

Gymnastics and Gender: Contesting the Meaning of Physical Education

At the end of the second world war, gymnastics formed the basis of school physical education programmes, to such an extent, in fact, that gymnastics and physical education were virtually synonymous. However, before the introduction of mass secondary schooling through the 1944 Education Act (in England and Wales), there had been a growing feeling among certain sections of the physical education profession that physical education was broader than gymnastics, and the 1933 Syllabus¹ reflected this view with its inclusion of games, swimming and athletics. The circumstances after the war were markedly different to those in which the 1933 Syllabus was written though, since it had been prepared with mainly elementary school pupils in mind. The new secondary schools, on the other hand, catered for older children and so presented the added difficulty of an unknown quantity in the shape of the fifteen year old when the school leaving age was raised in 1947. The problem for the profession was the extent to which gymnastics was likely to be able to hold the interest of these older pupils, and the fact that the maturer physique of the adolescent created new possibilities for the kinds of activities, some demanding strength and speed, that could be offered.

With the arrival of mass secondary schooling the demand for teachers grew, and after 1945 men began to enter the physical education profession in large numbers for the first time. Very soon, battle lines were drawn over which form of gymnastics should be taught in school programmes, and the two sides in the contest were distinguished almost entirely on the basis of gender, with the females preferring the new, 'progressive' educational gymnastics and the males, a form of competitive gymnastics. What was significant about the vitriolic debate that ensued over the next decade and a half was not so much the issue of what form of gymnastics should be taught but, rather, how physical education more generally should be defined. Since at this time gymnastics and physical education were regarded as almost synonymous by both the females and the males, this struggle struck at the very heart of the meaning of the subject in the new secondary schools, and had ramifications for teaching methods, content, assessment and many other pedagogical issues. The fact that gender was one of the main dividing lines between the opposing groups is particularly important in light of recent feminist critiques of physical education and sport as a male preserve,² a factor that is made all the more significant in that it was the formerly

of the subject under siege after the war. The male discourse that emerged in opposition to the female perspective is also revealing, since the debate provided a context in which the new doctrine of scientific functionalism, fostered by male physical educators during the postwar period, could be developed and refined.

The chapter begins with a description of three versions of gymnastics that were competing for curriculum time in British schools at the end of the second world war. From there, the demise of the formally dominant Swedish system is discussed briefly as a way of previewing two new discourses, one represented by the female educational gymnasts and the other by the predominately male scientific functionalists. We then turn to the debate that followed the male critique of educational gymnastics, which revolved around the notions of transfer of training in relation to skill learning, and the issue of competition. Finally, I will attempt to show how the conditions under which each discourse was nurtured and developed also set limits on the potential for progress of these versions of gymnastics, and of physical education as a school subject more broadly.

Three Versions of Gymnastics

By the end of the second world war, three distinct versions of gymnastics were competing for teaching time in school physical education programmes. The first of these, Swedish (or Ling) gymnastics, had been the hallmark of the professional female physical educator between the late 1890s to the 1930s, and the version of physical education officially approved by the then Board of Education for use in its elementary schools. The Swedish system was invented by Per Henrik Ling in the early decades of the nineteenth century and consolidated into a system of physical training at the Central Gymnastic Institute in Stockholm which he founded. It involved mostly free-standing exercises set out in tables that sought to systematically exercise each part of the body through increasingly intricate flexions and extensions. It also involved some apparatus work such as vaulting. Teaching within the Ling system was highly formalised and in the beginning especially, movements were performed to militaristic commands such as 'at the double!' and 'fall in!', and was easily practised with large groups in confined spaces. The Swedish system was boosted in Britain in the 1880s through the work of Swedish gymnasts appointed by the Board of Education to organize physical education in its elementary schools. One of these organizers was Madam Bergman-Osterberg, who in 1885 formed her own college of physical training for women.³ Swedish gymnastics formed the foundation of the women's professional training, which was supplemented by massage, remedial exercises and games. Its main focus was the physical and physiological effects of exercise, and the entire system was based in an extensive body of 'scientific knowledge'⁴ of functional anatomy and physiology.

The second form of gymnastics, which was witnessed in its modern form for the first time by British physical educators at the 1948 London Olympic Games, was German or Olympic gymnastics. German gymnastics had been around at least as long as Ling's system, and involved work on apparatus such as the rings, parallel bars and pommel horse. At the beginning of the twentieth

physical training by the Interdepartmental Committee set up by the Royal Commission on Physical Training (1903) to produce a Syllabus of Physical Exercises for British schools. It lost that contest, and suffered the stigma of its German origins after the first world war to be neglected by all but a handful of enthusiasts in Britain until the 1940s. After the boost given by the 1948 Olympics, however, which presented gymnastics as a competitive sport made up of the six activities of floor-work, vaulting, rings, bars, beam and pommel horse, there was an increasing level of interest in this version of gymnastics with a growing number of advocacies for its inclusion in school programmes from the early 1950s.⁵

The third form was educational gymnastics, and it had made a rapid and dramatic impact on female physical education from the first appearance of Laban's ideas on movement and dance in Britain in the 1930s. Modern Dance was built on a radical critique of 'unnatural' movement patterns in industrial society that had, in Laban's opinion, much to do with the presence of mental illness and other personality disorders. In the spirit of other psychoanalytic critiques of contemporary industrial society by writers and therapists like Wilhelm Reich, Laban's philosophy argued for the release of dangerously pent up and inhibited energies through free, spontaneous movement. Although Laban's main concerns were focused on the theatre and industry, his ideas were very quickly applied to gymnastics by female physical educators during the late 1930s and through the war years. Educational gymnastics borrowed from modern dance a concern for the qualitative dimensions of movement experience and selectively adopted some of the rhetoric and ideas of the fast growing and fashionable child-centred progressivism in British educational circles of the time, particularly those associated with humanistic liberal individualism.⁶

The Demise of Swedish Gymnastics

By the end of the second world war, Swedish gymnastics was under siege on several sides. In the climate of national optimism that followed the war, the work of the Swedish gymnast seemed to have little place. In the decade preceding the war, there had developed two mass movements created for and run by women, the 'Keep Fit' movement in the North of England and the Women's 'League of Health and Beauty' in the South.⁷ Although the Central Council for Recreative Physical Training (later the Central Council for Physical Recreation) was formed through the collaboration of the Ling Association with the National Association of Organizers and Lecturers in Physical Education in 1935 in order to co-ordinate the work of these and other popular physical recreation groups, the Ling Association's formal involvement in these activities appears to have been limited to the participation of individual members. Indeed, as McIntosh⁸ has noted, their under-representation on the various organizing committees that resulted from the Government's White Paper on *Physical Training and Recreation* in 1937 was attributed to a public image that associated them with 'knee bending and arm swinging'. Needless to say, this view was not shared by members of the profession themselves, who were inclined to lay the blame for their stereotyped image at the door of others, particularly the press. For instance, commenting on a tour

complained 'it also dawned on a number of them (the press), as they gazed at the packed theatre, that there is a large section of the public interested in serious physical education...and that physical education is *not* 'pt'. Such thoughts among the press are long overdue.'⁹ Notwithstanding this point of view, the Swedish gymnasts failed to improve either the popularity or public image of their version of 'serious physical education', and had little success in attracting the attention of the press in the decade following the war.¹⁰

Their fall from grace began in the 1930s, at a time when Swedish gymnastics was firmly established as the basis for the professional training of female physical educators, and had begun to play the same role in the new specialist colleges for men which appeared during the 1930s at Glasgow, Leeds and Loughborough. There had been earlier challenges from inside the subject itself, through the introduction of musical accompaniments to exercises by Irene Marsh, an innovation resisted staunchly by the Ling Association for many years,¹¹ and the modification of exercises by Elli Bjorksten in Finland and Elin Falk in Sweden to include rhythmic activities.¹² But these had done very little to challenge the firmly rooted orthodoxies of the system.

However, criticisms of the formality and functionality of the Swedish system, and especially its unsuitability for young children, began to gain ground towards the end of the 1930s. One reason for this was a reaction to the mass, command-style teaching method of Swedish gymnastics, partly due to the uncomfortably close association of these methods with the mass exercising of the Fascist and Nazi Youth Movements and with militarism. In addition to this, the arrival of Rudolf Laban in Britain in the late 1930s fuelled the already existing interest in his ideas on movement which had preceded him, and the female physical educators very quickly came to see Laban's work as a genuine alternative to Swedish gymnastics. Criticism from within the education profession also became more frequent. Addressing the Educational Association in London towards the end of the war, one distinguished speaker claimed that in the Swedish gymnastics lesson, pupils 'are treated like robots or marionettes and are made to perform agility movements according to the string-pulling of the instructor'.¹³ Writing two years later, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, Marion Wardle, caricatured the Swedish gymnastics lesson thus:

One can have the type of lesson in which the children come into the gymnasium and go straight to their lines, where they either stand or sit cross legged, waiting for the teacher's directions. An introductory activity may be given, probably in a set formation, such as a ring or a double ring. Then back to files where they perform a series of static exercises. Then to their section places for the 'heave' where they sit cross legged while the apparatus is brought out. When this is ready four, or possibly eight children stand and begin work at the teachers' command. This is followed by a 'balance' organized in the same way using either beams or forms — never both! After this back to files (or possibly wallbars) for abdominal and lateral exercises. Finally, section work, where the children again sit cross legged until the apparatus is ready, when the first four children begin to work at the teacher's or the leader's command. Throughout the whole period the children have had no single opportu-

spent 10 to 15 minutes sitting cross legged on the floor.¹⁴

By the end of the war, an alternative form of gymnastics, drawing on Laban's principles of movement and already dubbed 'educational gymnastics', had made its mark among the female physical educators. In a series of articles that appeared in the *Journal of Physical Education* in 1945 and early 1946, it is clear that the Swedish gymnasts were by that time fighting a rearguard action. The articles attempted to defend what one author called 'formal movements, or gymnastics movements proper' from a number of challenges. These centred around the claim that Swedish gymnastics involved formal, mechanical and therefore 'unnatural' movements, and that these were 'non-creative and dull, merely a sequence of unnatural movements put together without meaning'.¹⁵ The responses to this criticism reveal some of the assumptions the Swedish gymnasts made about their version of physical education. According to M E Squire, Principal of Anstey Physical Training College, it

is the only form of physical education which systematically attempts to affect bodily structure and to remedy possible defects of posture; therefore it should be the basis of all physical education in that it prepares a sound movable instrument upon which all other forms of physical education should play harmoniously.¹⁶

This statement conveys with certainty and conviction the idea that formal gymnastics was, for the Swedish gymnast, the fundamental form of human movement training. Another author, discussing the role of vaulting and agility work within the Swedish system communicates the same notion of the fundamentality of formal exercises in saying that 'the relationship of free standing exercises to vaulting and agilities is as grammar is to composition'.¹⁷ The use of a descriptor like 'systematic' betrays something of the Swedish gymnasts' concerns for precision, physicality and for the functionality of movement. Similarly, their stress on harmony and their close attention to posture confirmed the importance of intervention in the physical development process, while the conviction of their statements suggested something approaching an absolute belief in themselves as a professional group and their system.

