AN INVESTIGATION INTO PERCEPTIONS
OF THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF
PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

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I dedicate this thesis to my late wife, Niranjanee Moodley.
ABSTRACT

The general purpose of the Thesis is to chart and analyse the problems that beset PE in terms of its status within the school curriculum.

Chapter One of the thesis offers a socio-historical account of PE which highlights the struggle it has always had about status. My subjects too showed concern about its low status in the school curriculum. It would appear that the National Curriculum has thus far done little, if anything to raise the status of PE. This section concludes by discussing a series of legislative acts governing PE from 1870 to the present National Curriculum.

Chapters Three, Four and Five demonstrate a piece of sustained curriculum research carried out in the mid 80s. Qualitative in nature and using interviews principally—though with supplementary questionnaire and document analysis— it engages with twenty one people at the very centre of PE practice - teachers, trainee students in their final year of a B.Ed course, teacher educators and leisure centre managers. The data analysis falls into the following folds:

- the condition of PE in schools today
- the status of PE or the degree of importance attributed to PE vis-a-vis other curriculum areas
- the normative conception of PE held by 'the professionals' - their views on its aims and priorities, their views on whom it served, and how they came to those conceptions.

Chapter Six is prompted by the fieldwork, while taking the discussion on the educational value of PE into the early 90s. A lengthy chapter develops the author's own conception of educational values in PE by a process of dialogue, first, with a selection of statements of aims in policy documents in the UK from 1860 up to the recent National Curriculum in PE and secondly with a number of leading philosophers of education. This leads to the identification of the following broad aims: aesthetic development, social interaction, achievement and disappointment, health, fitness and exercise.

Chapter Seven includes brief discussions of four key issues in PE: the role of the academic, gender, teacher education and relationship to leisure provision.
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INTRODUCTION

I was conscious at the start that physical education (PE) in the school curriculum had not in the past, nor in the present, commanded a place worthy of its long history. I was conscious, too, that its present practice owed much to its history and, again, that whilst it was universally practised in schools, it did not portray a picture of wholeness, nor of basic uniformity, nor of consensus as to what a physically educated person was.

How much, I asked myself, were its problems related to its treatment as a marginal subject in the curriculum. The reader will be quick to remind me that other subjects too had to struggle for a place in the curriculum. But PE, it might be, failed to win a worthy status for itself because it has always tended to be unclear about its purposes, has perhaps been inhibited by influences outside itself from developing clarity about its purposes. Throughout its history PE has presented a remarkable range of messages to people at different times. Its real educational value to school pupils has perhaps not been made clear enough for it to be treated with any real seriousness. One is struck by the number of purposes it had been called to serve - obedience and discipline, fitness for war-time recruits, letting off steam from classroom lessons, for therapeutic reasons and so on. Its battle for proper recognition and approval from curriculum decision makers has certainly been long and drawn out. One wonders whether the National
Curriculum Council in its deliberations has really done much to advance the state and status of PE.

My research study was prompted by the appearance of a number of educational documents and a fair amount of public attention in the media showing firstly, a genuine concern for the development of PE and secondly, revealing some of the ambiguities in its theory and practice. The latest of such documents at the time was the Hargreaves or Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) Report on 'Improving Secondary Schools' which makes the following scathing comment on the subject. I quote extensively, while underlining the sentence which stimulated me most:

3.9.27. Physical Education (PE) is part of the common curriculum in many schools; often it is compulsory by tradition. Good reasons can be adduced for this. PE makes an important contribution not merely to fitness, psycho-motor development and education for leisure but also to the wider aesthetic, intellectual, social and moral development of the pupil. Today, as in the past, some pupils dislike PE. We have received substantial evidence that in some schools many pupils regularly truant ("bunk off") during games periods and even more alarming, for the whole day on which games is scheduled. Some schools have in consequence made PE optional in order to improve school attendance. We believe that this is not a sound principle by which to decide whether this or any other subject should or should not be compulsory. In some schools moreover PE is grouped as an option with 'aesthetic' subjects. We believe this too is unsatisfactory. Whilst we do not do deny the aesthetic component in PE, we do not believe that playing football or netball, for example is an adequate substitute for those subjects usually accorded the label 'aesthetic' subjects. In some schools we believe the severe unpopularity of PE to be a reflection on the quality of teaching in this subject: the curriculum content
and/or teaching method is inappropriate, there is lack of high expectation or a neglect of all but the most gifted, there is too great an emphasis on competition rather than co-operation. PE has undergone considerable diversification in recent years and there is now a much greater degree of choice as well as sympathetic support for those with few physical skills, than was true in the past. Wider dissemination of this good practice will improve the popularity among the older pupils. On balance, however we do not believe that PE should be compulsory for fourth and fifth year pupils. In our view PE should be a 'free option'. At the same time all pupils should be made aware of the importance of PE and encouraged to pursue it in some form, either within the formal curriculum, in extra-curricular activities, or in personal leisure activities.

My research goes a little way in examining some of the issues that have contributed to the unclear picture of PE practice. This thesis offers a by no means comprehensive view. It could be said, however, that it is a view arrived at by examining several issues that are inherently the concern of PE irrespective of time and place.

The study begins with a sketch of some aspects of the historical development of PE. In this, and in some historical passages later in the thesis, I am not attempting to provide another summary history of PE from the Greeks, but rather to trace the birth and development of PE in popular education in Britain in some reference to its not quite successful struggle for status.

Thereafter the study develops two main thrusts. In chapters 2-5 I report a fieldwork study which I conducted in the late eighties (88-89).
This section highlights, organizes and presents three thematic concerns that become the main feature of the study:

- the status of PE in the minds of my subjects,
- the state of PE as my subjects perceived it, and
- the importance of PE in the minds of my subjects.

One of the difficulties with this section is that it refers to a period which might be thought to have been completely changed by the introduction of the National Curriculum. I am not in a secure position to comment on the matter. Because I have not replicated the fieldwork since the National Curriculum, I am not in a position to say how much the condition of PE would still be the same in the minds of teachers, leisure centre managers and teacher educators. But even if the PE National Curriculum is in fact changing things drastically, so that the historians of the future will see 1991 as a watershed, how things were just before the big change will remain a topic of no small interest. In addition to that point later chapters of the study do in fact refer to the National Curriculum in PE.

The second main thrust of the study is an extended, mainly philosophical, consideration and evaluation of the real educational values of PE in chapter 6. It is this long chapter, principally, that is staging a fight for the status of PE. Chapter 7 draws on this general argument in its brief discussions of some issues, subsidiary to the three mentioned earlier. These are the currently topical issues of gender, leisure, and examinations in PE. All of these more theoretical discussions in these two chapters emerged first from the field-work.
CHAPTER 1
THE DEVELOPMENT OF PE AS A SCHOOL SUBJECT

David Kirk (1988) rightly remarks that much of the current debate on PE has its roots in history:

"The circumstances surrounding physical education's entry into the state school curriculum and its early development are important because they form the roots of the contemporary situation"

Its place in the school curriculum was dependent on different people at different times:

"... physical education's place in the curriculum has been contingent upon the purposes of particular groups of people at different times"

As a prelude to our study of the contemporary status of PE in schools we shall trace the development of PE as a school subject in the UK over roughly a century. In doing so we shall be indirectly broaching the topic of status, at least in a general way. For we shall notice, first, how PE became an accepted school subject and then a compulsory school subject, second, how its curriculum shifted from narrower to broader aims and contents and from extra-educational to educational conceptions, and, third, an increasing emphasis on the professionalism of PE (as of other) teachers.

We shall sketch the history of the subject from different angles, in this chapter from the point of view of government involvement in it (but with a small number of additional significant 'footnotes'), and in a
later chapter (chapter 6) from the point of view of changing perceptions of the aims of the subject. Some slight overlap between these will be unavoidable.

LEVELS OF PRESCRIPTION SINCE 1870

A snapshot of some of the more important government legislation items relating to PE since its inception in the school curriculum should throw some light on the status of PE as it is today, and provide in addition useful points of comparison with the new National Curriculum requirements for the subject. PE has changed a great deal since 1870. Not all the change has come through government legislation, but much of it did. Of course, legislation tends to reflect trends in public and educational opinion as well as to direct them. A study of it is one angle of entry to the more general history of PE in Britain.

The first government department to take responsibility for education, the Committee of the Privy Council set up in 1839, made this statement on PE in its first report:

"The physical training of the children may therefore be usefully provided for on other grounds than its tendency to develop the muscular powers and to render the scholars robust and vigorous"

It went on to say that "the physical exercises of the playground extend the moral influence of the teacher by encouraging the children to remain under his care during the hours of recreation" (Minutes of Committee of Council on Education 1839-40). The report very clearly placed PE outside the curriculum.
Acually, however, for the mass of children attending the elementary schools, PE was hardly to exist for most of the rest of the century, usually consisting where it existed at all of military drill for the boys and callisthenic exercises for the girls. A variety of games and sports was an established feature in many public and grammar schools well before 1900 and some of these schools had also introduced gymnastics on the German model. But the 'Arnoldian' athleticism of the public schools contrasted painfully with the sedentary passivity of life in the elementary schools (Selleck 1972). The elementary curriculum simply did not cater for the physical needs of pupils, even if teachers were sometimes to the fore in developing voluntary out-of-school activities for the luckier children of the working classes (the first elementary schools games league was started in 1885 (Macintosh 1976)).

The governments of the time made no attempt to encourage the School Boards to provide facilities and equipment for PE. Steeped in a strong belief in instrumentary education (Selleck 1972) they saw no sufficient value for investment in "extension of the practice of systemized gymnastics and military and navy drill", as proposed in the House of Commons in 1862, and dismissed it as an "unnecessary frill".

Although little was done for PE in elementary schools during the 1850s and 1860s there was evidence of a growing public concern about it. When in 1861 Herbert Spencer devoted one of his four essays on education entirely to the physical aspect of it there was considerable public interest and he enjoyed a large audience. He argued strongly "that all breaches of the laws of health are physical sins" (Spencer 1861). Nor
was he entirely alone in his concern. While the government was doing little or nothing for PE in this period, some private individuals were beginning to rouse and shape public opinion.

It was left to the School Boards to respond and take the initiative in PE. London and Birmingham were the leading authorities in this field, particularly by virtue of their introduction into schools (for example, into 300 London elementary schools between 1880 and 1885) of the Swedish gymnastics system originally devised by P.H. Ling. Their efforts were sometimes actively thwarted by governments. Thus in 1872 the School Board of London wished to include swimming in the curriculum and asked the Education Department to allow the "provision of baths and the employment of swimming instructors for purposes of grant". The department refused. It was not until 1890 that it gave agreement to this.

London's effort told in the end, however. The Cross Commission (1886) recommended the wider dissemination of the London system and the Education Department duly recognized physical exercises as well as drill as permissible. A similar permission was extended to games in 1894. When in 1895 the Education Department finally made PE eligible for grant as a subject of instruction for the first time, it recognised that the old army drill type of PE lesson had to be replaced by gymnastics. Although this was a major step forward for PE at curriculum level, it was also made clear that the prime reason they were interested in its inclusion was still one of discipline.
During the Boer War, 1899-1902, recruits for the army were found to be physically deficient to an alarming degree. Physical training and military drill under a wave of militarism received a great impetus. The Royal Commission on Physical Training (Board of Education/Scotch Education Department, 1903), consisting of nine men, made a recommendation that physical exercises become a universal activity in mass schooling in Britain. The commissioners showed concern for "the health conditions of children attending school at this time, and the likely therapeutic benefits to be accrued from active participation in physical exercise". Though not all the Commission's recommendations were put into practice, its influence was far reaching and profound.

In 1904 an Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration was set up. In its report it stated that a scheme of games alone could never be enough to take the place of methodical physical training. It proposed that local authorities should have the duty of providing and maintaining open spaces in proportion to the density of the population and that such spaces should be fitted with gymnastic apparatus. It also contributed to the Board setting up a Medical Department in 1907, which must rate as one of the most important events in the history of PE in this country - and to which we will return.

In 1905 the first national syllabus for "physical training" appeared. It was to be the first of several; others came out in 1909, 1919 and 1933. It stated two main objectives for PE.

"The primary objective of any course of physical exercises is to maintain, and if possible, improve, the health and physique of the
children. But the exercises which conduce to this result may, if rightly conducted, have an effect scarcely less important in developing in the scholars qualities of alertness, decision, concentration and the perfect control of mind over body."

We shall return to the matter of changing objectives in PE in a later chapter. Here we will just remark that the content of the syllabus did not offer any radical changes in the types of exercises. Indeed, military drill persisted in many schools long after the Report of the Royal Commission.

Although the Board of Education in its 1905/6 Report acknowledged the importance of games in the curriculum, their moral and social values were not recognised until after the Fisher Act of 1918. It was 1920 before "suggestions" in regard to Games appeared. No doubt the influence of the militarists so concerned with national fitness, and the supply of women teachers of Swedish gymnastics, tended to delay the acceptance of games as part of the PE programme.

Revisions of the syllabus in 1909 and 1919 reinforced the objectives of the 1905 syllabus. But the 1909 syllabus stated that the "exercises should be thoroughly enjoyed by the children", indicating that the element of recreation was gradually gaining ground. The 1909 syllabus also established the Swedish system of gymnastics as the system to be practised.

It, further, made PE a compulsory and examinable subject in all teacher training colleges. Between 1907 and 1909, the Medical Department of the
The Board of Education had prepared 3 syllabuses in subjects vital to school health: in hygiene, temperance and physical exercises. It was to be a chief duty of the training colleges to equip each student with sufficient knowledge to handle a class efficiently for physical exercises and to have a working knowledge of the physical and hygienic principles on which a system of physical training was founded. Since the training colleges were judged not to have been meeting these needs, the medical department revised and enlarged the 1905 Syllabus, thus giving the teachers in schools and instructors in training a uniform and detailed syllabus from which to work. To eliminate much of the dullness and monotony which had characterised the lessons of the 1905 Syllabus, a number of recreative exercises and activities such as step marches, dancing and skipping steps and gymnastic exercises were introduced for enjoyment and teachers were encouraged to introduce them more freely into the physical training lesson. A main feature of the Syllabus was the inclusion of 72 Tables of Exercises, explained and illustrated. It seems that teachers in the past because of insufficient training had been unable to construct suitable tables of exercises.

All in all there may have been a little more freedom and scope for the teachers and more enjoyment for the child in this new Syllabus, but the approach was still very formal. There was an insistence by the Board on uniformity on two counts:

* All teachers should follow the general progression of the tables.
* All teachers had to adhere to the uniformity of commands and terminology.
Equally interesting was the Board's attitude to girls' physical education. In a memo to inspectors the Board felt that "men were seldom capable of appreciating the limitations of a girl's strength and her capacity of physical endurance". Inspectors were asked to use their influence in getting women teachers to teach girls and where this was not possible, a mistress was to be in attendance and held responsible for "proper attention to dress and avoidance of undue fatigue".

Some emphasis was placed on games, but it was the exception rather than the rule for elementary schools to be able to use playing fields for their games period. In some of the large cities, arrangements were made with the Parks Department so that public parks and open spaces could be used by the schools.

The beginning of the War meant that plans for pushing forward in the training colleges received a considerable setback. This remained the situation throughout the war period, with the physical training of boys suffering more teacher shortage than did that of girls.

The Fisher Education Act of 1918 produced several further changes in the system of PE. First, a greater recognition and greater emphasis was placed on the subject by the government. There were several reasons for this:

* There had been a nationwide interest in games which had been brought about by the war and encouraged by the Services.
* The Boy Scout movement had achieved immense popularity and with it had arisen an unprecedented interest in camping and outdoor pursuits.
The foreign system of dancing called eurythmics, devised by Jaques Dalcroze, and the work of Cecil Sharp in the teaching of traditional English dances in schools, brought dancing to the forefront in PE.
* Finally the work of Mrs Humphrey Ward showed that physical training could be a leisure time activity of great value and led to the development of evening play centres.

Secondly, for the first time in the history of education an Education Act provided for a potentially national system of physical training for young people. This, coupled with the extension of medical inspection and treatment to secondary and continuation schools, meant that children drawn from the slums of manufacturing towns might, in principle, be under the continual inspection and supervision of the school medical service from the age of entry to school and during the whole period of childhood and adolescence. However, it is important that the Act merely empowered local authorities to carry out these measures. There was no question of compulsion (which was introduced only in the 1944 Act).

Thirdly, the 1909 syllabus had come to seem too formal and inflexible, particularly in its commitment to the Swedish system of gymnastics. The 1918 Act loosened up the PE lesson and also encouraged the introduction of dancing and some games where facilities were available.

The ten years, 1923 to 1933, must be seen in relation to three major influences which affected the progress of PE:
* The repeated economic crises of this period created political and social problems which altered the educational programmes of the Board of Education. "Marking time" was the order of the day; preparation for a new advance.
The creation of New Senior Schools, being recommended by the Haddow Report, required entirely fresh thinking from the Physical Training Branch of the Board on behalf of the older child and his or her teacher.

At this time physical training in secondary schools had reached a state of desperate neglect. Immediate and long term steps had to be taken to put it right.

It was clear that the 1919 Syllabus was inadequate and unsuitable for the New Senior Schools. Circular 1404, issued by the Board of Education on 24th September, 1929, stated that the Government was preparing legislation for the raising of the school leaving age to 15 as from 1931. A revision of the Syllabus became a matter of urgency.

The New Syllabus of 1933:

* created far more scope for the initiative and intelligence of the individual teacher;
* called for a higher standard of gymnastic performance on the part of the children;
* overhauled the exercises themselves;
* introduced fresh exercises and revised methods of teaching, particularly "with a view to the special encouragement of posture and flexibility of muscles and joints" (Report of Chief Medical Officer 1932);
* described a large number of simple games intended to lead up to the more advanced field games;
* stabilized a rather formal gymnastic pattern of work, but at the same time
by the inclusion of "activity" exercises, ensured plenty of free and vigorous movement in every lesson. (Report of C.M.D., 1932)

The syllabus appeared in the form of a Junior Book, suitable for children between the ages of 5 and 11 years. Separate syllabuses for senior boys and senior girls followed on.

The exercises were more advanced and difficult in these latter requiring more apparatus than had been used in the elementary schools.

The New Senior Schools were promised competent teachers of physical training. (By the 1930s the idea of a specialist PE schoolteacher was becoming a commonplace, though it had been unheard of in 1900.)

A physical training room or central hall was to be made available when weather made outdoor lessons impracticable.

Emphasis was laid on the importance of good posture both in rest and in action.

The Syllabus stressed the importance of the daily physical training lesson, preferably in the open air.

As in the two previous syllabuses the exercises were arranged in tables, but now they only mapped out the general scheme to be followed. The individual teacher was left to choose his own exercises and draw up his own lessons. This transition, from the early formality and depressing rigidity of the "drill" lesson to the freedom and wider scope of the 1933 Syllabus, was a striking advance. It made physical training active, something more than a chore that had to be attended to because it was on the curriculum. It gave it, indeed, a flavour of recreation with an emphasis on enjoyment. With regard to swimming its aim was to produce "the maximum number of swimmers and not to concentrate on the
expert attainment of a few especially apt pupils". It regulated PE for two decades without amendment.

The Second World War and the 1994 Education Act marked a clear watershed for PE, as for other subjects. The syllabuses published by the Board of Education in 1904, 1905, 1909, 1913 and 1933 were to varying degrees prescriptive, stating the aims and objectives of the subjects and including prescribed, or at least suggested, tables of lessons and games activities. Before the war, also, the Medical Board wielded a great influence on physical training, more or less dictating the pattern and format of physical training. The postwar period saw an expansion of activities and subject matter, a shift from an emphasis on therapeutic benefits to educational values, and, in particular, a period described by Professor Lawton as "the golden age of teacher autonomy", when teachers enjoyed a powerful influence over the curriculum in their practice. The Ministry of Education published in 1952 a handbook called Moving and Growing and Planning the Programme to replace the 1933 syllabus. It required no strict adherence from teachers, no longer even stated the objectives of the subject, nor did it contain tables of lessons for teachers to follow. It clearly endorsed the new informal approach to the teaching of the subject:

"These then are the various opportunities one might expect to find" (Ministry of Education, 1952)

The later, 1972, Department of Education and Science's publication Movement, which was to replace Moving and Growing, gave a similar endorsement of the autonomy of the teacher:
"It is the role of the physical education teacher to offer varied movement experiences"

The 1980s, however, were to see the return of central prescription, culminating in the 1988 Education Reform Act and the National Curriculum that was part of it.

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM We are now in the position of coping with a new statutory National Curriculum in PE. The document bearing the order for this is comprehensive in size and wordage; no other legislation for PE has taken up so much written space. Of course, PE is no different from other subjects in this regard. The shift from teacher autonomy back to prescriptivism is across the curriculum as a whole. So this change in PE was not, or at any rate not primarily, a response to factors within the world of PE. It was very much a matter of PE getting caught up in wider trends and events. (It is true that there may well have been some desire in the PE world for more guidance and structure from the centre and for more standardization of the curriculum. It has been my impression that the PE establishment seemed rather less sceptical and suspicious of the new National Curriculum idea and proposals than were some other subject establishments.)

To mention the main surface events relating to this shift. Recentralization might be said to have begun with the last Labour Administration of James Callaghan, whose own 'Ruskin College Speech' (1977) is usually seen as a watershed. It accelerated with the election of the first of several Thatcher Governments in 1979. An early
manifestation of it was that the Department of Education and Science (DES) began calling Local Authorities to account in relation to their curriculum responsibilities as defined in the 1944 Act, and they in turn harried schools into the production of curriculum plans and self-evaluations. A little later, in the early and mid 1980s, the DES produced through both its civil servants and its professional wing, Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), an unprecedented volume of documents on curriculum matters. A particularly crucial later event was the coincidence of a new Secretary of State for Education (Kenneth Baker) and a general election: the promise of a National Curriculum that would involve significant statutory change became a key part of the Conservative election manifesto for the election in 1987. Conservative victory in that election led to the rather hasty drafting and passage of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). This laid the legislative basis not only for the National Curriculum (including National Assessment), but also for both Local Management of Schools (LMS) and for schools to 'opt out' of Local Authority control and become in effect government schools ('direct grant' schools). The Act also set up a National Curriculum Council (NCC) and a Schools' Examination and Assessment Council (SEAC). In the aftermath of the Act, working-parties for curriculum subjects were set up and charged with producing draft proposals for individual subjects. These, after further consultation organized by the NCC, became the basis of the statutory curricula for individual subjects, such as the one for PE alluded to above.

Like other subject curricula, the PE curriculum includes overall attainment targets and subordinate statements of attainment, programmes
of study and assessment arrangements, all relating both to ages ('key stages') and to levels of achievement. In chapter 6 we shall be reviewing the National Curriculum debate about the aims of PE. Here we just note briefly the main features of the PE curriculum that emerged from what was a process of negotiation and compromise between the Working Party, the Secretary of State, the NCC and the wider PE establishment.

A single Attainment Target emerged as a composite of several proposed earlier which listed the processes of planning, participating/performing, and evaluating physical activities and added the appreciation of health consequences of physical activities. Six core areas of activity and experience were listed: athletic activities, games, dance, gymnastic activities, outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming. Over Key Stages 1 and 2 (ages 5-11) pupils should experience all six and there is an additional highly specific requirement in the case of one of them: all pupils must be able to swim at least 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 3 (12-14), swimming is no longer compulsory, but pupils should experience the other five over the two years, and at least four - to include games and either gymnastics or dance - in each year. At Key Stage 4 (14-16) there is much less prescription: pupils not undertaking a GCSE in PE should experience at least two kinds of activity.

In drafting and negotiating this curriculum, and in beginning to implement it since it was made statutory in 1992, the issue of resourcing has been an important background influence. Despite what
seemed to be a government determination to avoid commitments involving significant increases in resources, it seems that significant extra investment in both human and material resources would be involved, at least in some localities, in meeting the legal requirements. It is still unclear whether actual practice will be dictated by these legal requirements or by currently available resources.

**SOME SIGNIFICANT FOOTNOTES**

**SWEDISH GYMNASTICS** Some additional mention should be made of the introduction of Swedish gymnastics into this country. P.H. Ling's Swedish system was introduced into England in the early 1840s. Amongst several early pioneers were Swedes, Mathias Roth and Carl Georgie, who however worked as practitioners of medical gymnastics and as such made their living in London.

It was not until 1878, when the London School Board appointed Miss Lotving as Superintendent of Physical Exercises in Girls Schools, that an impetus was given to the introduction of Swedish Gymnastics into English Schools. Miss Lotving was succeeded in 1881 by Miss Bergman (later Mme Bergman-Ostenberg), a remarkable woman of great energy, ability and enthusiasm. During the next four years she trained over 1000 women teachers of the London School Board and in that way introduced Swedish Gymnastics into 300 London Schools. In 1885 she opened at Hampstead the first college in this country for the training of women specialist teachers of Swedish Gymnastics. Shortly afterwards she transferred her college to Dartford, where it still remains today as
a women specialist college in PE. Thus began the training of women specialist teachers of gymnastics, many years before similar facilities were available for the training of men specialist teachers.

We have already remarked how this pioneer work achieved a very considerable national dissemination, as recommended by the Cross Commission of 1886. The Education Department permitted school gymnastics from the 1890s and gave it - and the specifically Swedish version of it - further endorsement in a succession of national syllabuses, particularly in and after 1909 and extending even to the relatively non-prescriptive 1933 syllabus.

**NEWMAN, MORANT AND THE MEDICAL BOARD** We should also attend further to the important role of the Medical Board established, as we saw, by the Board of Education in 1907, with George (later Sir George) Newman as its Chief Medical Officer, and destined to be enormously influential during the period 1907-33. One of the duties assigned to it was the general organization and supervision of physical exercises in schools. The period following 1907 was one of the slow, but effective, development of a quite new outlook and policy regarding these.

A brief sketch of the contemporaneous ideological background draws on Selleck (1972) and refers to the 'practical educationists' and the 'social reformers' of the day.

*Now part of Greenwich University.*
Both military needs and industrial efficiency had been, or were, matters of concern for men like Sir John Gorst, Cyril Jackson, Dr C. Dukes, Herbert Spencer, W. P. Welpton and even Lloyd George who said: "You cannot run an A1 Empire on a C3 population!" For these 'practical educationalists', educational reform was to do with the progress of the nation and the prospects of Empire. Philip Magnus, one of the chief protagonists of technical education, articulated this view in his 1910 book *Educational Aims and Efforts (1880-1910).* "The systematic training of the muscles affords one of the more direct means for training the mind", wrote Dr W. B. Drummond of Edinburgh, who was also a hand and eye trainer. Stanley Hall condemned the fact that "the child must sit on unhygienic benches and work its tiny muscles that wag the tongue and the pen, and let all the others, which constitute nearly half its weight, decay." It seems that the major contribution of these practical educationists to the theory and practice of PE is that they sought to rectify crimes committed against the child's physique by the old instrumentary-sedentary view of education. They wanted the child to be physically 'efficient' so that the nation would be more efficient. The gradual introduction of gymnastics and free standing exercises into the curriculum seems to be the major result of their new educational ideas. Thus the (large) advances of the syllabuses of 1905 and 1909 might be attributed to them.

But PE had more than this to offer, it came to be realized. The 'social reformers' concerned themselves with the development of 'the complete child' and ultimately brought about the liberalization of PE. They would come to emphasise the aesthetic and moral significance of PE and
from the beginning they viewed PE in its broader setting of physical welfare. To encourage physical activity without relieving hunger and malnutrition would, in their view, do more harm than good. Those who belonged to the National Education Union advocated the extension of both physical training and medical inspection. H. M. Hyndman, founder of the Social Democratic Federation, asked that "instruction in the mechanism of learning should be combined with physical and industrial education". Fabians like J. W. Martin stressed the need for physical education, medical inspection and the feeding of school children in order to attain their all round development. Selleck points out that if the practical educationists had issued a firm challenge to the instrumentary tradition, the social reformers went further to require a new social order and wanted education to assist in its achievement. Their perspective and the setting up and work of the Medical Board clearly fed off each other.

The famous R. Morant was the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Education who took on the task of setting up a Medical Department to the Board of Education. He had previously shown an interest in the physical side of education. In 1906 he had written to Margaret McMillan saying:

"For myself I have for some time come to feel that for the good of the children and the people, what subjects are taught and how they are taught do not matter anything so much as attention to (a) the physical condition of the scholars and of the teachers and (b) to the psychological aspects of the school." (cited in Bernard 1934)

The work that M. McMillan had done for the physical condition of schools and the part she played in campaigning for medical inspection in schools deserve recognition at this point. She worked initially in Bradford,
pioneering, along with Dr. Kerr the Medical Officer, medical inspection, school baths and feeding for school children. Between them they made Bradford into the most progressive authority in the country as far as the health of the school child was concerned. (Mainsbridge 1932)

There may well have been a political sub-plot involved in setting up the Medical Board. At this time there was a considerable body of opinion in favour of putting physical training under the control of the War Office. The Board, however, was concerned to keep military training out of the schools. The fact that the work was physical, involving a knowledge of anatomy and physics and experience in remedial work, allowed Morant to turn to the medical profession as the only body qualified to organize it.

