude research on questions of central importance to women. Many of these research designs tend to be biased, not only in terms of their focus and concerns, but also in that they include only male subjects. Many of these positivistic designs promote the illusion of objectivity that is especially associated with the positivist approach. Due to the nature of the discipline and its methods as they currently exist, quantitative data is accumulated in an attempt to predict and explain the physical activity world and functioning of the physical body rather than attaining an understanding of the human experience as it relates to physical activity. Many of the research findings that relate, perhaps

not intentionally, specifically to men are improperly interpreted by the general population and are generalized to include women. Where women do not 'fit' the findings or norms, person-blame explanations are used (Jayaratne & Stewart, 1991, p. 86; Lenskyj, 1994).

Feminists who advocate human science research, along with other proponents, suggest that, though there are many kinds of human science methods, there are common threads that connect human science research. These common threads or methods, listed below, are often viewed as consistent with feminist values (Mies, 1983).

It is important to note that the feminist criticisms of empirical research can be challenged. Cook (1985) proposes a 'postpositivist critical multiplism' in response to attacks on a more positivist conception of social science. This triangulated design approximates 'the ultimately unknowable truth through the use of processes that critically triangulate from a variety of perspectives on what is worth knowing and what is known' (p. 494). There are quite valid arguments that positivistic researchers can mount against specific criticisms of their methods. And if there are very positive values in the kinds of knowledge that human science approaches can elicit, it is also true to say that the kinds of knowledge that positivistic research provides have positive value. The debate on the respective strengths and weaknesses of positivistic and human science approaches has tended to polarize the two camps, even within the approach called feminist. The point here is not so much to say that positivistic methods are limited and bad as it is to

suggest that human science approaches also have much to offer. One can recall here Hammersley's maze in which the paths wind back on one another. The central concern -- that the aim is the acquisition of knowledge that is valuable to people -- should never disappear in allegiances and in bickering. The feminist researcher should be aware of and open to all available methods that have the potential to reflect feminist values and goals. For feminists, those values and goals should always aim in the same general direction: the 'emancipation' of women. Stanley and Wise (1983) note that:

The idea that there is only 'one road' to the feminist revolution, and only one type of 'truly feminist' research, is as limiting and as offensive as male-biased accounts of research that have gone before (p. 26).

An inclusive feminist perspective towards research methodology 'will be able to identify the distinctive features of the best of feminist research' (Harding, 1987, p. 3), regardless of its orientation. Some feminist researchers argue that the selection of a research method should have its origin not so much in allegiance to a particular approach as it does in how well the method complements the research question. The point should be that the method chosen is the best means to reach the destination or answer the research question (Harding, 1987; Wittig, 1985; Jayaratne, 1983).

...feminist researchers use just about any and all of the methods, in this concrete sense of the term, that traditional androcentric researchers have used. Of course, precisely how they carry out these methods of evidence

gathering is often strikingly different (Harding, 1987, p.2).

Stanley and Wise (1983) state that feminist research includes the 'personal' experiences of the researcher both outside of and in the research experience. This involves intricate interactions between the 'research phenomenon', 'feminist theory', and 'feminist consciousness', which are the unique traits of the researcher that place her/him in the centre rather than on the periphery of the research experience (p. 267). In order that an effective application of specific data collection and analysis techniques could be done, I was cognizant of and vigilant about the potential problems that could exist within this method and the criticisms that are levelled against it. The recognition and use of an ethnographic and critical social science method in this inquiry with primary teachers has been prompted in part by the inability of empirical analyses to describe the reality of that situation/culture effectively or to identify models of effectiveness that can sustain educational reform (Pugh, 1988). As with any other method, however, if techniques and analysis are performed without sufficient care and attention, problems can arise. Rist (1980), for example, coined the term *blitzkrieg ethnography* to refer to the work of self-styled, poorly trained ethnographers who used various means to reduce their fieldwork time and who did not appreciate the importance of an emphasis on exploring the cultural framework of the participants. In What's wrong with ethnography? Hammersley (1992, p. 2) identified two current criticisms directed at this methodological approach. First, many have come to question the realist conception of validity,

arguing that rather than being a reflection of the phenomenon researched, the data that ethnographers use is a product of their participation in the field. The second criticism focuses on the claim that ethnography is not up to the task of being practically useful for the teacher or in generating change in the school culture. In addressing the aforementioned criticisms let me state that after the fieldwork experience I spent hours writing, and rewriting and in dialogue with interested individuals trying to uncover the essence of the experiences being observed. It was through that process that the themes emerged; they did not emerge as a product of my going 'native' in the primary physical education environment. Also as we have taken the further step of critical reflection the findings from this inquiry are practically useful in assisting the teachers and others to understand what teaching primary physical education is, and what it has the potential to be, for these women.

In addition to criticism of ethnography itself, other ethical, political and practical dilemmas may confront the researcher who is taking an activist stance towards social change. Fonow & Cook (1991, pp. 8-9) state that since much of feminist research (or any human science methodology for that matter) involves the personal and intimate lives of women and men, any intervention risks the possibility of disrupting relationships that are personally satisfying to the participants and perhaps materially necessary for survival. Feminists' attempts to reduce the power differential between themselves and those they research often employ egalitarian research techniques that generate trust.

Each interview can take on the aura of an intimate conversation and respondents can accept too eagerly what are rather flimsy guarantees of confidentiality ' (Finch, cited in Fonow & Cook, 1991).

I was careful not to betray any trusts during the data collection process or writing of the findings presented here. Since feminists are often not in a position to control how the data will be used, they must take extra precautions not to betray the trust so freely given. Stacey (cited in Fonow & Cook, 1991) warns that ethnographic collaboration between researcher and researched masks the real power of the researcher, who has much greater control over the research process and product than does the person researched. Moreover, I am aware that the researcher is free to leave the field at any time and is generally the final author of any account. The participants in this inquiry did not actively resist efforts to be included as an equal partner in the researcher's efforts to interpret the broader implications of the changes experienced in the research process.

Gaining access

The audience for whom the inquiry will provide 'persuasive answers' is the primary teacher responsible for teaching physical education to children and teacher educators. For this inquiry the suggested community is the elementary school St. Jude in a city on the Canadian prairies. I first made informal contact with the teaching staff concerning this proposal in May 1993 and the response was very positive. This did not yet guarantee, however, that the project would proceed unhampered. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) examined the difficulties involved

with gaining access to a particular culture. Gatekeepers, sponsors and hosts can impede the researcher's access to the cultural community. The expectation that the ethnographer is an 'expert' or 'critic' can also hamper access to and observation of that community's reality. Since my initial introduction and entrance into the community was through a teacher who organized our first meeting, I believe a less threatening first impression was created and the teachers appeared very enthusiastic to collaborate in this research. However, during my second meeting in September 1993 with the women who were interested only three women attended. As it was reported to me by the interested women, many of the other women were reluctant to be subjected to what they perceived as yet another form of 'evaluation' and to be reminded of their lack of confidence in their physical education program as it existed. Also, I found that one potential participant in this project thought I was going to 'come in and fix her gym class'. When talking with these women it became apparent that they did not believe in the 'collaborative research' notion I was proposing. Rhonda stated that she did not mind sharing her personal knowledge and educating me on her 'real world' but she wanted something more than just a report that she would throw on her shelf. So I asked what she would like me to do? She replied, 'I want you to come and teach my classes and show me what to do in phys. ed.'. I stated I would be more than happy to serve as a resource person for them after an initial observation period but that I could not make any guarantees that I could teach the perfect phys. ed. class to her grade one class. More recently, I find that the

women have less difficulty believing that they are the true educators here and I am serving as a vehicle to share with others their experiences and expertise.

This particular community was proposed for participation because it has a full-time teaching staff of 21, with 11 female and no male teachers in the kindergarten to grade three range. The school is located 11 kilometres from the university and, except for occasional student interns, the teaching staff has not been over-exposed to university faculty or graduate students. Finally, in informal discussions with university education faculty and teachers in the system, this community was suggested as being typical of most elementary schools in the city. The school has recently undergone an administrative change which has also been notable in my fieldnotes and talks with these women for various reasons.

Prior to commencing my fieldwork it was necessary and appropriate that I receive the consent of various individuals to participate in this inquiry. It was only fair and just that before opening up so many lives to the observation and participation of myself as principal investigator that we come to an agreement concerning my interaction in this culture. There were several levels of agreement that I had to obtain in order to proceed. Firstly, application to the university's ethics committee, followed by written consent of the school board, principal, the three women teachers and, the parents of children in the teacher's classes. The verbal permission of each child if an interview was to take place was also necessary to protect the rights of the children involved. And a memo was also circulated to other staff members at the school informing them of the inquiry and

my presence in the elementary school so that I would not be remanded by the authorities for loitering on the playground or in the school halls.

Methods of data collection

Data for this project was collected using a variety of methods. The initial stage of data collection involved **on-site non-participant fieldwork** to get a better 'understanding' of the functioning of three primary classes (kindergarten, grade one and grade two) and their physical education classes. This data collection focused on the teachers' interactions with other participants at the site (children, colleagues, principal, parents, researcher, etc.) during and outside of the physical education classes. **Written fieldnotes** were collected during this period. As I became involved, or accepted by the teacher and children, in the functioning of the classes my role changed from non-participant to **participant observer**. This shift for data collection involved movement for myself as the researcher from a peripheral, status of 'stranger' position, to a more welcomed and friendly position in the culture. The significance of this movement provided the opportunity to draw more personal data from the women as an involved participant in their culture rather than detached collector from the sidelines.

At this point, I became more absorbed in the day-to-day activities of the class. This involved assisting the teacher or children or becoming one of the learners during the lesson. This stage was dependent upon the direction that the research question took as a result of the questions being narrowed and refined during the course of the project. This is the nature of conducting qualitative

projects.

Another aspect of data collection was **formal and informal (conversational) interviews** conducted throughout the period of the study. Data from the interviews that were scheduled were tape recorded and transcribed. Data from clarifying questions and conversation that arose while on site during informal conversations were recorded promptly afterward. The more formal scheduled interviews had two foci. The first was to let each woman articulate her background in, and attitudes towards, physical activity. The second focus was to record the verbal accounts of these three women and their experiences with physical education.

The final method of data collection was the collection of **documents** that were relevant to the project. This included photographs of and around the fieldsite(s), gymnasium timetables, parent newsletters, school yearbook and other materials related to the primary teacher and her physical education class.

Trustworthiness of the data

Throughout the preliminary collection of data, and as the primary research tool, I took steps to insure the trustworthiness of data. Throughout the data collection and evolution of the project I made use of triangulation, multiple data sources to ensure accuracy, member checks, and the involvement of the women in the evolution and verification of themes that developed during the project. Another step I took to ensure the trustworthiness of the analysis of the data into themes or categories was the critical review of the data for cases that do not

conform to the themes or categories being suggested, that is, negative case analysis.

Triangulation, or using multiple sources of data and an extensive time period over which to collect data, has been suggested as a means to reduce the number of potential problems in the ethnographic research experience and method. While I did spend six months observing and another six months teaching primary physical education in the school it did seem that I naturally reached a point when data began to repeat itself and I was able to anticipate what would occur in and surrounding the women's classes. Interestingly, it was difficult to state exactly how the data was to be collected upon first entering the school culture. Unlike more positivistic approaches where the researchers disclose their exact data collection techniques and timelines prior to entering the site, that was impossible in this context. Had I been limited in that regard, I would have been prevented from collecting data outside of the teaching event. Conversations during recess, observations of impromptu trips to the tobogganing site and my thoughts concerning the quid pro quo classes would not have been permitted due to the restraints of the initial research proposal. All of these examples were integral components of the teachers' relationship to her physical education program. Absence of these elements would have left the data collected rather shallow and lacking the depth needed to understand, to the degree possible, the truth about what the meaning of teaching physical education is for these women.

There is no such thing as 'value-free' research. Specifically, within this

critical ethnographic inquiry my aim is to uncover and reveal biases and false assumptions that restrain the lives of these primary teachers and the children they teach. I intended in this aim to document 'the existence of alternative realities and to describe these *realities* in their own terms' (Spradley, 1979, p. 11). In this research approach then, an attempt to portray this inquiry as bias-free or sex-fair would be to actually create an artificial situation that does not reflect a lived-world. From a feminist perspective, this research might actually provide some means to redress a cultural or pedagogic situation that is not sex-fair and bias-free. Some of the criticisms of empirical theory should be considered here. These women teach and interact in a reality and an education paradigm that may be the result of male-bias theorizing and research. Although such points are arguable, the ramifications implicit in this possibility should at least be considered.

These considerations suggest that findings from this inquiry will not include claims of direct transferability of themes outside of this participant group to other primary teachers or to men dealing with slightly different realities; rather, the findings suggest directions for further research by providing one set of experiences of this reality against which other groups can reflect on their own. And, while teaching experiences in primary physical education are highly idiosyncratic the organization of the data into themes drawn from similar experiences enables the information to be categorized so that it can be meaningfully used as a self-evaluation tool for examining teachers' experiences. Hence the themes become transformed into a framework by which other teachers can review their

experiences and take the actions they may deem appropriate to modify, change, or reflect on their own situation whether they are very similar, or in stark contrast, to the women's situation in this inquiry.

Transferability of data is difficult in a human science approach. Merriam (1988) suggests thinking of it in terms of reader or user generalizability. Erickson (1986) states that instances in classrooms may be unique but nevertheless display universal properties of teaching. Generalizability of data can be enhanced by the accumulation of data reflecting a rich, thick description, so that anyone else would find the information appropriate to the judgement (Merriam, 1988). Also I embarked on this journey because I was dissatisfied with previous research that seemed to focus solely on the comparison between the generalist (primary) and specialist teachers and physical education. I believed that there was more to know out there that might be influencing the primary teacher's teaching environment. And although the experiences of the women are unique, the themes that emerged from the data collected were embedded in gender and societal restraints that generally influence women. These broader notions of women as relatively powerless on the periphery of the sport culture are not unique to these three women. Rather they pose questions that can be addressed to women and men in society as a whole.

It is also true that the ethical dilemma of unequal power relations is not unique to any form of research. Ethical considerations such as consent to participate and withdraw at any time and approval of final dissertation draft forms

that include data descriptions, thematic analysis, implications and suggestions for further research are inherent in this inquiry as a lever to balance the power relation. I have truly attempted to be fair to the women and profession of physical education; however I am aware that any findings that contradict or question knowledges held dear to a group's heart is usually met with accusations of unfairness or bias.

On having read the last few paragraphs innumerable times in the preparation of this document, it finally occurred to me that there were some serious flaws in my reasoning about power relations. Certainly, the ostensible goal of a collaboration with these primary teachers in an ethnographic inquiry is to even out the power differential. But finally having actually reflected on my comments above, I realize how much they demonstrate just the kind of power and control I am supposed to be vigilant against. There is an element of controlling behaviour and language in the decisions that my inquiry should not confer a primary power to me, that it should be emancipatory and empowering, and that the idea is not to ignore the daily reality of the participating culture. Thus I have imposed a framework on the inquiry -- and that is an exercise of power. Similarly, I must acknowledge a responsibility that I have in the culture that I inhabit on a daily basis, the responsibility to disseminate information and the obligations/duties that I have as an academic; as well, I intend to use the outcome of the inquiry in the service of my teaching responsibilities. My desire for personal and professional growth is sprinkled throughout this dissertation.

All of these things betray my hope that the power differential can be totally reduced. My own frameworks, my own enthusiasms, my own attitudes, my own responsibilities, etc., cannot fail to be a part of this whole experience. Vigilant as I may be, I cannot deny or escape myself, and so I must admit that in the end, I have a disproportionate share of power in the inquiry. Though certainly not completely, many of the directions the inquiry will follow will result from what I fix on as being important or meaningful, not just because I am intentionally selective but because of who and what I am. And I will not diminish what I am either. How my power is used, how extensively it structures and controls the inquiry and its outcomes will inevitably be tempered in varying degrees by the influences of my collaborators, but in the end I believe that I will not be able to escape myself and my own urge to have power.

Having reflected on this issue, it must also be said that I have not been reduced to paroxysms of guilt. This kind of self-examination could go on forever in an endless regress and eventually one would not be able to do anything because one fears one's own power. I will not do that. Instead, I will simply admit that the power that I wield as researcher has been there and that I employed it, I hope with as much honesty, generosity, and fairness as I could manage. Those words themselves are, of course, value-laden, but they are values that are meaningful to me.

These last comments are offered not to suggest that critical ethnography can be a perfect method if only it is done properly; instead, they are meant to

indicate that certain kinds of unique problems face every kind of inquiry and that each method can develop strategies to deal with those problems. Ultimately, the trustworthiness of the data of any method is heavily dependent on the researcher's sincere and well-motivated vigilance against those problems to counteract their possible effects or at least to be honest about their presence if any attempt to counteract effects is impossible or somehow counter-productive.

Data analysis

Data analysis and interpretation was an ongoing process throughout the course of this project. The transcribed interviews of teachers and the descriptive experiential accounts found in the fieldnotes represent the 'raw data'. These texts represent the means by which personal experience has been conveyed. The human science researcher is primarily interested in the deeper meaning structures that underlie these accounts as well as the personal or historical significance of the experiences. It is during the collection of these raw data that the researcher reorganizes or reshapes the data to identify the core or embedded richness of the experience. The process of thematic analysis seeks to understand the complexities of the text by locating and interpreting dominant themes. A theme can be viewed as the heart of the text, connecting and sustaining all parts of a story. To identify the essential themes is to settle upon the intersubjective meanings of experience -- the meanings that give structure to a particular experience or a specific way of being in the world.

There are three common approaches for identifying themes within texts:

the holistic or sententious approach, the selective or highlighting approach, and the detailed or line-by-line approach (van Manen, 1990, pp. 92-95). Van Manen provides general organizational questions for the researcher to bear in mind when employing any or all of these approaches to uncover thematic aspects of any lived-experience description. In the holistic or sententious approach, in analysing our text we should ask ourselves, 'What sententious phrase may capture the fundamental meaning or main significance of the text as a whole?' While utilizing the selective or highlighting approach we review our text several times and ask, 'What statement(s) or phrase(s) seem particularly essential or revealing about the phenomenon or experience being described?'. Upon identifying these statements the researcher can initially attend to them with a neon yellow highlighter. The detailed or line-by-line approach requires analysis of every sentence or sentence cluster and the consideration of 'What does this sentence or sentence cluster reveal about the phenomenon or experience being described?' And while highlighted or line-by-line analysis may bring relevance to the meaning of a particular experience described, they may not have the explicit appearance of a theme, but rather point to or hint about a possible theme. It is the challenge of the researcher to explicate the translating or reformulating of the key words in order to represent the meaning of the experience.

Throughout this past year I have had the opportunity to listen to several human science researchers who have been discussing their experiences 'peeling the fruit' in order to uncover essential themes within their raw data. One

researcher described her challenge as 'developing a notion from the data and then revisiting the data several times to clarify the essence of the notion '. This pattern of working with her data was repeated many times before she felt that she had reached the true nut, or essential theme. Another individual described his experience with his raw data as becoming overwhelming at one point until 'it' (a notion or potential theme) occurred to him one night while trying to get to sleep. He kept the thought until morning and upon revisiting his data discovered this particular notion had remained virtually unchanged throughout the course of his fieldwork. It was just a matter of clearing the way to find the essential thread that held the meaning of the experiences.

Upon beginning the fieldwork there were certain 'notions ' that I feel were intriguing or teasing me. One notion was that of 'space ', and while I initially did not reach the meaning of this notion it is one that was consistently evident in various forms in the data collected. Other notions that have piqued my attention were 'time ', 'control ', and 'caring '. Working through these notions to bring meaning to the experiences of these women, as well as showing you, the reader, how they evolved, were my challenges during this inquiry. Though these were the challenges, a cautionary note should be sounded. As was elaborated in the section 'where does the power lie?', bringing meaning to experiences can be a process that is fraught with the possibility of abuse, intentional or unintentional. Sharing power in a collaborative experience and being vigilant, to the degree possible, that one voice does not dominate another and that equal credence is given to the

unique powers of the participants are crucial to the success of the emancipatory direction of the inquiry. Further, the outcomes of the experiences of clarifying and identifying the prominent themes relevant in this inquiry and negotiating their acceptance by participants, the supervisory committee and finally publishers will contribute to the shaping of the knowledge we discover with respect to the experiences of primary teachers teaching physical education. Knowledge in itself is a very powerful, and at times a frightening tool that has the potential to change already existing behaviour.

Van Manen states (1990, p. 93) that the task of identifying a theme is to lift or capture appropriate phrases or singular statements that describe the main thrust of the experience. And once themes are clarified for the researcher a more difficult element of human science is to differentiate essential themes from incidental themes. Hence to determine essential themes in this inquiry I must ask myself, 'if I could change or delete this theme from the experience of women teaching physical education, would the experience remain the same?' (van Manen, 1990, p. 107).

I reflected on the raw data from the months of fieldnotes I had taken in each of the women's classes, notes collected as the result of informal discussions, interviews with the women, photographs of the school and other relevant documents. After going over the data innumerable times, with some lengthy periods for reflection I started pulling out phrases that stood out as having meaning for me and reflected the experience or stories of the women. I placed

the phrases on larger individual pieces of paper and placed them on my living room floor. Perhaps I should not have been so surprised to discover how naturally some of the phrase papers could be linked together in different groups. Initially the general areas that emerged loosely fell into the group titles of 'space', 'time' and 'body-personal'. After several days with these pieces of paper all over the living room floor I revisited my initial patterning. Except for a few of the phrase pieces being instances of other phrases the essential groups stayed the same.

At this point I took a holistic approach to the data analysis and asked myself, what phrase or sentence best captures the fundamental meaning of the entire group of connected phrase pieces? Was it necessary to use one of the phrases already present or formulate, by clarifying what was already lying on the floor, what all those phrase pieces essentially meant by capturing the main thrust in a phrase of my own. Of the three themes, two were directly identified on the phrase pieces, the third theme needed to be linguistically 'fleshed out' by the group.

While the result of my analysis of the raw data felt like it was right, I really needed the women collaborating with me to substantiate the findings. Happily, I received very positive feedback from the three women. The following chapters attempt to make sense of, and bring meaning to, the experiences of these women in relation to their teaching of primary physical education.

Report writing

The use of text in the human sciences

Attention should be explicitly drawn to the use of language in a human sciences approach, specifically in a critical ethnography, as the text and writing differ from more traditional research approaches.

Interpreting and interpretations are directly associated with the craft of writing ethnography. Clifford and Marcus (1986, p. 6) state that ethnographic writing is: *contextual* and draws from and creates meaningful social milieux; *rhetorical* as it uses and is used by expressive conventions; *institutional* where one writes within, and against, specific traditions, disciplines and audiences; *generic* and usually distinguishable from a novel or a travel account; *political* where the authority to represent cultural realities is unequally shared and at times contested; and, *historical* in the sense that all of the above conventions and constraints are changing.

Accordingly, ethnographic writings are 'fictions' that suggest the systematic and exclusive partiality of cultural and historical truths premised on the ethnographer's specific language, set of practices and specific experience of life. The key is for the ethnographer to 'let go' so that the writing gives voice to the culture's language when there are unequal languages. 'All translation,' Walter Benjamin (1969, p. 75) wrote, 'is only a somewhat provisional way of coming to terms with the foreignness of languages.' Like translation, ethnography is also a somewhat provisional way of coming to terms with the foreignness of languages

and of cultures and societies. The ethnographer does not, however, translate texts the way the translator does. [She]he must produce them. Text metaphors for culture and society notwithstanding, the ethnographer has no primary and independent writing that can be read and translated by others. No text survives [her]him other than [her]his own. Despite its frequent ahistorical - synchronic - pretence, ethnography is historically determined by the moment of the ethnographer's encounter with whomever [she]he is studying (Crapanzano, 1992, p. 43).

One might add to this that any ethnographic interpretation is, to a certain extent, linguistically determined. The importance of interpretation within the ethnographic method cannot be overstated. An ethnographer's task is to make conscious, explicit and familiar elements within or constitutive of a culture that are unconscious, implicit and latent. Giving voice to those things without the overlay of one's own voice and one's own voicing of the culture is difficult, perhaps impossible. It is natural and unavoidable that the tacit assumptions we have about language and its use will interfere with or have an impact on our attempt to give voice to a cultural or 'folk' language that may not be as powerful as the voice that is giving voice to that language. It is difficult to achieve the 'letting go' in interpretive activity because it is very difficult even to recognize the extent to which our *linguistic ideology* (Silverstein cited in Crapanzano, 1992) determines how we perceive, describe and evaluate what we observe or participate in. Crapanzano (1992, p. 4) draws attention to:

the moral and political consequences of the anthropologist's [ethnographer's] role as messenger. Insofar as we are shielded by fictions of objectivity, neutrality, and distance, the moral and political consequences of our role provide the determining undersong of our investigations.

All of the above point towards the difficulty of rendering an interpretation that is even relatively clear of the interpreter's own constructions of reality. In the context specifically of pedagogy, van Manen states:

To do research, to theorize, is to be involved in the consideration of text, the meaning of dialogic textuality and its promise for pedagogy -- for pedagogical thinking and acting in the company of children (1988, p. 449).

Hopefully the report of this inquiry will allow the reader, who is perhaps a primary teacher, to be able to understand the context described and provide an opportunity for moments of personal reflection on her own teaching of physical education to children. This self-reflection on pedagogy may provide an occasion for the women to critically analyze their own reproduction of, or resistance to, patriarchal ideologies embedded in their pedagogic relations, that is, the teaching of physical education to young children.

Van Manen (1988) goes on to share the four conditions necessary for a pedagogic textuality. First, the researcher needs to be oriented to the world in a pedagogic way that is reflexive and ontological. Our text needs to be *oriented* by ensuring an awareness of the relation between text and textuality, content and form, and speaking and acting. Our text needs to be *strong* by formulating a

pedagogic understanding that is exclusive of other interests. The educator needs to have a textual interest in the meanings of the experience by retrieving what is unique, particular, and irreplaceable. The text of anecdote, story, narrative or phenomenological description needs to be *rich*. Lastly, rich descriptions, that explore the meaning structures beyond what is immediately experienced, a critical analysis, gain a dimension of depth. The text of the pedagogic research needs to be *deep* (pp. 449-451).

The above passage on text was written in October 1993. I have been reflecting on the nature of ethnographic writing and the use of language and text during the past several months and would like to share some of my thoughts on how I have grown into this type of writing. My initial passion to investigate the experience of primary teachers resulted from my 'instinct' that there was 'something' amiss, lacking or under-productive concerning the interaction between primary teachers and the teaching of physical education. That sense was born of my contact with many teachers in both workshop and teacher education contexts. In a review of the physical education literature relating to 'generalist' teachers I found that there appeared to be a need to compare this group with the physical education 'specialist'. Most of this literature drew inconclusive results and was driven by a natural sciences philosophy. I felt a need to do 'something' for, with, on, or involving these primary teachers but I was at a loss for the tools that would assist me and at the same time be as human-friendly as possible for these women, that is to say, to render their experiences and insights in a way that

was not confined merely to surveys and numbers. In the fall of 1992 I enrolled in my first INTERPRETIVE INQUIRY course. While my initial training was in the natural sciences I found myself somewhat confused and yet liberated in these class experiences. It was at that time I made the decision that one of the methods within the human science orientation would provide the greatest emancipatory potential. However, I must also be truthful in admitting that it took me some time to reach my current comfort level. In retrospect, I believe one must spend time within the practical and theoretical milieux of the human sciences. With the added experience of an additional course in qualitative research methods, the participation in a dissertation discourse group at my institution, further reading, and primarily my fieldwork, I am becoming more familiar with the language that is so vital a part of exploring human meaning. I have a better understanding that the exploration of human meaning is not a search for predictable, concise answers but rather a quest for possibilities that can inform our human actions and that have potential to provide some form of emancipation. My progress in writing and verbalizing within this milieux have moved along the continuum from frustration to an early confidence. My position within this milieux is an ongoing process of discovery.

Too often those who are knowledgeable and who are the knowledge-makers or perpetuators of knowledge and values provide advice and offer hypotheses as if teaching was a profession rather than vocation (Huebner, 1984). 'Teaching is a way of living, not merely a way of making a living, and if we attend

intentionally to the meaning- and value-making of the teacher ' we will start to rebuild all aspects of our educational community (Huebner, 1984, p. 29). I believe this is an important point and that it sets an important objective for the inquiry. In order to understand the 'meaning-making ' and 'value-making ' of the primary teacher in relation to the teaching of physical education this process must begin by asking the question: How do power relations structure the women primary teachers' practice of physical education?

I believe that the critical ethnographic method I have selected provides the best potential 'fit' with the question posed, and that reflective, critical practice will be truly meaningful for me, the primary teachers involved in the inquiry, and the discipline of physical education.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF WOMEN PRIMARY TEACHERS

This chapter describes and conjoins the interview data with the fieldnotes collected on site to illustrate each participant's experiences as a primary teacher of physical education. Knowles (1992) suggests that biography, the formative experiences of teachers, can influence the ways in which the teachers think about teaching and how they behave in the classroom.

Despite the power of time, of school and classroom contexts, and of teacher preparation, the classroom practices exhibit convincing evidence of the strength of biography in the actions of ...teachers (p. 139).

Knowles identifies the experiences of family, experience of school and teachers, prior teaching experiences, significant others and experiences, whether positive or negative, as very influential in a teacher's role identity. This inquiry takes the position that being a woman in a patriarchal society where gender roles are socially constructed will influence teacher role identity as read up against the women's meanings of physical education and how power relationships structure their practice of it.

The chapter recognizes each woman's unique qualities as an individual, and will provide the various settings for the reader from which the common themes are identified in the following chapters.

As mentioned previously, on my second visit to St. Jude three teachers attended the meeting and agreed to participate in this inquiry. They were Karen,

a grade 2 teacher; Rhonda a grade 1 teacher and Suzanne who taught two kindergaten classess in the school. Each woman's personal background regarding physical activity and a brief description regarding her interaction in the primary physical education class will be presented.

Karen

Karen, a grade 2 teacher, was the one woman who had not attended the initial introductory session. I began to describe the tentative process as I had visualized it and the more I talked about observing the primary teacher teaching her physical education class the greater the unease I felt that Karen was experiencing. Finally Karen stated that she thought that I was going to come in and 'fix' her physical education class. When I responded that that was not what I had intended because I wanted to learn what their primary physical education was all about as it currently was Karen appeared alarmed. It was at this point that Rhonda, the grade 1 teacher, stated that, 'I'm not threatened by having her observe my class.' Feeling Karen's hesitancy at this point, I assured her that she was the teacher and I was the student and that I really didn't have a clear understanding of her real world. My purpose, I explained was that I wanted to learn by observing them and that in no way was this project to be an evaluation of her abilities to teach physical education. Rather, I wanted to understand why she taught and did what she did, whatever that might be. I must admit that I was a bit surprised when Karen agreed to participate after her apparent reluctance during this meeting.

I decided to be a part of the project because we have so many subjects to teach and I don't always have the time to improve all of them at once. So every year I pick a subject and try to improve or upgrade it. This year because you've offered to help us by teaching I decided that I would focus on my phys. ed. - Karen

Karen has taught in the primary grades 1 to 3 for 20 years in this city and has never been at one particular school for more than five years. She is currently teaching grade 2 which she said is her preference. She decided to become a primary teacher because she has always liked working and being with children. She teaches in the primary grades because she says she doesn't have much patience with the older children who do not behave properly.

I expect more of their behaviour and I can't understand why they do things the way they do. - Karen

Karen's teaching philosophy, which she stated is influenced by her strong religious background is that each child is an individual and needs to feel important.

I try to make them feel I care about them and I believe in them and I trust them and I know they can do it. Also that each student in my classroom is listened to, cared for and loved. - Karen

Karen went to university for two years to get her teaching certificate and then taught for five years before going back to get her degree, which she did in one year after several summer courses. Her specialization was language arts (reading) which she teaches in the morning with math and religion. Then, usually in the

afternoon, she teaches art, music, drama, physical education and French. In order that she could teach French she took one year of French at university and several weeks training during the summer. The only subjects she does not teach to her grade 2 class are science and social studies, totalling two hours per week, which are taught by the prep-time teacher. This latter arrangement is a change to her daily teaching load, only in effect for the past two years. Karen's class also has a half-hour per week for development of library skills with the librarian.

Karen is the youngest of three children and has a brother and sister. As a young person she considered herself a 'town' girl in a rural area. Her father was a farmer but built their home a mile from his farm so that the children would be raised in town. Karen stated that physical activity was never an important priority with her parents.

They weren't physically active. No sports at all. Well my mom and dad gardened. My dad was a farmer so he had his fresh air. We were never really encouraged to partake in sports. However, in winter I did go skating and in spring and summer the children on our block would play games on a vacant lot at least 3 nights a week. The games included ball, tag and hide-and-go-seek. We did have a family bike which was shared between 3 children. - Karen

Karen's brother did play hockey and ball but Karen stated that this was peer influenced activity and that the family never went to watch him play.

Karen's experiences with physical activity within the school setting were

virtually nonexistent. Her school never had a gym and the only physical activities the students would partake in were during recess playing low organizational games such as 'scrub'. Gallahue (1987) stated low organizational games are viewed in different ways but generally they denote games that are easy to play, have few and simple rules and require little or no equipment. Karen remembers her school having a volleyball team because there was a net outside; however you could only play if the weather permitted. Karen admitted that she doesn't know how to play basketball but knows a little bit of volleyball. Karen stated that when there was a school volleyball team, only the farm girls seemed to make the team and the town girls didn't.

