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'SHAPING UP TO WOMANHOOD': A Study of the Relationship
between Gender and Girls' Physical Education in a
City-based Local Education Authority.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	
The research context	1
Outline of chapter structure	7
CHAPTER ONE FEMINIST THEORIES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING GENDER AND SCHOOLING: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE (1)	
Introduction	11
Reproduction	17
Patriarchy	22
Ideology	24
Liberal feminism	27
Radical feminist theory	32
Marxist feminist theory	43
Socialist feminist theory	49
Conclusion	54
CHAPTER TWO WOMEN IN LEISURE, SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE (2)	
Leisure - a male preserve	58
Leisure - the feminist response	63
Young women, leisure and schooling	72
The sociology of sport - a male enterprise	81
Towards a feminist analysis of sport	86
Girls Physical Education - the neglect of gender	101
CHAPTER THREE HISTORICAL CONTEXT	
Introduction	112
Girls' schooling - nineteenth century beginnings	115
Women's sport and physical activity in the nineteenth century	128
The historical development of Physical Education	136
P.E. in the post 1918 era	165
P.E. in the post war context	172
Conclusion	177
CHAPTER FOUR METHODOLOGY	
Introduction	180
Research techniques and data collection	189
The interviews	190
The case study observations	202
Conclusions	209

CHAPTER FIVE	PART I - THE LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY - SOCIAL/POLITICAL/ ECONOMIC CONTEXT	
Introduction		212
Secondary schooling in the city		213
	PART II - PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE RESEARCH LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY	
Organisation		222
Staffing		227
Facilities		238
Curriculum		245
Examinations		264
Conclusion		266
CHAPTER SIX	IMAGES OF FEMININITY: THE RESPONSES OF THE FEMALE P.E. TEACHERS	
Introduction		270
Physical ability/ capacity		271
Motherhood/ domesticity		284
Sexuality		292
Conclusion		304
CHAPTER SEVEN	IMAGES IN ACTION: THE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS	
Introduction		308
Case Study I - Heyfield School		310
Case Study II - Rosehill School		334
Case Study III - Townley School		356
Case Study IV - Archway School		372
Conclusion		386
CHAPTER EIGHT	PRIORITIES, POLICIES AND PRACTICE: MAJOR ISSUES RAISED BY THE RESEARCH	
Introduction		392
Ideologies of the physical and the politics of sexuality		393
Young women's subcultures, leisure and P.E.		410
Mixed v single sex P.E. - the implications for girls		425
Conclusions		444
CHAPTER NINE	CONCLUSION PART I - THEORY, PRACTICE AND POLITICS	
Teachers' perceptions, attitudes and ideas		450
Structural analysis		453
Historical context		466
Cultural responses and resistances		468

PART II - FUTURE POLICY, FUTURE DIRECTIONS	472
Girl- centred organisation	478
Female- only space	479
Collectivity/ confidence	481
Physicality- muscles, strength and physical power	484
Consciousness- raising	486
Future research	488
FOOTNOTES	i
APPENDIX ONE	xi
APPENDIX TWO	xv
APPENDIX THREE	xxiv
APPENDIX FOUR	xliii
BIBLIOGRAPHY	

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
APPENDIX TWO	
TABLE ONE - Staffing across the research L.E.A.	xvi
TABLE TWO - Changes in number of schools participating in P.E. activities during years one to five.	xvii
APPENDIX THREE	
TABLE ONE - Heyfield School - Timetable of curricular activities.(Year)	xxxiii
TABLE TWO - Heyfield School - Timetable of curricular activities.(Week)	xxxiv
TABLE THREE - Heyfield School - Timetable of extra-curricular activities.	xxxvi
TABLE FOUR - Rosehill School - Timetable of curricular activities.	xxxvii
TABLE FIVE - Rosehill School - Timetable of extra-curricular activities.	xxxviii
TABLE SIX - Townley School - Timetable of curricular activities.	xxxix
TABLE SEVEN - Townley School - Timetable of extra-curricular activities.	xli
TABLE EIGHT - Archway School - Timetable of curricular activities.	xlii

LIST OF FIGURES

APPENDIX TWO	
FIGURE ONE - Facilities available for P.E.	xviii
FIGURE TWO - First year P.E. activities across the L.E.A.	xix
FIGURE THREE- Second year P.E. activities across the L.E.A.	xx
FIGURE FOUR - Third year P.E. activities across the L.E.A.	xxi
FIGURE FIVE - Fourth year P.E. activities across the L.E.A.	xxii
FIGURE SIX - Fifth year P.E. activities across the L.E.A.	xxiii

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ABSTRACT

The thesis examines how images of 'femininity' and the construction of gender-appropriate behaviour are reinforced and potentially challenged by the structure, content and teaching of girls' physical education in secondary schooling. The research involves both historical and contemporary investigation. The qualitative methodology used for the contemporary research focuses on an in-depth case study of an inner city local education authority. Open-ended interviews were conducted with advisory staff, teaching staff and education committee members involved in secondary school reorganization. This was followed by close observation in four selected case study schools. The research techniques were grounded in a feminist methodology.

The historical analysis identifies gender ideologies relating to physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality which underpinned the development of girls' physical education. The contemporary research concludes that images of femininity continue to find expression in the assumptions of women physical education staff although they are specific to their particular historical

location in the 1980s. The case study observations provide evidence of the institutionalization of gender ideologies in the policies, priorities and practices of girls' physical education.

Three central issues emerge from the research: the significance of ideologies of the physical and the politics of sexuality; the relationship between young women's subcultures, leisure and physical education; the debates surrounding mixed versus single-sex organization. These issues are critically analysed in relation to relevant literature, evidence from the research material and current feminist theoretical debates.

The thesis concludes by suggesting future directions for girls' physical education and future research in related areas. The research points to the need for a feminist analysis and approach to girls' physical education in order to initiate debate and anti-sexist policy innovation and also to contribute to wider feminist theoretical analysis particularly in relation to an understanding of physicality, sexuality and patriarchal power relations.

INTRODUCTION

The Research Context

The 'equality debate' has been very much a part of British education since the 1944 Education Act. Research in the 1960s concentrated on the relationship between social class and educational achievement [Floud et al 1957; Halsey 1961; Douglas 1967]. 'Cultural deprivation' was seen to be related directly to underachievement with the Plowden Report [1967] emphasizing the need for a programme of 'compensatory education' (Education Priority Areas, Raising of the School Leaving Age, etc.). However, the recognition that in practice these policy changes were having little meaningful effect on class-linked achievement heralded the 'new sociology of education' which stressed the wider issues of class relations in British society and the links to selection of knowledge in the school curriculum [Young 1971; Whitty 1974]. In the early seventies Althusser's work furthered the debate by arguing that various institutions in our society, including the family and schooling were concerned directly with the reproduction of the social relations of production within a capitalist economic system [Althusser 1971]. These Ideological State Apparatus (I.S.A.s), he argued, function to transmit ideology and thus become agents of social and cultural reproduction [Young and Whitty 1977]. Later work [Sharpe and Green, 1975; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Young and Whitty 1977] emphasized the

structural relationships between the social organization of education and the labour requirements of capitalist production (correspondence theory). Schooling by the late 1970s was seen by critical theorists as contributing to the maintenance and reinforcement of the process of social reproduction.

Alongside these developments in the 1970s was the growing recognition that schooling as an institution also is concerned with the maintenance and reproduction of a sexually differentiated power system. Research focused on the relationship of schooling to the reproduction of the sexual division of labour [Wolpe 1977; Deem 1978, 1980; MacDonald 1981] and the reinforcement of ideologies of femininity and motherhood through overt and covert curricula [Sharpe 1976; Stanworth 1983]. Classroom studies contributed to an understanding of how schooling influences the process whereby girls (and boys) emerge from the classroom with gendered identities prepared to take their place in a sexually differentiated society [Spender and Sarah 1980; Spender 1982; Mahony 1983, 1985; Weiner 1985]. These developments and findings within feminist research reiterated the concerns of the 'new sociology of education': that schooling must be considered within the broader construct of advanced capitalist society. Feminist research argued, however, that schooling must be considered in relation to the sexual division of

labour [Wolpe 1977, 1978; Deem 1980; MacDonald 1980], male-female power relations [Spender and Sarah 1980] or the complex integration of the two [Arnot 1981].

It is significant that throughout this work physical education¹ received little attention. It is difficult to identify precisely the reasons for this neglect. One explanation could be that within many educational circles physical education remains low-status academically and may be viewed as having no obvious or significant relationship to the future world of work and the sexual division of labour. Certainly much of the feminist work on girls' schooling has little direct knowledge of or involvement with P.E. and few feminist educationalists have a specific background in this area². In addition, research on teachers' attitudes shows that a large percentage of P.E. teachers are unsympathetic towards the notion of equality of opportunity in education [Pratt 1985]. Indeed, lack of physical educationalists researching in the areas of gender differentiation or sex discrimination is demonstrated by the fact that at the onset of the research there had been no major specialist publications on equal opportunities, gender and P.E.³.

Thus, this thesis developed out of a recognition that the area of gender⁴ and girls' physical education was under-researched. This left an identifiable gap in the

literature on gender and schooling. Furthermore, the research developed from a position which suggested that research on girls' P.E. and gender not only would fill this gap in the literature but also should contribute to the broader debates in feminist theory. P.E. is concerned fundamentally with many aspects of physical activity, including sport. At the onset of the research the area of 'the physical' and the relationship of gender to sport had been ignored in feminist work³. It was proposed, therefore, that research into gender and girls' P.E. potentially could contribute both to a feminist understanding of girls' schooling and, also, to theoretical debates concerned with male-female power relations in broader society.

The identification of the research topic as being one of significance in its potential to contribute to knowledge in the fields of education and feminist theory did not arise solely out of academic concerns. Three factors personal to the researcher provided a major impetus for the research investigation. First, I had trained as a P.E. teacher in a specialist teacher training college in the late 1960s and, subsequently, had taught P.E. in a city comprehensive school and as head of department in a sixth form college. My considerable experience as a pupil of P.E. in a school, a student at college and as a teacher in secondary schooling led me to question many aspects of my teaching. While at the sixth form college

I became interested in the following questions: Why do many girls opt out of physical activities/sport? Why do girls tend to select 'gender-appropriate' activities? How do my own expectations of 'femininity' influence my teaching? What were my aims for girls' P.E., and were they appropriate? Why do some girls with positive reinforcement and encouragement become involved and 'successful' in less gender stereotypical activities such as rock climbing, mountaineering, canoeing? What influence did I have as a positive role model? etc. These questions were reaffirmed by a second factor which influenced my choice of research project - a developing feminist consciousness and commitment. My increasing awareness of feminist literature and debates encouraged a critical self-questioning both of my practice as a P.E. teacher and my understanding of the importance of the social construction of gender and the implications of expectations of femininity for the structure, content and teaching of girls' P.E. Finally, I became aware that feminist politics appeared in conflict with my personal involvement in physical activity and sport. Many aspects of sporting activity seemed to be viewed as negative and contributing directly to the construction of a masculinity emphasizing male control, dominance, aggression and competition. There was restricted space for feminist women in this world of male dominance and 'macho' values. Yet I had been involved in sport and physical activity at a variety of competitive and

recreational levels since childhood. My own experiences suggested that sport for women also could have a liberating potential. Certainly, I felt that it had contributed many positive and enjoyable experiences to my development as a woman, teacher, partner, etc. Therefore, there was a need to question whether, or how, girls' P.E. contributed to and reinforced ideologies of gender (as identified in feminist research into other curriculum areas) and also whether P.E. could provide a liberating platform for the challenge to gender relations. It was decided that the focus would be on girls' P.E. not only because of the personal experiences of the researcher but also because girls' P.E. is a distinct and separate curriculum area in most secondary schools.⁶ The decision to focus on secondary schooling again reflected the experiences of the researcher. However, it was also felt that the period of schooling encompassing adolescence is a crucial time for the construction of gender. The period when childhood femininity uneasily approaches the expectations of adult womanhood. It does not deny that primary schooling is a significant influence on the construction and reinforcement of gender-appropriate behaviour but that primary P.E. should be the focus of future research [Clarricoates 1980; Whyte 1983].

The aim of this research project, therefore, is to examine how images of 'femininity' and the construction

of gender-appropriate behaviour are reinforced or challenged by the structure, content and teaching of girls' P.E. in secondary schools. The research developed out of personal commitment, experience and interest in the field of study and the identification of an academic area of work which would contribute knowledge to an under-researched, neglected but important area of understanding, both for gender and schooling and the broader feminist theoretical debates around male-female power relations. The following chapter breakdown introduces the main stages of the research and follows, broadly, the way that the research developed.

Outline of Chapter Structure

Chapters One and Two provide a comprehensive overview of the relevant literature in the field of study. Chapter One develops the theoretical framework to the research, focusing on key concepts central to the project - reproduction, patriarchy, ideology - and providing an overview of the main feminist theories and their application to the study of gender and schooling. Chapter Two identifies three key areas of literature which provide a necessary background to the research. Literature relating to leisure, sport and physical education is critically overviewed. In each area the dominance of male academics and male approaches to the field is identified, with the recent research and

writing centralizing women and leisure, sport and P.E., receiving analytical attention.

Chapter Three is important in providing the historical context for the research project. Using primary and secondary sources the chapter traces the historical development of girls' P.E. from the middle class girls' schools of the mid-nineteenth century to the current contemporary situation. As this chapter can provide only an historical overview, the period from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century receives most attention, for it is here that the roots, foundations and traditions of girls' P.E., as a separate curricular subject, are laid. The chapter identifies and discusses ideologies of physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality which are seen to have become institutionalized in the teaching and content of P.E. throughout its development.

Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven deal primarily with the contemporary research material in the Case Study of one inner city local education authority. Chapter Four discusses the methodology selected and the methods used for data collection. It provides a thorough justification for the use of qualitative techniques grounded in a feminist methodology. The main methods of research used in the project were interviewing across the L.E.A. and observation in four case-study schools.

These methods are described in detail. Chapter Five provides an introduction to the research local education authority. Part I discusses the social, political and economic context of the research authority with Part II providing an introduction to the teaching of P.E. across the city. The responses of the P.E. teachers gathered from the interview material are analyzed and discussed in Chapter Six. Images and ideas relating to femininity, as identified in the historical section (Chapter Three) - physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity, sexuality, - are analyzed to find whether similar gender assumptions continue to underpin the teaching of female P.E. staff. In order to determine whether images and ideas have become institutionalized in the practice of P.E., Chapter Seven provides details of the school P.E. programmes observed in the four case study schools. These are discussed in relation to organization, staffing, facilities, aims and objectives and curriculum content. Issues relating to gender are identified across the four schools and these form the basis for the analysis of Chapter Eight.

Chapter Eight focuses on three major areas concerning the relationship between gender and girls' P.E. These issues emerge from the historical and contemporary material - ideologies of the physical and the politics of sexuality; young women's sub-cultures, leisure and P.E.; the debates surrounding mixed versus single-sex

P.E. and the implications of organizational change for girls' experiences.

Chapter Nine concludes by considering the theoretical and political implications of the research. Part I focuses on the theoretical debates emerging from the research and discusses the contribution of the research not only to an increased understanding of gender as a central construct of girls' P.E. but also to how a feminist analysis of girls' P.E. can contribute to wider feminist theoretical debates. Part II looks forward to the practical implications of the research for future P.E. practice. Included in the discussion are recommendations for future research projects in associated areas.

CHAPTER ONE

FEMINIST THEORIES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS
FOR UNDERSTANDING GENDER AND SCHOOLING:
A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE (1)

Introduction

Class divisions within British society have been emphasized for many decades within sociological analysis. However it is only with the resurgence of a strong and committed feminist movement over the past two decades that issues relating to gender inequalities have received analytical and political attention. From the consciousness raising groups of the mid 1970s through to the political campaigns around abortion, childcare and violence against women, women have attempted to place their experiences and positions at the centre of theoretical analysis and political action. This has been extended to the development of intense theoretical debates geared to historical, political and economic analyses of women's positions. Importantly, women have developed theoretical frameworks around women's practice, claiming that theory can inform practice just as practice must be the cornerstone of theory. Roberts [1981: 15] asserts that feminism is 'in the first place an attempt to insist upon the experience and very existence of women'. Within this framework a 'feminist position' can be identified which is shared by different theoretical perspectives. Smith [1977] suggests that these are three central premises in the development of a feminist analysis:

One is that a feminist takes the
standpoint of women.... we begin with

ourselves, with our sense of what we are, our own experience. The second is that we oppose women's oppression.... And the third thing is the recognition of sisterhood.

'Sisterhood' suggests a shared experience of oppression which is based on being a woman. This shared experience, however, is felt at different levels of intensity within specific situations.¹ While acknowledging these three fundamental aspects of a feminist position it is at this point that feminists diverge. Critical questions relating to the primary source of women's oppression result in several strands of feminist theory giving primacy to different factors. Acker [1983] makes a useful distinction between 'implementary' approaches and 'fundamental' approaches. Acker [1984: 66] suggests that 'implementary' approaches:

do not address questions about the underlying reasons for the domination/subordination patterns; instead, they ask how individuals in a given culture go about learning and perpetuating such arrangements.

These approaches tend to be categorized as 'liberal', 'equal opportunities' feminism and are concerned with issues around socialization and the challenging of discriminatory practices. 'Fundamental approaches' differ in that they

seek basic, universal explanations: they ask what features of human nature or social organization require or demand

that women be subordinate.

[Acker *ibid.*:68]²

At the heart of these approaches is the recognition of a power structure whereby women are placed in a subordinate position. These approaches can be further subdivided into those that identify class divisions and the economic structure of advanced capitalism as the primary source of women's oppression (Marxist feminists), those that place patriarchal power relations centrally (Radical feminists) and those that combine class-sex issues in an attempt to integrate or accommodate both capitalism and patriarchy within their analysis (Socialist feminists). These major categories of liberal, radical, Marxist and socialist feminist perspectives are considered in more detail in this chapter. Having identified these areas of analysis, however, it is important to acknowledge that these perspectives are internally fragmented to form more specific positions as responses to specific issues.³

The area of work 'gender and physical education' is concerned with women's experience within the schooling system. The relationship of schooling to wider society received critical attention through the radical developments within the 'new' sociology of education of the early 1970s. [Young 1971]⁴. The failure of the post war liberal, social democratic attempts to create a 'fairer' society through equal opportunity educational

policies of access and compensatory education, led to more radical theorizing about education and its relationship to society. The 'new' sociology of education was characterized by its application of phenomenology to schooling and drew attention to the organization and content of knowledge and curricula with an attempt to explain these areas through an understanding of the power relations between classes in wider society.⁵ From these 'radical' beginnings developed an ethnographic approach to research which centred on classroom interaction and concentrated on the 'lived experiences' of teachers and pupils [Gorbutt 1972].⁶ This provided an optimistic approach to social change for it assumed this could be brought about through the identification of problems in the everyday content and organization of the school and that ultimately educational change would provide for a more 'equal' society. Critics of this position [e.g. Whitty 1977] argued that:

... many of these studies about the minutiae of classroom interaction, or analyses of the assumptions underlying prevailing definitions of curricular knowledge, seem to present education as being carried on in a social vacuum, and whilst they often tell us a great deal about 'how' schools perpetuate social inequalities, their failure to discuss 'why' this may be so helps to obscure the difficulties of change. In other words, while the sociology of education has increasingly focused upon 'cultural' aspects of schooling it has failed to locate them in their broader historical and political contexts.

This latter point encouraged a third approach within the sociology of education which sought specifically to explain schooling in relation to the economic structures of society within a broader political context. This 'political economy' approach drew directly from Althusser's [1971] view of school as an Ideological State Apparatus which functions to reproduce both the means and forces of production and their existing relationships.⁷ In this analysis the educational system thus functions to reproduce and sustain class relations and the division of labour necessary for the capitalist mode of production. The critics of this approach argued that it provided an overly-deterministic explanation which ignored the possibilities of agency and struggle and was ahistorical in its analysis [see Erben and Gleesan 1977; Johnston 1981].

These developments within the sociology of education heralded a more radical approach to theorizing the relationship between schooling and society and ultimately led to the recognition, by some working in the field, of the centrality of the state to any theory attempting to explain schooling within society.⁸ However, within each paradigm the concern for inequalities, both within education and their 'determining' or 'determined' relationship⁹ to wider society, remained firmly around issues of class. Race

and gender remained absent or, at best, marginalized. Consequently the 'new' wave of feminism which had developed from the 1960s, by the 1970s, created a feminist questioning of girls' position within schooling. Gender inequalities began to be analysed for the first time within a critical framework¹⁰ and just as radical theories were developed in an attempt to explain and understand class inequalities so 'new' feminist theories around girls' schooling emerged. In many ways their development paralleled the developments of the 'new' sociology of education, ethnography and the 'political-economy' approaches. Certainly many of the educationalists who began to address the problem of gender and schooling were 'living through' and part of the radical debates around explanations for class inequalities. Consequently 'liberal feminists' [e.g. Byrne 1978, Delamont 1976] reiterated the concern for 'micro' analysis and classroom interaction studies and Marxist feminists [e.g. Deem 1978, Wolpe 1976] attempted to incorporate gender within a structural analysis of the political-economic determinants of advanced capitalism. One further major strand of theory, radical feminism, insisted on an analysis of male-female power relations with 'patriarchy' as central within its analysis. Spender [1982: 37] argued:

Sexism is no bias which can be eliminated but the foundation stone of learning and education in our male controlled society. It is one of the means whereby males have

perpetuated male supremacy and control and we must explicitly acknowledge what it is that we are doing when we expose these practices and their purposes. What we are doing is challenging male control at a fundamental level.

Within this perspective 'patriarchy', not economic class, was the central explanatory factor in relation to gender divisions.

Before considering radical feminist analysis in more detail alongside the liberal, Marxist and socialist perspectives it is important first to clarify and consider certain key concepts which have emerged as central to the discussion. These concepts - reproduction, patriarchy and ideology - have been selected as worthy of discussion and definition, for they are used as explanatory frameworks in varying degrees within feminist analyses of gender division. However all three are complex and have received considerable attention in recent academic study.¹¹ The following discussion is intended as a pointer to the complexities involved and an indicator as to where more detailed consideration can be found.

Reproduction

In using the concept of 'reproduction' it is important to distinguish between the biological reproduction of the species and social reproduction - which has been

defined as 'the need of any social formation to reproduce its own conditions of production' [Barrett 1980 :20]. Biological reproduction is of particular interest when considering the divisions between men and women, for one major strand of thought situates these differences within biological explanations. This explanation is not critical of sexual divisions as socially constructed and, therefore, cannot be defined as a feminist position.¹² It retains considerable support on the fundamental assertion of the assumed 'naturalness' of such divisions.¹³ The major argument is that the primary biological function of 'women' is childbearing and from this her social role evolves 'naturally'. Women are biologically reproduced to provide comfort, loving, support for their offsprings. Thus social characteristics and behaviour are explained in terms of biological determinants. However, critics of this position argue that it is a major jump to explain women's subordinate position in the labour process, family relationships and domesticity, as being the result of biological difference. This reductionist argument is seen to simplify and reduce complex social relationships to a biological base without providing a satisfactory link between the two. This criticism is supported by cross-cultural anthropological studies which provide evidence that makes it difficult to sustain such a reductionist position¹⁴ [Mead 1962].

