

FIT, HEALTHY AND SPORTY – THE DISCIPLINING OF BOYS' BODIES IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Göran Gerdin

Critical Studies in Education, University of Auckland, New Zealand

Abstract

This paper will report on findings from a study that examined boys' performances of gender in school Physical Education (PE). Using a participatory visual research approach, involving video recordings of boys participating in PE, the boys' representations and interpretations of the visual data were explored during both focus groups and individual interviews. In order to interpret the data I draw on Foucault's work on power and his disciplinary technologies in which he highlights the body as a site of disciplinary, normalising practices. The boys' visual representations and interpretations illuminate how this disciplinary mechanism is responsible for simultaneously constructing meanings around the normal versus the abnormal masculine body with significant impact on boys' gendered and bodily experiences in PE. The findings in particular highlight how the disciplinary techniques used in this PE setting are aimed at producing docile and functional boys' bodies which above all are fit, healthy and sporty masculine bodies. In this sense, PE can be seen as a disciplinary machinery which influences how boys inhabit and experience their bodies in different ways which may have long term consequences for how boys perceive their bodies and see themselves as physically educated beings.

Introduction

This paper, based on my doctoral research, explores boys' performances of gender in school Physical Education (PE). In my analysis of the data I placed particular emphasis on the role that the boys' bodies play in their performances of gender since the body is a central aspect of any physical activity. From the data analysis it became obvious that the boys' responses in the interviews together with their visual representations and interpretations were stories of the workings of power, discourses and power/knowledge relations. In order to examine boys' embodied performances of gender in PE I therefore draw on Foucault's (1995) work on power and in particular his disciplinary technologies in which he highlights the body as a site of disciplinary, normalising practices. More specifically this paper will discuss how the disciplinary techniques of "control of activity" (Foucault, 1995, p. 149) and "organization of geneses" (Foucault, 1995, p. 156) are aimed at turning boys' bodies into docile bodies. It will also consider the role of examinations in shaping boys' embodied performances of gender by discussing how various techniques of examination such as fitness testing and picking teams results in boys being pushed into either dominant or subordinate positions in PE depending on how successful they are at embodying docile, functional, fit, healthy, sporting bodies. I will argue that these disciplinary mechanisms or techniques are responsible for simultaneously constructing meanings around the normal versus the abnormal masculine body with significant impact on boys' gendered and bodily experiences in PE. That is, the use of disciplinary technologies in PE has the cumulative effect of restricting the possibilities for a multiplicity of bodies and physicalities to co-exist in PE.

Disciplinary Power and Bodies

Using his concept of power as relational, presupposing that there are multiple forms of power, Foucault (1995) was particularly interested in what he called 'disciplinary power' by which he referred to the control, judgement and normalisation of subject in such a way that they were "destined to a certain mode of living or dying" (p. 94). Foucault in particular explored the position of the body as a site of the subject's social production and argued that bodies are subjugated to certain forms of disciplinary power. According to Foucault (1995) the body is a crucial site of disciplinary, normalising practices and the workings of power: "the body is invested with relations of power...power exercised on the body... rather than possessed" (p. 26). A Foucauldian examination of the role that boys' bodies play in their performances of gender is therefore of particular importance since it can be used to examine the dominant discourses of the masculine body and the mechanisms of power which help shape these performances. However, Swain (2003) argues that most research on boys in school and PE has largely ignored the role of the body (e.g. Epstein, 1998; Frosh, Phoenix, & Pattman, 2002; Martino, 1999; Parker, 1996; Renold, 2004). Sport feminists who have employed Foucauldian examinations of the female sporting body have, for instance, demonstrated how physical activity acts as a technology of domination that anchors women into a discursive web of normalising practices which disciplines women into docile bodies who unquestioningly follow a discursive regime (Cole, 1994; Markula, 1995; Markula, 2000; Theberge, 1991). Schools and PE can therefore also be seen as sites where boys' and girls' bodies are regulated, normalised and disciplined (Lupton & Tulloch, 1998), both biologically and socially (Kirk, 1997) into docile bodies (Foucault, 1995).

Wright (1996) argues that in PE bodies are inscribed with gender differences and that gender stereotypes, for instance, reinforce that the female body lacks those qualities associated with the active male body. It is in this sense that body stereotypes determine the way boys and girls perceive physical activities, which might result in boys manifesting masculine stereotypes (i.e. 'muscularity') and girls to follow traditional feminine stereotypes (i.e. 'slenderness') through acts of self-surveillance (Rave, Perez, & Poyatos, 2007). Through the workings of self-surveillance and normalisation which regulates and reproduces images of the normal versus the abnormal masculine and feminine body (Andrews, 2000) a hierarchy of ideal bodies is created. In this hierarchy, for instance, higher ranked masculinities are typically linked to the physical body (Swain, 2006). Privileged masculinities, which serve as high status markers among boys in the school culture, are particularly associated with size, muscularity and athletic physicality (Connell, 2005; Gorely, Holroyd, & Kirk, 2003; Kirk & Tinning, 1994; Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2003; Renold, 2004; Tinning & Glasby, 2002). The fear of not living up to these masculine body ideals may lead to anxieties about their bodies, negative body-images and low self-esteem (Grogan & Richards, 2002; Salisbury & Jackson, 1997) which also have implications for boys' masculine identity (Drummond, 2003). In this sense, the production of masculinities can be seen as inextricably linked to the lived experiences of the body (Foucault, 1995). Azzarito (2010) has recently

called for the inclusion of research methods, specifically visual methodologies, which “enable young people to “speak” meaningfully about their experiences and ways of knowing about the body in physical activity contexts” (p. 155). In following Azzarito (2010) I therefore employed visual research methods in my study.

