

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE TEACHING OF GAMES IN SCHOOLS

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I was delighted to be invited to speak at this Seminar. Initially, I was surprised to discover that I was to speak to the title "Games in Schools in relation to the Ethic problems in sport and society"! I must confess to being extremely confused by the proposed title and acutely aware of my inability to cover such a topic. What I have done, therefore, is to invent my own title which I thought might approximate to the area I was asked to cover. It did occur to me in passing was that you will have all experienced some ethic problems in sport and society this very morning - whether or not to have missed this session first thing on a Sunday morning!

I have retitled my paper and hopefully I will be offering "Some thoughts on the teaching of games in schools". I intend to look at the social context of physical activity and the contribution philosophy can make to the education process in general and physical education in particular. In the last decade an enormous amount of material has appeared on the social aspects of sport and physical education. I want to draw your attention to some of this material this morning. However, I will use such material to focus upon what I see as the practical problems of ~~the~~ teaching games in schools, particularly girls' games.

There will be very few, if any, of those attending this seminar who have not been confronted at some time during their career by external agencies. Unless we do have ^{here, at this seminar,} a hermit since birth or the odd wolf child it seems to me that we are all social products. We are all part of a social universe that includes others. Such others can be people, they can be institutions, they can be processes. The common ground here is that ALL others have expectations about behaviour. The remarkable feature of life is that we are all unique individuals and yet we display surprisingly similar behaviours. As I will suggest later, sociologists call this phenomenon the socialisation process. Depending upon your own persuasion this process can offer an open-ended opportunity for development or/...

or a straight jacket . Society equips us with ways of seeing the world. We will all have some conception, for example , of what ~~girls~~'girls' games might be. I do not wish to suggest that we will/^{not} have personal thoughts about girls' games but I do wish to suggest that they are nonetheless social. As my paper develops I hope to demonstrate that the way we perceive what a 'girl' and a 'game' are will subtly construct a range of possible activities. At the very practical level it will significantly effect the way the physical education programme is planned.

During this paper, I want to develop this social theme but I want it to be a theme underpinned by philosophical foundations. Unfortunately the word philosophy appears to be a boo word. Philosophical reflection is presumed to be an academic activity of little practical application. Philosophical reflection need not be idle speculation or mental acrobatics. At a very basic level the philosophical method seeks to criticise and clarify (see David Best , Philosophy and Human Movement , Unwin , 1978). J.P. Corbett suggests that :

"To mark out the philosopher's concern with man from that of all such specialists, we have to say that he is concerned with human thinking in so far as that thinking lays claim to validity." (in R.D. Archambault, Philosophical Analysis and Education, R.& K.P., 1972, p.141)

The oft-mentioned R.S. Peters suggests that philosophers are underlabourers in the garden of knowledge (see Introduction of Ethics and Education). Each one of us engages in philosophical conjecture . My suggestion throughout this paper will be that such activity can make a QUALITATIVE contribution to the teaching of physical education, Peter McIntosh makes this point quite forcibly in his recent book Fair Play (Heinemann, 1979).

It might be opportune at this point to outline the areas to be covered by the paper:

1. Some comments on play, games and sport.
2. the nature of education.
3. Physical education.
4. Social aspects.
5. Implications and prospects.

My treatment of these areas will be superficial and eclectic . My concern will be to suggest some thoughts that might be of some interest for you to discuss amongst yourselves and with colleagues back at school. Len Almond's handbook , Evaluation in a Physical Education Department , 1977, raised far more questions than I can possibly do here and his work is an example of how physical education teachers can examine their practice critically and systematically.

There appear to be a number of pressures upon the school curriculum and those who frame the curriculum . Physical education is inevitably tied in to these pressures. I would like to suggest that by developing a critical awareness of the philosophical and social dimensions of the physical education programme we can provide a thoroughgoing internal audit of our ideas, content and method that can withstand the pressures being placed upon the subject. This involves , in Michael Young's terms , Making as opposed to Taking problems. By this I mean that we often start our planning from a certain standpoint rather than radically, and sometimes not so radically, examining our assumptions about why and what we do. As I will suggest later , a remarkable feature of post-school involvement in games and sport is how few people actually participate. If this is the case, does the physical education profession need to rethink the content of courses ? Girls' physical education , admittedly from my personal standpoint, appears to be ensnared in a whirlpool of conflicting attitudes and values . How are these to be explained ?