Morant had already taken the view that a systematic scheme of physical training was the most urgent need confronting him and had set out to solve the problem. He enlisted the help of two H.M.I's, Colonel Fox and Mr J.C. Phillips, both of whom were sent to Sweden in 1907 to look closely at the Scandinavian system. They studied the system's characteristics and the state's methods of putting the system into effect from the public elementary schools through to the universities. They also studied organized games, the construction and cost of gymnasium, and the medical inspection of children. Thus before the Medical Department came into being, Morant had made the acquaintance of a broader conception of PE as including a concern for the health of pupils in public elementary schools.
In November 1907, Newman and Morant drew up Circular 576 for issue to local authorities explaining their view both as to the principles and methods of the new venture in state policy on PE [Public Record Office: Piece ED/50/5 Circular 576 1907]. Before the Circular was issued, Morant took the precaution of obtaining the opinion and criticism of M. McMillan. In it the duties of the newly defined Medical Officer with regard to physical training were amplified:

(1) The school Medical Officer had to present a review of the methods and results of physical or breathing exercises in the schools.

(2) The School Medical Officer was to advise the local education authorities on certain matters concerning the physical condition of the school children, including physical exercises for weakly children.

Thus, the first steps had been taken in building a foundation for the introduction of a health conscious physical training into schools on an efficient and comprehensive basis. There was a central body at the Board of Education and a local organization in each local authority in the shape of a school medical officer who had the task of co-ordinating the subject in the schools and advising the local authorities on the problems which were to be encountered.

The attention of the Medical Department during the first two years of its existence seemed to focus largely on the therapeutic value of physical exercises. (It also concentrated on elementary schools in those years; from 1910 it paid more attention to secondary schools.) Thus Newman was inclined to view Swedish Drill purely from a medical
standpoint. It is to his credit, however, that he wanted to ensure that the education of the children did not suffer because they were physically unfit to profit by it. With evidence of so much ill-health and lack of vitality among school children coming from medical inspections, it is scarcely surprising that the corrective and preventative side of physical training should be stressed during these early years. Furthermore, the educational aspect of physical training had to wait its turn until teachers and authorities had become properly accustomed and trained to use the 1909 Syllabus. It might be said that this was an unambitious approach to the subject, yet it had the effect of providing a base on which to build.

Another interesting aspect of the work of the Board at this time was its use of prescription. Morant in 1908 sent out a memo on physical exercises to H.M.I.s. In it he refers them to the Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools which lays down that: "in any course the physical development of the scholar should be aimed at, and the official syllabus of physical training should be followed". Morant pointed out that instruction given in this subject "had hitherto been of a very variable character." He hoped that by the adoption of a suitable system throughout the country, all intending teachers would receive, during some period of their training, satisfactory instruction in the Board’s Syllabus of Physical Exercises. He was cautious enough to sound out the feelings of the H.M.I's with regard to the actual wording of the article requiring the adoption of the official syllabus, lest he offend the authorities. (Public Record Office: 1908 Memo from Morant to H.M.I. on Physical Exercise.) There were sound reasons for this quite strong
directive to HMI. Training in physical exercises for most teachers in elementary schools was extremely limited. Therefore instruction had to be simplified and the best way to simplify it was to make it uniform.

Newman similarly insisted that the Official Syllabus had to be used in schools. In a memo of his own on the inspection of physical exercises to the H.M.I's, Newman advised them against recommending any other Handbook than the official Syllabus. He expected the men inspectors to inspect men training colleges and the women inspectors to inspect women training colleges. As there were about 80 colleges, he expected 80 Reports. In the Memo details of methods of inspection were set out by the Chief Medical Officer. He also warned them that as physical training was one of many subjects, it must be kept in due proportion and conjunction with the other subjects in the curriculum. [Public Record Office: 1909 Memo from G. Newman to 4 H.M.I's.]

But there were underlying differences between Morant and Newman. The attitude of Newman which allowed teachers little choice in what they taught in physical training and how they taught it, though apparently supported by Morant in the particular case of PE, was the direct antithesis to the more general policy of Morant and Holmes who firmly believed in freedom for the teachers. Later this attitude was to lead to the "Holmes Circular" and the resignation of Morant after he criticized the narrowness of approach of local inspectors in comparison with the wider approach of Oxbridge men.
CAMPING From the end of the First World War, if not sooner, the Board of Education saw in camping a method of alleviating the bad effects of slums, smoky industrial areas and urbanisation which affected the health of school children. Food, sleep, amusements and the symptoms of ill-health were carefully watched when the child was in camp. For many poor children it was the only holiday that they were likely to get. The camp also provided an opportunity for social work of a high order. The teacher saw the problems that the child had to contend with at home, such as bad manners, greed, inadequate washing etc. Finally the camp brought pupils and teachers together in closer relationship and enabled them to see each other in a different light from the one of the classroom. Newman was to stress the value of camping for the "formation of character" in his reports at the end of the 1920s. It might be seen as the forerunner of the inclusion in the National Curriculum of 'adventure' activities.
CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

My professional experience had left me with the hunch that, despite being around for some hundred years, PE had problems of both theory and practice which had serious consequences for its status as a school subject and the acknowledgement of its educational value. In my fieldwork I sought to ascertain whether this perception was shared by a range of other professionals in the field, and if it was I wanted to hear their views of the causes of this situation and of the remedies needed.

SUBJECTS: My subjects were professionally involved in PE in a variety of ways: teaching, learning to teach, lecturing and providing. They worked in state schools, independent schools, colleges of teacher education and sports and leisure centres. They were heads of school departments, lecturers, teacher trainee students in their final year of B.Ed and PGCE (Primary), and leisure centre managers who provided sporting facilities for neighbouring schools.

My research took me to eight schools, two for a modest 'pilot' and six for the main study, three state and three independent schools. The three state schools in the main study were all co-educational, one in Surrey, one in the inner-city and one in an outer suburb, each having a pupil population of just under a thousand. I used two inner-city schools for the 'pilot', one mixed sex and one single sex. Of the three
independent schools, one was mixed, one was all-girl and one was all-boy; one was located in the inner-city and the other two in the suburbs; each had a pupil population of one thousand.

My research further involved the PE departments in two colleges of education. I interviewed at length one lecturer in each college with overall responsibility for the BEd teacher training programme in PE. I also interviewed eleven B.Ed teacher trainees in their final year of training. In addition a further eleven PGCE students from a third college, in West Sussex, responded to a questionnaire (Appendix A)

Finally, I extended my interviewing to two leisure centre managers.

ISSUES: The research focus of this dissertation as a whole is the status of PE as a school subject. The focus of the fieldwork is the perception of that status which is held by a range of present and future professionals, people at the very heart of PE practice. However, the more the research progressed the more this single focus expanded into three inter-related foci. I came to realize that these three issues had already been implicit in the planning of the research and they became quite explicit at an early stage in analysing the data. They were:

- my subjects' perceptions of the actual condition of PE in secondary schools;

- my subjects' perceptions of the status of PE in schools, the degree of public acknowledgement of its educational value; and
- my subjects' view of the real educational value and potential of PE, their normative conceptions of PE.

In addition I had a number of subsidiary questions, anticipating concerns which I expected my subjects to have and to associate with the general question of the status of PE. These were:

- the extent to which PE reflected class differences, or responded to the ideal of class equality;
- the extent to which the subject had come to terms with gender differences;
- the degree of the success of PE in getting pupils committed to a fit and healthy lifestyle; and
- the appropriateness and adequacy of teacher education in PE.

In the event, one of these, the first one mentioned, turned out not to be a significant concern of my subjects, and faded from the research. By way of compensation, as it were, they came up with an additional concern which I had not quite anticipated:

- the role of examinations in PE and the more general issue of the relationship of PE to the academic.

Of course my intention was not to pursue these subsidiary questions in depth and for their own sake. I pursued them, rather, for their bearing on the main question of status.

I shall now discuss in turn the type of research chosen, the research methods employed, the 'pilot' study, the main study, the analysis of the data, and the difficulties encountered.
TYPE OF RESEARCH: I chose to work within the qualitative research paradigm. As I have indicated above, the enquiry was to centre around a group of professionals occupying different institutional positions in the practice - and to a lesser extent the theory - of PE. Myra Atkins captures exactly both the type and the motive of my research:

"Increasingly, practitioners are turning to small-scale research projects in an attempt to improve their understanding of the professional processes by collecting data on the experiences, problems, expectations, beliefs and values of those with whom they deal." (Atkins 1984)

A qualitative approach promised most for such a venture. It would produce data of a kind that would lend itself to issue emergence and issue discussion. The key is its open and flexible nature.

Thus, first, it can throw up - not only in the pilot but at later stages in the research - new ideas for exploration, and it can then accommodate these into the later stages of the research.

In qualitative research the researcher is constantly attentive to options which are circumstantially presented to him or which are created by him."

In my fieldwork, for example, a chance remark from a college lecturer intimated that there was "a wide gap between what goes on here (college) and what goes on in schools". I was able simply to add questions which sought to probe this gap to my subsequent interviews and this yielded useful data on the relationship between schools and colleges. A more quantitative paradigm centred around notions of representative samples of total populations would not have permitted such an afterthought.
Secondly, a qualitative paradigm is more open to the novel and unexpected idea.

"Like the nets of deep-sea explorers, qualitative studies may pick up unexpected and striking things for us to gaze on." (Barton and Lazarsfield 1969)

We have already referred to the emergence, unanticipated by the researcher, of the examination issue. Another example related to the limited industrial action being undertaken by teachers at the time. This involved bringing to a standstill many of the usual extra-curricular activities in school PE. One of my teacher-interviewees was the first to draw to my attention the view that teachers freed from the obligation to organize competitive games might be better able to focus on their PE lessons. She held that both children and teachers were gaining from this shift in emphasis. A research programme that was closely tied to preformulated hypotheses would not have turned up something so unexpected to the researcher.

Thirdly, a qualitative paradigm is better suited to remind the researcher of things he already knows but whose relevance to his research he was inclined to overlook. For example, I had perhaps been neglecting a duty indicated by Simons:

The power relationships between people must be fully described since these will affect how people construe their world" (Simons 1976)

But my teacher interviewees were able to bring home to me the importance of headteacher attitude and of the general goals and ethos of the school for the development of PE in the school. Thus, a head of department in an independent school described how his Head approached him on the question of PE examinations by saying "You don't want examinations in PE, do you?" The 'consultation' was over before it began.
A final advantage of the qualitative approach is that it tends to engage the research subjects at a deeper professional level.

Those people who are studied should feel afterwards that they have been enhanced, rather than diminished, by participation in the enquiry; they should not be left feeling that they had been ignored." (Jamieson and Pockington 1977)

Thus my final year teacher trainees welcomed the opportunity to be interviewed, despite heavy workloads connected with their looming final examinations. They spoke of their job searches and applications and the interviews involved in them, and felt that the research interview was of help in this exercise.

RESEARCH METHODS: I employed interviews, principally, questionnaires (of two kinds), and, minimally, document analysis to gather data for the study. The fieldwork was conducted over a period of approximately six months at the end of 1988 and the beginning of 1989.

Interviews

I interviewed all my subjects on a one to one basis. In all I interviewed 21 colleagues from the world of PE, excluding the two pilot school interviews and my preliminary visits to the colleges and leisure centres. Interviews lasted anything from 45 to 90 minutes per subject. I was guided by a series of flexible interview agendas (appendix C). I made use of a tape-recorder, having first obtained permission, to record the interviews, and a note-pad. Afterwards I transcribed the interviews word for word (examples in Appendix D).
The interviews followed the 'fixed focus' model (Merton and Kendall, 1976) which combines a flexibility of approach with a fixed determination of the central topic or topics of the interview. I consciously attempted to satisfy the proposed criteria of this model of interviewing.

First, the persons interviewed are chosen for their 'involvement' in the situation being researched. As already indicated all my subjects were professionally involved in the field of PE. I did not interview, for example, headteachers who exercise their considerable influence on school PE from a position somewhat outside the field.

Second: "The significant elements, patterns, processes and total structure of the situation have been provisionally analysed by the researcher." (ibid.) This researcher had a background as a PE teacher, Head of PE in a secondary school, and as deputy-Head with, as part of his management role, overall responsibility for the Faculty of PE and Arts. That background is his basic license for formulating an interview agenda and adapting it to the peculiarities of particular subjects and institutions. In addition he prepared the way for all interviews by sending in advance introductory questionnaires (see next sub-section) and digesting the information returned, and, additionally in the case of the colleges and leisure centres, by preliminary visits.

Third, "the interviews are based on their subjective experiences in an effort to obtain their definitions of the situations" (ibid). Subjects spoke at length, sometimes spectacular length, about their experiences
of PE and of the changing face of PE — comparing and contrasting
different phases in that experience, their school days and college days,
teaching and lecturing, college and school practice, earlier and later
periods in their teaching or lecturing. Getting at their subjective
experience in most cases proved not to be too difficult.

Fourth, "in interviews the aim is to secure what is within the minds of
the interviewees" (ibid). On the assumption that strength of feeling is
a reasonable index of what is 'within the mind' of the interviewee, this
criterion was successfully met at least some of the time. For example,
a long-term lecturer was eloquently critical of the manner in which
educational gymnastics was first introduced and an independent school
H.O.D. expressed himself strongly on why his school chose rugby over
soccer.

Finally, my interviews were 'non-directional' in the sense that I
preferred general questions (e.g. how does your PE programme contribute
to the ethos of your school?) with a view to opening up discussions. My
approach was semi-structured, seeking to allow my respondents the
freedom to dwell in the past and present and in some cases predict
future trends in a ruminative way.

Questionnaire

Two kinds of questionnaire were used. One was the 'introductory'
questionnaire, sent to the schools, colleges and leisure centre in
advance of the interviews and to augment the information needed for the
interview: on the size of the school or institution, number of PE staff,
nature of facilities, curriculum programmes etc. Its purposes were to help me prepare for the interview, to save time at the interview, and to break the ice between me and the interviewee. (See Appendix B)

The other kind was a one-off questionnaire sent to eleven students at a college of education not on my original list and at which I conducted no interviews. This questionnaire was intended as a substitute for interviews, like them consisted of fairly general and ruminative questions, and was, in effect, a light adaptation of my normal interview agenda (Appendix A). It was a matter of seizing an opportunity of adding to my data base by exploiting the visit of these eleven students to my school. I got their agreement to post them the questionnaire and in due course they all faithfully responded. As primary PGCE students, non-specialist but each with a future responsibility for class PE, they added an extra dimension to the data which turned out to be of interest at some points in the analysis.

Documents
My use of documents was minimal. I did not seek them out actively but had some pressed on me at the time of interviews, which I then took some account of. I considered that the documents available at that time would not yield significantly more information than was already in my possession. Were I, however, to conduct a similar study in 1993, documents could be a much more useful research tool. As part of their greater accountability to parents, pupils, inspectors and others, schools now produce a much greater volume of documented information about themselves.
THE 'PILOT' STUDY: As already indicated, this was a matter of interviewing two heads of PE in two state schools before embarking on the main interview schedule. I have been referring to it in inverted commas to indicate that it was a low-key exercise and, indeed, perhaps not a 'pilot' in the strict sense of the quantitative paradigm. Its purpose was not, for example, to test my questions for ambiguity, since in my open-ended and semi-structured interviews ambiguity was something I could hope to deal with at the time. Its purposes were rather twofold. The first was to test out and to clarify my sense of what the leading questions relating to the status of PE were, and in fact these pilot interviews did suggest some modifications and additions to my interview agenda. The second - very important to me because I was a novice at interviewing - was to get some initial experience before doing it 'for real', to try myself out at some of the techniques I'd read about, to get over beginner's nerves, and to get some sense of a proper pace and rhythm. Thus one of the things that emerged for me from these 'pilot' interviews, and from subsequent discussion of them with my supervisor of that time, was that it was important to be ready to move interviews on fairly firmly to the next question.

THE MAIN STUDY: I insert here brief comments on each of the main groups of interviewees.

The final year teacher trainee students (B.Ed) came across as a spirited and confident lot, indeed as 'raring to go' in their approaching teaching careers. They realized the difference between teaching
practice and the real thing, but still were confident about their teaching skills and capacity to cope. They spoke authoritatively about the importance of PE, agonized over its marginal status in schools, had ideas on enhancing its status, and expressed determination to work for change.

The **PGCE primary students** stressed the importance of PE in early schooling, thought PE was underplayed on their current course, but felt unable to have that changed.

The two **lecturers** showed a marked concern for their students' training and preparation, both on the front of teaching them the knowledge and skill base in PE (the what) and on the front of preparing them for teaching it to school pupils in their turn (the how). They spoke easily and glowingly of the importance of PE. They tended to be critical of what they took to be average school practice, while being aware that colleges were themselves vulnerable to criticism from schools. They reserved their comments about the then impending National Curriculum, saying it was early days yet.

The two **leisure centre managers** were also committed PE people. They were proud of their facilities including the excellent coaching by instructors at their centres. They doubted whether the schools who used their centres utilized these facilities in a consistently effective way and felt that the adult population of the borough made greater and better use of them. They were in fact quite critical of schools.
The teachers tended to talk about PE very much in terms of their specific school situations. They had clear ideas on how their programmes related to and were influenced by the philosophy and ethos of the school. In comparison with other interviewees, they seemed more fraught and careworn, preoccupied with problems and the search for solutions, both the day to day difficulties and a sense of a deeper and more structural 'marginality'. This was much more true of the teachers in the state schools, though the independent school teachers also worried about, for example, diminishing voluntary support from their non-PE colleagues in regard to extra-curricular activities. More generally, there was a sense of different agendas in the two kinds of school. For example, the state school teachers, but not the independent school teachers, worried about the effects of 'LMS', and speculated about the effects of the then forthcoming National Curriculum, on the status of PE.

ANALYSIS: Having transcribed the interviews I initially followed a strategy of classifying data by reference to the different groups of interviewees and their different positions in the PE world. I analysed the data question by question (though, of course, the interview questions had been broad and the responses overlapped with each other) for each constituency. I looked for consensus on particular issues, first within, and then across, constituencies. For example, both the lecturers expressed concern about the 'taster' approach to games teaching in schools and its effect on the reputation of PE, and I scanned the responses of other groups for echoes of this criticism. At
the same time I was careful not to overlook or play down the highly individual or maverick point of view in this exercise.

That was my initial strategy. However, the more I became immersed in the analysis and sought to write it up the more another strategy suggested itself and at roughly mid-point in the process I switched to it. As already indicated, this was to analyse data not according to source but according to three main emergent themes, perceptions of the condition of school PE, perceptions of the status of school PE, and perceptions of the educational value of PE. This switch of strategy was quite difficult at the time. I regularly got confused between the three categories and was often uncertain about where to place particular data and issues. However, the distinctions did eventually come to seem quite plain and this basis of analysis was ultimately very satisfying.

DIFFICULTIES: In other respects too the work was not all plain sailing. I will conclude with a brief account of some of the difficulties I experienced. I begin with the less serious and work up to the more serious.

There were technical and circumstantial difficulties. Batteries might have to be replaced in the tape recorder in mid-interview, affecting the flow of discussion. Once, workmen arrived at the college and began drilling in the room next to the interview room. We got by by shouting at each other.
It took some experience to judge how long to allow for an interview. My initial ambition of three student interviews per session was over optimistic. More than for my other interviewees their time was spoken for, discussions with them sometimes had to be curtailed, and there was an anxiety lest important questions would have to be omitted. In fact, under this kind of pressure I sometimes had to be content with short answers from students.

In the process of being reflexive about the practice of PE - which was what I wanted - all my respondents were encouraged to indulge in periods of reminiscence. Managing these periods proved, as may be imagined, quite a difficult task - and occasionally beyond me.

Transcribing the interviews had its own set of problems. Particular words might be difficult or impossible to identify. More important, sentences which might have seemed fine and intelligible at the time, and even on the tape, turned out incomplete or misformed when put on paper - thus sentences sometimes seemed to begin to say one thing but to finish by saying something very different.

Most important was coming to terms with the requirement of 'neutrality'. In the interviews I would ask a question and realize that the answer was either something I totally opposed or totally agreed with. Not intervening to present my own view on these occasions was difficult, and in early interviews I did sometimes get drawn into the argument with interviewees. I also came to understand that such engagements of the interviewer can have subtle as well as overt forms. Thus, interviewees
tend to perform better when there are little nods of interest and appreciation from the interviewer, but such nods can easily be misinterpreted as agreement (and their absence as disagreement) and lead the discussion astray.

Finally, I had a parallel difficulty in analysing and writing up the research. I had to learn, and I found this quite hard, to let my interviewees 'speak' without interruption or judgement from me, to sit on the fence provisionally, and to hold back from developing my own views on the issues until a later chapter.
CHAPTER 3  THE CONDITION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION  

as seen by my subjects

This section is about the personal experiences in PE of student trainee teachers, teachers of PE and lecturers in PE, experiences which prompt them to make strong claims about its theory and practice. Thus it is about the real difficulties that they as practitioners face in schools, colleges and leisure centres in the teaching of PE and games. They all also studied PE for every year of their schooling lives, before going on to teach the subject in schools and/or to lecture in it at teacher training colleges. Both their experience as teachers and their experience as students, we shall see, ranged from ones of affection to ones of disappointment, indeed from despair to hope.

What I aspire to do is to convey through analysis of the interview-data a sense of their mixed feelings about the state of PE in schools. I had already, in my interviews of these faculty heads at teacher training colleges, teacher trainees in their final years of training, teachers at secondary schools and leisure centre managers, been engaging with their views of the rationale behind theory and practice in PE in schools, their perceptions of its shortcomings and of possible solutions to its problems. At the time, these interviews left me with a general sense of some very strongly felt criticisms about the way PE was developing or, indeed, its apparent lack of direction. Returning to my notes and transcripts I find that dissatisfaction is still immediately evident in them.
Thus, one college lecturer was highly critical of the theory and practice of PE as he saw it in his day to day work:

"To say that the subject is in a state of confusion is almost an understatement. Recent evidence on health related fitness, concerns over elitism and extra-mural activity, reduction in timetabled hours, the arrival of GCSE, CPVE etc, the development of tertiary colleges, the demise of gymnastics, all contribute to a host of influences indicating a need for radical rethinking" 

His diagnosis of uncertainty is confirmed, if in more optimistic tones, by a teacher and by another college lecturer, each summing up their view of the present state of PE:

"In many cases one of reflection and unrest ... a good thing ... questioning practices which have until recently been set in stone" 
"The subject is in a state of flux certainly and I think people have not quite sorted out what they are trying to do. The introduction of exams is very good but it puts such a lot of pressure on the time table; really I don't think things are sorted out in everybody's minds ... they are not sure what they want"

Indications of disarray are also echoed in this remark:

"So it seems to me that there are several fronts on which we are not quite sure where we are going at the moment. And I am not sure that we have not been in a state of uncertainty for quite some time"

In what follows we shall be considering these "fronts" one by one.

FITNESS AND BASIC SKILLS

Why the uncertainty? A change of direction for PE from fitness and health to "a child centred approach" had brought some problems with it,
according to some interviewees. From being before the war the major single aim, fitness and health became progressively a "by-product of what we do". According to one lecturer this is reflected in our lessons today:

"The real character of a lot of work that we have done over a period of time became very skill based, very esoteric, and if you examined the actual teaching of PE, the lessons that boys and girls undertake, the actual amount of hard, rigorous activity that they take part in the time-tabled part of PE is very limited. Notions of strength, even ability with the demise of gymnastics, almost disappeared."

This lecturer picks up the contemporary association of health-related problems with a lack of vigorous exercising:

"Well, new evidence we are getting from all the people who have been looking at the health-related fitness scene in an entirely new light is that they are saying that some of the health-related problems as a result of exercise start in the early teens; the roots are there ... unless young people establish good exercise habits and practice during those years, they suffer as adults"

If "the actual amount of hard, rigorous activity that they take part in the time-tabled part of PE is very limited" then schools may be failing their students.

This point is put by another college lecturer in the context of a broader critique of PE in schools:

"My personal theory is that if you take children from the ages of 5 to 11 and show that PE is nothing more than a nuisance, pick them up at 11 in secondary schools, start teaching them basic ball skills and educational gymnastics which should have been covered from about the age of 7 and then offer them a hotch potch of
activities; give them no work on fitness, just the activities, and ask them at 14 to choose between options like ice skating, roller skating and a whole range of things ... then they come out of school with the most fragmented idea of what exercising is all about".

For both these lecturers then, the apparent neglect of real fitness in school PE programmes is a cause for great concern. Furthermore, this neglect has had a direct bearing on the fitness and the perspective of incoming students in teacher training colleges:

"Nobody in school PE at the moment is really interested in health and fitness; in fact they are not only not interested but they doubt the value of fitness or don't see the value of making kids puff and pant and stretch. In other words putting effort into things"

When pressed for evidence of this neglect:

"It is noticeable here, particularly with our women students ... in the students who come in at 18/19 years old, are committed to PE, committed to the notion of PE. You take them out and ask them to run around a field, a good proportion would find difficulty in completing more than 2 laps, without having to stop, look tired and exhausted. They have never been exposed to sustained exercise over a period of time and that does not exist in our PE programmes at the moment. All the evidence is that it needs to be done now from two points of view: the actual physical good that it is doing the participant over the time and establishing habits and knowledge of how to keep fit"

Looking back on his own teaching career this lecturer had this to say about the importance he attributes to fitness and health:

"I mean if I go back to my own teaching career back in the 50's at the start of every lesson ... whatever it was ... apart from games, every athletics lesson, even in gymnastics, I expected the
boys in the class to run between half a mile and a mile every single lesson. The effect that had on abilities to do just that was very marked ... I mean to ask a large number of modern kids to do that now ... they just won't be able to"

But it isn't only fitness levels that are disappointing in present entrants to PE in teacher training colleges, according to this lecturer:

"One would hope that the quality of students that you have on entry to courses in PE indicates that they already have well established performance skills in the key areas"

What is the basis for this expectation?

"If you go back 15 or 20 years you would expect any female student of PE to come to you being a knowledgeable performer in hockey and netball. It would be unthinkable for them not to be. So in teaching those games you started at a high base"

How different is that from today's entry?

"Now, now you rarely get a female student who is good at hockey and netball. Frequently they will be good at one and have done nothing in the other or, if they have, not since the second year at school because they have opted out of it ... Now you can go on extending that into all sorts of areas. You get students of both sexes coming to you as virtual beginners in athletics, who have done a bit in the first two years at school, but not again. Now that would be unthinkable 20 years ago. One could go on and on. Take gymnastics ... you are virtually starting from scratch with every single one, boys and girls together"

What is the implication for teacher training?

"Go back 20 years and you, would expect a male student to come to you with good athletics, good gymnastics, good soccer, good cricket, good running ... five of the fundamentals and perhaps they can swim reasonably well. A limited diet admittedly but with some depth in the key areas. A similar situation with women
students who have good gymnastics, good dance, good hockey and netball, not too much athletics, but certainly some swimming. You don't get that anymore; so that there are too many of the key areas in which we are trying to teach students not only how to teach but actually how to perform".

How do colleges cope?

"What we try to do is to produce a more thinking teacher who is aware of the problems they face, has a greater notion of what PE ought to be and where it has gone, so he is more capable of self development".

GYMNASTICS

Viewed with equal concern by some interviewees is the whole area of gymnastics and the teaching of gymnastics. Educational gymnastics came to the fore with the "child centred movement approach" soon after the war. Why, and how, it replaced formal gymnastics and the level of dissatisfaction with its outcome is shown in one lecturer's response:

"It is typical of a new wave of ideas, that people who take them on board are missionaries and I think this happened with Dance and Educational Gymnastics. They were missionaries and said 'This is the way and everything else is wrong and bad.' They went as far as saying that you must not call a cartwheel a cartwheel. It must be called transference of weight from one hand to one foot and so on ... which always seemed a nonsense to me".

So it was long winded as well as over-hyped in theory. And in practice it may not live up to its promise:

"The notion of educational gymnastics where you do a lot of sitting around and thinking about what you are doing rather than being active ... as a theory you cannot knock it, but in practice
In keeping with the philosophy of the child centred movement, educational gymnastics was seen as an approach to gymnastics which catered for all children, irrespective of gymnastic ability, giving every child an opportunity to explore movement at his/her own level and pace. Now in what way is it thought to be coming up short of this goal? The same college lecturer offers his impressions:

"If I see educational gymnastics at all, it is only in the first and second years. It stops there. And what I see is a constant repetition of low level introductory work with no quality ... the sort of work that ought to be done in the third year of junior school. And there is no development whatever. I don't think there is anything wrong with the system as such. What I feel is that it is an extremely difficult means of teaching gymnastics."