Given this view of themselves and their subject, the criticisms of the educational gymnasts, which was criticism from within their own ranks, must have been deeply unsettling. Those who wished to hold on to the Swedish system and its traditional values were unimpressed by the Laban-inspired educational gymnasts' criticism of formal exercises. Squire conveys something of the frustration that must have been felt by many of the Swedish gymnasts at this time when, in the final paragraph of her 1945 article, she fired this exasperated broadside.

If we only move in the natural directions with natural co-ordination there is a danger of working various sets of muscles only in one direction and range, and lessening the power of the individual to respond alertly to unexpected demands. If we never hold the body in a straight line or shew a precise position we shall lose much that is of value in self

work. There is too much 'Do as you please as long as you move', too much so-called experimental work and no real training value... Can we not get back a little more discipline both mental and physical and keep our aim of achieving easy poise in movement on the most perfect possible structural foundation?¹⁸

The criticism of the lack of discipline and precision in educational gymnastics was to resurface time and again in future years from a variety of other sources. However well founded though, it was too late to save Swedish gymnastics, and over the next decade it was to disappear completely from the curriculum of the specialist training colleges.¹⁹ Well before its eventual demise in the 1950s, a number of alternative versions of gymnastics were already waiting in the wings to take its place. Even though the Swedish system had been the hallmark of the female physical educator up until the 1930s, it had as I have already mentioned been taken on enthusiastically in the early days of the specialist colleges for males.²⁰ After the second world war however, the meaning of gymnastics would depend, as one contemporary commentator noted, 'on the sex of the individual'.²¹

The Female Creed: Educational Gymnastics and Child-Centred Progressivism

The female physical educators had begun, as early as the 1930s and still within the confines of the Swedish system, to critique the negative influence of modern industrial society on the quality of human life.²² Maja Carlquist, a Swede who had worked closely with Ellen Falk in the 1920s and 1930s, argued that rhythm was an essential quality in movement that 'through civilization with its industrialization, mechanization and technology... has become more and more dulled... Look at the people in the streets; stiff feet — stiff restricted movements — stiff expressions on their faces... Here one can truthfully talk of the melody which was lost'.²³ This comment could easily have been made by a Laban-inspired educational gymnast. Laban himself did not commit his ideas on the place of movement education in wider society until 1948, when he published *Modern Educational Dance*. He had by then carried out research in industry, and had become convinced of the detrimental effects of simple, repetitive movement sequences of many factory-based occupations on the worker's emotional and intellectual health.²⁴ These ideas were eventually to find their way, in largely unaltered form, into the discourse of the educational gymnasts.²⁵

This critique of modern industrial civilization was in tune with the popular educational discourse of child-centred progressivism in the 1940s and 1950s, particularly in the primary sector, though also in some of the new secondary modern schools.²⁶ As Hamilton has noted, the progressive movement in Britain from its inception in the late 1890s was constituted by a number of factions who were divided mainly by their views on the most effective way to change the social order, either by intervention at the level of institutions or by fostering individual growth. Hamilton argued that these factions were never clearly dis-

was this ongoing cycle of melding and disintegrating of the progressives' position that underpinned the notorious ambiguity of the notion of 'progressivism' by the 1950s and 1960s.²⁷ In the 1930s, some of the key features of child-centred progressivism had been set out for the first time in official policy; the idea, for instance, that the primary school curriculum should be 'thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored'.²⁸ Twenty years on, such ideas had become part of the official orthodoxy in the primary school, and while critics complained that progressivism displayed a chameleon-like ability to fit a diverse range of political ideologies and policy initiatives, it was most clearly seen to 'touch on issues of discipline, curriculum content and pedagogy; it (wa)s understood to be critical of authoritarianism, committed to the development of the 'whole person' and attentive to the psychology of learning'.²⁹

The wide currency and official acceptance of these ideas in the primary school was entirely consistent with the Swedish gymnasts' embryonic critique of industrial civilization as it had been expressed by Carlquist, and so it is no surprise that Laban's ideas found fertile ground during the war years. Indeed, Fletcher has suggested that Laban's views on movement and dance added a dimension to the educational gymnasts' version of child-centredness that increased its intensity; 'to move away from directed work and learning based on imitation, to teach the children rather than the subject, had become a broadly accepted goal; but could the history or mathematics teacher draw on such a radical ideology as the concept of movement developed by Laban?'.³⁰ There can be little doubt that in contrast to the previous form of physical education in the old elementary schools, consisting mainly of a repressive mixture of Swedish gymnastics and military drill,³¹ educational gymnastics was indeed 'radical'. The virtues of these progressive ideas and practices were particularly favoured for younger children. In one report on developments in Infants' education, it was noted that 'the abandonment of formal physical exercises and the adoption of the freedom of the newer exercises with the gradual effacement of the teacher are in complete agreement with the approach now accepted for reading and writing in nursery and infants' classes'.³² Another commentator suggested 'it cannot too often be reported that it is 'the physical and mental and social child' who goes to school, and that any adequate and balanced scheme of education must cater for the whole child'.³³ Significantly, this radical new approach to physical education in the primary school received support from the Inspectorate. One Inspector described the benefits of the new methods:

The semi-specialist tackles informal work more confidently because the informal approach plays a large part in modern teaching methods for the general subjects in which she has also been trained. Among the non-specialist teachers it has also been interesting to discover how readily they have taken to the freer methods, and what much higher standards of physical proficiency their children have attained since working on these lines. And I am thinking now of the supplementary teachers, the uncertificated teachers, the trained certificated assistants and heads, whose work I have seen both on the old formal lines and since their conversion to freer methods.³⁴

LEA Advisors gave the educational gymnasts' cause a tremendous boost, and resulted in the publication of the two curriculum guides *Moving and Growing* and *Planning the Programme*³⁵ by the then Ministry of Education in England. These guides appeared in 1952 and 1953, and were intended to replace the 1933 Syllabus for primary school physical education. As McIntosh has suggested, 'Movement' had come to express the official Ministry position on physical education in the 1950s in the same way that 'Posture' had done in the 1930s.³⁶ Neither of the guides mentioned Laban explicitly, but both were clearly and strongly influenced by his ideas and the work of the educational gymnasts. Given the fact that Laban himself only set out his ideas in written form as late as 1948, the guides represented the first authoritative statement of the educational gymnasts' creed.

While both *Moving and Growing* and *Planning the Programme* were reasonably well received within the physical education profession,³⁷ the achievement they represented for the educational gymnasts was not exactly celebrated by a heightened public awareness or appreciation. A report on the new guides in the *TES* in September 1953 reflects the very tenuous nature of the progress the educational gymnasts had made; 'from old-fashioned gym, P.T. or physical jerks to the modern concept of physical education, the transition has been rapid and is not yet complete'.³⁸ The *TES* report suggested that there was a lack of uniformity in physical education at this time, a problem it acknowledged could be addressed in part by the new publications. It is clear, though, that while the educational gymnasts had made rapid progress in some sectors of physical education, they had done little by this stage to dispel the popular elementary school stereotype of the 'drill teacher', or to communicate their ideas to a wider audience.³⁹ With the publication of these guides, they had achieved official recognition for their work. But this recognition was almost exclusively within the rarified environment of primary generalist teachers and female physical educators in schools, colleges and the Inspectorate.⁴⁰ This apparent indifference on the part of the wider teaching profession, never mind the general public, was to have a detrimental influence on the continuing progress of the educational gymnasts.

Nevertheless, in all of this support for the newer methods, the feeling emerges clearly from the female physical educators that they were finally up to date and in step with the most recent developments in education. Moreover, the days of 'knee bending and arm swinging', and the doubtful relevance of this version of their subject to the effort of rebuilding Britain after the devastations of the war, seemed to be over. Physical education had, in less than a decade it seemed, hauled itself up by the bootstraps to take a place at the cutting edge of educational policy and practice. But the apparent radicalness and intensity of this new version of gymnastics did not involve a gentle transformation of teachers' practices, nor did it seem able to be taken on in half measure. Marion Wardle's use of the term 'conversion' in a passage quoted earlier was not without significance.