1. Play , Games and Sport

Joseph Strutt , in his book The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England (first published 1801) suggested that:

"In order to form a just estimation of the character of any particular people, it is absolutely necessary to investigate the Sports and Pastimes most generally prevalent among them."

(p.xvii of William Hone's 1849 edition). Strutt appears to devote little space to ladies pastimes and summarises their involvement thus:

"In the 14C. ladies sometimes involved themselves in more vigorous exercise (than needlework and embroidery) but by the 17C. they had subsided to modesty and softness."

He was, however, referring to fair countrywomen and seems to have ignored those of lower standing. (This is a recurring theme of leisure research - the neglect of certain socio-economic groups).

Strutt's original comment about estimating the character of a people does however hold good.

Anthropologists have supplied a good deal of evidence about the cultural importance of play, games, sports and contests. The point is frequently made that play is a cultural universal whilst many games and sports are specific to societies. I will not dwell on this point but suggest that this in itself is an interesting area for discussion. Essentially, the suggestion is that games take root in certain contexts and not in others. In terms of lacrosse, for example, it might be possible to explain why the game originated and developed and why it is only played in certain countries. (I do not mean to suggest that games are not exported, but that it appears that there are certain socio-historical factors in the rise of sport).

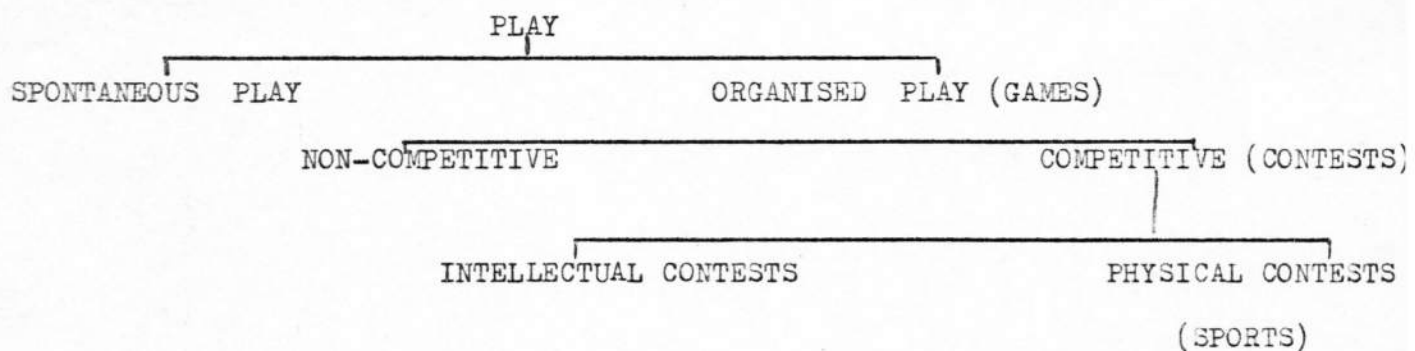
Before I develop my argument, I think I had better outline the way I am using certain key words. There is a plethora of words to describe physical activity: play, activity, pastime, leisure, work, hobby, game, contest, sport, recreation, exercise. We all have overlapping ideas of what might be involved. For the purposes of today's paper I want to argue that work/leisure definitions are problematical and thus to be

bypassed for the time being, since quite often one ~~man~~ person's work is another person's leisure. I see physical activity extending along a continuum of freedom and constraint usually extending from uninhibited and relatively unregulated play to rule-governed and rule-directed contest at the opposite end of the continuum. (But again this is open to conjecture for there might be 'play' within quite structured contests.) In order to avoid total confusion I would like to offer you Allen Guttman's definitions:

"Play is a realm of freedom." (p.3) This play can be spontaneous or organised. To play a game is to participate within a regulated framework. The rules that govern play are quite often 'inefficient': Cf. *Colin*

"To play a game is to attempt to achieve a specific state of affairs, using only means permitted by rules, where rules prohibit the use of more efficient in favour of less efficient means, and where such rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity." (p.5)

Contests and sports develop from games and Guttman's book, From Ritual to Record (Columbia University Press, 1978) is an account of the origins and development of games and sports. The following diagram traces the path outlined by Guttman:



This classification does provide a useful basis for reflection. In practical terms does the physical education programme pursue specific types of activity? (A classical stereotype is the overconcern of the p.e. teacher with physical contests, a stereotype excellently depicted in Barry Hines' book KES). Is play too soon removed from the school timetable? Is there an overemphasis upon competition? These are some of the issues raised by Guttman's classification.