In recognizing the difficulty of using a theory of biological reproduction to explain what is the social construction of differences between men and women the usage of the terms 'sex' and 'gender' needs clarification. Throughout sociological literature both terms are used interchangeably, often with no clear distinction in their useage.¹⁸ Oakley [1972] offers the most commonly accepted definitions whereby 'sex' refers to the biological aspects of being female or male and 'gender' as the social/cultural/psychological constructions of femininity and masculinity. Using this definition it is also acknowledged that 'gender' is not constant and can vary across cultures, throughout history and even during the lifecycle of an individual [Deem 1982].

Social reproduction theories are no less controversial. Willis [1981: 49] defines social reproduction as:

the replacement of that relationship between the classes (i.e. not the classes themselves) which is necessary for the continuance of the capitalist mode of production.

The title of his article 'Cultural Production is different from Cultural Reproduction is different from Social Reproduction is different from Reproduction' identifies his main concern around theories of reproduction which he expands throughout the article in a rather complex and at times obscure manner. However

his main thesis is helpful, for it considers specifically the school as the main site on which theories of social reproduction focus. He stresses the much voiced criticisms of the Althusserian theory of social reproduction¹⁶ which is seen to be functionalist and lacking in any understanding of contestation and struggle from the working-class¹⁷. In relation to schooling Willis [ibid.: 53] argues that such a theory of social reproduction:

... omits consciousness and culture as constitutive moments of social process and treats human action, apparently, as the consequence of quite inhuman and separate 'structures'. Thus the analysis is unable to comprehend the massive and currently evident "misfits" between the economy and education and finds it unnecessary to commit itself to a real analysis of what happens in schools in the variety of forms in which educational messages are decoded in particular student groups.

This criticism centres particularly on the 'correspondence' theories of Bowles and Gintis.¹⁸ This work has provided an important and influential empirical contribution to the debate which has formed a framework for the development of critical analysis. However the neglect of agency and resistance creates weaknesses that Willis attempts to fill by a broader consideration of Cultural¹⁹ Production and Cultural Reproduction. He draws on work by Bernstein [1972; 1975] and Bourdieu [1977], which he acknowledges as providing a vital move forward from the Althusserian position, but argues that

their emphasis on the cultural reproduction of the dominating class does little to enhance a true understanding of agency and resistance. The trap of determinism remains within their work. This led Willis [ibid.: 55] to argue:

It is only,...., in a material notion of Cultural Production and Reproduction amongst "the powerful" working through the contradictions of a mode of production in a struggle with the Cultural Production and Reproduction of the "powerless" that we can reach the notion of structured and durable social relations of power at all. The problem with Reproduction theories of various sorts we have looked at is that by articulating the analysis of Social Reproduction or even Reproduction in general, they have collapsed notions of, or implied highly mechanistic notions of, Cultural Production and Reproduction. Social Reproduction (or more precisely, one version of it) proceeds through Cultural Reproduction, proceeds through Cultural Production.

The value of Willis' work in this area is that he highlights the complexities of reproduction theories and attempts to provide a more useful understanding by separating out specific forms of reproduction rather than relying on a "catch-all" generalized notion of social reproduction. This is an important advancement in the work. However the issue of 'reproduction' is even less clear for feminists attempting to utilize the concept for an analysis of gender relations. Feminists involved in this area have applied mainly the Althusserian concept of social reproduction [Barrett

1980]. This has involved either incorporating gender within a class analysis [Secombe, 1974; Zaretsky 1976] or adding it on to provide a dual explanation [Cockburn 1983; Hartmann 1981]. This has introduced the complex issue of the relationship between sex and class in the attempt to find a core explanation for women's oppression. This central concern for socialist feminists has provided much debate in the 1980s. This will be considered in more detail later in the chapter in the section dealing with socialist feminist theory. The question as to whether the theories of reproduction used to understand class inequalities can be used to explain gender inequalities remains debatable. What is apparent is that not only is "reproduction" a complex concept but that in attempting to relate it to gender divisions the use of the concepts patriarchy and ideology must be addressed also.

Patriarchy

In any consideration of gender relations the concept of patriarchy is crucial. It is used extensively within feminist analysis but is by no means a straightforward concept. Beechey [1979] recognizes the complexities of the concept considering it neither 'single or simple'. This same word has been used to explain men's power to exchange women in kinship groups [Mitchell 1974]; men's control over women's reproductive capacities (e.g.

Firestone [1971]) and the more literal meaning taken up by Weber [1947] of the power of the father within a particular form of household organization. Kate Millet [1971: 24-25] uses 'patriarchy' as an all-pervasive system of male power and domination:

Groups who rule by birthright are fast disappearing, yet there remains one ancient and universal system for the domination of one birth group by another - the scheme that prevails in the area of sex.... The fact is evident at once if one recalls that the military, industry, technology, universities, science, political office, and finance - in short, every avenue of power within the society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands.

The emphasis within this definition is on the universality of patriarchy and the need for a 'sexual revolution' if women are to achieve equality.

Within a general use of the term there is some agreement that it is synonymous in some way with the 'subordination of women' [Delphy 1985: 17]. Delphy poses an important question when she says:

.... I consider the oppression of women to be a system. But the question is, what constitutes the system and how does it function?

Patriarchy as a system of the subordination of women to men, for Delphy, contains the important qualification that it exists in 'contemporary industrial societies'

She rejects a definition which cuts across time and is dependent on historical analysis (this is in contrast to Rowbotham [1979] who sees the need for a new historical approach to the issues). For Delphy it is an independent system of domination that exists 'here and now'. Of course this then raises the thorny relationship between gender and class yet again, for whereas some feminists (e.g. Millet, Delphy etc) consider patriarchy to be independent and central within their analysis of women's oppression, others argue for the incorporation of patriarchy within capitalism giving capitalist patriarchy [Eisenstein 1978; Sargent ed. 1981]. These issues will be taken up in more detail later in the chapter.

What becomes clear is that 'patriarchy' cannot be read as meaning the same for all those concerned with theorising women's position in society.²⁰

Ideology

As with the previous two concepts the question of ideology is complex and has received a good deal of attention.²¹ Cockburn [1983: 205] suggests that it is all too often believed that the 'problem of women in society is one that can be put down to ideas.' 'Attitudes', 'chauvinism', 'prejudice' are used to

explain why women remain subordinate to men. While it is clear that 'ideas about women' do exist, it remains also the case that to change ideas and attitudes at the level of the personal is not sufficient to equalize the power relationship between women and men. There needs to be a more developed understanding of 'ideology' and, for many feminists, an understanding of the complex set of material circumstances underlying ideologies. Hall [1981: 34] states:

.... ideas come in chains or clusters - sets of interconnecting propositions. And when they belong to well-defined chains, and define situations in terms of whole complex views or 'philosophies' we call them not just ideas, but ideologies.

.... Ideologies are sets of ideas, concepts, images and propositions which we use to represent to ourselves - and thus to make sense of - how society works and what our relationship to it is.

It is in the practices of state institutions, however - the political management of everyday life - that images or reputations, so apparent in common-sense assumptions, or media constructions, become institutionalized as ideologies or as part of discourses. Although subject to social or political changes and to the broader conflicts inherent in an advanced capitalist economy, ideologies such as 'patriotism', 'authority', 'discipline', 'gender', 'race', are not only effective forms of value transmission but also provide a consistency through time and across generations. In that sense they are "durable

and consistent as well as being fluid and reflexive" [Scraton 1985: 8]. The institutionalization of ideologies helps to make them effective in practice, which reinforces their 'naturalness'.

Different theoretical positions use the concept of ideology in different ways, particularly in relation to the identification of material circumstances from which they arise and upon which also they bear [Cockburn 1983: 205]. Ideologies not only interpret the material world, they also influence it. A difference in theoretical position stems from the centrality attached to ideology and the importance placed on a definition of the material. For example Marxist feminists emphasize gender ideologies but, in the final instance they would explain gender divisions as primarily stemming from an economic base. In contrast Mahony [1985] also identifies a material base but one of patriarchy. She recognizes that women's oppression exists in very real material circumstances e.g. rape and male violence. However, her position identifies the material base in relation to patriarchy as not only control of women's access to production and biological reproduction, but also the male control of women's sexuality. She argues forcibly:

The construction of male identity and in particular the social construction of male sexuality is crucial in the maintenance of male power.

[Mahony 1985: 70]

These differences will be discussed in more detail in the next section. However, throughout much of the literature 'gender ideology' is used to identify ideas, images and attitudes held about and internalized by women (or men) which are taken-for-granted and have material consequences, be they situated within an analysis of the capitalist mode of production or of patriarchy. It is the institutions and organizations of society e.g. schooling, which support and disseminate ideologies and are powerful in their maintenance and reproduction.

It is necessary now to consider in some detail the various feminist perspectives which have emerged and developed to explain and understand women's position in contemporary society. Liberal, radical, Marxist and socialist perspectives and their internal debates are considered both within their broader constructs and more specifically in relation to schooling.

Liberal Feminism

Eisenstein [1981: 343] states:

When I use the term liberal feminist, I mean that body of contemporary theory which shares the belief in the supremacy of the individual and the correlate

concerns with individual freedom and choice.

The primary characteristic of liberal feminism is the emphasis on 'equal opportunities' and 'women's rights'. It is not seen as a power structure which prevents women gaining equality with men but the presence of the social practices of discrimination and socialization. Within this framework there is room for much optimism, for if discriminatory laws are challenged and changed, socialization practices altered and consciousness at an individual level raised, then women will gain the equality that they seek.

The forerunners of this 'reformist' feminism ²² gave birth to the new wave of feminism in the 1960s: Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan and Germaine Greer²³.

Friedan [1963:13] spoke for many middle class women when she described 'the problem that has no name'. She wrote:

The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the United States. Each suburban wife struggled with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night, she was afraid to ask even to herself the silent question: 'is this all?'

The major breakthrough was the identification of a 'problem' relating to women's position. However the analysis remained at the recognition of oppression without further questioning the roots of oppression. For Friedan the answer for women remained at an individual level. Liberation would be achieved by gaining personal identity through taking on more tasks whether through paid or unpaid work. Women were seen to control their own destiny and as Kroneman [1981: 218] concludes

Liberation is thus about woman changing herself; the relationships within the family, of women's biology to social forces, of their oppression to the nature of capitalism, remain unquestioned.

This liberal perspective remains prevalent within work on gender and schooling. The central feature is the recognition of gender inequalities within the schooling system with change considered possible through reformist policies. Byrne [1974, 1975] draws attention to gender differentiation in education emphasizing unequal distribution of resources and the declining number of women in senior teaching posts. Similarly the D.E.S. Education Survey [1975] identifies differences in the curriculum for boys and girls beginning from seven years of age and becoming quite distinct by secondary schooling [Deem 1978: 63]. Studies of examination subjects indicate a clear trend towards the demarcation of subjects according to sex with girls tending to take

arts subjects and boys the science, mathematics and technical options [D.E.S. Statistics 1980] These facts lead several researchers to question 'why are there so few women scientists and engineers?' [Blackstone and Einrech-Haste 1980: 383]²⁴ and ultimately to the instigation of action research projects such as the 'Girls into Science and Technology Project' (G.I.S.T.) based in Greater Manchester Schools. [Kelly et al 1982]. These developed throughout the 1970s and 1980s a wealth of literature specifically aimed at identifying gender differentiation in schooling²⁵. Some of this drew on interactionist research which provided in-depth observation of organization, content and classroom practice relating to gender [e.g. Buswell 1981; Delamont 1980; Hartley 1980; Stanworth 1981]. Socialization theories were utilized in an attempt to understand how schools contributed to the socialization of girls towards traditional 'femininity'. Work by Belotti [1975], Sharpe [1975], Delamont [1980] described the process whereby girls typically are socialized into traits which restrict their vocational and career choice. The titles 'Learning to Lose' [Spender and Sarah 1980] and 'Just Like a Girl' [Sharpe 1975] sum up the process so accurately described by this literature. The major emphasis throughout is the identification of discriminatory practices which disadvantage girls and young women in schooling. As Acker [1984: 72] explains, just as with the broader liberal feminist perspective:

it does not matter so much why women are subordinate as what we do about it. Opportunities must be increased, discrimination fought, stereotyping abandoned.

There remains throughout an optimism for change, for the problem is located within education or the legal system concerned with rights and laws, thus the solution can be found through educational and/or legal reform. Byrne [1978: 258-9] epitomizes this approach in her recommendations for change and her final optimism. She suggests:

Research into the factors of conditioning which affect girls and boys in different kinds of schools; experimental work in non-sexist teaching materials; in-service training and re-education programmes - these are for both national bodies and local education authorities.... A quintessential characteristic of the education service at its best, is that the word impossible does not figure in our vocabulary. With the future lives of children and the country's economic and social future in our hands, there can be no room for failure; only if necessary, prolongation of the fight.

However this optimism is not shared by all feminists involved in schooling, for critics of this perspective argue for the need to explore the roots of women's oppression. Reform at the micro level of individual teachers, schools or even local education authorities may provide immediate benefit for those involved but will fail to produce long-term solutions for it neglects

the broader structural relations of patriarchy or capitalism and takes no account of changes needed in other institutions. As Weiner [1985: 8] explains:

The principal aim of this equal opportunities approach was to encourage girls and women to move into privileged and senior positions in existing educational institutions rather than to seek any fundamental changes in schooling. To liberalize access to an inadequate system might be acceptable in the short term but for more permanent change a major restructuring of all social institutions, including schools, is needed.

These latter concerns are central also to the radical feminist perspective.

Radical Feminist Theory

Radical feminists are unified in their concentration on the relations between men and women as fundamental to the oppression of women [Smith 1980]. They utilize the concept of 'patriarchy' to help explain the system of oppression, whereby men dominate women in a complex arena of power relations [Kroneman 1981]. It is this notion of patriarchal power relations which places radical feminist theory in a much more critical framework than that employed in the liberal feminist stance "discussed previously. Millet [1971: 25] draws attention to the importance of patriarchy in explaining women's oppression emphasizing men's control of

society's basic institutions with their dominance expressed through ideology, socialization, psychology and direct force. "Patriarchy's chief institution is the family" [p33], Millet concludes, which educates women into their roles, status and temperament.

Writing at the same time, Shulamith Firestone [1971] also places the family centrally within her analysis of patriarchy. However she emphasizes male domination of women's reproductive capacities as the primary issue. For women to free themselves they must take control of their own fertility through the revolutionizing of reproductive technology.

The critics of these early radical feminist theories concentrate on a number of issues. First, Millet is criticised for describing the elements of patriarchy e.g. social, institutional, psychological without analysing their inter-relationships [Kroneman 1981]. Furthermore, the pervasiveness afforded to patriarchy, with its trans-historical universality, leaves little practical basis for action and change [Barrett 1980; Beechey 1979]. As Rowbotham [1979] argues, this notion of patriarchy:

... implies a structure which is fixed rather than the kaleidoscope of forms within which women and men have encountered one another. It does not carry any notion of how women might act to transform their situation as sex.....

'Patriarchy' suggests a fatalistic submission which allows no space for the complexities of women's defiance.

Firestone [1971] stresses also the universality of patriarchy seeing women as an oppressed "class" cutting across economic class. Her solution, via the neutralization and control of biological reproduction, slides dangerously towards the biological reductionist arguments discussed previously. If the roots of women's oppression are in their biology then this can be fitted neatly into an argument that sees women's oppression and subordination as "natural" and therefore inevitable. For reasons cited earlier this argument cannot satisfactorily explain how and why men originally acquired such control over women's fertility [Barrett 1980].

However the strengths of these early radical feminist perspectives are in their emphases on the experiences of oppression and the recognition of the family as important in explaining women's subordination. Christine Delphy's work, most clearly expounded in her paper The Main Enemy [1977] and developed in her later work [Delphy 1984] concentrates also on the family but rejects biologicistic arguments. As she later states:

... an important part of my work is devoted to denouncing explicitly naturalistic approaches; to denouncing approaches which seek a natural explanation for a social fact, and why I

want to dislodge all approaches which implicitly bear the stamp of this reductionism.

[Delphy 1984: 24]

Delphy [1977] stresses social rather than biological relations and attempts to develop a materialistic analysis of women's oppression²⁶. The material basis of women's subordination centres on the unpaid labour of women within the home.

There are two modes of production in our society. Most goods are produced in the industrial mode. Domestic services, child-rearing and certain other goods are produced in the family mode. The first mode of production gives rise to capitalist exploitation. The second gives rise to familial, or more precisely, patriarchal exploitation.

[Delphy 1977: 24]

For Delphy, patriarchal exploitation cuts across class relations and is centred in a domestic mode of production. Whereas the wage labourer depends on the labour market, the married woman depends on one individual - her husband. Married women are subject to particular relations of exploitation whereby a husband appropriates unpaid labour from his wife within the institution of marriage. The material basis of women's oppression does not lie in capitalist but in patriarchal relations of production.

Critics of Delphy's work argue that she identifies two

separate sites of production, the domestic and the industrial. The domestic mode of production is assigned analytical independence from the capitalist mode of production and there is no systematic consideration of the relations between them [Barrett and MacIntosh 1979]. Economic class differences are minimized, for Delphy argues that:

Since less than 10 per cent of all women over 25 have never been married in developed societies, chances are high that women will be married at some point in their lives. Thus effectively all women are destined to participate in these relations of production. As a group which is subjected to this relation of production, they constitute a class; as a category of human beings who are destined by both to become members of this class they constitute a caste. The appropriation of their labour within marriage constitutes the oppression common to all women. Destined as women to become 'the wife of' someone and thus destined for the same relations of production, women constitute one class.

[Delphy 1977: 50]

For Delphy, women constitute a class within a male-female power system. However Marxist feminists argue that this negates the real differences due to economic class that exist between women [Barrett 1980].

The scope of this chapter does not allow for more than an introduction to the main perspectives adopted by radical feminists. What is clear is that the work of Millet and Firestone, within the new wave of feminism of

the late 1960's, created a critical approach to the theoretical use of 'patriarchy'. It must be stressed that there is no single radical theory. Later expressions of radical theory look towards more revolutionary strategies and the need for separatist-lesbian feminism. Jeffries [1977] sums up the 'revolutionary feminist position' by seeing the need:

to wrest power from the ruling group and to end their domination. It requires the identification of the ruling group, its power base, its methods of control, its interests, its historical development, its weaknesses and the best methods to destroy its power...

[cited in Coote and Campbell 1982: 30]

Jeffreys leaves no doubt that the 'ruling group' is men and the ultimate aim is to destroy the power of men. Men are seen as 'the enemy' thus the logic of this position points towards separatist feminism.²⁷

The importance of this work is the emphasis on male control of women's sexuality. Revolutionary feminist analyses move beyond male control over biological reproduction and women's access to production and stress that:

...it is the social construction of masculinity or social maleness, central to which is the construction of a particular form of male sexuality, which contributes to the continued oppression of women to the material benefit of men.

[Mahony 1985: 71]

Coveney et al [1984] emphasize the ways that male sexuality (heterosexuality) functions to control women. They cite restrictions on space, work, leisure and definition of appearance as important instances where male sexuality is exercised as a form of control²⁰. They conclude that the:

effect is to undermine our confidence and reinforce our inferior status, to alienate us from our bodies and to induce a timid and careful response to men. At a more general level the exercise of male sexuality helps to structure and maintain our subordination to men...

[Coveney et al. ibid.: 19]

Throughout all the radical feminist theories the point of commonality is the primacy given to patriarchy and the emphasis on oppression specific to a system of power relations between men and women. The family is identified as a key institution whereby women are deprived of control over their sexuality, their bodies as bearers of children and their domestic labour [Smith 1980].

Radical feminists involved in schooling have attempted to place girls' schooling within this theoretical framework. In their introduction to 'Learning to Lose' Spender and Sarah [1980: 1] explain their dissatisfaction with liberal feminist theory:

As a feminist study group interested in the theory and practice of education we were convinced that the aim of removing sexism from the curriculum, while desirable, was in itself, inadequate. We believed that if every possible recommendation for the avoidance of sexism in education were to be carried out by the letter, the position of women would not necessarily change.

This identifies their contrasting position to Byrne [1978] discussed previously. Whilst accepting the desirability of reform they do not share Byrne's optimism that such reforms will necessarily produce fundamental change in women's position. They identify power relations between men and women as the fundamental explanation for women's oppression and explain that inequalities have been constructed during the development of education as 'models of education were encoded by a select group of males (white, upper and middle-class)' [ibid. : 11]. Consequently schools today are seen to play a significant role in constructing male supremacy and in perpetuating male dominance and control [Spender 1982]. As Mahony [1985: 74] explains with clarity, the 'problem' girls experience in schooling -

... is not girls or 'the system' or capitalism but what I have called, for want of a better expression, 'social maleness'²⁹

Literature identifying the 'social maleness' of

schooling has concentrated on various factors including the control and definition of what constitutes "knowledge" [Spender 1982] and classroom interaction studies in mixed-group settings [Sarah 1980; Stanworth 1981; Clarricoates 1982; Spender 1982; Mahony 1983; 1985]. Smith [1978] identifies the male construction of knowledge which is discussed in more detail by Spender [1982: 18]:

When we examine what is presented to us as our cultural heritage and traditions, there can be no disagreement about the role played by women within it, for they are simply not there. It is their very absence from the record that is so obvious.... That these women are not mentioned within our own education does not prove to us that they do not exist, instead it begins to suggest there is something wrong with our education and the knowledge that is transmitted within it.

The identification of the 'maleness' of knowledge continues throughout many subject areas; science and biology [Kelly 1985]; history [Rowbotham 1975]; language [Spender 1980]; mathematics [Burton 1986] etc. Similarly classroom interaction studies identify the dominance of boys in classroom practice. Boys are seen to monopolize teacher attention [Clarricoates 1978; Spender 1982], linguistic space [Spender 1978] Gubb 1980; Harrocks 1984] and physical space [Mahony 1985]. Furthermore, teachers are shown to have different attitudes towards girls' work [Stanworth 1981; Clarricoates 1978, 1980] and frequently use girls'

appearance and sexuality for disciplinary purposes [Davies 1979; Llewelyn 1980; Griffin 1985].

This work is an important contribution for it has emphasized the 'social maleness' of classroom knowledge and practice. However, it must be acknowledged that, much of this research is small-scale and specific to one or two establishments (i.e. ethnographic). In agreement with Acker [1985] it must be recognized, also, that there are no clear means of identifying to what extent girls and young women internalize and believe the messages that are transmitted in the classroom. Care must be taken not to accept girls and young women as passive recipients of their "inferiority".

