

European Physical Education Review

<http://epe.sagepub.com/>

The physical education and sport interface: Models, maxims and maelstrom

Clive C. Pope

European Physical Education Review 2011 17: 273

DOI: 10.1177/1356336X11416728

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://epe.sagepub.com/content/17/3/273>

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

On behalf of:

[North West Counties Physical Education Association](#)

Additional services and information for *European Physical Education Review* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://epe.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://epe.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

Citations: <http://epe.sagepub.com/content/17/3/273.refs.html>

>> [Version of Record](#) - Nov 7, 2011

[What is This?](#)

The physical education and sport interface: Models, maxims and maelstrom

Clive C. Pope

The University of Waikato, Aotearoa, New Zealand

European Physical Education Review
17(3) 273–285

© The Author(s) 2011

Reprints and permissions:

sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav

DOI: 10.1177/1356336X11416728

epe.sagepub.com



Abstract

Within many school contexts physical education and sport have historically been positioned as polemic, and while there has been plenty of rhetoric about physical education as well as sport within education, there has seldom been engaged debate or discussion about the relationship between physical education and sport in school settings. This article revisits Elizabeth Murdoch's heuristic of five conceptualizations for the physical education and sport interface (Murdoch, 1990), reflecting that two decades have passed and neither physical education nor sport are what they used to be. Murdoch's interface invites teachers and coaches to apply policy, practices and pedagogies that have influenced the relationship of physical education and sport at a local level. While focusing on the policy and pedagogy of sport and physical education in a New Zealand context, this article draws on similar trends and issues at an international level to reaffirm the global relevance of the issues and challenges being raised. Attention is drawn to the need to keep pace with and satisfy the ever-increasing needs and wants of the next generation of young people. It behoves teachers and coaches to present young people with sport experiences that are full and enriching, based on sound maxims that help students understand how sport can strengthen a culture.

Keywords

education, models, physical education, sport, New Zealand

Introduction

Within educational circles one of the most protracted and emotive topics is the relationship between physical education and sport. Discussion and debate has been ongoing for so long it is little wonder that ambiguity and antagonism has prevailed in many contexts. Irrespective of the nature of debate, or whether, given the importance of such a topic, scrutiny has helped or hindered

Corresponding author:

Clive C. Pope, Department of Sport & Leisure Studies, University of Waikato, Private Bag, 3105, Hamilton, 3240, New Zealand

Email: cpope@waikato.ac.nz

individual or institutional perspectives, there appears to be little clarity or consensus. If anything, previous dialogue has obfuscated rather than enlightened the status of the physical education and sport relationship. Indeed, Stothart (2005) has argued, 'the endless debates in the literature and at conferences about the meaning of physical education exacerbates, rather than clarifies, our understanding of what is essential to physical education' (p. 99). Although Stothart's observation is directed to the Aotearoa, New Zealand, context, the underpinning sentiment and the associated tension with the physical education and sport metonymy are not unique to our country and could be applied to many contexts. As an international example, *The 1999 World Summit on Physical Education* (International Council Sport Science and Physical Education, 1999) called attention to the serious decline in the state and status of physical education and school sport all over the world. Among other issues, the report argued for urgent action and improvement in resources. In this article I examine Aotearoa, New Zealand, as a case of conceptual befuddlement, but draw on relevant and kindred international perspectives to illustrate how a sustained failure to establish workable solutions for the physical education and sport interface seem destined to merely compound the acknowledged decline in state and status of physical education.

Over the last decade national Government initiatives in Aotearoa, New Zealand, have seen increased attention allocated to literacy and numeracy (Crooks, 2009) while other areas of the curriculum have suffered reduced resourcing at school, teacher education and professional support levels. School physical education advisors have been almost completely disbanded and there is virtually no leadership in physical education at Ministry of Education level. The school day has become an even more contested space for time and resources, so Physical Education, like many subjects, has faced significant depletion. Universities have not escaped the tentacles of rationalism, with many initial teacher education courses slashing hours previously allocated to Health and Physical Education programmes. These examples collectively depict a picture of vulnerability, yet the subject's retention as a compulsory component of the National Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) offers a thread of hope.

As others internationally have agreed (Evans, 2004; Kirk, 2010) an antidote to diminished time and status will only be possible if physical education can present a cogent argument for its role and importance within the curriculum and the wider life of schools. The educational benefits claimed for physical education and/or school sport are numerous and widespread, but scrutiny would suggest such claims are highly situational and seldom backed by empirical support (Bailey, 2006; Bailey et al., 2011). Cogency should start with what the subject means not what it claims it does or can do. The intention of this article is not to define physical education or sport, but rather revisit an associated issue that has intrigued our field for many years (Kirk and Gorely, 2000) namely, the positioning of physical education with sport and how the interface can have multiple forms. This stance reflects the view that a focus on definitions (that are always destined to be contentious) may not be the most productive way forward if our focus is upon developing new policy and pedagogic relationships. Irrespective of whether sport and physical education are considered with a philosophical, sociological, pedagogical or historical backcloth, there is an insinuation of contestation. There is nothing static about what occurs under the rubric of physical education just as the meaning of sport is constantly evolving as political, commercial or strategic factors ensure what it means today will not necessarily be the same tomorrow.