Those interested in the social aspects of sport often suggest that "sport is the world in miniature". I think it might be informative to examine one particular sport and look at how that sport is being confronted by problems that are being faced by most other sports and in slightly different terms by society itself. In order to ingratiate myself with the AEWLA I have chosen women's lacrosse as the focus of my remarks. During the preparation of this paper I was able to look at a decade of Lacrosse magazines and very briefly isolate a number of extremely topical issues that I think have been addressed by sport in general within the last ten years. My thesis is that if ~~xxx~~ one examined ANY sports publication in a similar time span similar issues would be present. Indeed what appears remarkable about sport is the timeless quality of problems faced by sport. My own game of Rugby Union Football is an excellent example of this timelessness of problems. Anyhow, back to the Lacrosse magazine!

In September 1975 (Vol 29, 1) the issue was devoted to the United States tour of Great Britain and provides the reader with an interesting example of the history of the game of lacrosse and the earliest touring teams. The article written by Jean Dodd pointed out that:

"The AEWLA was founded in 1912 and the first Government Grant for a full-time, paid, organising secretary was only negotiated in 1965"
(p.4)

The Coaching and Development Committee was formed in December 1966, the first squad session was held in 1971. These developments I would suggest can be located within a wider social context.

I must at this point say how much I enjoyed reading the back issues of The Lacrosse magazine. It appeared to me to be a most informative forum for debate, discussion, comment and information. Above all it appeared to be a friendly forum. It was interesting to note the air of co-operation and support for other teams. In the Letter Box of the May 1975 edition a player from Watford Ladies wrote to "help re-inforce Pendley

Ladies standing on the lacrosse club map " and concluded by suggesting that: "It is always encouraging to see new clubs starting up and I hope as many clubs and individuals as possible will give Pendley all the help and support they deserve." (p. 24) It was therefore interesting to read in the Winter 1980 edition of the the development of the club. The article concluded on a promising note:

"The club is delighted with the number of new members , mostly young schoolgirls who have been attracted to the club by its reputation for friendliness " (p. 10).

In the Editorial to the March 1975 edition of the magazine attention was drawn to the U. N.'s International Women's Year and it was mooted that:

"in our own field we can apply the principle in our efforts to obtain more equality in publicity and in press and television coverage of women's sports ... and in providing facilities for women to participate in representative sport when they have child-minding problems ..." (p.3)

This was a theme pursued three years later at the First International Conference on Women in Sport .

My intention in presenting these extracts from the Lacrosse magazine is to indicate the background for the teaching of games in schools . School sport , I suggest is inextricably linked with the wider social discourse concerning the legitimacy of games and sport. This link presents the teacher with philosophical challenges and ultimately relates to the question 'What ought I to do ?'. This necessarily involves a constant critique of the p.e. programme. The examples I have used so far relate to the world beyond the school . In planning terms it seems essential to have some continuity between school and post-school games and sport IF it is maintained that teachers educate for the FUTURE . A particularly pervasive theme in physical education circles has been education for leisure . As I will suggest later this is a somewhat problematical area . It seems to me that the major problem to be faced

by girls' and women's games and sports is exactly that they are labelled girls' and women's activities. In my introduction I indicated that society inculcates expectations, and as you are all aware, to be a female member of the species is to be the recipient of certain views about your essence. Lady Howe, for example, in a paper entitled 'A Little Too Strenuous For Women' outlined the work of the EOC in relation to sport and catalogued some of the explicit discrimination to be found in sport. Such discrimination is underpinned by social conceptions of what it is to be a girl or a woman:

"Being good at sport is prestigious for boys of all ages and forms part of the idea that boys should be outgoing and make their mark in the world. Girls are usually, though not always, encouraged to take part in sport up to senior school entry level, but after that ... a girl who is good at sport risks being isolated or thought to be 'butch'."