Methodology

In my study I used a participatory visual research approach (Pink, 2001; Prosser, 2007) in which PE classes were recorded using video, by both me as the researcher and the participating boys. By employing this approach I particularly wanted to include “student voice” and endeavor to bridge the gap between the researcher and the researched since through a poststructural lens reality is a co-construction. Visual research, according to Pink (2007), creates a “context where ethnographers/authors can create or represent continuities between [these] diverse worlds, voices or experiences, and describe or imply points in the research at which they meet or collide” (p. 144). Prosser (2007) argues that the use of participatory visual research methods in educational research is of importance since it shifts the focus from doing research on students to research with and by students. Participatory visual research methods thus “let the people speak for themselves” (Prosser & Burke, 2008, p. 408) and can therefore provide a more intimate representation of the participants’ contextually embedded everyday experiences. This also enables a more fluid and open construction of perceived experiences, lending full ownership over the construction and social-personal representation of those experiences (Banks, 2001). By using video cameras to collect data it was envisaged boys could determine what information was captured along with its composition.

Nevertheless, when the visual data is edited and produced, a level of distance between the participant, researcher, and the social context is still maintained (Schuck & Kearney, 2006). To increase the level of intimacy between the researcher, the visual data and the social context Banks (2001) has suggested that the images produced by the participants can be used as a form of “interview probing”. This is why the visual data recorded by both me and the participating boys was used during the focus groups and individual interviews to help provide a more ethical and balanced presentation of results by giving the boys the chance to provide an interpretation of the visual data (Kaplan & Howes, 2004). Shuck and Kearney (2006) state that using data in form of video recordings can stimulate good conversation and produce rich data and a number of researchers have used this type of stimulated recall interviews to generate data (e.g. Byra & Sherman, 1993). Stimulated-recall interviews, therefore importantly redress the imbalance of power when the researcher (exclusively) analyses the data’s significance (Allen, 2008). I will now briefly mention the research setting, data collection methods and means of analysis before presenting some of my findings.

The Research Process

The research setting was a multicultural single-sex boys' secondary school in Auckland, New Zealand. Participants in this study were 60 Year 10 (age 14-15) students from two different PE classes. All the participants and parents/legal guardians signed consent forms. The researcher spent a total of 1 year with both PE classes collecting data from field notes, video recordings, focus groups and individual interviews.

The study began with some initial observations in order to get to know the students and gain some of their trust. These initial observations were documented, with written notes and video recordings. After an initial period of observations lasting a couple of weeks I then started giving the students control of the video camera. Each student used the video camera for about 20-30 minutes resulting in a mixture of longer and shorter video clips. These clips were then copied across to my computer and, without any editing taking place, used during the focus groups and individual interviews. During the focus groups and individual interviews the students were asked to select and talk about the video clip(s) that either they or other students had filmed. The clips were then played on my computer where I asked the student(s) to talk about what was happening in this particular clip. Throughout the interviews I also used a schedule of open-ended questions/prompts which were developed in relation to my review of literature and themes/issues that I had identified during the observations and video recordings. The conversations were taped and later transcribed. In order to analyse the data I decided to use both 'thematic analysis' (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and 'discourse analysis' (Burman & Parker, 1993) since it provided a broad framework that enabled me to focus on the practical implications of discourse, particularly with regards to power relations.

The boys' visual representations together with their descriptions and interpretations of these in the focus groups and individual interviews provided thick and rich accounts of boys' embodied performances of gender in PE and generated an array of meanings.

Control of Activity and Organisation of Geneses – Producing Masculine Bodies

Foucault (1995) observed that the first way of controlling any activity in the provided space was to timetable it since timetabling ensures an effective use of space in the provided time and it is, therefore, an attempt to "assure the quality of the time used" (p. 150). However, Foucault (1995) also contended that disciplinary blocks, such as the school "which analyze space, break up and rearrange activities, must also be understood as machinery for adding up and capitalizing time" (p. 157) which he refers to as "the organisation of geneses" (p. 156). Drawing particularly on military organisations, he argued, that the organisation of geneses is typically achieved in four interconnected ways: dividing time into successive or parallel segments; organising the segments into a series of progressive element; deciding on the length of each segment and concluding it with an examination; and creating a seriation of

successive activities (Foucault, 1995, pp. 157-160). The underlying principles here are those of designing, organising and prescribing those activities/exercises appropriate to the discipline or discourse and establishing set regular rhythms for these activities. Foucault argued that this way of timetabling and scheduling activities establishes rhythms, imposes particular occupations, and regulates the cycles of repetition. More importantly these disciplinary practices define:

how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines. Thus discipline produces subjected and practised bodies, 'docile' bodies.