It would not be unfair to say that many of the women who practised educational gymnastics in the 1940s through to the 1960s did so with a high level

of conviction and emotional intensity. It is not uncommon to find them being referred to as 'devotees' or 'disciples', 'a mystic cult of female groupies' idolising Laban and accepting his ideas indiscriminately and uncritically.⁴¹ Marjorie Swain, who returned to England from Australia on a visit in 1953 after an absence of almost twenty years, commented after attending one of Laban's classes, 'there was said to be something mystic about movement, which has to be experienced to be understood, and it does seem as if a mystic cult of initiates is growing up with a jargon all its own'.⁴² Christine Roberts, who had used Laban's principles of movement in dance, wrote 'some of us view with alarm the tendency to claim too much for Movement Training: indeed in certain quarters it is rapidly becoming a 'way of life' and the unconverted are viewed with a certain degree of suspicion'.⁴³ Some of these features of the female creed may indeed have had their source in the charismatic power of Rudolf Laban; but many were also inherited.

Like their predecessors the Swedish gymnasts, many of the educational gymnasts continued to work in the insular and elite circles of their female colleges and girls' grammar schools, displaying that 'curious blend of therapeutic, upper-crust and feminine values' associated with the tradition set in motion in the 1880s by Madame Bergman-Osterberg.⁴⁴ This tradition was centred around 'The Ling Association of Teachers of Swedish Gymnastics', which had strict standards of membership that effectively prevented men from entering in large numbers, since there were few training courses acceptable to the Association that men could undertake. The Ling Association had had only three secretaries between 1900 and 1949, a factor that the Association's historian Yvonne Moyse claimed had done much to contribute to the stability and continuity of the gymnasts' work.⁴⁵ Whatever the benefits of such continuity, it was an important factor in carrying forward values that had underpinned the establishment of the female tradition at the end of the nineteenth century on into the very different world of the mid twentieth century. These were the values of the Victorian bourgeois class which, despite their concessions to female emancipation, were strongly framed by patriarchal concerns. As Jennifer Hargreaves has observed,⁴⁶ these concerns manifested themselves within a female version of Victorian familism, that required hierarchy, obedience to hierarchical authority, and absolute loyalty to the group. The significance of this for the educational gymnasts was that they inherited many of the qualities and the foibles of their predecessors, a factor that as we will see was to have dire consequences for the further expansion of their version of physical education. While their tradition was a source of sustenance and continuity, it was also a conservative force, making adaptation to new conditions and circumstances difficult. Their views on the new, up-and-coming sport of Olympic gymnastics was an ominous case in point; commenting on the Olympic gymnastics competition at the 1948 London Olympics, the Editor of *The Leaflet* (the mouthpiece of the Ling Association) remarked 'of competitive gymnastics, the least said the better. On this note of significant silence, we will close'.⁴⁷



The Old and The New: Pleas for Moderation

If the educational gymnasts were less than successful in gaining recognition for their achievements from the general public, the intensity, assuredness and accom-

panying zealotry with which they adopted what was characterized among the female physical educators as 'the new' approach, had an unfailing capacity to provoke strong emotional reactions from within the profession. In the beginning, these reactions came, as we saw, from the 'old guard' Swedish gymnasts who were understandably unwilling to abandon overnight a lifetime's work in favour of an untried and radically different system. As early as 1947, Marion Wardle, a supporter of educational gymnastics, was able to caricature the excesses of the new approach as she had done for the old. Such classes, she said, involved

a period of chaotic activity, in which children rush wildly about at their individual and group practices without apparently the faintest hope or intention of achieving good performances, and maintaining for most of the time a sort of monkey-house chatter.⁴⁸

A decade later, another writer was to remark that 'the aim of the physical education teacher should be to find out what children would do if left to their own devices, and then make a career out of it!'.⁴⁹

However, it was the intensity and assurance of the educational gymnasts that provoked most pleas for proportion in the profession in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Most of these calls for moderation were stimulated by what their authors saw as excessive zeal in following through the tenets of movement education. One writer, in an open letter in the *Journal of Physical Education*, decried the imposition of problem-solving on all children.

We have, at the moment, I think, in the field of physical education, a tendency to force originality and initiative from children beyond what is right and proper — to lose, in fact, our sense of proportion about it... Do we not, perhaps, in our phobia against 'Teacher Direction' (which some of us seem to regard as the ultimate heresy) urge originality and experimentation in the physical sphere upon the child whose medium of expression may be the writing of verse or the painting of a picture?⁵⁰

This letter prompted a string of responses supporting the plea for moderation, one of which highlighted the problem of balancing inventiveness and discovery in and through movement with the consolidation of skills.

There seems to be too much emphasis on variety in the 'new' way and the child executes many beautiful movements which can never become known to him because he does not repeat them sufficiently. The children become absorbed in thought rather than in the quality of their efforts and the mechanics of the movements. Consequently, it seems doubtful whether they will absorb the same principles concerning movement as quickly as children under the 'old' way.⁵¹

This criticism of the lack of specificity and practice within educational gymnastics was to become a popular stick with which to beat the Laban-orientated women in subsequent years, and a key issue in the debate between the female and male sections of the profession that was to erupt later. In the meantime, debates over the relative merits of 'the old' and 'the new' continued unabated well into the

1950s, and showed that not all of the female physical educators had been seduced by Laban's ideas. Besides the pleas for proportion and moderation, the most common complaints about 'the new' gymnastics harked back to the guiding ideas of previous decades. One was that educational gymnastics paid too little attention to posture.⁵² Another, as we have seen, was a concern for control, or rather loss of it, in 'the new' approach.

How 'radical' the educational gymnasts were in this respect is open to question though. Certainly, the idea of children moving on their own initiative would appear to have been anathema to the Swedish gymnasts. However, in a revealing debate at a Ling Association Conference on 'Gymnastics for Secondary School Girls' held in 1952, the radicalness of the educational gymnasts' child-centredness is brought into question. In summing up the debate, on whether 'the old' or 'the new' approaches better prepared girls for healthy living, the chairwoman wrote

In order to say whether new or old methods made a difference, it was felt necessary to define the new and the old more particularly. In trying to do this, it was decided that the method in the end came back to the teacher, and if the teacher sincerely believed in what she was teaching, the results regarding healthy living would be the same.⁵³

The notion of the teacher 'teaching what she believes in, and believing what she teaches' recurs frequently in the discourse of the female physical educators, and this implicit and unquestioning belief in the teacher's centrality to successful learning on the part of the pupils could almost be described as a 'cult of personality'. At least, both the new and the old guard shared a profound belief that the quality of the teacher was the single most important factor in successful teaching. It also suggests that while the educational gymnasts 'excesses' may have appeared outrageous to the old guard, the extent to which they had been able to break with the concerns of their predecessors may have been limited. Rather than displaying features of a radical child-centredness, this belief in the teacher, irrespective of subject matter, locates the female physical educators, old and new, firmly in a teacher-centred mode. Indeed, the dissenting voices among the female physical educators at this time showed as much concern for the effects of 'the new' approach on teachers as students. Much of this concern was directed at the de-skilling effect of the 'new' approach. One commentator noted that some generalist primary school teachers were:

Conscious of the fact that there have been great changes in physical education since they trained, and being unable to get a clear overall picture of these changes, try to adopt what they think are the new methods, without properly understanding or believing them. Their lack of conviction gets through to the class with unfortunate results... Many of them would have continued to do excellent work along the lines of their training and convictions, but they are afraid of being considered old-fashioned by their HMI. Just how much ministerial pressure really exists I found it impossible to estimate, but evening and vacation courses contain many mature teachers who feel that their promotion and future

success depend on their mastery of the Art of Movement as interpreted by Laban.⁵⁴

Another wrote that:

There seems to be considerable anxiety among many members of our profession. Some are caused distress by feeling that they are hopelessly (through lack of experience and time to gain that experience) divorced from new trends which are apparently receiving so much official approval. Others fail to understand the new approach and consequently resent it. Those who do understand it preach it with a fervency which might be more helpfully put into print. Teaching, whatever subject it may be, depends upon personal conviction, understanding and sincerity. The lack of confidence in their methods among people in our profession today is a very unhappy state of affairs.⁵⁵

These comments reflect not only the conflict that was occurring within the female tradition in physical education, but also the uncertainties and pressures produced by rapid changes in other spheres of life. Away from the gymnastics debate, the whole conception of physical education had been widening considerably,⁵⁶ an issue that will be examined in detail in the next chapter. The Ling Association itself, for so long a bastion of female supremacy in physical education, was also changing. In the Editorial of *The Leaflet* in August 1954, the editor acknowledged that the Ling system 'had gone' and that the scope and membership of the Ling Association had broadened. In the same issue, the President Muriel Webster suggested in an open letter that the name 'Ling' lead others to think in stereotypical terms of the Association as concerned only with Swedish gymnastics, which she conceded was something narrower than 'physical education'. In July 1955, *The Leaflet* announced the appointment of a new General Secretary, Peter Sebastian, who was the first male ever to hold this position, and six months later, in December 1955 the Association changed its name to the Physical Education Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, thereby formally severing ties with the exclusive female tradition.

While the debate raged among the female physical educators over the relative merits of 'the old' and 'the new' gymnastics, Swedish and educational respectively, another challenge was beginning to emerge that was to generate much more acrimony and emotion, and to have a more profound effect on the future of physical education. This challenge did not lie in a return to the 'old way', but in the new knowledge derived from scientific measurement that was being produced in the university departments of physical education. It was at this point, in the early 1950s, and perhaps not coincidentally at a time when the educational gymnasts had received official approval of their work from the Ministry, that a distinctively male perspective began to emerge.