Serious criticism of educational gymnastics indeed! If it is fostering low level introductory work, without any development, then formal gymnastics has been sacrificed for very little! When pressed for a possible solution to the teaching of gymnastics the lecturer offered this suggestion:

"If we are going to succeed at all there has to be a much healthier amalgam of the skill orientated approach and the educational gymnastics approach. And we are not there yet"

A very plausible way forward. Why is it that we are not there yet? Some blame must be attributed to the teaching profession according to one lecturer:

"And to some extent this is an indictment of the profession, that they back away from the difficult. They are not taking on board how difficult it is to understand, to plot, to maintain progress
in this particular field."

To add to the problem "people are being fed the notion that teaching formal skills is wrong, is too restrictive". This is substantiated by the other, equally critical, lecturer:

"I think that the profession is at fault, I have to admit, in presenting PE as something which is just forcing children to go and play games - or rather not play."

At another level progress is said to be hampered by a lack of communication between colleges of education and schools:

"I would still get students who in their first teaching practice would be told 'Oh forget everything you have learnt in College. This is what really happens.'"

Such attitudes can only reduce the impact of colleges on new members of the profession. And, though the issue is usually presented as a conflict of theory and practice, it may be that it is the development and reform of practice itself that is endangered.

GAMES

The teaching of games, both competitive and non-competitive, came in for a fair amount of discussion in my interviews. PE programmes for years on end catered for and devoted a good amount of curriculum time to the coaching and playing of games. There was a feeling among some people in the profession that a total domination of games in the school programme was far from ideal. This led to a move towards making games non-competitive - less emphasis on winning and greater stress on co-
operation and understanding. Both these qualities became the key requirements in the teaching of games. There was no nationwide consensus on this new departure, however, and it led to a state of confusion. Local authorities were divided on which approach to adopt on the teaching of games in schools. Some authorities withdrew their support altogether for the pursuit of competitive games in schools, and others continued as before.

My interviewees in colleges, leisure centres and schools reacted strongly against this new approach to games:

"The move in some local authorities to ban competitive games on ideological grounds is causing great concern and is likely to damage the progress of health related fitness"

A leisure centre manager was dismayed at the response he received when trying to organise a competition at county level:

"I can remember a year ago, I think a year ago, when some London boroughs were saying that they did not have any team sports. I find that absolutely horrifying, I do not agree with that at all"

In a lot of responses there was a feeling that schools should re-engage children in inter-school competitions. The interviewees speak longingly of the past when there was a fair amount of competition among children in sports. It was accepted that industrial action by teachers put paid to a lot of after-school activities. (This fieldwork was carried out during the industrial action of the late 1980s.) However, unless there was a return to competitive games "a lot of youngsters are not going to reach their potential"
On the other hand, a rather different observation was made by one PE teacher about the effects of the industrial action:

"But I think the strike ... brought home quite what the commitment was and there was a feeling among people I know that suddenly they found they were teaching their lessons properly without having to worry about teams all the time and they started to question whether the amount of time involved in organising school teams is fair to pupils during the rest of the day"

Schools in the Independent sector were untouched by all this furor. They continued to teach games and continued to hold inter-school competitions, as one teacher pointed out:

"Well I think we lead quite a sheltered existence in the Independent sector. From what I gather many state schools are struggling to sustain their fixtures"

Prior to comprehensive schools, grammar and secondary modern schools operated a PE programme that offered a few major games, swimming and athletics. But in the seventies and eighties with the coming of comprehensive schools, PE departments found themselves better endowed with staff, facilities and resources. It might be said they could do little else but extend the programme to include a whole range of physical activities. This resulted in an approach sometimes referred to as "universal participation", where a great many sports were on offer to everyone but to a more superficial level. One lecturer commented:

"You go on endlessly offering taster courses in games and sports ... in order that children will find something in which they will succeed and develop. Now my own personal view is that in secondary schools the six week block is a disaster in terms of developing any true understanding or sense of achievement in
It would appear that it was "trendy to engage in many sports". I pressed the lecturer to suggest a solution:

"If one could see that a school was structured in a way in which it was very clear that we had an introduction to a number of different things in years 1 and 2 and then an opportunity for some degree of specialism in years 3 and 4, where a real involvement in depth could take place, one might appreciate this. But it seems to be very hit and miss whether in fact that might happen".

Dissatisfaction with the amount of time spent on the teaching of individual games and with the outcomes was expressed by several of my interviewees. "Universal participation" means that, in a school year, short periods of teaching time are devoted to each game with the object of picking up the same game in the following year. This approach was thought to give little chance for establishing an understanding of the game, and for the acquiring of important skills relating to it. A lecturer expressed a dismay that many seemed to share:

"A boy or girl has a 6 week block of basketball in year one, they have another 6 week block in year 2 by which time they have virtually forgotten everything they have learnt in the first year. So what they have to do is to do it all over again. Now that seems to be ludicrous - instead of saying let's give it 12 weeks or a full term block where you really have a chance of developing some depth of understanding in skill and movement. It would give kids a chance, and opportunity, to find out if they really do like it. It is far more economical ... instead of revisiting the games in the second year."

The lecturer saw as the two outcomes of the present widespread practice that there is:
* a general low level wish-wash, tasting this and tasting that
* not sufficient seriousness about pushing these kids as hard as we can to improve their abilities.

The other lecturer voices the same concern:

"However, we are asking them to do too many sports ... they are heading more for universal participation ... everything is done to a superficial level within each sport"

An associated area of concern is the teaching of games in the upper school. A main object of this would be to establish good habits for later adult leisure. Though most people would agree with this aim, a survey had shown that only "one in five school leavers returned to some sport on leaving school" (Kane 1987). Quoting this finding to the interviewees elicited a range of comments on the role of upper school in relation to games. If the aim is to establish good habits for the pursuit of an active leisure life style, it would appear that one would have to teach games to a good standard, create a liking for and help students to make links with local clubs. Does this really happen in schools? This question provoked the following bursts of speculation from my interviewees:

* "I wonder whether an undue emphasis on major games has alienated many for the sake of the few." (Independent School)

* "I wonder whether links between schools and clubs need to be developed so that it becomes a natural progression."

* "Perhaps we are turning our students into spectators rather than participants."

The last of the worries was the most widely shared among the interviewees.
Oddly enough, it is possible that both the earlier phase of "undue emphasis on major games" — which still persists in many independent schools — and the later phase of so-called "universal participation" — tend towards this end of creating spectators rather than participants. Is this the reason why so many adults admit to either a liking or dislike for games based on their experience in the early years of secondary schooling? How often does one hear the expression: "he is a gamesy person" in conversation, implying that such people are a particular, perhaps slightly eccentric, minority.

LEISURE

This kind of concern prompted a lecturer to say:

"Schools should take a very positive view of the development of leisure skills and attitudes. Current leisure habits are far too sedentary in children of secondary age with too high a dependance on 'provided rather than participant' leisure"

There is ample evidence in the way of surveys to substantiate the above fear. The most recent survey is summarized thus:

"The recent Allied Dunbar National Fitness Survey (June 1992) indicated that adults in England do not participate in appropriate exercise frequently enough to confer a health benefit. Even among 16 to 24 year olds, 70% of men and 91% of women fall below activity levels (relative to age) thought to be necessary to achieve a health benefit"
This would have serious implications for PE and for PE teachers. How do school PE departments, leisure centre managers and teacher trainees view the role of PE in leisure education?

It would be a truism to say that heads of PE departments have enshrined in their aims for PE clear statements for leisure and leisure activities. Almost all of them expressed the hope that children passing through their hands would engage in some form of physical activity on leaving school.

"Yes, that will be my aim that they will want to continue some kind of physical activity outside school and have the knowledge and skills to do that and how to keep fit and how to maintain that fitness throughout their lives" (Head of PE Girls Independent School)

"I think what we would see as our main role is to involve as many boys as possible in as many different types of activities as possible and I think our main criterion for success is the extent to which they continue with those activities when they leave school" (Head of PE Boys Independent School)

"I suppose two things. One is that they will have a sport in a broader sense that they could follow as a leisure time activity. Secondly, I think, this has really come recently with us ... I would like them to be aware of the importance of doing some exercise as part of growing up" (Head of PE Mixed Comprehensive School)

These sentiments are echoed by student teachers on their visits to schools:

"If I am a PE teacher in a school I have a responsibility to those children to make sure they appreciate the opportunities that sport or recreation or leisure might have for them ... on leaving
"It is not merely enough to make young people aware of the facilities available locally; young people must be introduced to local sports clubs and schools should have strong ties with clubs."

Another trainee student, a keen rugby player, thought that this latter did not generally happen:

"I think that in a lot of schools you don't hear about local rugby facilities."

An inner city school faced with a shortage of ground space was forced to adapt its PE programme to indoor facilities, using the local sports halls, sports centre and the swimming pool. The Head of PE found that

"the better able kids were not being taken to any great level here in the school and there are good community agencies around here who run various teams and we encouraged all our kids to do it."

Some of the teachers I interviewed indicated that they had made their own arrangements to join local clubs when they were senior pupils in school. Their views on whether they were encouraged in this by their schools are mixed, but on the whole positive:

"Not particularly, no. I mean I was not discouraged in any way, but (I mean) I think it was first of all my idea and then encouragement if you like."

"Oh sure. That is why I went to a PE College because I enjoyed my sports so much at school and was encouraged very much at school and that is what I wanted to do."

"We had no real links with outdoor clubs or outside school clubs as such."

"The PE staff were very supportive, they pushed it quite hard."
"The PE staff encouraged me and so did my parents in what I was going to do"

Student teachers also looked back on their own experience of participation in clubs during school days. In a good number of cases this was more significant for them than what their schools offered. It was noticeable that they made less reference to being encouraged in this by their schools.

"Personally I would say introduce them to clubs whilst they are actually at school. I was introduced to a hockey club while I was at school and I have carried that on. I wasn't actually introduced to it by staff but by one of the other pupils"

Another had a similar experience:

"From my experience at college, yes, but not my school experience. I mean I only really got interested in sports from outside school, not from within school. I joined an athletic club from the age of 10 and I competed until I was 19. That is how I got interested in it and that is why I started to teach just to get interested on that side and nothing to do with schools"

Much has been said about introducing youngsters to clubs, sports centres and sports halls at an early age for an extension of the school PE programme. In London most schools tend to use their sports centre during curriculum time. But do they really benefit from the excellent facilities and coaching that are on offer? In the two leisure centres where I conducted my fieldwork the feeling was that the best possible use of the centre was not made by children. A number of explanations were offered. Children attending leisure centres were in some cases reluctant participants:
"A lot of children who come here basically, I think, don't really want to be here, they would rather be elsewhere ... and you get a lot of messing around which is a bit frustrating seeing that some of the coaching is very good coaching" 

Teachers accompanying the students to leisure centres were not qualified PE teachers and hence did not get involved in the sessions.

"But you don't necessarily see the PE teacher going round each of the lessons to see what's going on and see how the kids are improving, you know. They sit on seats and do a bit of marking and have a cup of tea somewhere and come back when the lesson is over"

In cases where there were PE specialists present and when they did get involved in lessons it was remarked that the children appeared to be well motivated and to have benefited from the experience.

Two other factors emerged. First, pupil attendance at these centres varied enormously. Thus the attendance in one centre was very high, perhaps more to do with the fact that "not many schools in the Harrow area have their own facilities on site". Secondly, these exceptional children who attended as club members and who were involved in competitions seemed better motivated and usually performed better.

Can schools do more to encourage youngsters to make better use of the facilities and coaching on offer? I put this question to the leisure centre managers. "There's obviously something wrong with the school" was a recurring criticism. Booking arrangements for leisure centre usage were made well in advance. Anxious PE teachers tended to overbook places and in a number of cases children failed to take up their allotted
"... they book 20 places at the beginning of the year and they can only turn up with 10 students"

"I really don't know what is happening in the schools if they can't get 20 kids to come on a bus to participate"

It did cross this manager's mind that perhaps schools could be offering a better standard of coaching in their own departments but he was convinced that this was not the case. He felt that the youngsters in areas outside London made better use of their leisure centres:

"Coming from outside London, out in the sticks, it is a different set-up. There is no problem in encouraging people to participate in any number of sports"

It is possible that with a reduced allocation for time in the National Curriculum leisure activities would be the first to go by the board.

"With cutbacks in PE time in the upper school a noticeable drop in fitness levels would result"

According to one head of department:

"I mean half of them would walk little or do nothing; they are not actually participating in anything. You can often notice that, the difference between the end of the third year when they had two lessons a week for three years and when they go into the fourth year and only 1 lesson a week. It is possible to choose things (activities) which don't matter much, you definitely notice the fitness levels beginning to drop"

The "things which don't matter much" presumably refers to those less demanding pursuits which were offered in the option systems in the upper school at the time.
These are the feelings of people who are deeply committed to the cause of PE. What they say may seem to be a sad commentary on the state of PE, but we should note, also, their desire to improve the quality of PE.
CHAPTER 4 THE STATUS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION
as seen by my subjects

How important is PE perceived to be in schools - by PE teachers themselves, by other teachers, by pupils, by parents etc?

Is it important enough to warrant a place in the curriculum for all, or nearly all, ages?

Is it important enough to be recognised in terms of human resources and physical resources?

The answers to these questions would appear to define one aspect of the subject - its status. The status of PE relates, of course, to its actual condition, affecting it and being affected by it. So in my subject's responses the two are often naturally intertwined. Nevertheless, other things besides condition determine the status and other things besides status determine the condition of PE. Thus we may hope for some additional insight by screening my subjects' responses for their perceptions of the status of PE.

In the course of my investigations I observed that whenever I raised the question of the status of PE within the school curriculum, there was an uneasy silence before an answer was given. Did they wish to tell it as it is or did they wish to offer a rationalisation of why it is what it is? Was this uneasiness linked to the public criticism then
being directed at the subject in schools? (One lecturer, however, welcomed the intrusion of the press and hoped that the profession would seize such an opportunity to stop, review, and institute changes. This would only help to enhance the status of PE, in his view.)

How are subjects accorded status within the school curriculum? It would seem status is gained through a combination of historic reasons, strong parental support and head teacher support. There is also an element of continuous competition between subject disciplines as to what is important for a youngster in his/her school life and as to how that importance should be reflected in the school curriculum. This results in some uneveness in the sharing of school resources in human terms, physical terms, and curriculum time. PE appears to be in the thick of this battle, often not coming off well in it, often having to make sacrifices to gain a modicum of recognition.

It would appear from my interviewees that while people who are directly involved with the theory and practice of PE, be it at the level of teacher training college, secondary school, primary school or sport and leisure centre, are almost all totally convinced of the value and importance of PE in the lives of young people, there are a good number of other influential people who have yet to be convinced that it is important enough to warrant a full place in the school curriculum on a par with other subjects.

First, we may mention the pupils themselves, and the problems of their non-attendance and non-participation. PE may receive its fair share of
curriculum time but it does not follow that pupils will give it a fair proportion of their attention. Those that do not participate in lessons tend to produce notes of excuse, some genuine, others not. But in lesson after lesson a small hard core of pupils will be reluctant to show any intention to participate. In general, reluctance is more visible in PE than in other subjects - not bringing the proper kit, producing notes of excuse and even "bunking off" (Hargreaves, D. 198).

Thus there is a sizeable number of young people at the receiving end of PE who do not have the same view of its importance as the PE establishment. For various reasons, but perhaps in particular the two reasons of teenage embarrassment relating to body image and poor games performance, they have shied away from it:

"I mean there still is an emphasis on team games you know, and it is so easy to look a duffer in sport. You are there visibly to be seen if you are overweight, and if you are no good you can't hide like maybe you can in a classroom"

The difficulty can be accentuated in a mixed class:

"A student the other day was taking a mixed athletics lesson and he had a warm up game which required going under people's legs which was great if you were a boy and wearing shorts; not terribly easy for a girl forced to wearing a short skirt with fourth year boys shouting 'show me your knickers'"

This state of affairs prompted one student trainee to ask:

"Is it worthwhile spending money and time on children who have no interest in PE?"

Most of my subjects thought that non-participation had not been a major problem in their schooling days, but that over the years it has come to
be a sizeable problem. How do we prepare our student trainee teachers on leaving their colleges to cope with children who refuse to participate in PE? What kind of department policy or school policy would be adequate to the problem? Has it any connection with the finding that:

"only 1 in every 5 pupils will return to some form of physical activities on leaving school"? (Kane, J. 198)

One coping strategy that was mentioned:

"... the world is full of fourth team club players and that way what we try and do is to say 'well, look, okay you are not a great sportsman but here are four things you might enjoy and hopefully you might find something you do enjoy"

Early experience may well set the seal for any form of involvement in PE in later life. That considerable numbers, according to the Hargreaves Report "Improving Secondary Schools", regularly truant during games periods (and even more alarmingly for the whole day on which games are scheduled) was an acknowledged matter of concern for my subjects (despite the despairing remarks of one, already quoted above).

Moving from non-attendance to resourcing as an index of status: when I happened to suggest that perhaps the nature of staffing and physical resources in a department contributed principally to the status of PE in a school, I received mixed messages. One head of PE agreed, saying that "We are reaching a state of crisis" in terms of staffing. A lecturer felt inclined to disagree, saying to begin with that real status is established by the standing of school teams and by the success/failure of those teams in competitions:

"No, I don't agree. I think for example that in terms of
staffing PE departments are often quite well staffed. I don't think that is where the status of PE is decided. I think the status of PE is obviously decided solely on the status of the School Team. I don't think that has changed because who is it that is looking at the status of the subject ... other teachers ... well they will really look at school teams ... they don't see much else of PE. Hence, I don't think they have changed their views that drastically. The low status of PE may be traced to that."

There is ample evidence to suggest that success brought on by school teams is recognised and applauded by school members and that individual efforts are recognised by headteachers, governors and parents. On the other hand, while a school can be very proud of its sporting prowess, that may do little for the status of PE as a curriculum subject. I pointed this out to the same lecturer and invited her response:

"Yes, I think it is in the way it is presented ... I think the profession is at fault I have to admit ... in presenting PE as something which is just forcing children to go out and play"

What are colleges doing about this state of affairs?

"You probably think these progressive things are all happening until you actually go into schools and you find that they have not changed very much. So it is probably changing at this [college] level but it is going to take a hell of a lot of time to get it out there"

I drew her attention to a remark made by one of her colleagues that there was a terrible mismatch between what goes on at college and what really happens in schools:

"It is not the case that schools and colleges are working in partnership ... the change in teacher training colleges, any change, is only just happening in the last three to four years and the people coming out of teacher training colleges are not in
a position of power."

This was confirmed by another lecturer who had a similar view about the relationship between schools and teacher training colleges:

"I keep coming back to schools ... they put the blame on us and obviously we in turn put the blame on them but there is still not a clear intention of producing a young person who is physically educated and everything that means"

The same lecturer supported the suggestion that the quality and quantity of human resources in a department did have some bearing on the status of the subject:

"If they are small the range between them in expertise is a little limited. A broader staff will give you more specialism that will enrich the pupils' experience."

He was dismayed by the way physical resources were distributed to schools across the borough and by the lack of them in some schools - often in the same borough as well-resourced schools:

"I go round from school to school in similar boroughs and sometimes the contrast in the amount of equipment that one school has against another school is acute. 'They are funded by the same authority', I say to myself, 'What's gone wrong here?' The only conclusion I can come to is that the staff are not pressing for a fair share of the cake and you know how aggressive you have got to be to get a fair share of the cake and this goes along with having a particularly sympathetic headteacher to allocate the right resources. The difficulty is that PE is a particularly expensive subject. As it is not a key course in terms of examinations you have got a battle on your hands"

That same lecturer raised another issue for both schools and colleges - the contribution of PE teachers to whole-school development:

"Well the other thing that I was going to refer to about status
is something that I push hard with my students here. It is very hard for them to accept it because they ... we are saying one thing to them while we have them in College on what we think should happen. They go out into the schools on teaching practice and see another thing ... very different to the image we are trying to portray. The thing that I have in mind is that too many PE teachers isolate themselves from the rest of the school."

Several of my teacher trainee subjects also found this to be the case. The lecturer went on to connect this point with one about image and self-presentation:

"The way in which PE staff dress and present themselves says something about its attitude to what it is. And it is so easy to get into a situation that you are a scruffy lot with dirty track suits tucked into socks and half pulled up, a dirty old rugby shirt and scruffy footwear who are bashers over in the gymnasium and that is where you belong. It does the subject a disservice."

What was this college doing to counter this danger?

"The kids are now receiving an academic education in a college such as this about the nature of PE ... about the nature of education that is based on the community and what it means ... the philosophy of PE."

Another lecturer articulated the same priority:

"That is one of the aims of the course ... to allow the PE teacher to take on a full part in staff curriculum discussions in schools. Without really being able to do so, they can't put forward a case for their subject or perhaps I should say, can't put forward a case for their subject in terms of respective numbers of staff in their departments."

A set of factors with a fairly major impact on the status of PE may be grouped together under the heading of the subject's academic standing.
One of this set, according to one lecturer, is the nature of the 4 year course at teacher training colleges:

"Well I think that PE is not seen to have a theoretical base. The theoretical base has to be a science base, surely in movement. It is not to be seen merely as a practical subject; and perhaps is not given the same status as a theoretical subject"

She links this conception of a science-based PE to school examinations in PE, another important member of this set of factors.

"The new GCSE is just happening. The fourth year students would have had less preparation for instance than the present second years, and GCSE probably is one reason why we must agree to a science base to our course."

She is equally concerned that PE had not been subject to a process of evaluation and strongly advocates a review of the work that goes on in the name of PE:

"It has not done PE any good to be allowed to just continue in its own sweet way for so long. I think it has been allowed to continue because it was not seen to be particularly important."

She was also certain that the present practice of PE, in particular the absence in it of a proper progression, was unhelpful to its status. She felt that "we were not presenting a clear enough picture to participants and practitioners". Her development of this point has been strongly noted in another context but is worth repeating here:

"My personal theory is that if you take children from the ages of 5 to 11 and show that PE is nothing more than a nuisance, pick them up at 11 in secondary schools, start teaching them basic skills and educational gymnastics which should have been covered from about the age of 7 and then offer them a hotch potch of activities, give them no work on fitness, just the activities and then ask at 14 to choose between options like ice skating, horse
riding, roller skating and a whole range of things on top of that and then they come out of school with the most fragmented idea of what exercising is all about."

In addition:

"We do treat our 11 year olds in an extremely strange way. They do need basic skills it would appear when they come into secondary schools but then an 11 year old should not be involved in basic ball skills. An 8 year old, but not an 11 year old. I have taught children from 5 to 11 and that is when they should be doing it"

To return to the topic of school examinations: this was widely discussed by my interviewees. School subjects with good examination results gain popularity and status among parents and pupils and do in turn have some impact on the ethos of the school. PE until recently has not been a subject offering an exam. My respondents thought long and hard before taking any one side about examinations. The lecturers' feelings on whether or not PE should be an examinable subject were very mixed:

"Now a lot of people in PE would say that exams in PE are anti to what we are trying to do. Now that is an argument that is supportable. Yet if we are talking about the status of PE in schools, if it is going to gain status it has to go steaming ahead for exams. Now I particularly regret that."

An examination on the other hand, has the advantage of focussing attention on the quality of PE:

"It does come back to pushing up standards because there are external criteria to be met. You just don't go on and throw them a ball, blow the whistle and say that's well done."

but
"The corollary of that, which can be unfortunate, is that in the fourth and fifth years, PE is seen as one of a number of examination subjects. So it gets lost as a subject. The potential for that happening is real. So you opt for it like any other subject. So if you don't opt for it, you don't do it. So there is a real danger".

PE teachers in general had similarly mixed feelings about making PE an examinable subject in their schools. Some had reservations about its intellectual validity; others felt it might detract from the "real aim" of enjoyment. On an optimistic note there was a feeling that if the exam was conducted properly it could help the less able child to gain an exam success. But there was a feeling that it could become examinable for the wrong reasons, such as supporting the career of the PE teacher. As one teacher expressed her fears:

"I think there are a lot of PE teachers who can't cope with what they think is their lack of status amongst the staff and want to take it on for that sort of reason. They want some sort of academic importance. When I have been to GCSE meetings, which I have done for the last few years, there are certain people who are much in the forefront ... in fact I would really question their reason why they want to do it. I really think that fifty per cent of it is for their own status, and that's about it."

Examinations in PE posed a dilemma for this teacher:

"Well, a number of different thoughts on it. I mean I prefer not to see it as an examined subject because I think it has an awful lot more to offer than just a piece of paper, but having said that it certainly gives a lot more kudos if it becomes an examinable subject. So mixed feelings really."

One teacher felt that the aims of her state-school PE department had much to contribute to the philosophy of the school. She took comfort
in the fact that these enabled her to keep PE a non-examinable subject:

"It is nice to work in a school where sport is seen not as important as the academic but is seen to be an important part of the school"

An experienced head of department talks about her fears and her concerns regarding examinations:

"I think that as long as it does not dominate what you are doing with that particular age group, exams are excellent. I was involved in my previous school. We just started a CSE exam when I left and two of my flatmates are involved in schools where they are doing GCSE physical education exams. I am a bit concerned because of the amount of work involved in doing an exam. It could be to the detriment of everything else in that age group. And so if you have the time to do that well and to carry on with those that are not doing examination work then I think it is good. As I understand it, it depends on individual schools because I think the children who would want to do this examination are not available to choose that option. So if you are not careful it ends up as the less academic children who get the opportunity to do it, who probably enjoy it, but there will be other children who would love to do it but the school does not provide the system whereby they can."

Another head of department showed a similar concern:

"I think it has a lot to do with staffing really and ... having only a B as head of department and everybody else just on nothing, who is going to do the job to set it up? In theory for kids who are able to do it, fantastic. In practice what happens in schools is that exams are chosen by kids who are not academically bright enough to cope with the theory side and it becomes a sink subject."
Interestingly enough, Independent schools seem to avoid all this anguish by avoiding examinations in PE. My independent schools were afraid of academic overkill - a PE exam would add to the already heavy exam programme, ten exams in most cases. In addition the parents of children in Independent schools did not care unduly about a PE exam:

"I think it depends particularly on the type of school and the type of child. In this school [Independent Girls'] I don't feel it is relevant. I don't feel ... I mean it would be of little value as there are too many pressures on the children to complete 10 GCSEs in academic subjects. A lot of them are theoretically based and I certainly would not put another theoretic thing on the children. I don't think it is seen as valuable from the parents' point of view. For me PE is not an examinable subject in this type of school"

"We have chosen not to do GCSE here. And the Headmaster did not really expect any conversation with me over it. We don't want to do this, do we? I was quite happy not to. Having looked at some of the papers ... they seemed to be watered down versions of lots of things and nothing of any great significance or importance anyway. In this type of school where most of them are doing ... what ... ten GCSEs including Biology, Physics or whatever, PE just seems to cut across one of these areas without ever doing anything in great detail"

Of the seven schools I visited none had actually embarked itself on a PE examination, although some of the interviewees had experience from previous employment in other schools. The thought of taking on extra work, requiring extra PE teacher time, the uncertainty about the real value of such an examination and the detraction from one of PE's main aims - that of enjoyment - seemed to be the hurdles.
Whilst there is a broad consensus among teacher trainees and teachers of PE that it should enjoy a higher, if not an equal, status, they are realistic enough to admit that in practice PE would need to do a lot more to have its importance recognised. What exactly should happen for PE to have a better image? It would need, it seems, to become an examinable subject, despite all the fears associated with that. Another need is for it to appear as a compulsory subject for all ages at present. Each school has its own version of what it considers is acceptable in terms of curriculum time and pupil involvement. What effect does this loose arrangement have on the status of the subject?

Making PE compulsory ensures that it is there to be noticed. Student teachers, themselves, convey the dilemma about making PE compulsory for all ages. There appeared to be total agreement among them that it should be compulsory in the lower part of the school but on the question of making it compulsory in the upper school students were ambivalent in their responses. We need to remember that many of them had come through a school PE programme that was not compulsory in the upper school. Whilst it was seen that an element of option was necessary in some cases, it was not entirely desirable for the status of the subject, a dilemma that still lingers on.

A form of compromise seemed possible where it was felt that leaving PE optional was quite acceptable provided that the students in their final years at school participated in some form of physical activity that might lead them to pursue an active lifestyle on leaving school. How would student-teachers feel about such a compromise? Would they accept
that a student can opt to drop Maths at the beginning of the upper school in the pre-National Curriculum days? Here is one response:

"I don't think we can justify that our subject is more important than any other in the curriculum. I feel that PE is as important as any other in the curriculum"

It is certainly a balanced view point. Can we expect a similar balance from a science student about the status of science?

Student-teachers, teachers, lecturers and leisure centre managers have all complained at some stage or other that the subject of PE was not seriously appreciated by the other teachers in schools:

"I mean it would be good if other teachers in the school could understand what goes on behind PE because people you actually work with all the time still believe that all you do is go on court [basketball] and give them [pupils] a ball"

"It is struggling to find its level in most schools because the status of PE in most schools is still low. That could be because we don't articulate enough in our own schools. We do not fight enough within our schools for our own subject. I don't mean inter-departmental fighting. I just mean to keep the level of PE raised among the staff. It is not raised among the staff because some of the staff will have their views of PE from when they did it and from reports most of it has not been very good, or they are so academically minded that they think the world ends at Macbeth."