Karen said that, as an adult, she's made several attempts at being physically active but that she has not been too successful. Her personal attempts at physical activity have been motivated by the poor health of her parents, but other than gardening and walking she has not joined anything 'organized' aside from yoga, and that only because it was offered within walking distance in her community. She did enjoy some of her yoga classes but felt she was not very flexible.

Karen does try to encourage physical activity with her children Jack and Mary Ann, who are 12 and 8 years of age respectively. She believes physical activities such as cross-country skiing, walking or tobogganing could be a method or means for the family to be together and to be active together. She encourages her children to take part in recreational physical activities at school but steers

them away from competitive activities such as baseball because one has to give up summer holidays in order to commit to the team. Her children are also enrolled in swimming lessons.

They take swimming lessons and I think that's important to know how to swim. So they're swimmers already. It's usually seasonal. In the spring its ball, then in the summer we take swimming lessons and then in the fall my son has been in volleyball and then in the winter its skating, tobogganing and cross-country skiing. - Karen

Although Karen believes it is important that her children know how to swim several factors deter her learning to swim.

I took swimming lessons, but I never learned how to swim. I was never relaxed in the water and it was never a heated pool. I'm very short of breathe. I could never do any distances without stopping to breath. I don't have stamina, like in general, I was always played out. Like if I went from there to there [she points the length of the 12 foot room] I had to stand up to breathe. - Karen

Generally Karen believes that the reason she encourages recreational activities, such as swimming, rather than competitive activities for her children is the conflict between her personal values and those values she perceives the people heavily involved in sport to hold or represent.

I think they are overpaid heroes. As long as you just don't become an armchair participant [watching professional sport], like you know, if you

watch and that's your only interest and you're not involved in it in any other way but also you do it as a child. Like I'm thinking of children who watch too much T.V. But more I was thinking of hockey...there's violence and maybe not exactly what I'd say I want in my own family. The values that are involved in sport are not my personal values. They are not the values I want my own children to internalize. - Karen

Karen also stated that involvement in sports, whether as participant or spectator, can create inequity between the genders in a family.

A lot of people are driven by sports and I think it just tears the family apart. And I think sometimes the females are second in place to the males within the family. That the female will go to all these games just because their brother is there and they are dragged around. And what's their [the female's] activity? 'Well I don't have any'. I think there is an overemphasis in that area of competitive sports. - Karen

Of the 17 physical education classes I observed Karen teach all were focused on game skills (throwing, catching and rolling) with fundamental locomotor skills (walking, running, skipping and jumping) mixed in amongst them. The physical education class was generally composed of a few warm-up activities and a skill development segment. I would be waiting for the class usually outside of the gymnasium if it was occupied beforehand or if not occupied inside sitting on a bench against the wall. The children would file in line into the gymnasium and immediately move into a circle formation guided by the black circle for

basketball painted on the middle of the gymnasium floor. Karen would start by leading the children in a brief warm-up which might consist of walking around the circle, jumping in and out of the circle, waving arms around or stretching and touching toes.

Following a warm-up the class would move into whatever spatial formation would be necessary for the skill development portion of the period. Often Karen would call the children to positions in the row formations from their classroom. 'Row 1 please line up behind me here.' 'Row 2 please line up along this line.' Or, 'Row 3 please come and get a ball from me in the equipment room.' If the children were not in the correct position Karen would physically move them, taking them by the arm and pulling or pushing them into place.

All the skills the children were requested to attempt would be demonstrated by Karen first. Several times Karen would be describing the movement to the children only to find that it was close to impossible to perform as suggested so she would modify the task. Once, when demonstrating a bounce pass towards the wall, Karen was positioned too close to allow the ball to bounce high enough so the children could catch it and so she had the children take two large steps back from the wall. This resulted in her walking around repositioning the children prior to allowing them to attempt the skill. She would commence the children moving by calling out 'move now' or 'throw'. She would end the drill by saying first 'stop', and then to call the children's attention, 'focus', and she would point her fingers to every child to check that their eyes were on her. On

three occasions Karen brought a whistle to class and would blow the whistle to call the children's attention to her. During the skill attempts by the children Karen would move once to each child and usually provide feedback by physically moving them through the skill if she deemed they needed help.

Usually the gym period would end with Karen having the children run two or three laps of the gymnasium followed by two laps of walking. This was generally the portion of the class where the children had the most vigorous physical activity. Only on rare occasions did Karen have the children play running games such as tag or 'Crows and cranes'. At the end of the period the children would line up in the 'girls' line and the 'boys' line at the gymnasium door.

Upon exiting the gym, the routine for all the women's classes I observed would be movement towards the two drinking fountains at the end of the hall for refreshment, resumption of the lines and then return to the classroom.

Interpretation of Karen

When I was observing Karen's physical education classes she appeared genuinely concerned that she was doing the 'right' thing. Upon reflecting on her limited background and experiences with physical activity in general it is apparent that she teaches her physical education as she thinks others think it should be taught. In many of her lessons she expressed verbally the components of Laban's movement analysis (Stanley, 1977) body awareness, space awareness, effort qualities and relationships; but she seemed to have little understanding of where it was possible to take the children when using these components. Using an example

of the spatial terms, Karen would have the children move their utility balls in their hands 'up and down, up and down' with little justification, that I could understand, for why she asked the children to perform this movement. The class would then move to another task that appeared unconnected to the previous such as throw the ball against the wall. However, in considering the relations and patterns between classes rather than between movement tasks I found more congruency or flow. Karen would use utility balls in the hands or body manipulation of a hula hoop or skipping with a rope for several classes in succession. Hence Karen tended to teach a theme in several units rather than focus on a specific skill during one class period and then move onto another skill in a different class.

As demonstrated by her actions, class management was a concern for Karen. It appeared that despite having only 30 minutes for physical education in the gymnasium, and usually arriving late and leaving early, Karen spent a great deal of time making sure the children were in their 'proper' positions, or prohibiting any movement of the children until all the class were in position, had their equipment or were quiet and ready to attempt the task as given.

Interestingly, Karen's class tended to be most closely associated with the command style of teaching physical education as described by Mosston and Ashworth (1994, p. 24). They suggest that when the command style is used there is a single standard, the task is best learned by immediate recall and through repeated performance, the task can be learned in single parts over a short period,

individual differences in children are not invited and that the entire class of children can perform the task as given. What I heard while in this class is illustrative of the command style. Many of her instructions to the children were one word commands to the children, 'sit', 'go', 'stop', 'focus'. That she appears to use this style does not imply that Karen's intentions in her physical education class were to set a single standard for the class and ignore individual differences. Considering Karen's experience and movement abilities, she felt she was doing her best providing feedback for skills in this teaching format.

I must admit that, during my non-participant observer period of six months, Karen appeared distant. During my first several on-site periods she would seek reassurance after every physical education period. As I was recording what was occurring in the gym and not evaluating her teaching performance, I would smile and then change the subject. I don't believe she found this reassuring so I would try to converse with her on peripheral topics such as teacher-parent interviews, evaluation reports and such during recess in the staff room. During casual conversation with other teachers I did get the impression that Karen lacked confidence when asked to collaborate with other teachers in St. Jude and usually declined any offers. Interestingly, but not surprisingly in light of the teaching philosophy she shared with me, I saw Karen at her most confident and assertive when she questioned the parish priest about what she perceived to be his infrequent visits to the school. Karen most definitely seemed to be requiring an adequate response from the priest by not allowing 'I'm very busy' to end the

conversation.

Building trust or a harmonious relationship with collaborating participants is important to getting at the heart of an inquiry (Spradley, 1979). At the time of the aforementioned encounter with the parish priest I mulled over the idea of striking up a conversation with Karen about Catholicism in order to build trust or friendship. But I quickly realized that it would be inappropriate to attempt to establish trust on that basis as I am agnostic. However we did reach a point when I believe the ice broke and Karen was able to relax and view me as a true collaborator and not evaluator.

Part of the agreement to participate in this inquiry was that I would teach several physical education classes for each of these women. My first session with Karen's grade 2 class was what I called the 'treasure hunt', a modified orienteering session. Karen's class was the first group with which I attempted this session and it was also the first time I had myself used this particular approach to orienteering. (This was a class introduced to me by several of my students in a university teacher education class). Upon receiving instruction to search for their treasures on the playground the children eagerly left the gymnasium. The planned time for the activity was 20 minutes but within 10 minutes several of the children were already returning having found their treasures. Aside from mis-timing the activity the children were tracking mud into the gymnasium from the playground. This was a major faux pas in the school. Upon realizing the implications of my allowing this to happen I apologized to Karen and said I would clean up the mess.

I also was put into the position of being 'flexible' in my planning of the session and had to fill the remaining eight minutes with activity. As I had provided the teachers with my lesson plans it was quite obvious to Karen that I had miscalculated the session. While she lined the children up at the gymnasium door to return to their class, and I was on my hands and knees cleaning up the bigger chunks of 'gumbo' (clay mud) off the gymnasium floor, Karen called over and said, 'I'll see you next gym.' That was the first time I felt 'invited' back to Karen's class. That was the turning point. During the next three months, the quid pro quo period of the inquiry (discussed later), Karen was more willing, and appeared confident to talk to me about her experiences teaching physical education.

Rhonda

Rhonda was the grade 1 teacher in St. Jude with whom I made my initial contact. I explained over the telephone the nature of the inquiry and she offered to organize an informational meeting for the primary teachers at the school. Rhonda herself did not seem to hesitate and immediately agreed to be a participant. I was to discover later that Rhonda is very confident in who she is as a teacher and has been in the school system teaching for 27 years. She has been involved in several collaborative efforts such as working with student interns from the university and has volunteered as a representative of primary teachers on several curriculum revision projects. Rhonda was the woman who suggested the 'quid pro quo' agreement between the teachers and myself. She said she thought

it was an opportunity for the women participants to have a university professor assist with physical education. But more than that she thought if I really wanted to know what teaching primary physical education was like I should have first-hand experience by walking in their shoes.

Rhonda, like Karen, obtained her teaching certificate and taught grades 3 and 4 for several years before going back to study for her degree. Reflecting on her teaching background Rhonda believed her choice for careers was limited.

I've always wanted to be a teacher from grade 3 on. It was just always something I always wanted to be and in those days there wasn't an awful lot of opportunity. You were either going to be a teacher or a nurse or a secretary, that was the kind of expectation. But even before thinking of careers I just always wanted to teach and I don't think I have ever regretted it. - Rhonda

Rhonda began her degree part-time, majoring in history, while she was teaching kindergarten. On the advice of a math specialist in the school system Rhonda changed her program focus from history to early childhood education, an option that was not available when she initially began her schooling. She found this advantageous because all the assignments she applied right into her classroom.

Rhonda has taught the elementary spectrum kindergarten to grade 8 in five different suburban schools in the city. It is her ninth year teaching at St. Jude and she anticipates that, unless the enrolment of the school drops, she will finish her teaching career in seven years in this school. Rhonda found it difficult to put her

teaching philosophy into words. She believes each child is an individual and learns at her or his own rate but that this poses a practical impossibility for the teacher.

When you're given the enrolment that we are given, I find at many times that [teaching for individual differences] has to go second nature. Like you have to try to approach the majority and then if they're having trouble then you have to deal with the ones that are having trouble in a different way. But it would be ideal to have them all working but you just can't. So I don't know. I just feel the children should just work at their own rate and enjoy what they are doing and have fun doing it. - Rhonda

A typical day for Rhonda and her grade 1 class begins with a prayer and O Canada as opening exercises, discussion about the calendar and their agenda in the class day plan. This is followed by news which is read together by the class and the 'word of the day'. If there is a special event, such as Halloween, Advent or Valentine's Day there may be discussion surrounding that occasion. The children then have printing or journal writing and math before morning recess. Rhonda considers recess to lunch as her 'core' time and so has reading during this period. After lunch the class begins with a prayer and religion, but this does vary as Rhonda's prep-time teacher covers science and social studies after lunch also. The remaining afternoon time is filled with music, drama 'and all that'. When Rhonda does have her physical education in the morning on Wednesday and Friday, she teaches math in the afternoon.

Rhonda doesn't remember having any physical education in her rural

elementary school. She recalls playing pick-up games at recess with all the children in the school because there were only 20 students. So age did not deter the children playing together. Rhonda seems to recall having physical education in high school but all the activities she identified were organized sport. She does not picture herself as very athletic.

In high school we must've had phys. ed. Yeah, we had phys. ed. there and the intramural type games. I played on the volleyball team, never liked basketball. I played softball. I did track but track was not one of my strong points. I'm not really very athletic. I enjoy sports but I'm not athletic. I'm sort of mediocre in everything. - Rhonda

Outside of the school environment, except for recreational activities available in a rural environment such as skating, tobogganing and curling, organized physical activity for adolescents, especially girls, was not an option.

As an adult Rhonda's physical activity patterns are dependent on two factors she says -- how much weight she's gained and her husband's influence. Her husband, Tom 'really enjoys his sports'. Rhonda admits that if it were not for Tom getting her into tennis and curling and golf that she would probably be a 'spectator because that is what I am'. There are several physical activities that Rhonda does enjoy as an individual participant, but she is usually dissuaded for reasons of physical comfort.

I do enjoy swimming. I used to swim all the time as an exercise but I can't any more because of my skin. The chlorine and my skin don't get along

very well. Along with our weather we have...it's too dry. I find going to aerobics I get too flushed -- too hot. I walk outside and I just don't enjoy that. - Rhonda

Several of the primary teachers and Rhonda do walk for 25 minutes everyday in the gym. Rhonda states that it helps if she can do things on a regular basis.

Like her husband, Rhonda's two sons are very involved in sports. Ron is 23 and in his fourth year of agriculture at a large Western Canadian university and Allan is 18 and in his first year of education at the university in the city. Allan won the city athlete of the year when he graduated last year. Rhonda states that Allan, and Ron, though not superstars in any one sport, are very good at all of them. Rhonda said the one physical activity they do as a family, which is limited as our city is located in the middle of the prairies, is downhill skiing. This is the only sport that Rhonda 'loves with a passion'.

Physical activity for children is important to Rhonda. However she feels that in today's society adults tend to inundate the children's time away from school with organized physical activity and sport leagues. It is important to keep children busy and 'out of trouble' but parents tend to go overboard.

Sometimes children will say to me 'I don't have time to read...I was doing this last night or that. I don't have time to do this [homework] I'm too busy'. I think that is ridiculous. I don't believe in enrolling them every night of the week so they have no free time. I think they over-busy them.

Kids nowadays sit there and say 'what do I do next?'. They can't think any

more. Like I think of our recess, we never had a teacher who told us what to do, we made up our own games. You say go and play a game, or go organize something. They don't know how. They have no idea how to create things. - Rhonda

With the concern that children lack self-directed ability to create their own games, it is not surprising that Rhonda's physical education class involves a lot of questioning and playing games with her grade 1 children. I observed 15 physical education classes that Rhonda taught. I was also able to observe three physical education classes supervised by Rhonda but taught by the student intern, Marnie, during the latter portion of my non-participant observer period.

Rhonda would begin each of her classes with brief warm-up activities in the middle of the gymnasium in the circle formation outlined by black markings on the floor. Stretching activities on the spot would include touching toes and reaching high to the sky. Rhonda would usually lead by demonstrating the body actions. After two or three minutes of stretching around the circle Rhonda would expand the space used by the children by allowing them larger gross movements such as running, hopping and galloping throughout the space in the gymnasium. Rhonda would make verbal suggestions to the children, 'try bouncing like a ball around the gym'. Often the children would follow other locomotor patterns such as galloping instead of bouncing but Rhonda usually did not correct them.

Following the warm-up the class usually took one of two routes: skill development with small apparatus or low organizational games with the children.

Skills involved throwing, catching, rolling and kicking with utility balls that were approximately six inches in diameter. During this segment Rhonda would rarely demonstrate but was continually questioning the children about the positioning of their body parts while they attempted to execute the skill. 'Where are your arms when throwing the ball?' 'Where are your eyes looking when bouncing the ball?' 'How can we pass the ball in the air with our foot?' She would have one of the children provide an answer and in many cases she would allow the child to attempt a demonstration. In many instances several children would be needed to demonstrate until one successfully completed the skill. Quite often Rhonda would end the class by allowing the children to 'try something you haven't done before'. Typically what would occur at this point was that the boys would throw their balls at one of the six basketball hoops, the only permanent targets in the gymnasium, and most of the girls would find a small area away from the running and the throwing and play catch with a friend. This is not to insinuate that all boys shot hoops and girls played with friends, but the majority of children would follow this pattern.

Humbert (1995) found a similar situation with adolescents in physical education classes in that when girls are playing in more open space the boys will invade the territory and take over the area. While the girls were playing badminton in the gym the boys entered and began shooting hoops with basketballs. Before long the girls were relegated to smaller spaces on the sidelines standing or still attempting to play a cramped badminton game.

In approximately half of Rhonda's classes that I observed, following the warm-up of stretching activities the class would engage in low organizational games. Very often Rhonda would allow the children to select the game they wanted to play as a group. Occasionally a new game would be introduced to the class. Most of the games were a modified tag game in which once the child who is 'it' tags or touches another child that child also becomes 'it' and is free to chase and tag others. One example of this game is *Big A little a* where the children line up against one wall and chant (or scream) to the child who is 'it' in the middle, 'Big A little a, bouncing bee, Susan's in the middle and she can't catch me'. The children then attempt to run to the opposite wall without being tagged. The game continues until all children are tagged and 'it'. This game and others of its nature were games that kept all children active and included. There were no games that I observed, with any of the participants, that involved eliminating the children if they did not perform adequately. This type of game also promoted maximum activity of all children.

Circle chasing games that did not necessarily involve maximum activity for all children were played in Rhonda's class several times. In *Charlie over the water*, Rhonda would have the children sit or stand in a circle and one child would be 'it'. The class would chant, or scream, 'Charlie over the water, Charlie over the sea, Charlie caught a bluebird but he can't catch me!'. Then the child who is 'it' would tag a child in the circle, both would run in opposite directions around the circle and whoever reached the empty space left by the tagged child last would be

the next 'it'. While it would appear that this game was not premised on the notion of maximum activity for all children, as only two children in the class would be running at any one time, the children in the circle usually were excited and jumping up and down yelling and cheering-on the children running. It would be interesting to monitor the children's heart rates as a spectator in this activity.

Another component of Rhonda's physical education class was apparatus day. The last Friday of every month, if the gym was available all day, several senior students in the school would set up larger apparatus in the gymnasium for use by all classes regularly scheduled that day. Rhonda's grade 1 class and Suzanne's morning and afternoon kindergarten classes all had regularly scheduled gym periods on Friday, so those children all experienced apparatus day.

The gymnasium space would be set up with five stations. Station one would have an assortment of different sized balls and bowling pins that were to be used as targets. Station two had scooters which were square (approximately 18 inches) wooden or plastic bases with four caster wheels underneath. Station three had hoops of a variety of sizes and skipping ropes. Station four which took up one-third of the gymnasium had two hockey nets and plastic hockey pucks and sticks. Station five was the climbing apparatus pulled out from the wall. Apparatus days were the only time I observed the climbing apparatus in use in any the classes I attended. Rhonda would move the children into five groups, each of approximately six children, and assign them to stations. After five minutes Rhonda would have the children rotate to another station.

Rhonda used the time during apparatus day either to walk around to the stations and supervise the children or, as I was observing, to come over and talk to me about individual children or about her experiences teaching physical education. On the first apparatus day Rhonda told me that this class was 'easy to teach'. She mentioned that safety at each of the stations was important, in particular at the scooter station as fingers could easily get caught in the caster wheels and at the climbing apparatus station where children swinging on the ropes caused collisions. Rhonda said she used to feel uneasy about the climbing apparatus but after several years' experience, she realized that, just as in the playground, the children only climb as high as they are comfortable with. A few minutes later during this class we watched one small girl climb to the top of the rope. Rhonda seemed amazed and mentioned that it was rare for any grade 1 child she has had to climb that high because they lack upper body strength. Rhonda concluded that this girl must be in gymnastics or have a climbing rope in her backyard.

Rhonda's physical education class would usually end with her asking the children to line up quietly at the door. Once the girls' and boys' lines were quiet and straight they would be allowed to proceed to the water fountain and then back to their classroom.

I also had an opportunity to observe Rhonda's interaction with a student intern (teacher in training) and her physical education class. Marnie was a fourth year early childhood education student at the university in the city. Rhonda was

Marnie's cooperating teacher for a four-month period. Marnie was to gradually begin teaching several of the subject areas in Rhonda's class. After observing Rhonda teach physical education for five classes Marnie was given the responsibility to teach physical education. Marnie told me that she had never taught physical education before and that she was not an athlete. Her first class, which she admitted to being very nervous about, had to be modified immediately upon entering the gymnasium as it was apparatus day. Rhonda seemed unconcerned and told me, 'I was supposed to evaluate Marnie's physical education lesson plan. Oh well, I guess I'll still evaluate her at the stations'. Marnie walked from station to station while Rhonda sat and talked with me. The only interaction the women had was when Marnie expressed concern about how high some of the children were climbing on the wall apparatus. Rhonda's response to her was, 'No one has fallen yet'. However, when one boy was accidentally kicked in the eye by a child swinging on the rope it was Rhonda who immediately provided a quick medical evaluation and then consoled the crying boy. Marnie seemed flustered by the incident.

The next class Rhonda had an opportunity to evaluate Marnie's lesson plan, which she had written on a piece of paper that never left her side. Rhonda observed from the bench we were both sitting on. Marnie started with stretching by standing in the middle of the circle of children and demonstrating each stretch for the children. Rhonda would always be in the circle with the children while doing this activity. Marnie then had the children play *Who's afraid of Robin?*, a

game very similar to Big A little a with a different rhyme followed by *Hickory Dickory Dock*, which was very similar to *Charlie over the water*. Marnie ended the session by having the class sit quietly in the circle and asking the children questions about the use of directions while they were running.

Marnie's second lesson was similar to her first. Rhonda was ill on this day and a substitute teacher had been brought in who marked papers on the bench beside me throughout Marnie's class. The only difference between Marnie's two lessons was that on this occasion she put pylons across the middle of the gymnasium floor and the entire class was conducted in half the space. Marnie said later that containing the children in a smaller space made it easier for her to observe them.

Marnie's third physical education lesson was the following week. I did observe this class and Marnie later told me that Rhonda did not accompany her to the gymnasium but stayed in the classroom catching up on her marking. This class had an incident where a child had an 'accident' on the floor and Marnie's plans for the class were immediately in disarray. The story of this 'accident' is reported in Appendix B (p. 286). In the context of this chapter, however, it is important to note Rhonda's supervisory absence from the gymnasium as she needed the time to mark assignments.

It was shortly after this and Marnie's reporting of the class that Rhonda asked me not to observe in her class for one month so that Marnie could teach physical education without being inhibited by a university professor observing. I

had been talking to Marnie during recess and she did not appear inhibited by me; as a matter of fact she seemed to take the 'accident' in stride and seemed to chalk it up to experience. Nevertheless I was asked to take a one-month hiatus and return for the 'quid pro quo' portion of the inquiry at that time. Rhonda did state when asking for the break that she did think it would be beneficial for Marnie to observe me teaching physical education prior to her completing her internship.

Interpretation of Rhonda

Of the three women who participated in this inquiry Rhonda appeared the most organized and confident in who she was as a teacher. She appeared willing to speak her mind on topics that the other women either appeared hesitant to discuss or placed in the 'it isn't a really big problem' category. During one recess in the staff room two of the mature primary teachers were mentioning how their husbands call them 'mom'. Obviously each husband finds it convenient to refer to his wife in the same manner as do their children. Rhonda was quick to enter the conversation and stated that it would be unacceptable to her for her husband to call her 'mom'. 'I am not his mother! How could any woman tolerate that.' And while several of the women in the room smiled and nodded their heads other women appeared set back by such a forceful opinion. However, despite silence falling over the room Rhonda continued talking about why such a title bestowed by your husband would be improper if not degrading. Upon the recess bell ringing, Rhonda comfortably left the room having said her piece and returned to

her class.

This impression of self-assurance was also noted during our conversational interviews. Rhonda appeared uninhibited when discussing what to some women would be sensitive topics such as staff relations within her school. She was also able to very bluntly say 'no' or voice her disagreement to proposals from other teachers or administration. My experience with a more subtle display of Rhonda's feelings occurred one day upon missing my sessions with the teachers. On my return Rhonda smiled when observing me sitting on the bench and said, 'We missed you on Wednesday. We had a good class.' Although this invoked pangs of guilt it was also her way of saying 'we notice when you're gone and it's your loss'. Rhonda was very good at letting people know what she was thinking.

Rhonda was confident teaching her physical education class while I was observing. And several times throughout our conversations concerning her experiences with primary physical education she quite bluntly said, 'welcome to my world'. I believe her openness during the inquiry was motivated by her genuine need to promote change in the educational system, starting with what she believes are the privileged groups (essentially any group other than primary teachers) truly having a deeper understanding of her real world teaching primary physical education.

The children in Rhonda's class seemed very well behaved compared to other classes I observed although Rhonda did not see it this way. Rhonda very obviously had set the conditions for student behaviour and the children were

careful not to cross the line. Although she did not have elimination games in her class she was quick to tell a child who was coming dangerously close to misbehaving, 'Allan, do you want to go and sit on the bench beside Mrs. LeDrew?' Rhonda said this time-out was particularly effective because no child wants to sit and watch everyone else have fun.

I did not take offense that sitting beside me was purgatory, I just happened to be sitting on the penalty bench. However, I did cringe at the 'Mrs.' LeDrew. Both Rhonda and Karen introduced me to the children in their class with this title and I never did correct them. There are times to announce one's opinion on societal limitations based on gender and times where it is best left out of the equation.

Rhonda's teaching style fluctuated between her directing the content of the lesson and allowing the children to select the activity. She occasionally demonstrated but usually designated a child to attempt the movement. On the occasions that Rhonda did demonstrate she seemed to be careful to restrict her movement to only what was needed. For instance when kicking the ball she would do it once and limit the movement to just her kicking leg. No preparatory movement, arm swing or adequate follow-through was incorporated in the demonstration for the children. Rhonda's comfort level with her movement ability may be the reason she encourages the children to demonstrate.

Rhonda's knowledge of the critical features (McPherson, 1987) of various fundamental motor skills is limited and hence she does not realize the importance

of identifying or demonstrating these critical features for the children. In several instances Rhonda would ask the children to gallop and the range of movements exhibited by the children would be gallop, leap, bounce or skip. There was little corrective feedback on the differences between these skills. The fundamental motor skills can be viewed as the building blocks of more complex movements that are usually found in our sport and leisure activities. If a child can walk, run, leap, hop, jump, skip, gallop, slide, throw, catch, strike, kick and bounce, they can combine these basic fundamental skills in different combinations for various sport activities. For example, run, hop and throw in combination could assist a child in learning the lay-up skill in the game of basketball. However, Rhonda is not alone in her limited movement range, or knowledge of critical features, as women as a group tend to lack fundamental movement skills (Nelson, 1991).

After six months of observing classes, I began to wonder if the observation period had run its course. Guba and Lincoln (1985) cite 'exhaustion of sources' and 'emergence of regularities' as two of the theoretical guidelines indicating that the data collection period (fieldwork) is complete. I was feeling that I had witnessed all the various types of physical education sessions that these three women taught and that the sessions were becoming repetitive. However, as a new human science researcher I was 'hanging on' wondering if something new was going to happen that I should observe. During the week of my wondering Rhonda came to me and stated that it was now time for me to teach the primary physical education as I had observed everything she usually did. It was she who confirmed

that it was time to move onto the next phase of the inquiry.

Suzanne

Suzanne has been teaching predominantly kindergarten in the city for 17 years. During the first two meetings she was immediately enthusiastic about participating in the inquiry. The 'ace in the hole' as she communicated to me was the opportunity to use me as a resource person in physical education. When scheduling my observation periods with Suzanne it had not crossed my mind that she had two separate kindergarten classes with 21 children in each class. Due to an unfortunate scheduling conflict I was able to attend only three of Suzanne's four physical education periods per week. With Suzanne having two classes for me to observe, naturally I spent a good portion of my time conversing with Suzanne.

Suzanne came into teaching as a career later in life than Karen and Rhonda. At the time she was a clerk in an office downtown in the city and one day realized she wanted something else. She decided to become a teacher as a second career because she knew she liked working with children and thought, as her husband is a high school science and biology teacher, it would be nice to coordinate her holidays with his. Initially Suzanne selected a combined early childhood and business education degree.

I sat in the typing class for two weeks and I knew that I could never do that and I knew I would never be allowed to teach accounting so I went into early childhood. - Suzanne

When Suzanne first began teaching, her job was speech correction in 10 different

schools throughout the city. She said this experience really helped her to get a 'good idea about the way the different schools operate '. Suzanne has been teaching at St. Jude for eight years and says she enjoys it here.

When growing up as a city resident Suzanne was physically active in a recreational sense as there were really no organized sport activities for girls in the city. Her elementary school did not have a gymnasium and on the day she entered high school, its gymnasium was condemned by the city. Suzanne did take part in physical activities such as skipping, jumpzee, back lane baseball with the neighbourhood children and, as Suzanne noted, 'my trike was my best friend '.

The only structured physical education Suzanne could remember was once when their grade 8 teacher took the class outside and had them doing calisthenics.

I can still remember he had us doing push-ups. Of course we had no strength in the back of our arms and our shoulder and there was no way we could do that. And at the time it was the ones [push ups] from the toes up. Three people at the very back of the group went to sleep. They just put their heads down and they were gone. - Suzanne

Suzanne shared that there were about seven children her age in the neighbourhood and that they never played on the school grounds with the other children because they did not have enough confidence in their abilities as athletes and were afraid no one would pick them for their teams. So these children kept themselves entertained by playing games on the street and back alley.

I'm not a good athlete, but I enjoy what I do. I learned really early in life

that I would never be the best but as long as I enjoyed it that was okay too.

I don't have the competitive edge that it takes to make me move to be more active. I'm more like a individual person. - Suzanne

Her introduction to physical education in a structured sense was in her teacher training in university. She enjoyed this experience because the instructor who taught the class was 'gung-ho' and very enthusiastic and did not make an issue of her being a mature student in the midst of 17- or 18-year old students.

I was the one the professor called Mrs. McKay and I called him by his first name. The group was very nice to me, nobody called me mom. The professor used me as an example of what to do with children who can't do anything. - Suzanne

Suzanne accepted with good humour that, in terms of her physical abilities, she was the student in that class who resembled a child with movement difficulties. Even at the time of the interview, she said her personal physical activity is extremely limited because she must work in the time between her husband's basketball coaching, which takes up about four months of the year and the activities that her children are involved in. She is currently in aerobics once a week and stated that she has a Jane Fonda workout tape at home that she actually does use this but it's usually at the urging of her son Joe who is nine years of age. Shaw (1985) reported that women spend more time per day maintaining a household and report less time in recreational leisure pursuits than do men. Household duties included household labour, personal care, child care

and outside employment. Suzanne's available leisure time to pursue physical activity, like that of the other women, is limited with the additional responsibilities.

An example of Suzanne's physical activity being influenced by the needs of her family is the encouragement she gets from Joe her son. Joe has a weight problem and sometimes forces Suzanne to get up with him and work out with the tape in the morning. Joe does play basketball twice a week but that is not enough to work off what he eats. Physical education at Joe's school is not a priority and Suzanne thinks that's too bad. She believes Joe has become uninterested in physical activity because she and Dave have pushed Joe too hard.

When we had children I knew they were going to have to be involved with something physical. I did not want them to be a couch potato with no physical skills. So my kids have always been in gymnastics and swimming. My son has chosen to opt out of a lot of things because I think we tried to push him too much and that he couldn't handle. Joe's got basketball and that is about all he can handle. - Suzanne

Suzanne's daughter, Mary, is 13 and very involved in extracurricular activity, having six hours of rhythmic gymnastics and two hours of Girl Guides per week. As with many parents of children in organized sport, Suzanne has volunteered her time to assist with the functioning of the provincial rhythmic gymnastics association. She laughed at the fact that, with her limited physical activity background, she is currently the representative of competitive female

athletes on the provincial sport organization's board of directors. However, she was quick to point out that many of these organizations that do not receive the 'big' funding need volunteers to assist in running the organization and that in many cases the volunteers are the parents of participants.

When discussing other factors that influenced her children and their physical activity patterns Suzanne suggested that sports on television has a greater influence on Joe than on Mary. In particular, she feels that Joe is influenced by the amount of television he watches and which sport athletes he admires. But she also noted that Dave questions Joe on the reasons he may regard particular athletes as heroes.

Joe picks somebody that is good but he is lucky because his dad can sit there and say why do you think he is good? It can't just be because he is in a commercial. So you have to sort of gear them up to 'why do you admire that person?' You know in some cases there are valid reasons but in some cases they do just because they see them so often and it's just a name. -

Suzanne

Mary on the other hand, tends to admire people in closer proximity to her like her gymnastics coach.

She [the gymnastics coach] is so graceful so she can show them she is also the type of person Mary would like to be. She is very gentle and she is very supportive of anything that is done right. She doesn't focus in on what's wrong but what's right. So I guess this is a contrast to what she finds at

home. - Suzanne

Suzanne's family's connection to sport and sport personalities appears typical. For boys and men in our society 'having' a sports team or athlete to admire is an integral part of men's socialization into the 'manly sports' world (Nelson, 1994). Rarely are girls questioned on the sports world of statistics and heroes and athletic history. But given the abysmal media coverage of women's sport is there any wonder that girls do not 'have' a team. Nelson suggests women and girls do not 'need' a team as they are quite satisfied with the interpersonal relationships they have in the real world around them.