Scientific Measurement and the Male Perspective

Before the 1940s, physical education had not presented itself to men as an attractive career in the way that it had for women. Part of the reason for this was

the association of the field with militarism, and the fact that the earliest physical education teachers in the elementary schools provided by the government for the masses were former army non-commissioned officers. These men were generally regarded by teachers as their social inferiors, a label that stuck with male physical educators for many years.⁵⁷ When the unsuitability of ex-army personnel for teaching young children was finally recognized and the drill teachers removed, there were few institutions that offered courses in physical education for men. This situation persisted until the 1930s, when specialist colleges for men were established at Jordanhill in Glasgow (1932), in Leeds (1933) and Loughborough (1935).⁵⁸ The stigma of the social inferiority of the male physical educator in relation to their female counter-parts remained, however, until well into the 1960s when the private female colleges had been dissolved into other larger, mixed-sex institutions.⁵⁹

With the massive expansion of the secondary school system after the war, the projected 'baby boom' and the raising of the school leaving age to fifteen in 1947⁶⁰ teachers in every subject were in short supply, but this was particularly true for male physical education teachers since a 'system' of training had hardly existed before this time. So great was the demand that men were being 'qualified' to teach after undertaking courses of only short duration. This situation produced some anxiety among Ling Association members. One male member wrote to *The Leaflet* to express his concern that men were being appointed to teaching positions who

When questioned, prove to have no theoretical knowledge of the subject, but merely a rudimentary collection of games and movements... It is high time the gymnastics profession made a stand against this present-day attempt of short-course trained men to masquerade as qualified instructors... The fully qualified gymnast has as much to lose by quackery as the fully qualified doctor, and it would seem advisable to voice a protest without delay.⁶¹

Given the inferior status of males in the profession, this sort of comment was not good for male physical educators. Despite this influx of allegedly under-trained teachers though, men very quickly made headway in respect of their status problem. In December 1945, thirty male and twenty female physical education teachers were appointed to the promoted positions of 'Principal Teacher' in Senior Secondary Schools in Glasgow for the first time, and this was acknowledged as a major breakthrough since it offered male and female physical education teachers the same prospects for advancement and salary that teachers of other subjects enjoyed.⁶² A decade later, the *TES* reported on the all-male Carnegie College, Leeds' twenty-first anniversary, pointing out that its graduates occupied promoted positions in University and University College Departments of Physical Education such as Birmingham, Bristol, Durham, Exeter, Hull, Leeds and Liverpool. In the intervening period, men had clearly become more influential in the physical education profession, and this was in part due to the mere fact of larger numbers which had allowed them to begin to catch up on the women.⁶³ There were two main paths males could follow to become qualified physical education teachers, a two year general teacher training at a training college to be followed by a supplementary year at a specialist college, or

a three year university degree in Arts or Science followed by a specialist supplementary year at college. In Scotland, in contrast, male teachers could become qualified by undertaking a three year diploma course specializing entirely in physical education.⁶⁴ However, the male teachers who were degree qualified had a head-start on their male and female sub-degree qualified colleagues in terms of promotion and access to advanced study even though they had at least two years less training in physical education, a factor that may explain the apparent success of Carnegie students in gaining promoted positions in the university departments.

Nevertheless, throughout this period, the male physical education teacher was valued more for his sound character and practical ability than his intellectual capacity. In a conference address in 1958, Mr Hugh Brown, Director of the all-male Scottish School of Physical Education (SSPE), claimed that in selecting candidates 'attention is paid to natural strength, speed, flexibility and co-ordination'.⁶⁵ Even though there continued to be a shortage of male teachers, the SSPE regularly found only one third of its applicants to be acceptable. In addition to physical proficiency, prospective students had to meet academic standards that were only 'slightly below Scottish University entrance standards'. More importantly though, they had to be of sound character; 'it is most unlikely that a lad with an unsatisfactory record of behaviour and attitude will find a locker in our dressing rooms'.⁶⁶ Underpinning each of these criteria, Brown affirmed that the emphasis at the SSPE was 'first, last and all the time, on *teaching*', and that it was a particular strength of character that lay at the heart of good physical education teaching. In this, Brown was articulating a male version of the females' 'cult of personality'.

I believe... (that) the force of example in teachers is all important. In such things as speech, dress, personal cleanliness we are constantly under the keen scrutiny of that hypercritical section of the community — the school boy... Constantly I am reminding myself that we are charged with the task of training *men* to teach *boys*. This is a purely masculine sphere. Training *must* at all times be strong, must be virile.⁶⁷

The strength of conviction in Brown's statement is the equal of the female physical educators' assuredness and intensity, but it is here that the similarity ends. His view of the type of personality appropriate to teaching physical education to boys, 'masculine, strong, virile', makes no attempt at convergence or conciliation with the female physical educators. On the contrary, it can be read as an attempt to make clear and explicit the view that there is a difference between male and female physical education and that this is entirely right and proper. The fact that male and female physical educators trained in single-sex institutions or courses would certainly have done nothing to discourage this view of 'natural' gender-based differences, and while perhaps not all of the male physical educators who began to flood the profession in large numbers in the postwar period would have agreed whole-heartedly with Brown's sentiments, it is likely that few would have contradicted the main thrust of them.⁶⁸ Needless to say, the philosophy elaborated by Brown that lay behind the preparation of male teachers was bluntly at odds with the new ideas that had swept aside Swedish gymnastics.

The male physical educators were attracted to quite a different set of ideas.

One of these was their view of the central importance of competitive games and sports in physical education programmes. Another was the new scientific knowledge that was beginning to emerge, particularly knowledge relating to the development of physical fitness and to the acquisition of physical skills. Both of these matters are treated in detail in subsequent chapters, but both are relevant to the gymnastics debate in relation to the rise of Olympic gymnastic activities as a competitive sport and the associated issue of how to develop gymnastics skills. At the end of the war, a Ling Association Easter Holiday gymnastics course for males drew on activities outlined in the 1933 Syllabus, consisting mainly of free standing and bench exercises done in groups and some vaulting and agility work; in short, a form of Swedish gymnastics.⁶⁹ By 1954, some six years after Olympic gymnastics had been witnessed for the first time at the 1948 London Olympics by many of the current generation of male teachers, courses in 'apparatus gymnastics' were being run for males by the CCPR and the Amateur Gymnastics Association. This shift by the males towards a form of gymnastics in schools that resembled Olympic gymnastics was as much a reaction to the female sponsored educational gymnastics as it was an attraction for Olympic gymnastics as a competitive sport. Drawing on the logic of competitive sport and the new scientific knowledge of physical activity, the male physical educators began to crystallize their own perspective in direct opposition to the educational gymnasts'.

The open opposition of male physical educators to educational gymnastics became apparent when their criticisms began to enter the public sphere in the mid 1950s. As a result of a National Conference on Physical Education held in Edinburgh in 1954 involving both male and female physical educators and which was expressly concerned with the problem of gymnastics, the organizers set up a special committee to carry out an investigation into the content of the gymnastic lesson for boys. The dispute revolved around which of the three versions of gymnastics should be taught in Scottish schools.⁶⁹ After four one day meetings, the committee decided to support traditional Swedish gymnastics which had had a strong foothold in the Scottish School of Physical Education, the male college, since its establishment in 1932. What was interesting about this decision was the rejection of educational gymnastics on the grounds that it would undermine the traditionally high standards of gymnastic skill at the SSPE, an issue that was to form the corner-stone of the male critique of educational gymnastics.

Meanwhile, south of the border, David Munrow's influential *Pure and Applied Gymnastics* was published in 1955, and this book became the mouth-piece of male opposition to the progressive trend in physical education.⁷¹ The book was significant not only for the distinctly alternative position it stated in relation to the educational gymnasts' and thus its representation of the male philosophy, but also by virtue of the fact that it was read by many of the educational gymnasts and so formed one of the few avenues of communication between the rival parties.⁷² Munrow eloquently articulated the views of the coming force of scientific measurement, and how this new knowledge could be applied to physical education. Gymnastics, for Munrow, involved exercises designed to have particular effects on the body, and while his definition actually excluded many of the activities that made up Olympic gymnastics, we will see that the logic underlying his view supported this version of gymnastics over

educational gymnastics. Munrow questioned whether the way forward for physical education lay with any single 'system' of gymnastics at all, which he considered to be subservient to the broader notion of 'physical activities and their related skills'.⁷³

The new knowledge derived from scientific measurement was being produced in the university departments of physical education that had been established at Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds during the 1930s. Their initial role was to provide recreational programmes for the students, but they soon added to this a research function.⁷⁴ In 1949, physical education became an option within the BA degree at Birmingham, and this institution along with Leeds in particular appointed staff with research orientations. Many of these staff were male, and as we saw earlier all of the Directors of the university physical education departments were male. In adopting the perspective and discourse of scientific measurement, the university physical education departments were following another trend in postwar British society in the same way that the educational gymnasts had fallen in with the progressive movement.

There is no doubt that the second world war gave the technology of fitness development and the acquisition of skill⁷⁵ a boost comparable to other technological developments described in Chapter 2, such as the use of radar in commercial aviation, radio isotopes in medicine and the widespread use of penicillin.⁷⁶ Certain techniques like circuit training⁷⁷ had been shown to be an effective way of improving troops' physical fitness for warfare. But more significantly, the whole of British culture was suffused with enthusiasm for the power of science to bring about change for the better. The effects of scientific research could be seen everywhere, in all aspects of people's lives. The rapid advance of technology hand-in-hand with increasing affluence after the austerity of the immediate post-war years had its most profound impact in the home. The educational sector was strongly implicated in the 1950s in the rise of technology to these new levels of influence. Schools were soon to become, in the 1960s, a corner-stone in Britain's survival as a major industrial power, and a technologically-orientated curriculum was the way this was to be achieved.⁷⁸ The so-called systems approach began to be adopted by curriculum developers keen to promote educational innovations in schools. As we saw in Chapter 3, science also played an important part in sustaining and legitimating the new selective tripartite system of secondary schooling instituted by the 1944 Education Act, through the mental measurement school of educational psychology and its construction of IQ tests for the 11-plus exam. And it was in this wider social and political context that the male physical educators began to see their subject as being scientifically-based.