It is clear that student teachers and teachers of PE place great store on the perceptions of other school staff for their recognition of PE as a subject in its own right and the recognition of the contribution it makes to a balanced curriculum (after all the subject has been around since 1870):

"I think the staff need to appreciate what the PE department are
trying to do for the school; a little more support from the rest of the school"

PE is not all that unpopular in schools. There are schools where it seems to be extremely popular. Take for example the teacher who wanted to test the feelings and attitudes of her state school pupils when they were consulted on whether or not games should be made compulsory in the sixth form. The enquiry was in the form of a questionnaire. It transpired that there was strong objection from pupils to even doubt its place in the sixth form curriculum as the teacher's remark shows:

"Whereas I might have anticipated a fifty/fifty sort of reaction from the voting ... there was a strong feeling from the pupils, Oh no, that's ridiculous"

Another teacher records her thoughts on pupils attitudes:

"When they find, as they go up the school they get less PE, they moan."

One teacher sees PE as something positive in her school:

"As I said before it is a popular subject contrary to some headteachers' beliefs. In my particular school it is a competent subject. We do vary our programme, we adapt, we change for what I think are all the right reasons to make it as relevant a programme as possible."

In addition to the views of other staff generally, the attitude of the headteacher is seen as crucial. Headteachers are seen as either supporting strongly what goes on in PE or paying lip service only to the subject. If a school stood to gain glory through the success of its school teams, then there is a fair amount of support from the headteacher and staff of the school. But then not all the teams are
successful all the time.

As one student says:

"If the head of a school does not have a high opinion of the subject then I think it is given a very low priority and that rubs off on the teachers and kids."

A headteacher at a recent parent meeting, in attempting to explain the option course for year 10 pupils at key stage 4, was said to have referred to the GCSE PE course as PE being done in a classroom. This, it was thought, did little for the status of PE. Similarly, a head of department took strong exception to her headteacher's lack of understanding when he attempted to distinguish between PE and Games:

"PE is what takes place indoors and games is what takes place outdoors."

Not really knowing what goes on in the PE department is taken as fairly serious:

"I don't think that many heads or teachers know what actually goes within a PE lesson. It tends to look like extra-curricular [activity]. If a school has a good football or rugby team they [the headteachers] assume that PE is doing very well in that school regardless of what is going on in the curriculum itself"

Other subjects tend to encroach on PE for additional curriculum time, it would seem with quiet acquiescence from the headteacher:

"When I was on teaching practice the situation arose on a number of occasions where I will be reading through the register and say such and such ... 'Oh no, they are not here, it is music'. That half an hour gets priority to doing PE. I disagree with that"

"I would like to see it have a status where if there is something going on in the afternoon, they don't say, okay we will do it when PE is on"
It would appear that it takes a lot to convince teaching colleagues and other non-teaching staff that PE has something of importance to offer children. Their view of children and PE is based only on what success or lack of success they hear about:

"... but if you listen to members of staff in the staffroom you realise that yours is not the real subject"

One student trainee makes this plea for the status of the subject when he says:

"It should be regarded as a subject rather than purely as a means of getting the kids out of the class because a lot of teachers consider games just to be fun, especially in the summer when they see you out in the sun and they say 'all you do is get the kids out and you are in the sun'"

A school with a sympathetic headteacher, a strong PE department, good parental involvement, extra-curricular activity, support from other colleagues, has a good chance of establishing the status of PE in the eyes of staff, pupils and parents.

An overall view by teachers indicated that PE had made great strides over the last 15 years: changes in programme content, teacher qualification in the way of specialism, renewed interest with the introduction of examinations, and the recent emphasis on health related fitness. They were convinced that their individual programmes had strong enough aims and a good standard of PE and that the children were the beneficiaries despite the uncertainty about its recognition, its status and its future role in schools.
This picture, it will be noticed, is in some tension with the views, discussed in the previous chapter, of student-teachers, college lecturers and leisure centre managers on the same topic.
CHAPTER 5 THE VALUE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

as seen by my subjects

All my interviewees were professionally involved in PE. They were committed professionals, not mere observers. One would expect them to regard PE as important and valuable whether one attributed this to their heightened awareness of it or to their vested interest in it. And indeed there was a strong sense of commitment to PE in these responses, even, it might be observed, in those several responses that were profoundly critical of, or disillusioned with, present practice in schools:

"... to say that the subject is in a state of chaos is an understatement"

"I think that the profession is at fault I have to admit, in presenting PE as something which is just forcing children to go out and play games or rather not play"

However, there remain a number of questions relating to their commitment to PE. What this chapter is about is such matters as:

* The kind of importance they attribute to PE. What is its potential educationally, in their view?
* The degree of importance they place on PE in relation to other subject areas in the curriculum.
* Its importance for whom? Older as well as younger pupils, girls as well as boys, the unenthusiastic as well as the enthusiastic, the elite as well as the non-elite?
* How they came to make these judgements. Were they, for example, based on their own school experiences, their training, or their working experience in schools?

These issues will be recurring themes throughout this section. In addition two further issues emerged strongly from these responses, to some extent as a result of the questions I put to them and to some extent spontaneously, and to each of these, separate sub-sections will be devoted. They are the issues of gender and of leisure.

THE PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Student teacher trainees talked about the general importance and some of the particular aims of PE. Not all the passion they evinced to the interviewer comes across in their words, which however, are forthright enough:

"If I am a PE teacher in the school, I have a responsibility to those children to make sure they appreciate the opportunities that sport or recreation or leisure might have for them on leaving school"

"I feel that it is essential in the development of any child. Through natural processes a child always needs to play, needs to be active - for biological reasons, if nothing else"

"Recent data on the state of health of children with coronary disease and obesity elevates the importance of PE in schools."

In a more qualified vein:

"Very important in primary schools but less so in secondary schools where people can pursue PE outside school"
Heading off a standard objection: its importance is not intrinsically tied to competition

"Very important but it must be taught in an encouraging way; more praise for effort than ability and more competition with oneself, e.g. orienteering, rather than implicit praise for ability in team competition"

Its importance for them rises above the old cliche "a healthy body and a healthy mind" to benefits which are held in common with other curriculum areas - thus to social and communication skills:

"Very important in the development of social skills"

"Learn how to get on with people they don't particularly like or have character conflicts with"

"Learn about other people, how to interact and communicate ... These are the things that pupils should be learning all the time. It is essential in the development of any child, and it has the support of most educationalists"

They see it as important enough for every child to have PE on the curriculum and they have reservations regarding the extent to which this is achieved in schools. In this regard they are inclined to refer to their own experience of PE whilst they were pupils:

"From my own experience as a pupil I tend to remember a lot of bias towards children who were good at sports and certainly the fat and less able were pushed aside somewhat in my experience in both primary and secondary schools"

The attitude of some teachers is recalled as:

"The school rugby team come over here and get on with the lesson, everybody else go over here and amuse yourselves for an hour"
Mandy was a pupil in a small village combined primary/secondary school. Her account of her experience in her secondary phase raises another aspect of equality viz a certain kind of neglect of the gifted PE pupil:

"I used to be one of the superstars in the school and as soon as we got out of the classes as we got older in the third and fourth years I was told, Mandy carry the chairs outside, we [the teachers] will sit on the chairs and watch you teach the class. So that is all it was. So there was I teaching the class different things I did. Actually the teaching we had from teachers was abysmal"

The experience of inequality appears to be quite common for pupils doing PE. As student trainee teachers they have given the matter a fair amount of thought. Their criticisms sometimes extend to the schools that they visit for their teaching practice:

"I think the way you look on and feel about PE is all down to experiences in schools. I find so many PE teachers 'bolshie' and unless you are strong they make you feel so inadequate"

We see then teacher trainees reacting against the experience they have had, and continue to have, of inequality of different kinds in schools. Despite these off-putting experiences in their early years these college students have chosen to follow a career in PE. It certainly raises the question, why? Mandy, a final year student, went on from her critique of her school to compare it with her years at teacher training college and was optimistic enough to say:

"by heck, you do change a lot in four years. I love teaching, it has been great."

Not all students had had a negative early experience:

"... but the thing that sticks in my head most is my rugby teacher
because we had all respected him when he took over our rugby team ... it might have influenced my feelings towards school generally. He not only taught us the skills of the game but also the etiquette of the game which we respected and over the years it still comes through"

Another student was inclined to attribute his positive experience to the advantages enjoyed by the Independent sector:

"The public school I was in ... they did rugby in the first team, football in the second term and cricket in the third term ... it was very team orientated. In some respects it was good, in that for a year group there were three rugby teams. There was a chance of getting into a team if you were remotely interested in a rugby team or whatever. There were three under-12 teams, three under-13 and three under-14 teams. So obviously they all got a chance whereas in a state school there would be just the one team for the whole year."

When asked if they had studied PE for every year of their schooling life they almost all answered in the affirmative, but the similarity seemed to end there. Their experiences in primary and secondary schools - and even at college level - differed largely and ranged from one extreme to the other, from the unhappy to the very happy.

The commitment to PE which they nonetheless shared, and something of their concept of what it should be, sometimes emerged indirectly from their comments on other things:

"I think for a start PE should be held in high regard as a subject rather than purely as a means of getting the kids out of the class because a lot of teachers, a lot of classroom teachers, consider games just to be fun, especially in the summer when they see you out in the field in the sun and they say 'all you do is get the kids out ... and you are out in the sun'"
"When I was on teaching practice the situation arose on a number of occasions where I will be reading the register and say such and such [name] 'Oh no, they are not here today, it is music'. That half-hour piano lesson always gets priority to doing PE. I disagree with that."

The lecturers of these students tended similarly to combine commitment to the subject with a critical view of its practice in schools. The lecturer who referred to the subject as being in a "state of chaos" went on to show how important in health terms PE was in the early years of a youngster's life:

"New evidence we are getting from all of the people who have been looking at the health related fitness scene in an entirely new light is that some of the health related problems as a result of a lack of exercise, start in the early teens. The roots are there and unless young people establish good exercise habits and practice during those years, they suffer as adults"

An examination of the stated aims of the teacher training colleges suggests the kind of importance they attach to PE. One college placed great emphasis on the need for the PE teacher "to cater for all children". The lecturer from that college commented on one implication of this:

"You see it is all very well saying that 'I want to take some exercise. So I will go and be a rugby player' but if you are not good enough to get into a rugby club what is the point? So for a lot of people it is the non-competitive activities which are the ones that are to be fostered. Those who are good rugby players, good soccer players and so on, there is no concern. They will go on and do it. So it is the non-competitive things that can be performed non-competitively. You take something like golf or tennis, all right it is competitive but does not have to be. You
can go out and join a club and play at a low level and nobody bothers too much."

At both colleges an important aim of the course was to extend the role of the PE specialist. A lecturer:

"Students are now receiving an academic education in a college such as this about the nature of PE, about the nature of education that is based on the community; they are studying the curriculum and what it means and the philosophy of PE. They have a contribution to make, they must jolly well make it. They have roles to play apart from the mainstream of PE. They have significant roles to play in things like CPVE, TVEI and all these new areas. They get that opportunity. The opportunities now exist for GCSE PE."

A quotation from a college statement:

"The overriding aim of the course at ... is to provide a sensitive thinking professional capable of taking a full and active part in school curriculum development. PE is seen as an integral part of the curriculum and the PE teacher is seen as a fully involved member of the teaching staff at all levels."

Preparing PE teachers who would "take a full part in staff curriculum discussions in schools" was seen as of great importance by the colleges and as going some way to meet the criticism that PE teachers tend to remain isolated from the educational happenings in the rest of the school.

The comments of both lecturers and students on their own courses are another source of information about their conceptions of PE. In a four year degree course a lot of thought and effort goes into preparing young PE teachers for the eventualities they will encounter as teachers, some relatively new to the profession, others not. In regard to areas such
as mixed PE, curriculum innovation, and particular high-profile innovations like TVEI, college departments appeared to have well developed positions and pedagogies. In other areas such as primary/secondary liaison and management skills it was acknowledged that much more had to be achieved. One can't help feeling some sympathy for the lecturer who said, "... how much knowledge ... how big a quart could you fit into a pint bottle?" Among the students there were some hints of unease, first, regarding the balance of theory and practice in teacher training. One student had this to say about her teaching practice:

"I really enjoyed every bit of it. That has been the best part. I must admit I have not enjoyed the essays and the exams. I don't like the academic side. I love teaching. It has been great."

Another student, asked if she would like more time for teaching practice:

"I have learnt most through teaching practice."

She felt that she was echoing the feelings of other students. Again, not all games were coached in the four year course. The students were sensitive to this, while acknowledging the practical difficulties. As one lecturer put it:

"... they are virtually beginners when they enter college."

A student's comment:

"I would say that what the college has done is give us the stepping stones to a number of sports. Now whether we can teach them all is a different thing. I think in the time we are given we could not, the college could not realistically assume that we know them well enough to teach them"

Does teaching practice come to the rescue?
"They don't tell you how to teach it, you adapt that as you go along on teaching practices."

Continuity between primary and secondary school PE programmes was something else mentioned by students as important for both the subject and the pupils in transition, but neglected both in schools and in their college training. The only real experience of primary school for most secondary trained students is in their first year at college and even then they spend most of the time observing as opposed to teaching lessons. A fairly typical remark:

"I don't really know what the needs of the primary school are"

We know the college lecturers' views on the importance of PE in schools, we know too the student teacher trainee's conception of PE. But what of the teachers, who are the very people fighting their way through the hustle and bustle of school life? By comparison with the other two groups, their conception of PE appears to be embedded in their practice in schools, in the facilities and resources they have at their disposal, and in their general concern for the pupils in their charge.

They point readily to resources as one of the key factors in determining the curriculum offer in PE. They tend to cope with resourcing difficulties at school by using community resources to their advantage:

"This is something we positively encourage because we do find that the better able kids are not being stretched to any great level here and there are good community agencies around here who run various teams and we encourage the kids to do it [to join]"

Another teacher adapted his programme to suit the local facilities:

"What is offered especially in the upper school is different
opportunities using facilities in the local areas, using off-site facilities, lots of different aspects of sports never taught before and moving away from traditional things."

At least some of the schools shared the concern of students and lecturers that PE programmes should be built round the needs of all the pupils. This is an attempt by one teacher to involve as great a number of pupils as the programme can cope with:

"We try and run as many teams as possible and with as many members of staff obviously helping as we can. Up to 30 members of staff help with teams of one sort or another"

Even at the rate of two members of staff to every team, a 15-team school represents a considerable pupil involvement. A concern for the youngster who does not make the top school team is evident in this teacher's aims:

"The world is full of fourth team club players and that way what we try and do is say 'well look, okay you are not a great sportsman but here are things you might enjoy and hopefully you might find something you do enjoy'"

Teachers from two other schools also speak of getting the best out of every child as fundamental aims:

"I tried in our department to get to their own particular potential. It does not matter when that happens; a fifth year girl who is leaving on Friday said to me 'I am just getting into PE and I am having to leave'"

"The philosophy of the school is to, you know, get them to reach their potential. And we have always done that"

Children's achievement and success in PE brings great satisfaction to teachers and this may seem to reflect teachers' own personalities. Two
teachers:

"It is the only subject that deals with the physical, the physical image. It is the only subject where everybody can succeed in some way. I think it is the subject where you can visibly see a person succeeding and they could see that they succeed ... with the approach you have with them and the things you do with them you can get them to succeed in most things"

"As you say this idea of self esteem, that's the phrase you want to use, then I think they can achieve that through sport. I mean it does not have to be through excellence ... the degree of commitment is far more important than the actual qualities they go into the thing with"

The latter goes on to explain how he attempts to achieve self-esteem:

"... the one thing that I have introduced is, you mentioned to me earlier about recognition and achievement and whatever ... in the past we used to have first XI or first team colours for outstanding people and first team colours for people perhaps who served a long time but were not that good. What I have introduced since I have been here are second team and third team colours. In other words what I am saying to somebody is 'okay you may not be as good as the next guy but that does not mean to say I value your commitment any less than his and you and your third team have put in just as much as somebody else who happens to be more gifted than you'"

Teachers, finally, place a high priority on pupils "getting hooked" to physical activities:

"Yes that will be my aim that they will want to continue some kind of physical activity outside school and have the knowledge and skills to do that and how to keep fit and how to maintain that fitness throughout their lives"

"I think I have a hope that they enjoyed what they have done. I hope having learnt a number of and a variety of skills there is a desire to continue"
The reader will by now have detected differences in the way different categories of interviewee viewed the importance of PE, even if these differences are more to do with emphasis than substance. It is likely that these differences reflect the positions they hold in PE: learning how to teach, training student teachers in the craft of teaching, and involvement in the day to day practice of PE in schools. The student teacher-trainees with their rose-tinted glasses might be thought utopian. They want more curriculum time for PE, more resources, more off-site facilities and, generally, a higher status for PE. Lecturers on the other hand, aware of the longstanding difficulties facing the practice of PE, work to a view of the modern PE teacher who is prepared to cope with the difficulties and to collaborate on cross-school matters. Teachers, all too concerned with practice rather than theory, will defend their practice to the hilt, and when they do acknowledge deficiencies will shift the blame onto colleagues of other departments and the Headteacher. They too want more curriculum time and more staffing but will not assume that this by itself would be sufficient to raise the status of PE.

So we see three groups of people professionally involved with the theory and practice of PE, the commitments they share and the different emphases in these commitments.

We now move to two areas that my subjects as a whole took definite and strong lines on, mixed physical education and leisure.
Students, teachers and lecturers treated the question of gender with great seriousness. It emerged clearly as an area that is much debated and discussed at school and college level, at one and the same time a focus for the commitment of the modern PE teacher, a cause for concern, and a focus of some conceptual and practical problems. At one level there appears to be a total acceptance of the value of mixed PE both in principle and in practice. At another level there appear to be continuing problems in schools. In colleges:

"Certainly we are well into the notion of mixed PE. That is something we have been working on for some time. In fact all our work here is mixed. That is a matter of normal development as far as they [the students] are concerned."

But what actually happens at school level, as seen from the colleges?

"PE departments are still pretty traditional themselves in terms of boys and girls. Sometimes they are doing mixed PE but often they believe it cannot work. The commitment is not there and that is a real problem"

So what happens at college level does not necessarily happen in schools:

"I think we can send out our students with the belief that it was good to have mixed activities when they were here and that they would hate to be separated but how long these sort of beliefs are going to last in the face of a good battering from traditional PE departments I am not sure."

Students, too, are alarmed at what they see in schools and by the attitude of some teachers, pupils and parents:

"Even though it is mixed, there are still phrases like 'you are running like a woman'"

"You get them in a gym, you can guarantee boys will work in one
half of the gym and the girls in the other half. And I don't really know if the value of what you are trying to do is actually being achieved. That happens in games as well"

"Women PE staff wouldn't have minded doing mixed PE but the men seemed to be against it" (referring to a school where mixed PE was being considered)

"I am finding out that the boys by far are getting more out of mixed PE than the girls"

"It seemed such a touchy subject" (on teaching practice)

How supportive are parents and the public at large of the notion of mixed PE? Not much, according to one lecturer:

"Out there in the wide world girls are still seen to have different physical needs to boys and they are still not seen to be really the sort of people to be educated together in physical activities. 'Joe Public' is not aware, I would say"

Parents and sporting bodies have an important role to play according to this lecturer:

"I suppose you would have to blame, not blame but put some of the responsibility, at the door of the major sports who perhaps have a blinkered attitude at girls taking part. Parents obviously have a very significant role to play. If you offer children something similar perhaps parents of girls in primary schools would object. Families have an extremely important role to play but it is part of the total picture"

Well-meant insensitivity can contribute to the difficulties:

"A student the other day was taking a mixed lesson in athletics and he had a warm up game which was 'going under people's legs' which was great if you were a boy and wearing shorts, not terribly easy for a girl forced to wearing a short skirt with fourth year boys shouting 'show me your knickers'"
I asked the lecturer what she thought colleges should do to change attitudes:

"There is only so much we can do. We talk about it, we discuss it, look at it in tutorials if the tutorial system works which in some cases it does not. It is limited, without actually having the children there. Yes, it is very difficult. One of the things we can do is share the experiences of people who have taught mixed PE. We have to be realistic about it"

Another lecturer recommends a softly, softly, approach when confronted by the PE class in which in reality the children are performing in different parts of the gymnasium, girls at one end and boys at another end:

"If you take a first year class mixed together and allow them to choose partners or activities freely they will become separated. So the teacher has to take that on board and say 'what's my strategy? What do I do about it? I have got to do something, whatever it is and make it happen in a supportive, sustaining sort of way'. If you go in with a big stick too hard you will destroy what you are trying to create."

Another issue is as much conceptual as practical, is indeed part and parcel of the equal opportunity concept:

"If you are saying in pursuit of equal opportunities we should have boys and girls playing together ... if you do that are you really giving girls and equal opportunity? They should play basketball I agree ... if you do that you limit the role of girls to never playing under the basket because they are not tall enough to pick it up and rebound in the opposition of boys"

Of course some activities quite easily lend themselves to mixed participation:

"Now in some sports that is no problem. In something like
gymnastics I see nothing but virtue because the girls have qualities that the boys don't and the boys have qualities that the girls don't. They complement each other. In things like swimming, there is no problem there; athletics, no problem there and so on."

This lecturer was forced to make this admission:

"There are many bits and pieces all wrapped up in this that it becomes complicated. We don't have all the answers"

Another interviewee:

"I think there will be situations whereby on educative grounds, for ethical reasons or psychological reasons certain sports might be more suitable for one sex than the other"

The nature of an activity and the age of pupils do to some extent affect the interpretation of mixed physical education:

"Apart from the equality of opportunity scene I think there is something positive about boys and girls working together, up to a point ... up to a certain age ... In the games field you have to think very carefully abut direct contact in the invasion type games where size matters ... what you are saying in a sense is you could almost say that what I have said is not really anything to do with differences of sex but with differences in abilities and physical characteristics; equally true of a small boy as of a small girl."

From what has been said thus far it would appear that while its values and advantages are extolled, its implementation is problematic. It is complex both in concept and practice. The comment of a lecturer quoted earlier "We don't have all the answers" is his way of saying that this aspect of PE requires further thought and research.
How different is it from other subjects in this respect? "Not much", according to one lecturer:

"PE seems to think that when introducing mixed physical education it has unique problems but is in fact having the same problems as felt throughout the curriculum"

Perhaps in PE the notion of mixed activities has a higher profile than in other subjects, perhaps PE by tackling this problem would be paving the way for other subject areas:

"But in a mixed lesson, ahm, in a mixed English lesson, girls will sit at one end of the room and boys at the other end and when there is a discussion girls will talk to girls and boys will talk to boys. So these are the same divisions"
Leisure and leisure provision is the second of the two areas in which my subjects showed a particularly lively interest:

"We prepare children for the world of work, but not for the world of leisure"

Colleges had a definite view of what part leisure and leisure provision should play in the life of youngsters. They were particularly concerned that we could quite easily become a "nation of spectators rather than participants". Too much emphasis in the past has been "on provided rather than on participation leisure". Student teachers, too, are concerned that the input which should take place in the last years of schooling is not really happening and they see it as very much the task of the PE department:

"If I am a PE teacher in the school I have a responsibility to those children to make sure they appreciate the value that sport or recreation or leisure or physical activities might have for them on leaving school"

Experience shows that it is not enough merely to make young people aware of the facilities available locally; young people must be introduced to local sports clubs and schools should have strong ties with clubs:

"I think that in a lot of schools you don't hear about local rugby facilities."

"But I think that as a teacher I should be trying to get the kids to go out and join other clubs, get the enjoyment that I got out of it."

However, some students take a rather more laissez-faire view point:

"I don't think you can say that every child will want to be a part
of sport when they leave school. You can only give them the opportunity to try it and if they choose not to take up a sport then that is their problem. You have given them an opportunity and introduced them to local clubs.”

A further difficulty associated with the notion of leisure time and the nature of leisure pursuits appears in this response:

“The problem is going to be when the children turn round to you and say 'when I leave school the games I am going to play are darts, snooker, table tennis' ... we don't cater for that"  

This student suggested a tough response:

“We should say from an exercise point of view, if children are going to stop [playing] sport, and surveys illustrate that unfortunately the majority of children do give up sports when they leave school ... if that is the case then really we do need to give them more strenuous physical activities in school rather than those popular leisure type activities"

This view is commonly held by a good number of people who fear that the present upper school PE programme is having little impact on pupils who are about to leave school.

When addressing the importance of leisure pursuits student teachers often turned to their own secondary school experience.

“Personally I would say introduce them to clubs whilst they are actually at school. I was introduced to a hockey club while I was at school and I have carried that on. I wasn't actually introduced to it by staff but by one of the pupils"

Two of the schools in my study had embarked on involving young people while they were pupils in local sporting clubs. The results were judged highly satisfactory.
The college view of the school's role here is very clear. Schools have the best possible opportunity to change the attitudes of young people towards leisure:

"My feeling is that we have a duty, I mean that we do have a duty to those boys and girls to maintain their attitudes and knowledge about how to keep fit and help them to sustain those attitudes by keeping them involved. Now what it is they choose to do is another matter ... I would certainly go along with the view that sixth formers, that is what we are really talking about, should engage in regular physical activities as part of their time-table whatever that might be. I think not only would it benefit them as individuals from the point of view of health and fitness but there is plenty of evidence over the years to say just that it also improves their academic performance. Quite a number of research articles would support this argument"  

Leisure centre managers shared the view that schools were in a favourable position to influence youngsters in their attitudes to leisure pursuits. They, however, lament the lack of leisure centre usage by school pupils, the lack of commitment to healthy competition between schools and ask for a greater involvement and support by teachers of PE for youngsters who attend leisure centres and sports centres:

"I think I mean apart from the school groups that come in you certainly see more fifty year olds in this building than you would fifteen year olds, certainly participating in sports."

"We don't seem to get an awful lot of family use now"

"In my opinion there should be more competition. I am afraid I don't agree with this non-competition that has appeared."

"Yes I mean it's strange to me. We have all the local schools using us and yet they're still only having competitions in the
standard sort of games like hockey, football, netball, whatever. They have never approached me to run a badminton tournament, inter-school you know, anything like that and it just seems there should be more of that"

"... I mean, you see some schools have excellent PE staff and it's their kids that are really well motivated. Yet other schools don't have any interest at all"

For my respondent *teachers* the issue of where and how preparation for leisure should take place was one that schools should take seriously in an age of increasing leisure time for young people. If schools are to be the nurseries for establishing leisure pursuits then we ought to hear from these PE teachers:

"I think certainly what we would see as our main role is to involve as many kids as possible in as many activities as possible and I think our main criterion for success is the extent to which they continue with those activities when they leave school."

Thoughts about how their programmes will contribute to young people's leisure time were often expressed with great enthusiasm:

"I think it is right to change the emphasis as people get older within the school set up and for the more talented games players to really encourage them into outside organisations where they can get ... where they can meet people of similar standards, you know."

There appeared to be a deliberate attempt to make the PE programmes more enjoyable for the children:

"It is right that we should offer them as broad a range of activities as possible because that way you stand more chances of touching a nerve and finding something that somebody is going to like and want to carry on"
However, one teacher was realistic enough to say:

"I like to think almost as if 100% of the children thoroughly enjoy their PE. There are obviously some you will never reach, even with the broad programme that we have got"

Whilst enjoyment can be seen as an aim, it is the perseverance with an activity that can result in an outcome of enjoyment. It was a lecturer rather than a teacher who emphasized this:

"Any sport or taking part in any sport must have aims obviously ... enjoyment for one. There's got to be a good reason for doing it perhaps when you don't feel like doing it. Any sportsmen at whatever level would say at some time they don't feel like exercising. They do it because in the long run they are better for doing it. Now we are not giving them that understanding and we will not give them that understanding if we proceed in the way in which we are proceeding now"

In this area too, equality was seen as a major value. The slogan "sport for all" was a clear message that schools should be concentrating their efforts on all children, not just the elite as may have been the case in games dominated schools. Part of this emphasis is a caring concern for young people who do not perform well.

"... what we try and do is say, 'there's something there for everybody if you want to try it' and when it comes to the point of giving up we move them on and say, 'how about trying this and how about trying that?' So okay, I would accept the fact that people who run the A teams take the thing seriously but I would also argue that the people who take the 'odds and ends' or whatever go out and have jolly good fun with them"

"We don't put them down. There is no 'that is wrong'. Just take
a look at people running now. There's fifty different ways of running and fifty different ways of hitting a tennis ball . . ."

Health education and fitness were also seen as key aims of PE in this leisure-preparation dimension.

"I would like them to achieve a certain degree of fitness and an understanding of how they become fit, how they can maintain that fitness. I would like them to be enthusiastic, to enjoy participating, to feel that they have the skills to participate in a range of things"

Finally, the differing responses of the two college lecturers when asked to comment on the future of PE in schools:

"In a mood of change, questioning, accusation and conflict, the need for a 'thinking' professional who is able to defend the position of PE is likely to be felt as never before."