The work of radical feminists in education, by using a theoretical framework which places patriarchy and male-female power relations as central to their analysis, have identified a male establishment and power structure as the primary oppressor of girls and young women in schooling [Rich 1980]. Their recipe for change, therefore, involves a total restructuring of schooling placing women's history, knowledge and experience at the centre of the curriculum [Spender 1982, 1981; Beecham 1983]. This is a radical change involving far more than educational reform. As Spender [1982: 37] states:

What we need to appreciate is that the problem of sexism and education will not be overcome by inserting some positive images of women in the curriculum, by appointing a few more women to senior posts or even by encouraging girls to stay longer at school and reach the relatively higher standards of their brothers so that they no longer 'underachieve'... Sexism is no bias which can be eliminated but the foundation stone of learning and education in our male controlled society.

An initial step towards this change must involve 'girl-centred organization' [Weiner 1985: 11]³⁰. Mahony [1985] maintains that it is the relationship between men and women that has to be changed if women are to move out of an oppressed situation. The implication for girls' schooling is that:

co-education as things stand is not more socially desirable for girls because it is more normal. Rather it is because it is more normal it is, for girls highly undesirable.

[Mahony 1985: 93]

The re-establishment of single-sex schooling or, at the very least, single-sex grouping for girls is seen as essential in providing space, freedom, and opportunity for girls to begin to realize their full potential.³¹ As Spender [1982: 41] argues, a radical feminist position on schooling recognizes above all else that:

Currently education and schools play a significant role in constructing male supremacy and in perpetuating male dominance and control.

Marxist Feminist Theory

Classical Marxist feminist theory draws most extensively on the work of Engels rather than on Marx himself. In 'The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State' [1968 edn.], Engels suggests that with the development of private property, class structures³² are created through the unequal ownership of property. Women, within the family unit, are part of this private property, tied through monogamous marriage to men in order to ensure paternity for inheritance. Marriage is based on economic convenience and thus there develops a monogamous, patriarchal family form. Engels [1968:66] states:

The first class opposition that appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class opposition coincides with that of the female sex by the male.

Married women are excluded from participation in social production and become "the first domestic servant" [p73]. Indeed, within the family, Engels describes man as the 'bourgeois' with woman representing the 'proletariat' [p74]. The conclusion to his thesis with respect to the emancipation of women is clear:

It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of

women is the re-introduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and that this again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society be abolished.

[Engels 1968: 74]

Women are oppressed because of their role within the family. Marxist feminists identify the relationship of the family to the capitalist mode of production as central to their theses. The oppression of women is a product of the class system and the private ownership of property. Thus the primary battle must be that waged against an oppressive economic class system. Change in the lives and experiences of women will result only from a radical change in the economic structure of society. Women must work alongside the working class as a whole, if fundamental change is to be achieved.

A classical Marxist position puts stress on the need for capitalism to structure the population to function efficiently. Work is separated into a private domestic sphere and a public sphere of paid work. Paid work is segmented further to create both a primary and secondary labour market. Women are located, primarily, within the private domestic sphere and, if entering paid work, within the secondary job sector.⁹⁹ These divisions are functional to capital.

Within this thesis education is seen as an important

site for the institutional maintenance of social divisions in the labour market. The schooling system functions to produce and reproduce the social relations of capitalist production. Analyses concerned with the relationship of gender education to the labour process have been dominated by the Althusserian notion of social reproduction [Barrett 1980; Arnot 1981]. The primary work in this area has been concerned with modifying reproduction theories to explain 'the processes of the reproduction of the sexual division of labour in the waged and domestic labour forces, the patterns of sex segregation in types of work and the division between the public/male world of the economy and the private/female sphere of domestic life' [Arnot 1981: 112]⁹⁴. Wolpe's [1977] early work in this area provides an important step beyond a class analysis in its attempt to incorporate gender. She identifies two major divisions of labour for women; within the family and within the labour market. Both are linked and:

Essentially the education system functions to satisfy the requirements of both the domestic and the labour market.

[Wolpe 1977: 2]

This is achieved through the curriculum, the school organization and the teachers as agents [David 1980; Deem 1978, 1980; MacDonald 1980; Arnot 1981; Wolpe 1978]. Wolpe [1978] and Deem [1978] both explored the relationship between Marxist and feminist analyses in

their pioneering work on education's contribution to the maintenance and reproduction of the sexual division of labour.

The main critics of this work draw on the well-rehearsed arguments relating to Althusser's theory of social reproduction [previously discussed above]. It is considered highly deterministic [Barratt 1980], a point seemingly accepted by Wolpe in her later paper 'Education and the Sexual Division of Labour' [1978]. In this she specifies the importance of struggle and argues that the educational system has a "relative autonomy vis a vis the capitalist mode of production" [Wolpe 1978: 313], mediating between the pupils and their allocation into the labour process.⁹⁵ However the major criticism of a Marxist feminist analysis (including that pertaining to schooling) is that it tends to ignore or undertheorize the concept of patriarchal domination and control [Arnot 1981; Nava 1980]. It fails to explain why gender divisions benefit capital, why divisions have to be sexual divisions or why women need to be subordinate to men. Mahony [1985: 66] argues this point with clarity:

Capitalism, to put it crudely, may need someone to scrub the toilet for free so that the worker is kept healthy, but why should that someone be a woman?

In relation to schooling an example of this is seen as

the failure to explain why there are sexual divisions within the teaching staff. Why is it men rather than women that occupy the majority of highly paid, power positions within the educational system?³⁶

Indeed it could be argued that it is difficult to sustain a Marxist 'feminist' position for this perspective fails to satisfy the criteria established earlier as constituting a 'feminist perspective'. If a major factor in establishing a feminist theoretical position is the acknowledgement of the importance of 'sisterhood' - the shared experience of oppression between women - then the primacy of economic class over all other social relations fails to give credence to other material aspects of oppression e.g. physical, cultural, psychological, ideological. Women share certain experiences e.g. the fear and reality of rape, sexual harassment, which cannot be reduced to economic explanations. This oppression cuts across class divisions and potentially affects all women. Hartmann [1981: 7] argues:

The marriage of Marxism and feminism has been like the marriage of husband and wife depicted in English common law: Marxism and feminism are one and that one is Marxism.

As she goes on to argue, the problem with any attempt to find a Marxist feminist theory is that the central question relates women's oppression to the economic

system subsuming the feminist struggle in the struggle against capital without adequately considering the relationship of women to men. Within education women's struggle is viewed as part of the working class struggle against an oppressive capitalist system. Change can be brought about only by revolutionary economic change since schools are part of the overall structure of capitalist oppression and exploitation. As Wolpe [1977: 18] explains:

Nor can it be anticipated that dramatic change will come about simply through the curriculum change. The education system is too closely linked with the division of labour in society, as are the ideologies which legitimate this structure. As long as the labour of women is required in the open market at low wage rates and as long as the labour of women contributes to the economic role of their husbands, there is little chance of change.

Many feminists working from a Marxist perspective, however, have begun to question whether gender can simply be fitted into a class analysis. There has developed a growing concern to develop a more adequate theoretical relationship between class and gender. In relation to schooling MacDonald [1980: 30] highlights this concern:

I am interested in the ways schooling may be involved in the processes of legitimation and hence of reproduction of class and gender relations under capitalism.

The resultant debates continue to be waged and are considered in the following section categorized as socialist feminist perspectives for the purpose of this discussion³⁷.

Socialist Feminist Theory

Socialist feminists attempt to combine elements of a Marxist feminist approach with a radical feminist approach, thus arguing for an understanding of both patriarchal oppression and class oppression. The relationship between patriarchy and capitalism is the crucial issue³⁸. Some theorists argue that the most useful theoretical framework is a unified system which comprehends capitalist patriarchy as one system, with the oppression of women an essential and fundamental characteristic of that system. [Eisenstein 1979; Young 1981]. Others favour a 'dual systems' theory which acknowledges the existence of two systems which exist separately but are in continual interaction [Hartmann 1981; Cockburn 1983]. However the relationship between sex and class is theoretically argued the understanding of gender relations within capitalist class society is drawn from neo-Marxist approaches rather than the economic determinism of classical Marxism. These analyses stress the importance of the role of ideology and social reproduction rather than economic

reductionism [Althusser 1971; Poulantzas 1973]³⁹. More emphasis is placed on the 'superstructures' i.e. social, cultural, political and ideological levels, in providing the conditions for capitalist production to proceed. As Cockburn [1983: 195] comments:

There have been periods when Marxist thought has been narrowly economic. Today, the totality of the capitalist relation has been rediscovered. Marxism at its best is a world view. It takes the world as its subject and writes an account of it from one perspective: a theory of classes defined by their relation to the means of production.

Cockburn argues that a class perspective can be used to explain all 'events' even those relating to gender. However she moves beyond a Marxist feminist position because she recognizes, also, that those same 'events' can be read from a different perspective. She calls this a 'sex-gender' perspective⁴⁰. We need an understanding of both perspectives if we are to fully understand all 'events'. She continues [ibid.: 195]:

To say that patriarchal power is exercised only in the family or in directly sexual relations is as blinkered as to suppose that capitalist power is exercised only in the factory. The sex/gender system is to be found in all the same practices and processes in which the mode of production and its class relations are to be found. We don't live two lives, one as a member of a class, the other as a man or a woman. Everything we do takes its meaning from our membership of both systems. Feminism, like Marxism, is a world view and its subject is the world itself; a

totality. The two systems are, at bottom, conceptual models, each explaining different phenomena. We need them both.

The problem with this 'dual system' approach is discussed by Young [1981:43]. She argues that this framework still encourages class relations to take precedence over gender relations. Her suggestion, therefore, is to provide:

a theory which regards the conditions of women's oppression as located in one system in which that oppression is a core element...

It is only by providing a theory of capitalist patriarchy that women's oppression can be situated centrally. This then avoids the problems that she identifies as inherent within much of the socialist movement whereby:

women's issues remain segregated, generally dealt with only by women, and the mixed socialist movement as a whole fails to take issues related to women's oppression as seriously as others.

[ibid.: 64]

The relationship between sex and class remains an ongoing debate within the socialist feminist movement. Within education these issues remain controversial also. The work of Madelaine Arnot in the early 1980s was important in addressing this debate [MacDonald 1980; Arnot 1981a, Arnot 1981b]. She was interested 'in the

ways schooling may be involved in the processes of legitimation and hence of reproduction of class and gender relations under capitalism' [MacDonald 1980 p30]. Arnot [1981a] provides a useful critique of social reproduction theories in their application to gender, utilizing Johnson's [1981] major criticisms of the social reproduction model. Arnot [1981a: 21] suggests a way forward by adapting Bernstein's [1977, 1980] research in order:

to develop a theory of gender codes which is class based and which can expose the structural and interactional features of gender reproduction and conflict in families, in schools and in work places.

Within this work Arnot attempts to take an important step forward from the Marxist feminist theories of education which tend simply to subsume women within an analysis of the reproduction of class relations through the institution of schooling. In doing so she highlights the fact that there are points within schooling where girls across social class boundaries experience the same oppression which cannot be explained totally in class terms. She concludes [ibid.: 29]

... in neither the dominant or the dominated gender codes do women escape from their inferior and subordinate position. There is nothing romantic about resisting school through a male defined working class culture. It is at this point that women across social class boundaries have much in common.⁴¹

While this is a positive attempt to combine class and gender within educational analysis, Mahony [1985: 69] criticizes the work of Arnot for continuing to relate the maintenance of patriarchy to the sexual division of labour and ultimately to its benefit to capitalism. Class relations remain the central characteristic in understanding women's position both within the schooling system and within the family - work situation. For the reasons cited earlier in criticism of a Marxist feminist approach, Mahony finds this position untenable. As she argues, there is little analysis of the material base of patriarchy and how this contributes to girls' experiences of schooling. However Arnot [1981: 113] does alert socialist feminists to the importance of an 'analysis of conflict between classes and gender as two structures of control'. Nava [1980: 75] elaborates on this point by considering the 'mutual but contradictory and incoherent determinacy' between the two structures of capitalism and patriarchy. She goes on to argue:

Sometimes their interests have coincided and combined to reinforce each other, at other times they have been antagonistic. Schooling has been an important site for the enactment of these struggles and alliances. In my opinion, it is by conceptualizing patriarchy and capitalism in this way that it becomes possible to make sense of the extensive contradictions that exist within education.

By adopting such a theoretical approach Nava argues that political action becomes more possible and more

important. By identifying both patriarchy and capitalism as distinct systems of oppression both with connections and antagonisms, Nava argues that considerable insight can be gained into the conditions necessary for change. Alliances between women teachers and girls could be formed through a recognition of the relevance of gender which would cut across class boundaries. These reforms would be important for they would widen the field of struggle but without losing sight of the broader structural issues.

Conclusion

Theorizing the relationship between gender and class continues as a central concern within feminist analysis. Socialist feminist theory, as discussed above, highlights the complexities involved in feminist theory. In terms of how the position of women is improved, Marxist feminism and radical feminism are more easily interpreted. If the 'problem' is capitalism, then it must be overthrown or if the 'problem' is men then they must be removed or radically changed. Both these positions are ultimately deterministic and for many women unsatisfactory in the final instance. What becomes clear is that the categorization of feminist theory into neat sections labelled liberal, radical, socialist, Marxist becomes more difficult as relationships and interconnections are made. For example many feminists

who would adopt a socialist political position now recognize the importance of sexuality and the work done in this area by radical feminists.

The research project on gender and physical education starts from a theoretical position which acknowledges both patriarchy and capitalism as dual systems of oppression. The importance of power relations, both between women and men and between women of different class locations, is acknowledged although the points⁴¹ of interconnection, conflict and contradiction remain problematic. Schools as important institutions in our society serve to reproduce the status quo in relation to the capitalist mode of production and male-female power relations, albeit within a complex and often contested situation. Physical education as an aspect of schooling fits into this process both in terms of its relationship to a sexual division of leisure in our society⁴² and the reinforcement of patriarchal power relations. These power relations need to be considered in terms of their economic, social, political, ideological and physical aspects. The empirical case work material is approached from this dual position and the implications that this material has for developing a fuller theoretical framework form the discussion in Chapter Nine. The emphases and complexities identified by detailed empirical investigation provide the cornerstone for the development of greater understanding of the position of

women in physical education and, ultimately, the relationship of this to the overall position of women within a society which is both patriarchal and capitalist.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN IN LEISURE, SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION -
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE (2)

Leisure - a male preserve?

The sociology of leisure became important in Britain in the early 1970s as a specific area of study alongside the sociology of work, family, religion etc.¹ With this fragmentation of sociological analysis into discrete areas, the primary feature of the early work on leisure was the attempt to provide a definition of 'leisure' which separates it out from other spheres of study [Clarke and Critcher 1985]. Parker [1971, 1976, 1983] provides an initial definition by stressing the connection between work and leisure. His statement that 'the problem of leisure is also the problem of work' [1983: xii] was reiterated in the work of Roberts [1970, 1976] who argues [1976: 3] that:

to understand leisure in modern societies it must be seen, in part at least, as the obverse of work.

This work-leisure dichotomy provides an analysis which is largely pluralist in its framework in that leisure is viewed as 'free time' which can be 'filled' through individual choice, and is 'functional' to the requirements of both the individual and society. As Clarke and Critcher [1985] point out, there is little critical appraisal of human agency within this analysis², nor is there much recognition of constraints on choice or decision-making which might impinge on an individual's freedom to utilize their 'leisure' time.

Young and Wilmott[1973] added a further dimension to the work-leisure relationship by placing the family centrally within their analysis. Their findings lead them to conclude that leisure is on the whole family-centred, although there are some indications of gender and class variations. Whilst their work contributed considerable empirical detail to the sociology of leisure, a major weakness lay in their non-problematic usage of the 'family', with little consideration of the many households that exist outside the conventional family form³. As Clarke and Critcher [1985:29] argue:

family life is understood neither as a structural set of relations within contemporary society nor as a set of cultural relationships which each family makes anew in its own image.

However this emphasis on the family did encourage women's leisure to receive some attention. Young and Wilmott recognize, from their survey of 2,000 adults in and around London, that gender does influence the type of 'leisure' undertaken and the amount of 'leisure' time available. However their analysis of gender remains at a descriptive level with women's position seen as unproblematic and implicitly tied to the family situation. Indeed their conclusion that housewives have more 'leisure' than men in paid employment provided an obvious platform for the feminist response!

This view of women's leisure as a part of the family form is a small step forward from women's appearances (or lack of them) in the early work of Parker [1972] and Roberts [1970]. These writings reflect the marginalization or invisibility of women that was prevalent (and to some extent remains so) in the sociological discourse of the early 1970s. As Deem [1981a:1] explains:

For many years the study of leisure was dominated by the study of male leisure. This was not only because most leisure researchers were men, nor was it solely because the widespread influence of gender to social life remained largely undiscovered. It was also because the most empirically visible leisure was that enjoyed by men, and as all researchers know, it's easier to study activities which take place in public spaces than it is to investigate those which are private or hidden from view.

Women, therefore, are largely missing from these analyses except as appendages to men [Deem 1982]. Analysis centres around male work and male leisure which are seen as separate although related categories. By relating work and leisure to the family, Young and Wilmot incorporate gender divisions but these remain marginal to the primary analysis. The Rapoport's [1975] work however, gives more weighting to women's experiences of leisure as they attempt to relate work, leisure and the family, to change during the life cycle. Their analysis of the family recognizes the complexities

and problems associated with family life, thus the constraints imposed on women receive far more attention than had been the case previously. Yet within this work, women's position is seen largely as a problem to be solved by the individual at different stages in her lifecycle. There is no structural analysis nor recognition of the existence of a power structure within gender relations. In many ways their work in relation to women can be criticized on similar lines to those advanced for liberal feminist theory as discussed in the previous chapter. Although it constitutes an important advance in recognizing and describing women's experiences of leisure, it fails to provide a more in depth theoretical questioning of 'why' women should be in that situation. As Griffin et al [1982:96] note:

So the Rapoports can provide a limited descriptive account of women's leisure, with no theoretical means of analysing the material and cultural/ideological forms of patriarchal relations.

The main advance in the Rapoports' work is that women, as over half the population are accorded equal attention to men - a situation rare in much of the work in the sociology of leisure even in the 1980s [Clarke and Critcher 1985].

As with other areas of sociological analysis (e.g. education, work) the mid 1970s witnessed, also, a growing body of literature offering a Marxist framework

of analysis⁴. Clarke and Critcher [1985:45] critique Parker [1971]; Young and Wilmott [1973]; the Rapoport [1975] and Roberts [1970, 1978] as examples of the sociology of leisure in the 1970s and suggest that:

... work, the family and leisure are constantly invoked as the cornerstones of modern society. In this shrinking vision of society, any analysis of the totality of economic, social, political and ideological patterns and processes has been lost.

Marxist analyses, in contrast to functionalist accounts, stress the importance of structural determinants upon leisure, with leisure examined as a form of social control [Rojek 1984]. Within this framework there is an emphasis on sport as social control [Brohm 1978; Hoch 1972]; neo-Marxist analyses of sport and hegemony [Gruneau 1983; Hargreaves 1982] and youth cultural analysis [Brake 1980, 1983; Hall and Jefferson 1975; Willis 1978]. These areas of work are concerned to look more critically at the relationship of class to aspects of leisure. However, women fare little better in this 'critical' work than they have in the mainstream sociology of leisure epitomised by Parker [1971, 1976] and Roberts [1981]. The contribution of sport to the reproduction of the social relations of production is concerned essentially with 'male' sport [Clarke 1978; Taylor 1982]. The work on youth culture almost without exception presents 'youth' as being white working-class and male with studies of 'the lads' dominating the

literature [Cohen 1974; Parker 1974; Brake 1974; Willis 1977; Corrigan 1978; Robins and Cohen 1978]. Young women are defined either as extensions of 'the lads' experiences or as direct inhibitions on these experiences. To reiterate Deems' [1982] previous point, young women in youth culture analysis are viewed through the eyes of the lads and this vision is sharpened by the assumptions of male researchers [McRobbie and Garber 1976]. It is a vision which marginalizes young women's experiences and condemns them to the periphery of youth culture, leaving the centre stage to 'the lads'.

Whilst Marxist approaches to the sociology of leisure develop a more critical consideration of leisure in relation to economic, political and social processes, it remains, primarily, the sociology of male leisure. However, as feminist theory and analysis developed throughout the 1970s (as discussed in Chapter One), this 'male-orientation' of leisure research was challenged and there developed a growing feminist response which now attempts to redefine and re-examine 'leisure', placing women's lives and experiences centrally within the analysis [Deem 1982, 1984; Green et al 1985; Griffin et al 1982; Hobson 1976; Stanley 1980; Talbot 1979].

Leisure - the Feminist Response

Griffin et al [1982:89] argue:

... women's position in waged and unwaged work in relation to the family means the existence of 'leisure' as a pure category for women is questionable.

This statement highlights the problem of looking at the work-leisure dichotomy in relation to women [Deem 1981; Stanley 1980; Dixey and Talbot 1982]⁵. Work in mainstream leisure texts discussed in the previous section inevitably refers to paid labour. Leisure is seen in relation with, and in contrast to, this paid work; when the day's work is over, leisure time can begin. Immediately this raises questions for women. First the definition of work as confined to 'paid' work negates the experiences of many women in the household situation. Luxton [1980: 11/12] suggests:

Domestic labour seems to be invisible. It is neither understood nor recognized as work. For example, women are asked: "Do you work, or are you a housewife?". Women who do both wage labour and domestic labour are described as "working wives" or "working mothers", as if to deny that what they do in the home is also work.⁶

The existence of a sexual division of labour and women's major responsibility for childcare and domestic labour places women's experiences of leisure immediately in a different category to that of men [Hobson 1976; Parry and Johnson 1974; Talbot 1979]⁷, resulting in women being named as a 'target' group for policy initiatives. However, feminist critics of this literature argue that

this material tends to consider leisure 'activities' - the public face of leisure - which, as discussed previously, for many women may not constitute their primary 'leisure' experience. As Deem [1983:12] argues:

Leisure is not necessarily an activity; doing nothing, 'staring out of the window' or just sitting down, can all be construed as leisure, especially for houseworkers.

The importance of 'leisure', particularly for women, is that, often, it is a personal, private matter [Stanley 1980] and thus activity-based definitions of leisure are not sufficient to understand and explain women's experiences.⁸

The feminist response to the sociology of leisure has been to problematize the concept for women and to identify the many constraints on women's lives which are seen to influence women's freedom and opportunity to participate in 'leisure'. However not all the literature recognizes the fragmentation of women's lives, nor their domestic/child care responsibilities as problematic in terms of 'leisure'.

Gregory [1981:6], in contrast to much of the work on women's leisure, celebrates women's activities and lifestyles:

What is known of women's pleasure in

reproduction and child-rearing; in creating the home environment; in being at the centre of the intricate social web of a community; in changing and developing within a less fixed programme of life than many others? The starting point should be the collective achievement and enjoyment of women to date rather than their failure to slip from under the yoke of male oppression.