If external commercial, exclusive or political forces draw sport away from its educative potential, physical education and sport professionals have two choices: They can ignore such undesirable forces and watch sport take on a life of its own with the risk of any educational properties being diminished or lost, or they can advocate for and position sport and physical

education as mutually educational vehicles that promote access and opportunity. In so doing, students may become the recipients of sport's captive qualities within a setting where positive learning experiences take precedence. In this article I employ Murdoch's multiple-model heuristic (Murdoch, 1990) to highlight how policy, agency and structures can interact and influence perceptions at an individual or institutional level.

The physical education and sport maelstrom

A maelstrom is a very powerful whirlpool or vortex that has a fierce downdraft. In his short story 'A descent into the maelstrom', Edgar Allan Poe (Poe, 1902) describes a narrator who recounts his survival of 'the most terrible hurricane that ever came out of the heavens creating a vortex that begins to pull his ship under the waves drowning his panic-stricken brother' (p. 4). But the storyteller recounts how, while descending, he becomes transfixed by the beauty and power of this swirling maelstrom.

the vast bed of the waters, seamed and scarred into a thousand conflicting channels, burst suddenly into frenzied [sic] convulsion—heaving, boiling, hissing—gyrating in gigantic and innumerable vortices, and all whirling and plunging on to the eastward with a rapidity which water never elsewhere assumes except in precipitous descents. (p. 2)

But rather than panicking, and experiencing a similar fate to that of his brother, he jumps ship, observing how smaller objects were being pulled less into the powerful whirlpool. He grabs and holds on to a barrel, and avoids the spiralled descent until his eventual rescue several hours later.

In a metaphorical sense, the issues associated with the physical education and sport interface have encircled education forums for many years. Curriculum and policy planners and writers, politicians, academics, teachers and students have arguably been transfixed by the presence and potency of physical education and sport as they co-exist in whatever form, but often resembling a whirling vortex. The speed of the whirlpool can blur not only the constituents caught within the vortex, but also the perception of what observers and/or analysts are able to recognize. The risk of this blurring process is the creation of ambiguity in the meaning of, and relationship between, the constituent terms physical education and sport, or difficulty in articulating how the terms relate. Clarification requires the application of an appropriate lens through which the interface of sport and physical education can be examined, and analysis of the relationship between physical education and sport begins with looking at the options.

The sport–physical education interface: A helpful heuristic

A heuristic can help us discover and propose solutions, often through taking stock of current systems or processes. It is often employed when a judgement call is required or a problem solving exercise is adopted to promote clarification. As signalled earlier in this article, models often establish a framework or position. Elizabeth Murdoch (1990) presented a heuristic based on five models for the physical education and sport interface. Collectively they address the range of perceptions and attitudes often associated with this interface. For physical educators (among others) the application of Murdoch's heuristic offers an opportunity to evaluate where they are positioned in relation to the arrangement between physical education and sport on a personal or programmatic level, as well as where they would like to be.

The Substitution Model often involves these two terms being used interchangeably. This process is often reinforced by wider public perception. A colleague who views a physical education class 'doing' hockey on the fields is likely to substitute one term for the other. Likewise, a student who participates in a series of sport units for physical education will probably assume these two terms mean the same thing. Attempts to refute the sameness are often unsupported by measured argument. In the New Zealand context this condition has been illustrated through the adoption of Kiwisport¹ by New Zealand primary schools in the late 1980s and 1990s (Currie, 1990). The multitude of modified sports offered through Kiwisport often competed with, or, arguably, became physical education by proxy.

The Versus Model addresses the long-held need to differentiate between physical education and sport. As has been observed in many countries (Capel, 2000; Cheffers, 1997; Hardman and Marshall, 2000; Hardy and Sparkes, 1987; Penney, 1998; Siedentop, 1982; Talbot, 1998) there have been numerous statements in policy documents and reports separating the two terms:

Although sport and physical education are closely related, one can never replace the other. Physical education offers something to all students, whatever their limitations or capabilities, and all may participate. Sport, on the other hand, is competitive, and generally those competing are the most competent students. Physical education supports sport by helping students to learn and perfect skills and to condition the body for various games. (Dept of Education, 1980: 8)

The *Versus Model* can also manifest itself in many schools that have sport coordinators or even departments in addition to physical education (Flintoff, 2010). Dedicated staff will often be employed to organize and administer intra- and inter-school competitions. The presence of such a growing trend in many New Zealand secondary schools can either be seen as an opportunity for workable connections or as colleagues doing the same job, but differently.