(Foucault, 1995, p. 138)

As a way of introducing how a PE lesson might also be understood through Foucault's notions of control of activity and organisation of geneses as way of producing docile bodies I will begin by including an extract from my logbook:

At the start of the lesson one of the boys asks the teacher "What are we doing today sir?" and another one yells out "Dodgeball sir, please sir!" Mr Whyte replies "Yes Dodgeball" and it seems like the whole gym erupts from boys calling out "Yes!". Then Mr Whyte calls out "Ok boys lets get moving!" The boys start lining up against one of the walls while some boys are still getting changed. Mr Whyte looks at them and says "Hurry up you lazy bums!". A couple of boys are still in their normal school uniform and are not participating in today's class for various reasons. One of the boys, for instance, have got a broken arm. Mr Whyte calls out "Ok Go!". All of a sudden all the boys start doing this warm-up/fitness drill involving running back and forwards between the lines and stopping at times to do a number of push-ups and sit-ups. They seem to do this every time at the start of the PE class since everyone knows exactly what to do. The teacher hardly has to intervene at all, however, every now and then he calls out "Come on you lot, faster faster!". Some of the boys start chanting and signing military style songs while running and doing their push-ups and sit-ups. About 10-15 minutes later they all line up against the wall again and Mr Whyte calls out "You and you, you are team captains". Two of the boys step away from the wall and turns around and faces the rest of the group. They then start calling out the names of the other boys to come and join their teams. The boys who get picked stand up and walk proudly with their heads up high towards their team captain with some of them high-fiving them as they walk past. The rest of the group remain on the floor with their backs against the wall. As the two team captains keep picking their teams, the boys who

are left sitting on the floor, start dropping their backs and heads lower and lower to the point where some of them are literally disappearing through the floor. By the time the last few boys get picked the other boys have already started playing with the balls. The game of dodgeball starts and the gym is filled with loud noises from balls bouncing everywhere, no one is safe, including myself and the boys who are not participating. I observe how some boys never seem to be holding a ball and appear as if they are quite happy about that. The game goes on right until the end of the class, and I have no idea if anyone won the game or if they were even keeping some kind of score. Right before the end Mr Whyte calls out "Ok that's it for today boys!". A final burst of noise and grunts is heard and the boys rush over to the side of the gym to get changed back into their school uniforms. As the boys start leaving the gym I overhear one of the boys saying "Man, I love dodgeball, we should just do that every time in PE!"

Logbook entry 21/08/2010

This logbook entry demonstrates the first point Foucault (1995) makes in terms of the organisation of geneses which involves "divide duration into successive or parallel segments, each of which must end at a specific time" (p. 158). Foucault noted that timetabled activities have been further broken down into smaller elements to increase the effectiveness of the time used and consequently the control of the bodies involved. PE teachers at this school often would comment that "there is never enough time" which then requires more "effective" use of time, that is, "one must seek to intensify the use of the slightest moment, as if time, in its very fragmentation, is inexhaustible" (Foucault, 1991, p. 154). Most PE classes at this school are therefore broken down into two main segments: warm-up and physical activity, typically involving warm-up/fitness drills for 5-10 minutes followed by a popular ballgame like dodgeball or rugby for the remaining of the lesson. Regardless of PE being inside or outside this sequence is adhered to the majority of the time. This structure is used to use time effectively in order to provide fitness benefits for the young boys in the best possible way with time that is given to them. The only exceptions include when the boys are being assessed, for instance, when doing fitness tests, such as the "beep-test". It also typically involves the teacher, Mr Whyte, nominating two or more team captains who then are responsible for picking the teams. The common perception of PE at this school revolves around making sure the boys are active as much as possible and the use of various fitness regimes and sporting activities are assumed as the best way of achieving this. In the words of one of the PE teachers, "it is all about getting them active for as long as possible".

The use of military style fitness regimes and warm-up procedures is an example of Foucault's (1995) second point, that the timetabled activities need to be organised "according to an analytical plan - successions of elements as simple as possible, combining according to increasing complexity" (p.