Generally Suzanne sees herself as someone who is willing to try anything physical just so that she may find something in it that she can incorporate into her teaching program.

I'm the person that takes belly dance for fun and the person who takes yoga to see if I can actually twist up like that. Everything I've taken I've brought back into my classroom. I've used a lot of ideas I've learned from that but they're basically individual activities. I'm not really a team person.

- Suzanne

The basic teaching philosophy Suzanne has when dealing with her kindergarten children is that she feels every child needs to succeed. She does not see this as being the overall philosophy of the school board and she finds that unfortunate. She stated that physical education is an ideal subject area that can be the environment for success but that not all schools give to physical education or

to the coaches of school teams the priority she believes they deserve. Rather, they just focus on the very traditional sports that are always played.

I don't think our schools are supporting our phys. ed. programs. The basketball and volleyball it seems to me are stressed so much in grade school but they probably play again in high school and there are intramurals in high school organized for them too. I don't think we have enough stress on individual types of skills. I don't think our board supports the coaches [of both individual and team sports] that they have within the system and recognize their value. They've got coaches that have kept kids in school just because they are interested. I don't remember what I learned in social but I can remember the few things we did that were physical in school that were fun. - Suzanne

Suzanne says that she tries to incorporate fun within the daily routine of each kindergarten class. She believes if they are not having fun you lose their attention because the maximum time that the children can focus on any one thing is 10 minutes. Suzanne has found routine especially important this year with a special needs child in her morning kindergarten. She begins her class with a prayer or religious song as soon as the children settle. Any songs that are done in the class have movements associated with them. Suzanne stated the children learn the song more quickly if there are movements, such as hand gestures, associated with the lyrics. Following prayer and a song the children work with a calendar discussing the month, date and day. Then Suzanne uses a song, story or film to

introduce the theme of the day. Once the theme is introduced the children move over to their desks to do a task associated with the theme and when they are finished they are directed to different activities throughout the room. Following the recess the children can sit and do another quiet activity like show and tell and then move into some more structured activities around the room. There is lots of movement. She ends the class with something the children like before they go home, something the child selects for her(him)self. Ending the day like this leaves the children with a positive feeling and motivation to come back the next day. In the afternoon kindergarten class the only activity that changes is the scheduling of the physical education period.

On my initial visit to observe Suzanne's physical education class I was introduced as June and the children were told that I was going to watch them for awhile and then teach them some 'new neat things to do in phys. ed.'. Of the three women I observed Suzanne was the only teacher to change into physical education wear. By changing into physical education wear I mean she was sure that she had her running shoes on. Suzanne was not one to wear 'fancy' clothes with small children using paints and markers. Her usual attire included a comfortable blouse or top and slacks, 'Something that I wouldn't be devastated about if it was ruined. 'Suzanne would ask the children to find a partner, usually by lining up and holding the hand of the person in the opposite line. Suzanne tried to discourage the children forming into little buddy groups and alienating any children. In our two lines, if there was an extra child I was always partnered.

Holding hands with our partners we would make our journey to the gymnasium. Once at the gymnasium door Suzanne would remind the children why they would have to stand against the wall to allow another class to exit the gym.

Upon entering the gymnasium the children would rush to the middle circle and Suzanne would ask the children to space themselves evenly around the circle. Usually this would require that she quickly run around and physically position them. Suzanne would begin by leading the children in warm-up movements, usually the stretching of various body parts while Suzanne gave instruction throughout the activity. Often she would remind me of an aerobics instructor who is continually talking and trying to inspire the participants to keep moving.

Between both the morning and afternoon sections, I observed Suzanne teach 24 physical education classes and in summary would say that she had the most varied program. By varied program I mean that her activities covered the spectrum from basic fundamental skill development to low organizational games to cooperative games to other activities done periodically such as tobogganing, singing games with a record player, or hiking to the local park. She also incorporated the widest variety of equipment, a variety of sized balls, hoops, targets, ropes, small exercise mats, a parachute and other such equipment. Suzanne was also not hesitant to incorporate free-play time into her physical education program.

Despite her tendency to disparage herself respecting her body management skills, abilities and body size, Suzanne did not hesitate to assist the children by

demonstrating as much as was physically possible for her. This seemed to put the children at greater ease, because Mrs. McKay was willing to try it despite how 'silly' she might appear.

One factor that had to be reinforced constantly with the children was safety while in the gymnasium. While the safety zones and behaviours were discussed in other classes it appeared that safety was continually integrated in the task descriptions for the kindergarten children, who have very few body management skills, very short memories, and little appreciation of action and consequence. 'Look where you are running', 'watch before you throw the ball' and 'make sure you have enough personal space and no one is near to you' were phrases commonly attached to task descriptions.

Two unique portions of Suzanne's physical education program were the apparatus day and 'big buddies'. To foster cooperation between the older and younger students in the school, every Friday the afternoon kindergarten class teamed up with a grade 6 class in the school for phys. ed. with the big buddies. There would be one or two grade 6 students for every kindergarten child. Suzanne would usually lead the class in similar activities as she usually does but encourage more partner work or activities for the group. There were not too many running games attempted during these classes as 50 children running in the gymnasium always resulted in collisions and subsequent crying of the younger children involved. In a few instances, if the male grade 6 teacher was not present a couple of the grade 6 boys would start misbehaving, then Suzanne would have to make it

clear that although she was the kindergarten teacher that she could and would deal with the boys as does their male teacher. Interestingly, if the grade 6 teacher was leading the class the activities usually would be calisthenics and relay games with the students. It appeared that all the children enjoyed big buddy activities although some of the kindergarten children found the numbers in the gymnasium and the noise overwhelming.

Interpretation of Suzanne

Suzanne is one of the most enthusiastic people I have ever met. She says she loves her job and that is apparent in her everyday exuberance. Her job as a kindergarten teacher means she must not only teach the curriculum but find methods to assist in making the child's introduction to the school system a positive one.

On first entrance into the kindergarten class, the room and all activity centres look tidy and clean with the exception of Suzanne's desk and filing shelves. Amazingly though, I have seen her, when in need of a particular piece of paper, know exactly where to find it amidst the pile of information.

Parent -- teacher interaction is a very important part of St. Jude's school philosophy with the introduction of the new principal. On observing the kindergarten class prior to making their way to the gymnasium I would estimate that 50% of the time there was a parent volunteering in the classroom preparing an activity for the children. Suzanne's interaction with parents was always relaxed and she was always able to find a project for a parent who was interested in

helping out.

The use of themes in the kindergarten class and gymnasium were varied, educational and entertaining for the children. One day the class went to Hawaii in the dead middle of a cold prairie winter. The chairs in the classroom were set up in an airplane formation and the children took the plane to Hawaii, drew up postcards to send home, ate pineapple and danced at the luau. Suzanne referred to herself as a 'scavenger' and 'thief' because she is someone who is always stealing ideas to use in her classroom. I regard her as being very resourceful and productive in her role as a teacher. Suzanne has a vision for her students of what education can be and is not satisfied with the status quo or mediocrity.

Suzanne was not shy about her accomplishments or her attempt to improve the classroom situation for the children. She would often talk about going to various workshops and clinics and what sort of materials she was able to 'scrounge' from these for her teaching portfolio. Many times Suzanne was quick to introduce me to parents and others (i.e. priest and visiting presenters) as 'June my resource person from the university. She's going to show me a lot of fabulous things to do in my physical education'.

Of the three participating teachers, Suzanne was the only one who is still linked in some form with physical activity, albeit through her daughter's participation in gymnastics. She was also the teacher who spoke the most about her dissatisfaction with her body's physical appearance. This is not an uncommon occurrence with women who are trying to meet the social and cultural standards

of attractiveness by seeking the ideal weight and fatness level for females as perceived by unrealistic cultural demands (Lenskyj, 1991).

In summary, each of these women is unique in their own personal background and approach to teaching physical education. Each deals with her experience as a woman in the world differently. And while all these women are unique and their experiences teaching physical education are their own, common threads linking the meaning of physical education for them are present in the data collected during the observation period. Identifying the themes will assist us in understanding these women and the whys and hows of their teaching of physical education in a society that embodies the male ideology of sport close within its very being.

CHAPTER 5

MOVEMENT AND THE COMFORT ZONE FOR WOMEN

Females, beginning at an early age, under-value and underestimate their capacity (and potential) for competency in physical activity. This view is shared by others in society, including male peers. As a result, a girl's competency in physical activity constantly falls further behind her male peers. She may select only activities that are traditionally female, or worse, be turned off physical activity altogether (Dahlgren, 1988).

It became apparent during this inquiry that the women and their personal experiences in physical education, physical activity and/or sport and their perceptions about what is valuable in those domains does influence their teaching and the meaning they find in physical education. The women's own sense of physical being or body awareness was discussed in several contexts and in general this sense was measured on a continuum of 'How comfortable am I with my body?' For these women as with many others, sensitivity about their own bodies and movement abilities were very much in accord with what Dahlgren describes as typical for females. This personal sense of body awareness and the experiences in physical movement implicitly and explicitly surfaced in the women's experiences teaching physical education.

I don't feel comfortable in movement

Women selecting primary grades when entering teacher education have suggested that teaching across the spectrum of subjects motivates them to select

this career option. Some women, however, upon entering a primary teacher education program may have overlooked that teaching across the spectrum of subjects also includes teaching physical education. For these three women, it was only during their teacher training that the reality that teaching primary physical education was their responsibility sank in. The realization was not a particularly welcome one.

When I took my first phys. ed. teaching class it suddenly hit me. Holy man

I'm going to have to teach this. - Suzanne

When recalling their physical education experiences as pupils and their teacher training in physical education the women remembered their experiences with a variety of responses. Generally, though, the notion of 'comfort' repeatedly surfaced during their reminiscences. Suzanne's experience as a mature student with an enthusiastic instructor was the closest to being a positive experience that any of the women related.

I had an instructor at university who knew the phys. ed. curriculum inside and out. And he insisted we know it backwards and forwards before we went out to teach. He was inspiring and I felt a lot more comfortable. -

Suzanne

As discussed in Chapter 4, the three women in this inquiry have had different experiences with physical activity but the common element linking their experiences is that they felt themselves always to have been on the periphery of the physical activity milieu. Comments such as 'I'm not an athlete' and 'I wasn't

very good at it' were common when they described a sport or physical activity attempt in their past. Unfortunately, the women tended to assign less value to engaging in physical activities such as walking, aerobics or skiing in their leisure time outside of their educational experiences.

Comments by Rhonda and Karen suggested that, in their view, the teacher training course in physical education was not focused on primary grades but upper elementary and hence neither applicable to nor helpful for them. Suzanne noted that her instructor did focus on primary children, or students with less skill, by using her as an example of a student with little ability. Suzanne, being good-natured and feeling that she was not of the physical ability of other class members, all of whom were younger, did not mind being compared to a physically awkward or lesser skilled child. She believed these things to be true about herself already.

He used me as the example of what to do if you have a child who just can't cope. And the good thing about that was I can identify kids that are having troubles and I can identify with kids who are a little inhibited about trying something the first time. - Suzanne

Identifying with children or students that are not very comfortable or are inhibited about attempting movement was common among the three women. This point is not insignificant, usually those teachers who are specialists in physical education are successful products of the physical education class and/or sport system and may not be able to identify with those children who are not athletes or have

movement difficulties.

The connection between physical comfort with her body and comfort with teaching physical activity was strongly apparent. Karen gave the analogy that when she taught writing skills she could feel good about the experience for the children because she has adequate writing skills. The same applied for math skills and feeling good about teaching math. She then noted that teachers who are weak movers themselves may not feel as good about teaching physical education because they themselves are not comfortable with their experience. The insight is a good one and an important one to recognize. How can one provide the best experience teaching physical education when one does not feel comfortable with one's own body's movement or kinesthetic sense? As a result of cultural influences, women generally have more negative body images and lower self-esteem than do men (Edwards, 1993). Naturally, these in turn will have an influence on a teacher's perception of her ability to teach a suitable physical education program to her pupils, a constant reminder to her of what she perceives to be her own body's limitations.

I think that gender does have a lot to do with it and sometimes because you don't feel good about yourself, physically, it has some impact in your attitude towards physical education where you feel you can't possibly do a good job teaching it because you don't know anything. - Suzanne

Their own perceived ability or past experiences in the larger context of physical activity and their ability to offer the children a good experience tended to

influence their current thoughts on why many women in the primary grades may not feel comfortable teaching physical education or negotiate their way clear of teaching physical education.

I was quite inhibited about phys. ed. because I didn't have a good phys. ed. background. - Suzanne

I think women in primary grades shy away from teaching physical education because they think, 'what could I possibly teach this child who has had gymnastics or baseball for two or three years already?' - Suzanne

It's natural to avoid what you don't like. - Rhonda

We muddle through most things but you know some people just do not enjoy it. And so if you don't enjoy it you tend to steer away from it. For years I didn't like music and so I always scheduled music after math. Nine times out of 10 math ran over. You do whatever you can to defend your comfort zone I guess. - Rhonda

Defending the comfort zone within which the women were able to move and teach primary physical education was observed in several of their actions.

Whether it involved dressing in apparel that may limit movement, having children demonstrate movement or closing the gymnasium door to potential observers, the women structured their practice of teaching physical education to do what they

could to protect their comfort with their physical selves.

However, the women in this inquiry did feel comfortable opening their practice of teaching primary physical education to me. Whether it was because I was a woman watching women in potential movement situations, whether it was that I was to share my 'expertise' after the observation period, or whether they truly wanted me to learn about their daily realities and struggles with primary physical education, they willingly compromised their comfort zones from the onset of this inquiry. This required courage and indicated the ability to confront their own qualms regarding their bodies. The source of this courage, while recognizing that the self-esteem of women is generally lower than that of men, may have developed from the women recognizing that they are empowered, and to a certain degree, could control my interactions with them in this context.

As I was to learn however there was more at stake than the comfort zones of the women. The women were also concerned about the possibility of creating for the children the same negative experience that they themselves have had in physical education and physical activity in general. This possibility disconcerted them and was itself something of an incentive to avoid physical movement during the teaching of physical education.

For me to take kids out skating I can do some things but I can't do lots of things and I think it's ludicrous to go out and teach it improperly or just let the kids go out and learn it incorrectly. - Suzanne

What was interesting though, was that the women all believed that one of

the strengths of their physical education programs was that they actually refused *not* to have a program. As Rhonda noted, it's easy to find ways to steer around subjects that you are not comfortable teaching. Also they are comfortable in their conviction that the children are having fun while they teach, and the women view this fun as a strength of their physical education program that they themselves as participants in physical education and physical activity never really experienced.

In identifying weaknesses in their programs, the women uniformly cited their own perceived physical limitations as being a major drawback in their teaching. Suzanne believed her biggest weakness in relation to teaching physical education is her own physical fitness.

If you're demonstrating for the kids and you have to lie down on the floor because you can't breathe [laugh]...you know you're not in really good shape. And my knees are in really rotten shape. Getting up and down off the floor is a real problem for me. Kids have never commented on it but it is a problem. - Suzanne

Demonstrating physical actions that they have difficulties with can be overcome by finding student demonstrators in their class or another class.

I can't do a whole lot of demonstrating. So I always find out who in my class is good at stuff and I get them to demonstrate. - Suzanne

But when teaching in the physical education context in a large space the teachers could not avoid demonstrating at times for the children. In some cases it was necessary to have a 'monkey-see, monkey-do' or a direct approach to teaching a

movement skill or pattern to the children.

I think I demonstrate longer in the gym than I do in the classroom. I think basically that most of the things in the classroom you show them once and then you watch what they're doing and you move in if there's a problem.

Whereas in the gym sometimes the kids stop when I stop so I have to keep going longer. - Suzanne

This poses a problem for the teacher if she feels her physical ability is limited.

Nevertheless, she must perform constantly in order that the children continue to move or have a constant example for them to follow. If the teacher does not feel comfortable with her body in movement or performing particular skills in front of the students she may limit how often she demonstrates or even limit the types of activities that she suggests to the children.

Not quite the cheerleading uniform

As well as physically demonstrating, the physical presentation of her body, by her clothing, while teaching physical education served to reproduce the notion of women being on the periphery of the sport and physical activity culture and yet resisting dominant beliefs perpetuated in society about how women should present themselves physically to accentuate the female nature of their body. This nature being the exuding of female sexuality, frailness and dependence. Such presentation would be equivalent to a sparsely clad cheerleader being on the sidelines encouraging the movement of the athletes on the field.

When initially commencing my non-participant observer fieldwork period I

had expected that the women teaching physical education would be wearing active wear when they taught. I now see that this was naive on my part. As a physical education specialist and successful product of the sport culture in our society I would never think of participating in an activity without clothing that was appropriate for the movement patterns of the activity. When playing volleyball I wear diggers (short tight pants) and a loose shirt. When running I wear clothing easy to move in and appropriate for the temperature outside. When swimming I wear my swimsuit. And when teaching teacher education in physical education, although I am not always moving I usually wear a track suit. My perception is that there is appropriate and necessary clothing in which one should teach physical education. In some cases the clothing, by choice or cultural influence, inherently represented patriarchal notions of the role of the female athlete. Whether it be the form-fitting volleyball shorts or the light, feminine colours, I have been influenced by the sport images of how women's bodies are represented while engaged in a sport or physical activity.

In all the cases the women in this inquiry wore the clothing that they were teaching in that day. Suzanne came the closest to changing for physical education when she would put on her running shoes to go to the gym. Usually the women would be dressed in everyday professional apparel that women wear, usually that which is not conducive for physical activity except in a spectator capacity. Dresses, skirts, dress pants and blouses were the norm. This also included jewellery and footwear ranging from sensible to dress shoes to high heels. While this could,

intentionally or unintentionally, limit their movement in class, meaning less demonstration of movement, I noticed that with these women it never did. If Karen was not likely to demonstrate a log roll on the floor, it was not because she was wearing a dress: she would not demonstrate the roll while wearing active wear either. It was not a comfortable or particularly dignified thing for a teacher to do in her estimation. Suzanne, with the exception of special guest days, always wore clothing that allowed for free movement because it was necessary for her activities in her kindergarten class. Usually if Rhonda came to school with a track suit or leisure wear on it was for a special event or trip the class was taking. In essence the women wore in their teaching of physical education what they felt comfortable in -- what was regular or normal wear for their classroom.

It was also observed that the senior male teachers did not change for the gymnasium but generally they were in apparel that permitted free movement such as slacks, a sweater, sweat top or turtleneck sweater. It was not often I observed these men in suits and dress shoes, clothing that may limit movement. On the whole in our society though, clothing deemed acceptable or fashionable for men is more conducive to physical movement than clothing deemed appropriate or the standard for women.

Teachers, like athletes, have a uniform. They are constrained by the employer's regulations regarding appearance. While teachers are not overtly required to wear particular types of clothing, there are implicit messages regarding what is appropriate. Teachers are representative of the adult population

and supposed to be positive examples for the children. And while some types of active wear may be more comfortable to wear in the classroom and gymnasium, such as baggy sweat pants, they are not often considered as part of the professional uniform.

On the other hand, media images of women partaking and leading physical activity are inundated with women wearing clothing that is form-fitting and often very revealing and may not be active wear for the purposes of free-movement during physical activity but rather to sell the female body as a sexual object (Nelson, 1994). It was not likely that the teachers would feel comfortable in this sort of 'active wear' when instructing a physical education class. These women are not fashion models nor Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders and yet there is an expectation that they role model 'appropriate' female clothing for their classroom endeavours and physical activity.

The teachers' comfort zone is not only determined by how her body moves within the physical education class but also by how her body is presented. And although her uniform is restricted to a degree by her employment situation what she wears is determined by her movement needs in both her classroom and gymnasium activities, and constrained by society's gender fashions, the limited time for their physical education class and the unavailability of a convenient area to change from their everyday teaching clothes.

Despite the limitations for the women being physically comfortable teaching primary physical education, they overcome their perceived and real

barriers and resist the ease with which they could relegate themselves to the sidelines as a spectator of, or cheerleader for the children, by insisting on teaching primary physical education and attempting to be active in the class hence pushing the bounds of their comfort zone.

Primary phys. ed.: A lesson in female-friendly values

In her article *Girl-friendly Sport and Female Values*, Lenskyj (1994) suggests a sport and physical activity model that views female values and attitudes as central to the important experiences that could be inherent in our physical activity culture. She suggests that, even at a very early stage in the play of children, girls predominantly are more interested in the friendship, connection and cooperation than in winning the game or activity. The physical contact encouraged by a girl allows a connectedness to others, such as standing in a circle holding hands and being united in order to attain the group's objective. By contrast, the boy's physical contact has as its purpose limiting or controlling his opponent such as tackling an opposing player in football. Gilligan (1987) presented women's approach to relationships and connectedness to others as an important part of their identities. The aggressive, rule-bound and structured competitiveness of the male model of sport that currently exists is seen as endangering the 'web of connection' in the lives of women.

With respect to the socialization of children in games it has been found that generally girls were more concerned with positive interpersonal relationships than positive performance outcomes (Evans, 1986). And in studies on female

values and attitudes it becomes evident that many women (and men who are not athletes) do not share the basic premise that competitive sport is a good thing. They prefer to place social interaction during participation in physical activity as a high priority.

It became evident during our discussions that the women in this inquiry believed that sport and competition were not a substantive part of their physical education program. The women often would rationalize the absence of sport and competition from their physical education programs. They felt that 'others' believed that sport and competition are requisite to the physical education experience. However, despite what the 'others' endorsed, these women act in accordance with their own value system. They resist the dominant sport and competitive model reinforced as appropriate in our culture at large and decide what is in the best interests of themselves and the children.

The women believed that the gender of the teacher was a factor which influenced whether the teacher had more sport and competitive elements in their programs. Comments made by the women about what primary physical education should be substantiates Lenskyj's female-friendly model that suggests that women are more concerned about personal loyalty, continuity, experience and flexibility within their physical education class.

I think that females aren't as competitive on the whole as males are. So female phys. ed. is often...it just doesn't have the competitive aspect. It doesn't mean that we're not dealing with fitness aspects. - Suzanne

The women believe that they are focusing the experience for the children and their well-being.

Women teaching phys. ed. build more success into their programs. We try to make the children feel better about themselves. - Suzanne

The women were also quick during our discussion of competition to note that sport and competition are critical components of the physical education classes in the upper grades of the school. They felt that this was because the teachers were usually men and that the sports were those, usually 'manly' sports as identified by Nelson (1994), that men enjoy playing themselves.

I think as the kids get older it becomes more sports rather than a physical activity. Once the children start getting into grade 5, 6, 7, 8 then they usually have men teachers, not all the time but on the whole since the majority are men. And it's usually volleyball, basketball, you know, baseball, football, it immediately moves into the sports area. So if you're not gifted in that way, as a male or a female but predominantly female you can see why kids drop out. Whereas you can see why non-competitive games and more like we do in the lower end and you don't have a lot of competitive things where only the top ones excel. - Rhonda

This resistance to including sport and competition, although those are perceived by 'others' as somehow connected with or integral to the physical education program, is an attempt to protect the children, and themselves, from a social world where relationships are less valued than hierarchy, authority, aggression and

productivity. All of the latter are embedded values of the patriarchal sport culture. It was obvious that the women felt strongly that the exclusion of sport and competition was a necessary omission. The values of sport and competition do not seem to them to be appropriate for the age range of their primary children. And while this may appear to be a convenient argument to use to avoid their own inability to perform high level skills it is conducive to the women's belief in inclusionary rather than exclusionary practices and their desire to create a more positive physical education experience thereby. However, in their personal lives both Rhonda and Suzanne have included their own children in sport, although with Suzanne's son Joe basketball proved to be too time consuming and 'he could not handle it' (it was too competitive). Karen on the other hand had her children participating in activities that were more recreational rather than competitive in nature.

Because they hold these views it appears that the women are somewhat self-divided. First, they teach their students what they believe to be appropriate for that age. Second, they introduce their own children into the competitive sport environment. Hence, on a personal front they are reproducing dominant ideology but on the professional front resisting the values that are embedded in sport in our culture and that which permeates our notion of physical education. And, rather than controlling the physical education context by continually advocating competitive activities and permitting rules and the boundaries of the rules to govern the actions in their class, the women acknowledge the personal expression

of the children's choice -- what to participate in and to decide whether there is enjoyment in the activity. This, of course, was occasionally limited for reasons of safety during the movement experience; at times the teachers did, in the more traditional sense of physical education, control the activities in the class.

As observed with these women in their teaching of physical education, and as discovered with the student intern Marnie during her episode with 'the accident' (see Appendix B, p. 286), having control of the class and the children happy, busy and having fun assists the teacher in reaching a different comfort zone while teaching physical education. Rather than comfort based on her physical self this comfort zone is based on her psychological well-being as a teacher of young people. Children running or throwing with reckless abandon often resulted in children or the teacher being hurt. That is not to say the children could not run freely or engage in free play, but establishing the discipline and safety boundaries that the children could understand was of the utmost importance for the teachers while in physical education. And determining what these boundaries are is part of the lesson preparation that is not similar to other subjects such as language arts and math.

It's a fallacy that most people think that oh well it's phys. ed. That's fun we really don't have to plan for it. It's probably one of the hardest lessons if you don't plan. You know if you don't establish your discipline and you don't establish your guidelines right away it could be an absolute nightmare. - Karen

In this example the women do reproduce the patriarchal value system that focuses on control and boundaries as a measure to increase the teachers psychological comfort level regarding safety of children while teaching primary physical education. The most common activity observed in the physical education classes during my fieldwork was low organizational and cooperative games. Assisting the children to comprehend the elementary rules and perform the basic skills for such games was of paramount importance to the teachers. It appeared that if the teachers had the skills to play the games with some precision, and could potentially demonstrate or provide elementary feedback to assist a child to play, then the teachers were comfortable instructing the children in such an activity.

At my level it doesn't take much to know how to bounce a ball and how to show them how to bounce the ball or stand in a circle. - Karen

As simplistic as it sounds, the fundamental movement skills do need to be taught and enough practice time provided for the children to acquire such skills. Spatial awareness as simple as standing in a circle does take time and energy to impart to the children. And although this activity has as its objective the preparation for a game activity, the teachers are taking the opportunity to integrate other teaching moments into the physical education class (i.e., listening skills, recognition, understanding, etc.). An activity such as handing out equipment and having 30 young children space themselves around the room is not as simple as it sounds and if not repeatedly executed time and time again, the omission can have

unfortunate results.

One of the kids picked up the ball and just hucked it just as I turned around and it got me right between the eyes. And it really hurt. I put my hand over it and thought if this is bloody I don't want to move it because there are kids in this room who are going to freak. Well it wasn't but of course my glasses were shattered. - Suzanne

This time Suzanne's glasses were shattered and she had only a small bruise. But experiences such as this remind teachers of what worse things might be possible and do affect the type of game activities the teacher feels comfortable allowing.

Dance and rhythmic, as an integral aspect of being a physically educated student, was notable only by its absence among the low organizational games and skill acquisition activities. I was at an international physical education conference in 1994 and attended a meeting of individuals in Canada concerned about gender equity. During our discussions a professor from another Western Canadian university expressed her concern that the females in the secondary physical education teacher education program were being asked to teach the dance unit whenever they were in a teaching practicum. They were subsequently receiving little experience teaching in activities other than those stereotypically deemed 'female'.

Stereotyping is a characteristic assessed to individuals thought to be a member of a cultural, ethnic or racial group. Within the patriarchal hegemonic context, stereotyping perpetuates the dominant ideology by limiting the activities

of women and girls to those deemed appropriate for our gender. The example presented in the C.A.H.P.E.R.D. educational booklet *Gender Equity Through Physical Education* (1993) for the term stereotype is 'all boys enjoy hockey and all girls enjoy dance' (p. 3). Interestingly, I observed only one class that included rhythmic; in that activity, Suzanne taught a singalong piece with limited whole body movement, but with gesturing of the arms and hands. In this instance the women unknowingly resisted the patriarchal notion that being female automatically infers a natural desire and ability for rhythmic activities.

In discussion with the women it became apparent that the lack of dance of any description (folk, line, and creative) was due, once again, to the teacher's own comfort levels with dance as a movement medium and to some logistical and time issues as well. Securing appropriate stereo equipment that would be adequate for use in the gymnasium was inconvenient and created additional problems.

Now see, dance is an element I haven't done a lot with the kids. I do creative dance and it really sort of flip flops with creative drama and all of those things and sometimes you add a music element. So that's why I really wanted to see some more formal dance lessons taught so I could feel more comfortable about it. I think that's the thing with the curriculum, a lot of the things you're more comfortable with if you see it. - Suzanne

I hate using tapes because I hate finding my place on the tape but to carry along a record player is such a pain. - Suzanne

With adequate time being an essential element for the primary teacher's preparation of her physical education program finding a music box loud enough for the gymnasium, easy to set up (with a tape counter) and light enough to transport was not an attractive option for them.

During the 'quid pro quo' portion of the inquiry (discussed in Chapter 8) where I taught their physical education classes during the dance unit it was apparent that the teachers enjoyed the folk and line dancing because after initially observing they would join in and participate. But they were less likely to partake in the creative movement experiences with the children as Suzanne mentioned, 'I think I'd probably look foolish rolling and jumping around like a bubble'. In certain situations Suzanne had demonstrated a willingness to try new movements or activities that enabled her to be successful with the children. However, feeling comfortable with her physical self and how she would appear to others deterred her participation in the creative free-flowing movements. With the need to demonstrate periodically for the children, the teachers would be less likely to teach and demonstrate such an activity, which, ironically, is a stereotypical girl-friendly activity in the larger cultural context.

In the patriarchal context of physical education where we associate particular activities to a sex, we also associate the term play with the playing of structured games. The play education philosophy and program as a physical education curriculum emphasizes the development of competence in an activity and allows the students to select those activities they wish to pursue for mastery

and enjoyment of sport and dance for their own sakes (Siedentop, 1980). Jewett and Bain (1985), however, mention that, from the practical viewpoint of physical education as a discipline, 'some question the political feasibility of justifying play education to administrators and taxpayers' (p. 72). The teachers, while endorsing this type of program for the sake of the children and their comfort level with providing play activity, were weary of what others thought about play as the basis of their physical education program.

This view of play as less than worthy or acceptable as physical education is disconcerting. We value the notion of playing games within physical education as long as there appears to be some structure and concrete measure for evaluation purposes surrounding the event, once again reinforcing patriarchal values of control and boundaries. Unstructured play, a voluntary, fun, yet still educational activity, is accorded less value within the context of physical education in schools. A physical education university textbook, addressing who is responsible for physical education in the United States, states:

A large city may have specialists who provide a daily physical education program, while a rural area in the same state may have classroom teachers responsible for physical education, which may mean recess or supervised play once or twice a week (Thomas, Lee & Thomas, 1988, p. 7).

Within the discipline of physical education, play in its purest sense is not viewed as valuable activity within the parameters of physical education in schools. The physical education needs of the primary children, crucial to establishing a long-

term interest in physical activity and the need for physical education to legitimize itself as an academic subject, may not be compatible. But we cannot lose sight of those who are dealing with the practicality of the teaching moment and the grassroots introduction of positive attitudes towards physical activity. Play education was evident within portions of physical education periods and occasionally comprised the entire lesson, as was observed Friday respecting apparatus days. As Rhonda suggests to me, perhaps we should explore the children's joy in movement in the primary play context as compared to the structured playing of games when we consider the appropriate and potentially long-lasting benefits derived from physical education.

Physical education can be viewed as a learning ground for the acquisition of skills important in sport and competitive games. It is also possible to see opportunities for different kinds of learning in a less competitive and more cooperative environment. This latter focus is consonant with these women's resistance to patriarchal cultural values of competition and their endorsement of a cooperative play curriculum. Their recognition, whatever its source or motivation, of the division that exists in physical education between competition and play education empowers the women to resist an ideology stemming from a patriarchal culture and to endorse a play curriculum that makes greater sense to them in their context. The withdrawal of structured rules and boundaries within the play context allows the children to experience greater personal freedom of movement while also allowing the teachers to feel comfortable that positive attitudes towards

physical activity are developing in the children -- that objective is of paramount importance in primary physical education.

The women also had a few ideas about what they would like to see in the physical education program, and many of the suggestions focused on activities that were natural to the physical environment in which we live and activities in which the children can potentially participate throughout their lives. The emphasis on the development of high-level skills that only a few will ever master seems wrong to them.

I would really like to see more Canadian sports for young children in the curriculum. I would really like to see curling, tobogganing, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. - Suzanne

I think we really need activities like walking, hiking, curling, cycling...things they can do when they are older. I don't know too many adults who are playing basketball, volleyball and football at forty or fifty years old. - Karen

A wide variety of movement experiences that provide for maximum participation is recommended by the national professional physical education organization.

Plainly, the activities observed in primary physical education were limited by the teacher's comfort level with the activity itself. This is no different in real terms, however, than a specialist teacher in physical education who favours volleyball and basketball and negotiates ways around the teaching of a dance unit by reducing the time available or eliminating it altogether. Moving outside of one's comfort

zone can be intimidating for the teacher who specializes in physical education and even more so for the women who, for their entire lives, have been on the periphery of the movement experience.

However regardless of the activity, maximum participation of all the children was evident in my observations. The teachers were very sensitive to children being left out due to physical capability or game rules that eliminate players. Virtually all activities had all the children moving.