This situation has been explained by sociologists in terms of the socialisation process. Society, culture, the family, the school, peer groups exert pressure on the individual. The individual becomes social by experiencing categorisation. One of the most primary social classifications is that of SEXUAL IDENTITY. In summary the teaching of games in schools is constrained by:

- (i) the sex of those participating
- (ii) the kinds of activities that are acceptable.

It might be possible to talk of social determination of behaviour. Teaching games in schools is entwined with social conceptions.

The Lacrosse magazine has shown itself conscious of the problems faced by sport. Very briefly here are some issues raised within the magazine. In Crosse Talk in the October 1971 "Preturbed" raised an important issue:

"We are now entering a new era. One aimed at the efficient expansion and development of lacrosse ... All this is highly commendable BUT please is it not possible for progress to be made hand in hand

with enjoyment and pleasure ... Not everyone has the time , opportunity , or inclination to aim too high and this should not be an obstacle."(p.16)

The time-budget problems experienced by mothers often means that mothers (rather than fathers) forgo sporting involvement. A number of researchers have suggested that family based activities should be encouraged. It is interesting to note that the Lacrosse magazine of May , 1975 reflected this concern . A letter from a 'playing' mother suggested that perhaps:

"Could there be some courses where there is at least accomodation for , and someone to take care of the children , or better still , a real family holiday course , perhaps near the sea , where children of all ages can take part in activities while mum is playing lacrosse." (p.24)

All games rely upon constant recruitment , in some ways games and sports are seen as legacies to youth of younger people. How do sports accomodate youthful involvement ? Two contributors to the February 1971 edition made a plea for youth :

"An organisation that does not accept new ideas and admit the right of any member to present them , will stagnate and eventually fade away. Many of the younger members work hard for lacrosse and would work harder if allowed to do so . Let's not dampen their enthusiasm, but rather try to channel it usefully."(p.29)

Earlier in the paper , I suggested that games are inefficient in terms of their rules. The Lacrosse magazine in the last decade has regularly discussed and debated the rules of lacrosse. In Crosse-Fire in the Autumn 1979 one contributor sitting not too far from here suggested that:

"Unless the terms of the contract are known , understood and shared by all then the outcome of the contest is meaningless." (p.8)

As I will suggest later rules are necessarily moral constructs , they embody an index of control and civilisation (see the work of Norbert Elias). As a small example from lacrosse , I think the discussion of dangerous shooting and the protection of the goalkeeper are most illuminating. Barbara Dootson's letter in the most recent edition of the magazine is an

insight into a goalkeeper's perception of the situation: Do helmets protect the goalkeeper or encourage more dangerous shots? Is the logical extension of the safety argument for ALL players to wear helmets? (Contrast this with the discussion of head injuries in Rugby Union and Cricket.) As Barbara Dootson concludes:

"Surely we ought to look at ourselves and our interpretations of the rules ..."

It does not seem revolutionary to suggest that the interpretations of the ~~game~~ ^{laws} of lacrosse are created socially. Morality and morals, as J.L. Mackie has indicated, are not objective constructs they are invented rights and wrongs (~~KW~~ Ethics, Penguin 1977). It should not be surprising therefore that attitudes to the laws vary from person to person or from time to time? This must be a fundamental concern for those involved in games and sport. As Peter McIntosh has suggested in Fair Play teachers do not simply transmit motor skills (see Ch.12, pp.164-174).

I have spent a good deal of my time outlining themes from the Lacrosse magazine. It would be inappropriate for me to conclude without some mention of the concern over the future of the game. B.J. Lewis posed the question at the 1978 Coaches Seminar. As she suggested in her paper, individual sports experience similar problems and can learn a great deal from each other. Sharing knowledge must be the key to collective survival.

I apologise to the non-lacrosse playing members of the seminar. I chose the game as representative of the problems faced by all sports. Whilst I was talking I was aware, for example, of the dilemmas facing my own sport of Rugby Union. Concern over explicit violence has fuelled considerable soul searching within the game. The content of physical education in the school is under scrutiny for a number of reasons. The importation of fears for safety that have plagued American physical education has meant that teachers are required to supply a rationale for undertaking certain activities. We are certainly moving towards the "never mind my broken leg ... who can I sue?" syndrome. Traditional p.e.

activities are being challenged and in a number of cases excluded . I do not wish to suggest that this is necessarily a bad or a good thing . It does however require the teacher to think seriously about the content of the p.e. programme. I would like to propose that the p.e. profession develops a positive approach to planning . Activities might thus be seen as the product of explicit and conscious choice reflecting a calculation of risk and benefit . Hopefully the p.e. programme would become a creative and unique response to specific conditions and environments . Blueprints for curriculum development thus become guidelines to be interpreted by individual teachers for individual children. It is important to recognise that there are a number of obstacles to curriculum development . This however does not prevent or exclude attempts at a dynamic p.e. programme.

