Exploring Domination and Subordination
in High School Physical Education

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Abstract

This is a critical qualitative inquiry into secondary school students’ experiences of power relations within physical activity and physical education settings. More specifically the study examines the reproduction of power relations through the use of domination and subordination in physical activity and physical education. This study will attempt to understand power relations that take place between and among students and between teachers and students and how certain sports or activities reinforce power relationships within the gymnasium. Thirty eight first and second year university students completed a questionnaire which asked them to reflect upon their high school physical education experiences. Feedback from the questionnaires described that highly skilled male students benefit the most from high school physical education and receive more power and privilege when compared to lesser skilled students.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This is a critical qualitative inquiry into secondary school students’ experiences of power relations within physical activity and physical education settings. More specifically, the study examines the reproduction of power relations through the use of domination and subordination in physical activity and physical education. This study will attempt to understand power relations that take place between and among students and between teachers and students and how certain sports or activities reinforce power relationships within the gymnasium.

The current study is a retrospective survey which used a standardized open ended questionnaire as the data collection instrument. Participants were selected from first and second year university classes at a southern Ontario university. Participants were asked various questions regarding their high school physical education experiences, with specific emphasis being placed on power relations.

I decided to do this study from a critical qualitative orientation as opposed to traditional qualitative research because I am interested in exploring whether and how power relations might be a feature in physical education’s lack of appeal for some students once it becomes an elective. While I am concerned about students deciding against physical education, research abounds on this topic (Gibbons, Van Gyn, Higgins & Gaul 1999; 2000; Humbert 1995), and much of it includes some form of power differential in its findings. My interest is in further exploring power relations and, through examining physical education critically, I am hoping to gain a better understanding of how I, as a teacher, can be better prepared for the power imbalances I may encounter, and how I, as a
teacher, can be better equipped not to reproduce these power imbalances. This study focuses on a traditionally “silenced” majority in physical education and physical activity—students who make up the largest percentage of the class, but who do not “perform” as well as the skilled top 5%. Through the knowledge gained from this study, I am hoping that the decisions I make as a teacher will have a positive impact on students’ physical activity and physical education experiences and, as a result, have students who enjoy physical activity and want to continue with it once they have graduated high school.

**Background**

Physical inactivity is becoming a global concern. The World Health Organization (2000) discovered that fewer than one third of the world’s youth, in both industrialized and developing nations, were active enough to benefit their present health and future well being. At the same time enrollment in physical education class when the subject becomes an elective is also decreasing. A British Columbia study found that 10% of females and 25% of males enroll in physical education when it becomes an elective subject (Gibbons et al., 2000). The decline in physical education participation at the high school level is a great concern since, for many students, this may be the only opportunity to be physically active. Physical education is often perceived as a class for athletes and the skilled and as a result, many feel the class is too unfair. Therefore, many students would rather avoid this atmosphere and with it the embarrassing feeling of not performing well in front of peers.

I feel this is important since many of today’s youth are no longer engaged in physical activity outside of the school. Therefore, physical education classes may be the only opportunity many students have to be active. Since physical activity decreases as
individuals age (Allison & Adalf, 1997), it is important that high school aged students develop a strong foundation for physical activity so that this lifestyle trend will continue throughout the life span of the individual.

Therefore, this study will attempt to gain a greater understanding of how the power relations students have with one another impact their experiences of physical activity and physical education. It should be noted that I am writing this not as a disgruntled victim of the power relations that are common within physical education. With the success that I have obtained in the sport of rowing (winning three national university rowing championships) and competing internationally, as well as being active in a variety of other sports, I should be in a position of power and privilege and believe that I have earned my right to be “better than” everyone else. However, I am more than just an athlete, I am a student as well as an educator, and as a future physical educator I am well aware of the importance of instilling in students the importance of an active lifestyle. Personally, I believe competitive sport to be a great deal of fun, and can provide certain individuals opportunities that may not otherwise have been possible. However, a properly implemented meaningful physical education program has the potential to enhance students lives.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe students’ experiences of power relations within physical education with the intention of discovering how the power relations that exist within physical education among students and between teachers and students impact students’ experiences of the subject. Specifically, a questionnaire was
developed and distributed to 38 first and second year participants (30 female, 8 male) at a southern Ontario University. The questionnaire asked participants to reflect upon their high school physical education and physical activities placing specific emphasis on issues of power, or domination and subordination. The questions were developed in order to obtain former high school students lived experiences in physical education. Data obtained from the study were validated through methodological triangulation consisting of content analysis by question, cross case analysis using indigenous typologies based on similarities and differences, and theoretical analysis based in existing literature.

This study is important since it examines students’ interactions with one another and allows the possibility for recognizing and preventing negative interactions which have the potential to deter students from physical education and physical activity.

Questions To Be Answered

By distributing questionnaires to participants I am hoping to discover;

1) Did they experience power relations/ imbalances?

2) Were these power imbalances associated with the privileging of a specific group?

3) Can teachers intervene into these embedded/ entrenched practices of power?

Rationale

Throughout my post secondary education I have unknowingly become a critical practitioner. As a student teacher in teachers college I was surprised at how the louder minority students often dictated to the majority how the class would operate whether it be the type of activities played, or the emphasis that was placed on the outcome of the activity. I was becoming concerned how the skilled athletes who participated on varsity
sports teams were able to transform physical education class into a secondary practice for their sport as opposed to a class which places the main focus on learning and student outcomes. While working towards a Masters of Education degree I enrolled in a class placing emphasis on physical education, however this course examined the subject from a critical postmodern perspective. As a result of this class I was introduced to researchers, such as Linda Bain, David Kirk, and Michael Messner (just to name a few) who allowed me to see that power relations within physical education have their roots in the rest of society and culture.

My original intent in this topic was sparked while in teachers college at the University of Calgary. During my teaching block, I was amazed at the lack of female participants in the class, and how the few females that were present chose not to participate. I was also shocked at the small classes in upper year high school physical education. As a result of the decrease in students, I was curious as to why they did not “like” physical education, and what can be done, if anything, to change future students’ impressions of the subject. This earlier puzzle has developed into questions with many levels of interest, from personal and professional to political and cultural. Personally, I am hoping that the findings of this study will make me more aware of students’ experiences when I enter the teaching profession. At the societal level, I am concerned that students who do not engage in physical activity during their high school years will continue with sedentary habits into adulthood. This sedentary living will eventually impact all of society through increases in health care costs that will arise from combating illnesses that are related to inactive living.
Theoretical Framework

The theory guiding this study is a critical postmodern orientation examining traditional structures in physical education in terms of its ability to reproduce power relations of domination and subordination. For the purpose of this study domination is defined as any form of control or over-powering of one group or person over another group or person. Subordination refers to the experience of being dominated. An example of domination and subordination would be a bullying/victim relationship. Using a critical postmodern approach, and especially the hidden curriculum model proposed by Bain (1985), the study explored the intersections and complexities of power relations in high school physical education and physical activity contexts.

Importance of the Study

Understanding how students experience power relations and how physical education contexts and teachers unreflectively reproduce relations of dominance and subordination might allow practitioners to address these issues in their curricular and professional development planning, ultimately creating more equitable sets for engagement.

The results of this study should be important to everyone concerned about the activity levels of our youth. Particularly, physical educators and high school administrators who are becoming frustrated with the lack of participation in physical education classes. Physical education is becoming a subject that needs justification. Too often it is viewed as a class for “jocks” or an easy credit, and not a subject that is important to all of society. If the importance of physical education is not reemphasized, or does not become a setting in
which any student can discover meaning, then many may start questioning the role that physical education plays in the curriculum, and whether it is truly needed.

The results of this study should have an impact on physical educators' personal philosophy, which should in turn result in a re-evaluation of their current practices. It is common in the teaching profession that teachers teach the same way they have been taught. Although there have been new physical education curriculum documents that place emphasis on lifetime physical activity, many contemporary physical education classes are still dominated by sport type games. Unfortunately, in game situations most domination and subordination scripts embedded in the cultural consciousness carry over into the physical education and physical activity environment.

**Scope and Limitations**

The scope of this study is limited to a retrospective heterogeneous sampling of first and second year university students using a questionnaire to describe the role that peer relations played in students' enjoyment of and decisions to avoid physical education class (i.e., power relations between students, and between teachers and students). By looking at students from a cross section of the faculties of a southern Ontario university, I am hoping to receive feedback from a sample group that includes students who did and did not take physical education during high school.

The current study was limited by receiving permission to approach possible participants. Prior to approaching participants, permission was sought from the Deans of each faculty at the university. Three faculties responded to the request of including their faculty in the study. Hence, obtaining a cross section of the six faculties was not possible.
However, since many of the first year courses were electives, participants did represent an accurate cross section of the university’s student population.

A second limitation of this study was the data collection strategy of a retrospective questionnaire, which meant I was asking university students to reflect upon their high school physical education experiences. As a result of the time that the students have been away from high school, the responses may not be describing what is happening in current physical education classes. By consulting participants who were enrolled in first and second year university classes I hoped to tap into memories that were not too far in the past.

A third limitation relates to the lower number of male participants when compared to female participants, and not having any male non varsity participants. Unfortunately, the classes that were randomly selected to take part in this study consisted of mostly female students. Although it would have been desirable to have more males represented, it would have required breaching my ethics proposal and result in me being forced to predetermine participants, which could have had the potential to increase the likelihood of researcher bias.

Summary

The second chapter of this thesis describes existing research into domination and subordination in high school physical education as well as discussing the negative implications for those who choose to become disengaged from the subject. Particular emphasis is placed on the power relationships that are present within the gymnasium with a historical description of how these power relations may have dictated the current sports
based model of physical education.

Chapter Three, Methodology, describes the design, sampling, data collection, data management, and the data analysis of the current study. Specific emphasis will be placed on how the design features addressed anonymity of participants.

The fourth chapter, Results, presents the findings from the data analysis. Based upon responses from the questionnaire, participants were divided into gender and athletic categories. Discovering patterns of similarities and differences of participants' responses constituted the content analysis, which then were taken up in the final chapter, Discussion and Recommendations which examines in depth the responses provided by the participants. This chapter is divided into sub-categories that arose from the findings and were then related and compared to previous literature.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will be separated into seven subsections. The first, “benefits of physical activity” describes physical activities role in reducing illness, and how the healthy decisions made while in school can impact an individual throughout his or her life span. The second section “current physical activity levels” examines how active students are presently. Section three describes “physical education’s role in developing physical activity” among students. The fourth section begins to describe a common theme of “physical education’s power imbalances” and the way in which those with the power within physical education make the subject unenjoyable for those with lesser skills.

The fifth part of the chapter examines Linda Bain’s (1990) “hidden curriculum in physical education” and how students are often told simply to “try harder” in order to improve without taking into account how hard the student is working. Section six, “history of physical education in Ontario” describes the many changes that have taken place within physical education, and how the recurring theme of gender appropriateness has carried through the decades. Finally, the “current physical education” section examines the sports based physical education model that has become the accepted model of physical education classes, and how sports based physical education is appealing to the minority of students, while the majority of students are expected to conform to these activities.

Benefits of Physical Activity

With the evolution of technology new trends are developing with respect to students’ leisure time. Less and less time is being spent outside in vigorous physical activity. Instead, students are more likely to turn their attention to indoor passive activities,
such as watching television, playing computer games or “surfing” the internet (Franke, 2003). While these activities can be very important in the development of a student, all of a student’s time should not be dedicated to inactive pursuits.

Previous studies have discovered a correlation between sedentary lifestyles in youth and sedentary adult living. According to Pangrazi, Corbin and Dale (1999), a sedentary lifestyle in young people is more likely to remain with the individual through adulthood, increasing his or her chances of serious illness in the future. Physical activity can play a key role in reducing the chances of an individual’s susceptibility to illness. A physically active lifestyle improves “more than 50 different physiological, metabolic and psychological aspects of human life” (Donatelle, Davis, Johnson-Munroe and Munroe, 1998, p. 204).

Physiologically, active living improves lifestyle, while lowering the risks of disease, most notably heart disease. Heart disease is the number one killer of all Canadians. Through active living the heart, which is a muscle, becomes stronger, causing fewer beats per minute resulting in lower amounts of stress placed on the heart. “A stronger, more efficient heart is better able to meet the ordinary and extraordinary demands of life” (Donatelle et al., 1998, p. 204).

Physical activity also provides many psychological benefits. Regular vigorous exercise can “burn off” the chemical by products that are released by the nervous system that are created by stress. The elimination of these biochemical substances reduces stress levels by accelerating the neurological system’s return to a balanced state (Donatelle et al., 1998). Therefore, engaging in physical activity is an effective form of stress release. This
is very important, especially for students who often feel overwhelmed while balancing school work, a job, and an important social life (Franke, 2003).

Another major benefit of physical activity is the impact it has on strengthening the bone structure of the body, and preventing osteoarthritis and osteoporosis. Osteoarthritis occurs when the cartilage within a joint degenerates allowing the bones to rub against one another. This is a very painful condition that has no cure. Another similar condition, which is equally as dangerous, is osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is a condition characterized by the degeneration of bone tissue. As a result, bones become brittle and are more susceptible to fractures or breakages. Although osteoporosis and osteoarthritis are more common among older women, the diseases’ origin dates back to an individual’s youth (Pangrazi et al. 1999). All the pain and discomfort of these diseases can be greatly reduced if the individual embarks on a healthy lifestyle. Included in this lifestyle is a “well balanced” diet, and consistent exercise. According to Pangrazi et al., those who do not participate in daily physical activity, “compromise optimal bone mass formation, increasing both risk and severity of osteoporosis later in life” (p.16.)

An unfortunate result of the technological bombardment on society is the ubiquitous media portrayal of the “perfect” body type. For males this consists of well defined muscles, and for females a slender but shaped body. In order to conform to these images many undertake unhealthy eating habits that, in severe cases, can evolve into eating disorders. The irony here is that these unattainable bodies are even more in demand as activity decreases!

Over 90% of eating disorder cases occur in women. There are two main methods
that manifest in eating disorders: anorexia and bulimia. (Gibbons et al., 1999; Pangrazi et al., 1999). Anorexia “is characterized by self-starvation motivated by an intense fear of gaining weight and a severe disturbance in the perception of one’s body” (Donatelle et al., 1998, p. 198.). This condition is very dangerous to teenagers, whose loss of weight is associated with the failure of normal growth rather than weight loss. Bulimia on the other hand, incorporates binge eating followed by purging, usually in the form of self-induced vomiting. Those who suffer from these diseases usually have a distorted self-image, and often consider themselves to be overweight, even though their weight continues to decrease (Donatelle et al., 1998).

Since society is constantly being bombarded with information describing in detail the importance of physical activity, it would appear that common sense should prevail and many would turn to exercise. It also seems ridiculous to think that the majority of high school females chose not to take physical education given the benefits of the healthier lifestyle that can emerge from quality physical education (Gibbons, Gaul & Blackstock, 2004).

**Current Physical Activity Levels**

At the turn of the millennium the World Health Organization (2000) discovered that fewer than one third of the world’s youth, in both industrialized and developing nations, were active enough to benefit their present health and future well being. Although this is a global concern, according to Mandigo (2002), the evidence “...is in our own empty backyards, playgrounds and gymnasiums” (p.4). Today’s youth are not spending their time being active, and with the ever increasing popularity of computers, video game
stations, as well as the ever increasing channels on television, it is a safe assumption that children of today are indoors.

Unlike the past, today’s youth have many technological distractions keeping them away from physical activity. According to Cragg, Cameron, Craig & Russell (1999), half of Canadians aged 5-17 are not active enough for optimal growth and development, with girls being less active than boys. The unfortunate result of this lack of activity can be seen in the statistics of youth that are overweight. Statistics Canada found that in 1994/95, 34% of Canadian children aged 2-11 were overweight, with 16% of these children being obese. In 1998/99, this number for the same age group increased to 37% overweight, with 18% of them being obese (The Daily, Oct, 2002). The fact that the number of overweight children has increased between 1994 to 1999 is very disturbing, especially if this trend is to continue throughout the high school years. Unfortunately, Allison and Adalf (1997) discovered that “physical activity declined steadily with increasing age, the major decline occurring between the ages of 15 and 16” (p. 178).

If sedentary living continues, there will be significant health care costs as a result (Katzmarzyk, Glendhill, Shepard 2000). A study, found in the Canadian Medical Association journal, estimated that in 1997, the total cost of treating diseases associated with obesity was $1.8 billion, or 2.4% of the total health care expenditures for all diseases (The Daily, May, 2002).

Physical Education’s Role in Developing Physical Activity

In order to reverse the current trend of childhood and adolescent obesity, schools will have to play a larger role in emphasizing the importance of a healthy lifestyle.
Unfortunately, high school physical education’s major focus was on game type activities (Cavar, 2002). Physical and lifetime activities were receiving minimal emphasis in schools, as games, which are most commonly played within a gymnasium were becoming more popular (Ross, Dotson, Gilbert & Katz 1985). Unfortunately, the games required a larger number of participants. When in class this was possible, however, once out of the school, it became difficult for students to organize the number of participants required, as well, many activities, such as basketball and volleyball, were difficult to play without a gymnasium. According to Ross, activities, such as tennis, running and hiking, would play a valuable role in increasing the likelihood of students being active when out of the school.

Although the benefits of physical activity have been greatly publicized, many students are deciding against taking physical education courses when the subject becomes an elective. In British Columbia “10% of females, and 20% to 25% of male students choose to enroll in physical education...” when the subject becomes an elective (Gibbons et al., 1999, p.2). Therefore, there may be a deeper reason why students are no longer taking physical education. Although there is wide speculation as to what the other “reasons” are, this study will focus on the power relations that exist within physical education, most notably domination and subordination.

**Physical Education’s Power Imbalances**

Domination and subordination is a term used when one individual or group hold power over another group that most often has less ability to defend him or herself. Improper use of power has been demonstrated throughout history and is present today (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997). Events, such as war, business take overs, sporting events, and
bullying, are all examples of domination and subordination. Therefore, power imbalances take place on every level from global to local.

At the school level, domination and subordination relationships are often referred to as "bullying." Bullying is considered to be a sub-category of aggressive behavior but more vicious since it is directed, often repeatedly, towards a particular victim who is unable to defend him or herself effectively. The victimized individual may be outnumbered, younger, less strong or simply less psychologically confident. The bully/(ies) exploit this opportunity to inflict harm, gaining either psychological gratification, status in their peer group, or at times, direct financial gain by taking possessions or money (Smith et al., 1999).

By nature, schools reiterate the hierarchy of power that is common in society, beginning with the principal, teachers and other staff, to students. This hierarchy of power, while not intentionally negative, is understood and accepted by the students. Therefore, it should not be a surprise when students use the power that they have to dominate another student. In a survey conducted by Pepler, Craig, Zieger and Charach (1993), it was discovered that almost half of all students responding have experienced bullying and 28% of students who acknowledged themselves as bullies, have experienced bullying by another group. Unfortunately, the students that show domination over other students have themselves been the victims of someone else's abuse of power. As a result, students are following the unfortunate trend which involves humiliating, or hurting other students.

Physical education classes are prime settings for domination and subordination. According to Garret (2004)
The philosophical basis of physical education connects the learning area to the development of healthy, moral and wholesome individuals. This ideology has been translated into a sport and fitness curriculum celebrating elitist, white, middle class, Anglo Saxon and male values. (p.225)

This suggests that, even when in a numeric minority position in a class, students who embody the above attributes will be the ones who enjoy the most privileges and the most power.

According to Beaudet, Acquaviva and Grube (2004), “a typical physical education class often focuses on team sports” (p.39), and as a result “physical education tends to be dominated by physical skills associated with power, speed, strength and aggression, and ‘facts’ about human performance” (Garret 2004, p. 225). Hunter (2004) discovered that many students “regarded physical education to be synonymous with sport” (p.179). Physical education classes tend to reward students who demonstrate the above characteristics, while lesser skilled along with less competitive students are left behind. Unfortunately, the false belief that sport and physical education are “one and the same” results in a negative “carryover” effect to physical education.

Physical education as sport has constructed; a narrow conceptualization of movement as technical and utilitarian; an imbalance in the experiences provided for students, emphasizing for example regimented and controlled sport based movements, rather than exploratory experiences such as in creative dance; and the replication of oppressive practices, such as found in competition, and misrecognized as normal. (Hunter 2004, p. 179)
Since physical education is so closely associated with sport, the group of students in the class with the most power are the highly skilled, highly aggressive athletes. Furthermore, with the societal expectations of what it means to be feminine, which traditionally describes aggressive behaviors as being un-ladylike, male athletes become the sole holder of power within high school physical education (Hunter, 2004).