158). In this case, this is first of all evidenced by how separate warm-up/fitness exercises are organised into various durations revolving around either time or repetitions and locating them into a particular order. Separate exercises such as running between the lines, push-ups, sit-ups etc are then combined and progressively increases in intensity over time to include more repetitions and last for longer as the boys get older. For instance, throughout the year spent with these two PE classes I observed how the boys were expected to carry out more repetitions within the same time frame, thus, ensuring progression. Additionally, all the boys follow the teacher’s instruction so that each separate exercise unit is performed in a concise and precise manner making it similar to exercises done in the army. These concise and precise exercises, according to Foucault (1995), aims for the correct use of the body, “which makes possible a correct use of time, nothing must remain idle or useless: everything must be called upon to form the support of the act required. A well-disciplined body forms the operational context of the slightest gesture” (p. 152). One of the outwardly “sporty” boys (James) who seem to love everything about sport and PE, talks about these warm-up/fitness exercises (Figure 1) in his individual interview:



Figure 1 A group of boys lined up for the “beep-test” [top image] and doing fitness drills [bottom image].

James: I love the fitness stuff we do as a warm-up at the start of the lessons.

Göran: How come?

James: Well you know we kind of do the same things everytime. Like running,

pushups and situps you know to make us faster and stronger.

Göran: And does it work?

James: Yeah totally I mean maybe not for everyone. But most of us like you know are able to do more and more pushups and situps every time we do it. You know we get stronger and stuff. It also great having Mr Whyte yelling at us it kind of motivates us.

Göran: Do you think everyone feels that way?

James: Well I guess it can be quite hard for some of the boys who are not that fit and stuff. They usually don't have time to finish their exercises before we start playing games. So I guess it is a bit of a fitness test really.

James' comments highlight how this warm-up/fitness regime involves several different segments which progressively over time involves more repetitions and increased durations. In addition, James' feeling of being "tested" or examined while doing these warm-up/fitness exercises brings us to Foucault's third point in relation to the organisation of geneses. Foucault (1995) argued that after dividing the lesson into segments, organising them in a successive/progressive manner, and deciding on how long each segment will last it all "needs to be concluded by an examination (p. 159). The examination will importantly show whether the participants have managed to reach the level required and that all the participants have gone through the same training, but above all enable the classification and differentiation of the participants' abilities (Foucault, 1995). Examination is therefore a highly structured disciplinary technique which combines the techniques of normalising judgement and hierarchical observation in which the former enables classification/categorisation of individuals and the latter makes it possible for individuals to be differentiated and compared to each other.

Foucault (1995) suggested that on almost every occasion, disciplinary practices are often adopted in response to particular needs: such as a "renewed outbreak of certain epidemic diseases" (p. 138). In terms of what is taught in school-based PE, Burrows (2003) argues that New Zealand educators appear to be particularly influenced by a widespread set of concerns about the youth, such as the emerging 'obesity-epidemic'. This has had great implications for the discourses related to healthy masculine and feminine bodies which position certain body types and habits as health hazardous, or obesity-prone bodies (Burrows, 2003). In particular since critiques of this 'epidemic' are rare in the news media (Gard, 2011; Gard & Wright, 2005). This kind of Panoptic surveillance based on discourse of the obesity-epidemic enhances pressures to succeed and transforms boys' embodied performances of gender into a form of display. Fitness testing, such as the commonly used "beep-test" at this school, therefore provide the boys with a space and context in which knowledge and learning about bodies, fitness and health is constructed (Wrench & Garrett, 2008). This assessment technique which ranks

people's fitness performances in relation to a standardised scale, is also in keeping with Foucault's (1973) notion of the use of statistical norms against which to measure people's behaviour in order to determine normalcy or deviancy. For those boys in this study who experienced success, fitness tests provided particular pleasurable and public opportunities to present and construct themselves as having fit and able bodies. Duncan, who just like James can be said to belong to the group of PE loving and sporty boys, explains:

Duncan: I quite like test like the beep-test because I know I am pretty good at it. However, if I wasn't fit enough I don't think I would like doing it.

Göran: Why is that?

Duncan: Well you know when I do the beep-test I feel really good about myself you know having a fit body and stuff which makes you more popular and stuff but if I wasn't [fit] it would be quite embarrassing I think.

For participants in my study, such as Duncan, the contextual structure of the testing environment was a significant factor in defining their bodily experiences. Being fit and doing well at the beep-test allows Duncan to experience his body in positive ways which also importantly serves as a high-status marker amongst the peer-group. However, those boys who are not able to live up to these stereotypic images of masculine bodies when engaged in fitness regimes and beep-tests were significantly affected in more negative ways. One of the boys, Zack, a 14-year-old boy who described himself as "overweight", talks about how his teachers were initially supportive of his willingness to improve his fitness and lose weight by requesting that the class would spend more time on fitness assessments, such as the "beep test". However, over time he was aware that he became something of a "problem" student both in relation to his "failure" to make any significant changes and to participate fully in the PE lessons:

Zack: Since I never seemed to get any fitter or lose any weight my teachers would kind of shake their heads at me or just sigh. I think they sort of saw me as a bit of problem. I have kind of given up on ever getting a better body and I don't really like PE anymore since it keeps reminding me of this failure.

Göran: So have you stopped wanting to do more beep-tests then?

Zack: Yeah whenever we do test like that in PE I now make sure I bring a note from my and dad saying that I cant participate in PE on that day.

Göran: So how do you feel about PE now then?