"My thoughts on future developments are by no means clear. What is clear is that Health Related Fitness is here to stay and that it has a definite effect on the nature of the rest of the work. Closer relationships with leisure providers and outside clubs need to be established and some means of satisfying the needs of both the bulk of children and the needs of the elite performer."

**CONCLUSION**

Schools, unofficially, operate a pecking order for subjects accompanied by fierce and jealous guarding of boundaries by teachers. PE has in the past, and will for sometime, have to fight its own corner for a respectable position in the league table. Student teacher trainees,
teacher and lecturers of PE are giving one clear message: PE needs indeed to improve its practice and its image, but it remains that it is educationally indispensable.
CHAPTER 6  MY PERCEPTION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

If I am to make a case for PE in the school curriculum it might be useful to begin with a description of what it is I am trying to justify. For this I turn to a Scottish Working Party:

"PE in the formal school curriculum uses physical activities for a broader set of purposes than sport or recreation. Activity, enjoyment, competition and the pursuit of excellence are still involved but become part of a process of learning in which the prime focus is the pupil. PE is therefore identified as the process through which pupils are engaged in a diversity and richness of learning experiences which are intended to contribute to their physical, intellectual, social, emotional and moral development."


This makes it clear that PE, like many other subjects, covers whole ranges of both learning experiences and educational aims.

In relation to the latter, educational aims, it will also be useful in starting out to glance back over the years and briefly trace their emergence and the development, too, of the rationale for them. In the process I will occasionally refer back to my field work to measure those aims against those of my respondents. All this is a preliminary, however, to the chapter's main purpose which is to set up a case for PE in the curriculum.
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PE AIMS:

A return to the education scene of the past might just give us an understanding of the changing face of the aims of PE. As far back as the 1860s discussions about whether or not PE (then known as PT) should be included in the elementary school curriculum exercised the minds of the government of the day. Lord Elcho's motion in the House of Commons in 1862 for "the extension and practice of systemized gymnastics training and for the teaching of military and navy drill" was regarded by the government as an unnecessary frill to public elementary education. [Moodley 1979] This did not, however, prevent the Instrumental Educationalists (or Industrial Trainers, as Raymond Williams (1961) calls them) from making a strong, and ultimately effective, case for introducing physical activities into the curriculum — not for health or for broader educational purposes but for inculcating discipline and obedience. That emphasis set the pattern for many a generation and even our present practice of PE might be said to have difficulty in coming to balanced terms with that early aim.

In 1905 we find the Board of Education putting forward a different main aim for PT:

"The primary objective of any course of physical exercises in schools is to maintain, and if possible, improve the health and physique of children" (Board of Education, 1905)

In 1929 we find a text book for teacher training putting forward no fewer than 4 aims:

1. to develop the child physically and mentally so as to produce that
poise which is the outcome of an efficient, satisfactorily adjusted, agile body.
* to give the child a real appreciation of leisure and fresh air that he will take with him into adult life.
* to furnish him with a lively regard for group as opposed to merely personal interests.
* to supply the growing child with a power of resistance to minor ailments, which tend to make the average individual too readily accept, as all he can manage, a low rather than a plus standard of general health. (Davies, B., 1929)

In the same year, however, Cyril Norwood, commenting on Headmaster Thring of Uppingham, referred to his more traditional and moral-sounding perspective on the teaching of games in Public Schools:

"Games filled up the spare time of boys and exhausted their superfluous energies. Games kept the idle hobbledehoy out of mischief, and gave him a motive for avoiding smoking, drinking and things yet worse." (Norwood, C. 1929)

By this time, then, we already have clear references to such of our contemporarily familiar aims as health, leisure, discipline, poise, and co-operation. And in 1929 we encounter the words "physical and mental development", in what seems to be their first association with PE. They are of paramount importance in today's conceptions.

We move onto 1933 when a new PT syllabus was introduced. This syllabus formed one of the landmarks in the history of PE. The text was said to be "the best of its kind in the world" (Annual Report of CMO, Board of Education, 1932-7) and a Sunderland organiser observed:

"The new syllabus is very inspiring and merely to look at the
pictures therein, showing children clad in the minimum of clothing, exercising their bodies with the greatest of vigour, joy and daring, makes me feel that a great step forward has been made." (Times Educational Supplement, 20th October, 1933)

A new aim, that of enjoyment, makes its first major appearance here and we can sense the presence of the same 'child-centred' perspective as was at this time informing the wider deliberations of the Hadow enquiries.

The year 1933 also saw the opening of the first male teacher training college specializing in PT, an obviously progressive event for the subject but which, nevertheless, was the occasion for reaffirming some more traditional values. Lord Urwin, the President of the Board of Education declared that "only in individuals sane in body and mind could they build a sane state and therefore PE came very close to citizenship". He added that

"a boy who slouched about the world in body and mind was halfway to slouching about the world in thought and there was a very direct interaction between the one and the other" (Times Educational Supplement, 20th October, 1933)

By 1933 conditions had changed. In particular, the diseases that hitherto had a profound effect on the health of the nation had almost totally disappeared. There was no further need for PE, it might have been thought, to take on the mantle of inducing "discipline, obedience or cleanliness". However, the twin aims of health and discipline were to remain powerful for decades to come.

That was, however, despite the development of new emphases. According to Kirk, "the general trend within the PE curriculum from the 1930s until the early 1970s has been towards the expansion of activities and
subject matter generally" (Kirk, D. 1988). The period was marked by a shift from a need for therapeutic benefits to an educational curriculum, with a great emphasis on games and skill development. As early as 1937 Nye Bevan in the House of Commons was warning of an over-emphasis on games and games competition:

"I do not desire to see any enthusiasm for physical recreation. I desire to see recreation indulged in as a normal aspect of everyday life" (Glogg, M. 1972)

But this moderate unenthusiasm was not to be. Many of the school activities that appeared in the school curriculum were fiercely competitive both within and outside the school.

The decade leading up to the 1988 Educational Reform Act might be called the decade of the document. Official educational documents, from the DES, HMI, Local Educational Authorities and sundry others, proliferated, and PE was no exception. The PE-related documents of this period show a set of aims that embody and extend the principles of the earlier aims. First, the HMI Report in 1985 Curriculum 11 to 16-year olds outlined the broad aims of the PE curriculum:

"PE programmes should promote skillful body management through participation in creative, artistic activities requiring expressive movements; competition between groups or individuals involving the use of psycho-motor skills; activities leading to increased suppleness, agility, strength, stamina; and challenging experiences in various environments. The activities which traditionally provide the main contexts for PE are: gymnastics, dance, swimming, athletics and outdoor education."

Here the references to creativity, gymnastics and dance remind us of the addition of aesthetic aims since the 1930s.
The Sports Council Physical Education Working Party Report of September 1986 reminds us of another modern emphasis, namely, equality. It also refers to an imperative of 'balance' across physical activities:

"The PE profession see it as their aim to provide all their pupils with a balanced physical education programme giving them a wide range of opportunities at all levels of ability rather than to produce talented sportsmen and sportswomen or players for local sports clubs. This balanced programme will provide pupils with a basis of choice and encourage ongoing participation." (The Sports Council, PE Working Party Report, 1986)

The ILEA Report on "My Favourite Subject" in 1988 set out the following single overall aim for PE and Sports:

"The aim of PE is to lay the foundations for a physically literate population, cultured in the sense of both having an understanding of physical activity and experiencing enjoyment in it" and added the following more specific objectives:

* to encourage physically active lifestyles;
* to help children understand sport;
* to achieve sufficient levels of skills to enable physical activities to be pursued in adult life;
* to understand exercise and its relationship to fitness, health and well-being;
* to stimulate optimum growth and development and to provide opportunities for the positive use of energy;
* to use sport as a vehicle for social and moral improvement;
* to give children both the capacity to participate in a range of activities and the ability to benefit from these activities.

(ILEA Working Party Report on PE, Jan 1988)
Two comments are worth making about this. First, in an otherwise comprehensive listing of aims the absence of any explicit mention of aesthetic aims is somewhat strange. Secondly, the reference to the 'positive use of energy' shows the staying power of the Thring perspective!

The Secondary Heads Association Enquiry into the Provision of PE in Secondary Schools in 1986/1987 quoted the following as their aim for PE:

"We aim to develop in our pupils an awareness of the value and the needs of an active and healthy lifestyle, the complete acceptance of good sportsmanship and fair play, the ability to cope with both the success and failure of oneself and others, and the skill and confidence to appreciate and take advantage of opportunities provided in the wide community."

This needs to be interpreted in the light of the Association's concern to defend competitive school sports against some powerful critics:

"The Association calls for the provision of a balanced programme for all with the aim of developing physical abilities to the full and giving opportunities for pupils to achieve physical excellence through quality learning experience. Competitive sports, Secondary Heads believe, provide an important opportunity which enables pupils to measure personal achievement against that of others as well as providing powerful motivation for improvement of personal standards for those committed to it. Played within closely confined rules it also helps in the development of co-operation and unselfishness which will be essential if the pupil is going to be able to make a worthwhile contribution to society in life after school."

Finally, we come to the National Curriculum in PE (1991) - the last of the subject curricula to be published by the National Curriculum
Council. With this event it might be said that aims become statutory for the first time, but in the form of the 'attainment target' and the 'statement of attainment'. In the case of PE there is a specific difficulty of interpretation here. A single attainment target is announced, namely, 'the sum total of all the end of key stage statements'! In fact when one examines the key stage statements of attainment one quickly notices certain recurring themes: planning, participating/performing, evaluating (all in relation to specified physical activities) and appreciating health implications. The first three of these were originally proposed as separate attainment targets by the PE Working Party, and the final result may be seen as an honourable draw between the Working Party and the Minister who had asked for the simplicity of a single Attainment Target. Whether implicit or explicit those three Attainment Targets may be seen as 'process objectives', similar, for example, to the Attainment Targets for the Technology curriculum. As such they make sense only in conjunction with a specification of the activities involved. At a general level it is strongly emphasised that these activities are physical. The Working Party had observed:

"PE is a process of learning, the context being mainly physical. The purpose of this process is to develop specific knowledge, skills and understanding and to promote physical confidence. The focus, however, is on the child and his or her development of physical competence, rather than on the activity."

Even this was not strong enough for the Minister and the final Orders sought to make the 'physicality' of PE even more emphatic - in which we can easily see a deliberate decision to head off that 'academicization' of PE which we met as a topic of debate among my research respondents.
At a more specific level the activities are categorized as athletics, dance, games, gymnastics, adventure activities and swimming.

But now it must be said that even the combination of statements of attainment and specified activities does not actually amount to a statement of aims comparable to those we have been considering. It lacks the element of rationale (apart, perhaps, from the series relating to health-care), not telling us what educational value there is in planning, participating in and evaluating these activities. (In this sense the aims of PE, it might be said, remain a non-statutory matter.)

That element had been present in the Working Party’s Reports, and there is a conveniently clear re-statement of it in the Non-Statutory Guidance (1992) which follows the former quite closely but with a number of significant differences. In terms of their influence on practice in schools, it is probably the latter that counts now. In the blizzard of documents of the past five years, this year’s snow-fall quickly obliterates last year’s.

First, the Working Party Report.

"Physical education educates young people in and through the use and knowledge of the body and its movement. It:
- develops physical competence and enables pupils to engage in worthwhile physical activities;
- promotes physical development and teaches pupils to value the benefits of participation in physical activity while at school and throughout life;
- develops artistic and aesthetic understanding within and through movement; and
- helps to establish self-esteem through the development of
physical confidence and helps pupils to cope with success and failure in competitive and cooperative physical activities. (DES 1991)

The Non-Statutory Guidance's statement of aims is in general somewhat broader and more nuanced. It usefully divides aims into those that are specific to PE (1.1 below) and those which are cross-curricular or shared with some other subjects (1.2 and 1.3 below):

'1.1 Physical education contributes to the overall education of young people by helping them to lead full and valuable lives through engaging in purposeful physical activity. It can:
- develop physical competence and help to promote physical development;
- teach pupils, through experience, to know about and value the benefits of participation in physical activity while at school and throughout life;
- develop an appreciation of skilful and creative performances across the areas of activity.

1.2 Physical education can also contribute to:
- the development of problem-solving skills (e.g. by giving pupils the opportunities to make up and refine their own games);
- the establishment of self-esteem through the development of physical confidence (e.g. swimming at least 25 metres unaided);
- the development of inter-personal skills (e.g. by helping pupils to be aware of their roles as members of teams and groups and taking account of others' ideas).

1.3 Physical activity is combined with the thinking involved in making decisions and selecting, refining, judging and adapting movements. Through these activities pupils should be encouraged to develop the personal qualities of commitment, fairness and enthusiasm.'
Most of the aims in these two statements have a familiar ring. They are reaffirmations of either the traditional or the more modern aims we have been noticing. However they might be thought to have their own character and their own gaps. First, it is worth noticing that the various benefits of PE listed all seem to be thought of as the fruits of actually 'engaging in purposeful physical activity'. The emphasis is more strongly than might first appear on participation as opposed to reflective class-work. Secondly, references to the cognitive are muted. 'Problem-solving skills', in the second list, seem to be confined to the planning stage of physical activities. There is no reference to the exercise of mind in physical activities, to the development of games intelligence, for example, or the more general 'kinaesthetic intelligence' identified in some modern psychology (Gardner, H.T. (1983) and (1993)). Again, the now common phrase 'physical literacy' is not used in relation to the overall aim of PE. In general these lists of aims understate the involvement of mental skills and development in physical skills and development as the latter are normally understood in PE. It thereby leaves the door open to a return to a more dualistic - and conservative - conception of human development. That conception has never done any favours to the status of PE! We may wonder whether the Minister of the time is likely to lose any sleep over this risk to PE.

On the unavoidable assumption that the National Curriculum Council drafters of the second list had the first list before them, it is also interesting to notice what they omitted and what they added. On the credit side, there is in particular the more explicit differentiation of interpersonal skills, as well as the reference to problem-solving
skills. On the debit side, the aesthetic dimension is now no more than hinted at among the more general benefits of PE in the Non-Statutory list, though dance remains one of the six specified activities. The much weaker 'appreciation of' takes the place of the earlier 'understanding within and through'.

To bring this brief history of aims to a conclusion, it would seem that just as the PE curriculum expanded to include more activities, the number of its aims and objectives also increased. Eventually these included:

* the development of physical skills and awareness
* cognitive/mental development
* moral discipline
* moral and psychological safety-valve
* the development of social attitudes and competencies
* enjoyment
* health
* leisure and sports
* aesthetic awareness

Obviously these overlap with each other in many ways. Some of them have been, or are, disputed in theory and/or neglected in practice. For example, some of the recent documents we have looked at fail even to mention the aesthetic dimension. Historically, we have seen a shift from what PE should do to youngsters in the way of of discipline, obedience, etc. to what it may do for youngsters by way of health, fitness, leisure, etc. The more recently arrived aims spell out a message that PE should be centred around the physical, mental and moral
development of children with a view to producing a 'physically literate' population.

A CASE FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

'Philosophers come into their own not when people begin to ask for particular facts about our present secondary school curriculum, about its effectiveness in providing the general knowledge people need in our society, or how best to interest pupils in what we wish to teach; they come into their own when we turn from questions of empirical investigation to ask what is the nature of things we wish pupils to achieve, what we mean by the acquisition of knowledge, and what we mean by capturing pupils' interests.' (Hirst, P (1974))

In the heyday of Philosophy of Education in the 60s and 70s the question of PE, its aims and its place in the curriculum, was quite frequently addressed, sometimes directly by the more prominent philosophers like Hirst, Peters, and White, more often by followers applying their general doctrines to the field of PE. This address has continued more fitfully through the 80s and 90s. Despite the more embattled state of philosophy of education, Carr and Langford have written directly about PE while Walsh has recently proposed certain general principles and strategies with interesting implications for PE. With the exception of Carr, these writers did not have a personal professional stake in PE. They tended to write of it, as indeed of other specific subjects, in relation to general norms and criteria of educational value. Particularly when they and philosophy of education were influential and powerful it was extremely important for writers committed to particular subjects to
justify themselves by reference to the general criteria proposed by philosophers. Sometimes their task was to show that PE met these criteria better than the philosophers themselves gave it credit for. To help with assembling a case for PE I shall examine some of the views of Peters, Hirst, White, Carr, Walsh, Langford and McIntyre in relation to the questions of the place of PE in the school curriculum, the ways in which it is educationally worthwhile, and the nature of the contribution it makes to the life of the human being. I shall occasionally refer back also to my research subjects' views of the aims of PE.

It will be useful to retain the Non-Statutory Guidance's distinction between aims that are held in general with most subjects and aims that are specific and unique to PE, though the fact of the former has sometimes been used against PE, as we will see.

Peters (1965 & 1966) defines education as the initiation into worthwhile activities. To be worthwhile an activity has to be of value in itself, for its own sake. A worthwhile activity is further qualified as meeting four criteria, presumably interrelated:

- it needs to be serious in that it can illuminate other areas of life, thus contributing to the quality of life.
- it will have a cognitive element or "perspective".
- it should change a person's view of the world.
- it will illuminate truth and an educated man will care about truth.

Peters points to three exemplar activities, Science, History and Philosophy which fulfil the four criteria of a worthwhile activity. In
Ethics and Education (1966), his most influential work, he makes more reference to Games than PE. Games, according to him, are not worthwhile in the way of science, history and philosophy. They are non-serious: they do not illuminate other areas of life, and do not contribute to the quality of life. They lack cognitive content, are "hived off from the main business of living", and thus lack moral significance and are unlikely to change a person's view of the world. Peters is willing to concede that Games and physical activities generally can be of some value in education. Through play some "serious" things can be learned and PE can be of value in providing a means of developing "aesthetic grace, skills, qualities of character and some 'moral qualities'". Hence physical activities are seen as having an instrumental value in the curriculum for the purposes of developing other worthwhile qualities. By the nature of its subject matter PE engages pupils physically rather than cognitively, but it is cognitive engagement which develops pupils' cognitive abilities and meets the criteria of worthwhileness.

I would like to take issue with Peters' argument on two main points. Certainly, for some people physical activities can be a more or less serious matter. Now take two people, one seriously involved in physical activities and the other having no involvement at all. Surely, we can't expect them to have just the same view of the world or their lives to have just the same kind of quality. The sportsperson, for example, is one whose cognitive perspectives are significantly coloured by his or her interest in sports. For good or ill, that interest significantly influences not just Saturday afternoons but the whole week: what he or
she reads, thinks, talks and dreams about, who he or she keeps company with, builds up a fund of shared experience with, counts as good friends, etc. It may even influence his or her choice of life partner and then become a significant element in their shared and family lives. All this seems quite obvious.

Secondly, it is not difficult to argue that this interest can enhance the sportsperson's quality of life, and not just in terms of general health, and the length of life. What, otherwise, are the real benefits to the thousands of spectators who week after week travel long distances to watch sports? And what drives the participants who brave all sorts of weather conditions and other impediments to be actively involved in physical activities? Physical activities offer them scope for the expression of feeling, for aesthetic pleasure, for the sheer enjoyment of play and for the display of skilled performance. The case that can be made for alternative interests does not contradict the real values of this kind of interest.

There is perhaps one further point. According to Peters, subjects should demonstrate educational worth to be included in the school curriculum. Can we not then say if subjects have failed over long periods of time to win a curriculum place that this is evidence, though inconclusive of course, that they lack what it takes? Can we not equally say that if a subject has a long-standing and recognized place on the school curriculum then that is real, though inconclusive, evidence that it does have educational value.
I turn to Hirst. The background to his work in relation to PE was the theory of Forms of knowledge (Hirst 1965, and 1974) which was for a time popular and influential enough to set the agenda of debates in regard to curriculum inclusion and status. It was not surprising that some of the PE establishment sought to strengthen the position of PE by arguing that it involved its own Form of knowledge, kinaesthetic knowledge, as unique as any other and to be counted as an eighth Form in Hirst's sense (Hirst 1983). Hirst himself rejected this claim (ibid.) on the grounds that, first, the knowledge involved in movement-skills was in large part procedural rather than theoretic or propositional and, secondly, inasmuch as it was theoretic it was simply a mixture of some of the already acknowledged Forms of knowledge. Nor did he think that PE's place in the curriculum should depend on it being a special Form of knowledge. For that matter, 'geography is not a special Form of knowledge either, but a mixture of the scientific and the interpersonal forms of knowledge'. The fact that something is a cognitive mixture does not necessarily lose it its claim on the curriculum.

Hirst then was not arguing that PE ought not to be compulsory. Nevertheless, by opposing its claim to be a Form of Knowledge he was denying it high status in his terms at that time. Reviewing the argument now, we may feel that the PE establishment had a stronger case than Hirst allowed for their eighth Form of knowledge. And since then we have had the psychologist Howard Gardner's identification of a bodily-kinaesthetic kind of intelligence (1983 and 1993). But it is more important to note that the theory of Forms in general has been coming under increasing fire and Hirst himself has recently joined the
ranks of its critics (Hirst 1993a and 1993b). Indeed where once he saw 'propositionality', the knowledge in question's being propositional, as the badge of status, he now sees 'practicality' as the most important criterion of value.

I now turn to John White, the third of the educational theorists, who in his first book *Towards a Compulsory Curriculum* (1973), wrote strongly against the inclusion of PE in the compulsory school curriculum. This book was an argument for a common curriculum for all pupils. It began by arguing that the real purpose of education was to widen and deepen as much as possible the autonomy which students will have as adults. To achieve this purpose a compulsory curriculum of a particular sort is a necessary condition. First, schools need to provide 'taster' courses, which in many cases will have to be sustained over many years, relating to the options the pupils might want to choose in later life. Secondly, schools need to develop in pupils the psychological conditions which will eventually allow them to choose independently what they would like to do in their lives.

What, more specifically, would command a place on this autonomy-orientated compulsory curriculum? According to White, candidate activities divide into two broad categories, category A and category B, of which the first have a much more immediate claim on the curriculum. Category A includes:

* communication in general.
* engaging in pure mathematics.
* engaging in sciences.
* appreciating works of art.
* philosophising.

For an activity to be included in the first category it had to be the kind of activity that can only be well understood by engaging in it. Music, arts in general and mathematics would qualify, for example, but White declared himself pretty sure that PE activities did not meet this condition. Category B activities are those which can be reasonably well understood without engaging in them. Some of them too, however, should be compulsory, principally those that can strengthen in students a sense of their lives as wholes. Religious education (of a particular kind) and history are justifiably included in the compulsory curriculum on this ground. But PE does not meet this condition either. Of course the compulsory curriculum will include information about physical, as about other Category B, activities.

Why does White place physical activities among the Category B activities? One may sympathize with him when he remarks that the universal, if low-status, place of PE on the curriculum is sometimes sustained by such spurious claims as that it is

"a powerful factor in the formation and development of character [and] an important influence in the development and specialisation of brain cells" (p.42, quoting Newton (1919))

But we still want to know why he is so confident that physical activities and sports can be well understood without engagement in them? The answer to this is not entirely clear. White offers mountain climbing as an example. But, almost certainly, mountain climbers would throw up their hands in amazement at the very idea. Similarly with
swimming: being in the water and taking part seems an absolute requirement for the kind of understanding of swimming that we need in order to know if it is 'for us'. Sailing and ski-ing are other physical activities that require engagement to gain any reasonable understanding of their thrills and terrors. Indeed a great many physical activities seem to be among those that can only 'really' be understood from the inside.

We can find some more elaborate examples in the world of sports. Try explaining the game of cricket to an American. Typically, even if he is a baseball supporter, he does not understand what the English, and others, see in cricket. He may come to know the rules of cricket - in which his knowledge of baseball may be helpful - but understanding its spirit and peculiar passions is quite another matter. Here his appreciation of baseball may actually be an obstacle; he is, perhaps, wedded to the constant buzz and action of baseball, to its rhythm of discrete rounds, to its being over in an evening etc. So, it makes sense to suppose that unless you have had prolonged exposure to cricket, probably through being brought up to it, you will not be part of its culture and will lack a deep understanding of it, and, in particular, a deep understanding of its attractions.

There is also the little matter of the contribution of skills to enjoyment and satisfaction. A successful golf-player may well owe his success to playing golf when young, to playing many rounds of golf as he grew up, to mastering the necessary skills and seeing his game develop. He finds in later life that playing golf comes easier, having had a good
start in early life. Playing golf in his school days was not only acquiring an understanding of it - it was the beginning of becoming good at it. The implication is that if you want to truly empower people to include something in their adult lives you have to give them something more than information about it and, indeed, more than some minimal engagement with it. Much of the work in PE is of a developmental nature and there are no short-cuts to the acquisition and mastery of skills.

John White thought that the purpose of education was to get children to the point of being able to control, and indeed design, their own lives and choose the activities they wish to spend their time on. So what they need from the education system, basically, is a sufficient understanding and knowledge of all the things they could do to make this choice for themselves. In effect we have found out that there may be something unrealistic about this goal. The number and range of activities that should be counted as Category A, and the degree of engagement with them that is necessary to make them real possibilities, militate against it.

(In his later works (1982 and 1990) White was to place more emphasis on the social and moral goals of education - though without abandoning individual autonomy. This broader view did lead to some rethinking of his position on PE, among other things, for example:

'If such things as cooperation for shared ends, self-confidence, social recognition and imaginativeness in devising means to ends are among the central aims of education, there is every reason why health education, craft, design and technology, projects in the local community, work-experience, drama and sports should be
accorded great importance in schools.' (White 1990)

But it is the earlier work that belonged to the heyday of philosophy of education - the period in which philosophers were extremely influential in forming educational opinion.)

In a well-received book of the 1980s, Alisdair MacIntyre promoted the concept of 'a practice'. It is any complex, coherent, established and cooperative activity which has satisfactions that have to be understood from the inside, has standards that partly define it, has to be understood progressively, and provides a context for the practice of virtues (1981, chapters 14-5). Clearly this is at least close to White's earlier concept of a Category A activity. But MacIntyre includes sports in his lists of examples, as a matter of course, alongside the sciences, arts, politics etc. His more open list makes it clearer, not only that sports belong here, but that there are altogether too many practices to include them all in the general curriculum, that, therefore, we would need some further principle of selection not provided by White.

Interestingly enough, my respondents in the fieldwork strongly argued against the idea of a kind of PE programme that is only 'an inch deep and a mile long', referring, of course, to the 'taster' system operating in the games programme. Youngsters were leaving school without a true foundation in any one of the activities because they simply moved from one course to the other.
Peters, Hirst and White were writing at a time when philosophy of education was in its ascendancy. It was important to take note of what philosophers said; it was equally important for subject establishments to square their subjects up to the criteria being proposed by philosophers of education. We are no longer in a period of philosophical ascendancy. Nonetheless, 'criterial values' still represents an important kind of thinking even if it is not fashionable.

D.Carr, the one philosopher of education professionally involved in PE, was, not surprisingly, the one who was firmest in the defence of its educational value. Certainly, there is no doubt about its vintage and staying-power:

"PE has featured in most school curricula at least, since and more or less continuously from the time of Aristotle and Plato, so we need not, therefore, doubt its educational pedigree". (Carr, 1978)

In a later paper, he starts out from a series of questions:

* What part, if any, has PE to play in the general education of a person?

* What does the physical educator aim to contribute to the development of an individual?

* Can the inclusion of physical activities in the curriculum be justified on any grounds other than that these activities provide children with a much needed break from serious academic study? (Carr 1979, p91)

Carr uses this series to take to task the Hirstian notion that education is about the development of propositional knowledge and understanding.
Of course, knowledge and understanding are clearly necessary. A person could hardly be called "educated" if he had acquired no knowledge and understanding. Could a man 'who has no acquaintance with Maths, Science, History, Literature, Art or any other form of knowledge, who can neither read nor write and who lacks any practical or technical skill, be called "educated"?' (ibid. p94) But Carr wants to include rationality in his less restrictive definition of education:

"An educational aim would be.....something that served to promote the development of rationality, knowledge and understanding eg an intention to make children literate or numerate, or to introduce them to history or science" (ibid. p.94

This addition provides an entree to the practical:

"For an education in athletics, gymnastics, or outdoor pursuits, invariably involves instruction in rule governed activities and initiation into modes of rational agency. Disciplined physical activity does indeed serve to promote the development of individual rationality, but the rationality it cultivates is practical, rather than theoretical or intellectual, and when a child has mastered a skill or some particular game, the knowledge he is then able to exercise, is knowing how rather than knowing that, procedural rather than academic knowledge, but knowledge nonetheless." (ibid. p.86

Physical competence and sports make strong demands on practical rationality, knowledge and understanding. I share his view that this broader definition creates a place for PE in the curriculum. We may add 'physically competent' to 'literate' and 'numerate', and add sports to history and science.

Carr also does a piece of devil's advocacy for a standard objection:

"if education is essentially of the mind, how can there be such a
thing as physical education? Surely the very idea is absurd" (ibid. p 28).