The Reinforcement Model attends to the idea that physical education and sport are closely linked. They hold reciprocal relationships, so one may reinforce the other's function. Much of the rhetoric associated with this model is couched within a positive tone. One of New Zealand's foremost physical education scholars, Phillip Smithells, once affirmed,

although physical education and sport may have different ends in view, their means will be shared and a working relationship between the two can be established for the benefit of sport and not to the detriment of physical education. (Smithells, 1974: 59)

International evidence would indicate that sport and games form significant parts of many physical education programmes (Hardman and Marshall, 2000; Donovan et al., 2006). Murdoch (1990) cautions that this model will only flourish if careful pedagogy is demonstrated by teachers and coaches, so that they consider the needs and abilities of their students. The underpinning argument is that co-existence can be mutually reinforcing with appropriate collaboration and awareness.

The Sequence Model is arguably the option most subscribed to by many educators. The premise is that physical education prepares young people for sport. The privileged position sport holds in many contexts means that frequently, 'Physical Education merely means an introduction to sport within an educational context' (Talbot, 1998: 105). Similarly, Taggart (1988) argued that physical education has been portrayed as a foundation stone for sport. Such a perspective is echoed in the 1999 New Zealand Curriculum document:

Schools have an important role in promoting sport through the co-curricular programmes they offer students. These programmes allow students to build on and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they develop in the school's physical education curriculum. Organised school sports programmes should neither be seen as substitutes for sport studies in this curriculum nor as the specific domain of physical education teachers. (Ministry of Education, 1999: 44)

The danger in positioning physical education beneath or before sport is that it results in the subject being seen as a precursor to the school sports programme and the foundation of the elite sport pyramid (Kirk and Gorely, 2000). Students are sent on runs prior to the school cross country, a track and field unit is offered prior to the forthcoming athletics sports. For some teachers the topics addressed within their programmes, and how they are delivered, can be exasperated by teacher/coach role conflicts (Pope and O'Sullivan, 1998; Millslagle and Morley, 2004; Locke and Massengale, 1978).

Murdoch's final option is *The Integration Model*, which is presented as a more viable alternative to the four previous models. She advocates this option as a better way to address the multi-faceted nature of the sport-physical education partnership. Success may only occur if robust communication between relevant partners is established. In particular, the integration model advocates that any policy documents place young peoples' needs as a central focus. Moreover, change at policy level toward the integration model would also require significant changes in practice and attitude for physical education and sport professionals. Murdoch calls for cooperation, coordination and liaison between providers at a local and national level.

The contested terrain of physical education and sport

Sport is one of the most significant and omnipresent aspects of contemporary society. It extends into many aspects of our culture, including the arts, politics, the media, and, in particular, human lifestyle. It permeates society from the international level down to the consciousness of the individual. Sport achieves large audiences through both the media and live performance. It is the extent and degree of influence that sport has on society that draws attention. Whenever sport is placed under scrutiny, there is an array of opinion. The degree of disparity regarding how sport is perceived was colourfully described by the ex-President of Yale University, and former Commissioner of Major League Baseball, Bart Giamatti, who contended:

At it's worst, sport is the pointless, if widely enjoyed, detritus of an industrial society - a kind of non-toxic pollutant, junk food for the spirit, without nourishment, without history, without serious purpose. At its best, sport is a remnant of an Edenic world, now gone, mere May pole dance without the May pole, - fun, redolent of nostalgia, and probably because of the physical exertion required, good for your heart or maybe your character, but no longer for serious folk, except, of course, as occasions to moralize. (Giamatti, 1989: 26)

The often polemical perspectives described by Giamatti have influenced individuals and society. For many people, sport matters, shaping their social and cultural identity, while for many others it does not. Contrasts are evident in multiple locations including education.

By its very nature, sport teaches. It can be educative as well as mis-educative. The place of sport within education has often been marked by antipathy and confusion (Langbein and Bess, 2002) because the historical and philosophical tenets associated with sport and education have become

convoluted. Irrespective of the liabilities or advantages associated with its position in education, schools have been endorsed by Government agencies, ministries, or professional physical education organizations as venues where sport has an important role in the development of its students. All students should have the opportunity to engage in sporting activities of their choice to the highest level of their ability, both at school and in the community. Such a statement is codified in the UNESCO International Charter of Physical Education and Sport (it is salient to acknowledge the juxtapositioning of sport and physical education for this statement) which states in the introduction to sport:

The role of the school is to ensure that opportunities are provided for children, regardless of their abilities, to participate in sport. It should offer opportunities in addition to the physical education programme. The school should also liaise with sports bodies and individuals in the community to assist those students who wish to continue their participation in sport outside school hours, and for whom no voluntary coaches make themselves available. (UNESCO, 1956)

While it is more than half a century since this document was published it has served as a template for many subsequent policy documents and position statements. There is, however, a difference of opinion over time and across cultures (Hardman and Marshall, 2000; Kirk, 1992) concerning the reasons for the inclusion of sport as part of the school programme. The development of a balanced individual is often seen as justification for including sport as part of the school programme. Sport has often been promoted as an aspect of education that can enhance the social, cognitive, and physical development of the individual. This is the most common justification by those who advocate sport as a balanced part of the school programme (Bailey et al., 2011).