Peter McIntosh, writing in Sport and Recreation in 1974, indicated that "I once visited a school where the physical education consisted largely of basketball and pole-vaulting - a specialised, not to say restricted programme yet because of the competence, dedication and enthusiasm of the teacher a very large number of boys derived a great deal of satisfaction from it."

Elsewhere in the article McIntosh argues that the p.e. programme is to be regarded as the basic educational right of every boy and girl:

"No child however awkward or clumsy or even unco-operative , can be written off. The particular needs of the handicapped at one end of the scale and the gifted at the other end should be met by special arrangements but within the curriculum all will have to be catered for and the achievements of the few can be bought at too high a price if this involves the frustration and withdrawal of others."

A positive approach to programme planning development must integrate these elements.

2. Education

Access to educational provision is often regarded as an index of civilisation. I do not wish to dwell upon educational philosophy for too

long since the conceptual area might hold too many painful memories for those in the room. X However, all teachers are involved in the philosophical aspects of education even if it is only guilt by association ! The problem of educational theory has been succinctly put by J. Wilson in the following way:

"As any teacher knows, as soon as you get in a classroom most of what educationalists have written seems utterly divorced from reality. Few educationalists seem to know what children and adolescents are actually like, and neglect such obvious truths as, for instance, that girls are chiefly interested in boys and not French grammar ..."

('Two Types of Teaching' in R.D. Archambault (ed.) Philosophical Analysis and Education, R.& K.P.,1972, p.158).

Involvement in the education of other humans ~~inx~~ is supported by individual perceptions of what education is; the role of the teacher; the nature of the child. Without treading on the thin ice of educational discourse I think it is possible to characterise two schools of thought on the nature of education. One group argues that there ~~are~~ or appear~~x~~ to be objective forms of knowledge that are the rightful content of the curriculum and that these forms of knowledge are to some extent "what the community desires". The forms of knowledge are assumed to be neutral and value free. A contrary stand is taken by those who have been included under the title of "the new sociology of education". Michael Young, for example, has argued that "the sociology of education must take into account the historically and situationally specific character of both its phenomena and its explanations" (in Knowledge and Control, Introduction p.5, Collier-Macmillan, 1971). Kevin Harris in a recent contribution to the debate entitled his research Education and Knowledge - The structured misrepresentation of reality (R. & K.P.,1979). His case is that:

"Knowing the world, or coming to know the world, is not a matter of learning or coming into possession of sets of facts or truths about the world, which are there in the world, and which ~~yieldix~~ the world yields up to those who are able to see them; it is rather a matter of coming to perceive the world in particular ways, from particular

perspectives ..." (p.2)

I would contend that this debate is of central concern to all those involved in formal and informal education. It is relevant to those involved in physical education and presents a philosophical challenge to the body of knowledge transmitted by the p.e. profession. Can it be claimed that physical education programmes offer a particular socio and historico specific view of the world? Even a cursory glance at Len Almond's work mentioned earlier provides quite a shock to the system? Philosophical reflection can help to make things clear, if only to support current practices. Bertrand Russell is reported to have said that "most people would rather die than think ... and in fact they do." Traditionally, physical education teachers, particularly the male members of the species have been looked upon as of being of limited cerebral capacity, and the impression has been that thinking stops once sports clothes are put on. It is remarkable how many parents still think of physical education as P.T.. This is a legacy teacher in the 1980s will contend with. At a recent conference of p.e. teachers at I.M.Marsh College a number of problems that p.e. is facing in the schools were discussed. The final session of the conference indicated that the problems can be met face on by a dynamic profession. As you are undoubtedly aware curriculum development is a time and hope consuming business but without it physical education will be seen to be out of tune with developments in other areas. As I will indicate shortly, physical educationists often strangle the subject with hypothetical claims that cannot be substantiated. David Best sums up the point nicely:

"... one would be on much safer ground readily to concede that physical education activities are not intellectual, but to argue that they are none the less valuable for that."