Establishing a comfort zone

The teacher's practice of teaching primary physical education can prove to be an uncomfortable reminder of her physical limitations and psychological difficulties dealing with a subject that at times may philosophically be at odds with her values. The women, over time and experience, do empower themselves and decide what is best for them and the children they teach so that they can be comfortable with primary physical education. In order for this to occur the women must resist, as indicated moreso by their practice than expressed views, some notions of what is, or has been perceived by society in general, physical education. Some of these notions are those that are promulgated by professional physical education organizations such as the value of nurturing of positive attitudes towards physical education and evaluation procedures.

An environment that will nurture a positive attitude towards physical activity is a recommended component of the knowledge promulgated by professional physical education organizations as suggested in a Q.D.P.E program.

Being happy, busy and having fun have been viewed in the physical education literature as being detrimental to the predominant goal of physical education -- skill development. Professionals shudder at physical education still not being fully accepted as an important subject and many feel if the primary program goal is to ensure that children are happy, busy and having fun it does not legitimize the cause.

As the women's comments, 'I'm not an athlete' and 'I wasn't very good at it' regarding physical education to me revealed perceptions of elite skill development as being the primary focus of physical education is still evident and troubling after all these years. It might mean that we have to scrutinize again what is perceived to be physical education and what is an effective teacher in the field.

In order that programs in physical education be considered fun, they must consider the needs of all children, regardless of their gender, age, ability, ethnicity or socioeconomic level. This is a Q.D.P.E. recommendation for the professionals in physical education, including primary teachers. Research indicates that a high number of students elect not to continue in physical education as a program option when the subject becomes voluntary (Fitness Canada, 1988; King, Robertson & Warren, 1985; Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment, 1993). Somewhere from kindergarten to grade 12, students are deciding for various reasons to withdraw from physical education. Physical education, as these women at our grass roots recognize, needs to place at a premium the notion of positive attitudes that will foster lifelong physical activity participation. The

children in the inquiry were kept constructively busy, excitedly happy and do have fun. So at what grade level does the fun stop in physical education?

Humbert (1995) suggests that inherent in the context of having fun are the implicit needs of students. In her study, adolescent girls stated having fun in physical education included being active, being successful, learning new activities and associations with friends. Not having fun in physical education was described in contexts where competition and fitness tests were present. It is a Q.D.P.E. recommendation that the fitness component must be incorporated into the class. Vigorous activity was evident in primary physical education classes. But the traditional notion of fitness testing is not applicable for this age group as measuring such factors as endurance, strength and flexibility with children is difficult. As Humbert (1995) found, fitness testing is not fun for students. While fitness testing may assist the teacher to determine the strengths and areas needing improvement, it is more often used to measure student achievement.

In considering the needs of all students the primary teacher was attentive to, or at the very least inclusive of, children of all skill levels. It was apparent that the women tried to assist all the children to be the best they could be. In discussions with the women they voiced concern about the special needs children in their classes. At one point in Suzanne's class of 21 kindergarten children she had to accommodate a child with spina bifida, two children with attention deficit disorder, a child in a wheelchair with a cast on from the waist down and one child with the onset of muscular dystrophy. Under these demanding circumstances,

Suzanne still managed to set her movement tasks so that all the children could experience success thus keeping the children happy, busy and having fun and she herself comfortable in dealing with the situation.

When examining whether children are comfortable in primary physical education, as indicated by their positive attitudes, we need to examine if the program incorporates a student evaluation process that is fair and focuses on individual progress and achievement rather than comparison to others. This is another measure on which physical education is evaluated. Many evaluation tools are based on the patriarchal sport model of achievement. Positive performance outcomes assessed by skill and fitness levels are the norm by which students are measured. If the attitudes of these women are any indication, a female-friendly evaluation process would place at a premium the positive attitudes of each student.

Should we question the need to evaluate on physical achievement at the primary level or perhaps any level? Physical achievement measures are appropriate for extra-curricular sport programs that need to hierarchically categorize participants. Do we value an athlete and traditional skills such as spiking in volleyball more than a student attempting activities more for personal self-satisfaction and accomplishment if a student attempts wall climbing and is able to get half-way up? Whose self-satisfaction is more valuable? Measurement of performance outcomes of the children can be an acceptable tool for use by physical education teachers who are required by the educational establishment to

evaluate and the child's worst enemy.

'Jock' teachers have a comfort zone too

In reference to physical education specialists, the women did discuss the comfort level of the 'jock' teacher. It was stated that quite often 'jocks' can be just as uncomfortable teaching primary physical education as themselves -- but for different reasons. Comfort levels with their physical selves and specific activities tended to determine the particulars of the teachers' physical education programs. But the primary teachers felt that specialists in physical education, or 'jocks' as they called them, often have to establish their own comfort zones when teaching physical education to primary children.

I had a phys. ed. jock in my room and after a few weeks he said he would like to teach a phys. ed. class and I said that was great. I reminded him that we didn't have the gym so he would have to take the class out onto the pavement or onto the playground. Oh that was no problem. I decided to do it at the end of the day so we could dismiss the children from there. So he planned his lesson. He came that day and outside we went. First of all he said to them let's make a circle. Well you don't tell six-year-olds to make a circle. So he had a terrible time trying to get them in a circle. After he finally got them into a circle he started the game. In 10 minutes his whole lesson was done. And then he looked at me you know like, 'I've got 20 minutes yet what do I do?' Well I just shrugged my shoulder and let him go. I'm sure it was the hardest half-hour he put in and he'll probably

always remember it. - Rhonda

Individuals who specialize in physical education are usually those that have had successful experiences in sport. However, as Karen pointed out during a conversation, 'they may know how to teach their sports but they don't know young children'. It was interesting that she referred to the specialists as teachers of 'their sport'. The women stated that specialists defend their own comfort zones by focusing on their strengths in physical activity and perhaps ignoring activities outside of their comfort zone or negotiating ways around them. They taught what they were comfortable with themselves. If this were not the case we would not have the female student-teachers repeatedly being asked to teach dance by cooperating teachers already in the field. If you excelled and enjoyed volleyball and basketball in high school you are probably going to ensure that you have units in these activities. In the way that Rhonda managed to avoid music, if dance is a required component of your physical education program but the teacher doesn't like it, the teacher can find ways to minimize or eliminate her/his responsibility to teach that activity.

Humbert (1995) stated that adolescent females protested that physical education specialists tended to favour and provide more time to students who were the better skilled or team athletes rather than assisting students who perceived themselves as weaker and wanted to improve their skills. Perhaps greater critical reflection of power relations within the specialist circles should be undertaken by our profession. It has been suggested that the specialist in physical

education needs to develop a deeper understanding of the non-athlete. Chalmers (1992) states

physical education specialists are successful products of the system, [and] they may have difficulty understanding the reluctant and negative approach of some of their students (p. 3).

As noted earlier, Humbert found that young adolescent females

felt that many physical education teachers were only interested in the young women who were skilled (1995, p. 135).

Perhaps professional (physical education organizations and individual teachers) self-reflection is critical at this point.

After Rhonda related the story of the male student teaching her class I asked her if she believed the scenario had anything to do with the student being male. She believed it had more to do with the mind-set of people who are successful in their own personal athletic endeavours.

I don't think this was really a gender thing. I think more it was a mind set. I'm a phys. ed. jock so I know everything there is to know about phys. ed. I really don't have to learn anything more. - Rhonda

Suzanne did believe that if men comprised 100% of the primary positions in her school board, as the women currently do in the separate board, or if men taught primary physical education that physical education would be different.

I observed at a school where the principal [a male] did the phys. ed. and it was a far different phys. ed. than I've ever taught. I'm not saying it was

wrong, it was just far different. I thought, geez there's a lot of competitive things here. The kids enjoyed it. They loved the contact with a male. It was fabulous. - Suzanne

In this case different meant more competition in the class when the children are taught by a male. This anecdote supports Lenskyj's suggestion that the male model of sport and physical activity is competitive, or movement made for the purpose of beating an opponent. However, Suzanne did note that the children enjoyed the different focus. The question is, how long would the enjoyment last? How long would it be before the elements of sport, competition and positive skill performance, that can be exclusionary put pupils on the sidelines or make them less inclined to participate?

Q.D.P.E. proponents suggest that teachers must be qualified in order to teach physical education. In this context the primary teacher is set as the minimum measurement for quality physical education.

If boards are going to continue to assign physical education teaching duties to generalists [primary teachers], then teacher training programs must require all generalist teachers to take a minimum of at least one comprehensive physical education course to meet certification requirements (Bamford, 1993, p. 11).

That recent documents relating to the issue of qualifications are still attempting to validate the specialist as superior to the generalist suggests that this long-standing problem of how people are judged to be suitably prepared to teach

physical education needs reshaping. But perhaps we are looking at the issue somewhat in reverse. Rather than accepting existing values and standards and attempting to ensure that people live up to them, perhaps the values and standards should be re-examined. Physical education specialists have had many years to prove themselves worthy.

In this light, we as a society tend to set the stage for unsuccessful experiences for the primary teacher. Our culture provides less opportunity and value to women as compared to men in sport and its cousin physical activity. We set a model of sport and physical education that is based on patriarchal values of structure, achievement and competition. As shall be seen in chapter 6, we have allowed patriarchal values to design and control the gymnasium space the primary teachers are to work within and we insist on trying to find weakness in the primary teacher's relationship to her physical education program (although using traditional measurements we still have not validated our agenda). I believe it is time for self-reflection in physical education as a discipline. We need to examine how particular people, or groups of people and/or organizations behave and use their own personal power to advance their own agenda and in doing this, we need to congratulate the women primary teachers for not choosing to succumb to the explicit and implicit messages about whose physical education is best or more important.

How am I doing?

One day Vida, who is a first year teacher who teaches everything from

grade one up to grade six, was in my class. When I walked in to our buddy time I usually do the planning based on what has gone on in the morning. I walked in 10 minutes late cause I got held up by a parent who wanted to talk to me in the hall. Vida was winging it and she turned around and said, 'How am I doing?'. And then I took over and that became a joke, 'How am I doing now?' - Suzanne

The question 'How am I doing?' may appear simple enough to ask but the answer is dependent on to whom the teacher is addressing the question. In essence, the only people who have cared to provide an answer to this question in the context of primary physical education have been the primary teachers themselves, the children and myself in the context of this inquiry.

The implicit message underlying the question is the primary teacher's uncertainty that what it is that she is attempting to teach in physical education is acceptable. That she is not totally comfortable with what she is doing is secondary to the fact that she is successfully coping with the situation -- teaching a subject perhaps outside of her comfort zone. Unfortunately, except for the reassurances of other primary teachers also on the periphery of physical activity and not within their comfort zone, and the happy and busy children with whom the primary teacher is in constant contact, not too many others have cared to answer the question.

In the context of this inquiry, only three women demonstrated a willingness or felt comfortable asking the question 'How am I doing?' in connection with

physical education although the nature of the question was more reflective and along the line of 'What and why am I doing...?' Security about themselves as teachers and their connection, or lack of connection, to physical education as a teaching subject played an important role in their willingness to subject themselves to what was perceived as evaluation rather than an exploration.

A lot of teachers are very inhibited about someone watching them. They're afraid of making mistakes. There are teachers who started teaching when superintendents and consultants came in and ripped them apart and they feel threatened by that. They're afraid they're going to do something wrong. They don't feel they've kept up-to-date with things and that's too bad. - Suzanne

That the women do not want to be seen making mistakes with a subject that they themselves, physically and psychologically, are unconnected with is not surprising. Because their unconnectedness or uncertainty can be related to their own physicality or kinesthetic sense, participating in the inquiry was opening themselves to a review that goes beyond the professional self and includes their own personal sense of self as physical beings. That they do not feel 'up-to-date' with their physical self through physical movement is not unique: most women in our society are also on the periphery of the sport and physical activity movement.

However within their limited movement experience, which they perceive as unsuccessful, the women have learned to cope or make adaptations while teaching physical education. As Suzanne noted it takes experience and creativity but it is

possible to manage and provide the children with a positive experience in physical education.

After you've been teaching for awhile you can walk in and you can look at a specific piece of equipment or apparatus and know exactly what your lesson is going to come in on. And you know if they're reckless or it goes so well that you can add another element. But that takes experience and creativity. - Suzanne

The women in this inquiry have found themselves closer to being in the comfort zone when teaching physical education not due to their personal experiences in physical education but because of their years teaching children and the strategies needed to cope or adapt generally as a primary teacher. Their comfort zone in primary physical education has been extended with their increase in knowledge about the teaching of children.

Critique

The personal is the professional in the teaching of primary physical education. How comfortable a woman is with her physical self will determine the activities she teaches and how she conducts herself in the physical education context. These women and their philosophies on physical education do support Lenskyj's model for girl-friendly sport that places an individual's connectedness to others at a premium in the movement experience. Competition and valuing positive performance outcomes at the expense of others are not parts of the personal philosophy of these women and are therefore not evident in their

physical education programs.

The personal experiences of these women in the sport milieu is limited. However, they do find a comfort level in teaching physical education. The women empower themselves by ignoring the patriarchal ideology based on competition that they find in physical education and instead make physical education their own -- one that includes rather than excludes, one that is at times creative rather than structured and one that places the children at the centre of the pedagogical experience. This is a professional teacher of primary physical education.

At the outset of this inquiry there was an assumption that women are not as empowered as they might be, particularly in the area of body consciousness and physical self-esteem. The impression that grew stronger through the duration of the study was that the meaning of physical education for these women, whether positive or negative, was greatly influenced by their comfort level in their bodies and in personal movement. An adequate level of comfort was found to be essential to their teaching physical education. The more secure the woman was with her body and her body in movement, the more comfortable she felt teaching physical education as a subject. And in reflection, the teaching of primary physical education was a constant reminder to these women of their discomfort with their bodies and movement.

The physical education class takes place in a societal context in which women are constantly receiving the message that they are not good enough and must constantly improve. How am I doing? The women support each other in

their attempts to teach physical education by asking 'How am I doing?' as their uncertainty with physical education and their body image is low.

Feminist pedagogy is used by emphasizing the pleasure of physical activity and allowing the freedom for creativity and movement as well as social relationships with other children. This 'feminist pedagogy' is not really something the women are familiar with but rather a kind of teaching the women naturally do. However, they are explicitly bound by the structures and rules of curriculum and societal ideology of the active female body as one that is a contradiction between the traditional view of being weak and yet developing strength by being active. The women decide to consciously abandon a curriculum perceived to be grounded in patriarchal ideology that they feel uncomfortable transmitting to their children. In lieu, of that, they transmit to the children a program of physical activity that makes sense to them and provides them as much comfort, physically and perhaps mentally, while teaching.

Nelson (1994) has suggested that women who participate in sport and are physically active are involved in a feminist act. She submits that our sport culture is inundated with messages that place women on the periphery of the movement experience. For women to resist the messages that they belong in the margins and to participate in sport and physical activity is to resist the hegemonic notion of the sport world.

You can't be a female athlete without addressing questions of femininity, sexuality, fear, power, freedom and just how good you are compared with

men (Nelson, 1991, p. 196).

Women who do participate in sport may not necessarily purport to be feminists. But there are ramifications to committed participation. Others influenced by the values of what is essentially a patriarchal sport culture frequently believe that a woman who is an athlete or physically active is unfeminine, a lesbian, unattractive, weak and less able than men. Many of these suggestions women and men fall prey to and believe are true. What is important here is that women's movement in sport and physical activities, inclinations, beliefs and interests are not now regarded as something in their own right. Rather they are valued against what men do, how they do it, and in accordance with male values in relation to both the action and the quality of the action.

A friend of mine who has played on a national team and attended the Olympics, although an advocate of women, has admitted to adorning herself with jewellery and keeping her hair long to prevent the catcalls and stereotyping that all female athletes in her sport are lesbian and unfeminine. It is easier for her to put up with long hair than with degrading comments about her femininity or sexual orientation. She does not completely succumb to the attempted marginalization or sidelining of active women because she does not attempt to hide her enjoyment in sport participation. Being able to move her body in relation to the sport object to its maximum potential is her liberation. She enjoys training hard to strengthen her body and finds pleasure in the sporting experience.

Sport for women represents autonomy, strength, pleasure, community, control justice, and power (Nelson, 1994, p. 51).

Women who resist the status quo as perpetuated by the male myth of power, strength and masculinity as the sole domain of men as an inherently privileged group are, therefore, in Nelson's view committing a feminist act. I suggest that the women in this inquiry are committing a feminist act when teaching primary physical education.

Although some may argue differently, sport and physical education are inextricably linked. Many of the issues surrounding sport and gender are similar to those regarding physical education and gender. In both the sport setting and the physical education setting men have power and women, sometimes unknowingly, want it or exercise their practice of personal preference. Women want the ability to freely decide. They want choices. They want validation. In the teaching context, as elsewhere, these wants are not just for their own purposes but to facilitate the teaching process in primary physical education and the other subject areas they are responsible to teach.

The perceived physical limitations these women confront could influence their efforts to teach primary physical education. It would be all too easy to stay on the periphery of the experience. Lack of comfort with their own physical movement as with many women in many roles in our society, contributes to the feeling that there are intimidating barriers to effectively teaching physical education. This in turn leads to the implication that women cannot do an

adequate job teaching primary physical education. So why bother when there are so many barriers? Why bother exercising personal fortitude to improve the situation for themselves and the children?

I believe by attempting to overcome the feelings of discomfort with their own body's movement and make primary physical education their own these women are seeking a certain degree of autonomy, strength, pleasure, community, control, justice and power. The women are engaging in a feminist act by resisting their own discomfort, as reinforced by past experiences and our society's idea of the appropriate female role in sport and physical activity, one that is on the sidelines as cheerleader for physical education. By actively deciding to teach primary physical education the women are consciously deciding what is best for themselves and the children, enjoying the teaching experience with the children and attempting to place themselves within the context of facilitator of primary physical education.

The teacher interested in empowering herself and her students may reflect on the aforementioned actions of the women in this inquiry however pedagogy alone will not resolve years of patriarchal hegemony. It is highly unlikely that one empowering experience is enough to alter all of the conditioning one receives from the outside world. However, to resign ourselves to allowing women to find the physical interactions with their body uncomfortable is to perpetuate an oppressive ideology of gender roles. However, to assume all ideologies are impenetrable is to suggest that resistance and change are not, and have not, ever

been possible. This inquiry assumes that transformative possibilities do exist.

Whether these possibilities are found within sport and our society on the whole, within the school culture or with the personal expression of teachers of primary physical education, resistance to existing models is apparent at the level of the primary teacher.

CHAPTER 6

PRIMARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE COUGARDOME

The last time I went to watch a professional sports team it was a Blue Jay baseball game in the SkyDome in Toronto. I went with my father and through his work connections we were fortunate enough to sit in a corporate box (a.k.a. SkyBox) during a sunny June evening. I had been several times to Exhibition Stadium, the former venue of the professional baseball team, and the SkyDome was overwhelming in comparison. There were over 52,000 people watching the game that day. The crowd seemed deafening to me at times, and that was with the roof open.

Seeing a Blue Jay game was not a first for me but being in the SkyDome was. I was not surprised when Dad, who is an ardent Blue Jay fan, said that he had been to SkyDome only for sporting events never cultural ones. Our conversation also extended to another area he was knowledgeable about: the corporate and business connections and the circumstances enabling us to sit in this fancy grandstand. I was not surprised that all the names that Dad mentioned in connection with the corporate box and the Blue Jay organization were masculine.

As research suggests, there is a dearth of women in sport leadership positions or as heads of physical education departments (Bloot & Browne, 1994; Mickelson, 1993). The events in professional sport complexes, such as the Toronto SkyDome, are scheduled according to the priorities of the complex administrators. Generally, speaking, this was also the case in the school in which the participating

women in this inquiry worked. Usually those events or activities that are considered more important, professional 'manly' sports in Burton's terminology, are given the prime time slots by men who control the facility.

This seemed true even in the instance of activities in the school gymnasium space; primary physical education usually received lower priority. The allocation of inequitable time slots in the gymnasium or sport complex made this quite clear. There were many events deemed of higher priority and symbols of access that indicated the status of primary physical education in the school. The gymnasium space held two meanings for the women in this inquiry and for their practice of teaching primary physical education. First, time in the gymnasium for their class provided a productive break from classroom routine. And second, that the amount of time that the women get in the gymnasium, compared to others, and the number of times their classes are pre-empted indicated that generally outsiders do not see primary physical education as important or a valuable time for them.

Phys. ed. is a valuable break from classroom routine

Just as the SkyDome provides a venue for people to spend their leisure time, usually in a pleasurable fashion if your team happens to do well, primary physical education in the 'CougarDome' (the name of St. Jude's gymnasium) can be a valuable break from classroom routine for the teachers and students. Many of their concerns regarding their time in the gymnasium subtly spoke to the issue of their view of the teaching of primary physical education as it currently exists, that is, as the lesser of two evils. The real evil is not having the much needed

gymnasium time away from the routine of the classroom.

I think they need to move. I find that the days we have phys. ed. the kids seem to be more settled afterward. Especially if they've had a really good run. I find when we have indoor recesses, like this winter has been awful for no physical activity for the kids. And they just can't work, they can't think, they can't sit. They need physical activity. They really do. - Rhonda

Although actually teaching physical skills provided the women a certain degree of physical discomfort and anxiety, being in the gymnasium with the children engaged in physical activity made their teaching in the classroom more psychologically comfortable. Permitting the children to 'vent excess energy' in the gymnasium allowed them to settle and concentrate for longer periods of time while in the classroom. In several conversations it was mentioned that the children really do need physical education, just as they need recess. Without these, the teachers had more difficulties in classroom management and productivity. Both recess and physical education are a break from classroom routine and assist in the classroom objectives being attained. Primary physical education was more a means to an end for the women rather than an end -- or a subject in its own right.

Reasons for this will be detailed in the next chapter. For now, it is enough to say that time in the gymnasium is crucial to these women.

The women also alluded to the notion that unlike recess, primary physical education provided a valuable break from classroom routine that allowed them to observe the children in a very enjoyable environment. Only in rare instances of

injury or frustration did I not observe the children of these teachers excited about their gym time or the activities they were partaking in while in the gymnasium. The women all acknowledged that gym time is a favourite with the children, but in their particular cases, it was not used in reward/punishment fashion as a motivator for better classroom behaviour. Rather, these women believed that gym time itself helped generate appropriate classroom behaviour of the children. Taking physical education away from the class because of discipline problems only served to compound the difficulty of getting the children to focus on their desk work.

Despite its value as a break from classroom routine, there were some aspects of the gymnasium space and structure that seemed counter-productive. This was true both from a purely physical standpoint and in the sense of what those physical realities implied.

I had taken up my position on the bench for another session one morning in Rhonda's class. The class was vigorously engaged in a running game called 'octopus' when Nancy asked permission to go to the washroom. She skipped to the door and then flung her body against the door and out and away she went to the washroom. I continued observing the class when about three minutes later I heard a little 'thud' followed by another little 'thud'. I looked at the door and realized that Nancy was trying to open the door. I immediately put my notebook down, got up and opened it for her. Shortly afterward, Ronnie requested a washroom break and off he went. Ronnie, who was smaller than Nancy clicked

the levered door handle several times trying to get in. Before I could reach him to provide assistance he had opened the door wide enough to squeeze his body between the door and door frame. Realizing how often either I or the teacher was getting up to open the heavy metal door to permit a child re-entrance I began to ponder the implications of this struggle the children had with the door to the gym.

After the door episode, I began critically reviewing the gymnasium space and the primary teacher and children while they were preparing to be or were active in it. And the more I looked, the more it became apparent that the gym was not a hospitable place for children and the women's practice of teaching primary physical education; in fact at times it could be quite intimidating. The access door was too heavy; the gymnasium size and noise were intimidating; and the equipment was too heavy or too high. The gymnasium space itself was not a primary physical education-friendly zone. This notion was substantiated by the women in this inquiry. Suzanne related her experience with kindergarten children who are overwhelmed upon their first entrance into the gym as many have never seen a room that big and empty before....'it just blows their mind completely'. And she stated that some children are very nervous while in the gym.

Whenever I ask kids about why they seem nervous in the gym they always say 'the noise'. And it's true. Our gyms are noisy, they are not really set up to absorb sound. We have a whole school that complains when people leave the gym doors open because the sound reverberates forever and everything echoes. Balls make a lot of noise while they're bouncing.

Scooters even make a noise as they move across the floor. Hoops make a noise as they move across the floor. - Suzanne

This experience for the children was like being lost in a big huge loud room. The gymnasium can be a very overwhelming and scary place for primary children and hence not be as valuable as it could be as a break from classroom routine for all children.

Another reason identified by Suzanne that the gym was at times an inhospitable space for children is that there is not a specific place owned by the child in the gym -- like their desk in the classroom. So Suzanne is careful to orient the children slowly to the gym by first introducing the space briefly in the children's spring orientation to kindergarten, then via the Gingerbread cookie hunt.

I always try to get them into the gym as part of that orientation. It's a fun thing and we work on a little bit of spatial awareness when we're in there. It's a very short period just, this is where the gym is, you can run in the gym, you can yell in the gym. And then you set up some parameters and how to enter the gym and how to get out of the gym. - Suzanne

Quite a few of the first lessons in kindergarten would involve working with the hoops where they transformed into spaceships. The hoop becomes the child's space. The children move around in their spaceships and their personal space goes with them. Suzanne has created this activity to help the children who feel lost in the gym.

Regarding the use of equipment, the gym is not a child-friendly facility. Most of the equipment that is used regularly by the children in the primary grades, utility balls, hoops, pylons, etc. was not strategically placed at the lower levels so the children could access them. This meant that the teacher had to individually hand every child her or his equipment if there was a full set for the class to use, which was not often the case.

The weight of the door and the storage of the equipment were not only a problem for the children but the teachers. All the women stated that they would like to use the climbing apparatus on the wall and the larger equipment more often in their primary physical education classes but that it was either impossible or too burdensome to move in the short period of time they have for physical education. The weight of apparatus was also mentioned during discussions about the dividing curtain in the gymnasium.

I would like to be able to use the large apparatus [and dividing curtain] when I want to use it. But it's just physically impossible to move out. It would be nice to just push a button and the whole thing would come out automatically for use that way. - Rhonda

Assisting the primary teacher by incorporating a mechanism to open or dislodge heavier and bulkier equipment would eliminate a physical barrier to her using such equipment for the benefit of her class. On the other hand, allowing such barriers to remain reminds the women they are not physically strong enough to handle the equipment stored within 'CougarDome' and perhaps is a subtle

message about who really has control of the gymnasium space. This message is most probably picked up at some level by the children. For example, if a child asks if the class will be allowed to use the climbing apparatus the teacher must admit to not being able to make it available.

Suggestions are made within physical education texts and curricula that creative scheduling of the school facilities can allow for optimum time for physical education.

...efforts are being made in many schools throughout the nation to use other large areas in the school in addition to the gymnasium for a variety of physical activities (Kirchner & Fishburne, 1995, p. 120).

When I asked about the use of other facilities within the school for the physical education class, the query was always met by a slow smile as if to say, 'yeah right!' It appeared that encouraging any physical activity with primary children still developing basic motor control of their bodies and putting 20 to 30 of these little bodies in a classroom together would only result in the teacher establishing a dangerous environment. Any activity in the hallway and the subsequent noise would be unfair to their colleagues in the adjacent classes and certainly not as productive a break from classroom routine as the less restrictive space of the gymnasium.

Well there could be [physical education] if you didn't have 27 desks in your classroom and a few cupboards and what else. I can't do phys. ed. in my classroom other than maybe some exercises at the side of the desk. That

would be about it. And maybe a singing game where you're touching your toes or something. For any type of physical movement you can't it's too dangerous. We can't do it in the hallway because it's too noisy. We used to have the multipurpose room...but again for anything that gives them activity it's too confined. There's too much furniture in there. So it sounds like it would be a wonderful idea, but it's not. - Rhonda

It is not surprising that the women had to accept that the gymnasium is a sometimes inhospitable place for their teaching of primary physical education. However, the trade-off of productive work time in the classroom for the children who had made the trip to the gym was well worth the effort of accommodation.

Though the trip to the gymnasium for physical education was a valuable break from routine, it also had a less positive aspect. The trip itself was filled with subtle signs and messages about the value of sport within the school and society. Young impressionable minds quickly absorb these messages, and probably quite unconsciously. This break from classroom routine thus also provided an opportunity for the women and children to learn, or to have reinforced for them, the important messages about patriarchal values, the value of sport and the peripheral position of women in the school culture. I have to refer to this set of patriarchal hegemonic relations as 'Going to CougarDome: A trip to the sport hall of games'.

One day I arrived early for Karen's Tuesday afternoon class and was sitting on a chair outside of the gymnasium waiting for the children to round the corner.

I had with me my black carry bag and had withdrawn my notepad ready for observation. As I sat there in the short hall entrance to the gymnasium I began reading the intramural board. I was looking at the scores of each of the intramural teams. The teams were divided into senior girls, senior boys, junior girls and junior boys. I started noticing that the junior teams and the senior boys team had predominantly professional sport teams' names, and someone had obviously gone to some trouble to draw and colour a symbol for each team. Each of the eight junior boys teams was named after a Canadian football team while the junior girls were named after professional baseball teams. The senior boys were named after animals, again those often associated with professional sports teams such as wolverines and hawks. Other names were Tasmanian devils, jaguars, vultures and probably the most voracious animal -- the prairie chicken. (It is worth comment to point out the predatory and aggressive qualities implied by these names. All these animals are noted for their strength, speed and agility). The senior girls teams were all named after a colour and the corresponding team name was drawn in that colour. For example, the red team was simply written in bold red letters and the green team was scripted in green. It was obvious that less thought and energy was put into the senior girls intramural names or symbols. Students who cared to participate selected the creative names for their intramural teams. One of the teachers overseeing the intramural program chose the team names for the students who demonstrated little interest. In this case the teacher elected to use colours as names for predominantly the senior girls' teams.

Although speculative, it is suggested that this might imply that the girls in senior grades 7 and 8 are already responding to tacit messages about what physical activity is and resisting the inherent values stemming from the sport culture.

It was evident that cultural values with respect to sport were already quite present and active in the environment. Professional sport teams and sport in general played a major role in the naming of the school's intramural teams listed right outside the gym door. I glanced at the end of the hallway and noticed the school's 'victories and honours' case. Inside this trophy case, the only one in the school, I found 11 championship balls, 11 trophies, 26 plaques and three ribboned medals. With the exception of two small plaques, all the victories and honours inside the display case were sporting awards won by students or teams in the upper grades of the school. The two smaller plaques were awarded in drawing contests to students in the middle grades. It is hard to ignore that the items displayed in the display case represent what is valued in the school. Sport plays a very important role. And this value system is reinforced to the primary children and teachers on every trip to the gymnasium.

This is not to insinuate that the children did not have their 'treasures' displayed. Very often outside of each classroom, art work crafted by the children would be presented. However, the display of these materials did not occur in a system embodying male values. Scoring of the art work or presentation in a structured hierarchial fashion (best at the top; needs improvement or weakest at the bottom) was not done. Concepts such as 'best' or 'fastest' and the like were

not included in these displays. The award for the children was to have their art work displayed, but not at the expense of other children's art work being compared or not displayed at all.

After looking at the victories and honours case I turned around and between the entrance and exit doors was a drawing of the school mascot with the gymnasium's name and the greeting, 'Welcome to CougarDome! '. I had been through the gymnasium doors many times but it was not until I observed with a critical eye did I really see this banner. And yet, I am sure I knew the name of the gymnasium and had seen the cougar graphic innumerable times. The simple connection, by name, of the gymnasium to one of the major Canadian professional sport facilities and all the other tacit messages found in the short hall to the gymnasium entrance, reinforced the importance of sport and the gym's link to professional sport.

Looking further inside the gymnasium I noticed four murals painted on each wall. They were all action shots of people playing or engaging in sport activities, basketball, soccer, running and volleyball. Adult women were represented in the running and volleyball graphics and adult men in the basketball and soccer. The remaining space on the walls was vacant. Volleyball nets were hung along the south wall of the gym and in one corner a large scoreboard was posted. In the corner of the east wall was a chin-up bar that was positioned at approximately eight feet. By virtue of being there, the lines on the floor were indicative of and validated the sports of basketball, volleyball and badminton as

appropriate in this space. The six benches appeared to be positioned from the evening before when an interschool volleyball match had taken place. Two benches were positioned for the players of each team and four across the gym for any fans that may have been there to watch the game. Six basketball hoops (permanent height) were positioned around the periphery of the space for both a full court and two half-court basketball games.

On another occasion on one spring day, upon my entrance to the gymnasium I found that all the equipment for the track and field team (i.e. two large crash pads, high jump poles, pylons, etc.) had been left in the south west corner. On several other occasions the volleyball nets were left up after a previous physical education class or intramural period. This use of the gym as a sport storage room proved to be a definite distraction and safety hazard for the primary children and, therefore, for the teachers that I observed those days. It also either took time to correct or obliged the teacher to abandon a prepared plan.

It is apparent that the gymnasium as a school facility was designed for sport activities, primarily basketball, volleyball, and the like and not for primary physical education. The only item in the gym that may have been deliberately incorporated into the design was the climbing apparatus on the south wall. But as was discussed, practically it has very little value for the primary teacher due to its not being easily accessible.