Many of the watchdogs of sport have argued that the professional influence has eroded or eliminated the numerous benefits sport can offer to the participant. To these observers sport became increasingly rationalized, allowing providers to distance it from its historical and educative character. This shifting nature and purpose has concerned some New Zealand educators. Ross (1994) agitated, 'we in physical education have been exploited by the social and political growth of commodified, nationalistic male sport as entertainment' (p. 13). In this context, schools become a 'symbolic battlefield... the ultimate public-policy crucible in which our vision of social purpose is tried' (Paquette, 1991: 2). The dilemma posed for educators is mediating between policymakers' demands on the one hand and the needs of their students on the other. That mediation process often affects what is taught in physical education.

While physical education has traditionally been subjected to two competing sets of interests – sport and health (Penney, 1998) – it is the former that forms the focus of this article. Physical education and sport have been described as 'strange bedfellows' (Felshin, 1980) and 'uncomfortable bedfellows' (Stothart, 2000). It would seem that the debate harks well into the past but may also influence the future, as 'in spite of everything one quarrel persists which is well-known to ancient Olympia and which will occur everywhere and always. It is the quarrel between physical education and sport' (de Coubertin, 1929: n.p., cited in Saunders and Jobling, 1983). In Aotearoa, New Zealand, Ross (1994) has described sport as the predominant currency in male school physical education. In the United Kingdom contestation over the use of terms like physical education and sport (Bailey, 2005; Clay, 2005; Kay, 2005) has highlighted how the debate is not yet resolved. Opinion seems to swing between those who believe '[Sport] should not be the central focus of physical education in schools' (Tinning, 1995: 20) and those who believe that physical education has attempted to do so much that it has diluted both its meaning and purpose. This perspective was cogently argued by Siedentop, nearly thirty years ago:

Physical education has been used to teach reading and to remedy perceptual difficulties. Physical education has also been widely espoused as a blanket therapy for youth in the social/emotional domain. We have embraced both academic and therapeutic goals and almost any other goal that is thought to contribute to this version of human development. Unfortunately, along the way, physical education became diluted, ill-conceived, difficult to operationalise, impossible to hold accountable, and trivialised beyond recognition. (Siedentop, 1982: 11)

Siedentop lamented the growing distance between sport and physical education. What is more lamentable is the frequency, span and nature of such arguments, arguments that remain unresolved.

Models within models: Achieving integration

A 'model' is something which a copy can be based upon because it is an extremely good example of its type. It can serve as a template or a framework to base new or current programmes on. A model is also the study of structure that gives meaning to formal structures, such as curriculums, often marked by duality or alternates. One can specify a theory and then look to discover structure that satisfies that theory. In educational circles models are often framed with consideration to pedagogy. According to Metzler (2000) 'a model is designed to be used for an entire unit of instruction and includes all of the planning, design, implementation, and assessment functions for that unit' (Metzler, 2000: 12). For educators who adopt instructional models multiple considerations require attention, including 'learning theory, long-term learning goals, context, content, classroom management, related teaching strategies, verification or process, and the assessment of student learning' (Metzler, 2000: 12).

While there are several models that are often adopted in physical education programmes (see Metzler, 2000; Siedentop et al., 1986) the two models that arguably are best positioned to fortify Murdoch's *Integration* model are The Sport Education Model (referred to as Sport Education) and the Teaching Games for Understanding Model (TGfU) (Thorpe et al., 1986). Although both have existed since the 1980s it would be fair to say that both have had extended periods of latency.

Siedentop's early argument was the presentation to students of a sport culture that was egalitarian would be the foundation to a lifestyle that in turn sustains and nurtures a positive sport culture (Siedentop, 1982, 1987). The rhetoric was considered but it was only rhetoric. The educative approach to the culture of sport as a function of physical education has had support from other advocates. Almond (1997) has argued 'we need to teach sport as one exemplar of a culturally relevant physical activity and demonstrate ways in which sport can contribute to leading a full and valuable life' (Almond, 1997: 15). Corbett (1995) has claimed that 'sport is a significant component of our world culture and the cornerstone of physical education... when used properly, sport activities can and should promote educational objectives of physical education' (p. 12). Alderson and Crutchley (1990) also bemoan the lack of education about the culture of sport in education settings, particularly within physical education. Siedentop's argument became the precursor to The Sport Education Model or what is often now known as Sport Education (Siedentop et al., 2004).