While not denying that some women may gain 'achievement and enjoyment' from their domestic child-care roles and experience a pleasurable 'leisure' time through local community activity, the wealth of material on women's experiences in the home environment [Comer 1978; Oakley 1974] recognizes that the sexual division of labour and women's reproductive role can and does have serious social and psychological implications for many women.⁹ Not least it restricts their freedom to enjoy 'leisure' both in the public sphere of leisure activities and on their own terms in the private sphere of the home [Deem 1984; Hobson 1976].

The recognition that some women's lives cannot be compartmentalized neatly into areas such as work, leisure, family etc. has led feminist perspectives on leisure to adopt a more holistic approach involving:

investigating particular aspects of women's experience in relation to the structure of their lives as a whole.

[Green et al 1985:11]

Deem [1982:4] identifies:

a number of elements in women's general situation in our society which contribute towards not only their general oppression but also their specific oppression in relation to leisure.

These include domestic labour, childcare, the sexual division of labour, education, state institutions and social policy, cultures of masculinity and femininity and sexuality. The following section on young women and leisure will look in more detail at these constraints particularly as they relate to young women who are the subject of this particular research project. The literature dealing with the constraints women experience, which influence their 'leisure', importantly questions how and why women experience such constraints. Women's experiences in relation to 'leisure' are located in the wider structural issues of patriarchy and/or capitalism.

Deem [1984:13] refers to women's experience in many situations when she says:

... few women, of whatever social class or employment status would find themselves at ease on the rugby field, in a pub otherwise full of men, or jogging late at night on dark streets; nor are many likely to return from Sunday morning sport to find their lunch waiting on the table, and an offer from their partner to wash their sports gear.

This quote highlights several issues relating to the

restriction on women's access to both time and space for leisure, cultures of masculinity/femininity, domestic division of labour and the social control of women's sexuality. Green et al [1985] identify similar constraints on women's 'leisure' and clearly situate their explanation for such experiences within an analysis of patriarchy¹⁰. Although both Deem and Green et al recognize that class position can influence the experience women have of 'leisure' with some restrictions felt less by those in a materially advantaged position, they both emphasize the importance of male-female power relations¹¹. Green et al [1985:10] state with clarity:

.... we have attempted to identify how women's access to and use of free time are policed by men. The primary site for this policing is within the household: in order to enjoy leisure activities, particularly those located outside the home, women have to negotiate with male partners for their consent, perhaps also for a share of the household purse to spend on leisure, for childminding services or even for use of the family car. Ideologies about women's entitlement to personal leisure exist within a wider context of patriarchal norms about appropriate and legitimate behaviour for women which constrain their movements outside the home. These norms are, we would argue, enforced by men and/or by other women in the interest of men in general.

[emphases added]

Within this analysis the central explanatory factor relating to women's experiences of leisure is their

oppression by, and subordination to, men. This perspective, shared by Griffin et al [1982] and Stanley [1980], presents a radical feminist analysis which sees women's oppression to be primarily based on the control of women's sexuality and fertility and the sexual division of labour which Griffin et al [1982:90] view as "the allocation of women to a primarily reproductive role, through which all their other roles are mediated". The argument introduced by Green et al [1985] that the male social control of women both as individuals and as a group results in the control of time and space for women and the regulation of their sexuality, is a development within the literature which now attempts to situate women's leisure within the more general literature on male social control of women's sexuality and more specifically male violence against women [Coveney et al 1984; Coward 1984; Dworkin 1981; Radford and Laffy 1985; Stanko 1985]. This will be discussed more fully in the following section on 'Women and Sport' where male-female physical power relations will be considered.

From a Marxist feminist position Clarke and Critcher [1985] draw on the work of Barrett [1980] to help extend their understanding of women and leisure¹². They situate their analysis of leisure firmly within a class analysis and argue that the sexual division of leisure reflects the sexual division of labour.

The commonplace observation that the experience of leisure cannot be divorced from the experience of work is as central for domestic work as it is for the more visible case of paid labour. The qualitative and quantitative inferiority of women's leisure sharpens with the entry into the roles of wife and mother. Leisure has to be sacrificed in order to carry out these roles within existing social arrangements. Far from being the way in which women realise their leisure potential, the family curtails their leisure opportunities.

[ibid.:225]

The problems associated with trying to incorporate women's position into a Marxist framework, (as discussed in Chapter One) are recognized by Clarke and Critcher and they suggest that perhaps the theoretical framework might need more revision before a satisfactory incorporation can be achieved. As with more general socialist feminist literature, Deem [1984] argues for the need to look at women's position in the family, wider social and economic determinants and the effects of male dominance. In this way she is attempting to look at women's position in relation to the labour market including employment, unemployment and redundancy and to the structures of male-female power relations. This perspective on 'leisure' as it relates to women, attempts to situate leisure within both capitalism and patriarchy and reflects the debates around the integration or dual nature of sex and class found in the more general socialist feminist literature [Cockburn

1983; Eisenstein 1979; Hartmann 1981; Young 1981]. Likewise Dixey and Talbot [1982], in their thorough and interesting study of women and bingo, suggest that the women involved in their research 'operate under a dual set of constraints of class and sex - which limit their access in a particular way, so that their range of leisure choices is especially narrow'. This is a theoretical development from Talbot's [1979] earlier work which tended to be more descriptive rather than analytically developed. In many ways this reflects the fact that the literature on women and leisure is relatively recent and it is becoming more theoretically developed as feminist theory in general continues to progress. At present the literature on women and leisure remains relatively 'narrow' although the more specific area of women and sport (discussed in the next section) is an expanding area drawing extensively on work undertaken in North America.

Before moving on to consider the literature on women and sport it is necessary, first, to look at the literature on young women and leisure. This is relevant particularly to this thesis as it deals with young women of secondary school age. It is important, also, because it is an extension of the youth culture literature which forms a considerable amount of the male oriented sociology of leisure material discussed previously. Although this is a brief review of this literature it is

important in that it looks not only at young women's lives in general but also to their resistances which are experienced often within the school environment.

Young women, leisure and schooling

Within the work on subcultures the invisibility of young women's lives and experiences does not reflect a simple marginalization to the main action of 'the lads'. Rather it represents an absence informed directly by patriarchal power relations. Recent work has attempted to redress the balance in providing a feminist perspective on subcultures which starts from the experiences of young women [McRobbie 1978b; Griffin 1981, 1985; McRobbie and McCabe 1981; Nava and McRobbie 1984]. An initial consideration in the analysis of young women's experiences is that collectivity (i.e. the 'gang' or group), which is integral to the definition of male subcultures cannot be taken for granted for young women [Griffin 1981].¹⁹ McRobbie [1978] and Griffin [1981] in two separate projects with white working class women, found that they tend to form small but intense friendship groups with a 'best friend' central to their experiences. However, as young women begin relationships with boys, feminine cultures based on supportive friendships begin a gradual process of breaking up [Griffin 1981]. This does not occur to the same extent for 'the lads' who usually retain their male group

membership. Parker [1974:95], in his research on male working class youth, notes:

So the conversation went on, with Joey suggesting that the girlfriends should be kept in their place and not allowed to interfere with 'the boys' who if they were real mates would see to it. At this time Joey practised what he preached. He had been 'going with his tart' for six months and although he obviously liked her he would not allow his affection to change his relationship with the Boys.

This quote confirms the significance of male group membership even when girlfriends have arrived on the scene. However, before heterosexual relationships begin to fragment the supportive feminine cultures, various constraints work to discourage or to restrict the possibilities for young women to form large groups or gangs. These constraints also inhibit alternative expressions of women's sexuality and in this way young women's sexuality becomes regulated and controlled [Coveney et al 1984; Coward 1984].

First women, especially young working class women, have little access to 'space'. Social and sporting facilities are dominated by men and male groups with the pub, working men's clubs, snooker halls, rugby/cricket clubs clearly male domains. Often the street corner where 'the lads' can be found is unsafe territory for young women as they regularly face harassment ranging from verbal abuse or put-downs to actual physical violence [Hanmer

and Saunders 1984; Radford and Laffy 1985; Stanko 1985]. This does not mean that young women are totally excluded from the street. Research by Cowie and Lees [1981] suggests that young working class women can be found in groups hanging around shopping centres or street corners. They acknowledge, however, that "the extent of girls' participation or exclusion on the street would seem to be less than boys, but remains to be fully investigated." They conclude that 'girls' appearance on the street is always constrained by their subordination. It would seem that for many young women the answer is, as McRobbie [1978a] suggests, to retreat to a 'home base' where best friends can meet, chat and negotiate their existence. For many young women the 'private' sphere of the home remains the primary territory for their 'leisure'.

Working class young women also experience material constraints which, together with a lack of access to private transport, further inhibits their movements. Middle class young women have greater opportunity for participation in social and sporting activities. Not only do they have economic support, but also parental help to transport them to the gym club, swimming pool, youth centre etc. Despite increased access, however, the very real threat of violence on the streets exists for all women [Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Radford and Laffy 1985; Stanko 1985]. Facilities remain dominated by men

and within families 'free-time' is defined differently for young women than for young men. This raises the issue of domestic and childcare responsibilities which many young women, unlike young men, experience from an early age. Young women are expected to help with housework and the care of younger siblings.¹⁴ The strength of the ideology of domesticity emphasizes women's 'natural' domestic and childcare role. Young women also have a realistic view of their future which they see as involving domestic/childcare responsibilities. They recognise this as preparation for their future role as wife and mother, and although not always accepting it unquestioningly, it is regarded generally as inevitable [Griffin 1985]. The extent of expectations of domestic/childcare responsibility is related also to class. Working class young women are expected to take on these responsibilities to a greater extent [Dorn 1983] although middle class young women often still have their share of washing up and cleaning to do!

Young women's subcultures then, do not correspond to male subcultures in any simplistic way and an understanding of gender, class, race and age constraints is important. Indeed the term 'subculture' takes on 'masculine' connotations. It is more useful perhaps to consider young women's 'cultures' which are structurally separate and distinct from those of male youth.¹⁵

McRobbie [1978a] identifies 'romance' and the 'culture of femininity' to be central to the daily lives of adolescent young women. Her research highlights the importance for young women of talking and planning around fashions, make-up and boyfriends. The culture revolves around the intense task of 'getting a man' but always within the constraints of 'keeping a good reputation' [Cowie and Lees 1981] which is by no means easy or unambiguous. Young women are well aware of the inevitable future, influenced by political, economic and ideological constraints, in which a heterosexual relationship leading to marriage, home and family is the expected outcome [Griffin 1985]. Within this 'culture of femininity' there are obvious class and race differences. Just as 'masculinity' cannot be viewed as a static, universal concept so 'femininity' demonstrates marked variation across class and ethnicity. As Griffin [1981] rightly asserts:

There are some parallels with the position of young black and middle class women, but it is crucial to understand the ways in which young white women benefit from cultural, ideological and institutional racisms; how race and racism affect and are affected by the experiences of young black women; and how young middle class women negotiate their relatively privileged position in education and waged work.

McRobbie [1977,1978] and McRobbie and Garber [1975] provide an important analysis of young women's leisure in relation to 'youth culture' work, being at the

forefront of the literature that demonstrates the male bias of much of the youth culture and sub-cultural field of study [Griffin et al 1982]. However, Griffin et al [ibid.] argue that this work, which concentrates on the complex relationship of gender and class, fails to radically rethink young women's position, which they view as resting ultimately on male-female power relations. This is emphasized by Griffin [1981:2] in her application of the analysis to a discussion of white middle class girls in school.

Whilst some of these young women clearly realised the extent of their privileges as white and middle class, as women they will always have to play second fiddle to men, denied full access to the spheres of power in which they have apparently been granted 'equal opportunities'.

Turning to young women in the schooling process, the literature identifies female counter-school cultures just as there have been shown to be male counter-school cultures [Willis 1977]. Whereas the class significance of male counter-school culture has been stressed [Willis 1977], female counter school cultures are seen to involve negotiation around age, race, class and gender relations. Resistances to schooling for young women are not solely about gender or class but are bound up with the complex development towards adulthood. Indeed age-based resistances have been part of struggles by young women and young men within schooling since formal schooling began. It is likely that this has been further

intensified with the raising of the school leaving age which leaves young adults in a system geared to childhood and based on a clear age related authority structure [Johnson 1981].

Young women's resistances within school, however, do take on a specifically female form and cannot simply be equated to those of male youth. Young women who are considered 'non-academic' are in conflict with a school system geared to examination results. However, as research into girls' schooling has shown, schools are concerned also with producing young women who will fit into our society as wives and mothers [Deem 1980; Sharpe 1975; Stanworth 1981; Spender and Sarah 1980].¹⁶ Resistance here is gender-based and cuts across class considerations for it is challenging the school definition of a 'nice' girl (seen to emphasise neatness, passivity, hard work, politeness etc.) which will result in a 'good', 'suitable' job i.e. nursery nurse, infant teacher etc. It is important here to see resistance not necessarily as a 'problem' (as viewed by the school) but perhaps a 'legitimate source of pressure' [Johnson 1981]. Young women in this situation could be seen to be challenging the 'culture of femininity' and reasserting their right to define their own existence. This becomes dependent on the form of resistance taken. McRobbie [1978a] stresses the importance of 'appearance' as a form of resistance for adolescent young women. By

wearing make-up, jewellery, altering the school uniform, young women often use overtly sexual modes of expression which demonstrates quite clearly that they are overstepping the boundaries of girlhood (as demanded by the school) into womanhood. As young women constantly are judged by their sexuality, be it by the 'lads' in Willis' study or the teachers in their classrooms, it is a powerful means of challenging 'the system'. However, McRobbie argues that young women's own culture then becomes the most efficient agent of social control for by resisting, they reaffirm and reinforce patriarchal power relations:

they are both saved by and locked within
the culture of femininity.

[ibid.:14]

Clearly, by asserting a more sexually orientated appearance young women run the risk of being labelled as a 'slag' 'tart' etc. [Cowie and Lees 1981]. However, by rejecting the image of the 'nice' acquiescent girl, a more positive assertion of femininity is possible such that resistances can be used to challenge the dominant culture of femininity. Griffin [1981] discusses this positive assertion of femininity which:

Partly rejects the idealised notions of the 'nice' girl in a very direct manner, undermines images of the passive asexual young woman waiting for her 'fella' found in teenage magazines and romantic fiction; and serves as a partial attempt

to reappropriate femininity by young women, and for young women.

Young women's resistances are not restricted to those involving appearance. Griffin [1981] discusses a further strategy that young women use to negotiate their existence in schools. Most teachers would recognise her description of young women's silence and the 'sullen stare'. For many young women this is a more subtle and acceptable challenge which does not rely on the more extrovert use of appearance. This, too, cuts across class and cannot be seen only as a working class resistance to schooling [Griffin 1981].

What becomes clear is that young women's cultures exist in specific structural forms and cannot be equated simplistically with those of young men. Within school young women's counter-school culture is complex and again cannot be viewed only in relation to issues around class location. Certainly forms of 'femininity' are used by working class young women as class based resistances. However, as in middle class schools, notions of 'ideal' femininity, i.e. the 'nice' girl are also challenged and can be seen not as 'locking' them within the 'culture of femininity' but indeed forming a challenge to that culture in an attempt to redefine 'femininity' for themselves. The complexities are such that counter-school resistances by young women serve to reinforce, negotiate and challenge the 'culture of

femininity'. There is no clear cut line that can differentiate between these outcomes. Cultural analysis which recognises these complexities and acknowledges the importance of gender, class, race and age considerations remains at an innovatory stage.

It is important to consider this literature on female cultures and school-based resistances particularly in relation to the teaching of physical education in secondary schools. This issue will be taken up in detail in Chapter Eight when the empirical material from the interviews and case studies will be analysed in relation to the theoretical debates around young women's cultures and especially their resistances.

The next section of this chapter overviews the literature on women and sport which, in the past decade, has developed in both quantity and analytical quality.

The Sociology of Sport: a 'male enterprise'

The structural functionalist analysis of much mainstream sociology of sport views sport as performing a positive function of social integration within a pluralist society [Loy and Kenyon 1969; Dunning 1971; Edwards 1973; Mangan 1973].¹⁷ Within this analysis sport is seen as divorced from and independent of societal processes and, most importantly, from structures of

power. In tension with this work have developed interactionist analyses which, while accepting a more critical analysis of the social world, relate sport to the formation of individual or group identity within an increasingly restricting and alienating world [Stone 1971; Goffman 1972; Marsh et al 1978]. Their emphasis on the dynamics of social behaviour, with aggression understood and accepted as a universal and inevitable feature of modern industrial societies. Both perspectives emphasize the positive functions of sport, the satisfaction and enjoyment of both being a player and/or spectator and the value of sport as an harmonising influence within an increasingly complex and diverse society.

The main critiques of these perspectives argue that they lack analytical attention to the power structures of society and consequently they fail to situate sport within a critical structural framework.¹⁰ Much of this critical work has been informed by the emergence and consolidation of neo-marxist analysis. Writers, such as Hoch [1972], Brohm [1978] and Rigauer [1981] emphasize the need to theorize the relationship between sport and the political-economic relations of advanced capitalism. Their argument centres on sport being recognised as a direct reflection of modern capitalist society, an institutionalized social practice mirroring the social and political world in which it is located. In this

world sport plays a crucial role in the reproduction of the labour force required for capitalist production, a workforce imbued with the values and dominant ideology of advanced capitalist society (competition, individualism, survival of the fittest).

This deterministic analysis, however, has its critics both from within mainstream structural functionalism and from within the developing body of neo-marxist work. While acknowledging the contribution of theorists such as Brohm and Hoch and their work on class relations and sport, Hargreaves [1982, 1986] in England and Gruneau [1980, 1983] in Canada have been at the forefront of developing analyses which critique the overdeterministic position of social control explanations of the sport-power relationship [Hargreaves 1986]. Hargreaves [1986:3] argues:

Sporting activity... can never be adequately explained purely as an instrument of social harmony or as a means of self expression, or as a vehicle for satisfying individual needs; for this ignores the divisions and conflicts, and the inequalities of power in societies, which if we care to look more closely, register themselves in sports. Nor can their social role be explained simply as a means whereby the masses are manipulated into conformity with the social order, capitalist or otherwise, for to do so is to regard people as passive dupes, and it ignores their capacity to resist control and to stamp sports with their own culture.

In avoiding crude analyses of social control, Hargreaves

emphasizes the importance of 'culture', 'ideology' and history for theoretical approaches which seek to understand sport in industrial capitalist societies. Sport not only contributes to the reproduction of class relations but also forms part of the struggle and resistance of subordinate groups. As he argues:

Just as bourgeois hegemony over the social formation, as such, is never guaranteed, so it is not guaranteed over any specific realm, like sport either. Rather, it is a matter of continuous achievement, of work and practice at the structural, institutional and discursive/ideological levels.

[Hargreaves, 1986:208]

In addition Gruneau [1983] develops his analysis using the work of Giddens [1971] on the 'structuration' of social life and Williams [1976,1977] on the need for a concrete, historical concept of cultures. Sport, in Gruneau's analysis, is understood as a dialectical relationship between structure and agency; not only does sport reproduce class relations and inequality in capitalist society but through sport there can be resistance and the potential both for cultural formation and the transformation of socio-economic structures. Although Gruneau and Hargreaves do not develop identical analyses, as Critcher [1984] recognizes, the trajectory of their argument is remarkably similar. In attempting to resolve structural determinism the importance of people as active social beings is

stressed. However, class remains the central structural relation theorized both by Hargreaves and Gruneau. Although non-class elements, such as gender and race, are discussed they remain secondary to the main emphasis i.e. the understanding of sport-class relations.

The development of critical approaches to sport continues as an on-going debate in the sociology of sport [Beamish 1982, 1985; Ingham and Hardy 1984; Whitson 1984; Morgan 1983]. While these informative and important discussions have developed around hegemony and sport, and sport-power relationships, however, one glaring weakness in these analyses is that women's position in relation to sport has remained under-theorized and usually marginal to the 'main' debates. Certainly this is not a total omission. For example: Whannel [1983] considers the position of women in sport; Beamish [1984] attempts to apply his analysis, albeit limited, to an understanding of 'gender-related issues' in sport; Critcher [1984] challenges the radical critiques of Hargreaves and Gruneau for their lack of consideration of gender; and Kidd [1978] attempts to include women within his political-economic analysis of sport. However, while male theorists of sport have begun to acknowledge the impact of feminist theories and understanding, Hall [1985: 14] succinctly argues:

... all this work, useful as it is, still sees class struggle as the motor of

history. In short Beamish, like all production-biased materialists, fails to see that an analysis of the patriarchy/capitalist relationship goes far beyond merely encompassing gender issues within a fundamentally unchanged materialism.

The main criticism of the sociology of sport literature remains clear; it is dominated by male theorists concerned with experiences and issues around male sport. Women remain either invisible or simply an addendum, an afterthought, in both structural functionalist and Marxist/neo Marxist analyses. As Hall [1986] argues, it remains an 'add women and stir' analysis. Where women are considered it is largely within a separate arena designated 'women and sport'. The next section will consider how the impact of feminism and feminist analysis has, slowly but surely, begun to make inroads into the male world of sport sociology. This has been due largely to women insisting that their relationship to sport as active participants, spectators and supporters needs to be recognized, understood and theoretically examined.

Towards a Feminist Analysis of Sport

The 'women and sport' debate has developed within the different strands of feminist theoretical analysis discussed in Chapter 1. As Chapter 1 concluded, there is no one feminist theoretical position but several

theoretical dimensions which have developed within a broader feminist framework. Thus feminist analyses of sport can be broadly categorized into Liberal, Marxist, Radical and Socialist theoretical positions.

(i) Liberal Feminist Theories of Sport

Although situated more centrally within a social psychological paradigm the 'sport-femininity conflict' debate has dominated the explanations developed for women's position in and with sport. This debate is concerned with the conflict female athletes are perceived as having between their role as athletes and their role as women. Much of this work stems from the early and influential work of Metheny [1965] who identified and described a 'feminine image' in sport, defining clear boundaries of acceptable sports participation.¹⁹ The research that followed focused on differing perceptions of athletes and non-athletes on sport; dilemmas facing women athletes in relation to other social roles; attitudes to the 'female sex-role' [Fisher et al 1971; Hall, M.A. 1974; Kingsley et al 1977]. Hall [1987] provides the most extensive critique of this essentially functionalist research. She describes the work as:

... essentialist, atheoretical and harmful because it continued to perpetuate the very stereotype we wished to eradicate.

[Hall 1987:3]

By focusing on a perceived conflict between femininity and sport, research in this perspective reinforces an ideology of femininity with sport seen as a problem in that it is in conflict with the 'normal' female sex role/behaviour. The emphasis is on the 'individual' with no attempt for a contextual analysis situating the individual sportsperson within the social, political and economic structures of society. There is no questioning of why the stereotype of femininity continues to exist. It is functionalist in its analysis, failing to recognise the social construction of gender, the importance of an historically specific understanding or the interactions between other power relations such as class and/or race [Hall 1987].