In another province I had access to a university gymnasium that was more appropriately designed for primary physical education. The wall had a variety of

targets and shapes painted in a assortment of colours. The floors had a conglomeration of shapes in different colours and there were a variety of game designs on the floor (i.e., hopscotch, four square, snakes and ladders). And on the walls were graphics of young children actively playing. That space also had floor lines available for sports, but did not cultivate the appearance of a sport complex but an activity/play/physical education gym. Also available on the walls of that facility were two chalk boards. It was surprising that as all the school classes have physical 'education' in the gymnasium that the teacher's best audio-visual friend, the chalk board, was not found in the Cougardome.

When talking to the women about the design of the facility and the lack of design focus for primary physical education it was mentioned that perhaps we should be content with what is there as even that is an improvement.

In 27 years [of teaching] first of all you start out with nothing and you have four walls and that's all you've ever had [so] you don't miss it. But you're right now that you mention it. How many times do I want the children to kick to a target and you're saying, 'well do you see that dirt mark on the wall? Do you think you could hit that?' - Rhonda

Suzanne recognized that the lines on the floor were painted for sports but indicated that she adapts them for her own use in primary physical education. Specifically she has the children follow different coloured lines to help them develop directional awareness and their identification of colours. But the design of the gymnasium has obviously been premised on the sport model instead of with

the needs of a primary physical education class in mind. The importance of sport in the school was indicated by the internal markings and paraphernalia on the walls as being for the sole use by or promotion of sport. And as well as being a valuable break from classroom routine, the trip to the gymnasium and the gym itself serve as a valuable vehicle for patriarchal and sport-values to be consistently and subtly imparted to the teachers and students in the school.

This is worthwhile time for our classes too!

After my first meeting with the three women who agreed to be participants in this inquiry we got down to the task of scheduling when I would commence my fieldwork and the time periods for physical education classes. During the year I was in the school, each of the women had two 30-minute periods in the gymnasium each week. I thought this time short, as currently the promulgated knowledge of what constitutes a Q.D.P.E. program, suggests children should have physical education every day of the school week. When I asked if all the classes had two gym periods per week, I was enlightened about one of the many struggles surrounding the primary teacher and her teaching of physical education -- convincing her colleagues that her time in the gymnasium was valuable too.

The teachers found that one of the most overt messages reinforcing their real status among their elementary teaching colleagues emerged through how the gymnasium space is controlled. If the women had equitable time in the gymnasium to teach primary physical education they would have believed there was a certain degree of respect and support from their colleagues. If the women

had reasonable notice that the gymnasium would be needed during their primary physical education period for other functions they would have been more inclined to believe that their colleagues had respect for what they and the children accomplished in their physical education time. However this was not the case. The lack of equitable allocation and control of the gymnasium space reinforced with the women their status as professionals amongst their upper-grade teaching colleagues. That is to say, the significance attached by others to the women's practice of teaching primary physical education seemed representative of their worth as teachers in the school.

The thing I find [grimace] though is the scheduling of the gym. Definitely, definitely upper grades get first choice. - Rhonda

The struggles for equitable gym scheduling seem to be hampered by the status of primary physical education in the school hierarchy. Suzanne's metaphor that regarding use of the gymnasium, primary physical education was '...at the lower end of the totem pole' was verified by her experience and the actions of her colleagues.

When the older grades, who also have curling, and cross-country skiing and downhill skiing and canoeing and there's something else that they usually get to do...intramurals. And they [in previous years] still get three gym periods a week of an hour at a time and I am slotted in there for 20 minutes [in previous years and 30 minutes this year] twice a week. It's very obvious you're the low person on the totem pole. And you're told things

like, 'they're [the children] very active outside.' Well that's O.K. BUT there are certain skills that need to be taught and we have discussed this specifically at staff meetings and unfortunately most principals taught in the upper grades and that's where their hearts lie. That's where their priorities are and I can see where it would happen. But that doesn't mean that I'm still not going to try for more gym periods. - Suzanne

One day during my fieldwork I happened across the gym schedule in the teacher's coffee room and collected a copy for my fieldnotes. I wondered about the origin of this document, who had input or control, and how the schedule had come to be in its current form. I discovered that Mr. Eagle, a grade 8 teacher and school coach takes on the responsibility for gym scheduling. It was apparent from the document that one person had scheduled quite a few of the periods which also were found to be predominantly in the afternoon time slots (see Diagram 3, pp. 179). Analysis of the room numbers with the school map I had collected revealed that scheduling was predetermined to be three periods in the gymnasium for grades 6, 7 and 8 and these filled predominantly afternoon time slots.

Rhonda's view was that allocating three periods to upper grades in the prime afternoon slots and only two for primary grades whenever the teacher can find a empty slot, has been a tacit, though, quite plain message, of the relative status of primary physical education to the higher grades. Further, she noted this was an indicator of the status of the teachers of primary grades and their efforts to teach physical education in every school she had ever been in.

Diagram #3

ST. JUDE GYM SCHEDULE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00-9:30	Rm 16 Gr 4 Mrs.	Rm 22 Gr 3 Sis.	Rm 4 Gr 1/2 Mrs.	Rm 22 Gr 3 Sis.	Rm 16 Gr 4 Mrs.
9:30-10:00	Rm 21 Gr 3/4 Mrs.	Rm 9 Kind AM	RHONDA GR 1	Rm 9 Kind AM	Rm 2 Gr 1 Mrs.
10:00-10:30	Rm 8 Gr 8 Mr VP/Mrs.	KAREN GR 2	Rm 8 Gr 8 Mr VP/Mrs.	Rm 8 Gr 8 Mr VP/Mrs.	RHONDA GR 1
10:30-10:45	RECESS				
10:45-11:15	Rm 17 Gr 4 Mrs.	Rm 6 Gr 7 Mr.	Rm 18 Gr 5 Mr.	Rm 17 Gr 4 Mrs.	Rm 14 Gr 3 Mrs.
11:15-11:45	Rm 18 Gr 5 Mr.	SUZANNE KIND AM	Rm 21 Gr 3/4 Mrs.	Rm 6 Gr 7 Mr.	SUZANNE KIND AM
11:45-12:45	LUNCH				
12:45-1:15	Rm 15 Gr 2 Mrs.	Rm 11 Gr 6 Mr.	Rm 11 Gr 6 Mr.	Rm 11 Gr 6 Mr.	Rm 15 Gr 2 Mrs.
1:15-1:45	Rm 4 Gr 1/2 Mrs.	Rm 19 Gr 5 Mrs.	SUZANNE KIND PM	Rm 19 Gr 5 Mrs.	SUZANNE KIND PM
1:45-2:15	KAREN GR 2	Rm 10 Gr 5/6 Mrs.	Rm 2 Gr 1 Mrs.	Rm 10 Gr 5/6 Mrs.	Rm 20 Gr 6 Mr.
2:15-2:30	RECESS				
2:30-3:00	Rm 5 Gr 7 Ms.	Rm 20 Gr 6 Mr.	Rm 14 Gr 3 Mrs.	Rm 20 Gr 6 Mr.	Rm 5 Gr 7 Ms.
3:00-3:30	Rm 6 Gr 7 Mr.	Rm 7 Gr 8 Mr. E	Rm 7 Gr 8 Mr. E	Rm 5 Gr 7 Ms.	Rm 7 Gr 8 Mr. E

Shaded areas = Gym periods slotted by Mr. Eagle, Grade 8 teacher and school coach, morning periods 6 of 25; afternoon periods 18 of 25.

They use the excuse well they're [the upper grades] exchanging and with several teachers involved they have to get their periods first. But their periods are always the afternoon periods. So we're stuck in the primary with the first periods in the day. We don't need them. Our kids are fresh and bright then. We need them [afternoon periods] to perk them up later on in the day. But that's the whole society or education. As far as we're concerned the first monies go to the universities, then the high school and then the elementary. And it's the same then in the elementary. It's the senior you know really and the primary group gets shafted all the time. And it should be, I think, the other way around. - Rhonda.

Suzanne described the process for determining the use of the remaining time slots on the gym schedule.

The schedule is thrown out on the table and the teachers get into fisticuff fights....it's almost that bad. And [they] write down when they would like to have their gym period and how often. - Suzanne

All three women stated that it's usually announced at a staff meeting that 'so-n-so' will have this much time and 'so-n-so' will have that much time. They also offered the opinion that this situation, at least in part, is a 'male-female thing' as the male teachers in the school are the ones who teach predominantly in the upper grades, teach phys. ed. and coach school teams.

The women in this inquiry perceive primary teachers as being afforded little positional power in society as a whole. As Rhonda mentioned, it is the universities first then secondary schools followed by the upper elementary grades

and lastly the primary grades that are awarded monies and valued. That Rhonda thinks 'it should be the other way around really' indicates that she thinks that the values inherent in the system are somehow skewed. Each woman, however, did appreciate her important role as the teacher of her class and her ability to influence and act upon the children under her care and tutelage. They were also aware that they needed to negotiate with others who have positional advantage relative to them if the children in their class were to get the best that could be offered in physical education.

Nobody is going to come to you and say, 'I've noticed you're not getting phys. ed. and you'd probably really like some.' You have to go to bat for your class and you have to make other staff members aware of what your needs are as far as phys. ed. goes. - Suzanne

If she was confronted with a barrier and lack of understanding by others concerning her needs for the children's physical education, these teachers have resorted to using another source of power to reach the principal in the school. Several years earlier, Suzanne had been able to gain what, through months of her own negotiations she had not been able to accomplish. She had influenced parents, in particular one who had positional power in relation to the principal, to take up her concern.

I used parents and I had parents say well this isn't fair. The only thing that you can do is to approach the principal or make an appointment to go in and see him to express your concerns. I already expressed my concern in

staff meetings and in private to the principal and to the person who set up the gym schedule. So I had a parent express concern [several years ago]. And all of a sudden everyone in the primary division had 20-minute gym periods [during that year]. - Suzanne

The use of power through alternative avenues assisted in bringing primary physical education on closer par with that of the upper grades in the school and to raise the status of the women teaching primary physical education and forcing validation of its importance and value.

The use of cooperative initiatives amongst the primary teachers to facilitate their teaching of primary physical education was displayed when they organized themselves for exchanging or sharing of primary physical education and use of the gymnasium. In one instance Suzanne exchanged teaching activities with a grade 3 teacher. In another instance, she used her association to another teacher to switch classes. The other woman who had expertise in Ukrainian dancing, taught Suzanne's students while Suzanne used her experience in rhythmic gymnastics in another class. Therefore the children were provided an experience in which Suzanne perceived herself as having limited or no ability. The women in the primary grades also organized gym scheduling within their allocated times in order to have a 'Monster Mash' dance at Halloween for the children. In these instances the women teaching primary physical education cooperated in order to obtain some advantages for the children in their classes that were not available to them as individuals. In this case, the teachers are sending a message to their

colleagues that they felt physical education time is important for primary children too.

While positional and associative power sources were evident, the most common power source at the women's disposal for use in teaching their primary physical education was resource power. The women's capacity to act and influence others based on access to a variety of resources -- human, financial, technical, educational, networks, etc.--allowed them to accomplish the teaching of physical education with resources. While the monetary ability to assist in her teaching of physical education and the technical knowledge of physical movement were limited, the human and educational aspects of resource power were in abundance during this inquiry.

When faced with a barrier to achieving an objective, it is often necessary to discover alternative methods to achieve a desired end. In the following example the teachers devised an approach to argue against their lack of access (denial of a key to the gym and nurse's office) to various rooms in the school and to obtain materials for music recording for singsongs.

One of the dangerous things was that the nurse's office would get locked and if something happened to somebody at noon and there were no principal or phys. ed. person or one of the teachers of the older kids--we would have no access to medical things. It wasn't just an inconvenience there was a danger factor too. - Suzanne

Another technique for the teacher was to side-step official channels of positional

authority for resources that may be used in physical education by herself negotiating with others who have resources at their disposal.

I talked really nice to the fellow in our audio-visual department and I said, 'You don't have any of those short tapes hanging around do you?' and he said, 'Well yes I do and I never know what to do with them.' I said, 'Why don't I store them in my desk?' So I'm a real scrounge and I'll scrounge from anywhere. - Karen

The use of power via their own human capacities -- ingenuity, creativity and flexibility was evident in what I observed of their exercise of various kinds of power in relation to their teaching of physical education.

Still, with the power and creativity these teachers have at their disposal, they can only achieve limited successes. Superior powers and values perceived to be more important can still defy their efforts. During one point I counted the number of fieldsite observations that I should have had. After finding that over a three month period I should have had 68 observation notes I was surprised to find that I was short 28 classes. Although nine of the missing observations were due to the women cancelling their physical education for a class trip, school assembly or professional development session, the majority was beyond the control of the teachers. To miss more than a third of the classes in a subject did say much about both who controls the space, and about the value given to primary physical education. 'When they want the gym -- they take the gym!' was an emphatic statement from Rhonda indicative of the women's feelings about the

appropriation of their gym time.

Just because a primary physical education class was slotted into the gym schedule it did not mean that the time period could not be appropriated for another event that was deemed by the upper grades or the administration as being more important. This would occur with little or no warning. On several occasions I would arrive on site and walk to the gym to find the older students engaged in some activity, whether physical, such as a grade 8 dance, or singing practice for an upcoming festival. The primary teachers found that communication regarding the sharing, or appropriation, of their gym time was intragroup [between primary grade teachers] rather than open between all teaching staff [kindergarten to grade 8].

Most times we find, probably because it's been taken away from us so much, we find as primary teachers if we want to use the gym for primary purposes we usually make allowances and do switching. For instance we had a monster mash, a dance, for our little kids at Halloween. So we made sure it was in our phys. ed. time or we switched whoever's time it was. But we find with the upper grades if they need the gym, they take the gym and you're just told there's no phys. ed. that day. It happens a fair amount. -

Rhonda

That the teachers often did not have the time to warn me not to come that day because their gym time had been appropriated verified how arbitrary the process seemed to be. Suzanne's solution regarding the upper grades appropriation of the

primary grades gym periods appeared very simple.

Now to me, when you start to plan that [upper grades' activity] check to see who's using the gym and go to that person who owns that gym period and you say, 'Would you mind if?'. And that person could say, 'Well actually we had planned on doing this during my gym period '. And it works out. At one time it was just no ands, ifs, buts, or maybes, it happened. - Suzanne

The possessive language used during these discussions was notable. The time slots for the gym periods were preceded by MY or OUR gym period very often. Although the women were not happy about the method of distribution of gym periods, when they did have a time slot, they viewed it as theirs and not anyone else's to use unless they were approached ahead of time and asked politely. Merely having the views, though, did not always prevent appropriation from occurring.

In addition to the primary physical education gym period being taken by upper grades for their use, the gymnasium space is also used as an assembly hall for the entire school. On one occasion when our city was hosting a cultural festival, the school invited a Ukrainian dance troop to perform for the school. This included not only the dance performance itself, but a display of cultural artifacts for the children to peruse. An entire afternoon of gym periods was used for the physical set up, performance and dismantling, of the event. In this situation 'your gym period often goes by the wayside'. However, as Rhonda

noted, it is not only physical education that is lost to these events attended by the entire school body.

If you're having an award, or it's time for a concert...for example we had a concert yesterday afternoon and we have another concert Friday afternoon -- those periods [phys. ed.] are all gone. But it's like anything else... you are going to a concert then you are cancelling whatever is in your class time.

So if you were having to do math then there's no math that day. Not necessarily because you don't have the space it's because the children aren't there. - Rhonda

This circumstance, the use of the gymnasium for assembly purposes, did influence the scheduling of gym times for Karen. I thought it strange initially that Karen had slotted the first of her physical education classes Monday afternoon and the second on Tuesday morning. I had thought this scheduling was due to the 'fisticuff' format and which times slots were ultimately left over. But Karen indicated that, in this case, it actually had more to do with a strategy on her part in response to the scheduling of assemblies and community events. These functions are most often Wednesday afternoon or all day Thursday or Friday. So her rationale for scheduling early in the week was to keep the two gym periods she had as often as possible. Karen strategically positioned her time slots to those periods in less demand by upper-grade colleagues or community groups. Obviously, this meant that, on Tuesday at least, she did not get the full advantage for the teacher of the afternoon class to 'perk' her pupils up. But her emphasis

was on retaining the physical education for the benefit of the pupils.

Another barrier to valuable time in the gymnasium and collegial respect came to light shortly after I began my fieldwork. I arrived one day to join Suzanne's morning class for their physical education. It was noticeable that the movement of 20 five-year-olds from their kindergarten room to the gym, which was almost at the other end of the school, was at times a logistical problem. With the announcement of gym period, the children became very excited and the noise level naturally increased. The children were to line up in twos at the door, and once they were all settled and quiet we would begin our journey to the gym. It was important that the children were quiet in the halls so as not to disturb other primary classes that were in progress down the first corridor. Once inside the gym the children automatically moved into the circle. I took up my position on a bench by the door as Suzanne went to the equipment room. 'Shoot! The door's locked.' Suzanne shrugged her shoulders, waved her arms in the air and proceeded with another lesson without the use of equipment. After the class, during recess, we began conversing about which keys the teachers had and what they were allowed access to. This led to discussion with all three women about the symbolic value of the key to the gym.

Oh yes...wedid have a problem with keys. For a long time females on staff did not have a key to the gym. So if we were going to teach a phys. ed. class and the gym had been locked unless we could find a male with the key there was no way for us to get into the gym. - Suzanne

The key provided access not only to the gymnasium but also to the equipment rooms both inside and outside the gymnasium and to the female and male staff change rooms adjacent to the gym. Although the entire school had been rekeyed the first semester in my fieldwork, there was still bitterness in the voices of the women when telling of their experiences.

That was, we felt, a female-male thing with our last principal. The females had only one key that got you into the school. We had a second key that got us into...the staff room. We had no key to get us into the gym. We had no key that got us into that side storage room. Our key does not open the male and female washrooms inside the gym. They were basically the men's change rooms. - Rhonda

The only option available for the teachers who wanted into the gym was to leave their class of 20 to 30 small children at the gym door and find a male with a key to open it for them. When the primary women complained 'bitterly' one key to the gymnasium was attached to a hockey stick and hung in the staff room on the opposite side of the school from the gymnasium. Or, as Suzanne said with disgust, the key would be in 'little hidey places'. Not only was this inconvenient, it could also create impressions about class management as the teacher had to leave the children alone to go to the opposite end of the school in the hopes of retrieving the key--if it was actually in the staffroom and not in a 'little hidey place'.

This situation with the key represented more than just access to the gym. For many the issue was the collegial trust between those privileged enough to

have a key and those not of that group. In the case of this school it was the principal, vice-principal, upper grade teachers and caretaker, all of whom happened to be male, who were the privileged.

What they have is different locks for everything and the teachers had 45 keys sometimes. The janitor had, what do you call it, a master key. At one time they used to give the teachers only the key they supposedly needed.

Well if you're going to trust the teacher with the key to get into the school you may as well trust them with a key for everything. It makes no sense whatsoever. In Ontario a teacher friend of mine doesn't have keys at all.

I'm beginning to think that's a very wise idea. Because if you couldn't have a key to get into your school you wouldn't have that guilty feeling that

maybe you should be back doing some work. You couldn't do it. - Rhonda

Gathering the children together, getting them to the gymnasium door, finding it locked, and having no easy access to a key is enormously frustrating. Also, having or not having easy access to a key to the gym could have had implications for teachers less inclined to teach their physical education class. Even teachers who believe firmly in the value of primary physical education are tempted to let the period go when access is frustrated. Those who have less conviction in the matter would be even less inclined to salvage what might be left of the period.

And as Rhonda explained, not having a key provided a legitimate reason not to have physical education because other individuals have created the barriers. Suzanne and Karen, however, found ingenious methods to deal with the problem.

Suzanne's motivation for addressing the barrier was influenced by her resentment of such unprofessional behaviour by her colleagues towards her as a teacher and person and because she wanted the best for the children in her kindergarten class.

I even coached a basketball team one time so that I could get a key to the gym. And that wasn't fair to the kids on the basketball team because I have absolutely no knowledge of how I'm to coach basketball. So I always figure that if you keep plotting, it will happen. Then it did become a problem. I got locked out of several places in the school because they'd lock the school and I'd be practising or whatever and I made it a point to have a kid go to their house and phone the principal to come and let me in to wherever I needed to be. And when somebody is inconvenienced then they become aware that there is a problem. If you don't walk in somebody else's shoes sometimes you just can't relate to what they're talking about. You say that they're just nattering. But it is a real problem and because the females didn't have the keys it makes you feel less of a person. - Suzanne

Prior to developing this notion as part of the emerging theme I had to check to be sure that Karen had experienced the same barrier. During one recess I approached Karen in the staff room and asked if she had a key. When her response was yes I inquired as to how she obtained it. She looked at me and smirked, then in a lower voice she confessed that she was a friend of the former principal's wife and had been able to obtain a master key from her.

Another subtle reminder that the gym was for sport and the convenience of

the upper grades was that often the equipment used in the physical education classes of the upper grades would be left in position. On many occasions the volleyball nets were left up. Rather than cancelling the class because the metal poles and netting could prove dangerous with their existing lessons the teachers were flexible and changed their readied plan.

That was an impromptu thing where I walked in and the damn nets were up and I thought to myself 'Oh how inconsiderate! ' But what can you do? It's there. You don't want them running because they're going to run right into those poles. I found out that that was the perfect way to do that [adapt her lesson] and the teacher that doesn't have to take them down thinks that you're a wonderful person. It really helps with relationships within the school. Now not everybody wants to do that. - Suzanne

It was suggested by the participants that some other primary teachers who happened onto a situation such as the equipment left in position would use this as an excuse to cancel their physical education -- thus succumbing to the often less than subtle messages that primary physical education is not an important or valued use of the gymnasium space. The women in this inquiry elected to resist these subtle actions and persist with an alternative plan. But as Suzanne goes on to state the children enjoy having the sport equipment available to them to play on or with. And she does not mind, at times, allowing free play as a result of the upper grade teachers not returning the equipment to the equipment room.

The little guys think that they're really hot stuff using the nets. So it works

out. The same with the basketball nets. I know that nowhere in that phys. ed. curriculum for kindergarten does it say teach the kids to throw the ball at the net. But after they've been through all the other skills what do they want to do with the balls? Play basketball. - Suzanne

As suggested earlier, the allocation of and access to the gymnasium space emulate that of the sports complex and, through that, reinforce the values of that particular perception of the meaning and purpose of activity. The lines on the floor validate certain kinds of sport activities and sets of skill development. Yet these teachers demonstrate that it is possible to re-appropriate the space for their own purposes, as is evident from the way they adapt the lines on the floor to their own uses and purposes.

Critique

Change does not occur...by transforming the whole at once but only by resisting injustices at the particular points where they manifest themselves (Hoy, 1986, P. 143).

Power as it operates in our everyday lives can be used or abused. The use of power can be emancipatory for the user and the individuals affected by the use. In the context of this inquiry the women voluntarily teaching their physical education when they have many reasons and methods at their disposal to abdicate their responsibility demonstrates through their use of positional power as primary teachers the emancipatory potential for both the children and themselves. The abuse of power can lead to inequitable treatment of a group of individuals at the

hands of the individual(s) wielding the power. The male grade 8 teacher responsible for the inequitable gymnasium schedule manifests associative power. He is supported in his decisions by the other male upper-grade teachers and the male principal. Hence his associative power permits him to schedule the gymnasium at the expense of the primary grades who receive fewer and less advantageous time slots in the gym than the older grades.

However, identifying the issue and not quietly succumbing to the abuse of power is a strength portrayed by Suzanne's comment.

That's where their [upper grade teachers] priorities are and I can see where it would happen. But that doesn't mean that I'm not going to try for more gym periods. - Suzanne

The women involved in this inquiry who shared their knowledges and struggles relative to their teaching of primary physical education have helped to disclose hegemonic patterns that are manifest within their school culture. The power relations in each woman's struggles to teach physical education, although unique and thematic are not static but dynamic and ever evolving.

Resisting the notion that the women and primary physical education do not belong in the gymnasium, the same way the upper grades belong, is an example of the women using their personal power. The women resist the patriarchal placement of women on the sidelines of the physical activity culture and engage in devising alternative measures that allow them access to the gymnasium. These measures were not taken in overt defiance but rather through subtle action that

allowed them to attain the necessary and symbolic key.

It is not surprising that the symbolic value of the key to the gymnasium was a not so subtle message of patriarchal hegemony. It reinforces the system of privileged, controlling, structured behaviour and is patriarchal hegemony at its most effective. And, the barriers of inaccessibility were not the only signs of patriarchal-laden messages surrounding the gymnasium. Other messages relating specifically to the sport context reinforced the privileged position of upper grades and sport in the school hierarchy.

The general picture that emerged was that the gymnasium, named after the school mascot and mirroring a professional sport complex, CougarDome, was a space in the school that was most easily accessible by and convenient to the use of the male faculty and the upper grades. Though the space was not exclusively at their disposal, it was not a comfortable space for the teachers to work within, nor was it a space that seemed to incorporate any special design features meant for small children. On further exploration, not necessarily within the primary physical education class, I collected data that revealed that the gymnasium and adjacent areas were designed and currently used for the exclusiveness of sport as indicated by the influence of professional sport ideology and patriarchal values.

The use of their own personal power as a resource to assist in the teaching of primary physical education was evident, but the focus of these teachers was to enable the children to use the space. Messages relayed by the sport world that competition and personal performance at all costs are the most valued aspects of

activity were challenged and resisted for the sake of the young children. The women's expertise living every day with children and knowing what the needs of children are important. Also of concern in this component is the Q.D.P.E. recommendation that elementary students, which would include kindergarten to grade 8, should receive the same consideration. What if there is not enough gym time to equitably be distributed? What then? Perhaps our profession needs to re-examine the existing idea of whose physical education is more important. Left to its own devices equity is rarely considered as a primary issue that needs addressing. As the old saying goes... 'you can't change attitudes but you can change behaviour '. As we have observed in St. Jude, it is obvious that the upper grades are privileged in terms of gymnasium use. In practical terms, it would be easier for the upper grade teachers to incorporate other activities (curling, skating, snow soccer, etc.) outside of the gymnasium in their programs than for the primary teacher to take 30 young children to a strange environment that may pose a safety hazard.

For equipment and facilities to be adequate for primary physical education we must ask that the sport model and design be set aside to the extent that the needs of young children and convenience of the teacher are accommodated. The comments and behaviours of boys led many of the girls in Humbert's study to conclude that the boys controlled the physical education environment (1995, p. 159). Difficulties in this component are similar in this context as the men control the gymnasium space and equipment as has been discussed in the theme 'Primary

physical education in the CougarDome '. Faith notes how pervasive such messages and ideas can be.

Political and cultural resistances neither observe humankind as lacking in initiative, nor do they observe static power relations. Rather, in combination, they demonstrate means by which dominant or hegemonic discourses are transmitted through political economies and cultures, and encompass life itself (1994, p. 57).

Perhaps if primary physical education comes to be valued differently as a result of scrutiny, new attitudes toward activity can be fostered. These new attitudes just might involve the idea that activity is not necessarily oriented ultimately only at sport and high level skills. It can also be a healthful means of non-competitive enjoyment and expression.

The theme 'primary physical education in the CougarDome ' describes the relationship between primary physical education and the people in this school culture and the various values existing within that relationship. Similar to the sports milieu, the gymnasium as a space within which physical education is to occur is owned, operated and designed for use predominantly by men teaching sport activities in the upper grades. Hence not only is the gymnasium space insulated in the world of sport but it also potentially isolates the women who are to function in the space making it more difficult for them to teach physical education. This theme has helped to provide a description of the meaning of the practice of teaching physical education for these women primary teachers. The

gymnasium space, where the teaching of physical education takes place, represents a valuable break from classroom routine for the women and the children they teach. The gymnasium also represents, a value system the women are not fully in agreement with. Finally, the inequitable allocation of time period for primary physical education reflects at least in their views, the lower status of the women in the school.

Ideas such as who really has ownership of the gym, tacit as they may be, a critical component of the primary physical education class, the sense that children may not belong in the gym space as it is designed specifically for the purpose of patriarchal-valued sport games all assist in coming to an understanding of the links between the struggles of these women to teach primary physical education and how sport is valued in this school and our society.

CHAPTER 7

I DON'T HAVE TIME: THE PRIMARY TEACHER IN PERPETUAL MOTION

On Friday mornings, instead of trekking the 11 kilometres back to the university to wait for my next observation period, I stayed at St. Jude's during recess and would usually listen in on the conversations in the staff room. During one recess it occurred to me when I looked around the room that I saw only women. Thinking for a moment, I recalled that I rarely saw any of the male teachers in the staff room. It was then that I noticed that, despite the recess being a 'break' or what I thought was a break, most of the primary teachers were busying themselves marking papers or preparing class assignments. If the women were not marking or preparing, they were conversing with another teacher about a class, an assignment or the students. At times the dialogue in the room did become more casual and personal, but it was rare that the conversation did not come around to work-related topics. On a few occasions I noticed Suzanne, Rhonda or Karen sitting quietly and apparently just listening to other teachers talking. Other times they would be looking off into the distance. It struck me in one of these moments when I was watching Suzanne that it was one of the first times I had seen her still and not speaking, cuddling, directing, consoling, issuing or singing for that matter. The movement had stopped. On returning to class after recess she was her 'normal' self -- that is, moving perpetually. I believe she was using her 'break time' to recharge her battery.

It has been indicated in research on leisure patterns that many women

never really perceive themselves as having spare or leisure time (Henderson, 1994). There is always something to do. Similarly, these women primary teachers were always on the move. Directing closure to one activity or preparing for the next task, their time was fully occupied and they were always on the move. Rarely erratic, the movement appeared free-flowing. The women were always in control and always knew where they would like to go next or where others would like them to go next. 'Others' are the human agencies that have an interest in what is occurring in the primary class. People to whom the teacher is accountable for her movement or actions are, in particular, the school administration (board, principal and other teachers), the parents of children in her class and, central to this context of pedagogy, the children themselves. It is important to many people that the primary teacher keeps moving. So then, within her perpetual movement where does she find the time for physical education?

Imagine yourself a primary teacher. Your major responsibility is to assist the children in language arts (reading and writing). This responsibility is represented as a large 12-inch red utility ball which you are now holding. You are also to teach the children basic math skills, usually judged second in importance only to language arts in the curricula, so you now have an eight-inch ball. Now add eight six-inch utility balls for, as Rhonda puts it, 'all those other' subject responsibilities: religion, French, art, science, social studies, music, drama and physical education. You must keep all the balls off the ground and moving since these subject areas are very important for the child to gain some mastery of

functioning in our society. Also, the utility balls must be juggled as they too are dynamic in nature. So now you are juggling 10 balls of varying levels of importance as indicated by ball size. Let us also throw into the mix a few 'hidden curriculum' balls or subjects such as etiquette and personal hygiene. A little tricky? Which balls would you allow to drop? How do you determine the value of each ball and the implications of it falling to the floor?

The view each primary teacher holds regarding physical education is driven by her interactions with all of her other curriculum responsibilities. Each is implicitly directed by the values and decisions of the school administration, the parents of children in her class and the children themselves. Cultural phenomena such as these can be examined within the framework of power relations that this inquiry incorporates. Through it, we can explore the asymmetrical power relations present in this school culture. How is the issue of time negotiated within the realm of the proposed curriculum in primary classes and that which the women have control? How each of these human agencies values physical education as a curriculum subject influences the value the primary teacher places on the subject, particularly in relation to the three most valued subjects, reading, writing and arithmetic. In a practical context, then, how much time, which is already proportionally divided into numerous subjects, can the primary teacher allocate to physical education? How much curriculum time should focus on physical education and who decides this? Some of the data collected regarding behaviours of the various agencies and their interaction with physical education were sheds

light on this and surrounding issues.

Primary phys. ed. is low on the pole

Because I have nine subjects to teach and they all have their own curriculum I don't have time to sit down and go through and prepare every subject that way. And if I'm going to rank them, and if I would have to do it that way I hate to say it but phys. ed. would be very low on the pole because I have to teach them how to read, write and do math. The physical part I know is important but when you rank them it's not up there. -

Rhonda

How much time the teacher devotes to physical education as a curriculum subject area is influenced not only by her own movement experiences (discussed in chapter 5) but also by the value administrators, principals and school superintendents, place on the subject. Suzanne stated that physical education is only important if the principal of the school makes it a priority. Then the teachers have to give it time.

Once I was in a school and the principal said at a meeting that he never wanted to find the gym empty. I thought that that was great. Then everyone had to make sure that their gym time was used and used wisely because he thought that it was important. - Suzanne

Currently in St. Jude, however, physical education is not explicitly emphasized by the administration. As demonstrated in chapter 6, the administration and teachers of senior classes believe equitable time in the gymnasium for primary physical

education is not a priority. Thus the administrative faculty reinforces that the limited time allocation for primary physical education is acceptable. Both the children and the teachers are affected by this. The teachers learn that, since the time allotted for primary physical education is low and reflects the administration's view of its value, extra time that she spends will not be rewarded or even noticed. So she has little incentive to spend a great deal of time in teaching physical education. The children are affected in two ways. First, they receive less actual time in the gym. Second what is suggested by this is that they will get more time when they are more able to perform the kinds of movement skills that are valued.

Both the physical (time in the gym) and preparation time for primary physical education can prove to be a source of frustration for the teacher. Rhonda suggested that it would not be unusual for some primary teachers to opt out of preparing for and teaching physical education by providing free time in the gym or not going to the gym at all for their scheduled period. Such actions are rarely taken notice of, and there are virtually never any consequences for them. No one really questions the teacher about her lesson plan and responsibility when these relate to physical education.