Integration has arguably manifested in New Zealand schools through the adoption of Sport Education. The positioning of Sport Education within physical education has seen the potential of sport as an educational vehicle being realized and adopted as a means to help young people participate in the sport culture. Following a national curriculum trial (Grant, 1992) Sport Education was widely adopted across New Zealand secondary schools at year 11. Many secondary schools (and some primary and intermediate schools; Pope and Grant, 1996) have since implemented the

model at other year levels (Pope, 2007). In an educative sense this is achieved through inclusion, appropriate modification, progression and ownership. However, the student pathway to the wider sport culture is a task that must be clearly communicated by teachers and coaches (Grant, 1992). It is no accident that the integration of physical education with sport through the trial and widespread adoption of sport education within physical education programmes occurred through 'coordination, co-operation and liaison' (Murdoch, 1990: 71) at school and agency level. Since the national trial in 1991 other countries have embraced Sport Education. There has also been a significant research base (Wallhead and O'Sullivan, 2005; Kinchin, 2006), as well as texts and special issues of international journals on the subject.

A cultural connection is only one pillar that could support the integration of physical education and sport. Teaching Games for Understanding (TGFU) has also appeared in some Aotearoa, New Zealand, physical education contexts (Gordon, 2008) as a tool to promote student problem-solving and decision-making during purpose-created games. The student centred focus that forms the core of TGFU complements the educative tenets of physical education, providing scope for a range of meaningful learning experiences for students. Multiple sports can be explored through game playing, allowing strategies, tactics and skills to be learned in authentic and inclusive sport settings. In comparison to Sport Education the TGFU model has had modest attention from New Zealand teachers and researchers. It has not benefitted from a national trial sponsored by multiple agencies, as occurred with Sport Education. This is unfortunate, as the recent drive by SPARC to implement a player-centred coaching framework has signalled a major paradigm shift in coaching development (Cassidy and Kidman, 2010), but perhaps more importantly, it has promoted a pedagogy that potentially draws physical education and sport closer together. Despite conference workshops and anecdotal discussions there has been, to date, little research attention to the uptake of TGFU or other game-centred approaches (Oslin and Mitchell, 2006) in New Zealand schools. Although these two models have been examined separately there is an argument for their integration based on educative grounds (Collier, 2005; Hastie and Curtner-Smith, 2006).

The positioning of Sport Education and TGFU within physical education programmes broaches the issue of whether these two models clarify or compound how sport and physical education are situated within the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) and in schools. Despite numerous policy and curriculum documents, professional discussions and conference workshops, the status of both physical education and sport, and the relationship between them, remains dazed and confused. This status has arguably been exacerbated by The Ministry of Education's abrogation of responsibility for resourcing or leadership for school sport. Physical education in our country has often acted according to the trends and social forces of the time (Grant and Pope, 2000). While many physical education programmes are well-intentioned they do not always promote the positioning of sport and physical education coherently. Specious justification or advocacy is often unchallenged or ignored.

The sport-physical education interface: Maelstrom or millpond?

To avoid stormy waters physical educationists and sport pedagogues will need to review how physical education and sport should be positioned for ensuing generations of students. Unless educators focus more attention on how sport and physical education is presented to young people it could become an increasingly irrelevant part of many of their lives. The retention of traditional and contemporary physical education programmes should be evaluated against the needs of today's students. History tells us that their initial enthusiasm and support for sport, apparent at the age

when young people begin their high school careers, is often diluted, transferred, or eliminated by the time the same people are ready to leave high school (Johns and Lindner, 1990).

Should educators, administrators, and policy makers be concerned about such an outcome? The changing contexts associated with youth sport culture have implications for how physical education and sport can and should be delivered, or more importantly, how it has been delivered in the past. Three factors deserve attention in any appraisal process: Change, clarity and articulation. There have been numerous calls for change over the course of many years. Nearly 20 years ago Laurence Locke proclaimed 'there is a need to jettison the dominant way in which sport has been presented to students' (Locke, 1992: 372). Locke (1998) has also warned that perhaps physical education (including those who teach and research it) has one last chance to evaluate and transform a subject that has failed too many young people and requires systemic change. A more recent warning comes from across the Atlantic; 'we regard substantial change within the subject as a matter of necessity if it is to have educational worth in the 21st century' (Penney and Chandler, 2000: 85). Calls for review and change have probably been no more than calls, as the status quo appears to have largely prevailed in many contexts. But if young people are to be presented with options for participation then the options must be viewed as viable, attractive, appropriate, enjoyable *and* educational.