Munrow had argued that the university departments of physical education had an important role to play in the production of scientific knowledge of 'the body's mechanical and psycho-physiological behaviour in acquiring and performing intricate physical skills' since this was 'an area not being fully tackled by any other branch of learning'.⁷⁹ On the basis of this view, he argued that 'the men could not at the moment subscribe to a general account of movement training' and 'doubted if movement training was capable of refining physical techniques'.⁸⁰ By the middle of the 1950s, the stage was set for a debate between male and female physical educators over the nature of gymnastics which, in effect, was a debate over the definition of physical education writ large.

Inside the Debate

There were two major issues which help to focus the debate that developed through the 1950s and 1960s in the wake of the demise of the Swedish system, between the female educational gymnasts and the males with their functional scientific perspective. The first was the controversy surrounding the level of specificity required for skill development and the problem of transfer of training. The second related closely to this first matter, and concerned the application of objective standards to gymnastic performance and the place of competition in the gym. Both issues revealed the essential nature of the differences between the female and male discourses.

In *Pure and Applied Gymnastics*, Munrow presented a definition of gymnastics that was narrowly physical and functional. He argued that physical educators had in the past placed too strong an emphasis on Swedish gymnastics skills, and had neglected skills in other sports and games. This emphasis was doubly misplaced, he claimed, since these formal gymnastics exercises had a very high skill threshold level before competent performance became possible. In moving away from the Swedish system after the second world war, he suggested that male and female physical educators had reacted in different ways to this problem.

The men have made overt acknowledgement that other skills are as important and have 'diluted' the gymnastic skill content of gymnasium-work so that now boys may be seen practising basket-ball shots and manoeuvres, carrying out heading practices or practising sprint starting.⁸¹

Munrow's definition limited gymnastics to the exercises which were designed solely for their 'effect on particular parts of the body'. These effects were the development of strength, suppleness, stamina and skill; the muscles, joints, heart and lungs, and nervous system being the parts of the body affected. Skill could be developed through simplified skill drills which Munrow regarded as a form of gymnastic exercise. This sort of work had been growing in popularity with male teachers for some time,⁸² and involved breaking down complex physical skills, like shot putting or serving in tennis, into smaller sequences of movement and practicing these as drills in the gymnasium. Munrow went on to contrast the male response to the female reaction

The women, in the main, have... 'diluted' the traditional gymnastic skills by a quite different device. They have ceased both to name and to teach them. Instead, a description is given, in general terms, of a task-involving apparatus and individual solutions are encouraged. A much wider range of solutions is thus possible; some may include traditional skills but many will not.⁸³

The problem with the female alternative to the Swedish system, as Munrow saw it, was that pupils rarely had the chance to consolidate their skills. The educational gymnasts' response to Munrow's challenge appeared in an article by Marjorie Randall in 1956, in which she attempted to clarify the movement approach in light of Munrow's critique.⁸⁴ However, this 1956 response was

rather muted in comparison to a maturer expression of her position that appeared six years later in 1961 in a book, *Basic Movement*. In the opening chapter of the book, Randall immediately went on the offensive to contest Munrow's functional definition of gymnastics, suggesting that 'the masculine approach... has become largely outmoded so far as women's work is concerned'. She claimed that 'women's gymnastics... have been emancipated from the restricted practices of stereotyped patterns of movements based upon anatomical classification. The physiological and anatomical ends... are incidentally served'.⁸⁵ The major aim was the achievement of what Randall called body awareness, which included (merely physiological) nervous control combined with a higher level kinaesthetic awareness that could be developed through experience into an intuitive control of movement. She added to this a concern to engage the child cognitively in contrast to the male approach which she accused of stressing only the physical effects of exercise, and consequently regarding the intellect as out of range. She claimed:

The masculine approach to gymnastics... separates content from method. Munrow's gymnastics exercises can be directly and formally taken or informally taken. Movement gymnastics requires the intelligent co-operation of the child, rendering command-response methods obsolete... this represents a big break-away from the traditional approach of the 'see this' and 'do it this way' school of thought.⁸⁶

Randall's response showed that behind the less formal methods of educational gymnastics lay an attempt to treat the pupil wholistically, encouraging the concurrent development of intellectual and creative abilities in a movement medium, and relegating the physical effect of movement to a level of lesser importance. However, the notion of body awareness which lay at the centre of this scheme embodied claims for learning which ran directly counter to the new knowledge being produced by motor learning theorists. The educational gymnasts claimed, in much the same way as the Swedish gymnasts had before them, that the movement experience they had to offer was a general foundation upon which more specific skills could be built.⁸⁷ The notion of body awareness expressed this idea of a generalized kinaesthetic control. As early as 1949, however, members of the Birmingham University staff including Peter McIntosh and David Munrow, questioned whether there was such a thing as generalized skill training.⁸⁸ Joining this debate in 1953, another Birmingham staff member, Christine Roberts, argued that:

'the mingling of the general character of a movement with the necessarily limited mechanics of a movement is surely going to produce a false situation in relation to certain skills... as a basis for actual learning it seems to me to be too wide to produce the precision required in specific skills'.⁸⁹

This view was supported by an extensive literature on training and skill development which had accumulated by the late 1950s.⁹⁰ On the basis of this evidence, Barbara Knapp, yet another Birmingham University staff member, argued that transfer of training was most likely to occur when the tasks in questions were

similar, and so the best way to learn a specific action was to perform that action repeatedly over a period of time.⁹¹ Commenting specifically on this issue of transfer of training in the context of the gymnastics debate, she wrote

It often appears to be assumed that what is learned in the gymnasium will be transferred elsewhere... There is no experimental evidence as yet to support the assumption that a training in movement will enable every individual to deal with situations in which movement is involved more satisfactorily than those who have had other types of training.⁹²

The logic of experimental science, and its canons of truth and proof feature strongly in Knapp's views on the educational gymnasts' claims.

It cannot be claimed that educational gymnastics develops a central factor of physical activity for many attempts have been made to isolate a general motor factor but without success. Suggestions that it develops 'body awareness' or 'kinaesthetic sensitivity' should also be accepted with caution for proof of the existence of one such factor common to all motor skills is still awaited... Even if there is such a factor common to all motor skills its effect appears to be infinitesimal compared with other factors specific to any particular motor skill. Research indicates that skills are highly specific... and similar skills which are not identical can interfere with one another.⁹³

The crux of the motor learning theorists' critique, which the male physical educators championed vigorously, was that skill learning is specific. Thus, the best way to master any physical activity was to practise that particular activity repeatedly until it had been learned. The male physical educators took this principle to heart and developed an approach to teaching skills that consisted of reducing a skill to its component parts, and learning these parts separately, before re-assembling them gradually until the entire skill had been learned. All of this appeared to make nonsense of the females' claim that it was possible, indeed preferable, to develop a general body awareness as a foundation on which to build more specific learning. Indeed, as if to emphasize the chasm this placed between them and the female gymnasts, the males blissfully adopted cybernetic and mechanistic analogies of the skill learning process, and talked of 'effector mechanisms' and 'feed-back loops',⁹⁴ analogies that were not only antithetical but also offensive to the educational gymnasts, since this reduction of human activity to mechanistic processes through industrialization and factory work had been from the 1930s, as we saw earlier, an issue of central concern.

A second objection to the educational gymnasts' position related to the place of standards and competition in the gym. From the male perspective, it seemed unlikely that the educational gymnasts' child-centred approach could continue to stimulate pupils beyond the early stages of learning, and indeed many male physical educators were prepared to concede that educational gymnastics might be permissible if confined only to Infants. However, Munrow argued that it could not challenge older boys or girls and it was for this reason, as a stimulant or incentive, that competitive activity was essential. In *Pure and Applied Gymnastics* he complained

Allied to a teaching philosophy which seeks actively to avoid confronting less able children with failure, is the belief that the child's own solution to the problem being always valid and right. This makes more sense with young children than with older boys and girls and with first efforts at a skill rather than with later ones... to leave children floundering to evolve their own technique when we could guide them is a neglect of our professional duties.⁹⁵

The child's own imagination and creativity set the limits on what could be achieved, because intervention by the teacher was interpreted by the educational gymnast as an imposition that not only set a standard against which the pupils' success could be measured, but also where their failures and inadequacies could be revealed. In Munrow's view, this double edged quality to objectively set standards was unavoidable. 'If we attempt too much to shield the child from failure we shall also shield him from real success. For success that all can have for the asking is not worth having'.

In response to Munrow's view that standards were a necessary and important means of challenging pupils to strive for excellence, Randall suggested that girls, particularly in adolescence, had quite different needs to boys. She argued that the growing boy 'derives considerable prestige and social prominence through physical advantage in competitive games which his increase in height, weight and strength gives him'. Girls, on the other hand, may have little to gain from competitive sport during the adolescent period, and so:

In the gymnastic lesson let her be free from all this competition and let her progress at her own rate and find joy and satisfaction in the slow but sure progress of controlling her body. Through her pride in the mastery of her body in the gymnasium will grow a certain independence, security and emotional stability.

and:

Teaching must be geared to the individual; it must be flexible and tolerant of a wide range in aptitude... no longer is her worth in the gymnasium measured by whether she can get over the box in long fly or whether she can put her head on her knees keeping her legs straight; but rather can she work to surpass her own standards without being harassed or harried because she cannot conform to a common one.⁹⁶

The aims of independence, security and emotional stability contrast sharply with the desire to develop strength, endurance, flexibility, and particular skills, and to use these attributes in competitive situations. These contrasts reveal starkly the contested issues that divided the male and female physical educators. Munrow saw the educational gymnasts' apparent lack of standards as an arrogation of the teacher's responsibilities, a refusal to take an active role in pupil's learning.⁹⁷ Randall, on the other hand, argued that the incentive to improve did not come from comparisons with other pupils. Indeed, she claimed that competition was likely to inhibit performance particularly among adolescent girls, and comes instead from within each individual. What these contrasting views of the

issues of transfer of training and competition in gymnastics indicate are not simply different points of view, but different views of the nature of the entire educational process, including what it means to teach, what it means to learn, and more fundamentally, what the term physical education itself means. The two rival factions were not simply subscribing to different points of view on the same set of issue, but rather were operating on the basis of quite different agendas. There is a sense, then, in which Munrow and Randall, as two representative figures in this debate did not talk to each other, but talked past each other. Not only did they use languages that were foreign to each other ('the whole child'/'effector mechanism'), but the terms of the debate were themselves quite different for each group. For the educational gymnasts, movement was primarily a means of personal growth and self-realization, whereas for the male functionalists the central concern was the development of physical skills.