The objection goes that activities taught under the heading PE cannot in themselves be generally educational inasmuch as they are physical. The traditional maxim 'a healthy body and a healthy mind' has given theorists the ammunition to set up the physical/mental divide. But can either of these actually operate without the other? As well as making a contribution to the development of rationality, knowledge and understanding, for which he argues against Peters, Carr also argues that the practices commonly associated with the term "physical activity" are as mental as they are physical.

In these ways Carr provides a strong case that PE can contribute to the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and rationality and has, as a consequence, a strong claim to remain prominent in the school curriculum.

Let us now move to a much more recent philosophical work and, at the same time, to a rather different philosophical angle on our topic. Walsh (1993) does have a discussion of educational values but it is rather his notion of maps of cultural capital that I wish to take up here. It can be used to provoke a new line of enquiry for us. Distinctions between Forms of knowledge and between Categories A and B activities are 'maps' of culture we have already encountered, but Walsh proposes a more elaborate, multi-dimensional strategy to mapping. We shall consider now the implications of this strategy for PE - a matter that Walsh does not himself discuss.
Walsh sees curriculum mapping as an essential intermediate step between goal-setting and curriculum design:

"In whole curriculum planning the analysis of knowledge intervenes crucially between deliberating over goals and designing the curriculum itself, overlapping with each of these and translating them one to the other. In its absence grand statements of goal come all too quickly to be regarded as ignorable rhetoric" (Walsh, 1993)

If we are to design a curriculum, what is it that we have at hand? We have our cultural resources, made up of a whole set, or sets, of values, attitudes, disciplines and stores of knowledge. To avoid an impossible overload of the curriculum, we have to make a "selection". How does one select from such an array? What in the culture is so basic and so important that nearly everybody has to adhere to it? To answer this question there is a need, first, to categorise the material that makes up the cultural resources. This categorising is what Walsh refers to as "mapping". Instead of struggling with an amorphous mess of disciplines, one could divide them, for example, into the sciences, the arts and practical skills. But we can, in fact, categorize them in different ways. "Collections of things to the classified have .. many potential bases of classification." (p.120) This presents a problem in the sense that these sets of categories can cut across each other. Just as you would find if you had to classify a crowd of people in turn by "sex, age, hair colour, nationality, interests, income levels and so on" (p.120), so with cultural resources you could have, for example, a division into ones that are modern and ones that are classical cutting across another division into ones that are traditionally mens' pursuits and ones that are traditionally womens' pursuits. However, a way
forward with this problem is to ask: what are the most educationally significant ways of categorising cultural resources? Walsh puts forward three ways that are all borrowed from the tradition of philosophical reflection on culture and education. They are all, also, relatively simple, even 'elementary'.

Map A follows Aristotle in dividing knowledge into three kinds, the theoretical, the practical and the productive, each with its own distinctive aim. Map B, just as ancient as the first, classifies knowledge according to whether the contact it brings is with the physical world, the biological world, the human world or the divine world. Maps A and B cut across each other - and are in turn cut across by Map C which is based on the different dimensions or 'zones' of the human personality. Map C is actually a cluster of little maps. It employs "age-old psychological distinctions to urge the necessity of educating the whole person" (p.121) mind and body, imagination and emotions as well as intellect and memory, character as well as brain. Hence we have 3 maps, maps A-C, quite different from each other. But no one map seems better than the others - intuitively, they are all valid and important.

The question for us is how and to what extent do these maps accommodate PE as a curriculum subject?

With regards to the first map - the Aristotelian division of knowledge by aim - it is interesting to note that the skills and the competences that are at the heart of PE don't easily fit into this map, raising the
question of whether a fourth kind of knowledge — to be called 'kinaesthetic' perhaps — is involved at the heart of physical awareness, physical skills, and physical virtues? In pole-vaulting, for example, some theoretical knowledge of the mechanics, dynamics and aero-dynamics of the body, of the kind of pole you would need, the kind of run-up and speed you need before take-off, may all be involved, especially in modern professionalized athletics. But knowledge of how to pole vault, knowing how to do it, remains quite different from being able to say how it should be done. Similarly, there is likely to be an element of the aesthetic spectacle involved which gives pole-vaulting a relationship to productive knowledge in Aristotle's sense, but, we sense, that is also not the heart of the matter. Yet again, there may be decisions to be taken, and virtues like prudence and courage to be practised, for example, whether to compete despite injury or in certain weather conditions, whether to pressure an opponent by delaying one's next vault until the pole is higher etc. But the canniest vaulter is not necessarily the best vaulter. At bottom, we might say simply that the vaulter's body has to come to know, to be trained and exercised into knowing, how to use the pole to get over the bar and land correctly, how to compose and dispose, coil and uncoil, itself to those purposes.

Other subjects like technology, according to Walsh, may be centred in one of these three types of knowledge while also having a foot in one or both of the others. The idea we are pursuing regarding PE, however, is that it integrates elements from all three of these types of knowledge but is centred in a fourth kind. Where it overlaps with physiology, for example, it includes theoretical knowledge. It has an important
aesthetic - and therefore productive - dimension, particularly in such activities as dance. Carr, we may recall, saw it as involving practical knowledge primarily. Certainly, where it overlaps with health education and leisure education and focusses on the students' life-style choices and on providing the discipline to stick with them, it involves practical knowledge in the full Aristotelian sense. Even in regard to more limited settings, like learning when to attack the bowling and when to stonewall, or when to protect a lead and when to continue the attack, practical knowledge is involved. But the core knowledge, skills, flashes of inspiration and genius - all of them in some deeper sense physical - seem not quite to fit into this category any more than into the first two. Walsh remarks that the three Aristotelian categories are particularly archetypal (p.123). This fourth category may be just as elemental as them, just as archetypal.

Let us now move on to map B to see how it accommodates PE and how PE looks in relation to it. This map distinguishes knowledge on the basis of whether it relates to:

* the physical world.
* the biological world.
* the human world.
* the divine world.

How does PE relate to these different worlds? We could say that it belongs to a great extent to the human and social world. It both acts out and reflects upon concepts like co-operation, self-realisation, willingness, persistence, fair play, coping with disappointment and success etc. It involves learning about oneself as a person and about
other people. Some of this 'human' learning may be unique to physical activities. In any case it seems probable that PE offers a particularly economical, enjoyable and facilitative vehicle for some of these lessons about human qualities. A number nine batsman is sent in as a 'night watchman' to protect the usual number three batsman. He not only holds up his batting end but begins to score runs freely and finishes the game with the top score. How much might he have learnt in the process? First, that he can cope with a difficult situation with wickets falling all round him. Second, that he can score runs for his team when he has to and, so, turn a situation round. Third, that he can take advantage of the overconfidence of opponents. Fourth, that stereotypes mislead. Fifth, to walk taller and to command an extra degree of respect from his peers. Sixth, to sustain concentration over long periods. And so on.

Assume the match was a school fixture and there is an opportunity to further digest such lessons in a formal PE context. PE is full of such examples. For top athletes and sportspeople, as for the rest of us, bettering their performance - or indeed failing to better their performance - often brings with it an increased knowledge of themselves, their opponents, their teammates, and, indeed, of both people in general and interactive human situations in general.

So certainly PE involves learning about the human and social world. But it is involved with the physical world as well. This involvement is dramatic in activities like orienteering, mountain climbing, yachting, and weight-lifting, but not much less obvious in cricket (weather, light, state of the wicket) and outdoor activities generally, and still present even in indoor activities e.g. the effects of altitude on
athletics even if indoors. At bottom, the physical activities to which PE relates cannot avoid involvement with the physical world by virtue of being themselves physical or bodily. Furthermore, the development of proficiency and skill clearly often requires a strongly cognitive kind of involvement eg a weightlifter will come to require some knowledge of the workings of the human body. So in this second map, we might say that it is a mixture of the involvement of the human world and the involvement of the physical world. Finally, some sports and physical activities, like horse-riding, fishing, and hunting, also carry a biological involvement.

Map C is based on the premise that education is of the whole person and as such has to attend to every aspect of the individual. It draws on some ancient distinctions such as those between body and mind, between the moral character and the cognitive achievement of a person, and between faculties like imagination, feelings, memory and hard intellect. These allow the ideal of educating the whole person to be fleshed out.

Where does PE stand here? The PE teacher will, no doubt, grab at the idea of the need to educate the body as well as the mind, implicitly or explicitly claiming the body as her particular 'territory'. She is probably justified in doing this, and politically it seems to promise a clear role and legitimacy for PE. However she may also perceive that it is not without danger, including political danger. It could easily return PE to 'Cartesian' dualism, whereas she has learnt to think of modern PE as a kind of challenge to that sort of dualism.
She is likely to identify at least partly with Langford, a philosopher who, like Carr above, challenges head-on the Cartesian view that if anything is mental then it is not physical, and if anything is physical it is not mental. (Langford (1979)) Dreams may be particularly mental and stones particularly physical, but there are many other things, like music and people’s behaviour, which are both physical and mental. Physical objects, as such, cannot be educated, but persons who have physical existence can be educated because their physical existence is also mental. According to Langford there is no fundamental divide between educating the mind and educating the body. The frequently used notion of 'development', which he takes to be a biological metaphor for learning, can be misleading in this connection. He sees more promise for PE in the language of learning than the language of development. The human body develops by recognisable stages, but the contribution of education to that process is at best indirect. The business of physical education is rather the learning of physical awareness, skills and competences.

On the other hand our PE teacher might not be entirely happy to abandon the claim that PE is in the business of 'development', since this is a word commonly applied across the curriculum. She might choose to limit her objection to a too great assimilation of educational development to the model of physical growth. Walsh remarks that physical movements, physical skills and physical competences are, at once, expressions of mental life, and particular kinds of expression of mental life – namely, physical expressions – needing a particular kind of educational treatment. Our teacher might say that these expressions relate closely,
indeed, to more general values like discipline and cooperation, but have their own angle on them. Physical activities are activities in which people experience themselves in the world, but specifically through movement. Their popularity, surely, suggests the uniqueness of the kind of experience they provide. They have an inbuilt mental side to them while remaining physical.

In political terms, too, it is important to avoid a divorce between physical and mental development. Our teacher may fear that a divorce would allow the educational establishment to say that since the real business of education is knowledge, the physical falls outside education. Health and fitness may be important but they can be pursued outside school, in the local sports and leisure centres and in the park. There would be no justification for making them a burden on education.

On the other hand, an absorption of the physical into the mental would be no more helpful to the security of PE. People could say: 'as just another expression of mental life, it has no specific educational values; it does nothing that other subjects are not already doing, and so might be excluded from the curriculum'. Walsh observes in reference to science education, that unless it can demonstrate that it has values that are distinctive and specific it is vulnerable to being omitted from the curriculum on the grounds of being an expensive subject. PE is also a resource-intensive subject, requiring playing fields, special equipment and special arrangements. It too might be made to disappear unless it is accepted that it offers something distinctive that other subjects don't offer. So if we say that the physical is an expression
of the mental, we must be careful to add that it is a particular kind of expression of the mental and, as such, in need of special provision. The champion of PE has to steer a middle course between divorcing body from mind and absorbing body into mind.

Walsh makes an analogous point about the education of the emotions. (1993, p.121). Philosophers like Peters had quite rightly opposed too flat a contrast between feelings and intellect. Feelings, in fact, are based on cognitive appraisals, for example, of a situation as dangerous. So a lot of education of the feelings would consist of providing people with better beliefs and a better capacity to make these cognitive appraisals. Now this could be read as a hint that there is no real need for specific education for the feelings - feelings can take care of themselves provided the beliefs are being looked after. The reply to this would be that we all know of dessicated curricula and pedagogies which are perceived as, and blamed for, neglecting the emotions and the potential of many subjects for emotional education - in which feelings are neglected and do not take care of themselves. In the same way, Walsh also indicates that while the physical is indeed rooted in the mental, it does not follow that just by educating the mind you are automatically educating the body as well. You do need to provide specifically for this kind of physical-mental development and that is what PE is doing. PE is necessary because we are embodied creatures.

Let us round off our reflections on the three maps assembled by Walsh. In the 1960s and 1970s some in the PE establishment sought to show PE was a form of Knowledge in a Hirstian sense and, as we have seen,
attracted a rebuttal from Hirst himself (Hirst 1979). A less artificial and more persuasive case can be made for its uniqueness within Walsh's more multi-dimensional approach. All three maps we have considered expose dimensions and values of the subject: that it includes theoretical, productive and practical elements but may be centred on none of these but on a category overlooked by Aristotle; that it involves students substantially with both the human and the physical world (sometimes more with one, sometimes more with the other); and that it focusses on the bodily as a specific expression of the mental. But the second map discloses aspects (involvement with the human and physical worlds) that are not unique to PE; while illuminating PE, it makes an insufficient case for it by itself. It is then the other two maps which seem most relevant to the status of PE. Put into relation to them, PE comes out looking fairly unique and irreplaceable. The third map might be thought to hand this to PE on a plate, though we have noticed the care that needs to be taken with the claim that the body is PE's special territory. The first map is perhaps the 'surprise packet' in our discussion. The kind of physical knowledge and skills that are most central to PE, exemplified for instance in the learnt ability to undertake a long throw-in in soccer, may well constitute a unique kind of know-how, not theoretical nor 'productive' in a primary way, nor yet practical in Aristotle's precise sense of bearing on decisions and choices. If this idea were indeed to survive further evaluation it would go quite a long way towards showing that PE was indispensable.
AIMS OF PE

We have been reviewing a variety of philosophical strategies and arguments relating to the place of PE in the curriculum. Why are there such disparities in beliefs? Why is the place of the subject still controversial, considering that PE has been on the school curriculum since 1870 in one form or other, without any interruption or threat of losing its place? Periodic changes in its content and methodology, though substantial, seem on a par with those for many other subjects. There have been conflicts between the professional and the lay or public view of its role and duties – one has only to think of sports commentators who blame school PE for the ill fortune that befalls the national sports teams – but, again, there are analogous conflicts in, for example, English and mathematics without anyone actually wanting to abolish those subjects. A greater clarity about the aims of subjects may reduce such conflicts, but in order to re-secure the position of PE on the curriculum we need a statement of aims that brings out its real educational values.

In attempting now to come up with such a statement I would like to pull together different elements of this chapter and the last. I shall draw on the philosophical reflections we have just left off and on our earlier historical note on the evolution of aims in policy documents. I will also draw on my fieldwork subjects' views on the value of PE. Not, or not primarily, theorists or policy makers, those subjects were practitioners, committed certainly, but with a long and intimate experience of PE. They had had a minimum of eleven years of PE as
pupils, still more years as students at teacher training colleges, and most of them further time as teachers and lecturers of the subject. It would be extremely foolhardy to dismiss their views on the aims of PE, having gone to some trouble to find out what those views were.

As intimated, it is not an exhaustive and impartial list in which every item is made as important as every other that is needed. Our list will be biased towards aims that stand to enhance the status of PE, aims that are specific to PE or more fully and easily realized in PE, and, finally, aims that are more liable to neglect in PE practice.

(1) One aim is to cultivate the aesthetic skills and sensibilities of students. We saw that this, in the sense of an explicit and discrete aim, is a quite late arrival on the PE scene, and it is obviously by no means exclusive to PE, but it is still one of PE's more important current claims on curriculum status. In common with the arts, and more than other subjects, PE conveys meaning immediately, spontaneously, lucidly - also wordlessly for the most part. The performer's intention and creativity are expressed and revealed not in words but in movement. The advent of dance draws attention to truths about all movement. Movement exists only as long as it lasts, like music. It is deeply involved with time: quick or slow, lightning strike versus slow build-up, the sweetly - indeed exquisitely - timed pass (perhaps also 'inch-perfect', reminding us of movement's equally intimate involvement with space), the languid cover-drive. It can convey volumes, for example about the potential of a particular player, in a short space of time, like the cartoonist's swift strokes evoking a whole face and character
in a few lines. It may be deceptive, artfully concealing its true intention and direction, as in spin bowling. It can succeed brilliantly or flop disastrously. Split-seconds can bring moments of profound appreciative satisfaction to both performer and spectator. These may be sustained by the video replay, and become the subject of fond or still awed discussion for many an hour over many later years. The sheer beauty of a Campese pass at full speed on the wing, the backhand of McEnroe to touch the baseline, the double body swerve of George Best, these are all golden moments in movement, over in a flash yet relived indefinitely.

In addition, movement and sport has inspired as a byproduct of its own excitement and beauty what might be considered a special genre of literature, which both assists the process of reminiscence and adds its own value. This literature may even reinterpret the inelegant in elegance. The following is a cricket commentator's view of a number nine batsman:

"There is nothing aesthetic about his batting. In the short period he stayed at the crease he played more agricultural strokes than a farmer would in a whole day"

Such fine imagery makes a valuable contribution to literature.

In movement, too, the aesthetic moment and the historic moment can combine to intensify each other. A particular movement is historic because it changes and determines a course of events, the result of a game, or a whole competition, or even a World Cup. Suppose this movement is also brilliant and beautiful. Then it becomes the more
historic - it will be still more remembered and relived over and over by the armies of followers. And on the other hand its basic historic significance makes it the more aesthetically pleasing - by virtue of its being so 'fitting to the occasion'.

(2) Secondly, there is a highly significant group of aims clustering around the idea of self-esteem. In my experience as a teacher these are quite neglected in the general life of the secondary school. It is different for the junior school. If John at the end of the junior school day runs all the way home to show his mum his drawing for the day, this is because the ethos of the junior school encourages it - it is because John's drawing has already been praised that he carries it proudly home. In the secondary school, however, this ethos of encouragement is much harder to sustain. Not only is the home-school link less intimate; so also is the teacher-pupil link. PE teachers in the secondary school, including many of my field-work subjects, tend to be more or less sharply aware of this problem and to see themselves more or less clearly as obliged to counteract it. This is because, by the nature of the subject, involvement with both success and failure is a particularly prominent feature of PE.

Of course, some sense of achievement is natural at the end of any piece of school work, and is likely to be encouraged to a degree across all departments. But PE is one of a small number of subjects in which achievements are not primarily 'on paper'. It is one thing for the class teacher to call out a mark or a symbol to indicate and publicize a child's achievement. It is quite another thing for the class actually
to see the achievement for themselves, and for performers to experience their class-mates as an audience. In a game or a PE class a particular skill is executed (after weeks of practice) at a precise required moment, may also cause a chain-reaction of other movements in team-mates, and achieves its desired effect in full view of team mates and spectators. The person is applauded by team mates, the achievement is long talked about in the changing rooms and the discussion then continued in the Maths lesson. His skill may be copied movement perfect by others in the school and even, as sometimes happens, it may be named after the performer. Even without this exceptional degree of celebration, this kind of joyous achievement builds a confidence and self esteem that makes the performer feel "ten feet tall". Both in relation to PE and more generally (the spill-over effect), there is no greater motivation to go on to do better than a sense of achievement.

Equally significant about PE is the frequent, and again public, experience of disappointment and failure that it provides. We know that failure can damage. We also know that life is full of losings as well as winnings. In the PE lesson, the teacher knows that whether losing turns out to be the end of the road for the loser or a good learning experience will depend not only on the strength of the loser's character but also on the level of encouragement from teacher and peers. Knowing this the good PE teacher will develop a a teaching style and ethos of encouragement. Picking losers up and remotivating them is very much his or her hallmark. A useful skill in teaching any subject, it is indispensable in PE. And if the immediate message to the student is to try the immediate task again - today's loser can become tomorrow's
winner - the underlying lesson is how not to be too discouraged by failure generally. In education we tend to highlight the successful, and to say little about the loser. PE offers the opportunity of pursuing an "emotional equilibrium" between elation and dismay, hubris and despair. The key is the keenness and the rawness of the PE experience and the sheer frequency of success and failure and the transitions from one to the other in physical competitions. Each engagement is an opportunity for the loser last time to come good this time. It is not pleasant for PE teachers to see youngsters leaving the scene of the contest with bowed heads, tears streaming down their faces, unable to face their supporters - but they can offer the consoling thought of the next game. There is an opportunity in this area for PE teachers to make a valuable contribution that will be a life-long benefit for those youngsters.

(3) My subjects regularly referred to learning about people, communication, social skills such as learning how to get on with people and resolve character and personality conflicts, and one final-year student teacher commented on the 'etiquette' that rugby had taught him. In studying the policy evolution of PE we noticed the emergence of such aims as cooperation, setting group interests above one's own, sportsmanship and citizenship. I propose to consider all these under the general heading of social interaction as an important aim of PE.

Consider the following real-life, if somewhat extreme, example. To cope with pressure of pupil numbers on school basketball courts, it has become quite common to divide a class of 30 pupils into six teams of 5
and then run three matches simultaneously on the same court. The teams are identified by different colour bands and the matches are differentiated by using three different coloured balls. The demands made on the pupils' social awareness in this congested space - to differentiate allies, opponents and potential obstructions - may easily be imagined.

First, at a very basic level, because PE is physical and involves scarce space, often in large quantities, there is already a premium on sharing, taking turns, cooperation. Even in intrinsically individualist sports like gymnastics, pupils in the school situation will be expected to cooperate in moving equipment in and out of use as it is needed, to wait their turn to perform on it, and so on, and indeed working collaboratively to a common goal and working in teams and groups are common practices in the gymnasium. Second, sports are rule-bound and rules are social conventions, so that even the solo golfer or the footballer who is practising alone know themselves to be operating within a social tradition. Third, in team sports and activities pupils learn to work with others, to play specific roles within larger enterprises, to put group interests higher than their own interests, to support other individuals, to encourage downhearted colleagues - and with some probability of this learning spilling over into off-the-field interactions with teammates. Fourth, there is the social interaction with opponents in both team sports and more individual sports like tennis: one learns to withstand, to attack, to menace and threaten, to defend stoutly, to notice tentativeness and take advantage of it, to conceal one's own nervousness, to hold on grimly. These 'hostile'
interactions are constrained, of course, both by the rules of the game and by the ideals of sportsmanship as in, for example, calling a penalty on oneself, 'walking' in cricket, applauding a particularly impressive goal by opponents. They are also likely to be complemented by more convivial forms of interaction with opponents off the field.

The great majority of school PE activities, it can be said, require children to perform in groups and their ability to minimise conflict and reach compromises is essential to their learning and to producing something worthwhile at the end. In regard to both individual games like badminton and team games like rugby, co-operation, abiding by the rules, seeing that fair play is exercised, and bringing the game to a proper conclusion are prominent in teachers' minds and are vigourously demanded of, and indeed by, the pupils.

The social interaction in PE has a high physical component. Indeed one might say it is primarily physical, a matter primarily of body language, and some of it involving actual body contact as in a scrum in rugby. Arnold offers the following observation:

"Social interaction in general refers to the give and take between individuals in social situations. It involves ideas, thoughts, feelings and motives and these can be as much generated by touch, winks and nods and the like as by grammatically structured acts of speech." (Arnold, P.J. (1979) p.53)

The very look in an opponent's or teammate's performer's eyes can denote a whole range of messages. The dropping of a performer's head, the drooping shoulders, the punching of the fist in the air, all tell a tale. If two forwards in a football team have 'a good understanding',
then a particular movement of one into space is itself enough to trigger his teammate into initiating a 'one-two' passing sequence. No need for words. These and a whole range of other body movements form a language code that in many ways is unique to movement studies in PE.

PE, then, is highly anti-autistic. It is surely the most 'social' of all the conventional curriculum areas - more consistently 'social' than music, drama, and technology, and hugely more 'social' than most other subjects. Admittedly, the traditional picture of the solitary scholar at his or her desk silently wrapped in his or her own learning cocoon needs substantial qualification. In modern pedagogy, the 'on-task working buzz', the planned group discussion, and the shared project are commonplace. But individual work - individually assessed - remains the norm in curriculum areas other than PE. The opposite is true in PE. It includes some solitary activities, some room for individuals and individualism, and occasions for serious individual concentration, but it is interaction that is the norm here. We noticed in our fieldwork the jokey comment of non-PE staff that PE was just an extension of recreation. One way in which PE is like recreation and unlike other curriculum areas is that it is seriously interactive.

(iv) **Fitness and health** has been an important aim of PE at least since the turn of this century. Fitness is part of good health and it facilitates good health. But getting and staying fit is an issue and a problem for us today. How often do we hear the remark, "I have got to do something to get fit"? In the past their lifestyles enabled a large proportion of the population to stay fit without a clear intention of
doing so. Walking long distances, cycling to work, the carrying of heavy objects, operating manual machines, lots of fresh air and a fair amount of manual work all contributed to a state of fitness that was more common than uncommon in those days. This did not necessarily mean they were healthy since other factors are always involved in health, but they were certainly the healthier for being fitter. But cars, buses and trains have put paid to the need to walk long distances. The average pupil travelling to and from school walks no more than from the bus stop to the front gate - with some effort. I recently accompanied a group of twenty boys and girls on a fifteen kilometre walk across the South Downs. The group-leader was constantly barraged with questions like: "how much further have we to go? Are we there yet? Will we reach the finishing point in ten minutes time?" Clearly, children need lots of practice in walking before being taken on a fifteen kilometre walk. And indeed walking has become a recreational activity, institutionalized as a sport in itself, with special times set aside, special areas marked off, and highly organised events. The Long Distance Walkers Association sets up various walking events right across the country. It is as if people have forgotten what it is to walk and therefore need reminding.

Medical research shows a close relationship between fitness and health. What is health? The World Health Organisation defines health to "be more than the absence of disease". A sense of wellbeing and fitness should be central to any initiative to promote health. A useful definition of health

"is that people are healthy to the extent that they are able to meet their obligations and to enjoy the rewards associated with
Exercise appears to be a key factor in trying to keep fit which in turn contributes to good health:

"Exercise can take many forms and, at least until now, has been most commonly associated with the prevention of coronary heart disease. But with the accumulating evidence for preventive and therapeutic benefit in many other conditions, exercise is emerging as a key element in most national health promotion recommendations and strategies. This is hardly surprising as the ability to exercise is intrinsic to most aspects of human life and simple physical training can enable even the most unfit people and those limited by chronic illness to carry out the basic activities of modern sedentary life more efficiently and comfortably" (Dargie, H., and Grant, S., 1991)

Exercise can come to our aid in desperate situations:

"Even in the extreme trauma of some injuries the person in a vigorously healthy condition is likely to experience more speedy and effective healing than someone in a condition of poor health" (Wright, J. (1983))

The British Medical Association draws our attention to another area where physical activity is a major determinant (one of three), namely combatting low bone mass and age-related fractures. Physical activities during youth are capable of increasing bone gain growth:

"In a study of six to fourteen-year old children, those who spent more than two hours on weight bearing activities had around 10% greater wrist, spine and hip bone mineral density than those who spent less than than an hour each day in such activities" (Cooper, C. and Eastwell, R. 1993)

The BMA concludes:

"Despite increased opportunities the general population does not exercise voluntarily and there is an urgent need for a coherent programme of education about exercise in order to establish its..."
relevance and stimulate increased activity patterns." (BMJ 12.4.91.)

School PE departments probably do not have sufficient curriculum time to meet all the expectations of the BMA and much exercising, of course, occurs outside school time. However, schools do have a responsibility to ensure, first, that pupils understand the relationship of fitness to good health, secondly, that this understanding should be a practical understanding - pupils must know how to keep fit - and, thirdly, that pupils have a body of experience of vigorous exercise which is as far as may be both enjoyable and suited to their particular physical attributes. This may seem like a rather minimal list but it has the advantage that PE departments may not write it off as unrealistic.

In these times we will be expected to refer to the economic significance of fitness and good health. The Independent newspaper (24.9.93) carried an article 'Well on way to healthier workforce' in which it was reported that British industry loses at least £9bn a year through workers taking sick leave, with a loss of 35 million days annually through coronary heart disease and 50 million days through smoking related diseases. Many companies are now offering 'wellness programmes' to their employees, following the ancient insight that prevention is better and cheaper than cure. Dr. Alex Grieve, clinical director of BUPA Health Services, is reported as claiming that the provision of corporate wellness programmes has increased fourfold in the last five years despite the recession. Might such programmes be adapted for use in schools? More than the usual PE curriculum would be involved, but
schools might reflect that they might thus reduce their own, often high, levels of absenteeism through common colds and headaches. The Educational Reform Act requires schools to monitor attendance more closely and in turn parents are now held more accountable to schools for attendance. Attendance-rate is indeed one of the proposed major criteria of the good school (Secretary of State, John Patten 1993).

Finally, there is another cluster of aims which includes the following overlapping items: to build up physical experience, to develop physical awareness and understanding, to develop physical skills and competence - and confidence, to pass on physical knowledge, to develop the powers of physical imagination and physical intelligence, and of physical appreciation and enjoyment. This cluster might be generally characterized as physical literacy, a term we saw being used in the ILEA (1988) Report My Favourite Subject.