Along with physical prowess, athletes in physical education class benefit from their physical appearance. Todd and Kent (2003), reported physical appearance “to be a factor, as youth tend to treat attractive peers differently from unattractive peers” (p.660). Furthermore, Cherulnik, Turns and Wilderman (1990), discovered a positive relationship between leadership and physical appearance. The implication of this discovery within physical education reiterates the power of male athletes within the gymnasium since classmates look upon this group with admiration.

**Hidden Curriculum of Physical Education**

The hidden curriculum “refer to what is taught to students by the institutional regularities, by the routines and rituals of teacher/student lives” (Bain, 1990, p. 23). Activities, such as dressing for activity, attendance, and team formation, are all examples of the “institutional regularities” often used to bring order and control to an environment that may seem chaotic. Bain (1990) has suggested three dimensions to the hidden curriculum (meritocracy, technocentric ideology, and social relations) which control both the students and the subject.
Meritocracy and Physical Education

The principle of “meritocracy” is a modernist belief and states that “all students should be provided with equal opportunity, be encouraged to work hard and be rewarded for their achievements” (Bain, 1990, p.24). Students within physical education at the high school level are encouraged simply to try harder in order to achieve success. Bain, describes that “within these settings two definitions of achievement emerge; winning and losing, and knowing how to play the game” (p.25).

Students wishing to succeed in physical education, figuratively speaking, “learn how to play the game”, meaning that they are able to become the type of student that the teacher expects. Physical education teachers base the success of their classes on students being “busy, happy and good” and any student not conforming to this belief is deemed a “problem student” (Bain, 1990). As a result, students wishing to please the teacher, who has the almighty power of grade distribution, may be willing to sacrifice their learning in such an environment.

The main pillar supporting meritocracy in physical education is the belief that all students could achieve success if they “worked hard enough” in an environment of “equal opportunity.” However, many students are not given the chance to “try harder” as a result of the power holders within physical education.

In 1995, Louise Humbert was witness to the inequities faced by female students in the gymnasium. She recalls how male students, who were at the time outside playing softball, and the female students were inside the gymnasium engaged in a variety of activities;
Within a few minutes the boys had taken over the center of the gym, moving four badminton games and at least 10 young women from their positions around the baskets. The young women were forced to the periphery of the gym where there was limited space and only a couple of the baskets. I sat in amazement at the relative ease with which the boys exerted their dominance of the gymnasium. Most of the young women simply shrugged their shoulders and moved out of the way. (1995, p.71)

Humbert’s observation is a sharp contrast to an important aspect of the current educational ideology. The assumption that every student participating in physical education is receiving an equal opportunity to succeed is false. The females observed by Humbert were not receiving equal opportunity as a result of the male students who began taking over the space that the females were using. This sentiment is echoed by Gabbei (2004) stating; “females are reported to have less opportunity to achieve physical education goals than male students when instructed in coed groupings” (p. 34). Therefore, the domination of male students within physical education classes continued to impede female students’ success in the gymnasium.

The second falsity of the meritocracy belief is that every child will achieve, as a result of the hard work that he or she puts into his or her work. The truth is that no matter how hard a student works to achieve a certain standard, he or she may never be able to meet that standard as a result of external reasons, such as height, gender, or ability. Instead of teaching the students that not everyone can achieve the same success, they are led to believe that, since they are not able to meet the appropriate standard, then they are not
“trying” hard enough. Unfortunately, after many failed attempts, the individual will become frustrated and perhaps move on to other pursuits. What is most sad is the fact that the individual will move on, with the false belief that he or she is a failure. He or she will feel as if others were let down when, in fact, it was the system that failed that student. Furthermore, despite subject matter that places emphasis on competitive sport, minimal importance is placed on achievement. According to Bain (1990) “teachers do not focus on student learning, but direct their planning to provide for student enjoyment and participation and avoid incidents of misbehaviour” (p. 26). As a result, it is assumed that students are learning, so long as they are “busy, happy and good” (Bain, p.26).

Students become aware that if they appear to be busy and enjoying the activity they will be rewarded with higher marks. Therefore, it is common for students to be “playing the part” to the teacher (power holder in the class), while receiving minimal educational benefits. In other words, the students force themselves to become the perceived type of students that their teacher prefers.

The end result of meritocracy in physical education are students who “generally accept the privileges and attention bestowed on athletes...Thus while students may resist the meaninglessness of the physical education program, most (but not all) appear to believe that athletes have earned their higher status” (Bain, 1990, p.27).

**Technocentric Ideology**

Technocentric ideologies place emphasis on the body as being a commodity that can be used in order to obtain personal gain. As a result “goals are taken for granted and unexamined and attention is focused on the development of increasingly effective and
efficient means for achieving the goals... For this reason technocentric education tends to reproduce rather than challenge existing social arrangements” (Bain, 1990, p. 28-29).

What is being reproduced as a result of technocentric physical education classes are the ideal body type for both males (muscular and powerful) and females (toned and slender). Furthermore, those unable to achieve the ideal body type are considered “unvalued” in society. According to Bain (1990), “measures of fitness performance and especially of body fatness are seen not as providing useful information but as a public confirmation of one’s lack of worth” (p.30). In other words, the ideal body type is an “all or nothing” phenomenon, and very few are rewarded for trying, but rather become discouraged when they fall short of unachievable societal expectations.

It is for this reason, within a technocentric ideology, that the ends justify the means. In an attempt to reach the idealized body type, many high school students make unhealthy and often dangerous decisions, such as starving the body of critical nutrients to become thin, or the use of steroids to gain mass in order to meet the high “standards” of society. This is a result, according to Todd and Kent (2003), of the importance that high school aged students place on physical appearance.

*Social Relations of Domination and Subordination*

Learning in physical education classes and physical activity goes beyond what is taught within the curriculum. A great deal of learning derives from social relations, or what students learn from their peers. As a result, students within high school physical education and physical activity have conflicting curriculum between the teacher and peers. Bain (1990), describes
"the teacher-sponsored curriculum promoted an ideal of integrated, democratic living in which rules of individual worth are tempered with emphasis upon cooperation, equality and social responsibility. The student-imposed curriculum revealed patterns of discrimination based upon gender, race, social class, personality, and skills. (p.32)

Therefore, the student-imposed curriculum only reinforces the notion of domination by the powerful and subordination of the weak. This is compounded by the ignorance of teachers who "believed that the wimps, who were the most visibly ridiculed by other students, brought the teasing on themselves" (Bain, p.35).

The social relations or expectations of what it means to be female and male have deeper roots than peer interactions within the gymnasium.

"Media images of modern men athletes glorify their strength and power, even their violence. Media images of modern women athletes tend to focus on feminine beauty and grace (so that they are not really athletes) or on their thin, small, wiry androgynous bodies (so they are not really women). (Lorber, 2003, p.16).

These social expectations allow for high school physical education to promote "what it means to be a man" through the highly aggressive team sport activities, while placing females in a paradox. The paradox facing female athletes is one that questions if a successful female athlete (or student) is truly feminine.

**History of Physical Education in Ontario**

In order to understand the current physical education practices, one must examine
the evolution of the subject. Early physical education in Ontario mirrored what was taking place in England during the same time. During the mid 1800s physical education was primarily based around gender appropriate forms of physical training. These forms “...had dominated the Canadian educational context a century earlier: drills and calisthenics” (Lathrop 2002, p.165). During this time, Egerton Ryerson, the superintendent of education in Upper Canada, advocated a vision of sex specific physical activity. Throughout the 1850s and 1860s, at the Normal School precursor to present teacher colleges), male teachers received instruction in Swedish gymnastics and military drill, while female teachers were only taught calisthenics (Lathrop, 2002).

The result of this form of teacher preparation ensured that boys received physical training designed to “inculcate virtues of physical courage, self reliance, sportsmanship and loyalty, girls were training in calisthenics and expressive movement designed to foster beauty and health” (Lathrop, 2002, p. 165, Lumby, 2002). Although it was not stated, this early separation of the genders reinforced stereotypes of males being strong and powerful, while reiterating the notion that females are delicate and fragile (Gabbei, 2004). As a result, a difference between the sexes emerged with respect to physical activity, and this was constantly reinforced.

At the turn of the century, these notions were further developed as the boys’ physical education became more paramilitary. This was encouraged as a result of the “Strathcona Trust.” The Strathcona Trust was both a financial fund and a curriculum that formalized the link between the militia and the Department of Education (Lathrop, 2002). From the inception of the Strathcona Trust to 1911 funds were directed to pay for drill
instruction, drill competition and the purchase of the English (British) Curriculum guideline. Unfortunately, the funding from the trust was being distributed to male physical education endeavors, females were deprived of material resources and were forced to a system of “joyless, formal calisthenics” (Lathrop, p. 166). The fact that the Department of Education and the militia had a formalized link is evidence of societal events, impacting education. This was the result of heightened tensions around the world. These tensions came to a climax during the First World War. Therefore, the Strathcona Trust was very important for having young men properly trained physically if they were called to duty. Since women, during this time, did not participate in combative war roles, it was unnecessary to have them trained in a paramilitary style of physical education. As stated earlier, this form of education was intended to develop physical courage, and loyalty (Lathrop), characteristics that are needed in soldiers.

This form of physical education remained constant until after the Second World War. At this time teachers were beginning to emigrate from Great Britain to Canada, bringing with them their views of physical education. In England during the 1930s and 1940s a change in educational philosophies took place. This change focused on student-centered learning in the expressive and functional forms of movement, which was taught to both boys and girls. The result of this radical change, and the emphasis on teaching the girls similarly to the boys, resulted in a debate. This debate can still be witnessed today, and is centered around the conflicting visions of gender appropriateness.

During the 1960s a resistance to movement education developed. It was estimated that two thirds of secondary school men resisted the shift to movement education. An
argument was made that “questioned the line between expressive movement and functional movement, many perceived the approach too affiliated with dance and challenged its relevance to boys” (Lathrop, 2002, p. 176). There was a masculine fear that movement education would begin to feminise boys. As a result, physical education shifted to game type activities which began mirroring the organized sports that were popular during this time. Concurrently, separating the genders in any form of education was drawing a great deal of criticism. As a result, males and females began taking physical education classes together; however, females were simply being placed in male physical education classes, with minimal change to the sport based curriculum. Therefore, the physical education perception of being a male domain continued, and the females that were permitted to enter were becoming threats to this male domain.

It was at this time that there began to be a shift in physical education, from gymnastics and dance, to games. Previously, the majority of lessons were gymnastics based and to have games taught by the teacher was more of an exception than the rule (Lumby, 2002). A major result of moving to a games system in physical education was that many teachers of other subjects left the classroom to teach sports that they had an interest in, therefore, activities, such as rugby, soccer, and field hockey, began to gain in popularity. The positive impact of teaching games was that it introduced students to new physical activities. Unfortunately, the main emphasis of these games was the game itself, and very little time was devoted to teaching skills and running drills, “one learned to play the game, in spite of the lack of skills and drills, by playing the game” (Lumby, p.7). This form of physical education only focused on the actual playing of the games, therefore,
there were no clear objectives to the subject. This resulted in a class that tended to have little organization.

It was not until the 1980s that there was a global push for physical education reform, (Fraser and Beaudoin 2002). This reorganization was essential since, according to Stroot (1994), without the mastery as a criterion in classes, students associate little meaning to their physical education experiences. The lack of meaning to students is reiterated by Ross et al. (1985), stating; “Everyone seems satisfied because mediocre programs have become the norm” (p.5).

The fact that the programs became “mediocre” should not be a surprise. There was very little emphasis placed on developing a well intentioned physical education curriculum, therefore, the majority of physical education lessons were conducted by teachers that enjoyed certain game activities. The lack of curricular content led to problems, such as large skill differences between the sexes, and gender stereotyping, girls not being as good as the boys (Lund, 1993). Throughout the 80s while an attempt was being made to have more structured components to physical education, a major aspect of the subject was being overlooked, physical activity.

Physical and lifetime activities were receiving minimal emphasis as games, which are most commonly played within a gymnasium, were becoming more popular (Ross et al., 1985). Unfortunately, the games activities required a larger number of participants, when in class this was possible, however, once out of the school, it became difficult for students to organize the number of participants required. As well, many activities, such as basketball, and volleyball, were difficult to play without a gymnasium. According to Ross,
activities, such as tennis, running, and hiking, would play a valuable role in increasing the likelihood of students being active when out of the school.

The most recent curriculum document published by the Ontario Ministry of Education for the senior grades titled: *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11 and 12: Health and Physical Education 2000*, attempts to build on all the positive aspects of the past. However, the new curriculum has added a major new emphasis by encouraging life long fitness. The expectations of the new curriculum are to:

concentrate on the development of personal fitness, competence, skills, attitudes and knowledge that will help students deal with a variety of personal, social and workplace demands in their lives. The primary focus of this curriculum is on helping students develop a positive attitude and commitment to lifelong healthy active living and the capacity to live satisfying, productive lives (Ministry of Education 2000)

According to the Ontario Curriculum, 2000, “Healthy active living benefits both individuals and society in many ways “...by increasing productivity, improving morale, decreasing absenteeism, reducing health care costs and heightening personal satisfaction” (Ministry of Education, 2000).

**Current Physical Education**

Presently, many argue whether current physical education classes are equally relevant to all students (Gibbons et al., 2004). This is because sports based activities continue to dominate physical education classes (Gibbons et al.), even though the current curriculum guidelines intend to develop lifelong physical fitness (Ministry of Education,
2000). The mirroring of physical education class to organized sport activities often appeal to the dominant athletes which in most cases are male students (Gabbei, 2004). According to Messner (1998) organized sport was created during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in response to the “fears of social feminization” (p.109).

It is very likely that the students who participate in organized sports, where the goal is to “win,” bring a greater level of intensity to the educational setting of the gymnasium. According to Messner (1998) “...organized sport has served to bolster a sagging ideology of male superiority, and has helped to reconstitute male hegemony” (p.109). Organized sport was created as a “homosocial sphere in which competition and (often violent) physicality was valued, while ‘the feminine’ was devalued” (Messner p.109). As a result of physical education classes traditionally mirroring organized sport, many of the negative undertones, such as the importance of masculinity, and showing dominance over others become common themes in the gymnasium.

Organized sport became the backbone reinforcing the notion of masculinity due to the increasing momentum of the women’s movement, as well as the acceptance of women into the labor force (Messner, 1998). In other words, the repression of feminist values in society was slowly losing acceptance and, in order to maintain phallocentric ideologies, new forms of “all male” clubs were required. According to Kaufman (1998), “men have formed elaborate institutions of male bonding and buddying: clubs, gangs, teams, fishing trips, card games, bars and gyms...” (p.10), and have all aided in a males’ desire to be masculine. Often these clubs are off limits to females, and male members who do not meet the standards of masculinity, are often ridiculed, or perhaps worse, called a “girl” which in
society’s sexual hierarchy is considered a loss of power (Kaufman).

Ironically, the students of both genders who are overweight, less athletic, and perhaps have lower self-esteem are the students who desperately need to participate and succeed in physical education. Unfortunately, as a result of the sport based models prevalent in many high school physical education programs the students who would benefit the most from physical education are becoming frustrated and embarrassed and most likely to drop out of the subject when it becomes an elective (Gibons et al., 1999, Marsh & Peart 1988). Therefore, the students who do succeed in physical education classes are most likely to be students that also participate in organized sports outside of the school.

The students that are more physically skilled, are usually the ones that command the most respect from teachers and other students (Marsh & Peart 1988). Unlike traditional classrooms where students often work alone in the security of their own desks, a student’s work in physical education class is witnessed by all in the gymnasium. Here, the teacher is not the only other individual that will witness the failures and successes of a student; instead, his or her physical talents will be demonstrated in front of the entire class. This demonstration will culminate with that student participating in a game where, although not explicitly encouraged, competition and winning is the main goal.

If a student is unable to provide assistance in the sole goal of winning, the male or female may be heckled by teammates and avoid meaningful participation (Marsh & Peart 1988). The end result will be a student going through the motions of an activity with a goal of not making a mistake, and simply trying to “survive” until his or her shift is over, where
he or she may return to the safety of the sideline to become an observer as opposed to an active participant.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

The present study is a critical qualitative inquiry into secondary school students' experiences of power relations within physical activity and physical education settings. More specifically, the study examines the reproduction of power relations through the use of domination and subordination in physical activity and physical education settings. Previous studies (Gabbei, 2004; Humbert, 1995) have discovered that groups with power (i.e., highly skilled participants) can have a detrimental impact on students deciding to continue with physical education once the subject becomes an elective. This study attempts to understand power relations that take place between and among students and between teachers and students, and how certain sports or activities reinforce power relationships within the gymnasium.

The methodolgical basis of this research is qualitative which according to Marshall and Rossman (1999), has three main focal points “(a) a focus on individual lived experiences, (b) a focus on society and culture, and (c) a focus on language and communication” (p.3). The present study is actually a blend of “a” and “b” in that participants' lived experiences within society and culture will be analyzed.

According to Marshall and Rossman (1999) qualitative research has four main characteristics; “takes place in the natural world, uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic, is emergent rather than tightly prefigured and is fundamentally interpretive” (p.3). Qualitative research encompasses many genres that can be traditional or critical.

Traditional qualitative research assumes (a) that knowledge is subjective rather
than being the objective Truth (sic), (b) that the researcher learns from participants to understand the meaning of their lives, but should maintain a certain stance of neutrality, and (c) that society is structured and orderly. (Marshall & Rossman, 1999 p. 4)

Persons studying as critical qualitative researchers also assume that knowledge is subjective (a & b) but they "view society as essentially conflictual and oppressive (Marshall & Rossman p. 4). Typically critical research shares four assumptions;

(a) research fundamentally involves issues of power; (b) the research report is not transparent but, rather is authored by a raced, gendered classed and politically oriented individual; (c) race class and gender (among other social identities) are crucial for understanding experience; and (d) historic, traditional research has silenced members of oppressed and marginalized groups. (Marshall & Rossman 1999, p.5)

The preceding "criteria" for critical qualitative research apply to the present study in the following ways; (a) power is the topic and my own awareness of power relations informs my conduct as a researcher; (b) my experiences as an elite performer and "unwelcome" performer have influenced my development and must be acknowledged as having potential to influence my analysis; (c) gender and other identities is who (i.e., geeky, overweight, unattractive, unskilled) are represented by this study's informants and (d) the "silenced" group of this study are the unskilled majority who do not benefit from the existing power arrangements.
Selection of Participants

In order to obtain the feedback from a cross section of the population, the present study received feedback from students of different faculties at a southern Ontario University. A total of 38 questionnaires were distributed and collected with 8 males and 30 females volunteering to participate in the study.

The participants in this study were a purposeful sample in that they met a number of criteria, such as age (first or second year university students) and they represented a cross section of the students attending the university. Participants enrolled in first and second year classes were selected since they would be closer to the age of high school students, providing closer approximations of current high school physical education experiences. Secondly, participants were selected from a variety of academic majors to ensure that an accurate representation of the student body at the university was obtained. Obtaining a cross section of the student population increased the likelihood of heterogeneity of participants (i.e. some who enjoyed physical education class and some who do not).

Data Collection

The university has a strict ethics policy that must be followed in order to ensure the safety of all participants. Final ethics approval was obtained in November of 2003. Before any contact with participants was made, a letter was sent to the Deans of the six faculties on campus. Three of the faculties, Social Science, Education, and Business responded positively and suggested classes that would best suit the needs of the study. The three other faculties did not respond to the request.
After receiving permission to proceed with the study from the Deans, instructors of first year courses were approached. During these meetings, the purpose of the study was discussed and further permission was asked to randomly select a seminar within the class for the questionnaires to be distributed. It should be noted that many classes at this university have seminars as well as lectures. The seminars consist of 10-20 students from the overall class. The benefit of distributing the questionnaires to the seminar group as opposed to the whole lecture, allowed for easier explanation of the study, as well as easier retrieval of completed questionnaires.

Data were collected from participants on three separate occasions, March 29, 2004, March 30, 2004, and April 5, 2004. There were two faculties that were used in obtaining participants for the current study, education and psychology (social sciences). Although the original intent was to obtain participants from each of the six faculties, it became evident that a diverse student population was obtained from the two classes since many of the participants had selected these courses as elective subjects. Therefore, a seminar from a first year English and two seminars from a first year psychology course were selected for the current study.

Being the primary investigator for this study I was present for each of the three classes where participants were obtained. Prior to distributing the questionnaires, I introduced myself and informed each class that I was a Masters of Education student and invited them to volunteer to participate in my study. I described to each class that the questionnaire asks participants to reflect upon their high school physical education experiences. It was also emphasized that participants were volunteering and were permitted
to leave blank any question which they did not wish to answer. Participants were also asked to refrain from placing their names anywhere on the questionnaire to ensure anonymity. The questionnaires were then distributed to the participants. The first page of the questionnaire did not have any questions pertaining to the study, rather it was an information sheet outlining the expected time to complete the questionnaire (25 minutes) and that the study had obtained ethic clearance through the office of Research Ethics board. A second sheet of paper was then passed to each participant that stated:

By signing below, I have read the information sheet attached to the questionnaire and volunteer to participate in this study. I also understand that I must be over the age of 18 to complete the questionnaire.