The Aftermath of the Debate

By the early 1960s, it was regarded as old-fashioned to think of gymnastics as the core of physical education as the subject expanded to include, as a matter of course, a wide range of other physical activities, particularly team and individual games, and outdoor pursuits. Indeed, as we will see in the next chapter, games were increasingly from the mid 1950s to become for the professional physical educator what gymnastics had been between 1890 and 1950. For this reason, Olympic gymnastics was never to occupy the role that Swedish gymnastics had done for females and males before 1940 or that educational gymnastics had for the females between 1940 and 1960. Indeed, the form of gymnastics advocated by Munrow in *Pure and Applied Gymnastics*, consisting of parts of skills that could be learned and practised in the gym in isolation from the whole activity, had as much application to games and other sports as it had to Olympic gymnastics.

And what of Olympic gymnastics? Little has been said about this version of gymnastics up to this point, and this is for the reason that it was not so overtly or obviously aligned with the male perspective as educational gymnastics was with the female. However, while as many women as men did participate in this sport as its popularity grew through the 1960s,⁹⁸ the new knowledge that sustained it owed little to the educational gymnasts or the female tradition. As we will see in Chapter 6, the males' focus on the development of physical fitness fitted them well for the task of preparing elite sport performers. This version of gymnastics was an international competitive sport that demanded exactly what the male physical educators could provide — knowledge of how to develop strength, muscular endurance, agility and high levels of precision skills. Thus, Olympic gymnastics was fostered within the emerging discourse of scientific functionalism, even though many females actively participated in the sport. Educational gymnastics continued to be fostered and developed predominately by female physical educators throughout the 1960s, but its influence was limited to primary schools and girls' physical education in secondary schools. While some males did teach educational gymnastics, they were few in number,⁹⁹ and as the scope of physical education programmes expanded in schools through the late 1950s and 1960s, the role and significance of educational gymnastics within the

female tradition was also eroded, so that it became, like Olympic gymnastics, just one of the many forms of physical activity to be found in school physical education.

The importance of this debate goes far beyond the fate of the various forms of gymnastics themselves, however. This episode of contestation and conflict over the version of gymnastics to be taught in schools may in itself have become a non-issue by the beginning of 1960s, but its effects were to spill over into every other aspect of physical education in the two decades which followed. More to the point, the fact that the lines of conflict were drawn by gender is a matter of crucial importance, since this fact in itself challenged the notion, much touted throughout the postwar period, that knowledge was a neutral commodity untainted by the wider social, political and cultural divisions that mark society. By the end of the 1960s, and no doubt wearied by almost two decades of conflict, the females and males had adopted a stand-off position, most in effect agreeing to disagree. Some sought refuge in simplified rationalizations of the divide between the males and females; 'although there is undoubted intellectual content in physical education, it is not so clearly defined as in other subjects... there are two aspects to consider; the skill and the scientific on one hand and the fine arts on the other'.¹⁰⁰ Others by this time were even prepared to make admissions of culpability for earlier follies. Muriel Webster, a former Principal of Anstey College, one of the oldest women's colleges, commented that 'in the past we have done irrevocable damage by over-claiming' and admitted that the females could be justly accused of 'underestimating the place of specific skills; playing down the importance of physical strength, mobility and good poise; (and) throwing overboard the whole subject of health as an important aspect of the subject'. She also conceded that 'we are so often asked for proof of what we say and do and, perhaps unwisely, retaliate by questioning the value of some of the things that can be measured'.¹⁰¹ Some of the men, too, were prepared to shift. Both RE Morgan (of Circuit Training fame) and David Munrow, former Directors of Physical Education at the Universities of Leeds and Birmingham respectively, re-assessed some of the female's ideas sympathetically,¹⁰² while others became enthusiastic advocates of the females' ideals.¹⁰³

Notwithstanding these overtures to conciliation, the balance of power throughout the 1960s shifted, and the shift was towards those values which underpinned the male perspective as it began to emerge in the gymnastics debate through the 1950s. This shift is clearly illustrated in the scramble to prove physical education's degree worthiness in the quest for an all-graduate profession that the Robbins Report¹⁰⁴ made possible with the creation of the BED degree.¹⁰⁵ It was the males who took the lead in this quest,¹⁰⁶ and the new degree programmes drew heavily on the which emerging scientific sub-disciplines of exercise physiology, motor learning theory and biomechanics.¹⁰⁷ Another factor in this shift was the dissolution of the female colleges, which by the mid 1960s were in the process of being merged into other, larger institutions, and so their distinctive identities taken, or else closed completely. While this was not an abrupt affair,¹⁰⁸ the influence of the female physical educators as a group with a distinctively alternative perspective to the male view of physical education was by the end of the 1960s well and truly broken. In a field that until the late 1940s had been dominated by women for over fifty years, the rise of the male scientific functionalist discourse to power and influence during the decade and a half following

the end of the second world war was little short of dramatic. In the final section of this chapter I want to offer an explanation of how and why this occurred.

Politics, Power and Patriarchy

The educational gymnasts initially thrived within an already existing female tradition in physical education. They had institutions to practice and develop their art, schools in which to apply it, and a progressive educational movement to legitimate it. Their ideas were also extremely influential in the state primary sector, and through this educational gymnastics developed a base of support and gained official government backing. However, these very conditions that fostered their version of physical education also limited its ability to move beyond a certain point. The insularity of their institutions, for one thing, restricted to those women who could afford to pay their fees, worked against them in the late 1940s when the government began to demand more teachers than they could possibly hope to supply.¹⁰⁹ They found they could not compete with the larger institutions being set up to meet this demand, and there resulted a series of takeovers, amalgamations and closures that had almost entirely undermined their professional infrastructure by the 1960s.¹¹⁰ Perhaps this process could have been slowed but for two other forces which were also built in to the context in which educational gymnastics developed.

The first of these was their influence in the state sector primary schools and the fact that educational gymnastics very quickly came to be associated with primary school physical education. Because of the continuities between its non-competitive, aesthetic and creative features and the child-centred movement that was bringing about sweeping changes in primary classrooms, educational gymnastics was championed, as we have seen, by teachers of younger children, particularly teachers of Infants.¹¹¹ The way towards status and prestige, however, lay in the new secondary schools modelled on the subject-orientated grammar schools. While the arrival of mass secondary schooling had given the primary schools more scope to experiment, it was the secondary sector which was expanding rapidly, and it was there that the various Labour and Conservative governments in the late 1950s and the 1960s focused their attention, particularly on the transitional period from school to work and higher education. Progressivism in the primary school also worked against the achievement of an enhanced status and influence for the educational gymnasts' version of physical education by its very non-proprietariness, stressing instead the value of an integrated curriculum which attempted to dissolve subject boundaries.¹¹² This was little short of disastrous for a curriculum topic which could not present a coherent and unified public image of what physical education was and the knowledge it encompassed.

The second force at work lay in wider social and political trends. While the educational gymnasts were promoting humanitarian ideals focused around the notion of individual worth, the radicalism of postwar social reconstruction was, as we saw in Chapter 3, proving to be a sham.¹¹³ Beneath the consensual politics of right and left, Britain was moving during the 1950s into a consumer-orientated materialism that sprung from the new technologically-produced affluence. Equality of opportunity came to mean something quite different in Labour educational policy from what it had meant to the child-centred progressives.¹¹⁴

The early radical intent of leftist policy for social change through the raising of a collective consciousness and personal enrichment through the acquisition of liberal culture, was drowned in the clamour of voices from the middle and right of the Labour party which in contrast adopted a purely quantitative conception of equality based in the fair distribution of educational goods. As one recent commentator put it, the doctrine of equality of opportunity within Labour educational policy in the late 1950s and early 1960s resembled a competition that produced winners and losers, and drew on the meritocratic ideology of just reward for hard work and talent.¹¹⁵ This conception of equality of opportunity was quite at odds with the liberal humanism of the educational gymnasts where 'each girl in the class should work individually, trying to improve her own standard but not unduly conscious of or worried by the greater abilities of the girls around her'. The problem for the educational gymnasts was that the ideals of both liberal and radical progressivism were marginalized in the consensual educational policies of the day, and 'equality' became a slogan masking a profound materialism. Thus the discourse of progressivism in educational gymnastics, and the version of the subject it presented, had little support in the realities of broader educational policy and practice.

The male orientation, on the other hand, grew out of a different set of circumstances, and these created a contrasting set of possibilities to those of the educational gymnasts'. Their functional, scientific and competitive discourse from the start was in tune with a number of powerful trends. One of these was the widespread popular acceptance of competitive sport in schools and its role in the promotion of national prestige, a matter to be addressed in detail in the next chapter. The great demand for teachers to meet the needs of mass secondary schooling was also a particularly significant event for male physical educators. Because there were fewer of them compared to the women, greater attention was given to meeting this shortfall in the years immediately following the war.¹¹⁶ The institutional settings in which scientific functionalism was fostered, in the universities, large teacher training colleges and secondary schools, were therefore relatively unhindered by tradition and the men were in a better position than the women to respond to contemporary challenges. These factors helped the males to maintain a higher profile in relation to developments in the wider educational arena and in society at large. Furthermore, universities with their increasing bias towards technology, and the secondary schools with their subject-specific organization provided a fruitful environment in which to pursue professional status.