Obviously there is some overlap between such aims and many of those we have already singled out and discussed. Thus in attending to the aesthetic side of PE we stressed that its aesthetic was more specifically an aesthetic of movement. In outlining PE's heavy involvement with self-esteem, we traced that back, too, to movement and the physical: the frequency of success and failure, and the often public character of that success and failure derive from the nature of vigorous and competitive movement. Again, we stressed that the social interaction of PE was of a primarily physical sort. And, of course, it is because it involves physical movement that PE contributes to fitness and health.
How, more precisely, should we relate physical literacy to the aims and aim-clusters we have already discussed? There are perhaps two ways of doing this. One is to see physical literacy as an inner circle of core aims in relation to the previous aims seen as belonging to an outer circle. In order to achieve the outer aims we have to achieve the core aims first. This way of looking works well for some of the outer aims. Thus it seems right to say that for PE to contribute to self-esteem it has to first contribute to physical skills, competence and confidence. For example, the ability to read a game and to employ appropriate tactics and techniques leads to achievement and success on the field - which in turn contributes something to self-confidence on a more general front. What about the case of social interaction? This model fits the case of the person who joins a sports club with the express purpose of improving his social life. But when we were discussing this aim earlier we did not put the main emphasis on the social life that may build up around the physical activity, but rather on the social interactions that are involved in the physical activity - which we said were physical, sometimes bodily, in form. That suggests another model of relationship between physical literacy and our previous aims, namely, that physical literacy provides a more specific account and our earlier aims a more general account of largely the same thing. Thus at a general level we would say that PE is like the Arts in having a strong aesthetic dimension, while at this more specific level we would say that it is responsible for a movement Aesthetic.

What is the significance of this dialectic between 'inner core' and 'outer circle', or between 'more specific' and 'more general' aims of
PE? It is of crucial significance for the status of PE. First it is important to show that PE pulls its weight in relation to general educational goals, that it joins the other departments in contributing to these shared goals. PE, too, is in the business of, for example, social development and education; with the arts it shares aesthetic concerns; in common with all other subjects it pursues a greater understanding and a more developed intelligence. But, secondly, it is also important to show that it contributes to these general educational goals very much in its own unique way: not just any understanding and intelligence but (primarily) a physical understanding and intelligence; not all forms of aesthetic but specifically a movement aesthetic; not all forms of social interaction equally, but principally the more physical forms of social interaction. Both of these strategies of argument are necessary. If PE did not contribute to the general goals of a school it would be vulnerable to an invitation to shift its operation to somewhere else outside schools. If PE did not make some special or unique contribution to these goals it would be vulnerable to replacement by some perhaps cheaper substitute.

CONCLUSION.

Status does not depend on educational value and validity alone. It also depends on being seen to be valuable. The position of PE in the curriculum will always remain a tenuous one, unless it can demonstrate that it can offer a 'legitimate education to pupils' (Kirk 1988). For this, it needs, first and foremost, to present a clear picture of its aims and to relate these to sound educational grounds. Of course it
also has to demonstrate how these aims are going to be achieved and what the progression through the subject is for children at different stages, but if it is serious about removing the confusion and ambiguities that have run alongside the subject over the years, it needs above all an articulate and communicable clarity of purpose. A condition of that is, in turn, the steady maintenance of debate about aims among PE teachers and between them and other interested parties. We have seen how, despite being embattled, the subject gradually built up a complex philosophy. The National Curriculum exercise may be taken as a useful, though not perfect, snapshot in time of the current view of the aims of PE. The important thing now is to keep the discussion alive. Continued debate would not be incompatible with confidence about the value of the subject and a growing public acceptance of that value.
In this chapter I will take further the discussion, already begun in considering my subjects' responses, of three important current issues in PE. My purpose will be as much to open these issues up as to offer solutions to them, though in regard to the second and third I shall some suggest ways forward. The first issue is gender.

**GENDER**

PE is the one area in the curriculum where in many schools boys and girls are actually physically segregated. (Leaman, O. 1982)

"For the Victorian bourgeoisie, sexuality was carefully locked away - correct behaviour decreed that bodies did not touch, decent words ensured the purity of conversation." (E. Davies 19) Behind the articles of the time discussing whether girls' health could stand the strain of, say, higher education lay an image of Victorian womanhood which deemed that women in public were unwomenly. Many of the women who became publicly prominent were self-consciously ladylike as an aid to disarm the opposition and compromises of this nature were common as women made inroads into the world of men. Alternatively, women might make their way in areas where men showed a distinct lack of interest, and it is perhaps for this reason that girls and women actually enjoyed a headstart in PE which began at the end of the 19th century and lasted
well into this century. Girls and women took the lead in PE then, both
in the training of teachers and in the development of the discipline.
Earlier in the 19th century Mr Farron of the Taunton Commission (1868)
had reported that in 100 private girls' schools in the Metropolitan area
only sixty provided even for "walking about, croquet and dancing" and
only thirty-two provided callisthenics (for which, indeed, many schools
were requiring an extra fee). Spencer, similarly, had shown alarm at
the state of PE in girls' schools

"We have a vague suspicion that to produce a robust physique is
thought undesirable, that a certain delicacy of strength not
competent to sustain more than a mile or two's walk, an appetite
fastidious and easily satisfied, joined with the timidity which
commonly accompanies feebleness are held more ladylike." (Spencer
1861)

But all this changed as the century came towards its end. Rodean,
founded in 1885, insisted on two hours of exercise in winter and three
hours in summer and its headmistress was convinced that games held as
much moral value for middle-class girls as for middle-class boys. But
it was in importing gymnastics, first from Germany and then from Sweden
as we have noticed, that girls' education really took a lead over boys'.
Thus by the beginning of the First World War a tight little empire of
six specialised training colleges for women, Dartford, Anstly, Bedford,
Chelsea, Liverpool and Dunfermline, was firmly established to spread the
gospel of Swedish gymnastics. It remained an exclusive women's guild
until physical training colleges for men began to be established from
the 1930s onwards and male teachers other than those who had been army
trained arrived on the scene. (McIntosh 1976)
It would thus be particularly unfortunate if women's PE had now surrendered all of this early advantage. The issue arises particularly, though not exclusively, in the context of the new emphasis on mixed PE.

It might appear that most family activities are undertaken by both sexes together. This would be to forget how John accompanies Dad to wash the motorcar while Mary helps Mum in the kitchen. At a very early age some gender-based differentiation of labour is in evidence. On entering school at nursery level, the child again does some things in mixed groupings, but, also, boys play with trains while girls play with dolls. Again at primary school the situation is complex. It has been my experience in teaching PE to primary feeder schools as part of their secondary transfer programme that girls and boys can be got to participate well enough together. On the other hand, Dr. Leaman of Liverpool Polytechnic, in a seminar held at the Schools Council in 1982, has been one of many to emphasise the importance of the takeover of the school playground by boys, often with the connivance or encouragement of the school. It is surely disturbing that sex differentiation is evident at this level when no physiological differences between the sexes are significant for PE.

The secondary school, however, is the main concern. Inner city schools have as many as 30 primary feeder schools. The primary school child moving into a totally new institution with new disciplines and new teachers is at the same time encountering large numbers of new pupils. All the familiarity of the primary school where they had been together for almost seven years has gone. New friendships have to be formed at a
time when boys and girls are perhaps shyer of each other. In a
situation of newness, children find the social situation stressful and
difficult. In PE, they are for the first time given separate changing
rooms and asked to shower at the end of the lesson. It is only natural
that sex groupings begin to form and harden as the year goes by. This
is the difficulty encountered by a class teacher who attempts in the
first few lessons to consciously create mixed groups and which may well
lead him or her to abandon the idea.

Let us consider more closely first year PE in a secondary school:
* Children arrive at a secondary school with a variety of physical
  skills, some well developed, others not.
* They arrive with a variety of experiences. Some have been coached in
games techniques, others not. Most boys have played in a major game
at school level; girls have seldom ventured beyond a class
competition.
* There is a hard core of boys who have chosen a particular school for
  its good sports image. They themselves have represented their school
in inter-school competitions or played at club level in a Sunday
league. So their expectations are very different from the majority of
new pupils. They wish to represent the new school in inter school
competitions. They have little patience with boys who do not perform
well and absolutely no patience with girls who appear to hold them
back. This hard core of boys dominate the physical activities and in
turn other pupils in the class form groups.
* For girls the PE programme is not untypically quite bewildering:
gymnastics for six weeks, basketball for six weeks, volleyball for six
weeks, badminton for six weeks and swimming for a term. Not only do they need to adjust to a programme that is highly differentiated, but they would need to assert themselves in the presence of boys who are fairly demanding of the teacher in time and attention.

Many boys feel the need to learn as many physical skills as quickly as possible to give a good showing in the school competitions. For boys there are many competitions, for girls only a few. So boys begin to dominate physical activities both in the gymnasium and on the playing fields. Girls, if they fail to assert themselves, find that the easy way out is to recede into the background of most activities. In general they lose out. The sensitive teacher who becomes aware of this division may combat it by ensuring complete mixed teams in competitions, choosing girls as captains.

The next four years show variations in participation. Boys still dominate in the major games, girls tend to perform well in gymnastics, swimming, dance and the racquet games. Adolescence arrives and the gap between boys and girls widens. There appears to be a bigger drop out among girls, as among boys who are not so well co-ordinated. There is a tendency to miss games or to bunk off games. There is a slight change in the fifth and sixth year. For one there is no compulsion; an option system operates making participation a little more flexible. The object is not learning new skills, but to treat PE and Games as an opportunity for recreation. There is a greater tendency to play together for most boys and girls.
Leaman's observations about mixed PE fit well with this picture:

"One of the common experiences on visiting mixed schools for me was the contrast between the purposive, enthusiastic and confident atmosphere among many of the boys leaving the boys' changing room and the bored, embarrassed and different attitudes among many of the girls leaving the changing room. It struck me that girls seem often to feel alienated from the activities they are offered and the ways in which they are offered them."

And the following expresses a not untypical reaction of the PE establishment, understandable if problematic:

"Teachers cannot be asked to expect equal achievement of boys and girls if they have years of experience of higher achievement motivation and success rates in boys, nor be asked to give equal amounts of attention to boys and girls if the former are more real and insistant." (Jonathan 1983)

The National Curriculum PE pays some attention to equal opportunities. But PE had previously been criticised for doing little to combat gender stereotyping and some schools had responded by adopting a policy of mixed sex teaching, whether by a process of gradual introduction from the early years up or by a single radical sweep across all the year groups. It is perhaps too early to pronounce definitively on the success of this policy, but some are already disillusioned with it. Ten years ago Jonathan was pointing to the more general issue of secondary coeducation and suggesting it might be deferred until a better time:

("We need to take special care to foster e.g. achievement, motivation and independence of mind in girls, and co-operation and sensitivity in boys. We might even best achieve our aims by deferring the ideal of mixed secondary schooling until we have a generation able to take equal advantage of identical treatment."

(ibid.)
And, more recently, Williams pronounces unfavourably on the more specific issue of mixed PE:

"Girls are less actively involved in co-educational than single settings. Boys actively harass and limit girls' behaviour, often ridiculing their efforts." (A. Williams 1992)

To return to the more general question of how adolescence contributes to girls' disinterest in PE.

The first point is that there seems to be a marked difference in ability during this period of time and a widening of the gap between boys and girls, though it is difficult to estimate how much the lowering of girls's interest contributes to this as opposed to being caused by it.

Secondly, the requirement for communal shower taking is in direct conflict with girls' concepts of femininity in adolescence - this applies more to girls from some cultural communities. This is much less trivial than it might seem. PE teachers would readily agree that this one requirement of taking showers at the end of a lesson causes more confrontation with girls than any other.

Thirdly, Britain has the lowest number of women taking part in sport compared with any country of similar status, except Italy. According to Mike Melaniphy of the Sports Council, "Unfortunately the sporting woman isn't an admired woman." Many, perhaps most, women think that there is a conflict between sport and their concept of femininity. Alan Guy, a lecturer in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at
Loughborough University remarks:

"A shot putter is just about everything a growing girl doesn't want to become. Women don't want to be coloured with the male sporting traits of sweaty aggressiveness"

Gymnastics and track athletics are perhaps exceptions, but if we take hockey, a game played by more than two and a half million girls, its "butch" image undoubtedly prevents many who might have the talent from wholehearted achievement in competition and from any participation in it beyond the compulsory period.

Fourth, girls still tend to think that in adult life they would be preoccupied with child rearing and housework and would have little time in which to practice sport.

Fifth, there is a measure of futility in playing a game which has no club facility to which young women can transfer and continue playing. (In considering this factor too, of course, there is the question of what is cause and what is effect.) Games like lacrosse, hockey and netball - and women's football, cricket and rugby - offer extremely limited facilities if compared to those for male football, cricket or rugby. Swimming may be the main exception to this rule, partly because it is fast becoming a family activity.

The upshot of all this is, as already indicated and as is well known, that women and girls spend far less time being involved in sport and physical recreation than men and boys. A General Household Survey in
1980 produced the following table to show levels of participation among men and women.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indoor Swimming</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Tennis</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Darts</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Billiards/Snooker</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
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**Spectating:**

| Football                                       | 11         | 10         | 3            | 2            |
| Other games                                    | 7          | 8          | 6            | 6            |

The PE profession can hardly accept this degree of difference and inequality as just another God-given and natural fact of nature. That it represents one of our major current challenges is indicated, in particular, by the fact that the main educational values we found in PE in chapter 6 surely apply as much to girls as to boys. Movement aesthetics, self-esteem, social interaction, fitness and health, and the core value of physical literacy seem entirely gender non-specific.
LEISURE

One thing that mattered to working men in late Victorian England was how they spent the time they were not working. Historians tend to agree that it was in this period that the separation between work and leisure became clearly distinguished. Factory work patterns led to this and, besides, the rapid growth of towns had opened the way for new choices. And, of course, the proportion of time that is leisure-time has steadily increased since then. It is not surprising then that schools have long acknowledged the constructive uses of leisure time as an important goal of education, and PE, probably more than any other subject, has been expected to contribute to this goal. PE certainly seems to have major potential in this area, and the study confirmed that it was an explicitly acknowledged goal in the schools investigated, but the study also revealed the interviewees' doubts about the extent to which it has actually fulfilled this potential. There must also be some doubt about the real commitment of the school generally to this goal. Have the commercial entrepreneurs with their leisure-occupying gimmicks, not to mention television, not stolen a long march on education?

There is often an implied but untested assumption in PE that a good grounding in physical activities in the final years of a youngster's schooling would be sufficient to sow the seeds for a continuation of physical activities in her or his leisure time. It is an often quoted aim in school PE programmes. It is an actively pursued policy in many schools in years 9, 10, and 11 where the PE programmes are very different in content and emphasis and more explicitly orientated to
leisure education. There is a greater tendency in schools to introduce youngsters to local sporting clubs, to provide off-site facilities for games like squash, judo and golf in these later years. Yet my subjects, it will be recalled, tended to be discontented on this score.

"They won't go searching for it once they leave school because they don't value it enough. All right, some may. I think there's not enough, the expectation of boys and girls is not high enough, not high enough at all."

According to Hargreaves:

"The facts are clear: the transition from school into the community marks for the majority of young people a decline, a falling away from the aims and achievements of PE." (Hargreaves 1982)

It might be asked, however, how realistic this aim is in the face of a whole range of new, exciting challenges and opportunities that young people encounter on leaving school. After 11 years of school PE, could the attraction be the same? Is PE so important that we should expect youngsters to turn to the pursuit of a physical activity immediately on leaving school? Should we rather not face the fact that for some the importance of such activity can register at different times in their lives; five years later, ten years later, later still when the demands of parenthood plays an important part in leisure pursuits, or even at the point where fear of heart disease begins to grip. Does it matter very much how soon this happens? Is it not more important that it does happen? One respondent in a leisure centre made this observation about attendance:

"I think apart from the school groups that come in you certainly
see more 50 year olds in this building than you would 15 year olds, certainly participating in sports"

The more general question this raises is about how schools view the timing of the leisure for which they are educating. In most schools this education is confined to pupils in their final year of schooling. But should the idea of encouraging young people to look beyond the school gymnasium for leisure pursuits be confined to the final years of schooling? Are we to regard 11-14 year olds as having no spare time for leisure pursuits? Could they not be introduced to drama clubs, art studios or music recital groups? Could they not be introduced in PE to rowing clubs, angling clubs or cricket clubs (where the establishment is constantly bemoaning the fact that there aren't enough youngsters coming through the ranks to take up professional cricket). Some schools have reorganised the structure of the week to accommodate an "activity afternoon" where all subjects take on a more recreational image, and this is surely a positive step. It could also serve to accommodate young people who do not see participation in the major games as important as participation in the less appreciated activities. An interviewee remarked:

"The problem is going to be when the children turn round to you and say, 'when I leave school the games I am going to play are darts, snooker, table tennis' ... We don't cater for that."

But these activities are already being enjoyed by younger schoolchildren.
If schools paid more attention to the leisure habits of their students while they were still at school then, surely, the drop-out rate would be less at the end of school. And, of course, it does matter that so many do drop out at present. PE teachers may take some legitimate consolation from the fact that many of the drop-outs will later opt back in. But, first, it must remain a matter for concern and regret that they deny themselves the real values of physical activities in their 'primes', and, secondly, it is highly probable that if fewer dropped out in young adulthood the levels of participation in later life would be correspondingly increased.

The further implication of our discussion is that it needs a whole school policy to cater for the needs of every child. Why is it that in the main it is the PE department that concerns itself with young people's leisure? Should not the other subject areas concern themselves both with preparing youngsters for leisure beyond school and for the better use of leisure during school years? For example, the music department may, and the better department does, tutor young people in pianoforte appreciation with the view that they will both listen to 'difficult' music some day later, and listen to the music of their age-group now. In most leisure activities there is potentially a hidden seriousness that can be of immense educational value eg. a trip down the Thames observing the nature of river transport in an inner city. If every department made a contribution it would enhance the quality of the curriculum and of the education on offer to children.
Thus education would be seen as a whole, not in compartments as traditionally the practice was in English education. The further point is that PE becomes a part of the whole in encouraging cross curricular thinking about leisure - in which every department surely has a contribution to offer - and may indeed assume some leadership in orchestrating this thinking and writing it into the school development plan. Such a role - an entirely legitimate one - could only enhance the profile and the status of the PE department within the school. Hargreaves in 1982 had this to say about leisure and the role of PE:

"... in a world of growing unemployment and increasing leisure PE has an unprecedented opportunity and an unrivalled obligation to show leadership." (Hargreaves 1982)

This is as true today as it was 11 years ago.

It must be admitted, however, that the present structure of the National Curriculum does not favour such a development. Leisure has not been included in the list of officially nominated cross-curricular themes and, in addition, these themes are very much taking a back seat to the statutory subjects. Current events, however, indicate that the National Curriculum is not set in stone. An official endorsement of leisure as a cross-curricular theme is something worth fighting for, and in such a fight the world of PE might already take a lead.
EXAMINATIONS

It is difficult to imagine a time when children did not run races or wrestle. No one is sure when games, as formal pastime activities, began, but they are certainly ancient. Even in the remote rural areas of the world there are traditional contests which are no different in levels of demand and passion from physical pursuits in western countries. The attempt by a small group of South Indians as part of a religious festival to take part in a dance called "Six Foot Dance" is highly athletic and has had valuable lessons for our present high-jump event. Performers attempt to outjump each other from a standing position, often reaching heights of six feet! Today physical skills and Games are universally recognised in that a high proportion of the world's population becomes involved either as spectators or participants. Thus soccer, the most popular sport in the world is played in more than 140 countries. Whether ancient or modern, assessment - assessment by others and self-assessment - is an absolutely integral part of such enterprises.

At school level PE has long been viewed as a necessary subject. Unfortunately, there has not been a corresponding acknowledgement of its status. For a long time, as we have seen, its role was interpreted in relation to obedience, discipline, and letting off steam. There was little appreciation of its cognitive value - its very particular kind of cognitive value. It was not deemed important enough to qualify as an examination subject, even when examinations were extended beyond the
three 'Rs'. More recently, and not unrelated to broader conceptions of the subject and its educational aims, 16+ and A-level examinations in the subject have become available, as a result of concerted efforts by teachers, schools, sports bodies and examination boards. By the time of my field research in the late 1980s the support for examinations in PE had grown considerably. The National Curriculum, in which PE is accorded the status of a Foundation Subject, endorses this as an option, without changing or advancing the current situation:

"10.22. At Key Stage 4 it is expected that some pupils will elect to take PE as a GCSE examination subject. The syllabus for the examination will normally require the same amount of curriculum time as that of one GCSE subject." (DFE, National Curriculum PE for ages 5 to 16 Aug. 1991)

Not all commentators have supported this modest development:

"Academic excellence is not of the essence of PE and any attempt to beef up professional status by this means is doomed to failure." (Hoyle 1969)

For some, opposition was grounded in a perception of PE as essentially a necessary indulgence:

"The essence of the educational value of PE lies in its capacity to provide a range of activities that can be indulged in for their own sakes." (Skepper 1974)

It will be recalled that many of my subjects in the field work were of the opinion that examinations in PE might just raise the status of the subject. At the same time they tended to regret, sometimes very much, the thought that its status was so dependent on examinations.
Since then the thinking on this topic has undoubtedly moved on. The main factor in this has been the shift in educational discussion and practice generally from examinations to the broader concept of assessment. Teachers' thinking on modes of assessment has been stretched and important proposals and practices have been emerging right across the curriculum. The Record of Achievement and the Pupil Profile has been introduced and universalized. The National Curriculum has initiated formal and public assessments at new stages and ages, and for a time at least quite new forms of Standard Assessment Test (SAT) were envisaged and actually developed. Oral and practical forms of assessment were assuming a new importance in many subjects. The status that comes with public assessment was no longer being so closely tied to the traditional standard form of examination. Admittedly, PE, like Art and Music, was exempted from the strict assessment regime imposed on other subjects - a fact about which teachers were understandably ambivalent, on the one hand relieved if only because teachers generally were suspicious of these tests, on the other hand quick to detect in this dispensation a further slight on their subject. All the same, this new assessment culture was likely to promote in the PE community too a more sophisticated approach to assessment in their subject. It is unfortunate, however, that some of the advantage that PE stands to gain from these developments is threatened by the current retreat back to 'pencil and paper' tests.

Here we need to consider in more depth the unease of the PE community in relation to written examinations in their subject. There is probably a consensus that the now familiar GCSE and A-level examinations perform a
useful function - for those capable of doing reasonably well in them. Thus they are seen to enhance the career prospect of students, especially those who seek a sports orientated career. At national sports level there is a clear need for people with both a theoretical and practical understanding of physical activities. It is not just a matter of the status and prestige of the subject. People in prominent positions of power in leisure centres, sports centres tend currently to have no school qualification in PE. They have come through colleges and universities on the strength of specialising in one sport. Surely, a good PE programme would produce an all rounder whose contribution to policy making would be that much greater. It is also the case that too much of a fuss may be made about the time and resource demands of an examination and about non-suitable candidates and the fear of failure. Do not other subjects have the same concerns?

The fundamental cause of unease remains, however. It is that if such examinations were to be required of larger proportions of students, with a consequent major re-focussing of teaching energies on preparation for them, the resulting increase in the status of the subject would be at the cost of a downgrading of practical physical skills - and of those students whose levels of performance at these skills are not matched by their writing abilities.

My research subjects often expressed this unease as a fear that PE would become much less enjoyable - a theme that is close to the heart of the PE teacher. Most PE teachers would have enjoyment as one of the main aims of PE. To see why one has only to follow a group of pupils into
the changing room after a PE lesson. The sheer sense of enjoyment that emanates from the youngsters is indicative of the value of the PE lesson. As a teacher, one often feels the need to extend the PE lesson so that pupils experience the enjoyment of that activity more fully.

However, this line of objection to examinations is not entirely secure. Presumably, other subjects too think of themselves as enjoyable. A more accurate expression of the unease might be drawn from our previous discussion of the educational values of PE. We will recall that many of those values are shared with other subjects. But once we move from the level of general definition of them to identify the particular, and particularly powerful, contribution that PE makes to them, we uncover their dependence on the core value of what we called 'physical literacy'. Physical skills, knowledge and intelligence are simply the heart of the PE enterprise, we saw. It follows that the assessment of them has to be the centrepiece of assessment in PE. The main energies of the PE community in regard to assessment should then be directed towards resolving the problems of practical assessment. Teachers would have reason to be uneasy if concern about written examinations were to distract them from that more central and essential task.

Thus PE, though not subject to SATS in the National Curriculum, clearly needs to develop forms of assessment measuring progression in the subject if it is to measure up to other Foundation subjects. In this context, the concept of a form of assessment that is indistinguishable from a high quality teaching exercise is surely thought-provoking. It was originally developed with Key Stage 1 children in mind, and then
unfortunately dropped by the Government, but it might still be adopted by PE. The freedom it has from being exempt from official SATS might be exploited in this direction. One advantage of this would be that the enjoyment factor was less threatened by assessment.

Another major task is suggested by the distinction between open and closed skills, or routine and creative skills. Closed skills tend to be more concerned with stereotyped physical responses, as in swimming and athletic events. Open skills are those which rely on decision-making in an environment of changing signals eg. team games and individual ball games like tennis and badminton. PE teaching in the past has perhaps been mainly associated with relatively closed skills, the goal being an automatic response which has been acquired by drilling or constant repetition. I can remember taking the MCC coaching certificate in cricket in the 1970s. The batting strokes were broken up into a series of sub-skills, each one accompanied by a number eg. 1. Pick up the bat; 2. Bring bat down in line with the body; 3. Make contact with the ball; 4. Follow through with the bat! The open skill is manifested when in actual play the individual playing such a stroke is required to score four runs through a closely guarded boundary off an accurate fast bowler. A similar example in basketball would be to ask a player who is hemmed into a corner to make a pass to his team mates when he is surrounded by three tall opponents.

Can we teach open skills? It might seem that the answer has to be no. If one attempted it, would not open skills become routinized, losing the essential element of surprise? Such skills might seem just part of the
natural ability of players. Sportsmen like Gower and Hoddle are often described as players of natural vision. Commentators draw attention to a beautiful pass or a beautiful stroke because it has that 'unexpectedness' about it which takes the opposition by surprise. How could we teach the skill of a Viv Richards picking up a ball outside the off stump only to hit it for a six on the legside boundary? This sort of creativity, it might be claimed, cannot be taught, though it makes all the difference between a dull game and an exciting one.

However, if open skills could not be taught, then the effort to assess them would lose much of its point. The teacher would not be assessing anything do with the effectiveness of his or her own teaching. In fact they can be taught. The impression, which is sometimes expressed out loud, that they could not be taught depended on a far too narrow concept of 'teaching'. Teaching is much more than drill or even instruction. It includes the processes of demonstrating, discussion, replays of videos, setting up problem situations, and generally all those things which PE teachers do to create a learning environment in which open skills can emerge and be honed. This is as characteristic of teaching in other subjects as in PE eg. the teaching of poetry or music appreciation. It should also be remembered that in other subjects there is also question of building on greater or lesser degrees of natural ability. Natural ability in open and creative situations can be developed by good teaching, or left undeveloped by poor or no teaching, right across the curriculum.
In fact the development of PE over the last decade has included a much more deliberate targeting of just such open skills, often under the title of 'Games for Understanding'. What has not kept pace with this development is the parallel development of properly formulated and tried out assessment procedures. A form of assessment has to be devised to judge open skills. As and when that happens assessment will take on a new meaning for PE.

What then, finally, about status? First, advancing the validity, reliability and educational appropriateness of practical assessment would itself raise the professionalism of PE teachers and the status of the subject — and in a way that held no threat for the integrity of the subject. There is, however, another additional task that is crucial — this time a political task. That is to persuade the world of education generally, and indeed public opinion, that these kinds of physical skill are not non-cognitive just because they are physical. Perhaps in order to do that the PE community must first be surer of this itself. These are skills that involve their own particular form — it may even be a unique form, we saw — of knowing and intelligence, and that is what has to be got across.
CONCLUSION

The field study at the centre of this thesis has provided the reader with a clear insight into how a small group of PE professionals perceived the practice of PE in secondary schools. It has highlighted the problems associated with the struggle for PE status, drawn our attention to certain aspects of its condition, and referred us along the way to the attitudes to PE of non-PE people. Finally, it pointed to a need to address the problems of PE on educational grounds, a task on which the last two chapters have embarked.

My role as a field-researcher was that of an enquirer/reporter with little immediate opportunity to be critical of the views encountered. I could permit myself to express neither my feelings nor my own views. However much I wished to join in the dialogue I had to restrain myself lest I interfere with the self-revelations of the interviewees. I found this 'touchline' position difficult, more so at the time of the interviews and slightly less so when writing up my findings. It was with a great sense of relief that I moved on to the phase of arguing retrospectively, as it were, with my interviewees and developing a critical view on the values of PE and on certain main issues in the subject.