Participants were then asked to print the date of their participation, their name, and then for their signature. The involvement of a second piece of paper for participants to sign ensures that permission was obtained by the participants, while allowing the participants to remain anonymous. Upon completion of the questionnaires participants returned their questionnaires to the primary investigator and these were placed randomly within a file folder so as not to associate a face with the questionnaire. Participants were then given a letter of appreciation for participating in the study. Participants were not approached for follow up questions.

Instrumentation

A standardized open ended questionnaire was developed for the current study for three main reasons. First, using a questionnaire, and incorporating demographic questions, such as sex, and academic major, a code could be designated to each questionnaire without
the use of the participant's name, and would not compromise anonymity. Participants are more likely to answer truthfully when they are secure that the answers provided cannot be linked back to them. This is especially useful in the present study where sensitive and sometimes embarrassing issues may emerge. Therefore, the use of the questionnaire provides reasonably accurate responses in an atmosphere that is safe for the participants.

Second, questionnaires could be easily distributed to more participants allowing for a broadly diverse sample group and, in the case of the current study, more feedback from students across various disciplines (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). The larger sample group contributes to a diverse collection of participants. For the purpose of the present study a larger sample group will increase the likelihood of obtaining feedback from the "jocks and the nerds" and everyone in between (i.e. "jocks and nerds" are colloquial terms representing the unfortunate stereotypical categories in high school physical education settings).

Thirdly, the purpose of the study was to obtain information based on participants' lived experiences. Therefore, by providing open ended questions participants were able to reflect on their experiences and answer the questions in "their own words." This was very important since participants would have different interpretations of similar scenarios. As a result, the questions in the questionnaire were developed in order to have students recall similar situations, but respond based upon their own experiences.

The participants were permitted to take the questionnaire with them to complete on their own time. However, the instructors of each class allotted time for the questionnaires to be completed in class.
Development of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed for this specific study and was modified and refined following feedback from an external panel of experts prior to the final copy being distributed to participants. The questionnaire was modified four times to ensure that dichotomous (questions requiring a yes or no answer), as well as leading questions were removed. As well Quinn Patton (1990) was used as a reference to ensure that the questions asked provided responses that gave greater insight of the participants or simply put, a better understanding of the "whole person". The first priority in the development of the questionnaire was to develop questions that would be used to catalogue each participant so that their gender, age, and program of study, and not their names would be used to identify participants, therefore, better ensuring anonymity. Questions asked were primarily open ended, meaning that they required the participants to provide a detailed response based upon their lived experiences. Each question was specifically developed to allow the participants to write their personal interpretations of events that occurred within their physical activity and physical education experiences. Questions for the present study were designed to obtain six separate, but equally important types of answers. These include, demographic, past experiences and knowledge, behavior, feelings, sensory, and opinion and values. The inclusion of these factors in the questions allowed emotional and experiential answers (Quinn Patton 1990) Furthermore, the questions included in the questionnaire were examined for "bias, sequence, clarity, and face validity" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p.129-130)

The questionnaire was comprised of 12 questions. The first question was a four part
demographic question asking participants for date of birth, gender, academic major, and the province where they attended high school. The demographic questions were used to give a serial number to the questionnaire. The answers provided from the first question ensured anonymity, by not asking for names or student numbers, while obtaining age information and gender. Asking the participant the academic major distinguished the academic type of the student. The province where the participants were taught physical education was important since provinces have different regulations regarding the number of physical education credits required to graduate.

The second question asked participants the number of physical education credits. This information helped in consideration for the remainder of the questionnaire. It is believed participants that continued with physical education throughout high school would have had a more enjoyable experience. In turn, those with fewer physical education credits may have had less enjoyable experiences in physical education. The remainder of the questionnaire helped examine the role that peers played in the duration of physical education participation.

Question three asked about the gender make up of the participant’s physical education class. This aided in the examination that gender plays in physical education at the high school level. The question asked participants if they were in co-educational classes, or single gender classes. If participants were involved in both forms, the number of classes of each were asked. Answers from this question were helpful in determining the role that males play in females participation in physical education, and vice versa.

The fourth question asked about the participant’s participation in varsity sports
while in high school. Since students who qualify for varsity athletics will also participate in regular physical education classes, their status as participants in classes with same aged, but perhaps less skilled, peers is a factor in the power dynamics of the class. This question was included since varsity students are enrolled in physical education class, and bring a higher intensity to the physical education setting through their higher skill level, and potential desire to prevail in a competitive atmosphere. Furthermore, "students generally seem to accept the privileges and attention bestowed on athletes... believing that athletes have earned their higher status based on a meritocratic system which rewards outstanding performance" (Bain, 1990, p.27)

Question five asked participants if they are playing on a varsity sport at the university level. This question was intended to understand the participants' involvement in competitive activities post high school years.

The questions to this point are designed to obtain background information on the participants. This will help in estimating how important sport and physical activity is to the participants, and help determine students that were interested in physical activity, but not necessarily physical education.

The remainder of the questionnaire examined participant's experiences of physical education. Question six and seven asked participants to describe what made physical education class both enjoyable and unenjoyable, respectively. The purpose was to identify both positive and negative responses which may help high school physical education teachers become more aware of what is taking place in class.

The eighth question gave a definition of domination and subordination, for the
purpose of this study, and asked participants to describe in detail when the participant was witness, a victim, or perpetrator in a “bullying” type situation.

Question nine was a follow up question, asking participants to describe a situation that they believe illustrates an abuse of power. Possible abuses of power requested in the question include dynamics between same grade peers, same sex peers, and opposite sex peers.

The tenth question asked participants to describe the role that, in their opinion, physical education SHOULD play in the high school curriculum. The purpose of this question was to obtain participant’s feelings about the subject. Do they see it being useful for them in the future, or is physical education simply an “easy credit”, that allows them to be away from the confines of a desk for a period.

The eleventh question asked participants to rate how active they are presently on a scale of 1-5, 1 being the least, and 5 being very active. This reply will describe the influence, if any, that physical education had on students’ decisions to remain physically active after high school.

The final question (12) asked participants to add any other information that they would like to include related to their experiences in high school physical education. This question allowed the participants to add any information that they deem important, but may not have been possible to include in the previous responses.

**Data Management and Analysis**

The current qualitative study was a retrospective survey which used a standardized open ended questionnaire as the data collection instrument. Participants were selected from
first and second year university classes at a southern Ontario University. Participants were asked various questions regarding their high school physical education experiences, with specific emphasis being placed on power relations.

Once all questionnaires were completed and returned, each questionnaire was given a code based on the first question of the questionnaire. For example, a female participant born October 12, 1984 majoring in psychology would be given the code F1012PSYC. This designation was necessary for data management relative to inventorial content analysis, where each question was listed with the responses of each student. Data were analyzed using comparative content analysis by question, identification of indigenous typologies (patterns which are common across the responses) a comparison of these typologies to the literature thematics in Bain (1990), Kaufman (1998), Messner (1998), and Kirk and Tinning (1990) and document analysis of Ministry of education curriculum guidelines. These three forms of analysis allowed the triangulation of the analysis process thereby guarding against researcher bias or projection onto the data.

Content analysis of participants' responses were compared by question, and then further grouped based upon the demographic information provided by the participants. Therefore each question was reviewed first by separating genders, and secondly by separating participants by varsity and non varsity. Based upon the key phrases or themes across participants' responses, the similarities and differences across the two forms of sorting were used for comparison purposes. I used a variety of colour-coded indicators to keep track of similarities and differences. This also assisted with clustering responses.

Each questionnaire was read only by the primary investigator. Responses which
were common among participants were noted, along with responses which were isolated. The common themes were then categorized together and are described in depth in Chapter Four.

This is a critical qualitative inquiry into secondary school students' experiences of power relations within physical activity and physical education settings. More specifically, the study examines the reproduction of power relations through the use of domination and subordination in physical activity and physical education. This study will attempt to understand power relations that take place between and among students and between teachers and students and how certain sports or activities reinforce power relationships within the gymnasium.
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The findings of this study will describe the common patterns and themes that were generated through the analysis of data provided by participants in the study. Each question from the questionnaire has been summarised (in bold), followed by common themes and/or responses from the participants. It was anticipated that participants would be placed into four groupings, Male Varsity, Male Non-Varsity, Female Varsity, and Female Non-Varsity. However, there were only a total of 8 male participants, all of whom competed in high school varsity athletics. Therefore, the male non varsity group will not be included in the results, where applicable similarities and differences between the three groups will be described.

A total of 37 questionnaires were completed and returned. Eight of the respondents were male all of whom participated in high school varsity athletics. Twenty-nine females responded, 16 of whom did not participate in high school varsity athletics and 13 who did compete in varsity high school athletics.

The first question was a four part question asking participants to disclose their A) Sex, B) Date of Birth, C) Academic Major, and D) Province where they attended high school. The purpose of this question was to establish the demographics of the participants so that an identification number could be given to each participant.

Average Physical Education Credits: (Question 2)

The males averaged 4.5 physical education credits, varsity females 3.15, and non-varsity females 2.25. It should be noted that of the non-varsity females, one individual was not included in this statistic as she attended high school in the state of New Jersey and had
a total of 20 physical education credits.

**Question 6**

Describe an enjoyable physical education experience (and) what made it enjoyable?

**Male Varsity Enjoyable:** (8/8 respondents)

Recurring themes in this group included competition, dominating over others (bringing a big guy down), social atmosphere (working out with friends), and different types of activities in different venues.

**Female Varsity Enjoyable:** (13/13 respondents)

Different activities, fun, learning how the body works, good teachers, activities involving teamwork, time to socialise with friends, happy to receive the benefits of physical activity, and girls only physical education classes and how it was more relaxed.

**Female Non-Varsity Enjoyable:** (17/17 respondents)

Less competitive, teamwork, relax rest of the day, winning, good teachers/instructors, social aspect, no pressure to win, just be active, variety of activities, new activities, and organizing special Olympic events.

**Question 7**

Describe a negative physical education experience (and) what made it unenjoyable?

**Male Varsity Unenjoyable:** (8/8 respondents)

Fear of failing in front of others (lowered self-esteem), being threatened by classmates, teacher favouring those on his varsity teams, people cheating or not participating, health cycles that were "mediocre lectures on health and sexuality" (M840830PEKN), "lining up in squads feeling like a child (M820317BIOL)."
Female Varsity Unenjoyable: (13/13 respondents)

Unfair teachers, basing marks on success, sexual education, too competitive, boys not allowing the girls to participate, being made fun of, participating with those that are uninterested and poorly explained activities.

Female Non-Varsity Unenjoyable: (16/17 respondents)

Pressure from coach, teachers, other players, males being too aggressive, being told what to play no choice, health class, injuries resulting from activities, outside in poor weather conditions, poor performance due to a lack of understanding of the game, and uncomfortable in co-ed classes.

Enjoyable similarities and differences between the groups:

Similarities: Both male and females enjoyed the social aspect of physical education, being introduced to new activities, being active and the benefits inherent with physical activity. Both female groups mentioned the freedom that was experienced in “girl only” physical education classes.

Differences: Males had a higher number of responses who enjoyed competition in physical education. This is in contrast to both female groups which did not mention enjoying competition. Females as opposed to males felt that teachers or instructors resulted in enjoyable experiences. One male respondent enjoyed having power over an other individual by “bringing a big guy down” (M840203PSYC).

Unenjoyable similarities and differences between the groups:

Similarities: All three groups mentioned not enjoying the health components of physical education. As well, each group mentioned teachers as showing favouritism to
certain students or for being unfair. Both the male and female VARSITY players mentioned that lack of participation by other students made physical education unenjoyable, males were also frustrated with classmates that would cheat or fool around (not take the activity seriously). Both female groups made reference to males decreasing the enjoyable aspect of physical education. Males were cited as being too aggressive, and not allowing females to participate. Also, within each group there were responses that pointed out a single sport or activity that was not enjoyable.

**Differences:** The males were the only group to mention feeling like a child as a result of the routines that took place within the gymnasium, such as lining up in squads. One male student particularly disliked dance class, thought it should be a part of drama (M851008BIOL). On the other hand, a female respondent discussed how she disliked hiking cause it was boring and muddy causing her to get dirty (F850721PSYC). There was only one respondent (male) that made reference to feeling threatened as a result of a classmate (M840203PSYC).

**Question 8**

Example of Domination and Subordination

**Male Varsity:** (8/8 respondents)

A common place for “bullying” was in the change room, clothing was flushed down toilets, sexual references were made. Most of the abuse described was physical (being tripped). Games played encouraged dominating over others, such as football. Dodge ball was a common game used by students to inflict harm on other students by “ganging” up on a certain student to either hurt him or have him eliminated as quickly as possible.
“Geeky” kid was commonly picked on. Most severe case of bullying was observed from this group. A student was picked on by a “jock” in the changeroom, victim began working out and taking steroids, over the course of the year and the abuse resulted in the victim “snapping” and throwing the “jock” out a first floor window (M801207NEUR). Rules of the game were used to inflict harm on certain individuals (dodge ball).

**Female Varsity: (13/13 respondents)**

The majority of respondents described non-physical forms of bullying, such as name calling, or exclusion from activities. When excluded from activities, it was common that the males would refuse to pass to females, or would be benched by the male captains. The lesser skilled individuals would be made fun of if they did not perform well in the activities.

A participant from this group described how a German exchange student who believed that he was good at every sport performed poorly at basketball. Most of the male students disliked his “cocky” attitude, and when his performance at basketball was poor, the other students would make fun of him and eventually became physically abusive (F830721PEKN).

Another participant described how the males in her class would pass to her since she was very skilled, however, they would not pass to the other females. Therefore, she made an attempt to include other females by passing to them (F830720PEKN).

**Female Non-Varsity: (14/17 respondents)**

Overweight students were centred out and made fun of by classmates. The older students would use their size and age to intimidate smaller students. When students were
chosen to pick teams, the “cool” students, or more skilled athletes would be selected first. The change room was described as an area where teasing would take place. One participant described how their class was integrated with special education students, and they would make the special education students do demeaning activities (F840512ENGL).

There was one example of physical abuse described in a co-ed class, a male student tackled a female simply because he did not like her (F830726CHYS). Another respondent mentioned that she attended an all girls school, and never witnessed domination or subordination (F830608PSYC).

From the respondents, it seems that, although physical education is intended to teach student’s ways in which to be physically active, there are many students, mostly males that are overly competitive. From question 6, many males did enjoy the competition in high school physical education. This is in contrast to the females who prefer physical education class to be more social and focus on physical activities as opposed to games which place emphasis on winning and losing.

**Question 9**

Describe a situation of inappropriate use/ abuse of power.

**Male Varsity: (7/8 respondents)**

Change room was a recurring theme for places where bullying took place. Age and size differences were used to intimidate other students, athletes were commonly referred to as being the intimidators. Dodge ball was a time for people to form teams or alliances to exclude other students from the game. Being picked last was mentioned lowering students self-esteem. It should be noted that the participant who described the steroid case in
question 8 replied in question 9 as “never really being an issue” (M8401207NEUR).

**Female Varsity:** (11/13 respondents)

Similar responses were provided for question 9 as question 8. Skilled players putting down lesser skilled players. Males believing they are better, and assuming females cannot play. However, there was mention of power struggles between females, who were both considered leaders to the rest of the participants.

**Female Non-Varsity:** (14/17 respondents)

The responses for question 9 reflected those of question 8 for this group. Issues, such as males being too aggressive in class, those not in shape being singled out, popular or more athletic students being selected first, were common themes. However, the first mention of students bringing external issues into the gym were described in this group. External issues were in the form of “personal problems” the respondent did not describe the “problem” (F840329PSYC).

There was also a reference made to the teacher, and how the teacher preferred better athletes (F841226CHYS). A common theme was how males would interfere and then take over games that the females were playing.

Overall, the answers from all three groups reflect the answers presented in question 8.

**Question 10**

Role PE should play in curriculum.

**Male Varsity:** (8/8 respondents)

The most common response for this group was to promote physical activity.
Furthermore, many believed that teamwork or co-operation was an important lesson that is learned in physical education. One respondent did describe how physical education should show "reality" and the reality is that some are better then others, and bullying is a part of life (M840203PSYC). Participants in this group would also like to see more emphasis placed on the educational aspect of physical activity. They wanted teachers to teach why they need to be active as opposed to simply telling students that they should be active, and how physical activity positively affects the body.

**Female Varsity:** (13/13 respondents)

The most common response from this group centred around teaching students why it is important to be physically active. There was a call from this group to have teachers better understand the needs of students, and to expand the repertoire of student activities. In other words, teach them about different activities, and how they can become more active in their daily lives.

There were two respondents who believe that physical activity should be mandatory for all grade levels in high school (F840607CHYS, F850721PSYC); also, the importance of choosing activities that will help increase students’ self-esteem (F820930CHSC). It is a break from text book work (F850908LING).

**Female Non Varsity:** (17/17 respondents)

As with the male and female varsity group, the non-varsity female respondents believe that high school physical education should place emphasis on teaching students how to be active while incorporating teamwork. Along with being active, this group would like to be introduced to new activities as well as placing emphasis on having fun or
enjoying the activities. One of the participants described that physical education is considered to be a “bird course” and feels that the importance of physical education should be taken more seriously (F840512ENGL).

A major difference between this group and the varsity respondents has to do with the subject being compulsory. One participant believes that it should not be compulsory (F840329PSYC), while another believes that it should be mandatory in grade 9 and then the individual student can decide to continue with the subject in later years (F850928FREN).

**Question 11**

Rank your activity level 1-5.

1 being less active, and 5 being most active.

*Male Varsity:* 5,5,3,4,4,5,4= 35 (/8) average 4.375

*Female Varsity:* 3,3,5,1,4,4,2,5,5,5,3,4,2 = 46 (/13) average 3.538

*Female Non-Varsity:* 4,4,3,5,3,4,3,3,2,4,3,3,2,2 = 56 (/17) average 3.294

**Question 12**

Anything you would like to add.

*Male Varsity:*(2/8 respondents)

“I’ve heard people saying they are trying to reduce the amount of sports in PE. I believe this class is in par with art class. Some people are good at it, others are not. However, all people should be allowed to participate” (M851008BIOL).

“In a society where obesity is becoming more noticeable, it is important to stop this disease at a young age through physical education” (M840829NEUR).
Female Varsity: (4/13 respondents)

“PE is important to today’s youth because people need to stay active and have fun” (F840521PEKN).

“All about the teachers, knowing and understanding students” (F830720PEKN).

“PE is a very big part of schooling, and should not be cut out of any curriculum.” (F820930CHSC).

“Being physically active makes things easier” (F850721PSYC).

Female Non-Varsity: (5/17 respondents)

“Think PE in high school should be fun” (F840901CHYS).

“Sometimes the need to take required programs for university does not allow you to continue taking PE. It would be nice if this could change and more options would be open” (F840512ENGL).

“Equality is important, those without sport talent should not feel inadequate. There should be more opportunities for other things” (F841226CHYS).

“I find I miss my PE class. It was a time where I was able to get in shape while having fun” (F841120ENGL).

“In my PE class sex education was being taught. I didn’t agree with a lot of things being taught in this class (i.e. taught in this class how to wear a condom). This is ridiculous. Teaching this to 14 year old girls. Government should really research what is going to be taught and its effects before implementing it!” (F840704CHYS).
Summary

The content analysis provided in the previous pages were clustered into patterns which could then be addressed via sensitising concepts in the literature and indigenous concepts from the participants themselves. The sensitising from the literature around which the content patterns were organized are;

- Reinforcing an Ideology of Masculinity
- Detriments of Sports Based Physical Education
- Physical Education’s Reflection of Society
- Idealized Body Type
- Alternatives to Sports Based Physical Education
- Physical Education Teacher Preparation

The indigenous concepts are location as well as the additional commentary on the literature thematics in the students’ own language.
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the study, discusses its findings, and suggests implications for theory practice and research based on those findings. To conclude, it provides some reflections from the author (as a researcher and practitioner) regarding the current state of high school physical education.

Summary of Research

This is a critical qualitative inquiry into secondary school students’ experiences of power relations within physical activity and physical education settings. More specifically, the study examines the reproduction of power relations through the use of domination and subordination in physical activity and physical education. This study investigated power relations that take place between and among students and between teachers and students and how certain sports or activities reinforce power relationships within the gymnasium setting.