(in Philosophy and Human Movement, Unwin 1978, p.60). Again this is an area for discussion and one that is particularly relevant to those teachers hoping to develop examinations in physical education. What kind of knowledge is transmitted through practical and theoretical study? What claims can be made for the subject and defended against critics from outside physical education?

The basic problem is that we all know inside ourselves why we take part in sport and why we want to transmit this feeling to other people. It is quite easy, for example to think of the missionary zeal of many physical/ ^{education} teachers in pursuing certain games or sports to an apparently insensitive public. We would all share intuitively in the work of our colleagues and be able to empathise with their triumphs, struggles and not-so-bad days. I think we all know, through personal experience, what it is to be a p.e. teacher even though we have unique interpretations of the job. This however is the sticking point! Can this sensitivity be the ultimate repository for our future hopes? Is, for example, compulsory physical education the way to reveal the joy of physical activity? Are we not guilty of a tyranny of taste and choice and as one critic has suggested dealers in foregone conclusions summarised by the well-known exhortation - "You will enjoy this ... because ...". I do not think that other subjects have any greater or lesser claims to make. It is about time physical education stood alongside other curricular subjects without prejudice and located within the philosophical and social framework outlined above. If the question 'What ought we to do?' is posed then physical educationists should be prepared to make explicit defensible claims for the subject's continued existence.

In the time that remains I would like to present some of the problems that physical education might encounter in the attempt at validation of its place in the school curriculum. I will refer here specifically to girls' p.e..

I suggested earlier that society labels individuals at a very basic level with reference to sexual characteristics. Debate rages as to whether this is a biological inherent classificatory scheme or whether it is an arbitrary classification perpetuated by those who gain from the existing situation.

Lionel Tiger's book, Men in Groups (Nelson, 1969), is an example of

the argument that there is some utility in the biologically oriented approach to human behaviour (p.xiv). His thesis is that:

"when human groups expand beyond , say , ten to thirty individuals , it becomes necessary to form some kind of bond ... This bond is typically male ..." (p.113)

Once hunting became a dominant mode of behaviour , Tiger argues that changes in diet and food-gathering methods were accompanied by changes in social organisation . The outcome was that a programmed behaviour pattern developed and women ,for reasons that Tiger expands at length, were denied access to the hunt. It is thus Tiger's contention that:

"the behaviour of an individual is not determined by impingement of culture on a tabula rasa, but by the co-ordination of a genetically arbitrated life cycle with the more or less appropriate responses evoked by a particular community" (p.58).

Male and female are thus guided by biological legacies which determine social action . This is particularly relevant in the study of aggressive behaviour where Tiger suggests that "socially organised aggression is the propensity of males" (p.160). In these terms Tiger explains sport as the functional equivalent of the hunting pattern with which the human male has been endowed by evolution. (p.119)

Tiger's analysis of social behaviour is a challenge to those who see sex differences as the social and not natural product of human evolution. Those who explain the status of women in society as a social product argue that females are socialised into certain roles usually associated with submission and passivity. Such behaviour is learned ! Jay Kleinberg has argued that "most young women grew up believing that they should watch whilst the boys played " (Proceedings of International Conference on Women in Sport). A considerable amount of literature has been produced in recent years by women about women . This material challenges the role allocated to women in sport and society. It is particularly pleasing to see a considerable growth in the amount of material being produced in this

country. Dr. Liz Ferris has argued that :

"What more do women have to do to become totally accepted in sport whilst at the same time not being considered socially deviant? The answer is that they don't have to do any more than they are already doing: it is social attitudes that need to change." ('The Guardian', 30 November 1979).

Adrianne Mees^{Hartman} has recently summarised a good deal of the physiological aspects of women in sport (Physical Education Review 2(1), pp.44-49) . She argues that there is a low level of female participation in sport at all levels. The problem of this low level participation can be related to cultural and social influences. These influences are supported by a number of 'physiological myths' which "reinforce attitudes and ensure that activity levels in the female population remain low" (p.44). Women are thus deprived of the health and social benefits of participation.