These criticisms levelled at sex-role theory are also the criticisms of much liberal-feminist analysis. Explanations for women's position in sport have tended to remain predominantly within this framework of sex-role stereotyping or socialization theory. This is not to argue that this research has not been important in describing and drawing attention to sex inequalities in sport. However, with explanations centred on stereotyping or socialization the 'problem' for women tends to be situated once again with the individual²⁰. Boslooper and Hayes, who made an early contribution to

the 'women and sport' debate, put forward such a position:

The physical image of women has remained the same for thousands of years. Women have succeeded in liberating their intellects, but their bodies are still in corsets. They still think of themselves as passive, non-aggressive and supportive. And that's why no matter how intellectually or sexually liberated they are, women continue to lose.

[Boslooper and Hayes, 1974:52. Emphases added]

This position tends to 'blame the victim' with liberation seen to rest in the hands and heads of women themselves. Yet women who seek this 'liberation' must be careful to remain within certain clearly defined boundaries of behaviour and appearance. Observation of female athletes especially the 1988 sprinting 'stars' of the USA (in particular Florence Joyner), demonstrate this 'emphasized femininity' [Connell 1987] with fashion, make-up and jewellery attracting as much attention as sporting prowess. Their 'image' is as likely to appear on the features pages of Playboy as those of Sportsworld Magazine.

Liberal feminist analysis is static as a social theory in that it is largely descriptive, ahistorical and fails to explain either the importance of structural power relations or the resistances and conflicts which have developed within the areas of women and sport. It becomes an addendum to structural functionalist theory

in that it can be 'added on' to theorize women's position in and with sport but it is subject to similar criticisms for its inadequacy in theorizing sport within advanced capitalist society.

Parallel to these approaches, concentrating on equal opportunities and access for women in sport, there has developed considerable material concerned with physiological sex differences. Although this is not sociological research, this work has had a profound influence on the area. The main two researchers who have attempted to dispel the myths surrounding women's physical abilities and capabilities are Ferris [1978,1980] and Dyer[1982]. They draw on a number of research projects throughout the world which measure such physiological features as maximal oxygen uptake, stamina, strength, hormonal differences etc.²¹ However there has been justified criticism of this physiological concentration on sex differences. Willis argued against a sex difference approach as early as 1974:

The analytic socio-cultural task is, not to measure these differences precisely and explain them physically, but to ask why some differences, and not others, are taken as so important, become so exaggerated, are used to buttress social attitudes or prejudice.

[Willis 1974:3]

However, whilst totally agreeing with this point, it must be acknowledged that it has been important to dispel

some of the physiological and medical myths surrounding women's physical abilities and capacities. In dealing with sport which centres on physical activity it has been important to challenge the biological arguments which have dominated the debates around women's participation in sport. Once it is acknowledged that it is the social construction of gender that is important, not biological physical differences, there can develop a more critical and adequate understanding of inequalities in sport between women and men which situates the debate in the wider power structures of society.

(ii) Marxist Feminist Theories of Sport

Marxist feminist theoretical explanations are part of the broader Marxist framework which situates sport within the context of the social reproduction of class relations. Within this analysis relations between men and women stem directly from the exploitative relations of capitalist wage labour. The sexual division of labour is crucial for explaining women's subordinate position in that women are concerned with the reproduction of labour power both by servicing and supporting the male breadwinner and by producing the next generation of workers [Barrett 1980; Gardiner 1975]. Within sport the sexual division of labour is seen to be a major constraint on women's ability to be involved in sport, both in terms of their economic dependence on men, their

primary role as wives and mothers in the private sphere of the home, and their secondary place in the labour market. Therberge [1984], a Canadian feminist, provides a Marxist theoretical explanation for women and sport. She traces the 'problems' of sport (e.g. commercialism, exploitation, the reproduction of specific capitalist values) and argues that each can be located within a Marxist theoretical framework. Women's involvement in sport is recognized as stemming directly from these economic relations. However Therberge [1984:14] is uneasy with this analysis:

My own analysis leaves me somewhat unsettled. I am quite persuaded by the features of economic analysis, and the feminist in me is a little troubled by that because I don't have a well developed analysis which goes beyond economic interpretation.

This analysis remains situated within Hartmann's [1981] 'Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism' in that the explanation concentrates on the contribution of sport to the social reproduction of class relations through commercialism, professionalization and sponsorship and subsumes women's experiences of sport within this economic analysis. What is ignored is that it is not only capital which benefits but also men. The public-private division in which women have major responsibility for childcare and housework, is in the interests of men as well as capitalism. The sexual division of labour is a very real constraint on the

sporting lives of many women and needs to be theorized adequately rather than simply described. Marxist feminist analysis, however, cannot explain fully the lived constraints experienced by all women, regardless of age or class location. These include; the fear of violence/sexual attack on the streets travelling to and from their chosen activity or harrassment/attack during the sport itself.

Willis [1974] contributes to the 'women and sport' debate by utilizing the concept of ideology to avoid the economic determinism of much Marxist sport sociology. He argues that the main concern for feminist sport sociology should be that:

It accepts the obvious difference in sports performance between men and women, accepts that cultural factors may well enlarge the gap, but is most interested in the manner in which this gap is understood and taken up in the popular consciousness of our society.

[Willis 1974:2]

Therefore, the emphasis is on the development of a critical understanding of ideology and how sport is part of the ideological process of reproducing female inferiority. This was an important early development because it identified sport as a vehicle of gender ideology, seeing women in sport as a:

... particularly rich and appropriate

area for ideological penetration.

[Willis *ibid.*:22]

Yet, in the final instance, Willis looks to capitalist economic relations as his major explanatory category and once more women's position is 'added on' to what is recognized to be the central economic determination.

(iii) Radical Feminist Theories of Sport

Radical feminists are unified in their concentration on the relations between women and men as fundamental to the oppression of women [Smith 1980]. They utilize the concept of 'patriarchy' (see Chapter One) to help explain the system of oppression whereby men dominate women in a complex area of power relations. As noted, there is no single radical feminist theory and it is a complex area with continual theoretical developments. Within radical feminism there is a separatist strand which, in sport, has argued for the importance of female sporting values and the redefinition and development of separate sport centred on and for women [Birrell 1984; Fasting and Pederson 1987]. Probably the most influential work from a radical feminist perspective on women and sport is that which has focused on sexuality as of fundamental importance in the subordination and oppression of women. MacKinnon makes the point:

Sexuality is a form of power. Gender as socially constructed embodies it, not the reverse. Women and men are divided by gender, made into the sexes as we know them, by the social requirements of heterosexuality, which institutionalizes male sexual dominance and female sexual submission. If this is true, sexuality is the linchpin of gender inequality.

[MacKinnon 1982:533]

Lenskyj [1987] provides the most detailed examination of the relationship between women, sport and sexuality. In her extensive historical research she focuses specifically on male control of sexuality by and through sport, the importance of the female reproductive function in its use in the medical restrictions on girls' and women's sporting participation and the emphasis on compulsory heterosexuality in the legitimization of women's subordinate sporting position. Lenskyj [1987] argues in her conclusion that:

It is hoped that by understanding women's sporting heritage and by becoming alert to the ways in which sport has been and continues to be, co-opted for the purpose of male control over female sexuality and the female reproductive function, women will be strengthened in the struggle for autonomy in sport.

The contribution of radical feminism to the understanding of women and sport is considerable, particularly the importance given to a critical understanding of sexuality and physicality [see also Scraton 1987; Gilroy 1986]. The stress within radical feminist perspectives is on:

... the social construction of masculinity or social maleness central to which is the construction of a particular form of male sexuality which contributes to the continued oppression of women to the material benefit of men.

[Mahony, 1985:71]

Coveney et al [1984] emphasize the ways that male sexuality (heterosexuality) functions to control women. They cite restrictions on space, work, leisure - to which can be added sport - and definitions of appearance as important instances where male sexuality is exercised as a form of control. These issues are central to the analysis developed in Chapter Eight.

Feminists involved in sport are beginning to make vital connections between sport, sexuality, physicality and women's oppression and inequality in many sporting arenas [Scruton 1997; Gilroy 1988]. This is an area which needs to be developed and where sociology must both utilize the feminist work developed in areas other than sport and recognize also that feminist analyses of sport, physical power and sexuality can contribute to wider feminist debates and struggles.

Weaknesses and inadequacies of this theoretical perspective must be recognized, however, if a move to a comprehensive theoretical account of women and sport is to be achieved. While it theorizes gender as the primary

social division it does ignore or marginalize other social divisions (e.g. class, race). Research into women and leisure has shown that sporting participation is dependent not only on gender but also on class location. A woman's access to transport, sports facilities, time and money are all mediated by their economic and social position. These differences cannot be ignored when attempting to provide a coherent, comprehensive theoretical explanation. Furthermore, although race remains marginalized in much white ethnocentric feminist literature, black women's relationship to sport is influenced not only by their gender but also their class and race. Although there remains little work in the area of black women and sport, general accounts of black women's experiences in British society suggest that racism and racial divisions must be central to sports theory [Wilson 1978; Bryan et al 1982].

Furthermore there is a major problem with the separatist analysis which looks to the development of a separate female sports culture and the move to develop women's sport in a totally separate sphere defined by and for women [Birrell 1984; Fasting and Pederson 1987]. While this is a realistic and perhaps inevitable short-term political strategy for women and sport there is a danger that at a theoretical level it reinforces unwittingly a biological reductionist explanation for gender divisions. It suggests that there is a separate women's

culture and specific female values. With such an analysis it is difficult to divorce the debate from arguments of biological differences between women and men and at a political level provides pessimistic forecasts for the future of sport in a world which is not separatist in most spheres. Put another way, the question arises as to whether the masculine values, behaviours and definitions attributed to sport and much criticised by feminism are an inevitable feature of maleness. The implication of some radical feminist writing is that this is the case, which leaves feminist theory back once more in the entrenched commonsense views of inherent physical and psychological sex differences. This area of analysis is difficult to negotiate. The experiences of women suggests a real need for space and separate provision in sport but there is a real necessity to avoid biological reductionism for the progression of feminist social theory which can account for the social construction of gender. (See Chapter Nine).

(iv) Socialist Feminist Theories of Sport.

Socialist feminist theory attempts to provide an integrated or dual analysis which identifies the importance of both capitalist social relations and patriarchy as structural determinants of women's oppression [Eisenstein 1979, 1984; Hartmann 1981; Young

1981; Cockburn 1983, 1986].

The work of Canadian sociologist M. Ann Hall has been most influential in the feminist debates around women and sport [Hall 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1987]. She has moved the debates forward beyond liberal feminist analysis in an attempt to:

... lift the discussions of women and sport out of descriptive, journalistic, atheoretical, reportorial stages and produce a truly sociological and feminist analysis of gender relations in sport.

Much of Hall's work is at the level of critique and she provides the most extensive feminist analyses of mainstream sports sociology and sex role theory [1984, 1985a]. Although she recognizes that feminist analyses of sport remain in their initial stages, she moves the debate on by insisting that sports theory must be situated within an understanding of both capitalist and patriarchal social relations.

Although the feminist theorists discussed in this section may differ in their major explanations for women's inequalities in sport, they are united in their concern for the relationship between theory and practice. Indeed this relationship is fundamental to all feminist analysis. Research and analysis must be both theoretical and political. The continuing search for an

adequate feminist theory of sport is grounded in a belief in the need for, and the possibilities of, social change both in and through sport. It is recognized, also, that this change in sport will not involve the alteration and improvement of women's experiences and practices alone.

Hall [1987:12] argues:

There is also a slowly growing interest in how the patriarchal and gendered practice of modern sport has shaped men's lives as well. (See Sabo, 1985; Messner 1985; Carrigan, Connell and Lees; and Kidd, 1987]. Slowly but surely, the discourse of gender and sport is finally moving away from an exclusive and restrictive focus of women and femininity to the nature of gendered social behaviour and the impact of gendered social structures on both sexes.

It is important to situate the research project on gender and girls' P.E. within the debates identified in this literature review on women and sport. Although sport and P.E. are not synonymous, sport in the form of team games remains dominant within the curriculum.²² Thus this research project aims to continue the debates reviewed in this chapter in relation to an understanding of how P.E. contributes to gender relations and how gender informs P.E. The theoretical framework for this investigation being situated firmly within the structures of capitalist patriarchy [see Chapter One], with historical analysis and empirical investigation

helping to provide the links between theoretical understanding and future political action of policy direction.

Girls' Physical Education - the neglect of gender

Chapter One identified the major developments in the sociology of education focusing on the impact of the 'new sociology of education' and the influential work of Young [1971] and Young and Whitty [1977]. This development in the 'new sociology of education' was paralleled by a concern for more in-depth analyses of the organizational and internal processes of schooling [Lacey 1970; Hargreaves 1967] and followed by the instigation of ethnographical investigation in the classroom. [Hammersley 1980; Hammersley and Hargreaves, 1983; Hargreaves 1978; Hargreaves and Woods 1984]. However, as Evans and Davies [1986] point out these developments in educational research and theory have gone largely unnoticed by the world of physical education. Although Hendry's [1975, 1978, 1981] work has attempted to investigate the content of P.E. and the internal processes of P.E. teaching, Evans and Davies [1986:25] argue:

Studies such as those of Hargreaves, Hendry and Lacey, then, provided complex descriptions of the outcomes of schooling, they raised questions about the nature of society being reproduced through the processes of schooling and

sport, about the cultural origins of P.E. teachers, about class interests, power and control. However, the plethora of more detailed classroom studies engendered in their wake once more hardly touched the P.E. scene.

Where the sociology of P.E. has attempted to pull itself out from its dominant structural functionalist theoretical²⁹ base it has followed a Marxist deterministic framework:

One can argue that there is a closer and more material link between P.E. and the capitalist mode of production ... sport and P.E. are both aspects of society which can be seen as instrumental in helping to support ideological hegemony.

[Hargreaves 1977: 14]

Consequently the few critical analyses of P.E. have centred their attention on the role played by P.E. in the reproduction of the social relations of production [Hargreaves 1982, 1987; Tomlinson 1982]. As has been identified throughout the literature on education, leisure, sport and now P.E., the importance of gender for a critical theoretical understanding of all these areas has largely gone unnoticed until recently. P.E. is probably the most extreme example of this neglect of critical feminist analysis. The reasons for this are complex and were discussed in the introduction which set the background and context to this research into gender and girls' P.E. This section intended as a review of the

literature on gender and girls' P.E. confirms the dearth of discussion/analysis in this field of study.

P.E. hardly features in the literature on gender and schooling.²⁴ An exception to this is Browne et al [1984] which appears in a collection of articles considering sexism in the secondary school curriculum²⁵. Browne et al focus on P.E. and chart various aspects of sex discrimination in staffing and P.E. practice, while concentrating most attention on a discussion of practical strategies to be adopted in order to combat and challenge sexism. Within this there is considerable support given to the adoption of mixed P.E. teaching. This is an area that will be discussed throughout this research project and is an important consideration developing out of the research [see Chapter Eight]. One of the weaknesses of Browne et al's article is not only that some of their suggestions appear rather difficult to imagine in practice:

If any (male) students are too uncontrollable or boisterous at the beginning of a dance session, they could always be invited to demonstrate their virility with a little cossack or morris dancing.(!) A good way to end a lesson is with a quick dance, so that everyone leaves feeling all warm and puffed out.

[Browne et al 1984:21]

More importantly there is no theoretical questioning as to the underlying root causes of sexism in P.E. and thus

little critical analysis of the area. The strategies discussed remain at the level of reforms within the present context of P.E. with no structural analysis of P.E. within a broader social, political, economic and ideological context. Consequently conclusions are reached such as:

An imaginative P.E. curriculum would aim to show students that it is possible to keep fit without taking hours off from family responsibilities to attend distant clubs.

[ibid.:74]

This suggestion stands in isolation with no critical questioning of gender roles in the family, the family-school relationship or whether such an 'imaginative P.E. curriculum' would be the same for girls and boys. Perhaps women would like to keep fit by taking hours off from family responsibilities! The important issue is that gender roles within the family have direct implications for the lives and leisure of women and men. Women's physical leisure opportunities are directly (and disproportionately in comparison to men) influenced and constrained by their family and childcare responsibilities ²⁶. Sexism in P.E. must be situated within structural power relations whereby women are recognised as being in a subordinate and oppressed position throughout society and not simply in an unequal or different position within P.E.

This article by Browne et. al [1984] epitomizes the liberal feminist approach which dominates the limited literature on gender and P.E. The literature that is available concentrates on the identification of sex differentiation within the P.E. curriculum and the adoption of strategic reforms in order to 'equalize' provision and opportunity. II.L.E.A. 1984; Leaman 1984; Vertinsky 1983]. The emphasis is on differentiation between girls and boys and the part P.E. plays in the socialization process of girls into 'femininity' and boys into 'masculinity'²⁷.

North America has provided the beginnings of a more critical awareness of gender and P.E. An early paper in 1976, under the interesting title of 'Women in Physical Education: the Dribble Index of Liberation', is part of a collection of articles providing an important contribution to feminist analysis in the mid 1970s.²⁸ It, too, emphasized the socialization process but with a critical edge that placed women's position within an analysis of male-female power relations.

... American society is thought to have no formalized puberty rituals, no organized ceremonies of separation. But are there institutionalized rites of passage?... the earliest and most lasting memories of female separation and exclusion are those associated with physical education in schools... It now appears that games in the upper grades in elementary schools and gym classes in junior high schools are the situations in which girls and boys go through the

American version of puberty rights.

[Brown 1976: 41]

The article traces male control and the resultant responses from women in the worlds of sport and P.E. The analysis uses basketball as an example of this control and adaptation.

Over time, this game mirrors in miniature the status of women in society. With a strong women's movement, there was freedom to play full court and unlimited physical movement. In decades in which the fight for women's rights was subdued restrictions on time and space were imposed. Although the parallels are not exact, the number of dribbles allowed is, indeed, an interesting index of changing attitudes toward liberation.

[Brown 1976: 43]

Although this article is situated in North American society and uses the U.S. educational system for its research, it does raise a number of issues that are applicable to research into British P.E. First it uses historical analysis to inform current theoretical debates [see Chapter Four - Methodology]. Second it recognizes the importance of sport and physical activity for an understanding of feminist theory. Sport and P.E. are identified as being very much a part of women's overall oppression. Finally, and most importantly, it identifies sport and P.E. as having an important part to play in women's cultural resistances and responses to their oppression. Unlike feminist material which largely

ignores P.E. in its analysis of schooling and thus, by default places P.E. in a position of minor importance in the feminist schooling struggle, this article suggests:

As the surprised high priestesses of ceremonial coming of age, women in physical education have a particularly heavy responsibility to help sort out the cultural mythology that limits the lives of all.

[Roberts 1976:57]

This research on gender and girls' P.E. in the British secondary school system suggests, also, that the importance of P.E. within feminist analysis needs to be recognized, by both feminists and physical educationalists concerned to challenge patriarchal power relations both in and through P.E. teaching.

Duquin [1981] continues the debate by placing P.E. within the context of patriarchal power relations, drawing upon "both socialist and radical feminist theory". She concentrates on identifying and examining men's economic and physical power in the P.E. profession and:

the ways our profession impacts on beliefs pertaining to sexuality and sexual function including the role of homophobia in influencing both the material and psychological reality of women's lives.

[Duquin, *ibid.*: 168]

Again this is an important contribution to a feminist understanding of P.E. especially in that it identifies sexuality as of central importance. However sexuality is considered only in relation to homophobia within the P.E. teaching profession and the analysis is not extended to consider P.E. in relation to young women's developing sexuality etc.²⁹ The article, although concentrating on teachers and the P.E. profession is unique in that it does provide a critical analysis which looks at the structures of capitalism and patriarchy as central to the control over women's lives.

Hall does not limit her writing and influence to the field of sport sociology but also contributes to the debates about sexism in P.E. Her major contribution is in a paper entitled 'Intellectual Sexism in Physical Education'. This paper does not approach sexism in P.E. at the level of differentiation and practice but instead sets out to discuss 'identifying and counteracting the blatantly sexist bias within the knowledge base which constitutes our discipline'. In her paper she acknowledges that P.E. is a multidisciplinary field of study drawing on such diverse fields as anatomy, physics, physiology, history, sociology, psychology etc.³⁰ In overviewing literature from each of these fields she concludes:

Thus far in the academic discipline of physical education, we have seen

virtually no recognition that the diverse fields which constitute it are themselves based on andocentric assumptions and resultant biases. In other words, there has been little or no cognizance of the growing feminist perspective particularly within the social sciences and humanities, and more importantly, no sensitivity to how a feminist analysis throws new light on traditional concepts, theories and paradigms.

[Hall 1979:11]

Hargreaves [1982] argues that the P.E. profession in Britain, also, has been traditionally entrenched in the 'scientific and positivistic bias of much sports theory'. Saunders [1976] identifies the knowledge base of P.E. as being the physical, biological and behavioural sciences thus leading to a situation in which:

As a result of the emphasis placed upon the measurable, the observable and the quantifiable, we know very little indeed about the processes of teaching in physical education or of their consequences for children's social and physical identities.

[Evans and Davies 1986:12]

These critiques, which identify the traditional, positivistic, scientific and sexist knowledge base to P.E. are important for they identify a major factor in the explanation of why P.E. has remained resistant to feminist approaches and why feminist analysis has largely ignored P.E. Yet the limited literature on gender and P.E. suggests that it is important i) to

identify the teaching and processes of P.E. which potentially reinforce gender divisions and ii) the need to develop a feminist analysis of P.E. which situates it within the power relations of a capitalist, patriarchal society. It is an awareness of the limited critical research and literature in the field of gender and girls' P.E. that has instigated and informed the current research project.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Introduction

The questions we have to ask then are how and why are gender categories constructed in the way they are? We obviously need an historical analysis to sort out the specificity of our particular version of this dichotomy, our principle of classification, so that we can seek the source of that principle in the changed class relations contained within educational history.

[Arnot 1982:64]

Physical education in secondary schools today has its roots in the secondary schools of the nineteenth century. If the relationship of P.E. to the construction of gender is to be investigated then it seems pertinent to offer a perspective on how and why P.E. has developed as it has and thus locate the source and traditions from which this subject has arisen. Yet the history of P.E. cannot be concerned solely with its relationship to gender divisions within an introspective, insular context. In order to understand the development of P.E. an examination and understanding of the broader changing social, political and economic contexts is necessary. The construction of gender must be viewed alongside class relations, for girls' experiences of schooling were and are dependent on their class position in a developing capitalist society, as well as their position as young women in a patriarchal society.

This chapter sets out to consider the roots of P.E.,

questioning not only what took place throughout its historical development but why certain developments occurred at specific points in time. To answer this latter question it is necessary to place P.E. in the social, political and economic climate of the period while considering its relationship to women's leisure and sporting pursuits, and the changes influencing women's educational opportunities in general. In order to accommodate this broad intention the chapter concentrates on the years of innovation when P.E. first entered the formal institutions of schooling. For it is here that traditions and ideologies fundamental to the ethos and emphases of P.E. found root and grew as the subject became consolidated as an integral part of the schooling system. Yet history is a process and thus the final section of the chapter briefly updates the developments in P.E., particularly within the context of ideologies about women in the schooling system.