All of this suggests that the conditions in which the male scientific functionalist discourse arose created a range of possibilities that were denied to the female physical educators. However, none of it entirely explains why such disparate discourses emerged in the first place or, more to the point, why they were so firmly identified with 'the sex of the individual'. This is not to deny that some women were appointed to the university departments,¹¹⁷ nor to deny that some men did teach educational gymnastics. Perhaps the insularity and elitism of the female tradition was an important factor in allowing two distinctly different discourses to exist, but while this point explains how their conditions of emergence were dissimilar, it does not tell us why it was that the women as a group chose to move away from the functionalism of Swedish gymnastics towards a progressive, child-centred form of the subject, while the men reformulated the functionalism of the Swedish system within a scientific discourse. Perhaps, as

Fletcher has speculated, the quite disparate experiences of men and women during the second world war, and the male experience of armed combat was the crucial moment in drawing female and male physical educators so far apart.

Or perhaps more to the point is the nature of patriarchal norms and practices in which the events that have been discussed here were embedded. Scratton and Hargreaves¹¹⁸ both suggest that while the female discourse formed a radical alternative to the male version of physical education in one sense, in another it did little to challenge women's roles as wives and mothers. Scratton claims that while, on the one hand, girls' physical education presented a radical challenge to Victorian notions of the frail, illness-prone and delicate constitution of the female, on the other girls' activities were still framed and limited by patriarchal views of correct conduct, biological capacity and emotional instability.¹¹⁹ Hargreaves lends support to this line of argument in her claim that from the beginning of the female tradition in physical education, the gymnasts' support for female emancipation was based on 'a nationalistic sentiment, confirming the contemporary Social Darwinistic position about the vital importance of motherhood to evolution, and the encompassing belief that educational arrangements should be geared to the role of women as mothers'.¹²⁰ Thus, the familism of the Victorian era based on patriarchal authority and a strict hierarchy of command and definition of roles was, as Fletcher has shown in her study of Bedford Physical Training College, still present in the women's colleges in the 1950s. The fact that educational gymnastics came to be associated with the physical education of girls and small children in itself says much about the limits set by patriarchal structures on the extent to which any oppositional group may be permitted to form radical alternatives. In the next chapter, we turn to look at the rise of competitive team games in mass secondary school physical education during the 1950s, and the key role bourgeois patriarchal forces played in the male physical educators' rise to dominance.

Notes

- 1 Board of Education (1933) *Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools*, London: HMSO.
- 2 There has been a growing volume of feminist literature recently concerned with physical education and sport. See for example the collection of papers on the 'Gendering of sport, leisure and physical education' in the special issue of the *Women's Studies International Forum*, 19(4), 1987 and Fletcher, S. (1984) *Women First: The Female Tradition in English Physical Education 1880-1980*, London: Althone; Hargreaves, J. (1985) 'Playing like gentlemen while behaving like ladies: Contradictory features of the formative years of women's sport. *The British Journal of Sports History*, 2(1), 40-52; Scratton, S. (1986) 'Images of femininity and the teaching of girls' physical education', in Evans, J. (Ed.) *Physical Education, Sport and Schooling: Studies in the Sociology of Physical Education* Lewes: Falmer Press, pp. 71-94.
- 3 The college was permanently housed at Dartford ten years later from 1895.
- 4 Webster, C.M. (1958) 'The training of the woman teacher of physical education', *Physical Education*, 50, 85-90.
- 5 See Saunders, W. (1951) 'Why exclude olympic gymnastic apparatus work?' *Journal of Physical Education*, 43, 85-88.

- 6 For discussions of progressivism in British education see Hamilton, D. (1986) Some Observations on Progressivism and Curriculum Practice. Unpublished paper, University of Glasgow; Jones, K. (1983) *Beyond Progressive Education*, London: MacMillan; Finn, M.E. (1983) 'Social efficiency progressivism and secondary education in Scotland, 1885-1905', in Humes, W.M. and Paterson, H.M. (Eds) *Scottish Culture and Scottish Education 1800-1980*, Edinburgh: John Donald, pp. 175-196.
- 7 McIntosh, P.C. (1968) *PE in England Since 1800*, London: Bell, pp. 231-3.; see also Harris, J. (1961) 'The development of the Keep Fit Association of England and Wales', *Physical Education*, 53, 38-41.
- 8 McIntosh, note 7, p. 242.
- 9 *The Leaflet*, 45(9), 1946.
- 10 For example, between 1945 and 1955, Scandinavian gymnastics are mentioned in the *Times Educational Supplement* on only four occasions — 12 June 1948, 31 July 1948, 31 March 1950 and 22 April 1955 which contrasts starkly with the frequent comments on the promotion of games and sports, and the provision of playing fields.
- 11 See Fletcher, note 2.
- 12 Carlquist, M. (1955) *Rhythmical Gymnastics* London: Methuen.
- 13 Professor Olive Wheeler, in Wheeler, O. (1945) 'The changing conception of physical education', *Journal of Physical Education*, 37, p. 3. Wheeler went on to argue that the physical educator 'should never regard the body as mechanically determined — 'a combination of carbon compounds, ammonia and soluble salts' — or as an intricate machine, tenantless and uncreative'.
- 14 Wardle, M. (1947) 'Free formation and individual work', *Journal of Physical Education*, 39, p. 8.
- 15 Read, C.M. (1945) 'Gymnastics and physical education II', *Journal of Physical Education*, 37, 130-132.
- 16 Squire, M.E. (1945) 'Gymnastics and physical education I', *Journal of Physical Education*, 37, 101-104.
- 17 Cox, G.M. (1946) 'Gymnastics and physical education III', *Journal of Physical Education*, 38, 57-60.
- 18 Squire, note 16, p. 104.
- 19 See Fletcher, note 2, p. 113 on the fate of Swedish gymnastics at Bedford Physical Training College.
- 20 Small, R.B. (1976) *The Effects of Individuals On, and Developments Within, The Scottish School of Physical Education in the 20th Century*. Unpublished paper, Jordanhill College of Education, Glasgow.
- 21 Randall, M. (1961) *Basic Movement. A New Approach to Gymnastics* London: Bell.
- 22 According to Jones, note 6, p. 38 this is an important feature of progressivism.
- 23 Carlquist, note 12, p. 2.
- 24 Laban, R. (1948) *Modern Educational Dance* London: MacDonald and Evans.
- 25 As we can see from this remark from an influential spokeswoman for the educational gymnasts, Ruth Morison. 'The limitations imposed by contemporary life tend to disrupt natural harmonious movement and produce stilted, restricted, isolated actions, and to develop bad habits of movement and carriage which in their turn cause tensions, cramps and the resultant ills'. Morison, R. (1969) *A Movement Approach to Educational Gymnastics* London: Dent, p. 6.
- 26 Rubinstein, D. and Simon, B. (1966) *The Evolution of the Comprehensive School, 1922-1966* London: RKP
- 27 See Hamilton and Jones, note 6.
- 28 Board of Education (1931) *The Primary School* London: HMSO, p. 139.
- 29 Jones, note 6, p. 2.

- 30 Fletcher, note 2, p. 132.
- 31 Thomson, I. (1978) 'The origins of physical education in state schools', *Scottish Educational Review*, 10(2), 15–24.
- 32 TES 31 January 1948.
- 33 TES 27 July 1946.
- 34 Wardle, note 14, p. 10.
- 35 Ministry of Education (1952) *Moving and Growing: Physical Education in the Primary School, Part 1*, London: HMSO; Ministry of Education (1953) *Planning the Programme: Physical Education in the Primary School, Part 2*, London: HMSO.
- 36 McIntosh, note 7, p. 262.
- 37 For instance, TES 25 July 1952, p. 636; also TES Book Review 10 June 1955, p. 618.
- 38 TES 11 September 1953, p. 779.
- 39 Swain, M.O.B. (1954) 'Some impressions of PE in England'. *The Leaflet*, 55(4), p. 5. Note also lack of written texts on these ideas; see Karn, E. (1952) 'The "old" and the "new" in Physical Education'. *Journal of Physical Education*, 44, 64–65, which reveals something of the almost anti-intellectual dimension of the educational gymnasts, which was to become another source of problems later.
- 40 Report in *The Leaflet*, 55(5), 1954, p. 6, on the first ever 'men-only' course at the Art of Movement Studio; and note the comments of DT Williams, a male teacher, in *The Leaflet*, 62(5), 1961, p. 38. He first encountered educational gymnastics in 1956.
- 41 See Fletcher, note 2, pp. 134 & 136.
- 42 Swain, M.O.B. (1988) *Physical Education in England, America and NSW 1940–1960 and Allied Subjects NSW: ACHPER*.
- 43 Roberts, C. (1953) 'Movement training for girls', *Journal of Physical Education*, 45, p. 93.
- 44 See Fletcher, note 2, p. 128.
- 45 Moyse, Y. (1949) 'A brief outline of some of the activities of the Ling physical education association'. *Journal of Physical Education* 41, 31–53 and 77–89.
- 46 Jennifer Hargreaves, note 2, pp. 47–48.
- 47 Editorial, *The Leaflet*, 49(7), p. 140.
- 48 Wardle, note 14, p. 8.
- 49 McIntosh, P.C. (1957) 'From treadmill to springboard', *The Leaflet*, 58(5).
- 50 O'Dwyer, J. (1951) 'Open Letter — A plea for proportion', *Journal of Physical Education*, 43, 46–47.
- 51 Karn, note 39, pp. 63–64.
- 52 TES 19 January 1951 and 26 January 1951; *The Leaflet*, 53(5), 1952.
- 53 The Ling Association Easter Conference, 'Gymnastics for Secondary School Girls', reported in *The Leaflet*, 53(5), 1952, p. 70.
- 54 Swain, note 39, p. 5.
- 55 Karn, note 39, p. 10.
- 56 Colson, P. (1952) President's Address to the AGM. *The Leaflet*, 53(4), p. 50.
- 57 Even into the 1960s, certificate trained physical educators were not allowed to share a school staffroom with other (degree qualified) teachers.
- 58 Thomson, note 31.
- 59 See McIntosh, note 7 and Thomson, note 31 for more detailed discussion; see also the comment in TES 24 October 1952, reviewing McIntosh's book in its first edition, published in 1952.
- 60 Thomson, note 31.
- 61 Letter in *The Leaflet*, 45(1), 1946, pp. 9–10.
- 62 Reported in *The Leaflet*, 44(10), 1945, p. 194. One reason for the disproportionate numbers of male to female teachers in this case may have been due to the lack of availability of female teachers, who were in such demand that they could