Zack: Will I still like but it is hard sometimes because it makes me feel a bit left

out and I guess I have lost a bit of self-confidence altogether but especially in PE.

Zack's experiences of the beep test is in particular an example of how the techniques of examination in PE is aimed at producing fit and healthy bodies since through this procedure they are subjected to external regulation, transformation and discipline (Foucault, 1978). Teachers act as the judges of "normality" and thus provide a panoptic effect. Through the power of the gaze both from the other boys and the teachers, boys' bodies are singled out and regulated, and those who do not live up to these ideals, boys such as Zack, are through techniques of exclusion positioned as the "other" (Hunter, 2004). The teachers' shaking of their heads and sighs therefore serve as an indication to Zack that he was failing to make any real changes to his fitness and body weight. The shaking heads and sighs are also examples of how techniques of normalisation in the Foucauldian sense occur in everyday life. The message of getting fit and losing weight is presented as a form of "common sense" in the context of PE where it is about "doing what's best for your own good". Foucault (1995) claimed that normalisation is "one of the great instruments of power" (p. 184). However, this does not mean that everyone is treated the same. On the contrary, normalisation both homogenizes and individualizes which is most effectively achieved through the use of examination since it subjects individuals to a disciplinary mechanism involving measuring, recording, comparing, differentiating, punishing and rewarding (Foucault, 1995). Examinations within PE, such as the use of the beep-test, therefore serve to:

differentiate individuals from the otherwise undifferentiated masses, to impose, enforce and justify social and spatial divisions between able and less able bodies , and furthermore, to impose similar divisions between differently categorized lesser able bodies, based on their degree of normalisation.

(Markula & Pringle, 2006, p. 26)

Zack's story above is also one that demonstrates that fitness tests may actually contribute to or underpin diminishing interest in PE in particular and physical activity in general (Cale & Harris, 2005). The dislike and humiliation experienced by Zack during fitness tests has resulted in him adopting particular avoidance practices (e.g. the note from his dad). Other boys were also bothered by the public display where their performances and the standards they achieved were painfully evident and deemed to be lacking. Through the panoptic gaze they internalised a deep sense of inadequacy that contributed to a construction of themselves as physically deficient. Mark, another boy who like Zack appeared to struggle with his physical self-confidence, told me a similar story of his experiences of fitness testing in PE:

Mark: I always feel like crap when doing these tests since so many of the other boys are fitter than me. I find it really hard that everyone is watching you, you know all that pressure to keep going. If you stop too early you feel like a loser.

Stopping first is like being in hell.

Mark’s statement draws attention to the fact that dropping out early or even first seems to be particularly humiliating and a public demonstration of an “unfit” body. Focus on improving fitness levels and attendant fitness through fitness testing is therefore a problematic concept especially since multi-stage test like the beep-test was originally designed for use with adults and elite athletes (Cale & Harris, 2005).

Another form of “examination” in this PE context which further reinforces the hierarchical ordering of boys’ bodies is achieved through the practice of “picking of teams”. The picking of teams importantly becomes a constant reminder for how successful the boys have been at turning themselves into fit, healthy, sporting bodies. The picking of teams can be seen as one of those highly gendered moments in PE where boys are picked according to bodily attributes and abilities where traditional masculine values are sought after. The “sporty”, “fit” and “active” boys are picked before the “non-sporty”, “unfit” and “passive” boys. Denzin (2010) recently stressed the importance of identifying key moments where the “sting of memories” are felt and, although I can only speak for myself, I think many of us can remember these kind of experiences in PE. While watching a video clip of the boys picking teams for a game of indoor soccer (Figure 2) in one of the focus groups the boy who had been behind the camera that day yells out:

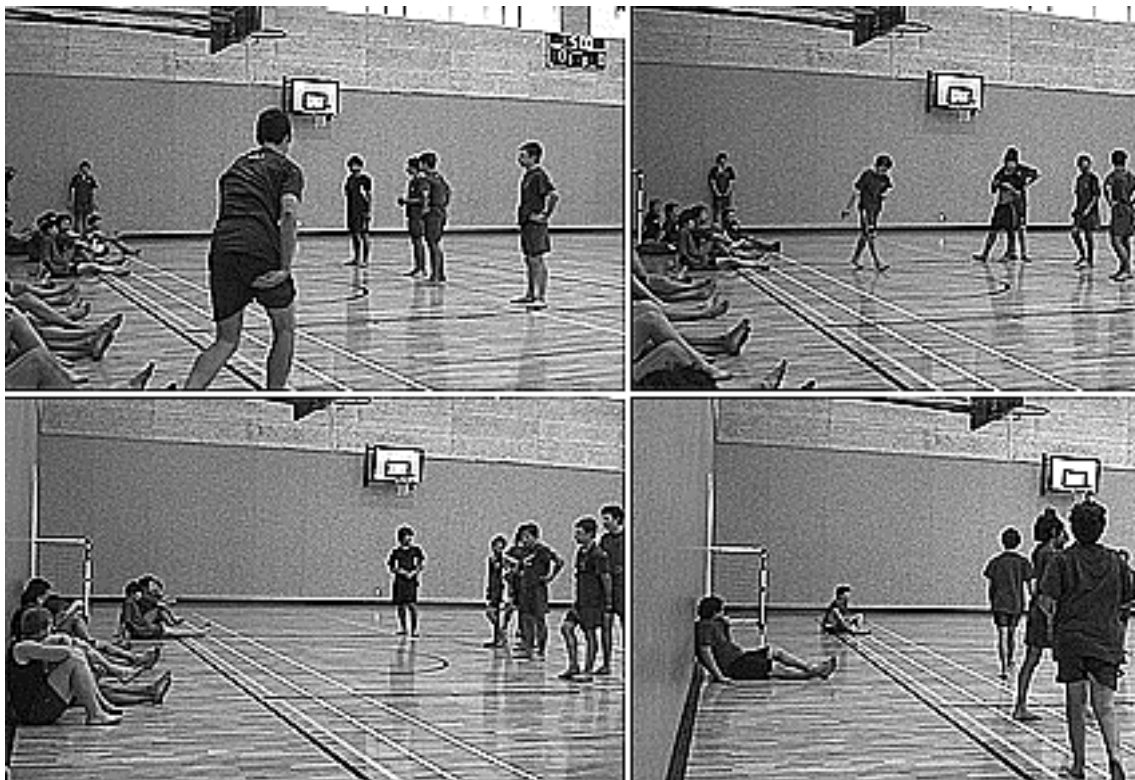


Figure 2 Boys picking teams for a game of indoor soccer.

Mitchell: Ah look I'm zooming in on all the nerds who are being picked last!

(Laughter)

Göran: What do you mean?

Mitchell: Well look at them they are just sitting there! [He demonstrates how the boys who are being picked last sit with their arms crossed, leaning against the wall of the gym and with their heads facing the ground). No one wants them on their team because they don't really care about PE they rather be doing their homework.

Göran: So who gets picked first then?

Mitchell: All the popular ones, you know the sporty ones.

Duncan: Yeah the ones who are the fittest and strongest.

Although the process of picking teams in this manner can be related to the contemporary 'performance discourse' in PE (Tinning, 2010) where team captains are simply tactically choosing players with the aim of securing the best possible team, this practice can also be interpreted through a gendered lens. Mitchell and Duncan, who can both be described as belonging to the popular sporty group and therefore amongst the first boys to be picked regardless of sport, for instance, draw attention to the hierarchising of boys and bodies associated with picking teams. Mitchell and Duncan's statements in particular highlight how those boys who are picked last are publicly displayed as the less physically competent and less popular boys because of their bodies being perceived as "weaker" and "less fit" masculine bodies (Davison, 2000). There is also little these boys can do to escape from this humiliating position. In this sense, this form of "examination" practice acts to categorise and sort boys and their bodies which reinforces dominant archetypal masculine bodily ideals (Drummond, 2003). The gendered distribution of bodies in space (Webb & Macdonald, 2007) is also evident in this scenario. The sporty able bodies are standing up tall and occupying space whereas as the non-sporty less able bodies are low to the ground and taking up minimal amount of space. Mark, who as described above has developed a rather negative body-image and a feeling of being physical deficient, also commented on this:

Mark: I just don't know why the team captains always have to stand up and the rest of us sit down. I mean then when all the good ones get picked first and they get to stand up as well the rest of us are stuck sitting down on the floor. It is so embarrassing and you feel like you are useless. Sometimes I just want to run away and hide.

Techniques of power are therefore evident also in this situation through the gendered placement of the

boys' bodies in certain positions during the procedure of picking teams. Mark went on to describe how these kinds of experiences often discouraged him from participating in PE. Consequently, consideration of the effects of the examination and distribution of bodies may help in understanding why some boys are pushed into marginal positions in PE. As pointed out by Burrows (2000, 2003) some boys experience clear disadvantages because of prevalent attitudes and beliefs about the importance of fit, healthy and sporty bodies in PE. On top of that, some boys, such as Zack and Mark, have additional self-esteem and confidence issues related to their body-image to deal with (Drummond, 2003; Grogan & Richards, 2002). These combined effects can have severe long-term consequences for how Zack, Mark and other boys view themselves as embodied physical educated beings (Macdonald & Tinning, 2003; McCuaig & Tinning, 2010).