However, if Rhonda decides to take the children outside to the apparatus in the playground for a physical activity experience she often feels that this action is moving outside the bounds of the physical structure(s) normally accepted for physical education.

I just take them out and I don't have to plan anything, it's too easy. And so you do, you get that feeling that, dare I take them out for their half-hour period and let them play on the apparatus? Although there's probably more physical activity going on in that half hour than there is in many of the gym periods. - Rhonda

Such 'free time' for the children can be permitted within the confines of the classroom -- the classroom is out of the general view of the public and the administration. In the closed space of the classroom or gymnasium, such a free time or free play environment is more likely to go unnoticed. The teacher is uneasy providing a free play environment in such an open setting as the playground for the general viewing by administration and others. They perceive it as one that may be fraught with consequence.

The teachers' concerns about taking the children to the playground for primary physical education as 'free play' indicates that they do not have confidence that the activity is perceived as worthwhile. Within the confines of the system, they can allow this 'free play'. But it seems surreptitious because it is out of the public view. It also seems to evoke some guilt on the part of the teachers because of their sense that they are not preparing enough for a subject that is low on the totem pole.

Generally public perception, which influences the women, is that physical education is a waste of time except in terms of developing the skills of those who will become elite athletes. Physical education in the primary system is largely

perceived as a weeding ground for a sport system, which is largely embedded with patriarchal values and is a system that is not congruent with the women's values and physical education. But if that were so, the primary physical education teachers would not have to feel guilt about overt 'free play'. That they still believe in its value as part of physical education is a form of resistance to a system that is competitive and focused on predominantly physical achievement.

Who decides what primary physical education is? Does primary physical education include free play? Is it a subject that can only be taught or experienced in the gymnasium? Does it not include basic fundamental skills such as hanging, swinging and climbing as executed on the outdoor apparatus? Or is physical education only the fundamental skills such as throwing and catching which will lead a pupil in the direction of the culturally and financially 'manly' (Nelson, 1994) sports of basketball and football?

In one instance, Karen cancelled an observation session with me early in the fall because 'we didn't have phys. ed. I just took the children out to play on the playground apparatus'. Karen's action and comment caused me to question at the time what primary physical education is for these women. And while it can be defined according to her personal experience, the meaning of the practice of physical education for these women is shaped by the administration, since that is who the women are accountable to.

As advocated by our national professional body (C.A.H.P.E.R.D.), quality physical education requires that it occur daily. Realistically, though, the value

system currently inherent in the all encompassing school curriculum prevents physical education from being either 'quality' or 'daily'. As long as physical education is perceived to be not only of lesser value but of far lesser value in the general curriculum, teachers will not have the time to prepare 'quality' time in the physical education class because they are not required to. Rhonda believed that 'I feel I can do a fairly good job with phys. ed. if I have the time'. Still, she worried that if the school administrators were to insist on what Q.D.P.E. advocates, that is every day of the school week, it would take time away from her responsibility to adequately prepare and teach in other subject areas.

Not necessarily every day but at least three, a minimum of three or four times [per week]. But I'm not sure I would do all five [days]. I don't know if I have time for all five. But two is not enough. - Rhonda

There are only so many hours in the day and if Rhonda had to spend more time on physical education because she was teaching it daily she would have to take time already devoted to another subject.

We are expected to get them to read and write at this grade and that is the primary purpose. They could give us other subjects too, geez I hope not, but we would still be expected to teach them to read and write. That time has to be there. - Rhonda

The teachers in this school are left virtually unaccountable for their teaching of physical education by the administration. However this did raise the question about what is perceived as primary physical education and whether it is

realistic. It has also indicated that, in this school at least, physical education is 'lower on the totem pole' than other subjects in the primary curriculum. On a positive note, these three teachers regarded physical education as important and not the 'lowest' on the pole.

When observing the preparation, however little, for primary physical education by the women in this inquiry I had intended to look for the basic teaching tools. Even now, after 10 years of teaching a practical physical education class at the university I still very often take my lesson plan to the gymnasium with me. I do not necessarily follow the plan verbatim but it does provide me with a guide so that I am sure I convey all the material to the students that I intended. Upon first beginning my fieldwork I wondered whether I would see the teachers with lesson plans in physical education. As time went by, though, I never saw anything in writing and it began to distress me. My distress forced me to acknowledge that I too am caught up in the existing value system with respect to how things should be properly done and what level of accountability should exist. The difference is that I am looking at it from the perspective that physical education is valuable and important. The only time I saw any writing or recording going on in the gym was when Suzanne was evaluating the children prior to report card time. She had a clipboard and allowed the children free play time while she moved about the gym asking various children to try a particular skill.

When I asked Rhonda about lesson plans in the traditional sense she equated formal lesson plans with the university's notion of accountability.

As far as formally actually writing up, like the university requests, no I don't have time. - Rhonda

Generally what I found was that their daily log books usually indicated the lesson topics or themes for each subject. Time to give to preparation for physical education was definitely limited compared with other subjects due to the teachers' understanding of how responsibility for each subject area is ranked.

One anecdote that shows how this value system operates involves Rhonda trading her physical education class for the grade 6 French class of one of the male teachers. She discovered that this took more time away from her own preparations. Although the children enjoyed the male teacher, he was the one benefitting the most. The children in her physical education class did not experience anything under his tutelage that was tremendously different than anything she offered them.

One year I taught grade 6 French and the grade 6 teacher took my phys. ed. But I found that quite an unfair switch. Like he had fun teaching phys. ed. and I had hours and hours of work with French. I only allowed that one year but that's the only year. - Rhonda

In this situation Rhonda decided that neither she nor the children, were benefitting greatly from such an arrangement. The following year she elected not to do it again. Yet the story shows how the value system works. Preparation time for the French class involved 'hours and hours' of work, hours she felt obliged to provide in relation to French. Even assuming that her knowledge of French was

weak and she needed the time, why would that not also apply for physical education?

While power was negotiated in several ways for and during the teaching of primary physical education it is of importance that while time restraints may make it all too convenient for each woman to elect not to teach it, she does. As the women stated, a strength of their physical education program is that they do it even though it would be very easy to permit the barriers present to dissuade them. But instead the women attempt to overcome and resist the barriers for the sake of themselves and the children at the centre of the pedagogical experience.

For those attempting to enable change for the benefit of all in our society it is usually a very slow process and involves large expenditures of energy. And even when the issues or inequities at hand have been resolved you wonder why we must experience the process in the first place. When we discussed the barriers to access to the gymnasium and the primary teachers not having a key for many years Suzanne began reflecting on the change with the new administration. The new principal rekeyed the entire school permitting access to all areas for all the teachers. I asked Suzanne if the situation with the key was better.

Yes, I think it has been resolved. but you sit here and say to yourself,

'Why did it have to take that long?' - Suzanne

Why? It appears a straightforward question but many times straightforward answers are elusive. Perhaps the connection to change of power relations, with the arrival of a new principal, or within our society on the whole could shed light on

the resistance to change. As Nelson suggests, 'All of us [women], collectively, are a threat -- not to men exactly, but to male privilege and to masculinity as defined through manly sports' (1994, p. 30). Any actions that resist the privileged, patriarchy or sport, in our society will naturally be censured. That censure is an attempt to maintain the differential power relations that create privilege and to ensure that change occurs very slowly if it occurs at all.

Curriculum guides often are not time efficient

Time constraints also influence the meaning that the women find in physical education curriculum guides. In this province two documents, the provincial curriculum guide for physical education and the 10 components for a quality, daily physical education (Q.D.P.E.) program, are espoused as the materials needed in order to effectively guide the women in their teaching of a primary physical education program. Ostensibly, if these are followed physical education could potentially be effectively taught and worthwhile goals attained. However, these women viewed them as often impractical and not meeting the needs of the primary grades.

My original question, which subsequently developed into a different focus, regarding the women teaching primary physical education was 'What meaning does the physical education curriculum have for the women teaching?' During my first several fieldwork sessions, the information or knowledge that was promulgated in the provincial curriculum guide was always in my mind as I observed the teachers and classes. My expectation was to observe a minimum of

20% of the class time on units of movement in the *games* skills, *dance* and other rhythmic, educational *gymnastics* and *seasonal activities* areas. I also expected, based on general fundamental education for movement, human movement skills and physical fitness components, that the children would be receiving 30 minutes of physical education every day. As the title suggested, however, these activities and fundamentals were curriculum 'guidelines'.

Needless to say, from the outset I had to adapt my expectations. I came to realize that I could not enter the fieldsite and let the purported guidelines colour my observation of the actuality of the women in the 'real world'. It was at that point that I came to understand that the curriculum was not solely a syllabus that directed the actions of the teachers but that the curriculum was a broader term encompassing the everyday happenings within the context of physical education. It was my hope then to understand the actions as they surfaced and critically reflect on the issue of power within that context.

During our interviews I broached the topic of the provincial curriculum by drawing one out of my file. This particular curriculum was almost immediately dismissed but not without comments as to its lack of usefulness and what type of curriculum the women believed would be of more assistance to them.

The new one is too piece-meal. Everything is sort of like in little booklets but the Public School Board took a look at it and their teachers said we can't work with this and they combined them all. And because I've always had contact with both boards I got myself a kindergarten phys. ed.

curriculum and I use that a lot. - Suzanne

Suzanne's concern about the curriculum being too piece-meal was one expressed by all three women. I recall upon first coming to the province and receiving copies of the provincial curriculum I was amazed at how many documents I had in my possession. Each of games, dance, gymnastics and seasonal activities had a manual for the teacher. Some activities were broken down into several manuals, for example game activities had several manuals for specific sports. The teachers simply do not have the time to read all the manuals to condense lessons out of them. They want concrete suggestions, not general ideas. And while the various manuals of the curriculum guide were physically awkward to teach from, as they were bulky, it was also noted that many of the activities suggested for the primary division were, according to the women, inappropriate for young children and in conflict with what they believed was best for the child.

At the time phys. ed. was just becoming mandatory for a methodology class so there were a lot of teachers out there that had never had any phys. ed. I used an old curriculum in a yellow book and I went lesson by lesson by lesson. So it was really well set out but very competition oriented. The games were all once you're out you're out and you sit on the sidelines. -

Suzanne

Suzanne's encounter with that curriculum guide was negative because she found that it promoted competitive games in which children are progressively eliminated from the activity. This was not in accord with her philosophical belief of what the

movement experience should entail. The teachers also questioned the use of particular pieces of apparatus for class activities. Suzanne had a child throw a hard ball into her face, which broke her glasses. On reflection she questioned why the curriculum would suggest such apparatus when it would inherently present a safety factor with which the teacher then had to deal.

Really in retrospect, there's no way those kids should have those balls [hard baseballs or rubber balls]. I have no idea why it would be in the curriculum. - Suzanne

With experiences such as these it became apparent that the women would be less likely over time to make use of the curriculum. When I asked the teachers their comments on curriculum guides in general, they all said there was no time to thoroughly make use of the guides. The lack of time devoted to the physical education curriculum guide appeared to be a result of both its perceived ineffectiveness and the lack of preparation time to thoroughly focus on the document. Physical education, however, was not unique in this respect.

The curriculum guide for the teacher is almost, well, I would venture to say, nine times out of 10 never moved off the shelf. And only because you just don't have the time. I was involved in rewriting, revising the religion program last year. We spent hours and hours as a team doing the objectives and movements of the lesson. And I said to the other grade 1 teacher should we tell them that we never read these? We don't have time to read them. - Rhonda

Rhonda went on to clarify that she believed that the curriculum guide should be produced for a writing team who are going to prepare a clear program based on the guide. Once again she asserted the uselessness of the guide for the primary teacher who does not have time to devote to creating her own program based on the goals and objectives vaguely stated in the guide.

The curriculum guide should be there for those teams of writers who are going to write your phys. ed. programs. But don't give me a curriculum guide and say teach from it because I can't. I don't have time. - Rhonda

Karen stated that she actively sought resource materials and persons that would make her teaching of primary physical education more effective but aside from the text she was required to purchase in university and a handbook she happened upon, she found the guide and consultant to be vague and not practical for her needs.

When I first started teaching physical education I relied on my university text for teaching games, game skills and movement. I also purchased a primary handbook from the university bookstore. The curriculum guide and physical education consultant were very limited in their suggestions and activities for children in my grade level. - Karen

I found Karen's comments on her university text as a resource interesting. When I began teaching classes in teacher preparation in physical education many of the texts that were suggested to me and which I subsequently used were theoretical in nature. They discussed the benefits of physical education for

children, basic movement components of the body, the physical development of children, the reasons various activities should be included in a program and management and facilitation of a physical education program. As time passed I became concerned that if these teachers, predominantly women, are going to teach physical education and they only purchase one resource text perhaps it should be focused more on activities the teacher is able to use in her class. Hence, for the last four years my colleagues and I have been recommending a Canadian author's text that has a combination of theoretical but also many practical ideas and activities for immediate use by the teacher. During the last year we also included the supporting lesson and unit plans accompanying the text. From a very practical perspective we decided that if the university students were likely to purchase only one text it should be one that has practical use for them in their teaching.

Regarding the practicality of the curriculum guide, all the teachers believed that a clear program for them to follow would best suit their needs.

I know you have to have a curriculum guide but my personal feeling is that the curriculum guide should be for the publisher or writer of your program.

They should use the curriculum guide and slot the program into that so that you as a teacher can say O.K. here's your phys. ed. program, here's your lessons set for you. - Rhonda

Both Karen and Rhonda have used the Australian curriculum guide because it has a good overview of the various strands and components of a

physical education program. As Karen stated, the curriculum program committee needs to 'make it [the curriculum guide] teacher-friendly, use common language and make it easy to implement '. I found it disheartening that the women would use a curriculum program that originated half the world away and contained very little Canadian content. But perhaps this is a message about the practicality of the current programs in Canada. However, I also admire the women for searching for a program with which they could work and which was recommended by another friend who was a primary teacher.

Currently the province is in the process of revising several of the physical education curriculums. The teachers did not necessarily view this as a positive movement for the primary grades but rather more of what they have already observed -- people not familiar with the primary context imposing their beliefs on the teachers about what physical education should be and how it should work. On one curriculum revision committee on which Rhonda sat, she found that 'the teachers were all but ignored ' while the university and administrative types directed the meetings. And as Karen voiced quite often 'these new curriculum ideas are thrown at us and we essentially have to fend for ourselves '. Suzanne voiced a similar concern about a new curriculum due out shortly.

We're supposed to have the new kindergarten curriculum and it's supposed to be implemented in the fall and I haven't seen it. I think this is ludicrous that we wouldn't have a chance to have a peek at it to start slowly. We just end up going crash into it. - Suzanne.

Dealing with unknown curriculum decisions and their subsequent implementation has been a challenge for the women. To be fair, though, the physical education curriculum is one of the least likely revisions in which they feel encouraged to partake because of their time realities and perhaps because they perceive themselves as lacking enough theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of physical education. It is not hard to ignore people who are not vocal because they lack confidence in their knowledge of a subject area.

As suggested in Chapter 2, I was interested in the role that Q.D.P.E. played in the teachers' teaching of primary physical education. Currently our provincial governing body has thoroughly endorsed the 10 components and even recently received funding to hire a provincial coordinator full-time to assist teachers. I was also fully committed to the 10 components from my perspective as a specialist in physical education and university teacher. However, after six months of observation of the classes of Karen, Rhonda and Suzanne and another six months teaching primary physical education I am viewing several of the components differently and questioning whose purposes several of the components are sustaining.

A minimum of 150 minutes per five-day week for elementary students where two-thirds of the time is devoted to skill development and the remaining one-third to vigorous physical activity is recommended by professional physical education organizations. The women in this inquiry enjoy teaching their own primary physical education classes. And currently they feel that two gymnasium

periods per week are insufficient. Five periods, however, seem to them to be too much. With her other teaching responsibilities Rhonda stated she probably would not be able to accommodate five classes per week. As well, the children might not view physical education periods as fun to the same extent. And since increased preparation demands might affect other teaching responsibilities for which the administration and parents are more likely to hold the women accountable, these teachers would be hesitant to suggest daily physical education periods.

It appears our profession may have been focusing too much attention on the notion of 'daily', even though 'quality' is the first concept to be emphasized. Jonah, a participant in one of my own classes last semester, was a grade 6 teacher in our city. We had several discussions about primary physical education and physical education in general. I was caught off guard when he kept referring to his program as Q.P.E. (Quality, Physical Education). He said that his school recognized that it could not conform to 'daily' physical education due to facility scheduling and teachers' attempts to meet their responsibilities in other subject areas. This teacher who was also vice-principal of the school, suggested that their physical education programs are better prepared when the teacher has three class periods. He believed five would probably result in the teacher having to 'wing it' in two or more of those classes due to preparation time restraints. Humbert, who observed female adolescents in physical education, suggested on the basis of her observations that

Perhaps our attention would be better focused on what is going on in physical education classes rather than advocating more for them (Humbert, 1995, p. 124).

But even granting the wisdom of the actions of Jonah's school, once again we cannot forget the reality of the hierarchy existing within the school itself. As a grade 6 teacher, if his school was similar to the one in which I observed, his classes would be relatively privileged in having access to even three periods per week.

The general statement of a requirement that 'two-thirds of the time is devoted to skill development and the remaining one-third to vigorous physical activity' seemed generally to be followed in the primary physical education classes of Karen, Rhonda and Suzanne. That terminology is important here. Skill development, while including sport-related skills such as a serve in volleyball or lay-up in basketball, is not limited to these. It also includes fundamental body skills such as walking, running, skipping, swinging and object manipulation skills such as throwing, catching and kicking. The teachers believed that this point was at times forgotten by others outside of their situation. They believed that, since our society values, so dearly, sport and the achievement of sport-related skills it forgets that they are dealing with children and basic body management skills. The women believe they are achieving their primary function in the gradual development of skills and the encouragement of vigorous activity in their classes.

As has been noted, however, the amount of time greatly varies depending

on the ability to get the children to the gym on time and to prepare them for activity. Class management for primary children in physical education is, to say the least, challenging. The amount of time the teacher is able to devote to skill development and vigorous activity is often limited by class management realities as simple as getting the children to stand in a circle or distributing equipment. The teacher's class management is not the issue but the ability of the children being young, inexperienced movers and not experienced in the control and structure of the physical education class that is generally required. The ability to maintain straight lines, get into a circle, follow instructions and perform the task adequately reinforces the underlying basis for sport and patriarchal values of control, automation of activity and structured behaviour of the participants.

Support services for physical education teachers for monitoring, training and resource materials are recommended by professional organizations. The discussion so far has shown that support services for primary teachers and their physical education were very limited if they existed at all. Most of the support has been focused on the specialist teacher or upper grades. Also important to note was the lack of time for the women to participate in physical education in-services or conferences. If professional physical education organizations are truly concerned about children and their physical education experiences, it may be necessary to try to gain access to assist the primary teacher through early childhood or language arts conferences.

Even if attempts are made to provide support services, they usually show

just how little understanding there is with respect to the real world of the primary physical education teacher. They also usually show how prevalent the masculine 'sport' values are as well. Two anecdotes in relation to this idea should show the need for sensitivity and understanding of the primary physical education context. Rhonda related one attempt where a male teacher was given the task to encourage Q.D.P.E. in schools throughout the province. However his background as a specialist in physical education and former elite football athlete provided him little insight into the women teachers teaching physical education in some primary division schools. This teacher, in her view, was the poster-boy for the male model of sport. His ideas were quickly dismissed by the teachers. In another situation, an individual who wanted to provide a Q.D.P.E. in-service to teachers in our city advertised a clinic at the local gun club. This proposal, to teach the students to shoot at a gun range, raised the eye-brows of both the primary teachers and the specialists in the field.

It really begins to appear that those involved in the preparation of primary physical education teachers have to wear the 'shoes', of primary physical education teachers so-to-speak, to truly understand their lived world. But to do this our profession must first try to be open to an experience that may not fit within the patriarchal framework that we have flourished within as well as admitting this traditional framework may need modification.

Most parents have no idea

Personally, I had a positive experience with physical education. I had

women role models who were positive examples. In retrospect, I admired these women because I was a good athlete and uncritically living a particular model of physical activity. My own success made me unable to appreciate how little value or interest physical education and activity might have for other people. Beyond that, I also did not realize how negative the experience was for some. I recall throughout my high school years that I was for several years the host for Mrs. Hunter our physical education teacher on parent-teacher's night. I was in a long hallway and had a desk set up outside a classroom where Mrs. Hunter hoped to converse with parents about their daughter's or son's progress in physical education.

These nights often proved long and lonely as parents rarely came to visit the physical education teacher. In one occasion a parent came whose son was not even in physical education but on the track and field team that Mrs. Hunter coached. While geography, history and math teachers had parents signed up for every appointment as Mrs. Hunter's host I had only three scheduled interviews. And aside from the parents of the track team member, the other two parents were of students who were doing very well in physical education. In a general sort of way, I learned from these evenings just what value physical education has in the minds of most people.

This situation illustrates and confirms where physical education is situated in the hierarchy of subjects. More and more, parents are concerned about their children's education. Sometimes this extends to volunteerism in classes. Yet

physical education, because it is not viewed as important, does not get this sort of attention.

The new principal at St. Jude's has been instrumental in creating a community-friendly school since his arrival. Very often during my visits I would see a parent accompanying classes on school trips, helping out with an upcoming function or providing individual assistance to children in various subject areas. But this is a relatively new state of affairs. In general the parents of students at St. Jude show little interest in the happenings at the school and in their child's class.

Parents really have, on the whole, little idea about what goes on in school. Like it's only the parents who make themselves visible in the school, that help out in the classroom, that they say 'Oh, I don't know how you can do it'. Because they have no idea. Their perception is that this is my child and that's all you have. - Rhonda

And while the women did acknowledge some parent concern regarding their child's academic performance not one of the three women in all their years of experience has ever had a parent ask about their child's progress in primary physical education. Suzanne stated the only mention ever made was concerning the child being overwhelmed in the CougarDome as noted in the previous chapter.

Except for why does my child cry when they go in. No they don't and I've always been disappointed in it because I think that their phys. ed. is one of the most important aspects of their school. - Suzanne

Lack of interest towards physical activity as part of their child's education program may be the reason that no parents openly make the primary teacher accountable for physical education by inquiring about the class. Like the teachers themselves, they seem to put physical education lower on the 'totem pole' as compared to other subject areas. Even if parents do volunteer, it is inevitably in a subject area to which they attribute more value. Physical education thus loses again. If a parent helps out in another subject, this relieves some of the class management problems for the teacher, and she can give more time and individual attention to pupils. No one volunteers for physical education, though, so preparation time, class management, and little opportunity to provide individual attention remain the rule.

Upon commencing this inquiry I sent over one hundred permission forms home to parents of the children in the classes of Karen, Rhonda and Suzanne. The forms provided a description of the project and included my telephone number for any questions that a parent might have. I received only one telephone call from a parent. This father asked me if I was going to bring his son's kindergarten class to the health and fitness centre at the university to run the children on the treadmill and test their fitness levels. I explained that fitness testing was not within the parameters of the inquiry as the focus was to be on the teachers and that there are ethical as well as methodological difficulties 'testing' children in this manner (Rowland, 1990). The parent seemed quite concerned that his son was not getting enough physical education. I asked whether he had spoken

to his son's teacher or the principal about his concern and he said no.

While this was only one telephone call it was significant that this father would not have spoken with the teacher or principal about his concern and instead opted to speak to a professor in physical activity at the university. And while fitness testing can be an indicator of the strengths and weaknesses in a quality physical education program, the father seemed to be preoccupied with the notion of fitness testing of the children as if testing them would somehow make their physical education program better. Suzanne stated that no parent had ever before indicated to her an interest in observing their child's physical education class this year or ever. So this father was concerned about a class he had never seen. One final speculative query that arises from this event is whether this father would have called if he had a daughter in kindergarten instead of a son? I wonder about this not to accuse or be judgemental. Rather, it occurs to me because of the way our society generally looks at these things. Without intentionally being biased or unfair, it may seem natural for a parent to be concerned about his son's level of fitness but never to think of that of his daughter.

Finally, the absence of inquiry and the apparent lack of interest by parents prompts the question, 'what do parents think physical education is?' The parents involved in this inquiry and parents in the teachers' past experiences have displayed little interest in physical education. Even if a parent such as the father cited above actually called Suzanne and expressed concern about her teaching of physical education and volunteered to help out her class, what model of activity

would be expected? More than likely, he would expect traditional competitive activities and skill development.

As mentioned earlier, most parents tend to have little idea about what occurs in their child's class and even less information about their primary physical education.

A lot of parents feel that all of kindergarten is play and yeah they do play in the gym but they're developing skills that are going to help them with sports that they play, with their academic careers as far as eye tracking and reading and printing. - Suzanne

The correlation between the development of basic movement abilities and academic proficiency in children has been substantiated in research (Payne & Isaacs, 1995). But usually, the only connection that parents may make between primary physical education and the other subject areas is that they appear on the progress report. And the progress report itself, Rhonda stated, physically differentiates between those subjects the parents should be concerned about and 'all the others'. The layout of the report card does appear to send a message to parents about what is more important and what deserves their primary attention.

Our report card is set up we have the language arts and math on this side. And on the right side we have science, social, health, phys. ed., fine arts on this side. And I would say nine times out of ten the parents don't even look [at the right side]. Well they look but they do not discuss the right hand side. - Rhonda

Also the report card is limited in the information regarding the child's physical performance in physical education. The teachers mark either 'yes' or 'no' for the child's evaluation in physical education. Therefore there is not a lot of informative feedback for the parent on the child's progress in this class. However, as Suzanne stated, if there were too much information and it would be difficult or too time consuming to evaluate.

The report card is 'yes or no'. Can they do it can they not. I had a little boy came from a school in another big city and on his report card they even had 'throw the ball properly' at whatever degree angle it was. And I thought that really breaks down the skill and I thought 'holy man', I don't think I want to get into quite that much detail. - Suzanne

As mentioned earlier, only once did I see one of the teachers bring a clipboard to class and that was during her evaluation of student performance prior to report card time. When I inquired about how the teachers evaluated their children in physical education, Rhonda answered that unless a child has a real movement problem and appears awkward she generally gives everyone the same evaluation.

The first report card I usually, unless the child really stands out as very poorly coordinated, gross motor coordination in that way, or I find is exceptionally good I really just give them a straight 'yes' if they're doing as required for their grade level. Then in the second report card I do more evaluation of the skills I've taught. The first report card I feel we really haven't gotten into it. It's more an orientation, the feel of the gym, just

starting into it. - Rhonda

This evaluation process is limited by three factors. One factor is the type of feedback required of the teacher. With the teacher being accountable for checking only one of two boxes and not providing any verbal statements why should she do more. Also once again time is an issue. As Suzanne mentioned if the evaluation process were to be more in-depth she does not know if she would have the time for it. The evaluation process may also be perceived as being limited based on the teacher's knowledge of critical skills of particular fundamental movements, although research has shown that, generally, teachers do know which children in their class are having movement difficulties or are physically awkward (Weiss & Horn, 1990). Knowledge of the specifics of movement skills are not necessary when a teacher has good observational skills and can scan a class moving and identify with some accuracy which children look clumsy, awkward or just not in sync with other children in the class.

Finally, the parents do not make the primary teacher accountable for her teaching of primary physical education. What she is able to produce reflects the parents' lacklustre attitude towards physical education and is constrained by time limitations generated by greater emphasis on the subjects with which the parents are most concerned.

We have a fun time in phys. ed.

Regardless of who the teacher is accountable to for her primary physical education, the ultimate focus should be the child. The definitive centre of the

pedagogical experience is the well-being of each child. On several occasions during my questioning about their primary physical education programs the women would respond with 'Why don't you ask the kids?' Initially in the inquiry I was so driven by the idea of observing the women that what the children did was only secondary to the purpose of the inquiry. However, on one Friday afternoon in Suzanne's class we were preparing to journey to the gymnasium and a small boy was quietly standing beside me. As the line began to move forward the boy gently reached up and put his hand in mine. When I looked down he was smiling and said, 'You're my buddy'. That is when it truly dawned on me that ultimately this inquiry is not just about the women but about the children. Teaching them. Caring for them. Entertaining them. It is about the movement experience and what responses that experience produces in the little ones. Within the interactions of the primary physical education class these things are what will ultimately promote positive or negative attitudes towards the experience of physical activity.

When questioning the children about their physical education I did not once hear a negative comment. All the children enjoy primary physical education and what they do in the gym. In only two circumstances did I witness children not listening, laughing or smiling. As mentioned, CougarDome can at times be an overwhelming experience for the younger children. Many children upon entering kindergarten have never been in a room as loud as the gym when balls are being bounced and children are squealing. Some children become frightened and start crying when going to that scary place. Suzanne would make an extra effort to

allow some form of comfortable transition into the gymnasium space. Usually by the second month of classes most children are comfortable going to the gym.

The second circumstance in which I would observe unhappy children in physical education was when they were hurt. Of course with 30 small bodies running about with not yet fully developed motor and body coordination there were bound to be accidents. During classes there was often a child who had run into another child and began crying. The teacher would have to disrupt her instruction or the activity to tend the crying child until they were settled. Frequently this would disrupt the women's teaching. But as I learned in the 'quid pro quo' portion of this inquiry in which I taught the classes myself, stopping seemed the only alternative. You are not in a teaching context that allows you to send the child to the sidelines while they are upset, frightened or hurt. You are not in a teaching or sport context that allows you to tell the child to 'shake it off'. One of the most effective methods of dealing with the circumstance is to cuddle and console the child. This circumstance or method is not mentioned in our physical education texts. However in what other subject area are you most likely to encounter this situation?

The primary physical education teachers in this inquiry did have time for the children. They had the best interests of the children at the heart of their pedagogical interactions. Caring for 30 children in a class can be a worry as Rhonda states.

Like you'll get notes from parents saying would you check every night

before Suzie goes home to see that she's got her mitts. I've got 30 children. I don't have time to make sure Suzie has her mitts every night. That's Suzie's job, you know. They think that that's the only one you have to worry about. - Rhonda

However, if Suzie were to set out for home in the winter without her mitts Rhonda would take measures to not let that happen. This is what I experienced as a child. My parents would warn if I was attempting or doing something silly, 'If you get hurt don't come crying to me'. But inevitably if I did hurt myself mom would be there. But it is part of the learning process. What can I physically do with my body? A child needs to explore their physicality or body awareness. They need to exert physical effort in what is ultimately a learning domain.

The winter I was doing my fieldwork was a particularly cold year. On many days or for a week at a stretch recess would be cancelled due to the wind chill warnings issued. The teachers were particularly vocal about the lack of movement the children had and its result on their general well-being. It was in this context that we discussed the two physical education periods for each class and the notion of daily physical education. How much is necessary? But the issue always was drawn back to time. What time is available that is best for the children's schedule? How much time can be managed with all the teacher's other responsibilities, most of which are considered, rightly or not, more important?

I felt that my phys. ed. program was much better with more time. You know when you're limited to half an hour twice a week you can't get a lot

in. And then of course you don't even dare, like when I was in the other schools when I had more phys. ed., if I was going skating then I would cancel the phys. ed. maybe the next day because they had had it that day.

But I can't do that here because they don't give us enough anyway as it is. -

Rhonda

While primary physical education periods are limited the women are careful to make sure that the children get the most time available for them and yet reasonable enough to accommodate other subjects.

If we have skating Tuesday afternoon we won't have phys. ed. Tuesday morning. If we have skating Wednesday then we'll still have our phys. ed.

[on Tuesday] because they just don't have enough time for it. - Karen

Although time constraints resulting from physical education's lack of priority as a subject responsibility shape the meaning the women find in the practice of teaching physical education, they find ways of empowering themselves to provide a positive experience for the children. An action as simple as taking the children to the playground apparatus for 'free play' despite the way administration may react to such a move was pressing the boundary of what some primary teachers felt might be viewed as unproductive time by the administration. However, such an action allows the children to occasionally experience movement in an environment that promotes whole body actions such as hanging, swinging, climbing and jumping. If for no other reason than that there is more opportunity for each child to experience movement on this apparatus in a less competitive

environment than at recess time, the time is valuable. Though uneasy about the possible consequences of the appearance of allowing the children to 'waste' time playing, the women occasionally did so. This also permitted flexibility in subject environment and activity as well as freeing some of the teacher's time.

Critique

Physical education currently serves society as the educational grass roots of a monolithic sport culture. This culture serves to perpetuate the ideals of male strength, structural values, and financial power. To the extent that sport and physical activity in general reflect and reproduce dominant ideology, teaching practices that have other emphases can have positive effects. They can challenge existing notions of what quality means in physical education. The existing notions are oppressive in that they relegate most women and many men to the sidelines.

Taking their cue from the administration and parents, the teachers consciously decide not to spend a great amount of time in the preparation of their physical education class. Their comments suggest, however, that there is dissatisfaction with the structure of the curriculum and the practicality of the way the professional organization suggests the physical education class should be conducted. Though the women do, to some extent, give in to the existing value structures, they also seem to believe that primary physical education has more value than it is generally accorded. And they question some of the objectives and suggestions of curricula and Q.D.P.E. In these ways, although perhaps not fully consciously, they resist the existing ideology in two ways. First, they resist what is

not practical in real terms for them. Second, They resist a 'sport' mentality that seems to suggest that primary physical education has purpose and is important only to the extent that children develop the coordination and body comfort that enables them to move into 'real' sport skill developments.