Throughout the chapter emphasis is placed on the identification of gender ideologies¹ which have become an integral part of the policies and practices of P.E. More general work on women and schooling has identified the significance of ideologies of femininity, motherhood and sexuality within the schooling system both at the level of policies and practices. It is these categories which are considered in relationship to P.E. The relationship between femininity, motherhood and

sexuality are complex and are concerned with assumptions which have been established and are held around women's 'natural' role, abilities, behaviour and attitudes.

Any historical account is fraught with difficulty. The relationship between official ideology, as stated in laws, documents, texts and practical outcomes, cannot be taken at face value. An overly deterministic analysis does not allow for individual responses and negotiations between schools, teachers and pupils. The outcomes of stated policy do not necessarily match the prescribed intentions. As Deem [1981:132] comments:

It should also be remembered in connection with ideologies about women, that just as policies still have to be interpreted by local authorities, and individual schools, so ideologies still have to be translated into specific policies and practices and this may lead to inconsistencies. Hence, for example, in the case of the educational system, we should not assume that dominant ideologies about women necessarily give rise to uniform practices in schools and amongst teachers.

It is important, however, to identify ideologies about women and consider whether such ideologies have consequences for social practice. While acknowledging that there is no easy relationship between intentions and outcomes, it is reasonable to assume that ideas and images, which are inherent in the structure and development of a subject, have the potential to exert real influence on those who experience its policies and

practices while retaining an awareness of the possibility of contestation.

Girls' Schooling - Nineteenth Century Beginnings

The impetus for increased secondary schooling for girls took place in the second half of the nineteenth century. The term 'secondary schooling' did not apply, as today, to universal provision as a progression from primary schooling after the age of eleven years. As Brehony [1984:2] recognizes:

In essence, secondary education was a social category, which was often used interchangeably with the phrase, 'middle-class education'.

Even following the 1870 Education Act, which provided most children with some kind of free elementary schooling, the opportunities for post primary schooling beyond the age of eleven years were very restricted.² 'Tops' and 'higher grade' schools provided an education beyond the normal elementary years for 'more able' working class children, but this was limited and more usually taken up by the sons rather than the daughters of working class families [Hadow Report 1926]. The Hadow Report [1926:15] cites two schools as examples throwing "an interesting light on the general character and aim of the curriculum" of higher grade schools in the 1880s and 1890s and indicates that there was an absence of

girls from these establishments. Lancaster School was "composed of boys drawn from miles around" and from it "boys, usually between 15 and 16 years of age, were appointed to vacant clerkships at industrial works which frequently led to partnership in the firms later on in life". Similarly, Oswestry School was "largely composed of farmers' sons" of whom many "went afterwards into merchants' offices in Liverpool and elsewhere" [Hadow Report 1926:211]. Where girls did attend these schools, the numbers were very restricted and by the turn of the century the majority of working class girls received little schooling beyond basic elementary instruction [Archer 1921].

By contrast, the 'middle class' nature of secondary schooling had remained intact throughout the century. During the first half, middle and upper class girls were educated at home by governesses or in small private schools. Their curriculum was geared to the acquisition of manners and social skills considered appropriate and necessary for 'ladylike' behaviour [Borer 1976; Kamm 1964; Delamont and Duffin 1978]. Francis Cobbe, who experienced such a school in the 1830s and later was to become an ardent feminist and supporter of higher education for women, wrote in 1904:

The education of women was probably at its lowest ebb about half a century ago. ... It is at that period more pretentious than it had ever been before and

infinitely more costly; and it was likewise more shallow and senseless than can easily be believed.

[quoted in Archer, R.L., 1921:310]

The emphasis in these schools was to produce an "Ornament of Society" [Cobbe:1894] with little regard for developing any other capabilities. The 'revolution' in secondary schooling which occurred from the middle of the nineteenth century was the result of the work and commitment of such women as Francis Cobbe, Emily Davies, Dorothea Beale and Frances Mary Buss. These women challenged the limited opportunities for women in education and pioneered a new outlook, stressing the 'intellectual' and 'academic' potential which they saw as dormant within female capacity. It was in 1864 that the Schools Inquiry Commission included a review of girls' secondary schooling and recommended that endowment money be made available to girls' schools on the same basis as boys' schools. It suggested, also, the upgrading of girls' schools to the standards being met by those headed by Miss Buss [North London Collegiate] and Miss Beale [Cheltenham Ladies College]. It was these two schools that became the forerunners of the new day 'high' schools for girls, established during the second half of the century and resulting in the founding of the Girls' Public Day Schools Company in 1872.⁹ By the turn of the century there were 33 new 'high schools' for middle class girls which offered a comprehensive curriculum including languages, mathematics, science,

geography, history, english, divinity and P.E. [Kamm 1971]. Parallel to this development was the founding of the girls' public schools [e.g. St Leonards 1877; Roedean 1885; Wycombe Abbey 1898] which aimed to provide an education for upper class girls similar to that provided by the boys' public schools.⁴

During the nineteenth century schooling was divided by class and gender. The secondary schooling available remained within the fee-paying sector with little free state provision beyond the age of eleven years. Working class opportunity and experience was restricted in terms both of access and the content of the schooling offered.⁵ Yet the schooling of girls, while separated on class lines, also remained inferior and distinct from that experienced by their brothers. Middle class girls benefitted from the new opportunities won in the battles fought by the pioneering women of the nineteenth century but the concessions achieved were based on an acceptance that girls and women required separate and distinct schooling from boys. In order to understand the basis of this decision, there must be some consideration of the social, economic and political climate of the period.

The nineteenth century Victorian England that witnessed the fight for girls' secondary and higher education had undergone considerable reconstruction in a period of ongoing change and the emergence of the state.

Urbanization and industrial expansion had continued throughout the century producing a newly emergent bourgeoisie which provided an expanded and consolidated middle class group [Banks 1968; Best 1971]. Just as society was differentiated by class, so the differences between the sexes were maximised during this period. The separate spheres of men's and women's lives became clearly demarcated with work being divided between women's domestic work in the home and men's work in the labour market [Hall 1979]. Yet, working class women's lives revolved around the physically arduous toil of work in factories or in paid domestic labour, while also bearing the responsibility for their own home and family. This was in sharp contrast to the leisured lifestyle of the middle class Victorian 'lady' who was confined to her home "cut off from production and economically dependent on a man" [Rowbotham 1973:55]. While patriarchy had been strengthened by the increased economic dependence of women on men, arising out of the separation of the private home sphere from the public work place, it remained experientially distinct for women in different class locations. It was the daughters of the newly emerging middle class families who experienced new opportunities for girls' secondary schooling. The recognition that girls might benefit from a broader, more 'academic' curriculum reflected not only the increasing interest of the emerging feminist movement to women's emancipation, but also the allied

concern that many women in the middle classes would need to support themselves and therefore required improved employment possibilities. Certainly, an expanding and more complex economy in the nineteenth century created an increased demand for labour which could be partly supplied by the newly 'educated' middle class woman.

Educational reforms thus ran parallel to these economic changes with the arrival of the 'new' woman by the turn of the century who was prepared for both work and marriage [Delamont and Duffin 1978]. This 'new' woman while benefitting from increased educational opportunities did not fundamentally challenge many of the values and ideals of womanhood espoused throughout the previous Victorian era. As Graham [1982:74] reflects:

She can benefit from the new opportunities: she can receive a modern education and pursue a profession; she can cycle and play tennis; but she will always remain feminine, both in physical manner and mental outlook.

Gender ideologies may have shifted and adapted to encompass 'new' images of womanhood but they remained powerful constructs continuing to delineate class boundaries for women's behaviour, attitudes and roles. These constructs centred on women's appeal to men (femininity), her role in the family (motherhood/domesticity) and her sexuality.

The definition of middle class womanhood in the nineteenth century emphasized qualities of passivity, gentleness, modesty, dependence and self-sacrifice [Gorham 1982]. The movement for secondary schooling for girls was located within the middle classes and these pioneers were enthusiastic to challenge the image of the nineteenth century 'lady' as a 'symbol of conspicuous leisure and the agent of conspicuous consumption' [Duffin 1978:26]. However, while wanting to present an image that incorporated the ability to undertake and sustain serious academic endeavour, the pioneers of girls' secondary schooling did not challenge the central image of 'femininity' but rather sought to adapt it to incorporate this more academic role [Bradbrook 1969]. The reason for adaptation rather than radical change rested on the general acceptance of a 'natural', biological femininity. Frances Cobbe, herself an ardent feminist involved in women's emancipation typifies this attitude:

The idea that there is a natural incompatibility between classical studies and feminine duties, is indeed an idea venerable for its antiquity and wide diffusion.... Our affair is to give nature its fullest, healthiest play and richest culture, and then the result will be what the Lord of Nature has designed - true Woman: a being not artificially different from a man, but radically and essentially, because naturally different, his complement in the great sum of human nature.

[Quoted in Richardson, 1974:22]

Thus, the curriculum for the new secondary schools sought to establish academic scholarship within a framework of feminine behaviour. The ideology of femininity for middle class women was not radically challenged in the new schooling opportunities, rather it was adapted [Delamont and Duffin 1978]. Indeed, as the twentieth century arrived, concerns about the damaging effects of certain academic subjects gathered momentum. Girls could receive education but only through the study of suitable 'feminine' subjects [Atkinson 1978]. Mounting pressure from both within education and, more significantly, the predominantly male medical profession raised doubts about the studying of such 'masculine' subjects as science and mathematics. Sara Burstall, an early student from the pioneering schools, and later the headteacher of Manchester High School, wrote in 1907 that the study of mathematics should be:

kept to a minimum for girls because of the hardening influence on femininity.

[Dyhouse 1978:25]

Thus, although great strides for women's education were made in the latter part of the nineteenth century with the opening of the Girls Public School Trust schools and some girls' public schools, ideologies of femininity were not seriously challenged by these innovations; rather they were adapted to incorporate an image of the

new 'educated' woman. This image incorporated, also, an ideal concerning the role of women. As Duffin [1978:58] states:

This new ideal for women lay in their role as mothers. The Edwardian image of the perfect mother replaced the Victorian image of the perfect lady.

The primary motivators for this change from the emphasis on 'ladylike' qualities to the importance of motherhood, were the disastrous effects of the Boer War together with a declining birth rate and high infant mortality rate [Dyhouse 1981]. The assumption that motherhood required regulation became established as women were seen to be responsible for the future health, well-being and success of the British race [Davin 1978:13]. The emphasis on women as acceptable wives and companions shifted to stress their function as mothers of the future generation. The emphasis on race regeneration added fuel to the already influential movement opposing the new academic schooling of the middle class young woman. A theory of 'conservation of energy' developed as an extension of Spencer's [1861:170] arguments in the nineteenth century:

For nature is a strict accountant and if you demand of her in one direction more than she is prepared to lay out, she balances the account by making a deduction elsewhere. ... Let it never be forgotten that the amount of vital energy which the body at any moment possesses is limited, and that being limited it is

impossible to get from it more than a fixed quantity of results... By subjecting their daughters to this high pressure system, parents frequently ruin their prospects in life. Besides inflicting on them enfeebled health, with all its pains and disabilities and gloom, they not infrequently doom them to celibacy.

Thus there developed a powerful argument that academic study and mental effort would produce undue and harmful strain on a woman's natural functions - particularly her reproductive capacity. The aims of schooling for working class girls in the elementary schools were clear:

The ultimate aim of a state system of education for girls in the public elementary schools should be to equip them in the best possible way for the duties which will fall to them in later life... and that it (book learning) might, especially in the case of elder girls, be more definitely directed towards arousing interest in and increasing the knowledge of, domestic hygiene, including infant care.

[Lyster R.A. 1908:3]

The proponents of secondary schooling for middle class girls were in a double bind. Although they argued vehemently against the over-strain theory, their belief in the 'naturalness' of woman's biological role remained unquestioned [Davin 1978; Dyhouse 1977]. Newly acquired intellectual skills would contribute to a girl's future role as wife and mother. As Constance Maynard [1914], founder of Westfield College argued, women and men have two distinct roles:

One half of the human race are to be fighters, rulers, explorers, discoverers and builders, and the other half are to make - body, mind and soul - those of the coming generation who are to fight, rule, explore, discover and build.

[Maynard 1914:161]

The ideology of motherhood transcended class boundaries in the schooling of girls in the early twentieth century (although with different emphases) and the maternal image of woman as 'Guardian of the Race' [Bland 1982] remained an integral aspect of the value system, ethos and, inevitably, the curricular priorities and practices of the 'new' girls secondary high schools. Inextricably interwoven with girls' future role as 'Guardian of the Race' was the underlying acceptance that women were responsible, also, for men's sexual behaviour. Women, owing to their weaker sex drive, were responsible for morality through their behaviour and appearance. Thus women required protection, not only from sexually transmitted diseases, but also from potential damage to her vulnerable and fragile body [Bland 1982]. Thus the overstrain theory was implicitly related to the "desire for active supervision of women's sexuality" [Bland 1982:14]. During adolescence girls needed to develop a 'pure' attitude to her body and deportment. The dress of the middle class lady in the latter part of the nineteenth century, epitomized by constraining corsets and stays, highlighted a woman's limited physical

movement and sexuality as she reached adulthood.

The 'new' schools for middle class girls incorporated this ideology. Women as 'moral regenerators of the nation' needed to be taught to be responsible for their sexuality and protected from harmful intrusions and behaviours [Davin 1978:25]. Separate schooling for girls and boys was important in order to keep the sexes separate at the vulnerable stage of adolescence. Girls were encouraged to be genteel and were carefully chaperoned at all times [Kamm 1958; Dyhouse 1981]. Although Victorian dress regulations gradually were eased, there remained an emphasis on neatness, modesty and uniformity. Kamm [1971:79] reports newspaper coverage of a prize giving at Norwich High School in 1896:

The sight which met their gaze was exceedingly pretty. The children, dressed uniformly in white, with tan shoes and brown stockings were ranged on either side of the room in rows rising one above the other. The universe might safely be challenged to show a more refreshing vision of 'budding' womanhood.

The overriding emphasis was to encourage the development of feminine women with high moral standards. Yet there is little evidence of direct teaching on morality or sex

education. Indeed, ignorance was the intended outcome: innocence could be maintained most effectively through ignorance. Developing sexuality in adolescent girls was denied through the emphasis on asexual, uniform clothing. Girls were to remain girls, shielded from womanhood until ready to enter the adult world. The 'new' secondary institutions were primarily female institutions with little overt male influence.⁶ The emphasis was on femininity and motherhood, combined with new ideals of intellectual endeavour. The ideology of sexuality was most powerful in its denial of developing sexuality.

Therefore, it would seem that the feminist cause of improved and increased education for girls, while making considerable progress through the development of day high schools, remained limited by the powerful construction of gender ideologies. Ideologies of femininity, motherhood, domesticity and sexuality were combined to structure the educational experience of girls and young women. Considerable strides forward were made towards more educational opportunities for middle class girls; strides which throughout the twentieth century extended towards working class girls. However, the innovations remained within underlying commonsense assumptions, supported by spurious physiological and psychological evidence, of the biological inevitability of gender differences. It was assumed that girls and

young women should be feminine (albeit that this was a shifting and developing concept) and should be adequately prepared for their 'natural' function as 'responsible' wife and mother. As Fletcher [1979:10] concludes:

This dominant bourgeois ideology was effective in sustaining existing power and class relations but it was not a fixed, abstracted system of beliefs and values, as if contained in a sealed package, but rather an intricate and changing amalgam of conceptions and meanings and ways of thinking.

Women's Sport and Physical Activity in the Nineteenth Century

Women's involvement in physical activity and sport during the nineteenth century mirrored their restricted involvement in the public sphere. Just as society in general was divided by class and gender so too were sporting activities. Yet it is difficult in retrospect to determine the extent to which women participated in physical exercise, for as in so many spheres, women's lives have remained 'hidden from history' [Rowbotham 1973]'. The social, political and economic changes of the nineteenth century, which resulted in the emergence of a consolidated middle class, and the attendant developments in women's social and economic position (see previous section) encouraged parallel innovations in women's participation in physical exercise. For

working class women the physically demanding, arduous toil of paid and domestic labour left little time, energy or opportunity to engage in formalised leisure pursuits.⁹ It is the history of these working class women, however, which has remained most hidden and consequently it is difficult to discuss with any certainty their lived experiences. Given their subordinate position in both work and family situations and the growing contemporary literature which describes their conditions and experiences, particularly of motherhood and childbirth, it seems likely that any involvement in formal exercise or sport was seriously restricted.

Their middle class sisters, however, enjoyed increased opportunities for sport and recreation throughout the nineteenth century. The 'cultured', 'ornamental' activities of the early years gradually gave way to increased freedom and physical competence [Hargreaves 1979]. These early years show women as elegant ornaments spectating and supporting the sporting gentry. Veblen, writing in 1899, describes women as:

... bound by a code of behaviour as tight as the stays she was compelled to wear.

[cited in Hargreaves 1979:54]

They were expected to accompany their menfolk but could not participate. Lowerson's [1983] description of golf

during the mid-nineteenth century demonstrates the male attitude to women's participation in sport:

It was claimed that they (women) were too weak and slow to play properly and that their inevitable chatter would disturb the seriousness of the men's game; in addition the sway of the figure and the sight of exposed ankles would put men off their stroke.

(Similar arguments have been cited in the 1980s to restrict women's participation in darts tournaments!) Gentle games that would suit women's 'innate' temperament (e.g. croquet) were encouraged and middle class women could be seen as engaging in 'conspicuous recreation' just as they were defined as 'conspicuous consumptive' [Hargreaves 1979].

Hargreaves [1979:62] distinguishes two main forms for middle class women's sport during the latter part of the nineteenth century which 'co-existed and overlapped one another': 'conspicuous recreation' for the 'ladylike, fashionable and physically limited' (croquet being the prime example) and 'sporting elitism' for the gentlewoman (hunting, shooting, riding etc.). The rationalization of sporting activities into more organized, competitive forms took place towards the end of the nineteenth century with the development of activities such as hockey, lacrosse, golf, tennis etc. The most noticeable feature of these developments was that, just as women's place in society and education

remained informed by commonsense assumptions around women's 'natural' abilities, so their sporting activities, associations and championships remained bound by the same powerful ideological constructs. These images and ideas were not solely attitudes in the minds of women and men but were experienced in the material conditions of their existence. Women became more physically active but their physical activity was acceptable only if it did not challenge their femininity, sexuality or motherhood role. In many ways sport not only incorporated these images but became a vehicle for their transmission.

This was exemplified most clearly in the development of women's golf.⁹ The first women's golf union was formed in 1893, resulting in the first 'national ladies' tournament that same year [Mason 1983]. However there were strict rules for women playing golf in the newly formed clubs. As Lowerson [1983: 22] reports:

They could only play at inconvenient weekday times, rarely on Sundays and never when male competitions were being held; women playing had to give way to men.

Central to women's primary 'feminine' qualities was their subordination and, ultimately, their inferiority to men. Women, therefore, were expected to 'give way' to men at all times, implying that for them sport was of only secondary importance. From the beginning, women

played off nine-holes only and had a shortened tee. Despite these restrictions on women's golf, some women steadfastly refused to accept the limitations imposed on them by the male sporting world. Certainly there is some evidence of suffragette opposition to their treatment, when in 1913 they attacked Lloyd George's golf course and poured vitriol on to the greens! [Lowerson 1983].

The development of restricted and adapted forms of various sports, implicitly accepted that women were physically inferior to men and thus needed their own less demanding forms of organization. An equally powerful argument for limited participation in sport was that women's dress would not allow for anything but restricted forms of physical activity. The desirable body shape of a Victorian woman was achieved by expanding the breasts and hips whilst constricting the waist to its narrowest extreme. This shape was the symbol of beauty and 'femininity' and was eagerly sought by middle class and upper class women. In order to achieve this contortion, appropriate dress style was invented. Thus women wore crinolines and bustles which were supported by corsets and tightly-laced stays.¹⁰ Such restricted garments did not allow for any freedom of physical movement and created real problems for women's health and body development. Initial entry of women into the sporting world was made within the context of such restraints and it is little wonder that

they remained spectators or participated only in gentle exercise. The influence of 'rational' dress reforms of the late nineteenth century contributed to the rationalization of sporting activities for women.¹¹ Feminists and suffragettes recognized dress restrictions as a major block on women's social and political emancipation. However it was the advent of a new popular sporting activity in the 1880s which "did more to promote female dress reform than any other single factor" [Hargreaves 1979:68] and consequently furthered women's cause towards increased sex equality. The safety bicycle provided the pioneering women of the nineteenth century with the opportunity to reconstruct women's dress and, ultimately, to allow women a new physical freedom. As Frances Willard recollected in 1895:

If women ride they must, when riding, dress more rationally than they have been wont to do. If they do this many prejudices as to what they may be allowed to wear will melt away. Reason will gain upon precedent, and ere long the comfortable, sensible and artistic wardrobe of the rider will make the conventional style of women's dress absurd to the eye and unendurable to the understanding.

[cited in Twin S. 1979: 105]

Thus new forms of dress were necessary for the safe riding of the bicycle. These included the adoption of bifurcated garments such as bloomers, knickerbockers and shorter divided skirts [Hargreaves 1979; Pointon 1978]. This unprecedented freedom encouraged more rational

dress for women in other sporting activities and other spheres of their lives. Innovatory developments in women's dress and activities, however, were opposed not least because they challenged traditional modes of behaviour which were implicitly linked with notions of morality. Consequently, women accepted this change in style of dress with caution and many became 'inconspicuous' cyclists, cycling as unobtrusively as possible [Hargreaves 1979: 70].

Dress reforms, then, provided a measure of liberation for women yet they tended towards an adaptation and accommodation of 'femininity' rather than a serious challenge to it. Willard [1898: 618] had explained:

Ladies dress is always more or less of a trial when taking exercise, and the blessings of our sex would be heaped upon anyone who could invent a practical comfortable and withal becoming costume. It must be becoming or very few of us would wear it.

Women wanted greater freedom in mobility but were wary of achieving this at the expense of their femininity. As dress reforms became popularized women's position became compromised. For if they engaged in new sporting activities, adopting unconventional dress, they were becoming, at best, de-feminized and, at worst, immoral. Despite this real pressure more and more women responded to the challenge and, by the beginning of the twentieth century, women were engaged in far more physical

activity than they had been fifty years before. They did so in new adapted forms and in new styles of dress but within a 'feminine ideal' which gradually shifted to accommodate such changes. Pointon [1978:33] suggests that a woman engaged in new physical activities "seemed compelled to add a feminine artefact to her dress and wear something on her head". Photographs of sportswomen at the turn of the century support this view [Grenville Lady 1894; Cunningham and Mansfield 1969].