Here I would like to reflect more holistically on the research, and particularly in relation to the status of PE. The research study has made me far more appreciative of the complexities associated with the
development of a school subject. In the case of PE, though it is now a Foundation subject in the National Curriculum, its battle for recognition both within and outside the school is far more over. For most other subjects in the school curriculum their development and subsequent status are well established, only their performance is called into question every so often - usually triggered off by examination results or by the whims and fancies of a government in crisis. Not so with PE, however. My study has clearly shown the deep seated concern my respondents had in regard to the status of their subject. Hoyle (1972) commented:

"As a profession teaching is prone to status concerns and, within teaching, physical educationists are particularly given to pondering status issues....we find also there is a subject hierarchy but there is little comparative data on this. What one suspects is that PE is universally rather lower than higher in the pecking order of school subjects."

One can go beyond suspicion in the light of this study, which clearly shows how PE as a subject was seen by a typical group of practitioners to have a low status. Of all the questions I put to my interviewees, the one concerning status caused them the most discomfort. Should they say what status it had in school and thereby risk doing themselves down, or should they defend their position by pointing out the slight improvement in status that it had achieved over the many years? In almost all cases they chose to agonize over its low status and to offer reasons for its position in the league table.

For many of them its status was closely connected with its actual condition in school practice. That is to say, these respondents were
more or less critical of how PE was actually conducted by teachers in schools. Not surprisingly, this view was more common among lecturers and student trainees, all of them with ongoing knowledge and experience of school practice, than among teachers. The latter were more inclined to defend their practice and to see it in rosier terms than the outsiders. Before deciding that this is special pleading we should consider whether teachers do not understand the difficulties in the way of desirable development better than students and lecturers, that students and lecturers can afford to be impatient only because they don't have to make it happen. It is likely, indeed, that teachers would have a much livelier sense of the context in which change has to be pursued, of the forces in that context and of the balances that have to be struck between PE and other subjects. Lecturers are totally focussed on their subject and its theory, and don't often have to engage in the practical balancing acts that teachers do. Nevertheless the criticisms of the lecturers, as of the student-trainees, must obviously be taken seriously.

The study identified uncertainty about aims as one source of trouble. The historical sections of this thesis show that this is a longstanding problem. It has given non-PE people an opportunity to exploit PE, for example, by moving in on the space and time of PE in schools. Student teacher trainees and teachers of PE place great store on the perceptions of other school staff and look to colleagues to support them by recognizing the status of PE.

"How others think and feel about a subject has important implications for those who teach it." (Sparkes and Templin, 1992)
In reality, is this support forthcoming? No subject should be an island unto itself but from the experience of my respondents it would appear that PE was indeed seen as separate from the rest of the curriculum by many of those whose views helped to shape its status. Mike Golby refers to this isolation when he says:

"If one contemplates the place of PE in the whole school curriculum it is the sense of its separateness which is most striking" (Golby 1985)

And Kirk concurs:

"a lowly educational status for many other teachers, pupils and their parents, and in this sense [it is] peripheral to the school's main educational purposes."

Teachers in other departments and in particular the Headteacher were the main culprits in the eyes of my respondents:

"If the head of a school does not have a high opinion of the subject then I think it is given a very low priority and that rubs off on the teachers and the kids"

I don't think that many heads or teachers know exactly what goes on within a PE lesson"

"PE is what takes place indoors and games is what takes place outdoors" (cited as the overheard remark of a headteacher)

"I would like to see it have a status where if there is something going on in the afternoon, they don't say, 'OK, we will do it when PE is on'."

"...but if you listen to members of staff in the staffroom you realize that yours' is not the real subject
It is very tempting to find fault with other teachers, and especially with heads, for holding these attitudes and being content with their ignorance. And, indeed, headteachers surely do need to examine their consciences regarding their collusion with other departments in decimating PE curriculum time, or their not untypical unawareness of what goes on in the PE classroom despite the availability to them of a whole range of devices for monitoring and assessing day to day learning. In my view they are only partly excused by the fact that their attitude to PE depends on factors some of which are outside their control - popularity among parents, standing in the community at large, the link in the public mind between status and written examinations, and their own early experience of PE.

Rather than blaming outsiders, however, it is likely to be more constructive to tackle those nagging problems within PE itself which sap its energies and contribute to keeping its status low, and, in the first place to address the uncertainty, inexplicitness, inarticulacy and lack of confidence about the real educational values of PE. This was what I set myself to do in chapter 6. It is perhaps a matter of convincing the PE world itself first - of building up its confidence in itself - and then of addressing the wider educational and public worlds from a position of greater intellectual strength. Thus there are two conclusions from the exercise undertaken in chapter 6, a central chapter to this thesis.

* One is that it is of the first importance for PE that it participates in an intense way in this kind of discourse about itself. As I myself engaged in and experienced this exercise I
found my own confidence in the value of PE growing and firming up. I suggest that the future of PE may rest to a considerable extent on its taking on such an engagement enthusiastically.

The other is to reiterate the particular values which we singled out, after lengthy engagements with both the historical development of aims in PE and the works of recent and present philosophers, as the most important for our time. They are, once again, movement aesthetic, self-esteem, social interaction, fitness and health, and the core or specifying value of 'physical literacy'. The first four are not in themselves specific to PE, though both the unique way in which PE realizes them and the large measure of its contribution to them makes them extremely important in identifying the case for PE and its status. The fifth value - 'physical literacy', meaning physical skill, knowledge, understanding and intelligence - is, we argued, the core value of PE through which its other values are to be interpreted and realized.

An important related matter is how PE sees itself and is seen in terms of the so-called academic/non-academic divide. How often have I heard PE colleagues referring to colleagues from other subject areas as 'academic staff'. "We tend to call on academic staff to help out on a games afternoon" is an often heard remark in schools. We might instead say "We call on non-PE staff to help out......." This is a divide which the PE community cannot afford to go along with. On the one hand it has not been part of my argument that PE is notably academic. If 'academic' is necessarily tied to 'literacy' in its literal sense, then PE is no
doubt less academic than many other subjects. Of course, in some of its aspects it does rely on literacy and some students may have just these aspects as one of their main areas of concentration, but I have argued that the core of PE is physical skills, knowledge, understanding and intelligence. On the other hand, 'non-academic' is a purely negative description — saying nothing about what PE positively is. Do science teachers go round calling themselves 'non-Arts' people? It is not only that, however. Since 'academic' is often associated, not only with literacy, but with what is cognitively powerful and concentrated, 'non-academic' tends to be taken as non-cognitive or, at least, non-powerfully-cognitive. And our argument has been that the skills and achievements at the heart of PE are at once physical and cognitive, and may be powerfully cognitive in their own specific way. That point is near to the nub of the case for the educational status of PE. A recent book remarks:

"In terms of the status of their subject in the eyes of the other staff there was an awareness across generations that physical educators had a poor anti-intellectual and non-academic image."

(Sparkes and Templin 1992)

Note the association of 'anti-intellectual' and 'non-academic' in this remark! Our argument challenges that usual association. The PE world is not helped by the ragged and unfair academic/non-academic divide and might consider rejecting it. It is interesting to notice that on the view of PE I have been arguing it gets on much better with 'discipline'. If instead of speaking of academic and non-academic subjects we speak of disciplines, PE qualifies in the same way as other subjects.
Moving towards solutions of its current acknowledged main problems would be another contribution to raising the status of PE. In chapter 7 we tackled this in respect of three of these problems. One of the three, examinations, connects up with what we have just discussed. Our conclusion was that whatever the validity and usefulness of written PE examinations for some students and some circumstances, they were unlikely to be suitable for assessing the central areas of PE. Instead of allowing its status to be tied to written examinations it would do much better to adopt the wider concept of assessment. It should then work as hard (or harder) at developing appropriate procedures, modes, and schedules of assessment and of reporting assessment - to cover open as well as closed skills - as other subjects have worked at the more traditional examination mode.

In relation to education for leisure - something neglected in the National Curriculum - we argued that PE and school departments generally are currently too inclined to consider only the future leisure of students. We also argued that PE was missing an opportunity to play some leading role in developing school plans in this area and in having leisure acknowledged as an important cross-curriculum theme. Such a role would enhance the status of PE in one of the most important contexts for status, namely, the rest of the school.

In relation to gender, on the other hand, we could do no more than open up the problem, and recognize that it had both theoretical and practical aspects. The important point was made that the values of PE already outlined seemed to be entirely gender non-specific. To have moved beyond
that point to definite solutions and proposals regarding, for example, mixed PE teaching in secondary schools would perhaps have required a whole thesis in itself.

Finally, it is important to move the context forward again to the early 90s and the changes introduced by the Education Reform Act of 1988 with its National Curriculum. My field research was conducted in the late 80s. To what extent has the picture with regards to PE changed? To what extent would I expect to be asking different questions if I were to conduct the field-work now and to what extent would I receive different answers to the same questions. This is, of course, a hypothetical question, but some speculative answers can be attempted to it.

The National Curriculum by itself appears, on the whole, not to have transformed the position of PE. The overall message from the National Curriculum Council seems rather to have been 'steady as you go'. By offering a number of new headings, a few guidelines, and by making a few decisions the Council has ducked some of the real issues and in effect is saying 'Keep practice going'. It has not, for example, really made things much more prescriptive in PE, despite its prescriptive language - this in some contrast to its effect in many other subjects. The door is left wide open to interpretation, and perhaps misinterpretation, in both content and methodology. On the other hand, and on the profit side, it has given some clarity of definition to PE and it has, one hopes definitively, given both Dance and Competitive Sports a significant endorsement.
But the Education Reform Act was more than the National Curriculum. One further factor in it, welcome in itself but potentially dangerous for PE, is the Local Management of Schools (LMS) and the accompanying new powers of school governors.

"The 1986 Education Act gave considerable new powers to school governors, a situation strengthened by local management of school provision in the 1988 Act. This provides governors with the right to decide how teaching vacancies may be filled. I suggest that the PE department which cannot justify its practice may well find its staff being cut....[Teachers are being asked] not only to practice what they preach, but they are to articulate to parents and governors alike that what they preach is of educational value" (Viant 1989)

Under LMS governors face decisions they never had to take before and with that goes the responsibility for them to deliver the National Curriculum and the possibility of legal recourse against them if they do not. They also, however, have to make ends meet in the school budget. A balancing act indeed! Furthermore, this is in the context of the 'league tables' of schools, introduced as part of the new National Assessment, and of Open Enrollment and the competition between schools in recruiting 'customer' pupils on the open 'market' and so attracting the funds that now follow pupils. These measures place a very high premium on examination success in a school, and, by implication, on those subjects which make heavier uses of examinations. Finally, the general background to all these new factors is a continuing tight control on public spending generally, including educational funding. Some schools have sought to relieve the situation by taking the Grant Maintained route. But if that route was awash with financial incentives to begin with, that feature is surely destined to fade in the measure
either of the success of the policy, or of the government growing tired of pressing it. For GMS schools, the problem seems only to be deferred by a few years.

The implications for PE are obvious. These developments make its position less secure. As a mainly non-examination subject which is at the same time expensive because it is space and resource intensive, it is vulnerable to cuts in its staffing - as pointed out by Viant above - and curriculum time. Its status as a Foundation Subject with its own National Curriculum should be enough to protect it from disappearance, but it is not at all clear that this will be enough to protect it from cut backs. Indeed, it is somewhat doubtful perhaps whether the government is altogether committed even to the few more definite requirements of the National Curriculum in PE. In particular, it is sometimes observed that it did not commit itself to extra funding in relation to the National Curriculum swimming requirement. Without such funding it is likely that governors in many primary schools will find it difficult to deliver this attainment target.

In this new danger PE has little else with which to protect its own future other than, as Viant said, a capacity to justify its practice. This, of course, confirms a conclusion we had already reached. To whom will this justification have to be made? Obviously, to colleagues in other departments and to the school governors. But the new accountability of teachers stretches further than that. As Viant also mentions, it extends to parents in particular. One aspect of making a good impression on parents is, I suggest, that development of assessment
techniques in PE already recommended above, techniques in particular for measuring and reporting to parents the progression of their children in the subject in a reliable way.

If then the field work of this thesis were to be repeated in 1993 I should expect to have to answer some further questions and to meet with some further concerns in my interviewees. It is possible, too, that there would be rather less criticism of the condition of PE - this is speculative. But it is highly unlikely that the pervasive worries about the status of PE would have disappeared. That is a problem that will need a long term solution.


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1. Firstly, your experience is your own primary school.
2. Secondly, your experience at your own secondary school.
3. Thirdly, your 4 year experience at teacher training college.
4. Fourthly, your teaching practice experience during the four years at College.
5. Fifthly, your experience in the pursuit of recreational sports.
6. Finally, your experience in a country which can be referred to as the Centre of major sporting events.

With that wide experience I feel that you are in a position to make meaningful comments about the state of Physical Education and Sports.

My first question to you is:

How important is it for every child in the school to have Physical Education in the school curriculum? Very important, physical development, motor control, development of sound skills, interaction, co-operation. Recent state of health of children with coronary heart disease, obesity should elevate importance of P.E. in curriculum. Sports are fun.

2. What status should Physical Education have in the curriculum? Should operate strictly? No, be integrated into a cross-section of the curriculum and the benefits in physical, mental, social, emotional should be considered of increasing importance. Also we constantly practice in the media about non-failure to produce champions - shouldn't need to be at school level!

3. If you as a teacher were asked to make a case for more curriculum time for physical education what exactly would you be saying to the Director of Curriculum Studies to convince him/her that there is a need for more time?

4. What games have you been coached in as a preparation for teaching in: Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Independent Schools? Do you think the notion of Rugby/Cricket in Private Schools and the notion of Football in State Schools is still prevalent?
5. If you were head of department would you devise a programme to encourage students in the upper school to pursue leisure-type activities? Does your teacher training prepare you for this?

6. Looking back on your four years of teacher training would you be able to say that you had sufficient contact time with pupils to prepare you for the real world of teaching?

7. What are your thoughts on mixed physical education. What problems do you see for a school that is just amalgamated to form a co-educational school? How has the College prepared you to take on a mixed P.E. programme at school level?

8. Can you write about one innovation that you would like to take into schools that would improve the quality of physical education.

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Yes

(b) No.

I was keen but 2 years prior to this is an independent school - I was thrown in the deep end!

Difficult to prepare for real world in 1 year.

I like mixed P.E. but there are practical problems with regards to games where sex division is really preferable but not essential.

No great preparation for mixed P.E.

Boys of games that can be played in confined areas - e.g. pop lacrosse - which are to be played mixed and are fun. Bringing P.E. to a relevant and enjoyable level.

From Daya Mondley, Deputy Head,
Little Ealing Comprehensive, West London
What activities does your Centre provide for young people?

What is your catchment area?
Which schools use your leisure centre and to what extent?

What links do you have with local schools?
Do you have a schools liaison officer and what is his/her role?

How many of the young people who attend your centre are people who have just left school / college?
What do you teach in the name of Physical Education? What part of the Programme is devoted to gymnastics and what part to games?

How many school hours do children spend on physical education and how many hours on extra curricular activities?
What skills - physical and social do you expect children to learn from their P.E. programme?

What major games are taught in the school and which of the major games are played at competition level?
What connection is there between the pursuit of games at school level and that at club level?

Where do most of your students continue their studies after 6th form?
What are the aims and objectives of your P.E. programme.

What skills do you wish your students to learn in physical education.
What is your summer programme?

What is your winter programme?
How do you organize your mixed classes for the teaching of:

GYMNASTICS.

GAMES. Minor and Major.

What do you do about raising the standards of all pupils in mixed classes?
How well do boys and girls perform in games that are traditionally sexist?

What do you teach in the upper school as a preparation for leisure during adulthood?
Have you any evidence of school leavers pursuing sports as leisure activities once they leave school? What are the local club facilities?
What do they offer?

What is the link between school and club?
What is the rationale for physical education in your teacher training programmes?
How importantly does your college view physical education as a specialist subject?

How many students on an average pursue physical education as a specialist subject?
How many teaching hours in physical education do students actually spend on practice?

What are your views on leisure and leisure habits in the upper part of the secondary school?
What are your thoughts on a) The present state of physical education and b) future developments in physical education?
What does the physical education programme consist of in each year of training?
YOUR EXPERIENCE IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CAN BE BASED ON A NUMBER OF LEVELS. DO CORRECT ME IF I AM WRONG.

1. Firstly, your experience at your own primary school.

2. Secondly, your experience at your own secondary school.

3. Thirdly, your 4 year experience at teacher training college.

4. Fourthly, your teaching practice experience at ............

5. Fifthly, your experience in the pursuit of recreational sports.

6. Finally, your experience in a country which can be referred to as the Centre of major sporting events.

WITH THAT WIDE EXPERIENCE I FEEL THAT YOU ARE IN A POSITION TO MAKE MEANINGFUL COMMENTS ABOUT THE STATE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN OUR SCHOOLS.

MY FIRST QUESTION TO YOU IS:

How important is it for every child in the school to have Physical Education in the school curriculum?
You have heard of the Bullock Report.—Language across the Curriculum. Does physical education have a place in the curriculum where its skills can be said to be transferrable?

Second Question.

If you were asked to make a case for more curriculum time for physical education in your school what exactly would you be saying to the Director of Curriculum Studies to convince him/her that there is a need for more time.

Third Question.

What games have you been coached in as a preparation for teaching in:

- PRIMARY SCHOOLS
- SECONDARY SCHOOLS
- PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

Fourth Question.

Do you think the notion of RUGBY/CRICKET in Private Schools and the notion of Football in State schools still prevalent?
Fourth Question.

If you were head of department would you devise a programme to encourage students in the upper school to pursue leisure type activities?

WHY.
WHY NOT.
WHEN.
WHAT.

Does your teacher training prepare you for this?

Fifth Question.

Looking back on your four years of teacher training would you be able to say that you had sufficient contact time with pupils to prepare you for the real world of teaching?

YES  Why do you say that?
NO

Sixth Question

Due to re-organisation in secondary schools a number of single sex schools have amalgamated to form new mixed schools. Recent trends show this to be the case.

What are your thoughts on mixed physical education?

What problems do you see for a school that is just amalgamated to form a co-educational school?

QUALITY.

GENDER DOMINATED CURRICULUM,
In your 4 year experience at Teacher Training College what have you been doing or what has the College been doing for you to prepare you to take on a mixed p.e. programme at school level?

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Finally,

Can you talk about one innovation that you would like to take into schools that would improve the quality of physical education.
SOME OF THE QUESTIONS I AM GOING TO PUT TO YOU

MAY SEEM TO BE A MATTER OF COMMON SENSE TO YOU. NONETHLESS

COMMON SENSE NEEDS TO BE Confirmed. SO, DOn'T HesITATE TO

ANSWER IF IT APPEARS TO BE COMMON SENSE.
INTRODUCTION TO INTERVIEW.

You and I (like many others in this country) have had eleven years of compulsory physical education in our schooling lives. What I would like us to do is spend some time talking about those eleven years and see how that eleven year experience has influenced you in what you are now doing and in your thinking.

PRIMARY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE.

Let's begin with your primary school. Can you remember that far back? ..................

What for example were you taught in P.E. and Games? (CONTENTS)

Were Games and P.E. separate as we know it to be today?

Who taught P.E. to your class? (SPECIALISM)
How was individual success in games seen by the rest of the school?

How was team success in games seen by the rest of the school?

Did the rest of the school have an opportunity to spectate at Inter house/school matches?

Were these games played during school time?

Was there an opportunity for you to follow a career in sports?

Did you like physical education in your secondary school?

Did the other students in your group like physical education?

Can you say why?

Was there much truancy/absenteeism during Games?

Were the lessons for mixed classes?
Was he/she known in the school as a specialist?

Did you have inter-school competitions?

When were they held?

Who in the school was responsible for organising the competitions?

Was there a school swimming gala?

Was there a school sports day?

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New can we move onto your secondary school experience.

How different was your Primary School P.E. programme to your Secondary School programme?

Time ..........school and extra-curricular.

Facilities ..........gymnasium, hall.

Games ..........summer/winter ..........On/Off site.

Teachers ..........specialists, instructors.
Are you in a position to say whether today's P.E. Programme

is better for the pupil than it was during your schooling?

If so, how is it better?

Could you be more specific when you talk about... ... 

How does your P.E. programme contribute to the school's

philosophy and ethos.
How important is Physical Education in your school?

What do you think will enhance the status of the subject?
Some of the questions that I am going to put to you may require straight forward answers almost bordering on the common sense. Nevertheless common sense has to be confirmed and I would like you to do just that if you come across such a situation.

I would like to start by taking you up on a statement you made in response to the questionnaire: 'to say that the subject is in a state of confusion is an understatement' Can you please elaborate in the light of the state of physical education as you see it today.
SOME OF THE QUESTIONS I AM GOING TO PUT TO YOU MAY REQUIRE

STRAIGHT FORWARD ANSWERS ALMOST BORDERING ON THE COMMON SENSE. NEVERTHELESS
COMMON SENSE HAS TO BE CONFIRMED AND I WOULD LIKE YOU TO SAY SO IF YOU
COME ACROSS SUCH A SITUATION.

1.

2.

NEXT

I. My first few questions to you must be seen in the light of recent

criticisms against our profession in the media both locally and nationally.

e.g.s: "15 year olds are less fit than 50 year olds."

'Are English school leavers less well prepared for an active leisure
type?"

To what extent would you agree that Education in Sports is mostly about

universal participation no matter how, why or to what standard?
The next question also takes up a similar criticism:

The SEcondary Heads Association Report as well as the Sunday Times, the T.E.S. and the Hargreaves Report on ISS all seem to be making a statement about teacher training in physical education and showing grave concern:

How far does the increased emphasis on theory diminish the time spent on practical training?

The government should implement an urgent review of the training of physical education teachers.

In some schools we believe the severe unpopularity of physical education to be a reflection on the quality of teaching in this subject, the curriculum content and/or teaching method is inappropriate.

In the light of your experience how justified is this criticism?

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Q4

Two factors, capitation and staffing resource seem to determine the status of a P.E department be it at a school or at college. Firstly, do you agree. Secondly, are there other factors that determine the status of physical education
5. Do you prepare students for changes they would encounter in their everyday practice?

- single to mixed schools.
- change of emphasis in sports from competition to co-operation creating the right balance.
- coping with the administrative chores of a department.
- engaging in curriculum innovation.
- monitoring student teacher practice.
- bridging the gap between primary and secondary school practice in PE.

6. Dr. John Kane: Only one in 5 school-leavers took part in any sport after the age of 16. How would your community education model prepare youngsters for the world of active leisure lifestyle?
To what extent early socialisation into gender roles determines firstly the pattern and secondly the quality of physical education in mixed schools?
MOODLEY: Mark, some of the questions I am going to put to you may require straightforward answers almost bordering on the common sense. Nevertheless, common sense has to be confirmed. So don't hesitate to answer if it leads in that direction. Let's begin with a very general question:

What is your view of the standard of sports among school boys and school girls as you see it from this part of the spectrum?

MARK: Eh, looking at the groups we get in I would say that it is bordering average and below average. A lot of the children who come here basically I think don't really want to be here, they would rather be elsewhere, not actually forced to come here, they get on the coach, come here and they see it as a day away from, a morning away from the centre and you get a lot of messing around which is only a bit frustrating seeing that some of the coaching, that is there, is very good coaching, for instance in diving you have the national coach who teaches them diving. In certain areas it is good but in other aspects of the sports they are just there to while away the time, pass the time really. They are not here to learn anything really.

MOODLEY: What are the prospects, with that problem in mind, of involving the physical departments in schools?

MARK: Eh, I think possibly yes but you don't necessarily see the physical teacher going round each of the lessons to see what's going on and see how their kids are improving. They sit in seats and do marking and have a cup of tea somewhere and come back when the lesson is over. In theory I suppose they should be looking around and see how their kids are developing.
MOODLEY : Above all, participating and seeing what is going on.

MARK : That's right.

MOODLEY : I remember when I used to come here I used to do the cricket coaching because the cricket coach did not turn up. John used to say to me 'just step in and do it'

MARK : Yes.

MOODLEY : It certainly helped. That is sad, that is a sad picture isn't it?

MARK * That's, that's what I see from this side, you know. I haven't been based over this side, the sports hall for a year now, merely to see what's going on. But I know having worked as a supervisor in recreation for 5 years I soon know you know if the kids get on and what they get up to. So I got a good idea.

MOODLEY : Okay, let's get on with the next question. John Kane, who was Head of West London Institute of Higher Education in one of his surveys indicated that only 1 in 5 school leavers ever returned to some form of sports after leaving school. Now if this is the case would you say that we in physical education are failing our youngsters?

MARK : ......................

MOODLEY * Yes, in some kind of sports.

MARK : Eh..don't think so. I wouldn't really know enough what
participation figures are throughout the country. I know that the Sports Council did several reports and the last one shows numbers in participation over the last 5 years and the next 5 years. Not knowing those figures on the top of my head I wouldn't really know 1 in 5 is good, bad or indifferent but it seems reasonable to me. Eh as far as the 4 in 5 doing absolutely nothing then possibly yes., but if you are not persistently not doing something...or doing something every other day then.....

MOODLEY : What I think Mark he was trying to point out in that survey is that we as a nation are becoming a nation of spectators rather than participants. That is what he was tryin to convey.

MARK : Hm. Well you can say that but access to the London Marathon and other that type of things where 30,000 people are taking part, then it is a steady, possibly steady increase. But some sports are dropping off, some sports are increasing ...........

MOODLEY : Would you put that down to a phase in sports?

MARK : I would have thought so, yes. It happens all the time.

MOODLEY : Okay. This leads me onto the next question. There was a programme on television recently, a Pamorama Programme which indicated that our 15 year olds are less fit than our 50 year olds. What are your views on that statement?

MARK : Eh. I don't think I believe that. I don't think a 50
year old could be as fit as someone who is 15, by the way they are built and that stage in their lives. It would be a very serious concern if that were the case, I think....

MOODLEY : Of course it would.
Okay, let's move onto the next question.
What in your opinion should schools do to encourage children to participate in sports over and above than what they are doing now? Okay, let's take your situation here. Schools enrol at the beginning of the year, they indicate they are going to send x number of kids to do x number of sports and during the course of the week you find that this has not happened. What do you think schools should do more?

MARK : There's obviously something wrong with the schools; as you say they book 20 places at the beginning of the year and they only turn up with 10 but they won't...they're frightened to lose their places if cut down in any way their numbers. Eh, I don't really know what is happening in the schools if they can't get 20 kids to come on a bus to participate, then there is something wrong; or there are offering better activities, which I don't necessarily believe, at their own school. If you come here you have got some very good facilities and very good coaching and you could improve to no end. I can't believe that is happening at the schools. That is in the London area, what I have seen. Coming from outside of London, out in the sticks it is a different set up. There is no problem in encouraging people to participate in any number of sorts. P.E. teachers, they get teams together, they play other schools every weekend, during the evenings. I don't know but does happen in London? Do other schools play other schools at rugby, cricket, football throughout the terms?
MOODLEY: It is less so now. There was a period or time before industrial action by teachers where you could on a Saturday morning where you could guarantee a school would send out 11 teams, 6 of rugby and 5 of soccer. But if you look at the position now you would be lucky if you had one game in a period of 6 weeks on Saturday morning. That has been the difference.

MARK: That obviously is the answer, you know, to your question...that the teachers aren't spending the time which isn't encouraging.

MOODLEY: For far too long, Mark, it has been taken for granted that teachers will work on a Saturday...

MARK: Oh, yes.

MOODLEY: Industrial action in some ways highlighted that problem and things have almost come to a standstill.

MARK: Oh, yes, oh yes. I can understand it. I suppose again I was quite lucky. We had physical education teachers and basically they loved doing it and we went out weekdays, weekends and what have you. Industrial action curtailed that and it is going to stop a lot of participation... a lot of youngsters are not going to reach their potential.

MOODLEY: There is also, Mark, there was a time when the word 'competitions' became a dirty word.

MARK: Hm.

MOODLEY: And it had some effect on the level of...
MARK: I can remember a year ago I think, a year ago when some London boroughs said that they did not have any team sports. I find that absolutely horrifying, I do not agree with that at all.

MOODLEY: And yet in most of the country it went on as normally as before.

MARK: Oh yes. It is as if you read ............... you had funny ideas.

MOODLEY: Yes, Okay then Mark, let's just move on. What is the take up or the difference in take up between primary and secondary schools at your centre? Are there a greater number of primary schools using your facilities.

MARK: Eh for the number of primary schools that are booked I would say there is a far higher percentage, ratio wise. Primary schools in general are teaching for learning to swim and their classes are generally booked all day and every day, whereas in the secondary schools they have 20 places booked and only half that number turn up. So obviously there is a difference. It is not so many kids but a higher rate of usage.

MOODLEY: Okay, final question, Mark. In terms of equal opportunities do you think we are doing enough to foster equal opportunities in our sports programmes? I am thinking in terms of girls being denied the opportunities to participate....

MARK: I don't think so. Eh calling on my experience in sports centres, you go to any sports centre in London they are
hammering out encouraging those people who miss out like disabled people, the over 50s, youngsters at certain ages, ethnic minority groups. And they are pushing those usages all day and everyday. So obviously in that will include day time usage for schools. So therefore, yes they are trying their best to fill their centre and encourage every single group across the board.

MOODLEY: Okay, Mark, thanks very much.