The suggestion of change can often be problematic. Multiple considerations are factored into any decision process. It may include challenging our own beliefs or those of others, a process that is often uncomfortable:

Any attempt to debunk commonly held beliefs in physical education and sport (as in any subject area) or to situate them in to a political and social context nearly always gives rise to incredulity, discomfort and even hostility among students and practitioners. (Culpan, 1997: 217)

The second factor is clarity. Physical education and sport have both demonstrated histories marked by conceptual ambiguity. Locke's (1973) plea to disentangle the multifaceted status of educative sport and physical education, including the exact relationship between sport and physical education, has gone unheeded for the last three decades. So many years have passed yet so little progress has been made. Clearly there are situational differences in the degree of clarity that can exist from an individual level right through to societal levels. But review has revealed the 'conceptual minefield' (Bailey et al., 2011) that characterizes our field. There would appear to be a plethora of strategies and levels where clear and robust meanings, connections (Flintoff, 2010) and alignments could figure in intelligent policy development (Kirk and Gorely, 2000) yet few exemplars abound.

Certainly the policy documents and their respective agencies do not reflect a clear position in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Since 1980 three Ministerial inquiries have been conducted into the sport and recreation sector. The most recent Ministerial Review (Ministerial Taskforce on Sport, Fitness and Leisure, 2001) claimed that the contribution of the education sector towards physical activity (including sport) was considered to be grossly inadequate. The Task Force stated it was:

appalled at the state of physical education, physical activity, movement and recreation and sport education in New Zealand. Evidence was repeatedly presented to the Taskforce that showed a *lack of clarity*, direction, prescription and scheduled time in schools for physical activity and sport. (p. 54, emphasis added)

It is worth noting that in this quote physical education is dropped in the second sentence, indicating either an oversight or an example of the slippage that can conveniently or strategically occur in

reports and reviews. More recently, a review of physical activity in Aotearoa, New Zealand, educational settings conducted by Gillespie (2004) reported ‘an ongoing ambiguity around the terms physical activity, physical education, sport, games and play’ (p. 32). Attempts to ameliorate this conceptual fog have been marked by professional inertia and it is only recently that clarification has prompted dialogue between Physical Education New Zealand and Sport and Recreation New Zealand (Reid, 2010). If and when clarity is addressed it must be clearly *articulated*, the final factor.

Numerous calls have focused on consensual articulation. Talbot (1998) warns that ‘the challenge will be to agree on a conception which is transferable across cultures, national systems and languages’ (p. 106). Capel (2000) cautions of the longer term implications by arguing that ‘It is important that physical education teachers are clear about, and articulate, the differences between physical education and sport because this has implications for the future of physical education’ (p. 132). In a globalized society the widespread presence of physical education and school sport can hold a stronger position within and beyond educational circles if unified and unambiguous meanings are offered. Murdoch’s five step model can serve as a helpful heuristic for individual or collective decision-making and the formation of pertinent maxims to guide policy and practice.

Final words

Sport is too big a cultural institution to be ignored. Education can play an important role in the transmission of this part of our culture by creating opportunities for students to experience and understand what good sport is, and how it can strengthen a culture. However, sport is becoming an increasingly complex part of society and can be difficult for many young people to fully understand. As the influence of the entertainment and commercial dimensions of sport become more and more potent, education, and perhaps more specifically physical education, has to address itself to widening and balancing young people’s understanding of sport. One of our challenges is to look for alternative ways to allow and encourage greater numbers of young people to both experience and form a relationship of sustained participation with sport.

This article has advocated for a re-engagement of an integration model promoting a physical education–sport symbiosis. But to achieve this will require a rethink of how the integration model can advance an educational approach with mutual benefit for physical education and sport professionals. But, perhaps more importantly, how such a gesture could benefit young people. We need to teach sport as one exemplar of culture and how sport can contribute to a young person’s education. However, any double-barrel attention will be negated if physical education and sport are seen as ambiguous and contested terms, marked by little consensus (Talbot, 1998) and minimal co-ordination. Failure to draw on any reciprocity or achieve some form of consensus on the relationship of physical education and sport could see both terms continue to orbit while being pulled ever downward by greater educational and political forces, creating a maelstrom and plunging toward eminent peril only to become a curriculum anomaly.

Note

1. Kiwisport was one of the first initiatives launched by the newly-formed Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness and Leisure, a Government agency, in 1988. The widely-resourced programme offered sport to young people (ages 5–12) through modification of rules, areas and equipment. Kiwisport quickly gained popularity and was widely accepted in New Zealand primary schools; one commissioned survey revealed a 94% uptake by schools, who indicated they had allocated more than 1.5 hours to their programme. At its

peak Kiwisport offered 28 different sport codes supported by National Sporting Organizations. Kiwisport has waned amid structural changes and over time to where it has virtually disappeared. The term was recently reassigned to a new Government funding scheme for sport in all New Zealand schools.