So far the historical discussion has shown women's increased involvement in both the secondary education system and the world of physical exercise and sport. In both spheres the gains made incorporated basic commonsense assumptions based on biological explanations of women's behaviour, attitudes, roles etc. supported by 'scientific' evidence. It is the fusion of these two areas to which we must turn in order to consider the development of physical activity within education and the eventual establishment of physical education. For it is in the climate of the nineteenth century, with its social, political and economic changes, that contemporary P.E. has its roots. The experiences of the twentieth century were born in the pioneering schools of the late nineteenth century and in the sporting world of the middle class 'lady'.

The Historical Development of Physical Education

The Foundations of Girls' P.E.

To the importance of bodily exercise most people are in the same degree awake. Perhaps less needs saying on this requisite of physical education than on most others; at any rate, in so far as boys are concerned.

[Spencer 1861:151-152]

Spencer notes an 'astonishing difference' between the 'natural spontaneous activity' prevalent in boys' education and the limited system of 'factitious exercise - gymnastics' which appeared the sole provision in female educational establishments. He argued that the justification for physical education was for health and happiness and considered that:

For girls, as well as boys, the sportive activities to which the instincts impel, are essential to bodily welfare. Whoever forbids them, forbids the divinely-appointed means to physical development.

[Spencer *ibid.*: 155]

He considered the link between mind and body as essential to the development of P.E. and argued that the effects of intellectual study and over-concentration of the mind, without similar commitment to the health of the body, was extremely damaging.

Being in great measure debarred from those vigorous and enjoyable exercises of body by which boys mitigate the evils of excessive study, girls feel these evils in their full intensity. Hence, the much smaller proportion of them who grow up well made and healthy. In the pale, angular, flat-chested young ladies, so abundant in London drawing rooms, we see the effect of merciless application, unrelieved by youthful sports; and this physical degeneracy hinders their welfare far more than their many accomplishments.

[Ibid.:186-187]

Physical degeneracy and the importance of nature were fundamental considerations in Spencer's writing. While a major proclamaunt of Social Darwinism and the theory of conservation of energy, his emphasis on a healthy body and a sound mind was in no way incompatible with his desire to see an improved system of physical education for girls. As Hargreaves [1979] notes, these two issues were complementary and by the 1860s such sentiments had been established and accepted as a major educational theme.

At the time Spencer was making his observations only minimal physical exercise was provided in the limited schooling available for older girls. The private schools and establishments included little more than callisthenics or gentle exercises. This was borne out by the Schools Inquiry Commission [1868], which examined one hundred private schools for girls and disclosed that, while thirty two provided nothing but callisthenics, sixty offered only "walking abroad,

croquet and dancing". During the 1850s the first two day high schools for girls were founded at North London Collegiate [1850] and Cheltenham Ladies College [1853]. It was in the climate of such restricted opportunities for girls that P.E. was developed. The growth of P.E. was paralleled and influenced by changes in the position of women in society and the increased involvement of women in physical exercise and sporting activity in general (see previous sections). However, change did not occur swiftly or without fierce opposition. Battles over physical activity for women were fought both in and outside educational settings and, as the following section will discuss, were implicitly linked to ideas and commonsense assumptions held about women's 'natural' and desirable characteristics.

Moreover, the fact that changes did occur was partly due to the development of a newly devised system of Swedish exercises¹² and the work of Martina Bergman-Osterberg¹³. In 1879 Concordia Lofving was invited by the London School Board to introduce the Ling System into London Schools. After one year, Martina Bergman [later Bergman-Osterberg], replaced her in the post and began to organize and train teachers in the Swedish system. When she left this post in 1887 she had trained 1,312 teachers in this method and almost all the Board Schools were familiar with the Ling system.

However it was Bergman-Osterberg's opening of a training college for teachers of physical education, in Hampstead in 1885, (later to move to Dartford in 1895), which exerted the greatest influence on the teaching of P.E. in secondary schools. This was the forerunner of the many specialist teacher training establishments [e.g. 1897 Anstey; 1903 Bedford; 1895 Chelsea; 1900 I.M. Marsh] which provided teachers of P.E. for the girls' day high schools and girls' public schools.¹⁴ The initial aim was to introduce Ling's scientific movement into the school curriculum and replace the callisthenics and musical drill which remained the main exercise for girls in most schools. In 1899 Bergman-Osterberg extolled the virtues of a female physical education teacher as follows:

Let us once and for all discard man as a physical trainer of woman... let us send the drill sargeant right-about-face to his awkward squad. This work we women do better, as our very success in training depends upon our having felt like women, able to calculate the possibilities of our sex, knowing our weakness and our strength.

[cited in Fletcher 1984:31]

The two year course at the college included gymnastics, outdoor games, swimming, fencing, anatomy, physiology, hygiene, medical gymnastics, theory of movement, anthropometry and practical teaching of P.E. [Hargreaves 1979: 156]. A comprehensive and balanced system of P.E. had been devised and gradually its influence filtered

into the secondary schools.

From the outset the introduction of team games was controversial. The first girls' High schools, at North London Collegiate and Cheltenham Ladies College and headed by the Misses Buss and Beale respectively, had quickly adopted Swedish exercises into their curriculum but were more reticent about the value of team games. As Burstall [1907] commented:

Organised games did not come at once; that would have been too great a breach of continuity with the past; but when, about 1880 to 1890, college women began to come into the schools as assistant and head mistresses, they brought games with them, the games they had learned to appreciate at college.

[cited in Atkinson 1978:113]

The acceptance of team games in schools was linked with developments in women's recreation and the organization of outdoor sports throughout Britain. Miss Buss was more enthusiastic about team games than her colleague at Cheltenham, which reflected the different school philosophies. She enthusiastically introduced a games club during the dinner break and by the 1890s she included several outdoor games - hockey, netball, tennis - in the widening P.E. curriculum. Miss Beale was less committed to team games and initially opposed their inclusion in the curriculum. However, mounting pressure eventually forced Miss Beale to concede and in 1896 she

ordered the acquisition of land in order to develop playing fields. By the late 1890s the students were playing rounders, cricket and hockey [Kamm 1958; McCrone 1982].

The new girls' public schools were more enthusiastic about outdoor games and they adopted many features of their male counterparts, including their emphasis on team games with their esprit de corps, morality and character building potential [Mangan 1982]. Penelope Lawrence [1898:145], headmistress of Roedean, saw the "close connection between a strong, vigorous, well-balanced body with a strong, vigorous and well-balanced mind". She considered games to be "more satisfactory than any other exercise" and were very important in "training character". Cricket, hockey, tennis, fives and rounders were all played at Roedean by the turn of the century [ibid. 1898:146]. Whilst Roedean placed most emphasis on games and physical activity, similar developments were taking place at other boarding schools e.g. St Leonards; Wycombe Abbey and St. Andrews [McCrone 1978].

By the early years of the twentieth century a comprehensive system of P.E. involving organized games and Swedish gymnastics was accepted gradually by the girl's secondary schools [Hargreaves 1979]. It was the middle class establishments which were the prime

recipients of these innovations. Older girls in the elementary system did benefit from the initial work of Bergman-Osterberg in the London Board of Schools and eventually the Ling system of exercises was established throughout most elementary schools in England and Wales [McIntosh 1952]. However, facilities for outdoor games, plus expertise in teaching, were lacking in most of the schools for working class girls and it took many years before they could benefit from a more thorough system of P.E.

The development of women's P.E. was associated with various factors; the changing economic system; increased opportunities in women's sporting activities; the innovations of the Swedish system of exercise and later the development of specialist teacher training establishments. The ethos around games-playing transferred from the male public boarding schools to the new girls' public schools with a general commitment to and concern for health and physical welfare of the body. This final association was fundamental in the introduction of P.E. to secondary schools and was to continue throughout its future development. Just as Spencer [1896] had emphasized the importance of health and the relationship between a healthy mind and a healthy body, so the early physical educationalists related their work to scientific principles of medicine. From the beginning they incorporated remedial and

therapeutic work into their programmes of physical exercise. Teachers of P.E., leaving the newly formed teacher training colleges, were qualified to teach P.E. in schools and to undertake work in remedial gymnastics, massage and therapeutic activities in private clinics or hospitals. In schools this association with medicine encouraged regular physical examinations and medical inspections both by school doctors and P.E. staff. As Hargreaves [1979:175] argues:

.... good health was the conditional starting point for the education of girls, and the physical education mistress became established as the schools' supreme caretaker of girls' bodies.

The influence of the predominantly male medical profession continued into the twentieth century. The formal links between medical practitioners and physical education in the girls' high schools were somewhat tenuous. However as P.E. slowly filtered into the state system, the influence of the medical department of the Board of Education, set up in 1908 under Sir George Newman, became far more important. From this time the supervision of physical training was in the hands of the medical department, which became responsible for recommendations and the establishment of syllabuses which directed the teaching in the schools¹⁵.

By 1914 and the outbreak of the Great War, P.E. was

established formally within the secondary school system for girls. It was a relatively comprehensive system including gymnastics, swimming, outdoor games and some dancing. In the elementary system, older girls were less fortunate, although many received instruction in the Swedish system and there were similar emphases on the therapeutic nature of such exercise [McIntosh 1952]. These were the foundations from which the comprehensive system of physical education emerged in the post 1944 'secondary education for all' era. Before considering what changes occurred in P.E. during this gradual increase in provision of secondary schooling, it is necessary to look a little more critically at these foundations as they have been described. As with the emergence of opportunities for girls' secondary schooling in general, it is important to consider the ideological framework which incorporated these developments. P.E. did not enter the schooling system in a vacuum. Its entrance was affected by, and dependent upon, gender and class ideologies which influenced the material outcomes of its development. Class differentiation resulted in a privileged school situation where the daughters of the middle and the upper classes were the first to obtain the opportunities to exercise and develop their bodies in a way that previously would have been impossible. Yet ideologies about gender cut across class boundaries. Whereas working class girls were restricted due to their class

location, all girls experienced a system of physical activity developed according to ideas and images held about desirable and acceptable gender specific behaviour, role and characteristics. These gender images were defined differently according to specific class locations but it is the gender ideologies of middle-class femininity, motherhood and sexuality which underpinned the foundation and development of a comprehensive system of girls' physical education.

Femininity

This priority of bodily training is common to both sexes but it is directed to a different object. In the case of boys the object is to develop strength, in the case of girls to bring about their charms... Women need enough strength to act gracefully, men enough skill to act easily.

[Rousseau (quoted in Archer 1964: 221)]

As previous sections of this chapter have shown, the image of the Victorian 'lady' was that of a weak helpless creature who "was incapable and ultimately disabled such that she must be protected and prohibited from serious participation in society" [Duffin 1978:26]. It was the myth of 'woman as invalid' [Ehrenrich and English 1975] which was challenged by the early feminists in order to establish access to schooling, higher education and, ultimately, the social and economic liberation of women¹⁶. Women's 'physical'

liberation was an important aspect of the feminist cause, for some of the key characteristics of 'femininity', which needed to be challenged, related to women's supposed 'natural' physical inferiority, weakness and passivity. The demand for educational opportunities for women attempted to negate the notion of incompatibility between femininity and learning. Indeed, women needed to be shown as physically fit enough to undertake sustained mental work. The philosophy of a 'fit mind in a fit body' was fundamental to the beginnings of middle class girls' secondary schooling. Yet it remains in doubt just how far the development of P.E. challenged the views of Rousseau, that bodily training needed to be quite different for girls than for boys. This philosophy was based on biological explanations of sex differences, with the emphasis for girls on developing 'charm' and 'grace' - attributes essential for a 'feminine' woman. The 'establishments' for young ladies in the early years of the nineteenth century certainly used physical exercise to this end. Ladylike accomplishments, so much the purpose of this limited schooling, emphasized physical exercise for young women to develop the grace and beauty befitting a lady [Fletcher 1984; Hargreaves 1979]. Cobbe [1894] recalls:

Beside the dancing we had 'callisthenic' lessons every week from a "Capitaine". Somebody, who puts us through manifold exercises with poles and dumbbells. How

much better a few country scrambles would have been than all these callisthenics it is needless to say, but our dismal walks were confined to parading the esplanade and neighbouring terraces...

[quoted in Murray 1982:201-202]

This was the accepted physical exercise for all middle/upper class women, as reflected in Donald Walker's [1834] treatise 'Exercises for Ladies'. This encouraged 'ladies' to use their recreation to develop 'ladylike' qualities of beauty and deportment, using wands and dumb-bells in gentle swinging movements.

These then were the limitations on physical exercise for women as the new secondary day schools became established from the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed Dorothea Beale, giving evidence to the Schools Inquiry Commission in 1868, suggested that:

the vigorous exercise which boys get from cricket must be supplied in the case of girls by walking and callisthenic exercises.

[1868:740 emphasis added.]
[School Inquiry Commission]

During the late nineteenth century, the introduction of Swedish gymnastics became an integral part of P.E. programmes for girls in secondary schooling. While this represented a shift towards a more energetic system of movements than previously promoted by callisthenics, it retained a commitment to the ideology of women's

'natural', biologically-determined abilities. Ling, who introduced and developed the Swedish system, emphasized the importance of maintaining the 'natural' abilities of women without inducing undue strain or unwelcome physical changes. Central to his system was the assumption that women's:

... physiological predisposition demands less vigorous treatment. The law of beauty is based purely on the conception of line and must not be abused. The rounded forms of women must not be transformed into angularity or nodosity such as in man.

[quoted in Webb 1967:49; emphasis added]

The pre-set, presumably biological, 'law of beauty', together with women's 'natural' predisposition to 'rounded forms' were the taken-for-granted assumptions held by those in the development, and which lay at the heart of, the ideology of biology underpinning the institutionalization of P.E. for girls.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the introduction of team games into girls' public schooling, as we have seen initiated by the developing public schools (Roedean, Wykeham Abbey, St. Leonards) offered a much stronger challenge to assumptions and images of femininity. Indeed the vigorous physical activity needed for team games was the antithesis of femininity. Yet while imitating the boys' public schools, the inclusion of team games was premised on the assumption that girls

needed to be given different experiences. At no time was there a consideration of providing the same physical activities as those enjoyed by their public school brothers. The games of the girls' public schools remained within the boundaries of acceptable 'feminine' behaviour. This does not deny that changes in the definition of 'femininity' were taking place. As discussed earlier, by the late nineteenth century the new 'high schools' and the girls' public schools represented a real challenge to the Victorian ideal of the 'feminine' woman. Yet, as has been shown, Lawrence [1898] stressed that they must "rigorously exclude games with vulgar and vicious associations" and whilst the 'new' woman engaged in games these were adapted or foreshortened. Ultimately there was an acceptance of innate physical differences between men and women, thus limiting girls' access to sports which stressed endurance, strength or physical contact [McCrone 1982]. Consequently, 'male' sports were adapted to accommodate women's 'innate' abilities and new sports were introduced, such as netball, lacrosse and hockey, which "did not carry the stigma of overt masculinity" [McCrone *ibid.*:28].

These developments to incorporate team games into the school curriculum received opposition from both within and outside the school system. Dorothea Beale, while encouraging the development of girls' opportunities in

schooling, was vehemently opposed to outdoor games and competition in general. She "grudgingly allowed for the introduction of team games but would not allow inter-school competition" [Atkinson 1978]. Her position was clear:

... I am most anxious the girls should not over-exert themselves, or become absorbed in athletic rivalries, and therefore we do not play against other schools.

[quoted in Kamm 1958:223]

Her dislike for games and competition reflected her view that they were incompatible with womanliness. Gentility and dignity were high priorities throughout all aspects of girls' schooling at Cheltenham and these, it was feared, would be challenged by competitive physical exercise. Games were equated with masculinity and were antithetical to desirable female characteristics.

In contrast, at St. Leonards, games were seen to encourage beauty, grace and good health. Indeed it was asserted that girls could play very rough games without becoming unwomanly [Macaulay J. (ed.) 1977]. Thus, the issue was not concerned with the desirability of reinforcing or encouraging 'femininity' or 'womanly qualities', rather the arguments focused on whether games playing could occur without serious challenge of incompatibility towards femininity.

As the twentieth century arrived team games had become accepted into many 'high' schools and most girls' public schools. Their acceptance was counterbalanced by an emphasis on 'ladylike' qualities when off the playing field. The histories of the training of women P.E. teachers illustrate this point most effectively [Fletcher 1984; Crunden 1974]. As Miss Dove, who was headmistress of both St. Leonards School and Wykeham Abbey School stated to a colleague:

Your girls play like gentlemen, and behave like ladies.

[quoted in Hargreaves 1979:138]

Therefore, it can be seen that the system of P.E. incorporating games and gymnastics, accommodated commonsense assumptions about femininity by offering different opportunities to girls for physical exercise. These opportunities involved negotiation and compromise but, ultimately, adapted to, rather than fundamentally challenged, biologically determined arguments relating to women's physical ability and capacity. The ethos of 'different' P.E. for girls was firmly established during the early years of P.E. development.

Motherhood

As has been shown, the ideology of motherhood, with its central image of woman as 'Guardian of the Race', was an

integral part of the ethos of the development of girls' secondary schooling. The concern was for the encouragement of healthy growth in mind and body in order to ensure the health and well-being of the future generation. As discussed earlier, the relationship between physical education and health was emphasized from its inception. Bergmann-Osterberg was committed to stressing the Laws of Health and this became central to the training of P.E. teachers in the new teacher training colleges founded around the turn of the century. She is quoted as saying:

If every mother and every teacher had a rational understanding of the value of physical exercise, based on anatomical and physiological laws; if to this was added a practical knowledge of personal hygiene, a long step would be taken to solve some of our present difficulties and problems.

[Fletcher 1984:35]

Miss Anstey at Anstey college had similar objectives, as Crunden [1974:7] notes:

Her aims were strongly vocational and her belief that the value of gymnastics was as a means to influence standards of health through the country led to a strong remedial bias in her approach. To train students to improve the quality of health in girls' schools throughout the country was of supreme importance, as these girls were to be the future mothers of the race.

Most people concerned with the schooling of girls

welcomed this concern for health and hygiene. The critics of and opponents to many of the new initiatives in girls' schools stressed, primarily, the problem of overstrain. Initially the introduction of Swedish gymnastics did little to present opposition to this view. The Ling system emphasized the scientific basis of exercise, with its overriding emphasis on remedial and therapeutic exercise. Herbert Spencer [1861:169] bemoaned the fact that girls received little effective physical activity in their schooling. He asked:

Is it that the constitution of a girl differs so entirely from a boy as to not need these active exercises?

Yet, it became apparent that Spencer's concern was primarily for girls to receive P.E. to ensure the production of a healthy woman for the reproduction of healthy children and thus the maintenance of the race. The Ling system did not challenge these views, rather it actually promoted qualities of caring and helping others through the remedial aspects of physical education. These were qualities directly associated with the ideal of 'perfect' motherhood.

Bergmann-Osterberg herself, while a progressive pioneer of increased female opportunity, left no doubt as to her own eugenic sympathies. Her primary concern for the future teaching of P.E. reiterated eugenic arguments about race regeneration:

I try to train my girls to help raise their own sex, and so to accelerate the progress of the race; for unless the women are strong, healthy, pure and true, how can the race progress.

[quoted in May 1969:52]

McCrone [1982:7] argues that these first initiatives in P.E. had as their main intention:

to preserve and improve women's health and thus heighten their chances of producing healthy children: it had nothing to do with freeing women from traditional restrictions on bodily movement.

Yet the future developments in P.E. were a more complex interaction between the encouragement of vigorous sporting exercise, hitherto unacceptable behaviour for 'young ladies', and the continuing emphasis on its relationship to health and future motherhood. It was these initiatives which created a more serious backlash from the opponents of girls' secondary and higher education. They challenged the claim that girls could undertake such energetic exercise without overstrain and serious bodily damage. Dr Mary Scarlieb writing in 1911, summed up this opinion:

Doctors and schoolmistresses observe that excessive devotion to athletics and gymnastics tends to produce what may perhaps be called the 'neuter' type of girl... Her figure, instead of developing to full feminine grace, remains childish... she is flat-chested, with a

badly developed bust, her hips are narrow and in too many instances, there is a corresponding failure of function.

[quoted in Dyhouse 1981:130]
[emphasis added]

This view was supported by Dr Murray Leslie who suggested that hockey playing might result in the inability to breastfeed in later life [Dyhouse 1976:46] and Arabella Kenealy who argued strongly against the physical and mental exercise of girls, which she professed would result in 'sex extinction' [Kenealy 1920]. Even some of the original supporters of secondary schooling for girls expressed concern about these developments in physical activity. Sara Burstall, herself a product of the 'new' high schools and later to become headmistress of Manchester High School, wrote:

Important as are bodily vigour and active strength... in the men of a country who may have to endure the supreme test of physical fitness in war the vitality and passive strength - potential energy - of its women are even more important, since Nature has ordained women to be the mothers of the race.

[Burstall 1907:90]

The relationship between P.E. and health, and the continuous concern for the development of healthy womanhood [i.e. healthy motherhood] was fundamental to the development of a systematic, comprehensive physical education programme. The opposition to physical education, primarily from the medical profession, did

not remain at the level of attitudes. It was recognized as legitimate, by the incorporation of medical supervision and medical inspection into the everyday organization of P.E. in the schools.¹⁷ Thus, it became institutionalized. While on the one hand P.E. developed as a progressive movement, increasing women's physical opportunities, it did so within the boundaries of medical concern for women's future health. Girls were encouraged to become more physically active in order to promote good health and remedy weakness or physical deformity. However, behind these progressive moves was the concern not to cause damage to their reproductive organs and to protect and guarantee their future role as mothers. The adoption of limited and adapted games not only reinforced an ideology of femininity but was premised also on an ideology of motherhood. The pioneers of P.E. were careful to tread a fine line between gradually increasing physical freedom without challenging the biologically determined assumptions of women's primary function in life - motherhood.

Woman as mother was fundamental, also, within the ethos of physical education training in the new teacher training colleges. The P.E. colleges encouraged an atmosphere of family life with the principal as 'mother' shepherding her flock. As Fletcher [1984:59] discovered, when researching the history of Bedford College:

the family spirit, even at the start with only thirteen students, was at least as much a reflection of attitudes as it was of numbers.

A system of college 'mothers' was instigated throughout all the colleges, whereby older students 'mothered' the new intake of first year students [Hargreaves 1979]. As Fletcher [1984:69] so aptly states:

Generations of students were lapped in this warm amniotic fluid.

Thus the ideology of motherhood was as deeply rooted in the ethos of P.E. training as it was in the development of physical activity for girls. The combination of these two factors resulted in secondary school girls receiving a P.E. curriculum that was underpinned by institutionalized assumptions as to their primary function and future role as mothers.

Sexuality

From the earliest years of physical education in high schools there was a general commitment to the moral connotations of physical education. The emphasis on morality as an aim of P.E. teaching was generally recognized. Woodhouse, headmistress of Sheffield High School reported in 1898 that:

moral effects are of greater importance than any increase of measurement or of

muscular vigour.