This study explored and described students’ experiences of power relations within high school physical education and physical activity with the intention of discovering how the power relations that exist within physical education among students and between teachers and students impact students’ experiences of the subject. Specifically, a questionnaire was developed and distributed to 38 first and second year participants (30 female, 8 male) at a southern Ontario University. The questionnaire asked participants to reflect upon their high school physical education and physical activities placing specific emphasis on issues of power or domination and subordination. The questions were developed in order to obtain former high school students lived experiences in physical
education. Data obtained from the study were validated through methodological triangulation consisting of content analysis by question, cross case analysis using indigenous typologies based on similarities and differences, and theoretical analysis based in existing literature.

Previous literature has documented that 10% of females and 20-25% of males participate in physical education class once the subject becomes an elective (Gibbons et al., 1999). The lack of physical education participation is disturbing considering that sedentary living in young people is likely to remain with the individual through adulthood, increasing the chances of serious illness in the future (Pangrazi et al., 1999). According to Cragg et al., (1999), half of Canadians aged 5-17 are not active enough for optimal growth and development, with girls being less active than boys. As a result, obesity levels in children and adolescence is on the rise while physical activity is shown to be decreasing in children between the ages of 15 and 16 (Allison & Adalf 1997).

Many are looking at physical education as a means to reverse this trend, and it is evident in the changes to high school physical education curriculum documents. In 2000, the Ministry of Education in Ontario implemented a new curriculum placing more emphasis on health and life time activities in an attempt to address the issue of inactivity in our youth. While modifying the curriculum is a step in the right direction, more radical changes within physical education are needed to ensure that all students are being treated equitably by teachers and peers.

Power relationships between students had been discovered in previous literature (Humbert, 1995) to have an negative impact on students’ physical education experiences.
The highly structured and competitive sports based programs that are a common place in physical education (Cavar, 2002) reward those that are physically strong and skilled. Therefore, physical education is often viewed by less skilled students as a humiliating experience as they are often criticized or eliminated from participation.

The current study used a critical qualitative methodology. This approach was descriptive and allowed the researcher to vie the experiences and events that occurred through the written word of the students involved. Thirty-eight students were purposefully selected to participate by answering a standardized, open ended questionnaire that formed the basis for the findings of this study. Participants were coded based upon gender, birth date, and major area of study. This designation was necessary for data management relative to inventorial content analysis, where each question was listed with the responses of each student. Data were analyzed using comparative content analysis by question, identification of indigenous typologies, and a comparison of these typologies to the literature thematics in Bain (1990), Kaufman (1998), Messner (1998) and Kirk and Tinning (1990). These three forms of analysis allowed the triangulation of the analysis process thereby guarding against researcher bias and projection onto the data.

Discussion

"We lack a critical tradition in our field, and tend to view conflict and criticism as always destructive, intensely personal, rarely objective and never constructive" (Kirk & Tinning, 1990, p.2)

The findings of this study are presented in a manner that may, on the surface, sound negative with regards to physical education. Although the issues being brought to the
forefront do warrant critique, this should not overshadow the many positives that result from physical education. Rather, the purpose of the present study is to obtain a better understanding of the impact that power relations have within physical education class and to discover if physical education class is teaching students what they feel is important. This thesis aims to reflect critically on physical education in an attempt to make the subject more meaningful to more students.

This final chapter will be divided into eight thematic sections;

1. Reinforcing an Ideology of Masculinity
2. Detriments of Sports Based Physical Education
3. Location
4. Physical Education’s Reflection of Society
5. Idealized Body Type
6. Meritocracy in Physical Education
7. Alternatives to Sports Based Physical Education
8. Physical Education Teacher Preparation

The first section describes how physical education is used to reaffirm male dominance through the activities that are often used, as well as some of the other more subtle forms of sexism and elitism. The next section of this chapter will explain how the prevalent sports based activities are limiting, as well as detouring many students from a meaningful physical education experience and how the sports based model is affecting many individual’s decisions to continue with the subject, or even physical activity since the subject is misleading students into preconceived notions of what it means to be physically
active.

The third section of the chapter looks at the physical location of the gymnasium as an area which reaffirms domination and subordination in activities that require skill and competition. Also, this category will examine the location of the changeroom, an area that is commonly referred to by participants as being an area where bullying took place. In the fourth section, a connection between physical education and societal practices will be examined, including how the idealized body type and consumerism are connected to sports and physical education.

The final two sections will attempt to give alternatives to the critiques that were previously discussed in the chapter. Alternatives to the common sports based physical education model will be addressed, and lastly the impact of physical education teacher preparation which reiterates the sports based model for physical education. This chapter will highlight the uniqueness of physical education when compared to other subjects highlighting both the beneficial and detrimental aspects of this unique subject.

Reinforcing an Ideology of Masculinity in Physical Education

Prior to explaining the role physical education plays in reinforcing the ideology of masculinity, it is paramount first to describe masculinity. According to Kaufman (1998) “masculinity is a reaction against passivity and powerlessness, and with it comes a repression of a vast range of human desires and possibilities: those that are associated with femininity” (p.7). However, further examination of Kaufman’s definition discovers that he does not give a description of masculinity, but only describes what masculinity is “not.” He explains this lack of definition by stating;
Masculinity is power. But masculinity is fragile because it does not really exist in the sense we are led to think it exists; that is as a biological reality-something real that we have inside ourselves. It exists as ideology; it exists as scripted behaviour; it exists within gendered relationships. (p.7)

Therefore, although confusing, masculinity is nothing more than perception used to maintain a false sense of male superiority. Unfortunately, even though it is under false premises, the behaviours of those attempting to be masculine result in negative consequences for those who are further down the “sexual hierarchy.”

Physical education activities reward masculine values such as “physical size and strength, competitiveness and aggression” (Kirk & Tinning, 1990, p.11). As a result, those unable to demonstrate the masculine values are often discriminated against in many ways. A non-varsity female participant supports Kirk & Tinning’s (1990) description of physical domination in physical education. When asked to describe a negative physical education experience, she responded by saying; “playing ball hockey with the boy’s class-unenjoyable because they were pushing and shoving everyone” (F840304ENGL). The high impact physicality of the ball hockey game made this individual’s physical education experiences negative. However, physically intense play was not the only way in which participants were excluded from participating. A total of 8 female participants (2 non-varsity, 6 varsity) made direct comments about not being “passed to” in a game activity that involved a ball. A varsity female participant stated “being a sportive girl, I was always able to play with the guys. They always passed the ball to me compared to other girls. So I tried to include everyone, yet sometimes it is hard” (F830720PEKN). Of the female
respondents making direct reference to "not being passed to" in physical education, it is interesting that three times as many varsity females made reference when compared to non-varsity females. One explanation for this could relate to the fact that varsity females were more aware of the intentional exclusion of them, as a result of competing on varsity sports teams, and had a greater understanding of the games.

Females are not the only victims of exclusion within physical education class. Males who do not meet the perceived standards of masculinity were also excluded. A male varsity respondent, when asked to describe a domination/sub-ordination event, stated; "how the geeky kid always got picked on in dodge ball. The ball was always intentionally thrown at him to either hurt him or to exclude him from the game as quickly as possible" (M820317BIOL). The "geeky" reference to the victim mentioned above indicates that the individual was intelligent, and was more than likely successful in other subject matters. Therefore, his intelligence may have been viewed by the dominating students as a threat. Referring to Kaufman's (1998) statement that "masculinity is fragile" (p.7), in order to feel more superior than the "geeky" kid, the dominating students found it necessary to reveal this student's weaknesses, which in this case relates to his physical ability. As a result, discriminatory masculinity practices are not solely based on gender roles. Rather, it supports the notion that masculinity traits are highly valued within the physical education setting. The respondents, both males and females, described how exclusion of certain individuals was quite common. Other incidents include students who are heavier being picked on or tormented because they were deemed physically unable to perform the activities. For the males who did not meet the masculine standard the repercussions
included “taunting, early elimination in activities and name calling” (M840830PEKN). Referring back to the “sportive girl” participant (F830720PEKN), her athleticism and physical ability to perform well in a co-educational physical education class allowed her a greater chance of meaningful participation.

By publicly demeaning females and males who do not perform at an acceptable masculinity level, dominant males are reinforcing their power within the physical education setting. At the same time, the dominant males are reinforcing superiority to themselves by showing that they are better than the other students.

A response from a male in the current study reiterates the threat of an activity that he did not feel was appropriate in physical education while also reinforcing the notion of Kaufman’s (1998) scripted behaviour. This particular male student did not enjoy dance and “felt that it should be a part of a drama class” (M85008BIOL). In the early 1900s, dance and calisthenics, according to Lathrop (2002) was reserved for female physical education classes, while the male classes received “physical training designed to inculcate virtues of physical courage” (p.165). Therefore, the inclusion of dance in the “male dominated” world of physical education demonstrates how dance, traditionally taught to females, is in contrast to the virtues that are taught to males throughout their lifetime. Also, Lathrop’s (2002) description of the differences between male and female education throughout the twentieth century explains how males and females are expected to act based on scripted behaviour of the past.

The current study also discovered that males are constantly “policing” other male students to ensure that they do not stray away from the masculinity ideology of superiority.
A male respondent described “fear of failing in front of others, lowered self-esteem” (M610929PSYC). This participant made reference to playing baseball, which he admitted to as not having the appropriate skills. “People would groan when I came to bat under their breath, I was very intimidated, made me feel unworthy and low self-esteem” (M610929PSYC). This individual was aware of his lacking ability in baseball. His classmates, instead of being supportive, would rather lower his self-image further by groaning. The message being sent to this participant was one that, since he was not helping the team succeed by winning, he was, in fact, a detriment to the team. Other forms of “verbal policing” are found with the feminine names being given to males, such as being called a “sissie, or a girl” (F840512ENGL). The use of female names to males is derogatory since it is assumed that females are unable to perform a task as well as males. The use of stereotyping in this manner is effective in “policing” males since a feminine name is considered to be a loss of power to the male since females are lower on the sexual hierarchy of society, which has “real men” at the top (Kaufman, 1998).

There was a major difference in the preferred activities between the sexes participating in the study. Males, having been raised in a society that promotes masculine powers (Hantover, 1998), found that enjoyable physical education classes included competition sports, and showing dominance over other students. One particular male respondent stated “taking a big guy down, he was bigger then me, and it was enjoyable because I owned him” (M840203PSYC). This is in great contrast to female respondents who found activities with less competition that focused on teamwork and co-operation as being most enjoyable.
When asked what made high school physical education unenjoyable, male varsity participants replied; "fear of failing in front of others, lowered self-esteem (M610929PSYC), being threatened by classmates" (M840203PSYC), and "lining up in squads, feeling like a child" (M820317BIOL). Of particular interest is the "fear of failing in front of others" response. According to Messner (1998), "all boys are, to a greater or lesser extent, judged according to their ability, or lack of ability in competitive sports" (p.111). Therefore, a male student may feel vulnerable and open to attacks which will question his masculinity if he is unable to perform to specific levels athletically.

In order to be successful in high school physical education, participants need to be agile and strong, characteristics which have traditionally been taught to males (Lathrop, 2002). As a result of this study, it appears that females who were most likely to succeed and be accepted in physical education class were the ones who could meaningfully participate. A female varsity participant in the study stated; "being a sportive girl, I was always able to play with the guys. They always passed the ball to me compared to other girls. So I tried to include everyone, yet sometimes it is hard" (F830720PEKN). This participant was able to perform at an acceptable level as a result of her athleticism which, when describing herself, is "sportive."

The "sportive girl" also gives justification to the theory of hidden curriculum described by Bain (1985). According to Bain, the hidden curriculum teaches students "to conform to institutional expectations... by seeking privilege through 'apple polishing' and by hiding behaviours that might displease those in authority" (p.146). Within the gymnasium masculinity rules, however, females find themselves in a conflicting position.
As stated earlier, physical education activities reward "physical size and strength, competitiveness and aggression" (Kirk & Tinning, 1990, p. 11). Therefore, in order for a female to achieve success in physical education, she will have to conform to this type of behaviour. Unfortunately, the hidden curriculum also puts pressure on females to act in a way that is deemed feminine. Since aggression and competitiveness is traditionally considered "un-lady like" the female attempting to achieve success in physical education may have her sexuality called into question (Bourne, McCoy & Smith, 1998). Since there is such great social heterosexual pressure, a female would be more likely to sacrifice a high mark in physical education for a negative social stigma. Therefore, the hidden curriculum helps re-establish the gymnasium as a masculine domain.

**Detriments of a Sports Based Physical Education Program**

The responses from the current study show that physical education is commonly perceived as being a subject that is used to establish and maintain the ideology of masculinity. This is a result of the activities played in physical education mirroring organized sport. According to Messner (1998) "organized sport has served to bolster a sagging ideology of male superiority, and has helped to reconstitute masculine hegemony" (p. 109). Therefore, male students in particular act in aggressive ways in an attempt to exhibit power and control. Those who do not achieve this level of performance are quickly punished through physical forms of aggression, exclusion or humiliation. Physical education is a class where many students do not feel comfortable, and quite often are made to feel uncomfortable. This is a result of the underlying nature of the sports based activities that are constantly taught. The sole purpose of many of these game activities is to "win" or
show dominance over the opposing team. Physical education classes that place an importance on competition result in classes that adopt a “win at all costs” mentality. Unfortunately, the “cost” of this adoption is the alienation of students who are less skilled or less competitive. From the current study, a total of 5 female participants made direct references to competition in physical education as effecting them negatively, conversely male participants only made reference to competition in a positive manner. The desire that males have to succeed in competitive activities stems from the fact that; “all boys, to a greater of lesser extent, are judged according to their ability or lack of ability in competitive sport” (Messner, 1998, p. 111). This sentiment is reiterated by a female varsity participant who stated; “when skilled athletes dominate the court and do not allow other less skilled students to participate, or when males automatically assume that females cannot perform skills” (F841123PEKN). For the athletic male students, a sports based physical education model provides opportunities for males to “prove” their masculinity by demonstrating their ability to have control over other students.

Sports based physical education has other ways of segregating a class. Both male and female participants made reference to peer team selection. Peer team selection takes place when the teacher allows students to select their own teams. The teacher will select two “captains” who are usually the most skilled at the activity to be performed (a poor teaching technique which will be discussed further in the chapter). Then it is up to the two captains to pick from the rest of the class their respective teams. Fifteen percent of participants (one male varsity, four female non-varsity, two female varsity) made direct comments regarding peer team selection. One participant stated; “when playing in class-
not getting picked and being made fun of because bad at certain sports” (F850426PSYC). The reliance on “captains” to select teams in physical education, and the selection of the highly skilled athletes first, demonstrates the importance of winning, and how certain individuals will contribute to that goal more than others. “The captains of the class teams and the people who are better at the sports often control or selectively exclude those that are less good by benching them in order to have more playing time and to have a better chance of winning” (F840801NEUR). Secondly, a poor self-image will begin to develop with the students who are constantly selected last. This poor image could result in those individuals believing what they are indirectly told, that they are not valued in the physical education and sport setting. The feeling of non-worth is echoed in a male’s response by saying; “kids who weren’t athletic felt degraded when picking teams” (M851008BIOL). Not all students who enroll in physical education have the “win at all cost” mentality; instead, they choose physical education for what the title of the subject conveys, “physical education.”

According to Beaudet et al. (2004), “a typical high school physical education class focuses on team sports” (p. 39). However, when asked to explain what made physical education enjoyable (question 6), many students did not mention the most popular sports played in physical education (basketball, volleyball, soccer). A non-varsity female participant described “bringing different activities into the phys-ed class such as kick boxing and self defence” (F840512ENGL) as being the most enjoyable activities. Another non-varsity female stated; “I enjoyed working out and just going to the gym as opposed to playing actual sports. It was enjoyable because you could see actual results”
A third female non-varsity participant described an enjoyable basketball class stating; "playing basketball (more just shooting hoops). This was fun because there was really no pressure to ‘win’, just to have fun" (F840923SOCI). This female enjoyed the skills of playing basketball, and found it much more enjoyable when the pressure to win was removed from the activity. Male participants were also interested in activities that were different from the sports typically played. “Ski trip to Blue Mountain, fun, challenging, time to be with friends and doing something recreational” (M851008BIOL). Although many male respondents indicated that they enjoyed socialising and exercising with friends, some male students preferred the sports based model. One male participant stated, “what made it most enjoyable was the emphasis of strictly playing games and not paying much attention to movement studies and theory” (M840830PEKN).

Furthermore, when participants were asked to describe the role that they feel physical education should play in the high school curriculum very few made reference to competition and sports. Rather, the majority of the respondents (78%) described that physical education should place a great deal of emphasis on teaching students the benefits of physical activity and provide time for students to be active when in school. The second common response to the role that the participants feel physical education should play in high school was teamwork or co-operation. Eighteen percent of the total respondents described physical education class as having the opportunity to provide student teamwork skills.

Of the 78% who felt that physical education should promote healthy living and active lifestyles, there were a few responses that stood out by putting forth additions.
"Physical education should be a time where kids can have fun while experiencing different fitness activities. The activities should be different that way the class is not catering to one specific sport" (F841120ENGL, non-varsity). Another female non-varsity participant feels that physical education “should be seen as important, not just a bird course” (F840512ENGL). One particular varsity female described that physical education is “a break from textbook work” (F850908LING).

Within the female group, however, there were contrasting beliefs with regards to physical education being mandatory. A female varsity student stated; “I think physical education should be mandatory for everyone” (F840607CHYS). This is contrasted by a non-varsity female saying; “I don’t think it is very necessary, the only reason I took it was because it was mandatory. I think physical education should be optional” (F840125FREN).

The male participants also described the role that physical education should play beyond improving students activity levels. Physical education should teach the “educational aspects of health, such as the functions of the body, drug abuse, and sex” (M840829NEUR). However, there was a male participant who thought that physical education should teach reality, “reality is that some are better at things than others. Bullying is a part of life” (M840203PSYC). The response of this male is particularly disturbing since it seems to give justification to power relations of dominance and subordination, as opposed to attempting to eliminate it.

Many students are more interested in being active in physical education through means that are not focused solely on sport. These students, who represent the majority of the school population, are often forced into a classroom that is controlled by the minority,
or the “jocks.” The “jocks” try to carry on the tradition of a physical education class that reproduces and reinforces masculinity traits. Therefore, those entering into this “male domain” who do not appear to meet the standards of highly skilled athletes are alienated and made to feel as if they are “less than.” Therefore, the highly skilled athletes present in physical education classes seem insulted or even threatened when their territory is occupied by these “lesser specimens.” Ironically, however, without the students who are less physically skilled, the athletes would feel equally powerless, since there would no longer be a group who reinforces their perceived superiority.

**Location**

Physical education does not begin once the student enters the gymnasium, rather it unofficially begins in the change room. The change room, or locker room, can be a very intimidating environment for many students since it is often unsupervised. It is also within the change room where students feel most vulnerable to attack. This is the result of the close confines, and the necessity for students to get changed into proper physical education attire. Changing in front of one’s peers can be particularly unsettling especially when one takes into consideration the physical changes that take place with high school aged students, and the difference in physical growth across a single grade.

The lack of supervision within the change room makes this location a prime area for students to take advantage of power relations. Fifty percent of male participants compared to one female participant made direct reference to the change room as being a location where abuse of power was witnessed. Although there were differences in the type of “bullying” in the change room the victims of this abuse were very similar. For instance,
students who were “less popular” (M850309BTEC), heavier set (M801207NEUR), or misbehaved during the class resulting in the whole class “to do more work” (M840829NEUR) were common characteristics. The victimized students suffered “verbal abuse, having clothes hidden, spit on and even flushed down toilets.” One of the male participants described how one of the victims of bullying in the change room ended up crying (M850309BTEC).

The most extreme reported case of change room bullying from the current study is stated below;

A fellow who was heavier set was engaged in a verbal confrontation with a jock. The heavier set fellow’s underwear and socks were flushed into toilets or thrown into shower stalls. What was unfortunate for the jock was, the heavier fellow ended up taking copious amounts of steroids and started exercising two times a day. The jock kept on picking on the heavier fellow and 8 months into the academic year, the heavy fellow snapped, grabbed the jock and smashed him face first into a wall, then proceeded to eject him from a (ground floor) window. (M801207NEUR)

This incident demonstrates the negative side of bullying in physical education. The student that was being constantly “picked on” reverted to the use of power in a devastating way. After 8 months of being overpowered by a “jock” he lashed out with an act of aggression, reinforcing the notion that force is the only way to resolve a conflict. Although a direct question relating to the change room was not included in the questionnaire, it is interesting that half the males made reference to the change room as being a location for domination
and subordination. Females only reported one incident related to change room bullying.
The change room is just one aspect of physical education that makes this class unique from any other subject. A second unique point of physical education’s location is the reliance on the student to perform in front of others.