- virtually select which schools they wished to teach in, and certainly would not have had to work in the government sector unless they wanted to. Another possible factor could have been the larger number of boys staying on to Senior Secondary stage; in Scotland, only male teachers taught male pupils, and female teachers female pupils. A third factor, noted below (in note 63) would have been the view that women could not be promoted to positions of responsibility since they were liable to marry and leave teaching.
- 63 The next big push for more teachers came in the late 1950s and early 1960s with the creation of the Wing courses, see Thomson, I. (1986) 'Professional training in physical education and sport within a binary system of higher and further education in England 1944–1985,' pp. 61–74 in *Trends and Developments in Physical Education* (Proceedings of the VIII Commonwealth and International Conference) London: E & FNSpon. Determining actual numbers of teachers being produced by the specialist colleges between 1935–1960 is not easy due to complexity of training arrangements. However, one source (Foster, R. and Sagar, H. (1960) 'The future training of specialist teachers', *The Leaflet*, 61(5)) provides some illustrative statistics. The total number of women in all training colleges 1949–50 was 746, and in 1959–60 1052. The total number of men produced by all sources in 1935 was 60 per year, 100–120 in 1939, 220 in 1949 and 350 in 1955. This difference in numbers is offset however, by the high attrition rate of women, evidenced in the repeated complaints of shortages of women teachers and pleas for married women to return to work throughout the postwar years and well in to the 1960s — see for example, *The Leaflet*, 49(5), 1948; TES 9 October 1949, p. 574; *The Leaflet*, 57(9), 1956; *The Leaflet*, 62(1), 1961. It is important to note also the prevalent attitude of the time with regard to women and careers; for example, the TES 31 July 1948, p. 1 & p. 432 *Report on International PE Congress pre 1948 Olympics* — Miss M. Crabbe and Dr H. Schofield on the 'Training of Teachers' — 'Whereas women could specialize in this field alone, men had also to be trained as 'general practitioners', so that when they grow older they could undertake other class teaching. The Ministry did not, Dr Schofield pointed out, consider this essential for women, since they were liable to marry and leave.'
- 64 Brown, H.C. (1958) 'The training of the man teacher of physical education', *Physical Education*, 50, 91–94.
- 65 Brown, note 64, p. 92.
- 66 Brown, note 64, p. 93.
- 67 Brown, note 64, p. 93.
- 68 For example, see the report on a gymnastics Conference in *The Leaflet*, 57(1), 1956.
- 69 *The Leaflet*, 45(6), 1946, p. 120.
- 70 The conference topic was 'Physical Education Today and in the Future', and was organized by the Scottish Joint Consultative Committee on Physical Education which was made up of representatives of the separate male (Scottish Physical Education Association) and female (Scottish League of Physical Education) associations. There is a report on the conference in *The Leaflet*, 56(1), 1955.
- 71 Munrow, A.D. (1955) *Pure and Applied Gymnastics* London: Arnold. Munrow was the first Director of the Department of Physical Education at Birmingham University.
- 72 In the second edition of *Pure and Applied Gymnastics*, published in 1963, Munrow commented on the debate around his definition of gymnastics presented in the first edition. 'Certainly the impact of the word 'artificial' in the definition has been unfortunate, especially on supporters of Modern Educational Gymnastics. Some of them might subscribe to the present definition of 'systematized exercises designed to produce particular effects on the body'... Thus a small

- area of agreement could be found on which to stand together and discuss what are likely to be substantial areas of disagreement.', p. 22.
- 73 Munrow, A.D. (1956) 'Looking back and looking forward in gymnastics', *Journal of Physical Education*, **48**, 18–24.
 - 74 See McIntosh, note 7. The shift to research is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.
 - 75 See for instance Squadron-Leader Winterbottom, in Winterbottom, W. (1945) 'Physical training in the Royal Air Force', *Journal of Physical Education*, **37**, 9–11, and Brigadier T.H. Wand-Tetley, C.B.E., in Wand-Tetley, T.H. (1946) "'Purposeful" Physical training in the army"', *Journal of Physical Education*, **38**, 140–143.
 - 76 Marwick, A. (1982) *British Society Since 1945* Harmondsworth: Penguin.
 - 77 Developed at Leeds University by Morgan and Adamson. See Morgan, R.E. and Adamson, G.T. (1957) *Circuit Training* London: Bell.
 - 78 See Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (1981) *Unpopular Education* London: Hutchinson.
 - 79 Munrow, A.D. (1955) *The Leaflet*, **56**(1), p. 6.
 - 80 Conference on 'Gymnastics in the Secondary School', Munrow's comments reported in *The Leaflet*, **57**(1), 1956, p. 2.
 - 81 Munrow, note 72, p. 276.
 - 82 See *The Leaflet*, **48**(4), 1947, pp. 90–92.
 - 83 Munrow, note 72.
 - 84 Randall, M. (1956) 'The movement approach — A need for clarification'. *Physical Education*, **48**, 15–17.
 - 85 Randall, note 21, p. 12.
 - 86 Randall, note 21, pp. 25–6.
 - 87 Indeed, educational gymnastics was sometimes called 'Basic Movement' or 'Movement Training'.
 - 88 McIntosh, P.C. (1948) 'Skill and physical education. *Journal of Physical Education*, **40**, 130–137.; Munrow, A.D. (1952) 'Transference of training'. *Journal of Physical Education*, **44**, 49–54.
 - 89 Roberts, note 43, p. 96; a similar point was made by Nahapiet, K. (1955) Transfer of training. *The Leaflet*, **56**(4); and in J Wright's response in *The Leaflet*, **57**(4), 1956, p. 21 to Randall, note 84.
 - 90 Holding, D.H. (1965) *Principles of Training* Oxford: Pergamon
 - 91 Knapp, B. (1963) *Skill in Sport* London: RKP, pp. 110 and 166.
 - 92 Knapp, note 91, p. 110.
 - 93 Knapp, note 91, pp. 112–113.
 - 94 See Carr, D. (1981) 'On Mastering a Skill', *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, **15**(1), 87–96, for a devastating critique of this psychologistic approach.
 - 95 Munrow, note 72, pp. 280–281.
 - 96 Randall, note 21, pp. 20–22.
 - 97 Munrow, note 72, p. 278.
 - 98 See Stuart, N. (1964) *Competitive Gymnastics* London: Stanley Paul; and Allison, J. (1963) *Advanced Gymnastics for Women* London: Stanley Paul.
 - 99 See Whitehead, N. (1970) 'The present and the future'. *SSPE/SAPE Conference Report* Jordanhill College, Glasgow, p. 24.
 - 100 Miss J.D. Browne, Principal of City of Coventry Training College in 'The training of teachers' *The Leaflet*, **66**(1), 1965.
 - 101 Webster, M. (1969–70) 'Physical education today and tomorrow', in the *Physical Education Yearbook 1969–70*, pp. 7–14.
 - 102 Munrow, A.D. (1972) *Physical Education: A Discussion of Principles* London: Arnold; Morgan, R.E. (1974) *Concerns and Values in Physical Education* London: Bell.
 - 103 Carlisle, R. (1969) 'The concept of physical education'. *Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain*, Vol. 3; Curl, G. (1973) 'An attempt to justify human movement as a field of study', in Brooke, J.D. and Whiting, H.T.A. (Eds) *Human Movement as a Field of Study* London: Kingston pp. 7–17.
 - 104 Robbins Report (1963) *Higher Education* London: HMSO.
 - 105 See Thomson, note 63 and Fletcher, note 2 for detailed accounts.
 - 106 See *The Leaflet*, **66**(9), 1965, p. 74 and the letter from Margaret Rosewarne Jenkins concerning the lack of female representation on BED study group report; see also Fletcher, note 2, p. 148.
 - 107 See for example Henry, F.M. (1964) 'Physical education — An academic discipline', *The Leaflet*, **66**(1), 6–7.; and Chapter 6 in this book.
 - 108 But as Fletcher, note 2, p. 139 has commented 'their descent has been prolonged and uncertain, sometimes more like the movement of a kite, which, when almost grazing the ground, may lift off on a sudden upstream and soar again, or eventually tumble'.
 - 109 McNair Report (1944) *Teachers and Youth Leaders* London: HMSO.
 - 110 See Fletcher, note 2.
 - 111 The key agents in the dissemination of educational gymnastics from the specialist physical education colleges to the generalist infant teachers were the Inspectorate and LEA Advisors, many of whom were women.
 - 112 'Physical education is not a subject, it is an aspect of the curriculum.' *TES* 27 July 1946.
 - 113 CCCS, note 78.
 - 114 See Jones for a discussion of this point, note 6.
 - 115 Bennett, D. (1982) 'Education: Back to the drawing board', in Smith, R. (1985) *The Inequalities Debate: An Interpretive Essay*, Geelong: Deakin University Press, p. 85.
 - 116 Thomson, I., note 63.
 - 117 Though as Fletcher, note 2, p. 135 observes, women were not admitted to the advanced diploma course at Leeds University until 1966, 11 years after it began.
 - 118 See note 2.
 - 119 Scratton, note 2, p. 73.
 - 120 Hargreaves, note 2, pp. 47–48.