The cumulative effect of these repeated cycles or "seriation of exercises" (Foucault, 1995, p. 157) involving, for instance, warm-up/fitness exercises, sporting activities and testing/examination, aimed at producing fit, healthy, sporting bodies, leads us to Foucault's fourth point. By exposing the boys to these "series of series" of exercises each boy is caught up in a sequential series of activities which ultimately defines and ranks him in relation to the other boys. According to Foucault (1995) this way of developing a series of series of exercises can therefore also be called a "disciplinary polyphony of exercises" (p. 159) since it is the disciplinary technique which makes it possible to continually observe and evaluate each boy's progression both in relation to the activities and compared to the other boys. The disciplinary technologies in relation to the control of activity and organisation of geneses discussed in this section can therefore be related to Foucault's (1980) assertion that the development of the human sciences in particular worked to produce classifications and categories of human activity. In particular, these disciplinary technologies are tied to power because of the way they are used to regulate and normalise individuals (Foucault, 1980). That is, with the development of human norms, such as the fit, healthy sporting body, individuals can be organised, compared and classified. As presented above, the process of fitness testing and picking of teams are examples of how the boys' bodies can be compared and classified as either fit or unfit, able or less able, sporty or non-sporty bodies and therefore constitutes a regulatory mechanism designed to discipline boys' bodies. However, it is important to point out, and as highlighted above by the boys conflicting stories and experiences, that these disciplinary practices are therefore responsible for producing multiple masculinities and masculine bodies. That is, although this disciplinary mechanism attempts to turn all boys into docile, functional, fit, healthy sporting bodies, it also produces a plethora of alternative bodies, including, for instance, the unfit, passive, non-sporty masculine body.

Conclusions

The findings presented in this paper have highlighted how disciplinary technologies in PE are aimed at turning boys' bodies into docile and functional bodies which above all are fit, healthy and sporty

masculine bodies. In this sense, PE can be seen as a disciplinary machinery which influences how boys inhabit and experience their bodies in different ways. Seen through Foucault's notions of control of activity and the organisation of geneses the boys are progressively exercised into docile, functional bodies. The use of various examination procedures enable comparisons to be made and make judgements in terms of how successful the boys have been in becoming docile and functional bodies. That is, these disciplinary practices not only produce singular but multiple forms of masculine bodies which are all ordered hierarchically. It is in this sense that practices that serve to discipline and normalise the body in PE, create a hierarchy of ideal gendered bodies. This PE context can therefore be seen as being implicated in a form of modern disciplinary power which through the workings of (self)surveillance and normalisation regulates and reproduces images of the normal versus the abnormal body (Andrews, 2000). The findings presented in this paper adds to our understanding of this normalising practice by elucidating the disciplinary machinery that makes the boys themselves mainly responsible for regulating and negotiating their embodiments of masculinity. The surveillance and self-surveillance of particular masculine body ideals in PE therefore restricts the possibility of what Davison (2000) calls "alternative bodies" and "If you cannot shape yourself to the masculine standard demanded in PE class, you risk being shamed by the PE teacher and by other students" (p. 262). Failing to live up to ideal masculine body types in PE can have long term consequences for how these boys perceive their bodies and see themselves as physically educated beings.

References

- Allen, L. (2008). 'Young people's 'agency' in sexuality research using visual methods'. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 11(6), 565-577.
- Andrews, D. L. (2000). Posting Up: French Post-Structuralism and the Critical Analysis of Contemporary Sporting Culture. In J. Coakley & E. Dunning (Eds.), *Handbook of Sport Studies* (pp. 106-137). Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Azzarito, L. (2010). Ways of Seeing the Body in Kinesiology: A Case for Visual Methodologies. *Quest*, 62, 155-170.
- Banks, M. (2001). *Visual methods in social research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Burman, E., & Parker, I. (1993). *Discourse analytical research*. London: Routledge.
- Burrows, L. (2000). Old Games in New Rompers? Gender issues in New Zealand Physical Education. *Journal of Physical Education New Zealand*, 33(2), 30-41.
- Burrows, L. (2003). Physical Education in Aotearoa/New Zealand.
- Byra, M., & Sherman, M. (1993). Preactive and interactive decision-making tendencies of less and more experienced preservice teachers. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 64, 46-55.
- Cale, L., & Harris, J. (2005). *Exercise and Young People: Issues, Implications and Initiatives*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cole, C. L. (1994). Resisting the canon: Feminist cultural studies, sport, and technologies of the body. In S. Birrell & C. L. Cole (Eds.), *Women, sport, and culture* (pp. 5-29). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Connell, R. W. (2005). *Masculinities* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Davison, K. G. (2000). Boys' Bodies in School: Physical Education. *The Journal of Men's Studies*, 8(2), 255-266.
- Denzin, N. K. (2010). *A critical performance ethnography that matters*. Paper presented at the Contemporary Ethnography Across the Disciplines, 17-19/11, 2010, Hamilton, NZ.