The free play, or fun, busy and happy environment of the primary grades encourages the view that movement can be enjoyable, creative and interactive. Force-feeding physical education five days a week would only result in the mechanistic delivery of a physical education curriculum with which the teacher does not feel connected. Keeping in mind the teacher's time restraints, this would reinforce an automaton behaviour that reproduces the world of work. Deciding what physical education is within her own framework of time permits each woman control of how she implements the subject within the context of the educational experience of the primary grade.

Daily physical education is suggested in the curriculum. This suggestion can never be taken seriously by the teachers because it seems to take so little account of the realities of their working lives. This creates a negative interdependence between the teacher and the curriculum as it is difficult with other responsibilities to satisfy this requirement. The teacher is then always falling short of the recommended structure, or time allotment, for physical education.

The recommendation that physical education be a daily event in itself tends to reinforce a circling of the wagons among the men in administration and the upper grades in this school. There is only so much gym time available, so the

prevailing view of skill development justifies more time in the gym for their classes. This perpetuates the hierarchy of the school culture and tacitly supports the existing curriculum design and its writers. The situation as it exists allows the curriculum guide and Q.D.P.E. program documentation to suggest that the right kind of attention and emphasis are placed on physical education in the schools. The experience and opinions of these teachers suggest otherwise.

And in the larger context of sport in our culture, men are still predominantly the administrators, spectators and participants. That we expect women primary teachers to wholeheartedly embrace a particular kind of physical education, an aspect of our sport culture, and to make it a priority within her teaching responsibilities is to insist on control over her professional decision making. In essence while these women have reproduced traditional views of what appropriate female labour is by becoming teachers of young children, they do empower themselves in their conscious and unconscious resistance to the reproduction of patriarchal values inherent in physical education.

From a feminist perspective, it is important that we provide greater opportunity for women in the primary grades to be an integral part of the development and implementation of the guiding objectives and values of the physical education curriculum, including those of other grade levels. Allowing the teachers to lead assists in diminishing the boundaries between university professors, school administrators and teachers. For example, free play, although perhaps presently deemed to be too unstructured for educational institutions to

advocate, allows the children to participate in movement in a more unstructured environment. Hence, it allows more time for physical activity as the environment is not limited to the school gymnasium.

Do transformative possibilities in the classroom, school and society as a whole exist that may allow more time for women teaching primary physical education to interact with this curriculum? Similar to sport within our culture, the classroom, school and society are constrained by patriarchal values that do not permit time to flow freely but instead be bounded and captured into slots. The twenty-four hours in the women's day is scheduled into personal and professional areas. Time is further divided into professional subject areas which are to be facilitated and are reviewed according to perceived levels of importance and productivity. The meaning of physical education for these women is obscured in the school environment by its low priority relative to other more valued subjects. And in the larger context of society, although sport is allocated a great deal of time in the leisure and financial priorities of most men and some women, most women do not view time spent interacting with the sport culture as important.

The way these women interact with primary physical education was explicitly suggested to be limited by time constraints. However, there are implicit suggestions of the innate nature of sport in our society, the value of physical education in the school environment and the teacher's explicit power to decide what is physical education within her class.

CHAPTER 8

REFLECTIONS

Quid pro quo

If you don't walk in somebody else's shoes sometimes you just can't relate to what they're talking about. - Suzanne

Upon initially meeting with the teachers they sat politely and listened to my proposed plan for the inquiry. After my outline the first question came from Rhonda, 'While you get to observe our physical education, what exactly do we get out of this?' I explained that they would be instrumental in increasing the understanding of their experiences with physical education and this would in the long-run benefit primary teachers. I was nicely told that was not enough. I asked what it was that they thought they would like and immediately Rhonda stated, 'Well you're supposed to be the expert, how about teaching our classes for awhile. So then you would be used as a resource for us and also get a taste of the real world'.

As this was supposed to be a collaborative inquiry with the teachers and I working together, I immediately agreed to the arrangement. Upon leaving the school I wondered about the ethical question that might be raised by such an agreement. Would this be viewed as bribing the participants to agree to the observation period? On our ethics application form there is a question regarding whether the researcher is influencing or has some power over the participants that require them to take part. This may be evident in situations where the instructor

is requiring students to fill out surveys as part of a research project. However, I did not believe that the 'quid pro quo' experience would be detrimental to the teachers or myself; in fact, we both would benefit from the experience. And initially I was not sure whether the experience would be included as part of the overall inquiry. But my experiences in the teaching did assist in reaffirming several of the notions that I found in the women's experiences. So I feel it is important to share some thoughts on this phase of the inquiry.

First I would like to clarify that I did not actually walk a great distance in the shoes of the primary teachers. I only taught their physical education classes for half an hour at a time. Since that half-hour did not occur for me as it would for them, in the midst of all the other subjects they are responsible for from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., my experience was a fraction of theirs. And although I have counselled children this age at summer camps my teaching experience has been with upper elementary children and adults in university.

The teachers asked that I show them some dance classes as they believed they would benefit from this resource, but I also did orienteering, cooperative games and fundamental body and game skills. I was terribly nervous when I first started teaching. I hoped that I would not disappoint the teachers, the children or, for that matter, myself. I spent a great deal of time preparing the lessons and presenting them to the women prior to teaching. I even taped the music on separate tapes for convenience and ease of use. I had learned that, since their preparation time was very precious, the women would probably not repeat the

lessons if those were not successfully demonstrated and clearly outlined in the lesson plan.

Initially when I began teaching the women sat at the side and observed as I had. Their comments afterward were often about the children. Observing the children move while someone else taught provided insight into many children that the teacher, in her other contexts with the children, was not able to see. Also, as the lesson was somewhat different than what they usually taught, in several instances particular children who were subdued or less-vocal appeared to find their niche, especially in dance. The teachers after observing for a time began participating in several of the dance lessons, with the notable exception of creative dance. I was pleased that they did. They seemed to have as much fun doing the line dances as the children did.

While most of my experiences were controlled and positive, there were several instances where I could empathize with the women teaching primary physical education. On a few occasions my lesson had to be flexible when my planned activity ran short, and I was forced to think quickly on my feet to fill the remainder of the class. Fortunately I do have a plethora of resources that saved me, but I discovered how easy it was to mistime an activity or how long the children would be able to participate before losing interest.

Another circumstance where I was saved on numerous occasions was when the special needs children needed extra attention in order to participate. Amy was in a wheelchair in Suzanne's kindergarten class and during an Aladdin magic

carpet dance was able to move her carpet (towel) so that it did fly through the air. However when we progressed from the stationary activity to moving the carpets around the gymnasium Amy was left out as she could not manipulate her wheelchair. Suzanne 'rescued' me and pushed Amy around the gym while all the children were flying their carpets. It was impossible to provide individual attention, demonstrate and lead all at the same time. If Suzanne had not rescued me Amy would have been forced to continue the stationary activity, which I am sure she would have grown tired of in a short time. Also of note during this particular class was that, while Suzanne rescued me, she herself ran into trouble pushing the wheelchair. Adam, a child with attention deficit disorder and filled with too much candy that day, quickly changed his body direction and ran right into the front of Amy's wheelchair while Suzanne was pushing it. This caused a bit of commotion and I am sure was an interesting story for Adam to tell his parents.

During an episode in Rhonda's class I truly experienced the notion of caring for the children at the centre of the pedagogical experience. I was teaching a line dance to the grade 1 class to a popular piece of music. I felt good about the teaching experience and the children were moving well and having fun with the dance. From the movement training portion of the class where we explored the different segments of the dance we were about to begin an attempt at the entire piece together. It was at that point that Rhonda received a message about a long distance telephone call and she left the gym. I was congratulating the children on their beautiful performance and suggested that we show the dance to their big

buddies in grade six some day. We commenced the dance in its entirety when I noticed that Maxine was standing still and crying. As I was demonstrating I worked my way over to her and asked what was wrong. Then she started sobbing. I kept asking if she was alright but she only sobbed. I cuddled her and she immediately grabbed me around the neck and cried into my shoulder. She was not talking, just crying and squeezing my neck. I kept trying to demonstrate and lead the children through the dance but it was impossible with Maxine crying into my shoulder, and I found she was getting heavy. Rhonda was not there to rescue me. A teaching moment. I eventually gave up and asked the children to practise the dance by themselves although many could not remember the entire piece. They were not able to direct themselves. Essentially one child stalled the lesson and I could do nothing about it but console her. I could not say 'Go sit on the bench until you feel better'. I did not know why she felt bad. I had to essentially allow free-play or movement to the music until Rhonda came back, to my relief. She immediately pried the sobbing child from around my neck and I then had to gather the children, refocus them and continue with the lesson. At the end of the class I found out what had caused Maxine to cry. She had had her own moment of performance anxiety -- a panic attack initiated by my comment that the children would show their dance to their big buddies. She did not want to perform in front of the big kids. It scared her.

What could I do? I had observed this happen to the teachers on numerous occasions -- usually from children running into each other. This incident that I

unwittingly created and had no control over stalled the lesson and I could not do anything about it. This personal experience really clarified for me what I had observed but had not until that moment, ever felt. It refocused the teaching process for me. I can never again look at the teaching of physical education primarily from the perspective of content. Of course, that remains very important, but this experience made me very aware of what kinds of events can create positive and negative feelings to arise in association with a particular subject. These intangibles, the feelings of the child and the interaction of child and teacher on this more personal level, are often ignored. Perhaps that is because they can be so difficult to know how to handle. I have never come across a physical education teaching manual that addressed this issue. Rhonda apologized for having to leave me alone but also made the comment, 'Now you know what it's like. Quite the experience eh?'. Yes it was quite the experience for me.

There were two other situations for which I was unprepared. First, I decided to repeat a dance lesson that I had taught to the kindergarten children for Karen's grade 2 class. Of course, I increased the complexity of the movement slightly but began the dance by breaking it down to its elementary steps. Well as soon as I stood up to demonstrate three of the children in the class began the very dance I intended to teach. They already knew the dance that I had created. When I asked them how they knew, they said their five-year-old siblings taught it to them. I used these children to demonstrate. The second situation resulted in the only time I felt that what I was doing was not appreciated. I had the music on

during an activity where we were parading around the gym doing different movement patterns and suggested that the children try something new. As we moved around skipping, galloping and leaping I decided suddenly to cartwheel. I did not expect the reaction I got. The children loved it. 'Oh look June can cartwheel '. However as my action caused excitement for the children Suzanne looked uncomfortable. I wondered whether she thought it was a boastful movement. Whether the children thought she should be able to do it. I worried that the cartwheel crossed the line and 'showed-her-up '. I had moved from being one of them while teaching to being the 'jock'. I showed the children that she could not move. I did not ask the children to cartwheel but a few did and a few tried after my demonstration. However I did not feel comfortable with Suzanne's expression. I did not cartwheel again.

Reflective practice

On reflecting on the quid pro quo period I believe that the experience assisted this inquiry and will benefit me as a teacher of primary physical education. I recommend more university professors get into the trenches instead of commenting from the periphery. But everyone protects their own comfort zones. I also came to realize that the quid pro quo suggestion was yet another way the teachers negotiated and used their personal and associative power with me to attain more resources for their physical education. Their use of power benefitted me, them and the children. I thank them.

During the past decade, the concept of reflective practice has been

advocated by some researchers as a means to generate professional development for educators. Osterman (1990) stated that educators challenged to become personally and actively involved in a critical assessment of their behaviour will ultimately be the key to educational change and the development of their teaching craft.

In her experiences with teachers in a graduate-level curriculum course, Oberg's (cited in Grimmett, MacKinnon, Erickson and Riecken, 1990) aim for teacher self-reflection is to have the teachers

...make explicit for themselves the intentions and underlying assumptions, knowledge, values, and sensitivities that guide their practice (p. 34).

This perspective views teacher reflection as the reconstruction of experiences that are taken-for-granted and which serve to frustrate and constrain their teaching practice. Grimmett et al. (1990, p. 35) provide a conceptual mapping of three perspectives on reflection in teacher education that could be used to orient those who are confused, provide direction for those who are exploring and encourage educational dialogue for those who are seeking improvement.

Reflection is well grounded in the tradition of learning theory. Kolb (1984) developed the idea, proposed earlier by Lewin, Dewey, and Piaget, that learning is dependent on the integration of experience through reflection, and of theory with practice. They argued that experience is the basis for learning and that learning cannot take place without reflection. Reflection allows teachers to clarify their

own beliefs about the purposes of education and to examine teaching methods and materials critically to identify hidden, largely tacit, lessons about equity and power. This critical pedagogy described by McLaren (1990) is a movement against the antiseptic, value-free, purely rational view of teaching and learning. Lather positions critical pedagogy as

that which attends to practices of teaching/learning intended to interrupt particular historical, situated systems of oppression (1992, p. 121).

Therefore critical pedagogy in the educational context is the practice of 'transforming' the consciousness of the three agencies -- the teacher, the learner and the knowledge they produce.

Educational reform depends not only on developing new ideas or theories of action, but on eliminating or changing old ideas that drive behaviour. Actions are not always consistent with intentions. What we say we believe (espoused theory) sometimes differs from what we actually do (theory-in-use), and this kind of contradiction is quite common in the school context. Most teachers, for example, agree that all children should be treated equitably within the classroom; however, observational data have repeatedly demonstrated that students are treated differently depending on such characteristics as gender, race, and ability level (Deutsch, 1984; Dunbar & O'Sullivan, 1986). The teacher is often unable to articulate the beliefs, values, and assumptions underlying his or her actual behaviour (Kottkamp, 1990). As teachers become more aware of their theories-in-use, they become more aware of contradictions between what they do and what

they hope to do, and as a result they begin to change and to explore more effective approaches to education (Osterman, 1990). Another facet of this kind of contradiction may be found in Joan's example in Chapter 1. She probably told her students, sincerely believing it to be true, that physical education is good for them; yet she herself was 'petrified' at taking a course in it. What impact did this sort of tension between her 'theory' and her 'practice' have on her and her students? Taking the course allowed her to confront and examine some elements of the theory in practice, and she may now have more conviction about her espoused theory or she may even decide on a wholly different approach based on her reflections about her own experience.

Personal

Learning this through the inquiry, coupled with rereading what I have written about the experience has resulted in my coming to understand the importance of reflection in other than a theoretical way. When I see phrases like 'walking in somebody else's shoes', 'clarified for me', or 'refocused the teaching process for me' I realize how powerful the experience of immersion in the reality can be. Articulating what we observe makes us able to think about what we are doing, which is helpful for primary physical education teachers. But collaborating in their daily experience shakes our own comfort zones. There is much to be gained from being forced out of what we are familiar with. Then to reflect on what we have been confronted with cannot but result in new and different awareness. This is what reflection has come to mean to and for me.

Reflection allows you to set what you think you know against what is unexpected, surprising and unknown. That view may not be anything but a reiteration of what others have already said, but, having been through a version of it, I believe that I comprehend it a level deeper than intellectual understanding.

Though for different reasons, Joan's experience is not so far from my own. I had to admit that I had some trepidation about actually teaching a primary class rather than teaching about how to teach one. My espoused theory had to become theory-in-use. In the course of that experience, I came to realize just how many other factors come into play in the primary teaching act. Although it is by no means useless, theory is often supplanted by unexpected disruptions, time pressures, parental and administrative expectations, hierarchies within the primary school itself, and broader societal concerns about what valuable outcomes should follow from the primary physical education class.

The identification of the themes from the data collection assisted me in recognizing the prevalence and influence of power relationships on the women's practice of teaching physical education in this particular culture. The idea that gender relations, or restraints, do influence the women's ability to move unselfconsciously in their own bodies, own space (the gymnasium in this case) and in their own time continuum was a valuable experience for me to witness personally.

Within the context of wanting to create change to allow women teaching primary physical education to experience a less restrained teaching culture I will

acknowledge that my own impatience can be a hinderance. However, I have, over time, come to realize that change is a slow process. Realizing this, the first step may involve changing my own teaching practice in light of my new understanding of the reality of these women teachers.

Revolutionary and immediate change will not result from the findings of this inquiry; but the kind of knowledge that critical ethnography generates can and should be used together with positivistic findings to enlighten those within or connected with this particular culture. A problem confronting change from this inquiry is that as yet, critical ethnography is not viewed as wholly legitimate by many in the discipline. This, too, will change gradually.

I have come to understand primary physical education in less simplistic terms. It is not merely reluctance due to personal discomfort with activity that affects the attitudes these women have about physical education, though that is actively a part of the picture. The general view, often held by primary teachers themselves, that physical education is less important than science or math or reading makes time an issue. The implicit messages about what the space is ultimately for and about the relative importance of the primary physical education teacher in those larger schemes are factors that, in real terms, often compete with issues such as content and curriculum.

Yet the women are not helpless or powerless. Initially, I was, and was prepared to continue being, angry about what was coming to light in the inquiry. In keeping with what I know of my character, I wanted to change it immediately.

But my own arguments, and those of many feminists, tend to resist revolutionary change. Though these three women are not powerless, they, too, do not all see the issues the same way. Often unwittingly, they tend to reproduce certain kinds of ideas and values even while resisting others. But the inquiry has allowed me to see more clearly that I, too, have been engaged in both reproduction and resistance. Hence the need for and value of reflection. The change it will generate will inevitably be gradual, yet without it, issues similar to the ones dealt with in this inquiry might not even be considered -- and that leaves very little room for positive change to occur at all, at least respecting these issues.

The inquiry and subsequent reflection have prompted me to change my practice and to resolve to keep abreast of what actually goes on in the physical education class. Regarding the focus of the classes that I teach at the university I am less rigid about requiring the students to follow a particular framework set by the dominant discourse of people entrenched in the system. In the elementary physical education class I am more practical in nature and focus on providing a successful and fun movement experience as so many students in these classes do not share my experience as a successful product of the sport system. I know it is difficult to change ingrained attitudes at this point. But I can validate the teachers' experiences by sharing the findings of this inquiry. If some of the issues uncovered in this inquiry are introduced and discussed as a matter of course, that process may contribute to the gradual process of educational reform, and perhaps ultimately in the culture at large.

At one point during reflection it did occur to me that I might be perpetuating a cycle of marginalization for myself within my physical education faculty. I already have less status because I am in elementary teacher education. This coupled with my feminist interest within a predominantly male hierarchy drives me further off the page. And now I have become interested in human science research. Although it is gaining wider acceptance, it is still relegated to the sidelines by a discipline entrenched in the positivistic examination of the functioning of the human body -- not human relationships and power issues. This has caused me enormous frustration during the process of this inquiry. After asking a colleague to review this inquiry's proposal I received this feedback.

I do not see this investigation as a gender issue. Perhaps the results may indicate it is but at this point it would be presumptuous. Personally I think you should investigate why we have a problem at the primary level. Hence is there really a need to create a gender issue in your proposal?

Once again the assumption was made that there is a problem at the primary, non-specialist, level and that identifying gender and power relationships as an issue was presumptuous on my part and perhaps a red herring. A human science colleague tried to console my frustration by stating that those questions are natural given that the individual is coming from a positivistic research background. And that aside, whether such issues marginalize those who see them or not, if they are not raised, it is unlikely that they will be considered.

As a result of this inquiry, the issue of power relations as central to human

interactions is an insight that has jumped to the forefront of how I now view occurrences in my everyday world. Having reflected on it, I believe I have a much keener sense of the variety of ways we negotiate with others in our everyday human exchanges in order to obtain our end, whatever that may be. I was surprised to learn that the teachers in this inquiry both wield and submit to power in so many ways. Suzanne's acknowledgement that she coached the basketball team just to get a key to the gymnasium and Rhonda's example of how some teachers may organize the subjects they teach in order that they conveniently 'run out of time' and cannot fit physical education into their day surprised me. Such examples allowed me to see just how much power women primary teachers wield, aside from the obvious one of influencing our children's attitudes.

Another aspect of this inquiry that surprised me was the women's energy. In speaking with the women it became apparent how full their lives were, professionally and personally. And yet, after 20 years of teaching the women still enjoy their profession and were willing to voluntarily participate in this research project. I have often wondered during the last year or so whether I could be a primary teacher for 20 years...or a university professor for that matter.

By this last statement I do not mean that I question myself doing further research with teachers. Of the research projects that I have been involved in I believe that this has been my most satisfying and has the greatest potential to create change for the profession of physical education and its practitioners.

Use of critical ethnography

This was my first experience with human science research. As with any neophyte I found the process one of exploration for myself. In reviewing my early fieldnotes, I noticed that I was recording and trying to describe every action of the teacher, reaction of the students, and any extraneous information I thought could be relevant to the project to the point of charting the temperature in the gymnasium. (I did this because I was freezing). I believe I was still directed by my general grounding in the positivist approach that utilizes numbers of data to ultimately explain, predict or control the object of research. For example, during my masters degree the instrument I used to observe women teaching elementary teacher education in physical education required that I record the teacher's behaviour every six seconds. I was able to move somewhat beyond my positivist grounding when it finally came to my attention when actually counting the number of my observation periods that during the first three-month period of my fieldwork I had only 40 classes of fieldnotes. The number of potential observation periods over that same period was 68 classes. Prior to commencing my fieldwork I would have assumed that the 28 absent periods were cancelled at the request of the teacher, and while that was the case in several instances it proved the exception rather than the rule. This led to my trying to 'get to the bottom' of this phenomena. As discussed in the theme 'primary physical education in the CougarDome', the gymnasium is a privileged space for the male teachers of older classes in the school. This analysis of the number of observations I had collected

opened up another direction to move and set of questions to ask. Critical ethnography provided me the freedom when fleshing out the nature of the research question to get to the heart of this matter involving the gymnasium space. The explicit actions, interactions and experiences of the primary teacher in the gymnasium space were important, and I had initially focused on those factors exclusively within the physical education class in the gymnasium. But I had not yet come to think that the gymnasium space was community property, that certain groups within that community might hold or be perceived by these women to hold ultimate or at least greater control or influence over that space, and that this control might manifest itself quite variously in the setting of educational priorities of the gymnasium.

While this was a 'learn as I go' process I did find myself allowing and directing myself along a different path because it made sense to me. After the first set of interviews I returned the transcripts to the women for review and clarification. Karen was comfortable with the content of her interview but not with the way she talked. 'Look at all these incomplete sentences -- I'm supposed to be teaching language to the children!' Although Karen felt better that she could repair the incomplete sentences she requested that she be allowed at the next interview to write her responses. In a more traditional research method Karen at this point would have been withdrawn from the project if she did not complete all the required testing procedures. However due to the flexibility of critical ethnography, and with my reassurances that she could edit the second interview,

we decided if she was more comfortable that it was fine.

I have also found that the use of language and the need to write extensively were things to which I was initially unaccustomed. The writing style of positivistic research tends to be dry and limiting regarding the description of information. Oberg states (1989), the writing style for critical ethnography is typically more colourful and expressive and must be if it is to effectively recreate an event or experience for the reader. I found people in the field kept telling me to keep writing, keep writing. Many times I felt that I had said all that needed to be said. However as time passed I found some of my notes and much of my writing needed to be clarified. There have been many editorial transformations of this final document. And although I found this frustrating I also believe I am becoming more perceptive in what it is that I am writing. However this is an ongoing process.

The physical aspects involved in the fieldwork I found exhausting at times. Making seven trips for half-hour physical education periods every week, many of which were unexpectedly cancelled, was trying. But I believe this was a matter of inertia as once I was actually in the class taking notes I was glad to have made the trip. Also making notes, aside from the ones collected during the class, was very time consuming. But these I came to regard as crucially important in a sort of circular pattern. I found that many of the clues leading me to the themes that emerged came from these particular notes. But the notions that led me to recognize them as clues were present in the teaching class notes. This only goes to

prove that if researchers are truly interested in finding what is at the heart of their inquiry, or in trying to get as close as is possible to the truth, that they must expect to put in their time.

My approach and focus has concentrated on and attempted to incorporate both the *explicit* (the conscious) and the *implicit* (the subconscious) values and behaviours in order to attempt a description of actions and an interpretation of meanings found in the actions, interactions and experiences of these teachers. This focus and critique enabled me to uncover or focus my lens on deeper structures of meaning or cultural assumptions that have an impact on or influence human actions and experiences, in this case, particularly as these relate to women engaged in the practice of teaching primary physical education.

Strategies for action resulting from this inquiry

Jayaratne and Stewart (1991) suggest that feminist researchers should consider interpretations consistent with the findings that yield more effective political strategies for change in women's lives rather than victim-blaming interpretations, which may be supportive but are circular in the pattern of women's oppression. This is consistent with the critical ethnography approach, which has the avowed intention to create change, ostensibly for the better. Such an approach is arguably biased, but in some respects not any more so than the way findings from positivistic studies often are. The point is more that, if interpretive bias is not avoidable in any case, let us at least look for biases that are oriented towards ideas that will create positive change rather than those that

will maintain many of the inequities that exist in our society.

If I were to explicitly identify the most important strategy for action as a result of the findings of this inquiry I would have to recommend that validation of the women's experiences and practice of primary physical education is just and sound given the power relations within which they are living. As suggested earlier, victim-blaming interpretations are circular and do not yield to more effective political strategies for change. However, understanding the experiences of these women may allow individuals in teacher education, professional organizations and those seeking research questions in the area to more effectively act when acknowledging different groups of people in the physical education culture. And, for the women teaching primary physical education the findings may be supportive but also emancipatory when reflecting on the power relations present and how these three women may, or may not, have negotiated the situations.

I believe we should attempt some political analysis of the findings from a professional basis as I can only suspect that I will encounter similar reactions to those that I experienced when I first proposed this inquiry. I would like to share these analyses as they may influence future interpretations of this research and present strategies for action as a concrete way to move towards change.

Teacher education

Q.D.P.E. proponents recommend that teacher training institutions must ensure appropriate qualifications for teachers of physical education. However, everyone wants a piece of the pie. As a university professor, I dread revisiting

degree program requirements. In my experience, what usually results is not a program that suits the practicality of the real world for the pupil but the personal and teaching orientations of particularly vocal or influential faculty members. And in the current situation, women are far under-represented in physical education faculties in this country. But even that is not just a question of numbers. Women, too, perpetuate patriarchal values of sport -- performance outcomes based on models of competition amongst students rather than cooperative models which foster long-lasting positive attitudes towards healthful activity and the pursuit of self-knowledge. Even so, the viewpoint from the perspective of female faculty members is restricted due to the limited number of female professors (about 20%) and our lack of positional power. And the viewpoint of feminists (female or male) concerning equity is often ignored or silenced. Currently, at my institution there are no females in the physical education department - Faculty of Education (I am in the Faculty of Physical Activity Studies).

At this point in my university students in elementary education are required to take one physical education class. It is usually taken in the students' first year, which poses problems as the students have limited experience with the university scene. I find the students are more receptive to and comfortable with the idea of teaching physical education if they have already completed their student practicum or are returning in an after-degree program and have some lived experience in the primary grades. However teacher training institutions have been perceived as the ivory tower, where there is a lot of philosophical talk about

'what should be' without risking the experience of 'what really is'.

Professional organizations

The provincial sport governing body supported a student bursary on an application I made to examine primary teachers and their physical education. I discovered later that the bursary committee had many lively discussions concerning my application. Fortunately there were several secondary teachers sitting on the committee who believed we should examine one of the grassroots of the sport system and its implications for future directions for physical activity and their 'sport for all' motto. I imagine while the findings from this inquiry depart from the dominant discourse it will provide valuable information about what is currently occurring in primary physical education and why. I do appreciate that the people in this sport body on receiving my bursary application possessed vision and were open to assisting with the development of literature of this variety in this province.

A less positive reaction came from the provincial physical education organization to which I also applied for funding for this inquiry. An entry from my journal dated October 26, 1992 describes their reaction which was threatened, if not hostile (see Appendix C, p. 293). The organizational leader at that time used his positional power in two particular instances of which I have been made aware to undermine the value of this inquiry from its onset. In one instance he threatened to quit if the application was supported by the group as a whole and in the second instance he returned my application stating I had not followed

appropriate protocol. This surprised me and others in the organization because my application was the first they had ever received and they had never developed any protocol.

I was upset by these actions but not surprised. During one meeting I attended I questioned the support the organization was providing for women in the primary division. The discussion was heated and quickly laid to rest. That incident lead me to write an article on the primary teacher and her physical education class. I submitted it to our provincial organization's journal and it was decided that the organizational group should vote on its inclusion in the journal (another first). Nine months after I submitted it, I received a letter from the organization's leader stating they would not publish the article because 'it was not in the best interest of the organization at this time'. Not to be silenced I submitted it to another provincial physical education journal and it was published in the next edition. And, although I wrote the article prior to this inquiry and my knowledge and understanding about women and their practice of teaching primary physical education has been transformed I have included it for the reader's perusal (see Appendix D, p. 295).

These professional organizations ostensibly exist to further the end of educating people about physical activity. Yet many primary teachers are not members, nor does there seem to be a great effort to cultivate them. Thus no time or money is devoted to their specific problems or professional development. This seems an important omission since attitudes towards physical activity begin at

this level. I would suggest that some effort should be made to accommodate the unique problems and experiences of primary physical education teachers.

Primary teachers

The positive endorsements for this inquiry that have come from interested groups associated with physical activity and education come from primarily the teachers in the field, who smile appreciatively when I tell them about this inquiry. I believe it is important that the findings from this inquiry about primary teachers reach the practitioners. The women teaching primary physical education need to have their work validated instead of viewed as something to be hidden and/or lacking if not detrimental for the children and physical education. As mentioned it may allow them to reflectively act on similarities or differences in their own situation.

Another important implication of this inquiry for professionals in the field was the flexibility of the research design. The lack of rigid time requirements, standardized surveys, and laboratory-like setting, and the opportunity for concrete reciprocity created a very positive environment for this 'collaborative' inquiry. To know that this type of project is possible and that researchers and practitioners can work together towards the same ultimate result is change in action. It provides the opportunity for a taste of reality for the researcher and collegial respect for the researcher-teacher.

What these three teachers and other teachers who may be the participants in similar inquiries cannot forget is that reflection must become a habitual

practice. If the experience of the inquiry becomes only a memory, the possibilities for change arising from the experience will fade with the memory.

Future research

Although research from many completed dissertations is never published in professional journals or presented at scholarly conferences, I hope the findings of this inquiry will reach colleagues through these avenues. Along with the personal desire to share potential findings, the practical need to show professional competence during performance review will also provide motivation for dissemination of these results. The experiential knowledges acquired and developed while doing this fieldwork have broadened my perspective and enhanced my ability to collaborate with and assist practitioners in the teaching field.

However, I will probably be disappointed in the limited interest by particular groups of people regarding the findings of the inquiry. I expect women teaching primary physical education will be interested but the findings indicate that women and men specialists in physical education also need to know what is happening at this level and why. This is not just a women's issue, just as taking an adapted physical activity course is not solely for people with disabilities. We all need to be familiar with the patriarchal framework and ideology within which we are functioning and how our everyday interactions with others are influenced by this framework. However some people are uncomfortable with such open discussion -- especially those who are insecure and perceive change as detrimental

to power arrangements and dissemination that they are familiar and comfortable with.

However in stating what may occur I would like to also suggest the innumerable possibilities that exist. Further research exploring the reactions of new, student and rural primary teachers, to name just a few, to the three themes presented would be enlightening. As the women involved in this inquiry were long-standing professionals it would be interesting to see how new teachers or student teachers react or interpret the suggested themes revolving around body, space and time issues. Also, as rural schools in the province have suggested they possess a closer 'community atmosphere', those schools might present a quite different culture in which to consider this framework of power relations. If nothing else, exploring how these themes exist or do not in the experiences of others would open up discussion on the topic of the practice of teaching physical education and the interaction of individuals within a school culture. Another subgroup with which collaborative possibilities exist are women primary teachers who are successful products of our sport culture. What types of power relations are involved in their interaction with the practice of teaching primary physical education or any other grade level for that matter? How power relations are at work and influence the practice of the teaching or implementation of physical education, recreation, sport, or active living programs can be explored in myriad ways.

Summary

Our sport culture perpetuates patriarchal values within our society. At all levels, sport is dominated by men and entrenched in male-dominated values. If women are admitted, it is in a fashion that is exercised as social control to reproduce and support the biological and gender interests of men. Women are predominantly viewed as providing ornamental support to men and their 'natural' physical superiority. And media-pursued sports that do focus on women require traditionally feminine characteristics -- intuition, grace, flexibility, finesse, dependence, passivity, trust, beauty and receptivity.

There is research substantiating the notion that the television and print media is dominated by the male sport image, one that reinforces that which is power, strength, masculinity and superiority (Birrell & Cole, 1994; Burton, 1991; Burton, 1994). We would be naive to think that this patriarchal ideology does not in some way influence the women who teach primary physical education.

What does the practice of teaching primary physical education mean to these women? was the question posed for this inquiry. The three themes that emerged from the data collected indicated that the teaching of primary physical education is practised in a way that provides a degree of comfort for women in physical activity that is consistent with their values; that the gymnasium space represents a valuable break from classroom routine and reinforces the teachers' relatively low status within the school; and lastly, that time issues surrounding primary physical education reflect its low priority for the women in response to the greater value

the administrators and parents place on other subjects. Importantly, it also is a time when they have fun with the children.

In these contexts we need to understand how power relationships between the primary teachers and others permeates the culture and influences the women's practice of physical education. Having identified such relationships those interested can assist in resisting patriarchal values as perpetuated in sport and physical education and create change that is beneficial for the primary teachers, the children they teach and the subject of physical education.