Since physical education class is not restricted to desk work, and there is little “book work” when compared to subjects, such as the sciences or English, a student’s grade is most often determined by his or her participation. For students with less physical skills, this form of evaluation can be very unsettling. A student in math class is not required to demonstrate his or her knowledge of the subject in front of the entire class. However, in physical education demonstrating skill in front of others is a necessity, therefore, making the whole class unofficial evaluators.

Although not directly stated, female participants did make reference to the uneasiness of performing in front of the class, and being evaluated. As with the change room incidences, those who are less skilled and/or overweight were described as being the one most commonly singled out. “I witnessed this in gym class; where the students were all tested to measure their fitness capabilities. I saw bullying in that the overweight students were centred out when they were not capable of fulfilling the tasks” (F830528LING, varsity).

Unfortunately, physical education is a class that requires students to perform in front of their peers. While demonstrating in front of an audience develops skills that can be useful in the future, it is important that the audience is taught to respect the individual performing and to understand that not everyone is going to be as skilled as others. By
teaching students the importance of compassion to fellow students, how to be supportive and not negatively critical, it would be likely that students would have fewer incidents of negative physical education experiences.

*Physical Education’s Reflection of Society*

When examining power relations within physical education, it is imperative that society as a whole comes into question. After all, if the saying; “it takes a community to raise a child” holds true, then it should also be that same community that is held accountable for incidences of domination and subordination. Therefore, blame for the power relations that are prevalent within physical education classes should not be viewed simply as an education problem, rather as a societal issue. As stated by Kaufman (1998), “civilized societies have been built and shaped through the decimation, containment, and exploitation of other peoples” (p.5).

Therefore, aggressive students are simply “surviving” in a world which they did not create, but are living within the rules that have been rooted in the history of western culture. Societal inequalities are prevalent, and according to Fernandez- Balboa (1997),

> We only have to look around us to see how the gap between the rich and the poor has widened; how discrimination in terms of gender, race, sexual orientation, ableness, physical ability, appearance, and religion (to name a few) has become ever more scathing; how violence and war are still constantly present in our lives; how pandemics and hunger are decimating entire populations; and how the Earth is being systematically destroyed due to greed, ignorance, and irresponsibility. (p. 122)
It is important that physical educators focus on “how these wider movements within society circumscribe and interfuse our work in school physical education” (Kirk & Tinning, 1990, p. 2). Therefore it should not be a surprise when one witnesses injustices, such as domination in physical education class, since those students are simply following the trends of history, as well as the current news which is widely broadcasted on television and other forms of media.

A second societal value that is often seen in the gymnasium relates to consumerism. Students feel the need to have very expensive clothing and footwear in order to maintain an image. Quite often the image that many of the youth are attempting to imitate are either music artists or sports celebrities.

With respect to sport celebrities, many of these individuals are seen as role models to the youth. In the athlete’s defence, not all of them want to be role models, therefore, there are both positive and negative athletic role models. As a result, many students within a physical education class can be seen “copying” their sport heros on and off the playing surface. The public worships the talent and skill that many of these sporting heroes display, and tries to emulate not only their physical ability, but their lifestyle. Top professional athletes “live the good life.” This is witnessed every time they are seen outside of the athletic realm. They drive vehicles that could never be purchased on the average salary and are surrounded by “beautiful people”. One could argue that sport celebrities behave in this manner in order to be noticed and become more popular. It can also be argued that students in physical education class will attempt the same activities in order to obtain their own notoriety. The desire to be noticed and accepted by peers is extremely important to the
social lives of today’s youth. Negatively, since there is such high societal value, many students feel a great deal of pressure to dress and behave a certain way. Incidents of societal pressure were common, especially for females within physical education. A varsity female participant witnessed “one girl mocking another because of the way her clothes fit her. The girl, was therefore, always uncomfortable and was not able to ‘give her all’ in the activities for fear of being looked at or drawing attention to herself” (F830120FREN).

Unfortunately for the victim in this situation, she was unable to perform to the best of her abilities, as a result of the negative comments and, therefore, became very self-conscious.

While highly skilled athletic males are admired in society, females are often portrayed as sex objects. For examples of this contrasting view of gender differences in sport one only has to look at the sport of beach volleyball. In beach volleyball, male competitors are permitted to wear baggy shorts and t-shirts. Female competitors on the other hand are required to wear outfits that are skimpy and extremely revealing. The perception of females seen simply as sexual objects was also mentioned by a female non-varsity participant who stated, “boys checking out girls, making comments about them” (F840512ENGL). As a result of physical appearance being judged on a daily basis, it is not a surprise when students put a great deal of emphasis on their looks. Since appearance is crucial to high school students many of them try to beautify themselves in an attempt to obtain the ideal body type.

*Idealized Body Type*

The ideal body type is very heavily promoted in current society. This is evident in the many “make over” television shows that make a variety of personal transformations
ranging from minimal changes, such as hair and wardrobe, to more drastic changes, such as plastic surgery. The constant bombardment of these types of shows are telling viewers that they must look a certain way in order to be considered a valued member of society. According to Franke (2003), high school students spend 70% of their leisure time watching television or socialising. Therefore, many high school students are aware of the television programs that encourage acceptance by society through an individual’s appearances. As a result, a misconception occurs with regards to the average body type and the idealised body type.

Since the idealised body type is most often the figure that is portrayed in popular media it is easy for students, and society, to compare themselves to ideal body types, and discover that they are lacking. According to Kirk & Tinning (1990), “the slender body achieved widespread prominence as a metaphor for health, well-being and affluence... Fatness on the other hand, particularly in women, elicits moral reproof. Overweight or obese people are represented as lazy, emotionally weak and sexually unattractive” (p.6). The positivity that is attributed to slenderness and the negative stigma attached to fatness can be seen as a new form of corporeal control, “where the locus of control has shifted from the masses and punitive external sanctions and repressions to become internalized within the individual and located within a moral category of guilt and reproof” (Kirk & Tinning, p. 6)

Corporeal control through body image is prevalent within physical education class. Previously discussed incidences, such as the “heavier set fellow” who ended up taking steroids and “ejecting” the jock out the window (M840127NEUR), the “geeky kid” who
had the dodge ball intentionally thrown at him to eliminate him from playing (M820317BIOL), and the singling out of overweight students who were not capable of fulfilling the task (F830528LING) are examples of individuals being singled out based upon appearance. The underlying message being sent to these individuals is that physical education, and society as a whole, has no place for them, since, as described by Kirk and Tinning (1990), they are undesirable.

In a world that places such great emphasis on looks, the mass media often turns to athletes to advertise a wide range of products (Kirk & Tinning, 1990). Many athletes can be categorized as having ideal body types. These athletes, who are most often paid professionals, have devoted the majority of their life to their sport. As a result, they have developed wonderful physiques, the type that many "ordinary" people strive to obtain. The present society places great emphasis on slender females and muscular males. The image of the ideal body type is reinforced on advertisements found in magazines, television, and massive billboards. "The widespread occurrence of eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia, which are both underwritten by an obsession with weight and body shape, illustrate two contradictory imperatives within contemporary capitalism to consume and to abstain (Kirk & Tinning, 1990, p.6). The contradictory messages being sent to students and society has resulted in schools needing to "fulfil a complex range of functions" (Kirk & Tinning, 1990, p.4).

In Ontario, this range of functions is understood and, in response the Ontario Ministry of Education’s new Physical Education curriculum (2000), places a great deal of emphasis on lifetime activity and improving the physical fitness of students. That being
said, however, it is important that physical educators teach students that healthy choices are for the betterment of the student’s health, and not solely for societal improvement. It would be a tragedy if a student of any sex misunderstood the new curriculum as being one meant to enhance beauty. Therefore, it is imperative that physical education teachers address the differences between what the popular media often misrepresents as being healthy and actual healthy choices that students make on a daily basis. The images of attractive bodies in advertisements describing how “easy it was” for them to obtain their bodies leads into Linda Bain’s (1990) myth of meritocracy in physical education.

**Meritocracy in Physical Education**

It is believed that most of the top athletes got to where they are because of their “will and determination” to work hard and to overcome adversity. Very little is attributed to their natural talent, size, or gender. The underlying notion is that “if you (the average individual) work really hard, you too can achieve greatness.” While the hard working notion is admirable, and the popular media makes a point of constantly broadcasting these stories, it is extremely unrealistic to think that through hard work and determination anyone can achieve his or her goal. For example, a female who stands 5'3", with limited ball handling skills would be unlikely to succeed in her co-educational physical education basketball class. She may put forth a great effort to move to the open areas, however, when given the ball, if she consistently turns the ball over to the other team, it is unlikely that her classmates will continue passing to her. Very little mention will be given to her with regards to her ability to move to open spaces, her peers and the evaluator will only remember the mistakes that were made that resulted in a turnover. This results from the
emphasis that physical education classes place on winning, as opposed to developing skills that can be adapted to other activities.

According to Fernandez-Balboa (1997), "finding the most efficient means to achieve a particular end becomes the dominant issue of concern" (p.124). For the above example, even though the female basketball player was attempting to propel her team to a victory, the turnovers resulted in her becoming a hindrance. Since sports based physical education places emphasis on winning, excluding her becomes justified for the greater good of the team. Unfortunately, the competitive atmosphere that develops, and the desire to win, cancels out the true purpose of the subject which is to teach students.

It is believed that "all students should be provided with equal opportunity, be encouraged to work hard and be rewarded for their achievements" (Bain, 1990, p. 23-24). This belief system sounds as if it should work and it may be questioned as to why it is being criticised in this paper. The reason it falls under scrutiny is because it states that every student should be provided with equal opportunity. From the results of the current study, not all students are being treated equally. Respondents from both the varsity and non-varsity females made reference to being not included in games by males during physical education classes. Furthermore, male respondents noted several incidences where the rules of the activity in which the class was participating were manipulated in order to exclude certain students. A key activity that promoted the exclusion of weaker students was "dodge ball." A male participant described "how the geeky kid always got picked on in dodge ball. The ball was always intentionally thrown at him to either hurt him or to exclude him from the game as quickly as possible" (M820317BIOL). A female varsity
participant documented a similar incident with regards to dodge ball when asked to describe an inappropriate use of power (question 9): “co-ed physical education, when certain games were played ex dodge ball. The males ruled because they threw the ball extremely hard injuring some girls, even though it was unintentional” (F830120FREN). These statements indicate that both females and males who do not meet the “criteria” of athletes are often discriminated against. If these students are not being permitted to participate, how is it that they can then be rewarded for their achievement. From these descriptions, no matter how hard a student “tries”, if he or she does not meet the standards of what students believe is the ideal physical education student, he or she will not succeed. Therefore, it is important that the current sport’s based physical education classes be modified in a way that has students take a greater responsibility for their learning as opposed to simply showing up and participating.

*Alternatives to Sports Based Physical Education*

Sports based physical education classes have become the norm where in the past they were the exception (Lumby, 2002). The underlying competitiveness of these activities reinforces the importance of physical skill, and an understanding of how to play the sport. While the intention of these activities is to have students participate, the assumption is that they are also being active. According to Bain (1990), “teachers seem to define the teaching situation in terms of keeping students busy, active and good” (p.26). In turn, students will appear the way the teacher expects them to behave, by being busy. Unfortunately, going through the motions of what a student believes is expected of them does not result in a meaningful educational experience. While these sports appeal to some, the majority of
students are simply going through the motions within a physical education class for the end goal of obtaining a required credit, and then moving on to other subjects.

Therefore, alternatives are required within physical education class so that students understand that physical activity is not simply playing sports (Cavar, 2002). Once alternatives are introduced to students then physical educating truly begins. This is evident in the majority of the participants from the current study. Four male participants made reference to enjoying activities that were not sports based, such as skiing, kick boxing, and weight training. Furthermore, a male participant stated; “phys-ed OAC level, introduction to kinesiology...and managing/ coaching sports received NCCP 1 certificate” (M801207NEUR).

Female respondents also enjoyed activities that did not centre around sports typically taught within physical education class. A non-varsity female stated; “I just loved physical education because it gave me time to just have fun in class, also it allowed me to enjoy new events. My gym class went on a camping trip to Haliburton where we rock climbed, canoed and mountain biked, we also ran a special Olympic event” (F841120ENGL). Two other female respondents made reference to increasing physical fitness within physical education class. “I enjoyed working out and just going to the gym as opposed to playing actual sports. It was enjoyable because you could see actual results” (F830528LING non-varsity). It appears that physical education classes that are most appealing to females include fitness and social environments. Also, as stated by participant (F850908LING) having an all female class was enjoyable.

Two of the above statements made reference to activities that will be beneficial
after the students leave high school, coaching certification and organizing a special Olympic event. By providing these type of activities, or added bonuses, physical education becomes more meaningful to students. The coaching certification is a necessity for anyone interested in coaching activities. Furthermore, this class can be expensive to students, and may not be readily accessible when one considers that many students have part-time jobs that may occupy week nights and weekends (Franke 2003). Therefore, providing this certification within physical education class allows students the opportunity to obtain a certificate that can assist with employment outside of the school. The benefits of the special Olympic event is just as important. In order to organize such an activity students must work together and co-operatively. Also, the personal satisfaction of witnessing the event and the joy that it brings to the participants will give a better understanding to the organizers about people living with disabilities.

According to Beaudet et al. (2004),

a typical high school physical education class often focuses on team sport...(and) such a curriculum does very little or nothing to enhance students’ health and fitness. However, since attempting to eliminate team sports might be met with great resistance, the answer may be to enhance fitness through the team sport curriculum (p. 39).

Sports education that places emphasis on physical fitness requires the class to be divided into teams, and each team will then be required to select a trainer responsible for developing practices which place emphasis on developing fitness. An individual who will take on the role of the coach by developing plays, as well as each team, will be required to
provide a referee and a score keeper. This model of physical education allows students to better understand the sport as a whole, and the training and development of skills that are necessary to participate and succeed. It should also be noted that it is important that the whole team be active in the decision making and participation in the culminating tournament. In doing so, physical education will no longer be a class where the students are required to simply show up and play. Rather, research will be required on behalf of the trainer and the coach. Each new sport introduced to the students would be considered a new unit, and different students would be assigned to the various roles, allowing each student an opportunity to experience the various roles necessary (Beaudet et al., 2004). Students will, therefore, develop a team in the true sense of the word, one that places emphasis on the team as a whole, and not on certain skilled athletes. At the end of unit the team would be asked to critically reflect on their experience and what changes could have been made to increase enjoyment for all participants. In doing so, onus is placed on the students, however, the teacher must ensure that every student has the opportunity to participate meaningfully.

Just as there was a change from movement education to sports based physical education, another shift of student- preferred activities is taking place. These new activities have the title “extreme sports” and have been gaining acceptance in the mainstream media in the forms of the “X-Games”. The X-Games are similar to the Olympics in the fact that they have a variety of sports and medals are awarded to the top three finishers. However, that is where the similarity ends. Whereas the Olympics place emphasis on events, such as track and field, and swimming for the summer and skiing and speed skating for the winter,
the X-Games places emphasis on skateboarding, moto cross, and moto jumping (motor dirt bikes). These activities are exciting to the spectators and can be seen as a rebellious form of physical activity, much the same as "hot dog" skiing did in the 1980s (many events such as moguls, are now apart of the Olympics). These radical sports are creating their own sports idols, such as Tony Hawk in the sport of skateboarding.

The sports at events, such as the X-Games, are not the only draw for younger viewers. These games are usually accompanied by popular musicians. The entire atmosphere is geared around fun and excitement. It is also these activities that are lacking within physical education for numerous reasons, most notably safety, but secondly, many of these activities are seen to be a nuisance to society. It is very common to witness many young youths in an urban environment honing their skateboarding skills. It is also just as common to witness these individuals being hassled by the police and politicians. However, very few individuals, including the skateboarders themselves are unlikely to think of themselves as athletes, even though they are very physically fit.

Gymnastics was becoming a forbidden activity to include within physical education due to the safety concerns. "Ironically," according to Lumby (2002), "many young people cry out for such activities" (p.6), citing the high interest in extreme sports. Many municipalities are beginning to accommodate these athletes and society by investing large sums of money to develop skateboarding parks. It is interesting how the municipalities are slowly beginning to accept these new activities, yet schools are still cautious to include them for the fear of large lawsuits. Although the current study made no reference to these types of activities, future research into the topic would more than likely result in some
interesting findings. Also, perhaps if some of the students in the current study had participated in such activities, then maybe they too would have been listed alongside canoeing and mountain biking.

*Same Sex Physical Education Class*

Unfortunately, sports based physical education classes have become embedded into the high school curriculum, and a shift to more meaningful activities that places lesser emphasis on sports and more on physical fitness may be slow. However, as a result of the current study, it appears that female’s preferred activities are fitness, where male’s are sports based activities. Therefore, perhaps separating the genders would reduce the unhappiness that is common to many female students within physical education.

In the United States, prior to 1970, both males and females were educated separately within physical education class. In 1972, Title IX was passed which states; “No person..., shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial Assistance” (Gabbei, 2004, p.34). Although American, Title IX has served to set a worldwide example with regards to equality in education. However, many have questioned the way this bill has been implemented and its benefit to female participants within physical education. According to Gabbei (2004),

Title IX, which mandated co-ed physical education classes, was based on a melting pot philosophy of integration, where all cultures blend into one overall culture. In practice, this philosophy meant that many different cultures would be dominated by the majority culture and that one culture is good for all ( p. 34).
The lack of changes within the curriculum, and even teacher’s behaviour, resulted in females having to conform to the dominant model of male physical education, which is sports based activities. A participant in the current study described how her female only physical education fitness class was most enjoyable; “Live fit class in grade 10. It was enjoyable because it was an aerobic class every other day. It was also only girls so it gave us the freedom to be goofy and have fun” (F850908LING varsity). Her description, although not stated, leaves out two important factors that tend to result in negative physical education experiences for females, sports and males. Gabbei (2004) gives further explanation by stating, “female students experience more opportunity to achieve learning goals when instructed in single-gender groupings male students tend to improve regardless of gender groupings” (p.34). From the current study 40% of female respondents made reference to males as being contributors to negative physical education experiences. The majority of the responses made reference to males not including females in the activity, however, the most extreme response from a female describing a male’s action was; “in gym class, which was co-ed, and one of the guys tackled one of the girls because he didn’t like her. He would push her around for the entire game, and finally he completely attacked her” (F830726CHYS). Along with physical attacks, female students were very self-conscious of their actions as a result of the presence of males. For example, “being forced to do certain activities in front of many others, sometimes in front of the boys” and when the same participant was asked to describe an inappropriate use of power she stated, “opposite sex peers, boys checking out girls, making comments about them” (F840512ENGL). Humbert (1995) observed similar findings and concluded “that for the
majority of the women, the milieu that is created when the boys are removed is not only desirable but essential if they are going to enjoy physical education” (p. 65).

While single gender physical education classes may reduce the uneasiness that many females face, this could only be considered a short term solution to the overall problem of societal injustices. Separating males and females will not allow mutual respect and trust to develop, and will reproduce the historical misconception of male superiority. Therefore, in order for single gender classes to be effective there must be a goal of meaningful gender interaction in the future. In order for this to occur not just physical educators but all educators must be made more aware of the inequalities that may be intentionally or unintentionally conveyed to students.

**Critical Pedagogy**

In order to allow all students to participate meaningfully in physical education it is essential that students first learn to respect one another. Education was intended to inform individuals about the world, and how students can develop into productive citizens. The attempt was to create within the students a consciousness that would have them question the practices which they are witness to on a daily basis and make appropriate changes. According to Fernandez-Balboa (1997), however, education “has served to perpetuate the boundaries of power and to separate the dominant from the dominated” (p. 122).

Although power relations are very evident among students, they themselves should not be expected to shoulder all the blame. According to Bain (1990), they are behaving in a manner that has been deeply rooted into their daily lives. In order to change students’ perception of physical education and justify the importance of the subject, it is important
for current and future instructors of the subject to change the ideology of physical education and be made aware of the hidden curriculum that often supports sexist, homophobic behaviour.

Fernandez-Balboa (1997) believes that teacher education programs require examination in order to better understand how physical education classes are structured as to reinforce the goal of winning to students. “Since its conception, physical education teacher education (PETE) has not been a vehicle for developing students’ civic and political attitudes... (by creating)... a willingness to contribute purposefully and positively to the development of a better society for all” (p. 123). Currently, physical education is appealing to those with power, in most cases athletic males, while less athletic students and females have been expected simply to conform to the preferred activities (Fernandez-Balboa).7

Since the teacher is the individual with the true power in the class, it is important that new teachers, especially males, (since those currently teaching will be more resistant to change) begin to create physical education classes that are more appealing to the majority of students (Cavar, 2002). Currently, “PETE adheres to the technocratic and performance-oriented ideology” (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997, p.123), which places a great deal of emphasis on sport based activities while increased fitness levels are considered secondary.