References

- Almond L (1997) *Physical Education in Schools*. London: Kogan-Page.
- Bailey R (2005) Words and things: A response to Will Kay. *Bulletin of Physical Education* 41(2):163–166.
- Bailey R (2006) Physical education and sport in schools: A review of benefits and outcomes. *Journal of School Health* 76(8): 397–401.
- Bailey R, Armour KM, and Kirk D, et al. (2011) The educational benefits claimed for physical education and school sport: An academic review. *Research Papers in Education* 24(1): 1–27.
- Capel S (2000) Physical education and sport. In: Capel S and Piotrowski S (eds) *Issues in Physical Education*. London: Routledge, 131–143.
- Cassidy T, Kidman L (2010) Initiating a national coaching curriculum: A paradigmatic shift? *Physical Education & Sport Pedagogy* 15(3): 307–322.
- Cheffers J (1997) Sport versus education. The jury is still out. *International Journal of Physical Education* 33(3): 106–109.
- Clay G (2005) Tilting at windmills. *Bulletin of Physical Education* 41: 147–162.
- Collier CS (2005) Integrating tactical games and sport education. In: Griffin LL and Butler JI (eds) *Teaching Games for Understanding: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 137–148.
- Corbett DR (1995) Methods and techniques for teaching educational aims of sport activities. *ICHPER•SD*: 12–17.
- Crooks T (2009) *Towards Defining, Assessing and Reporting Against National Standards for Literacy and Numeracy in New Zealand*. New Zealand Assessment Academy.
- Culpan I (1997) Physical education: Liberate it or confine it to the gymnasium? *Delta* 49(1): 203–220.
- Currie C (1990) KiwiSport. *Commonwealth & International Conference on Physical Education, Sport, Health, Dance, Recreation and Leisure*. Auckland, New Zealand: NZAHPER, 47–55.
- Department of Education (1980) *Physical Education in Secondary Schools: Planning for Fitness for Living*. Wellington: Government Printer.
- Donovan M, Jones G, and Hardman K (2006) Physical education and sport in England: Dualism, partnership and delivery provision. *Kinesiology* 38(1): 16–27.
- Evans J (2004). Making a difference? Education and ‘ability’ in physical education. *European Physical Education Review* 10(1): 95–108.
- Felshin J (1980) Physical education and athletics: ‘Strange bedfellows’? In: Crafts V (ed.) *National Association For Physical Education in Higher Education*. Brainerd, Minnesota: Human Kinetics, 3–11.
- Flintoff A (2010) The school sport coordinator programme: Changing the role of the physical education teacher? *Sport, Education and Society* 8(2): 231–250.
- Giamatti AB (1989) *Take Time For Paradise*. New York: Summit Books.
- Gillespie L (2004) *Physical Activity in Education Settings*. Report to Sport and Recreation New Zealand: Wellington.
- Gordon B (2008) Teaching games for understanding: A teaching approach for all teachers. *New Zealand Physical Educator* 41(2): 17–19.
- Grant B (1992) Integrating sport into the physical education curriculum in new zealand secondary schools. *Quest* 44(3): 304–316.
- Grant BC, Pope CC (2000) Retrospection and ruminations on sport and physical education. *Journal of Physical Education New Zealand* 33(2): 64–74.
- Hardman K, Marshall J (2000) The state and status of physical education in schools in international context. *European Physical Education Review* 6(3): 203–229.