I will not develop this theme here but if anyone is interested in some of the research currently available I would be quite happy to indicate the sources of such material. I do think however it is important to pose the question - ~~What is the role of the physical education teacher in~~ what does the p.e. teacher do to construct, modify or alter the image girls have of physical activity? Does the teacher manage identity for the children in her care? John Yates has suggested that the teacher:

"can make decisions concerning the content of the movement programme which have an important bearing on dominant definitions of what are considered appropriate 'male' or 'female' movement activities" ('Psycho-social Aspects of the School Physical Education Programme' in The Journal of Psycho-Social Aspects, April 1975, p.61).

The challenge seems to be whether physical education can resolve the problems of ascription against achievement.

Every physical education teacher brings a unique biography to bear upon the planning and development of the programme. In 1974 the Schools Council through the work of John Kane attempted an overview of physical education in the secondary school and the teachers responsible for the subject. The results of the survey indicated the variety of meanings attributed to the subject and the impact of age and gender on the teaching of the subject. At a very general level it might be asked - what do teachers want to do? how will they set about doing it? and how will they assess it when they think they have done it? It follows from my argument that the choice of content, method and assessment procedures will create a microcosm of meaning for the pupils within the teachers care. To emphasise my point, I would like to use a particularly interesting piece of research conducted by Len Almond. Almond proposed that activities were often included in the programme with very little thought given to the time required to reach an acceptable standard for each activity. Time, of course, is one of the scarcest resources. Almond used a hypothetical school year of 36 weeks with 140 mins for p.e. in each week: to calculate the following:

Number of activities per year	Length (weeks)	Max. time available	Les 15 mins. changing per double
3	12	28	22
4	9	21	16.30
5	7	16.20	12.50
6	6	14	11
7	5	11.40	9.10
8	4	9.20	7.20

Source: Almond, op.cit. section 2.22

How does the teacher allocate the time available? What are the relative merits of breadth and depth? This kind of research can fuel a good deal of conjecture. The basic question of course is what use is made of the limited time allocated to the department?

Physical Education teachers face the problems of quantity and quality but these are often based upon certain assumed benefits of physical activity. John Yates has argued that:

"The many words contained in books or publications aimed at convincing the physical education student of the worthwhileness of the subject point towards non-existent evidence for the hypotheses of faith, hope and aspiration rather than to theories of the real world based on empirical research." (p.53, op.cit)

Oft-quoted myths include:

(i) healthy mind in a healthy body;

(ii) character development - many associated problems; what character?

is the relationship inverted - certain personality types choosing sport? why cannot sports involvement develop negative qualities?

(see Yates op.cit., pp.53-56).

However Yates does argue that the p.e. teacher can play a vital role within the educational system:

(i) an opportunity to relate naturally to the child in an informal context;

(ii) a restoration of the body to a dominant place in the thinking of all people. Importance of the physical level of human experience.

(a) positive self-identity - opportunities for physical as well as cognitive development. Relevant to ALL ages.

(iii) sociological implications:

(a) involvement and peer group status

(b) social implications of body types and handicaps?

(c) we become ourselves through social interaction and involvement.

Play, games, and competition.

(d) classical example of pedagogy?

(e) a significant person in the school. Achievement, ascription.

(f) cultural significance of sport.

A fourth category, not mentioned explicitly by Yates, could be the positive health benefits of physical activity. (See P.H. Fentem and E.J. Bassey,

The Case for Exercise, Sports Council, 1978).

It follows from my argument that the physical education programme is an open-ended social construct. If this is the case, then the teacher must be aware that her values are being transmitted consciously or sub-consciously in her programme. This has important consequences for her role as legal guardian and moral custodian of the pupils in her care.

Peter McIntosh in his study of Fair Play (Heinemann, 1979) posits that:

"The inevitability of the hidden curriculum is well established and for a teacher of any subject to contract out of moral education is in itself an indication of a moral standpoint which must have an influence on pupils." (p.165)

Society bestows the title of educator upon those who are entrusted with the formal, institutional instruction of the child at specific stages of the child's life. There is no doubt that a great deal of learning is of an informal nature. Teachers are entrusted with the socialisation of the young into acceptable modes of behaviour as socially competent individuals. But how do teachers know what values to transmit? Do all teachers hold common values? Do such common values reflect particular sections of society? In terms of moral values do these change over time? If values do change how does the teacher know they have changed? These all seem important questions, for I would suggest that by the very nature of social existence one person's certainty is another person's doubt. It might be useful to develop some practical problems to act as a focus for these kinds of questions.