Therefore, if the assumption that students are learning so long as they are “busy, happy, and good” (Bain, 1990, p.26), one must question what physical education students are learning especially if so much time is spent degrading other students. According to Fernandez-Balboa (1997), “education has reinforced modernistic values and has been used
to promote capitalism and exclusive, elitist notions of culture” (p. 122). Therefore, current education is reinforcing power relations which create students who are self-centered and only concerned for their own well being at the expense of others, a theme that was common with the current study. Although this statement is harsh, one only needs to examine the ways in which the earth has been negatively exploited for the riches of a minority of the world’s population, and how this exploitation of the weak manifests itself in the school environment (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997).

To reverse the self-centered drive that fuels so many in our society to exploit the earth and others, a change in human behavior is needed, and a new set of beliefs is required. Although this seems as if it is a huge task at the macro level, one must make these changes at the micro level. At the educational level, Fernandez-Balboa (1997) believes that this can be achieved with a new ideology in education; critical pedagogy.

Critical pedagogy will have students be more civically and politically minded while striving for freedom and justice (Fernandez-Balboa, 1997). In essence Fernandez-Balboa suggests that students need to be made more aware of the “larger picture” that their actions can have long lasting and devastating effects on another student. This is especially true in physical education where it has been demonstrated that power relations are prevalent.

**Teacher Preparation**

Physical education is a subject that is often criticised and deemed as “insignificant due to the all too common misconception that the leisurely activities and playing of games are trivial and unnecessary to the development of the individual” (Cavar, 2002, p. 101). Although it is a misconception, it is a perception that is believed by many parents and
students. Therefore, it is up to the teachers to provide justification to their students about the importance of physical education. After all, a healthy body will only help foster a healthy mind.

From the current study, participants described their physical education teachers both positively and negatively. The majority of all negative comments made regarding the teacher most often referred to his or her improper use of power. While questions specifically asking participants about their teachers were not included in the questionnaire, it is interesting that 13, or 34% of respondents, made reference to their teachers. Of the 13 references directed towards teachers only four were positive compared to nine negative. Teachers that contributed to enjoyable physical education experiences "allowed students to decide what they wanted to do in class" (F840607CHYS), and "made it enjoyable and interesting" (F830720PEKN). However, it was also discovered that the most effective teachers gave direction, for instance, "weight training, the instructor was very enthusiastic and also somewhat strict, which made it enjoyable and also serious to follow a routine" (F830120FREN varsity). This particular instructor was described as being strict, therefore, it can be implied that he or she was able to use his or her power in a positive way justifying the importance of teachers to be leaders in the gymnasium. However, much of the criticism of the teachers could be interpreted as them being the opposite.

Criticism of teachers from the current study was very diverse and included abuse of power, insensitivity, favouritism, and improper grading techniques. One participant stated,"I felt there was an abuse of power shown on behalf of the phys-ed teachers. Many students who were forced to take gym class and who were not in the best of shape were
forced to do certain tasks in front of others that potentially could have made them feel very uncomfortable...” (F830528LING non-varsity). This incident is very troubling and, although the individual describing it was not the victim herself, she was able to see how it negatively impacted her classmates. Unfortunately, the memory of a negative physical education experience often stays with that individual. “In elementary school the gym teacher was very insensitive ie. constantly refused the students any rights that they should not have been denied” (F840519SOCl non-varsity). This participant was unable to recall a high school situation where domination and subordination occurred. However, the fact is that many years after her negative elementary school experience this memory stays with her. Fortunately, this individual was able to continue with physical education and her inability to describe an incident in high school demonstrates that her high school physical education experiences were positive. However, one must wonder how many end up associating a negative stigma to the subject and choose no longer to take physical education when it becomes an option.

In order for students to have enjoyable physical education experiences it is essential that the instructor of the course be aware of his or her actions. One respondent stated; “The only negative experience I ever had, had to do with the teacher who was not reasonable or fair. So this individual gave phys-ed a negative feel, although I still enjoyed everything we did” (F840521PEKN varsity). Although further description of what actions the teacher did to make physical education negative for this participant were not included, it describes that negative experiences can be greatly controlled by how the teacher organizes his or her classes.
As stated numerously throughout the paper, the gymnasium has a great deal of power relations. However, there has been limited discussion with regards to the teachers role. Within the gymnasium the teacher has all of the power, since he or she is the one responsible for discipline, planning classes and, most importantly, evaluating students and giving grades accordingly.

Some participants described the grading of students as being unfair. “They graded us in a basketball unit on how many baskets we could get in a certain amount of time, if you weren’t good you got a bad grade” (F850426PSYC varsity). This is a very unfortunate response since it places a great deal of emphasis on skill. There are many basketball players in the NBA who would perhaps make only 50% of their baskets, so to grade students in this manner and assign a grade accordingly appears to be very unethical.

As discussed in an earlier section, many students of both sexes made reference to peer team selection, where that teacher would pick two “captains” and have them select the rest of the team. This is a poor teaching technique since it asks the class to line up and be picked, which usually results in the more skilled athletes being selected first, and the less skilled being selected last. There would be nothing more embarrassing for a student than being the last person selected for a team since it relays a hidden message to the student that he or she is “just not good enough.” Quite often the teacher uses this technique since it eliminates one task from his or her responsibility, however, the consequences need to be considered.

Of the 13 participants making reference to teachers 84% were females (23% positive, 61% negative), indicating that for the females physical educators play an
important role in physical education experiences. This is supported by Jenkins and Bainer (1990) who discovered that, "girls learn to be more dependent on the teacher and others for guidance, direction and answers" (in Hutchinson, 1995, p. 44). Since females rely so heavily upon feedback from teachers, lack of attention, or even negative attention will most likely result in disengagement from the activity (Hutchinson, 1995). Perhaps this could explain the fact that females from the current study were less likely to continue with physical education when compared to the male participants. Females from the current study averaged 3.15 physical education credits for varsity, and 2.25 for non-varsity students. When compared to the male average of 4.5 credits it is noticeable that females are more likely to withdraw from physical education, although the reasons behind withdrawing were not the purpose of this study, it does support a trend similar to those findings of other studies (Cavar, 2002; Gibbons et al., 1999; Humbert, 1995; Hutchinson, 1995).

The negative female physical education experiences as a result of the educator is also discussed by Humbert (1995). In interviewing female physical education students, many of the young women in (her) study expressed the feeling that because of their low skill and confidence levels, physical education teachers did not pay attention to them in their physical education classes...(their teachers) spent all their time with the people who were already good (p. 74).

The lack of attention physical educators dedicate to females is echoed by Hutchinson and states "attention to students behaviour is one teacher behaviour known to affect student learning, self-esteem and self confidence" (p. 44). Showing favour to a single group of students was not only described by females, a male participant stated; "phys-ed teacher
focussed entirely on those individuals participating on his varsity teams (basketball).”
(M801207NEUR).

Physical educators are often expected to do much more than teach within the school community, and a secondary role that many physical educators adopt is coaching. As a coach, a physical education teacher may feel a great deal of pressure to succeed as a result of the public acknowledgement of winning athletic teams. As a result, the teaching becomes secondary to many physical education teachers. Furthermore, many hiring practices for schools require a physical education teacher to coach a varsity sport. When this occurs one must question on whom will this teacher have the greatest impact, the whole of the school, or a selected number of athletes he or she coaches.

According to Fernandez-Balboa (1997),

Education is considered just a means to securing a job, not a way of challenging students to think more deeply about themselves and the world. Once hired, many graduates of such programs become sullen and silent functionaries with schizoid and passive attitudes and little desire and/or power to change things. That is why most physical education teachers cannot be considered professionals in the true sense of the word, just mere technicians (p.126).

Unfortunately, since the present physical education model is so embedded into the high school curriculum, new teachers, with a different, more inclusive ideology of physical education may face a great deal of opposition from other teachers of the subject as well as the dominant male athletes who enjoy sports based physical education. As a result, a new physical education instructor will more than likely “fall in line” with the current routine, as
opposed to making positive changes. Until all physical educators begin taking responsibility for the happenings within the gymnasium, and cease placing the blame on students, as calling them hard to manage, or lazy, the term “mere technicians” will be a suitable title for this profession.

Questions to be Answered Revisited

At the onset of this thesis, there were three questions that I hoped to answer:

1) Do students experience power relations/imbalances?

As a result of the current study, it is evident that power relations exist within high school physical education and can be a detriment to many students wishing to participate.

2) Were these power imbalances associated with the privileging of a specific group?

Power imbalances in physical education were found to privilege the athletes, or skilled performers. Their ability to perform in a superior manner from other students was a cause for admiration and justification for certain actions, such as not allowing the lesser skilled students to participate.

3) Can teachers intervene into these embedded/entrenched practices of power?

The present study did not disclose any noticeable interventions by teachers. However, it is essential that teachers take an active role in better understanding what “hidden” messages are being sent to their students as a result of the activities in which they incorporate into their teaching. Activities that mirror competitive sport will only foster the privileging of the skilled students, and further alienate the lesser skilled students.
Limitations and Implications

The original intention of the current study was to obtain a cross section of the University population by inviting all six faculties of the university to participate. Unfortunately, only three faculties responded to the letter asking permission to include their faculty in the study, therefore, possibly limiting a diverse range of participants. However, since many of the classes approached were also elective classes (i.e., first year psychology) there was a diverse range of academic majors.

Another limiting factor for the current study was the fact that the participants were all university students who were asked to reflect upon their high school physical education experiences. As a result of the time that the students have been away from high school, the responses may not be accurate to current physical education classes. Furthermore, university participants do not accurately reflect society as a whole since the majority of high school graduates are unlikely to enroll in university. Therefore, responses from students who choose to attend college or enter directly into the working force were not included in the study. However, it should be noted that the attempt of this study was not to assume that the sample group included in the current study reflect the feelings of society as a whole. Rather, the intent of the current study was to receive a better understanding of the power imbalances that impacted students’ experiences of physical education.

Implications for Future Research

As a result of the current study, it is evident that power relations exist within high school physical education and can be a detriment to many students wishing to participate. However, the current study did not address how many participants decided against physical
education as a result of these power imbalances. Therefore, a study examining both male and female justification for eliminating physical education from their course load when the subject becomes an option requires further research. It is extremely important for this research to take place and the recommendations to be implemented, otherwise physical education and physical activity will continue to support the elitist notions of allowing only highly skilled athletes to succeed. Upon reflection on the current study, the questionnaire should have included a question asking participants to describe the reason for withdrawing from physical education. In doing so a more direct explanation would have been present as to the reason why students choose not to take physical education when the subject becomes an elective. Even though the question as to why students withdrew from physical education was not included, a female participant did mention that there was no room for physical education within her school schedule as a result of the many prerequisite courses that universities and colleges are demanding of high school students. Even though there was a single participant making reference to not having the space in her course load, it is safe to assume that with the stricter requirements in place by post-secondary institutions that many students are sacrificing a physical education credit. Therefore, a study that examines the impact of post-secondary institutions implementing physical education credits as a requirement for admission would be interesting.

Since varsity students excel in physical education and also tend to control the class, a study that removes this student population from the unit which focuses on the sport in which they compete should be considered. For instance, a varsity basketball team member would be exempt from the basketball unit, yet be required to submit a portfolio describing
his or her experiences. Then the varsity athlete would join the class for the remaining units. Since the varsity athlete has already demonstrated his or her skill relative to that specific activity it is doubtful that this student would benefit from the physical education unit beyond a "secondary practice" for their sport. Other units, such as swimming, soccer or gymnastics (just to name a few), could be activities within which the varsity basketball player would participate, increasing his or her movement repertoire and perhaps introducing him/her to newer activities. This study could then examine how the removal of the skilled athletes impacts the power balances of the class.

Finally, much of the discussion from the current study was related to males overpowering the female participants, however, there were indications that female domination over other females exist. An important study to conduct in the future would examine how female specific power relations impact physical education participation.

**Implications for Theory**

As it appears from previous literature and present participants, females are receiving less meaningful physical education experiences than males. While this is not new it adds to the literature in this area. Another extension of the theory is the fact that power is an issue in the physical education classroom. What my study has added is the fact that students are both aware of it and unable to address it. This is in addition to the literature and needs to be investigated further. A new finding seems to refer to the place in which the issue of power is most problematic- the change room. This has not been addressed in the literature explicitly. It demonstrates that even when classroom pedagogy is addressed, the more personal nuances of the problem may not be solved. This is an area which needs to be
addressed in practice and further research. Research on bullying has often looked at the people and processes involved. This study is pointing to specific spaces in which power issues are occurring and how the acceptance of problem behaviour as “natural” interferes with its examination.

Perhaps single gender physical education needs to be re-addressed. While there is a great deal of resistance to sex separation in physical education, researchers need to re-examine the maturity level of high school male students who, from previous and present findings, tend to be a major contribution to females non-enjoyment of the subject. Segregating the sexes within physical education may be faced with resistance and in extreme cases be deemed as sexist. However, it is essential that all students regardless of race, gender or ability are provided opportunities to participate in physical education classes. Unfortunately, single sex physical education classes would not address the issue of power relations in physical education, (i.e., skill will continue to dominate). Instead it only removes a certain group with the belief that females would benefit in an environment that restricts males and it also would not address “change room” issues.

**Implications for Practice**

The results of the current study have raised many issues that are prominent in physical education classes. Respondents made numerous references to the change room as being a location for the most physical and demeaning forms of abuse. In order to allow every student to feel safer physical educators need to take an active role in monitoring the change room. Through closer supervision within the change rooms violent incidents might be greatly decreased. Reflecting upon my own physical education experiences the change
room was an area where the majority of abuse, and/or fights took place. The change room was a common place for incidents of misbehavior since it was the only time in which students were left unsupervised. However, supervising this area may prove to be difficult since students should be allowed privacy when changing.

With regards to the classes offered in high school physical education, teachers and administrators could offer two streams of physical education. One class for students who are more interested in the competitive undertone of many sports, and a second that focuses on lifetime fitness, which would not include competitive activities. The lifetime fitness class would focus on developing workout regimes, and teaching the student how to meet his or her fitness goals by the introduction of various community centres which offer a variety of different activities. For this strategy to be implemented and succeed students wishing to participate in either physical education “stream” would have to be aware of the course parameters and agree to the limitations that each class offers. The hope would be that the competitive athletes would compete against one another, while those interested in developing healthy lifestyle habits would be introduced to activities and locations that would assist in meeting their goals.

The results from the present study also indicate that teachers need to become more vigilant in observing their classes. Physical education teachers must be aware of the students who are not actively participating in class and discover why the student (s) have chosen to avoid the activity. The current study described how less skilled, or less physically active students are discriminated against by the active members of the class. As teachers we can no longer place the blame on the students by assuming that these students are lazy
or deviant. To do this, teachers must be proactive in the activities they select to include in their curriculum and approach students who are "shying" away from participation. By simply talking to the students teachers will be able to understand the apprehensions certain students may have and develop new teaching strategies to ensure that all students who are wishing to participate in physical education are provided ample opportunity.

It would be impossible to eliminate students’ desires to win and be competitive, however, it is imperative that physical educators instill a sense of compassion to all students, and ensure that students understand that physical education is separate from competitive sport. It appears that this separation is not conveyed to the students. Physical education needs to be what its title suggests, educating students about physical activity and healthy lifestyles options. Instead of continually teaching the same sports, students should be exposed to a variety of physical activities that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to participate.

Numerous participants in the current study described a high sense of enjoyment from activities, such as hiking, canoeing, skiing, and less structured activities. It was also recommended from the participants that physical education teach students how to be physically active, and instill cooperation and teamwork. It is not mandated in the physical education curriculum that students participate in sports that correspond to that season of the year, however, many physical education programs are designed in this manner. In my opinion and as described by this study, sports-based physical education remains common in the high school physical education curriculum. Teachers who enjoy these sports are simply using these activities as a base for their courses and as a result healthy choices and life long
physical activities are less emphasized. This is in stark contrast to what the health care professionals and society are requiring of our profession. In the battle against obesity and other diseases associated with inactivity, physical educators are on the front line, and it is up to us to get out of our trenches and start assisting our students in making healthy decisions.
References


APPENDIX: A

Questionnaire

Brock University
Department of Education
Letter of Appreciation

Thesis: Exploring Domination and Subordination in High School Physical Education

Researcher: Darcy Usborne (905) 931-3298, darcyusborne@hotmail.com
Research Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly (905) 688-5550 ext. 3381, mconnell@arnie.pec.brocku.ca

I would like to thank you for participating in the study on high school physical education experiences. Your co-operation has been greatly appreciated, and the information provided is extremely important to me.

Once again I feel the results of this study will be very valuable to educators and students participating in physical education. The benefits that can be acquired by the results would not have been possible without you sharing your high school physical education experiences.

The results of this study will be available in April 2004. Please contact me at the above email address if you require a summary of my findings. The final publication of my M.Ed thesis will appear in the Brock Library.

If you have any questions about the results, your role in the research, or any other issues please feel free to contact myself, or the research supervisor. Your feedback is very welcome, and I invite you to comment on any part of my research. Again, thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

Darcy Usborne
Faculty of Education
Brock University
Exploring Domination and Subordination in High School Physical Education.

This Project has been reviewed by and received ethics clearance through, the office of Research Ethics Board. (File # 03-082).

This Study is being conducted by Darcy Usborne (M.Ed student) darcyusborne@hotmail.com (905 685 3704), under the supervision of Dr. Maureen Connolly (905 688-5550 ext. 3381). This study, and the result discovered will be publicly accessible through the Brock University Library system.

You are being invited to participate in this research project. Your participation is completely voluntary. The purpose of this study is to receive feedback about your highschool physical education experiences, with specific emphasis on the power relations that occurred within your class experiences.

Participation in this study is expected to take no more then 25 minutes of your time. If you decide to volunteer, you will be asked to answer twelve survey questions. Other then increasing you awareness of the issues, you may not benefit personally from your participation in this study. However, the information obtained from this research may be useful in designing meaningful physical education classes in the future. Your name will not appear in any report, publication, or presentation resulting from this study. To ensure confidentiality, each participant will be categorized by class, age and sex, therefore making it unnecessary for you to list your name on any of the survey pages. In the event you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this study, please contact the Research Ethics Officer at 905-688-5550, Ext. 3035. You may also withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty, by advising the researcher of this decision. Since this is a survey study, you are permitted to leave unanswered any question that you prefer not to answer. The type of questions you will be asked will be similar to the following:

-Describe an enjoyable Physical Education experience. What made it enjoyable?

Feedback about the use of the data collected will be available to you during the month of April. To receive information please contact me via email.

In order to participate in this questionnaire you must be at least 18 years of age. By completing and submitting this questionnaire, you are indicating consent to participate and that you are over the age of 18. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. Participants are encouraged to retain this consent form for their records.

Darcy Usborne.
Faculty of Education
Brock University
Exploring domination and Subordination in Highschool Physical Education

Questionnaire

day/month/year

a) Sex (circle one) M  F  
b) Date of Birth. ______/_____/_____  
c) Academic Major ______
d) Province where you attended high school. _______________

2) Number of Highschool Physical Education Credits ______

3) Were the classes Same Sex or Co-educational or Both (Number of credits for each)
   ______ same sex, ______ Co-educational.

4) Did you play Varsity Sports in High school?  No  Yes  number of years playing_____
   Type of sport (s). ______

5) Do you or have you played Varsity Sports at University?  
   No  Yes  Sport:__________________

6) Describe an enjoyable Physical Education experience. What made it enjoyable?

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

7) Describe a negative Physical Education experience. What made it unenjoyable?

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________
8) For the purpose of this survey, domination is defined as any form of control or overpowering of one group or person over another group or person. Subordination refers to the experience of being dominated. An example of domination and subordination would be a bullying/victim relationship. Please give an example where you were witness to or a participant in a dominance subordination experience within a physical education class.

9) Describe a situation where you feel there was an inappropriate use/abuse of power between either same grade peers, same sex peers, or opposite sex peers.
10) Describe the role that you feel Physical Education SHOULD play in the highschool curriculum.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

11) Please rank your current physical activity level. 1 Being very inactive, and 5 being very active.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very inactive</th>
<th>Very Active</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12) Is there any other comments that you would like to add relating to the topic.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Appendix B: Ethics Approval

Brock University

Senate Research Ethics Board

DATE: November 12, 2003
FROM: Joe Engemann, Chair
Senate Research Ethics Board (REB)
TO: Maureen Connolly, Physical Education and Kinesiology
Darcy Usborne
FILE: 03-082 Usborne
TITLE: Exploring Domination and Subordination in High School PE

The Brock University Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above research proposal.

DECISION: Accepted as Clarified

This project has been approved for the period of November 12, 2003 to April 4, 2004 subject to full REB ratification at the Research Ethics Board's next scheduled meeting. The approval may be extended upon request. The study may now proceed.