- Drummond, M. (2003). The meaning of boys' bodies in physical education. *The Journal of Men's Studies*, 11(2), 131-143.
- Epstein, J. S. (1998). *Youth culture: identity in a postmodern world*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Foucault, M. (1973). *The birth of the clinic : an archaeology of medical perception*. London: Tavistock.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality, Volume One*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1991). *The Foucault effect : studies in governmentality : with two lectures by and an interview with Michel Foucault*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline and Punish : The Birth of the Prison*. Westminster, MD, USA: Vintage.
- Frosh, S., Phoenix, A., & Pattman, R. (2002). *Young Masculinities: Understanding Boys in Contemporary Society*. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave.
- Gard, M. (2011). *The end of the obesity epidemic*. London: Routledge.
- Gard, M., & Wright, J. (2005). *The 'obesity epidemic': science, ideology and morality*. London: Routledge.
- Gorely, T., Holroyd, R., & Kirk, D. (2003). Muscularity, the Habitus and the Social Construction of Gender: towards a gender-relevant physical education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24(4), 429-448.
- Grogan, S., & Richards, H. (2002). Body Image: Focus Groups with Boys and Men. *Men and Masculinities*, 4(3), 219-232.
- Hunter, L. (2004). Bourdieu and the Social Space of the PE class. Reproduction of Doxa through Practice. *Sport, Education and Society*, 9(2), 175-192.
- Kaplan, I., & Howes, A. (2004). Seeing through different eyes: Exploring the value of participative research using images in schools. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 34(2), 143-155.
- Kirk, D. (1997). Schooling bodies in new times: The reform of school physical education in high modernity. In J.-M. Fernandez-Balboa (Ed.), *Critical postmodernism in human movement, physical education and sport* (pp. 39-64). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Kirk, D., & Tinning, R. (1994). Embodied Self-identity, Healthy Lifestyles and School. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 16, 600-625.
- Lupton, D., & Tulloch, J. (1998). The adolescent 'unfinished body', reflexivity and HIV/AIDS risk. *Body & Society*, 4(2), 19-34.
- Macdonald, D., & Tinning, R. (2003). Reflective practice goes public: Reflection, governmentality and postmodernity. In A. Laker (Ed.), *The Future of Physical Education: Building a new pedagogy* (pp. 82-101). London and New York: Routledge.
- Markula, P. (1995). Firm but shapely, fit but sexy, strong but thin: the postmodern aerobicizing female bodies. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 12(4), 424-453.
- Markula, P. (2000). "I gotta do the marathon": Women running as a truth-game. *Aethlon*, 18, 89-106.
- Markula, P., & Pringle, R. (2006). *Foucault, sport and exercise : power, knowledge and transforming the self*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Martino, W. (1999). 'Cool Boys', 'Party Animals', 'Squids' and 'Poofsters': interrogating the dynamics and politics of adolescent masculinities in school. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 20(2), 239-263.
- Martino, W., & Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. (2003). *So what's a boy? : addressing issues of masculinity and schooling*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- McCuaig, L., & Tinning, R. (2010). HPE and the moral governance of p/leisureable bodies. *Sport, Education and Society*, 15(1), 39-61.
- Parker, A. (1996). The Construction of Masculinity within Boys' Physical Education. *Gender and Education*, 8(2), 141-158.
- Pink, S. (2001). *Doing visual ethnography: Images, media and representation in research*. London: Sage.
- Pink, S. (2007). *Doing visual ethnography*. London: Sage Publications.
- Prosser, J. (2007). Visual methods and the visual culture of schools. *Visual Studies*, 22(13-30).
- Prosser, J., & Burke, C. (2008). Image-based educational research. Childlike perspectives. In J. G.

- Knowles & A. L. Cole (Eds.), *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research* (pp. 407-419). London: Sage Publications.
- Rave, J. M. G., Perez, L. M. R., & Poyatos, M. C. (2007). The Social Construction of Gender in Spanish Physical Education Students. *Sport, Education and Society*, 12(2), 141-158.
- Renold, E. (2004). Other' boys: negotiating non-hegemonic masculinities in the primary school. *Gender and Education*, 16(2), 247-266.
- Salisbury, J., & Jackson, D. (1997). *Challenging macho values: Practical ways of working with adolescent boys*. London: Falmer Press.
- Schuck, S., & Kearney, M. (2006). Using Digital Video as a Research Tool: Ethical Issues for Researchers. *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, 15(4), 447-463.
- Swain, J. (2003). How young schoolboys become somebody: the role of the body in the construction of masculinity. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24(3), 299-318.
- Swain, J. (2006). The Role of Sport in the Construction of Masculinities in an English Independent Junior School. *Sport, Education and Society*, 11(4), 317-335.
- Theberge, N. (1991). Reflections on the body in the sociology of sport. *Quest*, 43, 123-134.
- Tinning, R. (2010). *Pedagogy and Human Movement: Theory, practice, research*. New York: Routledge.
- Tinning, R., & Glasby, T. (2002). Pedagogical work and the 'cult of the body': Considering the role of HPE in the context of the 'new public health'. *Sport, Education and Society*, 7(2), 109-119.
- Webb, L., & Macdonald, D. (2007). Dualing with gender: teachers' work, careers and leadership in physical education. *Gender and Education*, 19(4), 491-512.
- Wrench, A., & Garrett, R. (2008). Pleasure and pain: Experiences of fitness testing. *European Physical Education Review*, 14(3), 325-346.
- Wright, J. (1996). The construction of complementarity in physical education. *Gender and Education*, 8(1), 61-79.