- (i) how does the teacher resolve the issue of competition, winning, losing, fairness?
- (ii) Co-operation, competition, individual and team games.
- (iii) mixed or single-sex activity.

Whatever the teacher does, she socially constructs a reality for the children in her care. Is her role the immediate or long term education of her pupils? McIntosh raises a variety of problems in his book and

leaves the reader with the contention that:

"discussion of philosophical issues is a valuable and necessary activity if we are to have any control over our sport, our education, and our lives." (p.191)

One of the most enjoyable aspects of attending a seminar is the opportunity^y to sit down and let other people do the work and to discuss in an unhurried atmosphere everyday problems and concerns with fellow travellers. Dare I say it, even a chance to think!

Before I release you from the rigours of listening, I would like to provide you with some final food for thought. Do we, as physical educationists have any conception of the product of our toils? Realistically, in the present social environment, participation in on-going physical activity is a minority undertaking. Let me indicate the problem women face:

1. Margaret Talbot:

"...there are quantitative differences in leisure behaviour between men and women, and even stronger differences between women of different social backgrounds and circumstances... Women have been designated as recreationally 'disadvantaged' by the Department of the Environment..."
(in Women and Leisure, Sports Council and SSRC, 1979, p.1)

2. Chris Griffin:

An examination of the transition from school to work for young white, working class women. Griffin's research indicated that for the women in the survey 'work' involved factory work, shopwork, secretarial and clerical work. Part of work was in fact finding a man. First wages tended to be spent on clothes. In essence:

"For all young women, albeit in different ways, their primary work/obligation is men; finding a man, keeping him, serving his work and leisure...having his children and taking the twenty four hour responsibility for them."

3. Leo Hendry

His book School, Sport and Leisure is an examination of adolescent behaviour in these aspects. He refers to his own and other research concerning the leisure activities of young people. In 1971, it was estimated that users of 5 selected sports centres manifested the following demographic pattern:

68%	of all users in non-manual occupations
5% unskilled or semi-skilled
27% skilled manual

Evidence of this sort has fuelled considerable debate. Isobel Emmett, for example, has suggested that sport and physical recreation may play a less important part in the lives of young people than is often assumed. In his own study of 15 Scottish schools Hendry discovered that with respect to extra-curricular activities pupil involvement was of the following order:

	Boys (%)	Girls(%)
Competitive	26	16
Recreative	17	15
Non-participant	57	69

Two final quotes from Hendry's research:

"In British society adolescent males are considerably more physical-activity loving than girls and every investigation of this topic emphasises this difference"(p.125)

and

"Sport is only one way a young person can occupy his leisure time and the need for sport does not exist in equal amounts in all young people. Indeed, in some it does not exist at all."

Some conclusions

I deliberately chose an extremely broad title to allow myself to ramble through some of the evidence available. The speakers of the first day of the conference raised issues and themes that have encouraged discussion and conjecture. The difficulty is of course that ultimately debates about our central life interest are challenges to our very being. The difficulty is undoubtedly that we are talking about matters of belief and faith. I would like to suggest that an awareness of the social and philosophical dimensions of physical education will at least encourage something more than blind faith ! The physical education profession sometimes becomes ensnared in Utopian aspirations of pleasing all of the people all of the time. We talk a great deal about pupils opting out of physical activity . It is equally appropriate I think to talk of teachers opting out . As a profession we are guilty of holding a rational model of human behaviour that is an abstraction. It is one of those OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL models. The kinds of demands that are made upon the caring teacher are often unbearable. As one member of the seminar suggested yesterday there are very practical reasons why things cannot change.

Conferences like this might well be an additional impetus for already intrinsically motivated teachers . Is the p.e. profession as a whole prepared to undergo rigorous self questioning? I have attempted to indicate that those concerned with the teaching of girls games have considerable problems to overcome. I would suggest that THE problem you have to resolve is being labelled WOMEN. When you have resolved that particular problem your task might be seen in quite a different light.

Thank you for your attention.