Please note that the Research Ethics Board (REB) requires that you adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and approved by the REB. The Board must approve any modifications before they can be implemented. If you wish to modify your research project, please refer to www.BrockU.CA/researchservices/forms.html to complete the appropriate form REB-03 (2001) Request for Clearance of a Revision or Modification to an Ongoing Application.

Adverse or unexpected events must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Principal Investigator, the safety of the participants and the continuation of the protocol.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and approvals of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement requires that ongoing research be monitored. A Final Report is required for all projects, with the exception of undergraduate projects, upon completion of the project. Researchers with projects lasting more than one year are required to submit a Continuing Review Report annually. The Office of Research Services will contact you when this form REB-02 (2001) Continuing Review/Final Report is required.

Please quote your REB file number on all future correspondence.
Appendix C
Raw Data/Coding
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Prov</th>
<th>(c) (ss) crd</th>
<th>PE Credits</th>
<th>H/S Sports (years Part)</th>
<th>Uni sports</th>
<th>Active Lev</th>
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<td>F850908ling</td>
<td>ON</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>(4) Field Hockey</td>
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<td>F830528ling</td>
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<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 6</th>
<th>Question 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F830528ling</td>
<td>I enjoyed working out and just going to the gym as opposed to playing actual sports. It was enjoyable because you could see actual results.</td>
<td>Being told what sport to play and having no choice in what you are playing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850908ling</td>
<td>Live fit class in grade 10. It was enjoyable because it was an aerobic class every other day. It was also only girls so it gave us the freedom to be goofy and have fun.</td>
<td>Leadership class in grade 11. The only thing that was not enjoyable was that all of my friends were in that class and every time we had to lead the class it was frustrating because they wouldn’t take us seriously.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 8</th>
<th>Question 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F850908ling</td>
<td>In every class there is always separate groups. The “cool” group and the “loser” group. When I was in the co-ed leadership class, the boys would always pick on the other boys. It not only happens in phys. ed class but in every classroom. They would throw things at the other boys and call them names and make fun of them.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
F830528ling: I witnessed this in gym class. Where the students were all tested to measure their fitness capabilities. I saw bullying in that the overweight students were centered out when they were not capable of fulfilling the tasks.

I felt there was an abuse of power shown on behalf of the phys-ed teachers. Many students who were forced to talk gym class and who were not in the best of shape were forced to do certain tasks in front of others that potentially could have made them feel very uncomfortable. This resulted in a lack of self-esteem and a poor body image.

Participant | Question 10 | Question 12 |
---|---|---|
F850908ling | Physical education is a good class to have in high school curriculum because it keeps students aware of their physical fitness and its importance and also gives them a break from textbook work. | No response provided. |
F83052ling | I feel that physical education should play a positive role in schools. It should not centre children out and make them feel uncomfortable with themselves. | No response provided. |

Child and Youth Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Prov</th>
<th>(c) (ss) crd</th>
<th>PE Credits</th>
<th>H/S Sports (years Part)</th>
<th>Uni sports</th>
<th>Active Lev</th>
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<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>F830726chys</td>
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<td>none</td>
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<td>F841226chys</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840901chys</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(1) (2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant | Question 6 | Question 7 |
---|---|---|
F840901chys | I found soccer enjoyable because of the fact I was on the rec team and it was less competitive. | Sometimes in soccer when the coach puts pressure on you to win, makes it very stressful for the players. |
F840704chys | There were no enjoyable physical education experience. I'm more of a music person. | Competition, pressure from coaches, racist coaches No emphasis on fun. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 8</th>
<th>Question 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840704chys</td>
<td>No response provided</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F830726chys</td>
<td>Witness to a dominance subordinate experience would be in gym class, which was co-ed, and one of the guys tackled one of the girls because he didn’t like her. He would push her around for the entire game and finally he completely tackled her.</td>
<td>Example above (8) also fits here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F841226chys</td>
<td>When picking teams. Usually the weaker team or less popular people are not chosen until the end. In hockey the initiation process one guy had his eye brows shaved off. Hazing.</td>
<td>In the co-ed class the males usually dominated. The teachers preferred the better athletes. Older peers were usually more aggressive and unfair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840607chys</td>
<td>I can’t recall a situation where there was a dominant/ subordinate experience in a phys-ed class.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Question 10</td>
<td>Question 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840704chys</td>
<td>Should offer exercise to students. Avoid vain competition.</td>
<td>In my phys.ed class sex education was being taught I didn’t agree with a lot of the things that were taught in this class, for example how to wear a condom. This is ridiculous. Teaching this to 14 year olds. Government should really research what is going to be taught and it’s effects before implementing it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F830726chys</td>
<td>I think that phys.ed is an important part of high school to remain healthy. It also allows you time to interact with peers and gain group work skills. I think that phys.ed is very important for all grade levels.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F841226chys</td>
<td>I feel it is important for physical fitness but those who are not as good should not have to feel uncomfortable. There should be things for everyone to do and enjoy.</td>
<td>I think equality is important those without sport talent should not feel inadequate. There should be more opportunities for other things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840607chys</td>
<td>I think phys.ed should be mandatory for everyone and marks should be given strictly on effort and participation. This would cut down on the number of unhealthy high school students.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840901chys</td>
<td>It should be a fun activity for students with no pressure. Also it should provide physical activity and sometimes fresh air.</td>
<td>I think physical education in high school should be fun.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PEKN Male

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
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<td>(5) (2)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(4) Hockey</td>
<td>none</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 6**

I have always had a deep interest and love for games and sports of all varieties. What made it most enjoyable was the emphasis of strictly playing games and not paying too much attention to movement studies and theory.

**Question 7**

The health cycles we had to complete twice a year. I took phys.ed to be active not to receive mediocrity lectures on health and sexuality.

**Question 8**

In attending an inner city, highly populated high school, forms of domination were inevitable. I particularly remember playing dodge ball in grade 9 and cornering a fellow classmate we liked to tease. That wasn’t the only instance, there were many others such as derogatory nicknames.

**Question 9**

There was always sexual references and conversations occurring in the change room by the “popular” guys. In recollect, it is obvious that these conversations made several student uncomfortable.

**Question 10**

It should promote physical activity and well being, and also emphasize of comradery among classmates.

---

### PEKN Females

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Prov</th>
<th>(c) (ss) crd</th>
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<td>ON</td>
<td>(1) (3)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(4) Rugby Hockey</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>F830720pekn</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(2) (3)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(5) N/S</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840521pekn</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(5) (0)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(5) rugby soccer bball vbball</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Question 6</td>
<td>Question 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850912pekn</td>
<td>Dancing is my favorite physical experience to do. I enjoy dancing competitively.</td>
<td>None have been really negative</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F830720pekn</td>
<td>Understanding the type of activities, and learning the way the body works. My teacher made it enjoyable and interesting to me.</td>
<td>I don’t like health sex ed. made me uncomfortable.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840521pekn</td>
<td>I really enjoyed playing rugby for the first time last year. I really liked it because it was something new, different and challenging.</td>
<td>The only negative experience I ever had, had to do with the teacher, who was not reasonable or fair. So this individual gave phys. ed. a negative feel, although I still enjoyed everything we did.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F841123pekn</td>
<td>Playing basketball at OFSAA. The enjoyability of working so hard all year to make it to the finals.</td>
<td>Having to play field hockey it was not properly explained and no one participated.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Question 8</td>
<td>Question 9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F841123pekn</td>
<td>People in gym class bullying other students and making fun of them for their inability to perform certain activities or skills.</td>
<td>When skilled athletes dominate the court and do not allow other lesser skilled students to participate or when males automatically assume that females cannot perform skills like throwing a football.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850912pekn</td>
<td>When we would be mixed with older grades in a gym class. It was more an intimidation thing, rather than bullying per say. Never went far enough as to hurting someone.</td>
<td>Never experienced that.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F8430720pekn</td>
<td>Being a sportive girl, I was always able to play with the guys. They always passed the ball to me compared to the other girls. So I tried to include everyone, yet sometimes it was hard.</td>
<td>Can’t think of a situation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Question 10</td>
<td>Question 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840521pekn</td>
<td>Some students would be <strong>verbally</strong> abusive towards others. Such as name calling mostly.</td>
<td>I was never in a situation like this before.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F841123pekn</td>
<td>It should play a <em>detrimental</em> role in promoting good health and physical fitness. It should also promote team work.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850912pekn</td>
<td>I think it should play a major role, to keep kids active and learning to participate. Now a days kids are into virtual games rather than playing outside. Therefore having a physical education class keeps them active.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840521pekn</td>
<td>Phys. ed should offer students the opportunity to expand their repertoire of activities and to stay health and active.</td>
<td>I think phys. ed is important to today’s youth because people need to stay fit and active.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F830720pekn</td>
<td>Teachers understanding students needs. Teachers able to communicate with students during physical activity.</td>
<td>It’s all about the teachers! Knowing and understanding students.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**French**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Prov</th>
<th>(c) (ss) crd</th>
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<th>H/S Sports (years Part)</th>
<th>Uni sports</th>
<th>Active Lev</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F850928fren</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(0) (1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840125fren</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(1) (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>830121fren</em></td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(1) (1)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(2) Cross Country</td>
<td>Cross Country</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 6</th>
<th>Question 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840125fren</td>
<td>I enjoyed my physical education experiences because my teacher allowed us to have a say in what we were learning. We were all allowed to make up an activity.</td>
<td>Having to run around a school for class in the rain instead of doing something inside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Question 8</td>
<td>Question 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850928fren</td>
<td>I never experienced a dominance subordination within a physical education class.</td>
<td>When we were playing basketball, the guys would take over the game and would not pass or let the girls try.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840125fren</td>
<td>An example would be a teacher/student relationship when the teacher was forcing a student to do something they knew they couldn’t do.</td>
<td>A group of students would force a special needs student of some grade and sex to do thing when the teacher wasn’t around because they were left in charge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*830120fren</td>
<td>One girls kept mocking another girl because of the way her clothes fit her. The girl was therefore always uncomfortable and was not able to give her all in the activities, for fear of being looked at or drawing attention to herself.</td>
<td>Co-ed phys-ed, when certain games were played, ex dodge ball, the males ruled because they threw the ball extremely hard, injuring some girls even though it was unintentional.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 10</th>
<th>Question 12</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F850928fren</td>
<td>I believe you should have to take it in grade 9 because being active is very important good health. Although you should choose if you want to continue.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840125fren</td>
<td>I don’t think it is very necessary, the only reason I took was because it was mandatory. I think physical education should be optional.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Prov</td>
<td>(c) (ss) crd</td>
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<tr>
<td>F841120engl</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(0) (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F851121engl</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(2) (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840304engl</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(2) (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850705engl</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(1) (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840512engl</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(0) (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 6**
- F850705engl: Playing indoor soccer in grade 9 gym class. It was enjoyable because I like to play soccer.
- F840512engl: Bringing different activities into the phys-ed class such as kick boxing and self-defense. Doing sports outside on the field, makes things interesting change of pace.
- F840304engl: It was ok- the teacher and my friends and the sports.
- F841120engl: I loved Physical Education because it gave me time to just have fun in class. Also it allowed me to enjoy new events. My gym class went on a camping trip to Haliburton where we rock climbed, canoed mountain biked, we also ran a special Olympic event.

**Question 7**
- Playing Volleyball. It was unenjoyable because I sprained my baby finger. Also did not know how to play very well.
- I was forced to do certain activities (ie fitness testing) in front of many others- sometimes in front of the boys. Playing against the boys.
- Playing ball hockey with the boys class. Unenjoyable because they were pushing and shoving everyone.
- I can’t think of a negative experience.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F851121engl</td>
<td>I knew I was becoming fit.</td>
<td>Some sports and activities did not appeal to me and I wasn’t really good at it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F841120engl</td>
<td>In all honesty, I never witnessed an event like this I went to a small high school and everyone in my class got along well. There was also a good student teacher relationship.</td>
<td>I can’t think of one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F851121engl</td>
<td>This wasn’t really in class but on my field hockey team where there was one player that wasn’t exactly playing the field well. There was another girl who likes to take over that began to challenge this team member during the game and pick on her during half time.</td>
<td>N/A- never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850705engl</td>
<td>I was not always picked first for teams. I guess this would/ could be an example of subordination. The other girls tended to pick their friends first or people who were good at the sport. Groups of friends stuck together, so they were always on the same team.</td>
<td>Again the groups that stuck together and didn’t accept anyone else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840512engl</td>
<td>people often teased each other in the change rooms. The special education class was integrated with our class and some students often centered them out and made fun of them. Most bullying would take place between the boys. When one of them did something wrong or failed at something they would be made fun of. Ie called a girl.</td>
<td>Same sex peers- girls making fun of girls in the special needs class. Opposite sex peers- boys “checking out girls”, making comments about them. Same grade peers- bringing other irrelevant issues (ie, from other class or outside school) into the phys.ed setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840304engl</td>
<td>I was never witness or a participant in a dominance/ subordination experience.</td>
<td>When the boys class played ball hockey with the girls class on one occasion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
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<tr>
<td>F841120engl</td>
<td>Physical education should be a time where kids can have fun while experiencing different fitness activities. The activities should be different that way the class is not catering to one specific sport.</td>
<td>I find that I miss my physical education class. It was a time where I was able to get in shape while having fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F851121engl</td>
<td>It should play a role that is geared to staying healthy, sort of like health class; possibly to change our fitness and eating lifestyle.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850705engl</td>
<td>It should be for exercise purposes, to get kids to be active at least once during the day. Playing sports can release tension, or provide a break from in class working.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840512engl</td>
<td>Should be seen as important, not just as a “bird” course. Should emphasize importance of healthy living, active lifestyle.</td>
<td>Sometimes the need to take required programs for university does not allow you to continue taking phys.ed. It would be nice if this could change and more options would be open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840304engl</td>
<td>It should encourage teens to have a healthy active lifestyle while introducing sports to people who have never had an opportunity to play them before.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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</table>

Psychology Male

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M610929psyc</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(3) (0)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(3) rowing football</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>M840203psyc</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>(3) (2)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(1) rugby</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Question 6</td>
<td>Question 7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Taking a big guy down. He was bigger than me and it was enjoyable because I owned him.

A guy threatened and attempted to "rake" me (step on my body with cleats and drag them across my body) He didn’t, but he wanted to hurt me even though they were winning.

I always enjoyed rowing but it was hard work. We won several gold medals and the satisfaction came not so much from winning gold but realising how much work had gone into attaining the win which the spectators could not know had to happen first in order to win the gold.

Attempting to play baseball. Wasn’t very good, people would grow when I came to bat under their breath. It was very intimidating, made me feel unworthy and low self esteem.

In football we were made to think the was the goal. To overpower and dominate the lines of defence. I was offensive guard and my job was to dominate that defensive line.

No response provided.

A guy intentionally tripped me. He did it cuz it was funny to him.

Dodge ball. People would team up and tag everyone else which is not against the rules, but it is “cheap”.

Get the kids physically fit. Teach sport rules and fair play. Teach about the body and keeping it healthy.

No response provided.

I believe it should show reality. Reality is that some are better at things than others. Bullying is a part of life, but it should also show how teamwork can overcome.

No.

Psychology Female

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<tr>
<td>F850721psyc</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(0) (3)</td>
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<td>(4) Cross Country</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>F850712psyc</td>
<td>Soccer, being on a team and having fun with friends</td>
<td>when they force you to do things that you don't want to do ex- running laps and you must do the required amount for marks</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850426psyc</td>
<td>Basketball, Volleyball, Tennis: Playing as part of a team and overall it is fun and exercise.</td>
<td>None that I can think of.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F040329psyc*</td>
<td>Playing tennis- We got taught the rules and actually got to play against different people. Archery something new, not done very often- fun</td>
<td>They graded us in a basketball unit on how many baskets we could get in a certain amount of time- if you weren't very good you got a bad grade</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850721psyc</td>
<td>Working as a team and being able to relax during the school day.</td>
<td>When not being included, because of sex or various reasons like not being good at all at the sport.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850721psyc</td>
<td>Swimming because it was relaxing and worked my whole body. Also, I did not get extremely tired.</td>
<td>Hiking because after a while it got boring of doing the same thing. Also the weather outside was wet and muddy so I got dirty.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850721psyc</td>
<td>This girl wanted to play on the basketball team but she wasn't very good. However, the teacher told the class that everyone should play together, so they did. The girl got teased at, and people made fun of her because she didn't have any basketball skills. The team seemed to dominate over the whole class since they were so good.</td>
<td>When playing sports, boys seem to have more power of girls. Because of that most of the rules of the game are made by boys.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| F850712psyc       | It should play an important role because it allows children to be active, and physical. I think phys.ed should be mandatory in all high school grades. | Being physically active makes things easier.  
1. The Benefits |
<p>| F850712psyc       | To be enjoyable but at the same time a way for people to be physically active and healthy. | No response provided.                                                        |
| F830608psyc       | I felt phys.ed is a very important experience mainly to teach about the importance of health and exercise and the benefits of these and as well as learning to co-operate in a group environment. | No response provided.                                                        |
| F850426psyc       | I think it should be fun as well as teaching fundamental skills. Good way of exercising. | No response provided.                                                        |
| F040329psyc*      | I don't think it should be compulsory, I think students in their third year should decide what kind of physical activity they want to participate in. | No response provided.                                                        |</p>
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<th>Active Lev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840923soci</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(1) (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840519soci</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(1) (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840519soci</td>
<td>Playing roller hockey in grade 9 gym. It was one of the most entertaining games we played. Most of the class laughed through the game. <em>Alternative games</em>&lt;br&gt; Health class. It was extremely boring. Most of the material had been covered before.</td>
<td><strong>Redundant info.</strong> \n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840923soci</td>
<td>Being placed into teams and playing basketball (more just shooting hoops). This was fun because there was really no pressure to “win” just have fun.</td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840519soci</td>
<td>I cannot think of any experience like that. In elementary school te gym teacher was very insensitive, he constantly refused the student any rights that they should not have been denied.</td>
<td>Any sort of bullying on the playground, in class. In class when students would pick others to be on teams. My personal experience consisted of the same few students picking the majority of the time, most of the leaders would pick their personal friends or the more athletic students. \n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F8400923soci</td>
<td>Many times there is usually a “leader” for the team, and generally whatever they say went. Some people rebelled but there wasn’t much that could be done.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840519soci</td>
<td>I feel as though the role it currently plays is sufficient.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I feel the role of physical education in the high school curriculum should be that you do not have to take this credit if you do not want to. I think it should be optional and not mandatory.

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<td>M820317biol</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(3) (2)</td>
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<td>(5) N/S</td>
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<tr>
<td>M851008biol</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(3) (0)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(4) hball vball fball socc swim</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weight lifting class, how me and all of my friends worked out together.

Ski trip too blue Mountain- Fun Challenging, time to be with friends with doing something recreation.

How the geeky kid always got picked on in dodge ball. The ball was always intentionally thrown at him to either hurt him or to exclude him from the game as quickly as possible.

Kid was beat up before class on high jump mat, wasn’t hurt but the conflict was unwanted.

Having to line up in squads, makes me feel like a child.

Dance- Wasn’t really negative just didn’t enjoy it. Felt like it should be part of a drama class. Didn’t expect to be doing dance in gym class.

Kids who weren’t athletic felt degraded when picking teams. I’ve seen people make fun of girls in sport before too.
M851008biol Promote active lifestyle through sport, also teach health education.

M820317biol To build up the physical health of the kids, avoid them from health problems and to teach the kids co-operativity.

I’ve heard people saying they are trying to reduce the amount of sports in physical education. I believe this class is on par with art class. Some people are good at it, some aren’t. However all people should be allowed to participate.

No response provided.

CHSC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Prov</th>
<th>(c) (ss) crd</th>
<th>PE Credits</th>
<th>H/S Sports (years Part)</th>
<th>Uni sports</th>
<th>Active Lev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F820930chsc</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(4) (1)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(5) Bball Vball swim badminton</td>
<td>none</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Participant Question 6

I played a number of sports throughout highschool and I would have to say that my volleyball practices were the most enjoyable experiences. Because we had fun as a group becoming closer friends and creating that team bond while receiving the benefits of physical activity.

Participant Question 7

The only thing I ever experienced that made physical education unenjoyable was having to participate with students who were unwilling to try sports. It was frustrating to the class to have to accommodate to this type of person. As well it brought the spirit to the group/team down.