- Hardy C, Sparkes A (1987) School sport and the control of the physical education curriculum. *Bulletin of Physical Education* 23: 28–31.
- Hastie P, Curtner-Smith M (2006) Influence of a hybrid Sport Education–Teaching Games for Understanding unit on one teacher and his students. *Physical Education & Sport Pedagogy* 11(1): 1–27.
- International Council Sport Science and Physical Education (1999) *World Summit on Physical Education*. Berlin: ICSSPE.
- Johns DP, Lindner KJ (1990) Social exchange in the process of withdrawal from adolescent sport. In: Williams T, Almond L, and Sparkes A (eds) *Sport and Physical Activity: Moving Towards Excellence*. London: E & FN Spon, 504–511.
- Kay W (2005) A rose is a rose by any other name. But physical education and sport are not the same. *Bulletin of Physical Education* 41(1): 15–22.
- Kinchin GD (2006) Sport education: A review of the research. In: Kirk D, Macdonald D and O'Sullivan M (eds) *Handbook of Physical Education*. London: Sage Publications, 596–609.
- Kirk D (2010) *Physical Education futures*. London: Routledge.
- Kirk D, Gorely T (2000) Challenging thinking about the relationship between school physical education and sport performance. *European Physical Education Review* 6(2): 119–134.
- Langbein L, Bess R (2002) Sports in school: Source of amity or antipathy? *Social Science Quarterly* 83(2): 436–454.
- Locke LF (1992) Changing Secondary School Physical Education. *Quest* 44(3): 361–372.
- Locke L (1998) Advice, stories, and myths: The reactions of a cliff jumper... *Quest* 50(2): 238–248.
- Locke L, Massengale JD (1978) Role conflict in teacher/coaches. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport* 49(2): 162–174.
- Metzler M (2000) *Instructional Models for Physical Education*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Millslagle D, Morley L (2004) Investigation of role retreatism in the teacher/coach. *Physical Educator* 61.
- Ministerial Taskforce on Sport Fitness and Leisure (2001) *Getting Set for an Active Nation, Report of the Ministerial Taskforce on Sport, Fitness and Leisure*. Wellington.
- Ministry of Education (1999) *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media Limited.
- Ministry of Education (2007) *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media Limited.
- Murdoch EB (1990) Physical education and sport: The interface. In: Armstrong N (ed.) *New Directions in Physical Education*. Champaign: Human Kinetics, 63–78.
- Oslin J, Mitchell S (2006) Game-centered approaches to teaching physical education. In: Kirk D, Macdonald D and O'Sullivan M (eds) *The Handbook of Physical Education*. London: Sage, 627–651.
- Paquette JE (1991) *Social Purpose and Schooling: Alternatives, Agendas and Issues*. London: Falmer Press.
- Penney D (1998) Positioning and defining physical education, sport and health in the curriculum. *European Physical Education Review* 4(2): 117–126.
- Penney D, Chandler T (2000) Physical education: What futures? *Sport Education and Society* 5(1): 71–87.
- Poe EA (1902) A descent into the maelstrom. *The complete works of Edgar Allan Poe*. New York: Putman Publishing.
- Pope CC (2007) Happy 21st birthday sport education: Where are we now? *The New Zealand Physical Educator* 40(2): 11–13.
- Pope CC, Grant BC (1996) Student experiences in sport education. *Waikato Journal of Education* 2: 103–118.
- Pope C, O'Sullivan M (1998) Culture, pedagogy and teacher change in an urban high school: How do you want your eggs done? *Sport Education and Society* 3(2): 210–226.
- Reid J (2010) Opening address to the PENZ Conference, 5–7 July, Wellington, NZ.
- Ross B (1994) Artifice and innocence: Sport and physical education. *Journal of Physical Education New Zealand* 27(4): 11–14.
- Saunders JE, Jobling IF (1983) *Sport in Education: A Study of The Role Of Sport and Physical Activity in Queensland State Secondary Schools*. University of Queensland.

- Siedentop D (1982) Movement & sport education: Current reflections and future images. In: Howell ML and Saunders JE (eds) *VII Commonwealth and International Conference on Sport, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*. Brisbane: University of Queensland, 3–16.
- Siedentop D (1987) The theory and practice of Sport Education. In: Feingold RS, Rees CR and Pieron M (eds) *Myths, Methods and Models In Sport Pedagogy*. Champaign: Human Kinetics, 79–88.
- Siedentop D, Mand C, and Taggart A (1986) *Physical Education Teaching and Curriculum Strategies for Grades 5–12*. Palo Alto: Mayfield.
- Siedentop D, Hastie P, and Van der Mars H (2004) *Complete guide to sport education*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Smithells P (1974) *Physical Education: Principles and Philosophies*. Auckland: Hinemann Educational Books.
- Stothart R (2000) Uncomfortable bedfellows: Sport and physical education, a problematic relationship. *Journal of Physical Education New Zealand* 33(1): 40–48.
- Stothart R (2005) Nine strikes and you're out: New Zealand physical education in crisis. *Journal of Physical Education New Zealand* 38(1): 95–102.
- Talbot M (1998) Physical education: Contested positions, competing discourses - The need for renaissance? *European Physical Education Review* 4(2): 104–116.
- Thorpe R, Bunker D, and Almond L (1986) *Rethinking Games Teaching*. University of Technology: Loughborough.
- Tinning R (1995) The sport education movement: A phoenix, bandwagon or hearse for physical education? *The ACHPER Healthy Lifestyles Journal* 42(4): 19–22.
- UNESCO (1956) *The Place of Sport in Education: A Comparative Study*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Wallhead T, O'Sullivan M (2005) Sport Education: physical education for the new millennium? *Physical Education & Sport Pedagogy* 10(2): 181–210.

Biographical detail

Clive Pope is a senior lecturer in the Department of Sport and Leisure Studies in the Faculty of Education at the University of Waikato. His research interests centre on young people's experiences of physical education and sport.