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APPENDIX A

THE SPECIALIST AND NONSPECIALIST TEACHING PHYSICAL EDUCATION: SWIMMING IN THE SHALLOW END

Common sense prompts most people to think that there is a direct correlation between a subject area and the expertise of the teacher assigned to instruct pupils in that subject. Thus, many parents--and even some educators---may assume that curricula are always implemented by teachers fully familiar with the unique content associated with a particular discipline. Yet, many pupils in Canadian elementary schools have teachers who are not thoroughly trained in the disciplines associated with the content areas required in the core curriculum. Physical education does not escape this general circumstance and it may be that, for a number of reasons, the physical education curriculum suffers for it most among all the elements of the elementary core curriculum. Concerns that parents and educators may have about the competence or qualifications of teachers usually focus on the subjects traditionally viewed as vital to that core curriculum (i.e. language arts, mathematics, and science). Those concerns do not often extend to a teacher's ability to maximize the benefits of a physical education class. Educators to whom this issue is important, therefore, need to focus on some issues in the deep end of the pool rather than remaining complacently in the safety and comfort of the shallow end. This paper will: review the research focusing on the specialist versus the nonspecialist teaching physical education; summarize the respective advantages of having a specialist or a nonspecialist teaching physical education; and identify some of the issues that will need to be addressed if the physical education curriculum is to be implemented to its best effect elementary schools.

While the research reviewed here does focus on several different kinds of variables that may be influenced by a specialist or nonspecialist teaching physical education, there are some aspects of the terminology that should be noted. Firstly, the terms synonymous with nonspecialist' were "generalist" and "classroom teacher". It appears the 'vogue' is nonspecialist and will be used accordingly. Also,

the research rarely defines the term, or experiential background of, the 'nonspecialist'. Secondly, the research has utilized a wide range of definitions for the term specialist which include:

- ▶ individuals who have a degree in the discipline;
- ▶ individuals who have specialized in the discipline during their teacher training;
- ▶ individuals defined as the specialist teacher in their school; and,
- ▶ individuals who are currently specialists in their teacher training program.

Review of the Research

The initial investigations, conducted two decades ago which involved the specialist and nonspecialist, focused on fitness and motor performance as the variables which could help determine who best should implement the physical education curriculum. Zimmerman (1959) employed the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (A.A.H.P.E.R.) Youth Fitness Test with 333 children in grades five through eight. Data was collected on the variables: sit-ups, pull-ups, shuttle run, standing long jump, softball throw, 50 yard dash, and 600 yard run/walk. The results of the study indicated that the children taught by physical education specialists exhibited a higher level of physical performance on the fitness test measures than did children instructed by the nonspecialist teacher. Similar results were found by Clarke (1971) who examined the muscular strength and cardiovascular endurance of 360 grade six children.

Motor performance variables were tested using a sample of 400 children in Workman's investigation (1965). Test items included the softball throw, basketball dribble, standing long jump and shuttle run. Workman found that the 200 grade six children taught by the physical education specialist teacher had better motor performance scores than the 200 children taught by the nonspecialist teacher.

While a majority of the research has compared the specialist and nonspecialist teacher the following two studies focused on unique sample groups. Hallstrom (1965) investigated the effects of the specialist, nonspecialist, and

physical education specialist who was also the classroom teacher. Results from the study indicated that the specialist had a more positive effect on the development of the measured variables than did the other teachers. Van Wieren (1973) collected fitness and motor performance data from 382 grade five children who received instruction in physical education from the classroom teacher and the classroom teacher consulting with the physical education specialist. The teacher consulting with the specialist provided the advantage when the children's data was analyzed.

Self-image and fitness were the measured variables in Yeatts and Gordon's study of 75 grade seven children (1968). The children were administered the A.A.H.P.E.R. Fitness Test and Gordon's self-image survey 'How I See Myself'. Results indicated that the children performed better and were more able to assess their fitness level accurately with a specialist teaching physical education. Also, self-image positively correlated with physical performance for these children.

While initial investigations suggested that a specialist teaching physical education had a more positive effect on the fitness, motor performance, and self-image of children more recent studies examining these and other variables have proven to be inconclusive. Patterson and Faucette (1990) administered the Children's Attitude Toward Physical Activity (CATPA) Inventory to 414 grade four and five children. The inventory assessed children's attitudes toward physical activity participation within seven scales: physical activity as an aesthetic experience, as a form of health and fitness, as a means of social growth, as the pursuit of vertigo, as a catharsis, as an ascetic experience, and as a means of continuing social relations. Findings implied that the attitudes toward physical activity were similar for the children in this study regardless of the type of teacher.

In reviewing research studies which focus on behaviours associated with effective teaching, Placek and Randall (1986) found no significant differences in academic learning time in the physical education (ALT-PE) classes taught by seven specialists and thirteen nonspecialists. This is in contrast to the findings in Faucette and Patterson's study which examined teaching behaviours via Rushall's

Teacher Observation Schedule (1990). Specialists (n=4) observed had significantly more effective teaching behaviours (e.g. feedback, rewarding, questioning, directing, explaining and informing) and significantly less non-effective behaviours (e.g. monitoring, attending) than did the nonspecialists observed (n=7). Also, the authors attributed student activity levels increasing with the specialist teachers due to more appropriate class organization.

Grant (1979) found no significant differences between the specialists and nonspecialists student teachers in either their teaching effectiveness or generic behavioral patterns. However, noticeable variability was found within each group for the behaviours associated with Gasson's Three Dimensional System of Interaction Analysis. Twa (1982) found similar findings when using the Modified Rankin Interaction Analysis System. There were no significant differences between specialists and nonspecialists in the verbal and nonverbal interaction used but within categories specialists used significantly more 'movement to skill practice' behaviour while nonspecialists had considerably more 'teacher talk'.

The *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education* published a monograph on a three-year study by Graham, Metzler and Webster (1991). This longitudinal research measured the effect of the specialist and nonspecialist teacher on the motor performance, fitness, cognitive, and affective development of children throughout the elementary years. Data was collected using: the observation of motor skills throwing, catching, kicking and striking; the A.A.H.P.E.R. Fitness Test; an adaptation of the survey used in Surrey schools to measure children's knowledge concerning movement performance; and, a combination attitude toward physical activity survey and a perception of ability questionnaire. The results from the data collected suggested that children who received sporadic instruction from a nonspecialist in physical education did not significantly differ on any of the measures when compared to those children receiving instruction twice weekly from a physical education specialist. The researchers suggest a curriculum factor which may have affected the results. This factor being that policy makers, curriculum supervisors, and teachers tend to keep adding content

to the curriculum when innovations in the discipline come to their attention. This is problematic when existing content is still retained and teachers must try to cover all content in a stable time allocation. Hence what occurs is children get exposed to a wide range of educational content but may come away with little learning due to limited practice or review time.

While the aforementioned research focused on the effectiveness of a specialist or nonspecialist teaching physical education the following studies examined the nonspecialist and the physical education curriculum. The studies conducted by Faucette, McKenzie and Patterson (1990) , and Faucette and Patterson (1989) discovered findings that indicated the curriculum employed by nonspecialists usually involved the children in game-type activities with few opportunities for children to engage in skill practice, gymnastics, and dance activities. It was also found that frequently these subjects would drop physical education classes from the class schedule or instead allow the children to engage in free play or 'extended recess'. Furthermore, the latter study indicated those teachers serving as subjects in the study had an overwhelmingly negative attitude toward the responsibility of teaching physical education as they had little value in the subject.

Advantages for the Specialist and Nonspecialist in P.E.

While the research presented is not exhaustive and that currently available is inconclusive there are theoretical advantages in having the specialist and nonspecialist teach physical education. As discussed in the literature and presented by Sanborn and Hartman (1970), the advantages for a specialist teaching the elementary physical education class include but are not limited to:

- ▶ the specialist having a better understanding of the content in the discipline of physical education and therefore being better able to utilize that content for the children's advantage;
- ▶ the specialist usually being a competent mover which can be used as an instructional aid and provide a positive role model for the children;
- ▶ the specialist providing consistent scope and sequence to a physical

education curriculum by being familiar with each individual class program and interschool instructional programs;

- ▶ the specialist providing a valuable 'break' in the day for both the nonspecialist teacher and the children; and,
- ▶ the specialist providing a quality year-long physical education program by being the designated individual responsible for organizing and administrating school activities and facilities.

The advantages for the nonspecialist teaching the elementary physical education program include but also are not limited to:

- ▶ the nonspecialist having a better understanding and relationship with the individual in the gymnasium due to the amount of time spent with the child in the classroom;
- ▶ the nonspecialist providing consistency in instruction and behaviour management within all subject areas, including physical education;
- ▶ the nonspecialist being better able to integrate classroom subject areas with the physical education curriculum at the appropriate time; and,
- ▶ the nonspecialist being financially more viable for the school system than having to employ a specialist.

Keeping in mind that these listed are advantages for the specialist and nonspecialist, one could easily exchange the points and present them also as disadvantages for physical education curriculum implementation.

Concurrent Issues

While there are both advantages and disadvantages regarding the specialist and nonspecialist teaching any elementary curriculum, there remain concurrent issues which beset the physical education curriculum and its successful implementation. These issues involve: attitudes toward the discipline; the population characteristics of those currently teaching elementary school; the current trends in teacher education; and, the professional development of elementary school teachers in physical education.

The discipline of physical education has received much media awareness

and thus many financial rewards during the past two decades. The awakening of society to the benefits of physical activity have been profound. During lunch hour one would be hard pressed to find a major urban city that is not clustered with adults jogging or walking. Many dollars have been spent by adults on the fitness and activity paraphernalia available. And, while Canadian adults become more physically fit and active the current research indicated our country's children experience the opposite. Parents remain virtually unconcerned as to their child's fitness level and the quality of their physical education curriculum. How many elementary teachers have received a telephone call from a parent inquiring about 'how little Zita was doing in physical education class?' The physical activity craze which has swept over our adults has yet to transpire into a concern for our children.

As cited earlier, within the school system some nonspecialist teachers essentially consider the responsibility of teaching physical education a burden. The obligation of teachers to provide each child with a holistic education has resulted in the demand to implement individual curricula. As there are several core subjects quite often the teachers provide physical education less priority in their allotted preparation time. This coupled with the long-time held belief that physical education is a 'frill' makes legitimacy of the curriculum difficult. O'Sullivan's (1989) study of two first-year physical education specialists found that the greatest concern the neophyte teachers had was gaining respect for themselves as professionals and for their subject matter with students, parents, and colleagues. It is important that all concerned with physical education curriculum implementation continue the up-hill struggle to educate society, especially parents and teaching colleagues, on the critical role that implementation of a quality daily physical education curriculum can play in child development.

As well as attitudes toward the subject area, another concurrent issue is the population characteristics of elementary school teachers. LeDrew (1992) stated that 75% of the elementary teaching population in the Saskatoon School Board were female while 25% were male. As this appears to be a consistent trend across

the country it could be assumed that if the physical education curriculum is not being provided the legitimacy needed within the elementary school curriculum females are the population group where advocates of the curriculum should focus. And, if educators are to convince this targeted population that the physical education curriculum is viable and just as important as the other core curricula we must look at the barriers which prevent a group of 'educated' women from truly believing in the benefits of a quality physical education curriculum. Listed are some of the barriers cited in the literature and still very much present today.

1. Sport and physical activity are still a male preserve. Very few inroads have been made for women in the areas of implementation of physical activity programs, coaching, and positions involving decision-making in physical education curriculum.
2. The preponderance of media coverage and financial rewards involve male sport.
3. Women are still expected to be the primary care-givers in the raising of children and the functioning of the household. This role coupled with a teaching position, for most women, would result in less 'free-time' and/or money to attend professional development workshops or to adequately improve their physical education curriculum if change was desired.
4. The final barrier is the recognition that physical education, especially in the elementary school, can and should go beyond traditional game activities which are associated with professional sports and men.

Another population characteristic which may influence the successful implementation of the physical education curriculum is an 'aging' teaching population. As less monies for education, and a decrease in the number of teaching positions become more prevalent, especially urban school boards are bound to see an increase in the average age of the elementary school teacher. This, in and of itself, may not be problematic but if we are to see an improvement in the implementation of physical education it will require change within the elementary school. Change is the operative word. And that, coupled with

individuals who may be set in their ways and not very enthusiastic about spending energies on improving their physical education curriculum, may be another mountain to climb. Little research has been conducted in the area of the 'female' and 'aging' elementary school teaching population and the implementation of the physical education curriculum which could provide invaluable insight in this issue.

One area that is currently being explored in the research is the future direction of teacher education in physical education. In the **Undergraduate Physical Education Curriculum Review: Task Force Report** (1989) conducted by the Canadian Council of University Physical Education Administrators (CCUPEA) it was found that between 1940 and 1969 nineteen of the 32 universities that responded to the survey indicated their physical education programs were initiated in order to prepare teachers in physical education. But, between 1960 and 1989 twenty of the universities had reduced their commitment to teacher preparation and instead were adding streams to their degree or adding another degree to their program. Consequently what is occurring is a decrease in the commitment of the knowledgeable and/or expert in our discipline to train specialist and nonspecialist teachers in physical education. Eventually the impact of these decisions to down-size this service will filter through the educational system and hence affect the number of students interested in pursuing university studies in the discipline.

Also of interest in the CCUPEA report was the information on required classes in a physical education/teacher preparation degree. As stated earlier in this paper, there is considerable variability in the term 'specialist'. A degree professing a specialization in physical education (the report does not specify elementary or secondary) may vary according to the training institution. A few highlights indicate that all teacher preparation programs require candidates to take activity classes, exercise physiology, and kinesiology/biomechanics, while 77% require a class in growth and development, 66% a class in curriculum/planning, and, 55% a class in adapted physical activity. This information may be cause for

concern and perhaps consideration for an accreditation program across Canada for the physical education specialist is needed for adequate implementation of the physical education curriculum.

The final concurrent issue presented in physical education curriculum implementation is the professional development of teachers. While nationally, provincially, and in some cases regionally, physical education groups hold special subject conferences or professional workshops, little investigation has examined the population which attend these professional development gatherings and whether any benefits are derived from them. More information is needed on: whether policy makers endorse and financially support the professional development in physical education of the specialists and nonspecialists in the elementary system; what is the likelihood of nonspecialists attending workshops in the physical education subject area; and, whether the teachers truly find the workshops improve their implementation of the physical education curriculum.

Those concerned with optimal child development including physical education should encourage policy makers, educators, and researchers to examine the concurrent issues besetting physical education in the elementary school such as:

- ▶ the teachers' attitudes toward the physical education curriculum;
- ▶ the barriers to quality, daily, physical education curriculum implementation for the female and aging teaching populations;
- ▶ the trend to down-size commitment to teacher preparation in physical education: and,
- ▶ the trends in professional development in the subject area of physical education.

By venturing into and eventually swimming in the dark cold waters and issues in the deep end of the pool, Canadian children may benefit from the implementation of quality daily physical education curricula by the specialist or nonspecialist teacher.

APPENDIX B

The 'ACCIDENT'

I was waiting in the gym with my note pad poised ready for action when the grade 1 class entered led by the intern Marnie. Marnie is a mature intern who has been in Rhonda's class since Christmas and is slowly being given the responsibility of teaching various subjects. As the 28 children moved into the 'circle of habit' I was surprised that Rhonda, the primary teacher, was not present. This was to be the third physical education class that Marnie had ever taught, and her cooperating teacher was nowhere in sight.

Marnie began in the centre of the 'circle of habit' with her obligatory stretches to 'warm-up' the children. I believe I blended into the environment quite nicely by this time since Jason and Grahame took no notice of another adult's presence and proceeded to make faces and taunt Marnie whenever her back was turned to them. These boys would sidestep lightly into the circle and were almost at the point of touching Marnie but would hastily retreat when her body was more open to them.

The children were full of energy (a.k.a. wired) that period, day, month, season. This Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. was no exception. We had experienced one of the coldest winters on record and as a result of almost constant -30 C temperatures (-40 C with the windchill) the number of recesses and outdoor activity trips had been drastically reduced.

Marnie's announcement that they were going to play 'Big A, little a' was met with exuberant cheers, squeals and jumping up and down. I have found this to be a very popular game in this class. 'Big A, little a' is the 1990s version of my 1960s 'What time is it Mr. Wolf?'. The children line up against the wall with one 'lucky' child designated 'chaser' in the centre of the room. Tara was appointed by Marnie to be the chaser. All the children rhyme (shout/scream) off the jingle,

Big A, little a, bouncing bee,

Tara's in the centre and she can't catch me!

This is immediately followed by 27 children trying to run from one end of the gym to the other end without being caught by Tara in the middle. I have observed that all the children squealing/screaming is a necessary part of the running movement and fun. Generally, at the beginning very few other children are caught. The trend for this grade one class is for the child, who is literally in the centre of this large gymnasium, to stand there and wait for everyone to run by her(him) and then turn and run after the stampede of children already past her(him).

Well today the children initiated the jingle/chant before Marnie prompted them and while the children were already a quarter of the way across the gym Marnie was yelling 'Stop, stop, I didn't say GO yet!' By this time many children were running wildly while several obeyed Marnie and stopped on the spot, thereby providing obstacles for the other children still on the run to crash into. This created a domino-effect and there were at least two collisions that I observed with some concern as one was a definite 'head-butt' while the other was a 'knock & drop'. It appeared that the knock & drop participants were fine although one boy had pushed the other boy as if he had purposely intended to knock him down. However, the other connection left one child holding his head in a daze while the girl's immediate reaction was to cry. Marnie immediately provided attention by hugging and comforting the crying child and quickly reassured the dazed boy by rubbing his head, which provided immediate relief for him and he rejoined the game. In the meantime the game was proceeding undirected and Marnie began yelling at the children to 'Stop & listen, or we won't play.' When Marnie recognized that she was yelling, she held up the 'hand signal of silence' (a fist with the first two fingers extended upward), which was slowly followed by a chain reaction of hand signals from the children and, within a minute, silence. Once the ceiling fans in the gym were the primary sound, aside from a few sniffles, coughs and the quietening sob of the head-butt victim, Marnie asked the children who were scattered throughout the gym, 'What should you be careful of while playing Big A, little a?' After a good three seconds Marnie nodded to one girl who had her hand up and who answered, 'Hitting people.' Marnie answered back, 'Yes,

be careful and watch where you're going. Run gently. O.K. we'll try this again. Everyone to this side.' All the children obeyed except the few who had been caught. Marnie then prompted the jingle again, 'Big A, little a...'. I really didn't notice the children attending any more carefully to their running patterns this go-around, but if a lack of head-butts or knock & drops is any indication, then it was a successful passing.

With three children caught in the centre and now chasers, the children began the jingle again. However, one boy was a bit farther off centre than the other two chasers and as the 25 children began to run and squeal hysterically I noticed the boy gaining the attention of Marnie and pointing to the floor. Casting my eyes downward I realized the gravity of the situation. There on the floor was a huge puddle (pond would be a *slight* embellishment) of, dare I write the word, 'pee', and as my eyes scanned to the right there were 25 children squealing and running towards the general vicinity of the puddle. Marnie was quick to size-up the situation and once again began yelling, 'Stop!' but it was very difficult to hear her over the exuberant vocalizations of 25ish running grade ones. She then went into 'defensive mode' and, creating a wall shape with her body, tried to protect the puddle from being run-through and trekked all over or to protect the children from getting wet or slipping -- I'm not sure which took priority. Marnie's frantic arm-waving managed to protect the puddle successfully and as all the children reached the opposite gym wall her yelling, 'Stop!' finally gained their attention.

'Who had an 'accident' on the floor?', Marnie asked as she pointed to the puddle of urine. Well, I did guess correctly that the culprit was not likely to confess to her(his) crime. Marnie then proceeded toward Michael, a boy who since Christmas had had several such 'accidents' at school I had already observed. 'Did you have an accident?', Marnie asked. Michael, sheepishly shook his head 'no', somewhat embarrassed, probably because he was being singled out. Marnie then walked closer to do a visual inspection and found Michael to be telling the truth. At that point she appeared a bit flustered and decided her next

step was to inspect the other 27 children visually. Marnie's teaching assistant (a child designated for special duties each week), Carey, the next child cleared after inspection, asked if she should go to the washroom and get some towels. Marnie said O.K., so off Carey went. The gym grew silent and the ceiling fans seemed louder as Marnie slowly progressed down the line of 27 children who were against the wall in a manner that reminded me, in a macabre but nevertheless humorous way, of nothing so much as a parody of military execution.

Carey arrived back in the gym just as Marnie reached the end of her unsuccessful visual scan of the children's clothing. Marnie's face seemed to grow more frustrated and haggard by the second, especially when she looked over at the one, lone, paper towel that Carey brought from the washroom (and it wasn't a super absorbent brand either). That's when Marnie's shoulders slumped as she exhaled loudly.

Up until this point I had been careful in my fieldwork not to disrupt the natural progression of the classes by being too vocally or physically obtrusive in my participation. I've helped with equipment at times, chit-chatted about the weather and extraneous ongoings in our daily lives with both the teachers and children, and handed out Halloween and Christmas treats to my collaborators, but I have never actually participated in the gym space. But it was at this moment I became a true 'participant observer' in this particular class. It definitely seemed like an appropriate moment to lend a hand. I stood up and told Marnie I'd take care of the 'accident' and quickly ran for more paper towels. On my return Marnie indicated she had found the culprit. It was Celeste, who was wearing a dress, which was why Marnie's visual scan had not detected her. Marnie then asked me to watch the class as she was going to take Celeste, who did not appear to be embarrassed or afraid but rather had an impish grin on her face, to the office to call her parents so they could bring a change of clothing or take her home. (It was school policy that the teacher was not to 'clean up' children who had 'accidents' while at school. Apparently it was beyond the call of duty even taking Celeste to the main office. I've since been told that the teacher is not to

leave the remaining children alone for this reason, but perhaps this intern of three weeks was not privy to this policy. Or perhaps Marnie was concerned about Celeste's trek to the main office, which was located at the opposite end of the school. I haven't been able to find out yet).

As I started to sop up the 'accident', which I might add was not a pleasant olfactory experience and caused me to retch -- twice, I noticed six to eight girls helping me out and providing running questions/commentary throughout the clean-up effort.

'I like your pink slippers that you always wear.' *Oh thank you. I like them too.*

'Everyone has accidents who know. It's not Celeste's fault.' *Oh. Why is that? 'Cause it happens'.*

'What are you always writing?' *I'm writing about your gym class. 'Oh.'*

'Why do you always wear your coat in the gym?' *Because I'm usually not running around like you and I get cold. 'Oh.'*

'We'll help you clean up. Everyone has accidents you know.' *Thanks.*

'You have nice hair.' *Thanks.*

'This smells, eh?' *Yup (involuntary retch).*

'I like playing Big A, little a.' *Oh, what else do you like doing in the gym?*

'Oh, lots of stuff.'

'There's lots of pee here!' *Yup (involuntary retch).*

Finally, with my hands heavy holding a bunch of damp paper towels, surrounded by six to eight inquiring minds, I noticed the activity in the gym getting louder and instinctively felt responsible for this noise that might be disrupting other classes. It was at that moment I withdrew the secret weapon -- my gymnasium voice. 'Please play quietly until Ms. Frolic returns.' Due to either the volume or the unfamiliarity of my voice, the children quieted down and

resumed their free-play. (I wasn't really sure what they were playing as there was no equipment out, and I did not consciously observe as I was too preoccupied by the girls' questions and my trying not to retch at the strong smell of urine).

After approximately six minutes Marnie returned without Celeste and thanked me as I headed to dispose of the damp paper towels and wash my hands. On my return to the gymnasium the class was in the circle of habit and Marnie was debriefing them on the Celeste situation and what they should do if they have to 'go' or if an 'accident' happens again in the gym. Marnie then told the children to line up to go back to class.

At 10:55 a.m. as the line of girls and line of boys progressed out the gym and to the water fountains (a drink is a must regardless of the activity in the gym), Marnie came up to me and squeezed my arm while thanking me earnestly for helping out. I don't know if it was stress or running back and forth from the main office to the gym on the other side of the school but Marnie looked like she had been caught in a wind tunnel.

Again, this was the third physical education class Marnie had ever taught in her life.

While I do not mean to provide a critical analysis of this data at this time, I have included this story in its entirety at this point for several reasons. First, the activities that Marnie had planned for the gymnasium during her physical education class were familiar and similar activities are evident throughout the fieldnotes I have collected thus far from all the classes I have observed. After spending several months in the school, I was feeling content that I had a grasp of the typical activities that these women planned for their pupils in the gymnasium. Second, the flow of the actual lesson was also familiar. The *accident* was an unfortunate but not atypical example of the real life impediments that befall the primary teacher and that have an impact on her reproduction of our profession's ideal physical education lesson. Third, while this data is rich, and provides depth with its familiarity, if the initial focus of this project had remained within the boundaries of my interactions with the participants initially identified, I would not

have been able to share with you this structure of experience I observed in the gymnasium. As a result of Marnie's 'abandonment' by her cooperating teacher in this space, I have been uncovering the layers of this experience to bring to light another process on which this project could focus. Under the layers of human experience, I began to see, if you will accept the metaphor, the acorn that potentially contains all future oak trees. This process, the cyclical pattern of repetition of the primary teacher's lived reality, as revealed through Marnie's reproduction of and resistance to the physical education curriculum as she has experienced Rhonda's reproduction (the role of cooperating teacher with Marnie) and resistance (her abandonment of Marnie), probably goes a long way to either establishing or confirming in the minds or outlooks of interns some of the less positive associations that physical education has for primary teachers. Some of those negative associations may exist for no other reason than that they were conveyed, consciously or unconsciously, to today's cooperating teachers when they were interns.

Although I have not fully clarified the meaning or cultural assumptions within this human experience at this point, it reinforced both my feeling that the critical ethnographic method has been correctly selected for this project and my recognition that the project focus and conditions are not static but ever-evolving. This flexibility of focus and for conditions as they arise allows for authenticity within the pedagogical/political project because questions are continually evoked that must be opened up to reveal more authentic human existences and experiences. As this project is about meaning, the guiding questions or focus that form its basis are of a special kind that cannot be objectively and expediently answered, thereby quickly closing the case. These are particular human existences and experiences that I experience and in which I partake throughout my fieldwork, and I propose to share them with you, the reader, as the authentic lived experiences of these particular primary school teachers as they teach physical education.

APPENDIX C

October 26, 1992 Journal Entry

Well today had a few downs. I spent the entire weekend of the 17th putting together a research funding application. I sent the application to a provincial recreation organization which is the umbrella group for the provincial physical education organization (PPEO). Initially I wanted the application to go forward as an independent research suggestion rather than go through a recreation organization under the umbrella. The research trust consultant suggested that it go through the PPEO as the project had to do with physical education. Although I've done countless hours of professional and volunteer work for both associations I had an inkling what would occur. PPEO has had several disturbances relating to gender issues recently. Unfortunately I walked into one last May and was blindsided in the encounter. That encounter was the motivation for my writing the article 'A potential barrier to Q.D.P.E.'. I might add I posted all PPEO Board members a copy of the article in memo form before submitting it for publication to the journal. But PPEO has at it's helm a male volunteer who will not acknowledge gender differences in pedagogy nor support any proactive behaviours to remedy the situation. I must admit he is a workhorse, but only for the causes he, as an individual, feels are important. This is not necessarily an attribute which the president of a democratic organization run by 35 volunteers needs. His method of side-stepping any issues he feels are not important, but the body as a whole does, is to threaten to quit. Well apparently this was his tactic during this weekend's executive meeting. When the motion came forward for the organization to support my research application he threatened to quit. He justified his actions by saying the real issue was whether my application had followed protocol for submission. (I really don't know what this protocol is as PPEO has never had a research application for consideration). Anyway, he forced a vote on whether I had followed protocol rather than a vote on the worth of the research submission. Isn't it interesting that protocol becomes an issue when necessary and is ignored when it is politically expedient?

The irony of this situation is that supporting the research application does not cost the association anything. And, this association has put many dollars into hiring a Q.D.P.E. coordinator. But gender differences is a very touchy issue with the president of this association. He does not believe there is a problem. He and subsequently his posse possess hidden patriarchal values which recently have been 'squashed' by the national association and provincial education ministry both implementing gender equity policies. When I questioned him about this concern in May he, a director of education, stated 'we don't have to follow a blind man'. Go figure, eh?

I still haven't received my copy of the provincial organization's journal. I submitted 'A potential barrier to Q.D.P.E' to the editor in May. I wouldn't be surprised if she was told to file it. (She is a teacher in the district where the PPEO president is director!).

APPENDIX D

A Potential Barrier to Q.D.P.E.?

How can a provincial organization measure its success in the coming decade? As a substantial amount of funding is being allocated toward a Quality Daily Physical Education (Q.D.P.E.) promotion, I for one would measure its success by the increase in numbers of schools and teachers who advocate the premises of Q.D.P.E. and are therefore implementing the curriculum criteria associated with the program. With this in mind, which individuals are more likely to buy into the program? One might forecast that, over the next several years, the majority of provincial organizations' energies will be spent on those individuals who are physical education teachers in the secondary schools and specialists teaching in the elementary system.

The question then remains as to which teaching population will be the toughest to get on the Q.D.P.E. haywagon. I believe the toughest sell will be the generalist teacher in the elementary school. A closer look at this target population currently indicates that it is predominately female. The Saskatoon School Board recently expressed concern that 75% of the teachers in the elementary school system were female while only 25% were male (there was no indication of concern over a 35-65% split in the secondary schools). Statistics do not indicate that this elementary school ratio will change greatly over the next decade or so if student enrolment in teacher preparation in the elementary stream at the University of Regina is any indication. The number of male students in this area has remained relatively constant during the past decade at approximately 20%.

Hence, eventually provincial organizations' energies, and consequently monies, will have to be invested in strategies that will convince a great number of female teachers that Q.D.P.E. is important and functional within their daily curriculum. One action any provincial organization could take is to lobby the provincial board of education to require that Q.D.P.E. be mandatory in the curriculum. But this is rarely a popular move and anyone who has examined

current research on curriculum implementation would know that this usually evokes two responses. The first is resentment at an imposed curriculum and the second is the half-hearted (if any) implementation of such a curriculum. Is this the avenue the provincial organization wants to take? C.A.H.P.E.R.'s objectives for Q.D.P.E. indicate that it wants the teaching population to truly believe in the advantages of Q.D.P.E. and to have confidence about curriculum implementation.

If provincial organizations are to convince this target population that Q.D.P.E. is viable it must look at the barriers which prevent a group of 'educated' women from truly believing in the benefits of physical education and, consequently, from implementing a Q.D.P.E. program. Listed below are some of the barriers cited in the literature which are still very much present in many provinces.

1. Sport and physical activity are still a male preserve. Very few inroads have been made for women in the areas of implementation of physical activity programs, coaching, and positions involving decision-making in programs involving physical activity. A 1991 survey of approximately 410 Saskatchewan High School volleyball athletes (male and female) indicated 11.5% are coached by females (LeDrew & Zimmerman, 1992). It has also been proven that role modelling is a viable method for encouraging women to enter these traditionally male roles.
2. The preponderance of media coverage involves male sport. Just this past Fall CKCK in Regina had an advertisement for its news program which featured 6 brief shots of sporting activities. Two each of hockey, football, and volleyball featured male athletes. The irony of the situation was that the men's national volleyball team housed at the University of Calgary was included in those athletes presented. This was at the time that the Team Canada Women's Volleyball program was making a decision on whether to relocate the Regina-based team. Most followers know the results of this decision moved the team to Winnipeg.

3. Women are still expected to be the primary care-givers in the raising of children and the functioning of the household. This role coupled with a teaching position, for most women, would result in less 'free-time' and/or money to attend a provincial conference for professional development or to adequately prepare a Q.D.P.E. curriculum if change was desired.
4. The final barrier is the recognition that physical education, especially in the elementary school, should go beyond traditional game activities which are associated with professional sports and men. Other content areas are perfectly acceptable and are presently suggested in the current curriculum. A survey conducted this past winter in Regina indicated that 17 female elementary school teachers on the average had 86 minutes per week in physical education. All respondents stated that their programs consisted of 'free-play' game activities which perhaps do not accord with the term 'quality' which is associated with Q.D.P.E. (Wilson, 1992).

If provincial organizations hopes to obtain its long-term objective to have Q.D.P.E. implemented in all schools, perhaps the conference organizers should acknowledge the aforementioned barriers, as some individual members already have. Hopefully, members lobbying the Board and Executive will result in provincial organizations taking a proactive role in tackling these difficulties now instead of playing the laggard 10 years from now. Suggested below are several initiatives, or possible policies, which may help to eliminate the current barriers to Q.D.P.E. in the elementary school system.

1. Highlight females and generalist teachers in the elementary school system who have successfully qualified for Q.D.P.E. recognition.
2. Highlight females as functioning members in provincial organizations and such decision-making organizations.
3. If possible secure funding which may be provided for this target population to attend the annual conference for professional development.
4. Ensure that conference sessions accommodate the K-3 grades where female teachers predominate.

5. Where possible, provide childcare at the provincial conference and regional workshops to encourage the attendance of this target population.
6. Survey the target population to ensure activities and content areas which appeal to and are accepted by females are included in conference and regional workshops.
7. Ensure that the Q.D.P.E. Co-ordinator is knowledgeable in, and sympathetic to, strategies for dealing with the concerns of this target population.
8. Follow the lead of C.A.H.P.E.R. and provincial boards of education which already have equity policies in place.
9. Recognize that suggestions for change do not necessarily indicate that what has been advocated and accomplished in the past is incorrect.

I believe it is provincial organization's aspiration that Alberta will eventually see Q.D.P.E. as an established reality throughout its school system. Let's all work together to overcome the barriers to its successful implementation and eventual rewards.