Participant Question 8

Participant Question 9
F820930chsc | We had a student in our gym class who thought they were the best at every sport. She would put down and embarrass other girls who were not very athletic or shy about trying a new sport. Others were not very receptive of her and others had confrontations with her telling her behavior was unacceptable and to give others a chance.

| In both gender physical education class, some males were unfair to females in the class and didn’t even give them a chance to show that females are capable at sports too.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 10</th>
<th>Question 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F820930chsc</td>
<td>Teach kids early about the health benefits of activity. A chance to learn new sports, increase self esteem, teach teamwork.</td>
<td>Physical education is a very big part of schooling and should not be cut out of any school curriculum.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Neurology Male

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Prov</th>
<th>(c) (ss) crd</th>
<th>PE Credits</th>
<th>H/S Sports (years Part)</th>
<th>Uni sports</th>
<th>Active Lev</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M840829neur</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(4) (1)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(4) rowing</td>
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<tr>
<td>M801207neur</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(0) (5)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(5) --</td>
<td>rugby</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 6</th>
<th>Question 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M840829neur</td>
<td>The competition and competitive nature. Running lifting weights friendships made</td>
<td>People cheating or not competing and fooling around. Have to do a test run and people take cars and take a shorter route.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M801207neur</td>
<td>Phys-ed-OAC level. Introduction to kinesiology as well as learning other sports and managing/coaching sports (received NCCP Level 1)</td>
<td>Phys-ed teacher focused entirely on those individuals on his varsity teams (basketball).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 8</th>
<th>Question 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Question 10</td>
<td>Question 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M840829neur</td>
<td>Physical education should focus on creating a healthy lifestyle for developing adolescence through physical and mental training, as well as educational aspects of health, such as functions of the body, drug abuse and sex.</td>
<td>In a society where obesity is becoming more noticeable it is important to stop this disease at a young age through physical education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M8101207neur</td>
<td>Phys. ed should be a means to promote physical activity in schools to create interest in sports that will remove kids from sitting in front of TV’s with playstations or internet or drugs. Should also provide listings of athletic clubs where their sports can be practiced.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Neurology Female

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840801neur</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(0) (1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(2) bball, swim, curling, X Country skiing, track</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 6</th>
<th>Question 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840801neur</td>
<td>Mat- Pushing competitions- in which teams of people push crash mats across the gym. It was enjoyable because it was not overly competitive, everyone worked together as a team and we had a good laugh.</td>
<td>Running double suicides for 2 hours with a time limit. It wasn’t enjoyable because it was too intense for people that just wanted to have fun and maintain a slight fitness level. Also it was monotonous and pointless unless you were into heavy conditioning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 8</th>
<th>Question 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840801neur</td>
<td>The “captains” of the class teams and the people who are better at the sports often control or selectively include those that are less good by benching them in order to have more playing time and to have a better chance of winning.</td>
<td>On my curling team the skip and vice had inappropriate power fights and attempted to control not only the shots we made but our thoughts and our allegiance to one or the other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Question 10</th>
<th>Question 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F840801neur</td>
<td>I think that it should help student maintain a healthy level of activity and help them to improve their motor skills. As well as teaching them to better work together as a team and utilize everyone else’s skills as well as their own.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Prov</td>
<td>(c) (ss) crd</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>M850309btec</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>(1) (2)</td>
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</table>

**Participant**  
Question 6  
Question 7  

**M850309btec**  
Tae Kwan Do: Achieving black belt. Soccer: playing competitively.  
Cross Country: injury  

**Participant**  
Question 8  
Question 9  

**M850309btec**  
Bullying in the change room before gym class and after to two or three not as popular individuals to the point that the bullies had made the boys cry.  
With same sex peers, believing that they are superior to those younger because of age size difference, or if they play sports.  

**Participant**  
Question 10  
Question 12  

**M850309btec**  
To teach lifelong lessons of health and physical fitness.  
No response provided.  

**M850309btec**  
To teach lifelong lessons of health and physical fitness.  
No response provided.  

----

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
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**Participant**  
Question 6  
Question 7  

**F810823none**  
Badminton- was the class champion in doubles.  
Self defense- too traumatic when acting it out with the man dressed in foam.  

**Participant**  
Question 8  
Question 9  

**F810823none**  
No response provided  
No response provided.  

**Participant**  
Question 10  
Question 12  

**F810823none**  
Teach health and healthy living. Encourage an active lifestyle and introduce all kinds of sports.  
No response provided.
Appendix D
Raw Data Sorted by Question
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Prov</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Question 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850705engl</td>
<td>Playing indoor soccer in grade 9 gym class. It was enjoyable because I like to play soccer.</td>
<td>Playing Volleyball. It was unenjoyable because I sprained my baby finger. I also did not know how to play very well</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F840512engl</td>
<td>Bringing different activities into the phys-ed class such as kickboxing and self-defense. Doing sports outside on the field, makes things interesting change of pace</td>
<td>being forced to do certain activities (ie fitness testing) in front of many others- sometimes in front of the boys. Playing against the boys.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840519soci</td>
<td>Playing roller hockey in grade 9 gym. It was one of the most entertaining games we played. Most of the class laughed through the game.</td>
<td>Health class. It was extremely boring. Most of the material had been covered before.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>F850912pekn</td>
<td>Dancing is my favorite physical experience to do. I enjoy dancing competitively.</td>
<td>None have been really negative</td>
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<tr>
<td>F830528ling</td>
<td>I enjoyed working out and just going to the gym as opposed to playing actual sports. It was enjoyable because you could see actual results</td>
<td>Being told what sport to play and having no choice in what you are playing.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850712psyc</td>
<td>Soccer, being on a team and having fun with friends</td>
<td>when they force you to do things that you don’t want to do ex- running laps and you must do the required amount for marks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F820930chsc</td>
<td>I played a number of sports throughout highschool and I would have to say that my volleyball practices were the most enjoyable experiences. Because we had fun as a group becoming closer friends and creating that team bond while receiving the benefits of physical activity</td>
<td>The only thing I ever experienced that made physical education unenjoyable was having to participate with students who were unwilling to try sports. It was frustrating to the class to have to accommodate to this type of person. As well it brought the spirit to the group/team down.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840801neur</td>
<td>Mat- Pushing competitions- in which teams of people push crash mats across the gym. It was enjoyable because it was not overly competitive, everyone worked together as a team and we had a good laugh.</td>
<td>Running double suicides for 2 hours with a time limit. It wasn’t enjoyable because it was too intense for people that just wanted to have fun and maintain a slight fitness level. Also it was monotonous and pointless unless you were into heavy conditioning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F830608psyc</td>
<td>Basketball, Volleyball, Tennis: Playing as part of a team and overall it is fun and exercise.</td>
<td>None that I can think of.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F840923soci</td>
<td>Being placed into teams and playing basketball(more just shooting hoops). This was fun because there was really no pressure to “win” just have fun.</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840304engl</td>
<td>It was ok- the teacher and my friends and the sports.</td>
<td>Playing ball hockey with the boys class. Unenjoyable because they were pushing and shoving everyone.</td>
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<td>Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>F810823none</td>
<td>Badminton - was the class champion in doubles.</td>
<td>Self defense - too traumatic when acting it out with the man dressed in foam.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F830720pekn</td>
<td>Understanding the type of activities, and learning the way the body works. My teacher made it enjoyable and interesting to me.</td>
<td>I don’t like health sex ed. made me uncomfortable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F850426psyc</td>
<td>Playing tennis - We got taught the rules and actually got to play against different people. Archery something new, not done very often- fun</td>
<td>They graded us in a basketball unit on how many baskets we could get in a certain amount of time - if you weren’t very good you got a bad grade</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F040329psyc*</td>
<td>Working as a team and being able to relax during the school day.</td>
<td>When not being included, because of sex or various reasons like not being good at all at the sport.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840521pekn</td>
<td>I really enjoyed playing rugby for the first time last year. I really liked it because it was something new, different and challenging.</td>
<td>The only negative experience I ever had, had to do with the teacher, who was not reasonable or fair. So this individual gave phys. ed. a negative feel, although I still enjoyed everything we did.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F840901chys</td>
<td>I found soccer enjoyable because of the fact i was on the rec team and it was less competitive.</td>
<td>Sometimes in soccer when the coach puts pressure on you to win, makes it very stressful for the players.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F850908ling</td>
<td>Live fit class in grade 10. It was enjoyable because it was an aerobic class every other day. It was also only girls so it gave us the freedom to be goofy and have fun.</td>
<td>Leadership class in grade 11. The only thing that was not enjoyable was that all of my friends were in that class and every time we had to lead the class it was frustrating because they wouldn’t take us seriously.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F840704chys</td>
<td>There were no enjoyable physical education experience. I’m more of a music person.</td>
<td>Competition, pressure from coaches, racist coaches No emphasis on fun.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F841123pekn</td>
<td>Playing basketball at OFSAA. The enjoyability of working so hard all year to make it to the finals.</td>
<td>Having to play field hockey it was not properly explained and no one participated.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>F830726chys</td>
<td>Being involved in games or activities that I liked, or being able to play different sports with my friends. All around I enjoyed phys-ed in high school, but in later years did not have enough time to participate in a gym class. Still played sports outside of school though.</td>
<td>Some people feel uncomfortable in co-ed gym classes, but I did not think it was such a big deal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F841120engl</td>
<td>I loved Physical Education because it gave me time to just have fun in class. Also it allowed me to enjoy new events. My gym class went on a camping trip to Haliburton where we rock climbed, canoed mountain biked, we also ram a special Olympic event.</td>
<td>I can’t think of a negative experience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F851121engl</td>
<td>I knew I was becoming fit.</td>
<td>Some sports and activities did not appeal to me and I wasn’t really good at it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F840125fren</td>
<td>I enjoyed my physical education experiences because my teacher allowed us to have a say in what we were learning. We were all allowed to make up an activity.</td>
<td>Having to run around a school for class in the rain instead of doing something inside.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F841226chys</td>
<td>Meeting new people. Having and belonging to a team, exercise, enjoyment.</td>
<td>Coaches or teachers too hard on students, people who were too competitive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850721psyc</td>
<td>Swimming because it was relaxing and worked my whole body. Also, I did not get extremely tired.</td>
<td>Hiking because after a while it got boring of doing the same thing. Also the weather outside was wet and muddy so I got dirty.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840607chys</td>
<td>I just love physical activity and anytime I could do it and get a high mark for it I’d be happy. It was good when the teacher allowed the students to decide what they wanted to do in the class and when everyone was given equal playing time.</td>
<td>Sometimes in co-ed gym, the guys wouldn’t include the girls as much in their games, or pass the ball to them. This was very frustrating.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Question 8</td>
<td>Question 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>*830120fren</td>
<td>Weight training- the instructor was very enthusiastic and also somewhat strict which made it enjoyable and also serious to follow a routine.</td>
<td>Coming last in a race. I wanted to give up. Not as fast as others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850908ling</td>
<td>In every class there is always separate groups. The “cool” group and the “loser” group. When I was in the co-ed leadership class, the boys would always pick on the other boys. It not only happens in phys. ed class but in every classroom. They would throw things at the other boys and call them names and make fun of them.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840704chys</td>
<td>No response provided</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F841123pekn</td>
<td>People in gym class bullying other students and making fun of them for their inability to perform certain activities or skills.</td>
<td>When skilled athletes dominate the court and do not allow other lesser skilled students to participate or when males automatically assume that females cannot perform skills like throwing a football.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F830726chys</td>
<td>Witness to a dominance subordinate experience would be in gym class, which was co-ed, and one of the guys tackled one of the girls because he didn’t like her. He would push her around for the entire game and finally he completely tackled her.</td>
<td>Example above (8) also fits here.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850928fren</td>
<td>I never experienced a dominance subordination within a physical education class.</td>
<td>When we were playing basketball, the guys would take over the game and would not pass or let the girls try.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F841120engl</td>
<td>In all honesty, I never witnessed an event like this I went to a small high school and everyone in my class got along well. There was also a good student teacher relationship.</td>
<td>I can’t think of one.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F851121engl</td>
<td>This wasn’t really in class but on my field hockey team where there was one player that wasn’t exactly playing the field well. There was another girl who likes to take over that began to challenge this team member during the game and pick on her during half time.</td>
<td>N/A- never</td>
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<tr>
<td>F851121engl</td>
<td>This wasn’t really in class but on my field hockey team where there was one player that wasn’t exactly playing the field well. There was another girl who likes to take over that began to challenge this team member during the game and pick on her during half time.</td>
<td>N/A- never</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840125fren</td>
<td>An example would be a teacher/student relationship when the teacher was forcing a student to do something they knew they couldn’t do.</td>
<td>A group of students would force a special needs student of some grade and sex to do thing when the teacher wasn’t around because they were left in charge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F841226chys</td>
<td>When picking teams. Usually the weaker team or less popular people are not chosen until the end. In hockey the initiation process one guy had his eye brows shaved off. Hazing.</td>
<td>In the co-ed class the males usually dominated. The teachers preferred the better athletes. Older peers were usually more aggressive and unfair.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850721psyc</td>
<td>This girl wanted to play on the basketball team but she wasn’t very good. However, the teacher told the class that everyone should play together, so they did. The girl got teased at, and people made fun of her because she didn’t have any basketball skills. The team seemed to dominate over the whole class since they were so good.</td>
<td>When playing sports, boys seem to have more power of girls. Because of that most of the rules of the game are made by boys.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840607chys</td>
<td>I can’t recall a situation where there was a dominant/subordinate experience in a phys-ed class.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>*830120fren</td>
<td>One girls kept mocking another girl because of the way her clothes fit her. The girl was therefore always uncomfortable and was not able to give her all in the activities, for fear of being looked at or drawing attention to herself.</td>
<td>Co-ed phys-ed, when certain games were played, ex dodge ball, the males ruled because they threw the ball extremely hard, injuring some girls even though it was unintentional.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850705engl</td>
<td>I was not always picked first for teams. I guess this would/ could be an example of subordination. The other girls tended to pick their friends first or people who were good at the sport. Groups of friends stuck together, so they were always on the same team.</td>
<td>Again the groups that stuck together and didn’t accept anyone else.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840512engl</td>
<td>people often teased each other in the change rooms. The special education class was integrated with our class and some students often centered them out and made fun of them. Most bullying would take place between the boys. When one of them did something wrong or failed at something they would be made fun of. Ie called a girl.</td>
<td>Same sex peers- girls making fun of girls in the special needs class. Opposite sex peers- boys “checking out girls”, making comments about them. Same grade peers- bringing other irrelevant issues (ie, from other class or outside school) into the phys.ed setting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840519soci</td>
<td>I cannot think of any experience like that. In elementary school te gym teacher was very insensitive, he constantly refused the student any rights that they should not have been denied.</td>
<td>Any sort of bullying on the play ground, in class. In class when students would pick others to be on teams. My personal experience consisted of the same few students picking the majority of the time, most of the leaders would pick their personal friends or the more athletic students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850912pekn</td>
<td>When we would be mixed with older grades in a gym class. It was more an intimidation thing, rather than bullying per say. Never went far enough as to hurting someone.</td>
<td>Never experienced that.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F830528ling</td>
<td>I witnessed this in gym class. Where the students were all tested to measure their fitness capabilities. I saw bullying in that the overweight students were centered out when they were not capable of fulfilling the tasks.</td>
<td>I felt there was an abuse of power shown on behalf of the phys-ed teachers. Many students who were forced to take gym class and who were not in the best of shape were forced to do certain tasks in front of others that potentially could have made them feel very uncomfortable. This resulted in a lack of self-esteem and a poor body image.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850712psyc</td>
<td>Well people would get made fun of it they were bad at a sport of could not keep up to the other students.</td>
<td>When boys would always think they were better at all sports because they were male. Rather they thought girls always sucked.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F820930chsc</td>
<td>We had a student in our gym class who thought they were the best at every sport. She would put down and embarrass other girls who were not very athletic or shy about trying a new sport. Others were not very receptive of her and others had confrontations with her telling her behavior was unacceptable and to give others a chance.</td>
<td>In both gender physical education class, some males were unfair to females in the class and didn’t even give them a chance to show that females are capable at sports too.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840801neur</td>
<td>The “captains” of the class teams and the people who are better at the sports often control or selectively include those that are less good by benching them in order to have more playing time and to have a better chance of winning.</td>
<td>On my curling team the skip and vice had inappropriate power fights and attempted to control not only the shots we made but our thoughts and our allegiance to one or the other.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F830608psyc</td>
<td>I went to an all girls school and I have never witnessed any of the mentioned behavior.</td>
<td>Sometimes some of the bigger girls would tend to think they were better at sports because they were heavier and maybe felt they were superior.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840923soci</td>
<td>Many times there is usually a “leader” for the team, and generally whatever they say went. Some people rebelled but there wasn’t much that could be done.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<td>Participant</td>
<td>Question 10</td>
<td>Question 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850908ling</td>
<td>Physical education is a good class to have in high school curriculum because it keeps students aware of their physical fitness and it’s importance and also gives them a break from textbook work.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840704chys</td>
<td>Should offer exercise to students. Avoid vain competition.</td>
<td>In my phys.ed class sex education was being taught I didn’t agree with a lot of the things that were taught in this class, for example how to wear a condom. This is ridiculous. Teaching this to 14 year olds. Government should really research what is going to be taught and it’s effects before implementing it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F841123pekn</td>
<td>It should play a *detrimental role in promoting good health and physical fitness. It should also promote teamwork.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F830726chys</td>
<td>I think that phys.ed is an important part of high school to remain healthy. It also allows you time to interact with peers and gain group work skills. I think that phys.ed is very important for all grade levels.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850928fren</td>
<td>I believe you should have to take it in grade 9 because being active is very important good health. Although you should choose if you want to continue.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F841120engl</td>
<td>Physical education should be a time where kids can have fun while experiencing different fitness activities. The activities should be different that way the class is not catering to one specific sport.</td>
<td>I find that I miss my physical education class. It was a time where I was able to get in shape while having fun.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F851121engl</td>
<td>It should play a role that is geared to staying healthy, sort of like health class; possibly to change our fitness and eating lifestyle.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840125fren</td>
<td>I don’t think it is very necessary, the only reason I took was because it was mandatory. I think physical education should be optional.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<td>Student ID</td>
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<tr>
<td>F841226chs</td>
<td>I feel it is important for physical fitness but those who are not as good should not have to feel uncomfortable. There should be things for everyone to do and enjoy.</td>
<td>I think equality is important those without sport talent should not feel inadequate. There should be more opportunities for other things.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850721psyc</td>
<td>It should play an important role because it allows children to be active, and physical. I think phys.ed should be mandatory in all high school grades.</td>
<td>Being physically active makes things easier.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840607chs</td>
<td>I think phys.ed should be mandatory for everyone and marks should be given strictly on effort and participation. This would cut down on the number of unhealthy high school students.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>*830120frec</td>
<td>To enhance one’s ability to sustain and endure a consistent work-out, sweat and increased heart rate because it is always important to keep the heart healthy also, to meet new people.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850705engl</td>
<td>It should be for exercise purposes, to get kids to be active at least once during the day. Playing sports can release tension, or provide a break from in class working.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840512engl</td>
<td>Should be seen as important, not just as a “bird” course. Should emphasize importance of healthy living, active lifestyle.</td>
<td>Sometimes the need to take required programs for university does not allow you to continue taking phys.ed. It would be nice if this could change and more options would be open.</td>
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<td>F840519soci</td>
<td>I feel as though the role it currently plays is sufficient.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850912pekn</td>
<td>I think it should play a major role, to keep kids active and learning to participate. Now a days kids are into virtual games rather than playing outside. Therefore having a physical education class keeps them active.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F83052ling</td>
<td>I feel that physical education should play a positive role in schools. It should not centre children out and make them feel uncomfortable with themselves.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850712psyc</td>
<td>To be enjoyable but at the same time a way for people to be physically active and healthy.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F820930chsc</td>
<td>Teach kids early about the health benefits of activity. A chance to learn new sports, increase self esteem, teach teamwork.</td>
<td>Physical education is a very big part of schooling and should not be cut out of any school curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840801neur</td>
<td>I think that it should help student maintain a healthy level of activity and help them to improve their motor skills. As well as teaching them to better work together as a team and utilize everyone else’s skills as well as their own.</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>F830608psyc</td>
<td>I felt phys.ed is a very important experience mainly to teach about the importance of health and exercise and the benefits of these and as well as learning to co-operate in a group environment.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840923soci</td>
<td>I feel the role of physical education in the high school curriculum shoule be that you do not have to take this credit if you do not want to. I think it should be optional and not mandatory.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F840304engl</td>
<td>It should encourage teens to have a healthy active lifestyle while introducing sports to people who have never had an opportunity to play them before.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F810823none</td>
<td>Teach health and healthy living. Encourage an active lifestyle and introduce all kinds of sports.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F830720pekn</td>
<td>Teachers understanding students needs. Teachers able to communicate with students during physical activity.</td>
<td>It’s all about the teachers! Knowing and understanding students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F850426psyc</td>
<td>I think it should be fun as well as teaching fundamental skills. Good way of exercising.</td>
<td>No response provided.</td>
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