[Special Reports on Educ. Subj. 1898:133]

This was reiterated by her colleague Penelope Lawrence at Roedean who considered that the "moral influence [of P.E.] for girls is of greatest value" [ibid.: 145]. What was meant by morality encompassed all forms of exemplary behaviour and standards concerned with appearance, discipline, conduct, clothing, social graces etc. Above all else they were expected to demonstrate respectability through their behaviour and general demeanour. As noted previously, female sexuality during the period when physical education laid its foundations was seen to require 'responsibility' and 'protection'. Women's sexuality needed regulation if women were to fulfil successfully their future female adult role. Fletcher [1984] describes the training of P.E. teachers in the early colleges as a 'peter pan world' that was both long and sexless. This supposedly 'sexless' world is significant for it was the values developed through teacher training which filtered into the teaching of P.E. in the secondary schools.

Both Crunden [1974] and Fletcher [1984], in their histories of Anstey College and Bedford College, report an emphasis on 'petty' discipline in an atmosphere often described by past students as a convent or a nunnery. The 'sexless' world of P.E. training in the early years involved no contact with the opposite sex, no male

visitors and a general emphasis on morality and modesty. Modesty was an essential aspect of femininity - the desirable behaviour and attitude of 'young ladies'. Ideal femininity at the turn of the century was synonymous with female sexuality [Jackson 1982]. Ideally, women's sexuality was hidden or denied and the training of P.E. teachers stressed a particular ideology of female sexuality in both its 'formal' curriculum and the 'hidden', underlying ethos of the courses. This latter ideological role of the training was stressed by Bergman-Osterberg:

The girls when they leave me are entirely different creatures. Their physical capacity has developed surprisingly; but what is far more striking, is the improvement in mind and character.

[cited in May 1969:110-111]

An improvement in 'mind and character' was developed through the encouragement of 'standards' of discipline, neatness, self-control, respect for authority, dedication and service to others. In 1905 the Anstey College of Physical Training Magazine reported that the main aims of physical training included:

Regular attendance, good behaviour throughout the year, and general improvement in all respects.
Smart personal appearance shown by general care of the body as regards hair, teeth, skin, nails, clothing, and good health.
Good posture when standing and sitting and good carriage in walking.

Attention to word of command, absence of mistakes and vigorous work in the gymnasium. General forms and style of movement, sense of time, self-control and power of relaxation.

[Crundon 1974:19]

Swedish gymnastics, with its emphasis on "precision and smartness" [Lawrence 1898], provided the perfect activity to encourage these 'standards'. Gymnastics encouraged increased moral consciousness and health through its emphasis on remedial and therapeutic work. A notion of 'service' to others was implicit and training involved work in local clinics, orphanages and, at Anstey, the taking of classes at Public Elementary Schools. Future teachers of P.E., therefore, were encouraged into a role of 'helper'. They were learning to service others, just as in later life they would service husband and children. Interestingly games playing, both in the colleges and in the high schools, encouraged a similar servicing role. Whereas the boys of the public schools and grammar schools were being taught leadership qualities through character building exercises on the playing fields, their sisters were encouraged into team games to develop a moral consciousness relating to the unquestioned discipline of rules and regulations. Penelope Lawrence [1895] considered games as "more satisfactory than any other exercise". Their importance lay in their ability to train character and thus involved an education "in obedience to law and in acting together to a common

end". Young men were encouraged into games "to make a man of you" [Springhall 1985]. Leadership, dominance, decision-making were promoted on the rugby pitch and cricket field. Games playing developed their masculinity and adult masculinity was intrinsically associated with mature male sexuality. Boys needed to develop a form of sexuality involving activity, initiative and control in order to develop into acceptable manhood. For girls sexually appropriate behaviour involved modesty, passivity and responsibility. While team games allowed for energetic activity, they were controlled by restricted direct contact with other players or the hockey/lacrosse ball. These games were acceptable because there was an implement between the ball and the player. Physical contact was taboo on the playing field and within the gymnasium. Netball, while allowing contact with the ball, was adapted for girls in its restriction of space, reduction in speed and avoidance of physical contact. "In all activities girls' bodies are extended and constrained in this choreography of their future which they learn unconsciously in legs, arms, hands, feet and torso" [Okeley 1979:132]. Women needed 'protection', not only for their future reproductive function, but from any hint of sexual contact or sexual awareness. They were responsible for maintaining modesty and the connections between childhood, femininity and asexuality were supported by physical education. The opposition to girls playing team

games was linked clearly to the concern that it would affect their development into ideal femininity and moral womanhood. The image of women faced two directions - the virgin or the whore [Jackson 1982]. By undertaking 'masculine' pursuits young women would be in danger of developing 'masculinity'. Thus, the pioneers of physical education trod the new path to physical activity with restraint. They, at no time, challenged the ideology of women's sexuality and were careful to adapt and encourage new physical pursuits which could incorporate this ideology and thus contribute to its continuation.

The existence of limitations to the new found freedom of physical exercise, imposed by assumptions around young women's developing sexuality, was most apparent in the reforms in women's dress and clothing which, as discussed earlier, took place at the turn of the century. P.E. contributed to these innovations by the development of the gymslip and tunic which allowed for greater freedom of movement than previously had been considered socially acceptable or sexually appropriate. Yet these changes retained an emphasis on modesty and carefully masked any hint of the developing sexuality of young women. As Okeley [1979:131] reports:

.... our bodies were invisible, anaesthetised and protected for one man's intrusion later. As female flesh and curves, we were concealed by the uniform. Take the traditional gymslip - a barrel shape with deep pleats designed to hide

breasts, waist, hips and buttocks, giving freedom of movement without contour.

Morality and modesty - sexually appropriate behaviour - remained the firm responsibility of girls and young women through their appearance and behaviour. Physical education, although liberating women from many bodily restrictions and conventions of dress, was careful to protect the sexuality of young women with a reaffirmation of 'feminine' modesty and 'desirable' dignity.

From this excursion into the history of the origins of P.E. it is apparent that ideologies of femininity, motherhood and sexuality underly the development of P.E. and have become integrated into its traditions and practice. It is important to recognize that the development of P.E. in secondary schools for girls was not simply a progressive movement which contributed to women's increased access to physical activity and the experience of freedom of movement. The development of P.E. did not occur in isolation but reflected the social, political and economic position of women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was part of the move towards increased educational opportunities for women and the demand for more sport and leisure activities. Ideologies about women's ability, role and behaviour became institutionalized within the P.E. profession such that secondary school

girls experienced a subject which, on the one hand contributed to their liberation in terms of dress, opportunities for physical activity, and access to a future profession, but, on the other hand, reaffirmed clear physical sex differences, their future role as mother and the boundaries and limitations of women's sexuality. Furthermore, working class girls had to wait many years before they could begin to experience similar opportunities of physical activity. It was the legacy from the elitist, middle class schools of the nineteenth century which provided the basis for the comprehensive system of girls P.E. which eventually entered the tripartite system of schooling in the post 1944 era.

The following section considers the extent of this legacy, in relation to gender ideologies, by tracing the developments in P.E. from those early beginnings through to our more recent past. This section will provide only a schematic insight into the more detailed history of P.E. in the twentieth century. However, the major developments in P.E. will be considered in relation to the broader educational and social changes experienced by women as the twentieth century progressed.

P.E. in the post 1918 era

Between the Wars

By the end of the First World War P.E. in the new secondary schools for middle class girls had undergone approximately fifty years of development. It had reached the stage where more and more secondary high schools included a comprehensive system of P.E. in their curricula and the P.E. teacher training colleges were flourishing. The circle was reaching out further as more trained teachers entered the schools, encouraged P.E. development and initiated the progression of more secondary school pupils along the path towards teaching. Yet this progression continued to experience opposition and throughout the second decade of the twentieth century opposition to women's sporting activity and girls' schooling experiences of P.E. continued with considerable fervour. Dr. Arabella Kenealy published her book 'Feminism and Sex Extinction' in 1920 in which she spelled out the damaging effects of strenuous pursuits such as hockey on the feminine image and on women's capacity to feed their future offspring! The 1922 British Medical Journal Report of 'The Physical Education of Girls' was not so heavily opposed to P.E. for young women, but was careful to warn that:

games and sports tend to foster a love of pleasure detrimental to home and other

interests, and to lessen womanly qualities... injurious effects may come from injudicious exercising on gymnastic apparatus.

The general mood amongst physical educationalists, however, was positive and their developments continued within a framework which was tempered so as not to antagonize or challenge the 'medical' position too directly. A new textbook on 'Gymnastics for Women' written by Braae Hansen, a lecturer at the College of Hygiene and P.E., Dunfermline, was reviewed in the Journal of Scientific Physical Training at this time. This text reflected the continuing acceptance of inherent physical sex differences which must be heeded in the teaching of girls:

... there are a fair number of teachers who maintain that gymnastics for men and gymnastics for women can and should be conducted along the same lines, with the modification, that as women are muscularly weaker than men, their exercises should be less vigorous. Such teachers are far behind - many differences are inborn... any attempt to minimize them, would not be beneficial to the individual or the race.

[Journal of Scientific P.T.]
[Vol XI 1918-1919]

The suggestions for 'suitable' gymnastics for women included the 'avoidance of too sudden vigorous exertions' with gymnastics keeping 'the feminine form of movement not sharp or marked'. This emphasis on 'suitable' exercises for women was reflected in a

positive review for a new book in a later edition of the Journal of Scientific Physical Training [1919-1920]. The article praised a publication by Max Parnet [1929] - Woman her Health and Beauty. Its main strength was seen to be that it had:

drawn up a series of movements easy to understand, suitable for home performance and aiming at the acquirement of health and beauty.

Obviously these three attributes were extremely desirable for women's physical leisure activities!

The 1920s continued to emphasize the therapeutic and remedial nature of physical education, which had gained momentum from the war years, when the necessity for massage and rehabilitation from the hospitals had provided an obvious objective for women's P.E. colleges. The stress on medical gymnastics was obvious in an advertisement for Liverpool Training College published in 1927. The advertisement included the following details:

- Provides a professional training for the education of women in remedial and educational gymnastics.
- Games (hockey, lacrosse, tennis, badminton, rounders, cricket)
- Recreational and Rhythmic Exercise
- Dancing (Rhythmical, Classical, Operatic, Folk and Social)
- Swimming - Fencing - Rowing, Girl Guide Work
- Theory, Anatomy, Physiology, Hygiene - Massage - Medical, Electrical, Anatomical

[Journal of Scientific P.T. Vol XIX 1926/1927]

The major change in P.E. in the late 1920s was the gradual move away from the Ling system of exercise. This development was largely through the work of Eli Bjorksten who encouraged more rhythmical gymnastics with the use of music. Although her main text 'Principles of Gymnastics for Women and Girls' was originally published in 1918 it was not until the translated, revised edition appeared in 1932 that the true impact of her work was felt. Advocates of this system had begun to develop work in the colleges during the 1920s, but the developments filtered through to the schools in the early years of the 1930s. The most striking feature of this new gymnastics was the continued concern for women's 'natural' predispositions. The book provides a wealth of information concerning excessive strain or damaging movement. It warns against 'ungainly' movement and suggests that "the wish for beauty in gymnastics is one worth gratifying" [Bjorksten, 1932:44]. It covers many pages explaining the physical inferiorities and weaknesses of women, finally concluding:

In a comprehensive review of the most noticeable differences in physique between men and women we find that women are, in almost every respect inferior. Disregarding the fact - which may be taken for granted - that this difference is in accordance with the purposes of nature, we who have to develop women's gymnastics must start from existing conditions. A woman's more delicate physique requires appropriate exercises. There must be no attempt at training a

muscular power which is quite disproportionate to her capacity, no exercises which are harmful to her body and alien to her mental tendency. Womanliness in the real meaning of the term must not be lost sight of in gymnastics, the aim of which should be to form a type of woman who, more than has ever been the case, before in civilized societies, is able to fulfil her own special function - motherhood.

[Bjorksten 1932:142]

The transition to a more rhythmical gymnastics, therefore, did little to challenge assumptions around gender. Indeed the main advocates of rhythmical gymnastics, clearly following Bjorksten's directions, based their activities on an acceptance of biological inferiority and difference, and on the need to protect women for their future mothering role.

In the inter-war years P.E. became consolidated as a comprehensive subject including gymnastics (both Swedish and rhythmical), outdoor games, some dance, and swimming. Yet it remained predominantly a subject for the privileged schools of the middle classes. Educational opportunities for the working classes, however, were expanding slowly and although P.E. remained a 'two nations' system [Fletcher 1984] some of the innovatory work began to spread to the developing senior schools of the elementary system.

This commitment to increased P.E. within state education gained momentum immediately after the first world war

when there was a national concern for the physical fitness of the younger generation [McIntosh et al 1957]. For girls the eugenic overtones of such concern remained dominant, as their fitness was concerned primarily with ensuring the health of the future generation. One of the major practical effects of this concern was the forging of more direct links between the medical profession and school P.E. This took the form of medical inspection in the schools with the Board of Education report on P.E. each year coming from the Chief Medical Officer within his overall report on 'The Health of the School Child'. In addition, a system of P.E. organizers was introduced. Their function was to liaise between schools and L.E.A.'s and to organize courses, day schools and summer camps in P.E. activities. By the end of 1936 organizers were well established for P.E., with 222 employed to cover 169 L.E.A.'s [Board of Education Report, 1936]. These organizers were drawn from the specialist teacher training colleges and, in this way, the ethos and teaching of P.E. developed in the privileged high schools and public schools, was gradually extended to the state system of education. However, the gap between the 'two nations' remained quite wide for even with the increased enthusiasm for secondary education for all children [Board of Education Report 1926], opportunities for older girls remained limited and the P.E. within the schools available, remained restricted by lack of facilities and trained teachers [Board of Education

Circular 1445 1936]¹². Furthermore, it was not until the Circular 1450 on Clothing and Shoes for Physical Training in 1936 that serious consideration was given to wearing specific, suitable clothes for P.E. Prior to this:

all that was required was that outer garments should be discarded so as to ensure that the ordinary clothes did not hamper free movement.

[Board of Education Circular 1450]
[1936:156 Item 3]

P.E. for working class children had been hampered by these factors and did not receive the changes enjoyed by their middle class sisters until after the second world war.

Therefore, between the wars P.E. continued to be the privilege of the middle classes. Steps were under way to develop P.E. in the state schools but this was limited by a number of circumstances. What is clear is that the desired P.E. towards which these schools were moving, was the system developed during the nineteenth century and it was these traditions that were to be transferred to the teaching of all girls in the post second world war era, as 'Secondary Education for All' became available. Where facilities remained limited, for example in city schools where playing fields were unavailable, the games adopted were those requiring playground space only. Therefore a 'two nations' system

could be seen to continue with regard to some of the activities pursued. However, the attitudes and ideas underlying the formation of these activities remained those behind the development of such sports for girls and women. Ideologies of gender were integral in the development of P.E. in the original high schools and these ideologies were transferred through as P.E. became a more acceptable and available subject for all girls in secondary schooling.

Physical Education in the Post War Context

Post-war England and Wales experienced considerable educational and social change, particularly in relationship to women. The post war years saw a "re-evaluation of the benefits of family life" with the "central role of the mother as child-rearer and housekeeper" [Smart 1984:49]. The ideology of the family brought with it an emphasis on the relationship between mother and child ¹⁹ and the importance of socialization and family life [Birmingham Feminist History Group 1979; Wilson 1977]. The Beveridge Report [1942] and Beveridge[1948] within the framework of the welfare state, firmly reasserted women's role as voluntary carers within the family [Wilson 1980]. The concern for the family reflects the experiences of disruption caused in the wartime period. The family as a unit was seen as a vital stabilizing force on society. As with the years

following the First World War, there was anxiety over a falling birthrate and a need to replace the population losses. As the baby boom of the late 1940s demonstrates, many women returned to a mothering role [Wilson 1980].

Wilson [1980:33] suggests:

Universal free education for the young adolescent created an opportunity to educate girls for their future role as wives and mothers.

Newson [1948] epitomized the attitude that prevailed, which viewed women as biologically different but equal to men. This ethos stressed the importance of 'feminine' and motherly virtues which should be lauded and encouraged as important values for our society:

The future of women's education lies not in attempting to iron out their differences from men, to reduce them to neuters, but to teach girls how to grow into women and to relearn the graces which so many have forgotten in the last thirty years.

[Newson 1948:109]

The 1950s and 1960s brought a continuing emphasis on child-centred learning, which for girls meant the centering of attention on their 'natural' attributes and their future role as wife and mother. Where they were prepared for work it was for a female world reflecting the clear sexual division of labour. Physical education during the post-war period underwent several major changes, including a major break with tradition as

Ling's Swedish system was finally replaced by a new approach to teaching gymnastics. Laban's movement approach took the female P.E. world by storm and by the late 1950s modern educational gymnastics and modern educational dance were well established in girls' P.E. departments throughout the country. No longer were these initiatives directed solely towards a middle class elite, as an expanded teacher training system, with the introduction of 'wing' colleges, ensured more in-depth P.E. training for teachers entering all sections of the tripartite school system²⁰ This shift to a framework incorporating Laban's techniques fitted perfectly into the broader educational ideals of the time and the assumptions that prevailed around girls' schooling. Just as Ling had ideals of womanliness inherent in his system of exercise so Laban stressed creativity, co-operation, unity and aesthetic discovery. As male P.E. moved closer towards scientific enquiry around anatomical and physiological questions and an enthusiasm for circuit training and competitive games²¹ women's P.E. re-emphasized and celebrated 'feminine' qualities. Although competitive games remained at the forefront, movement principles were used for skill learning in team games based on learning by discovery with shared experiences emphasizing the co-operative element in team sports.

The 'different but equal' ethos prevalent in girls'

schooling was reflected in the continued separation of P.E. even in mixed secondary school situations. Girls were seen to require a different physical education to boys based on different 'natural' abilities and interests²². The developments in women's P.E. reflected a different attitude of the female P.E. profession towards competition and a scientific approach to movement. Whereas pre-war physical training had utilized scientific elements to develop a therapeutic and remedial approach, stressing posture and appearance together with caring qualities, the post war scientific enquiry was seen to be more 'masculine' in approach concentrating on tests, measurements, skill acquisition etc. Sports science as a subject was to develop from this scientific approach adopted by male P.E.²³ Female P.E. distanced itself from these developments and remained bound up within its movement principles.

The late 1960s and 1970s saw the move towards comprehensivization spread throughout the country. A policy of 'equality of opportunity' had been adopted in the 1960s as concerns over class inequalities within education drew from the academic debates of the new sociology of education. Flexibility, variety, innovation became the watchword of education with the launching of the Nuffield Foundation (1962), The Schools Council (1964) and numerous projects designed for mixed ability teaching and more 'progressive' approaches to learning.

The 'movement' approach to P.E. fitted into this framework perfectly. As teaching methods were adapted, organization of groups reorganized, curricula rewritten, 'movement education' encompassed this 'new' progressive philosophy:

Movement is an activity of the whole person, and not only is the physical side important but also the intellectual, emotional and intuitive aspects of the personality are brought into play... The inner experiences gained in the art of movement awaken vitality, creative impulses and sensitive reaction to others and encourage harmonious development.

[Russell J. 1958]

Yet 'equality of opportunity' throughout this period was concerned primarily with issues of class, other groups in society i.e. women, ethnic groups, were given little attention.

In theoretical terms the 1970s brought a changing emphasis, as economic recession closed in on educational expansion and the women's movement began to regroup. The concept of patriarchy was developed to help theoretically explain the recognised oppression of girls and young women (see Chapter One). The 1975 Sex Discrimination Act made it unlawful to discriminate in terms of sex (although some areas were exempt from the Act e.g. Sports Clubs) and women began to question the school system in relation to gender differentiation and

the reinforcement of ideologies of gender. The transference of theory into practice, however, was less obvious and by the 1980s studies relating to gender and schooling continued to highlight the inadequacies and inequalities in the education system.

Throughout this period the major development in physical education was the introduction of options. These developed during the seventies for the upper years of secondary schooling partly as a response to the raising of the school leaving age to sixteen years and partly due to a renewed interest in the connection between P.E. and future leisure participation. P.E. continued to be taught, almost exclusively, to single sex groups and it was not until the 1980s that questions relating to mixed versus single sex P.E. began to be seriously considered.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the development of P.E. from its nineteenth century beginnings, in the 'new' girls high schools, to the present situation in the 1980s. Unfortunately space does not allow a more detailed historical examination but the chapter has attempted to place the development of girls' P.E. within its social context and particularly in relation to the broader developments in education and sport/recreation for women. Many issues could have been discussed in more

detail including the changes in teacher education to a degree entry profession and the disbanding of the pioneering specialist P.E. colleges throughout the 1970s as all teacher education became reorganized. Fletcher [1984] presents a thorough and detailed examination of these events.

However it has been established that gender ideologies relating to femininity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality have underpinned P.E. policies and practices throughout its development. These ideologies are by no means fixed but adapt according to the social, economic and political climate. The following chapters will focus more closely on contemporary P.E. in the 1980s in order to determine whether similar ideologies can be identified in the current policies, priorities and practices of P.E. teaching.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The aim is not to prove absolute truth or value freedom, but to observe, study, record and analyse a group of people with scholarly credibility, sociological imagination and theoretical relevance, in order to achieve a clearer understanding of their experiences both as they perceive them, we research them and societal structures interact and influence them.

[Duxbury 1984:32]

The above quotation introduces some of the debates which have dominated social science methodology over the past few decades: positivistic v naturalistic research; objectivity v subjectivity; 'hard' v 'soft' data; structuralism v ethnomethodology. Inherent in the statement is the significance of both social structure and the practices of agents within the research situation.

This research project, focusing on gender and girls' P.E., starts from a similar premise. Before outlining the actual techniques/methods adopted it is important to examine some of the methodological issues raised by the research and to consider why certain methods are considered to be more relevant than others for the investigation of gender relations and divisions in a state institution (education).

In considering the research methodology it is important

to return to the first seeds of interest from which the research grew and developed. The research did not develop from a desire to investigate a specific problem that was 'out there' requiring explanation and proof. It developed out of the personal experience of teaching girls' P.E., work with adolescent girls and a growing personal commitment to feminist politics. Immediately this challenges the basis of positivistic methodology which claims neutrality and 'hygienic' research [Stanley and Wise 1983]¹. Feminist researchers [Graham 1983, McRobbie 1982, Smith 1974, Stanley and Wise 1979, 1983] have argued forcefully that sociological research, far from being neutral, has reflected gender bias by concentrating on man's social world, and male definitions of knowledge and 'truth' which has been validated by male researchers and theorists. Positivistic research has consistently denied the influence of both the researched and the researcher on the research process [Cain and Finch 1980]. As Stanley and Wise [1979] point out, however:

.... the personal is not only the political, it is also the frequently invisible yet crucial variable present in any attempt to 'do' research. We emphasise that it should not be absent from 'doing feminist research'.

Thus this research starts from the acceptance that all research is 'grounded in consciousness' and that the personal and political commitments and experience of the

researcher inform and are integral to the research methodology [Stanley and Wise 1983]². This suggests that research cannot be value-free and rather than denying politics, experiences and consciousness, as has been the tradition of masculinist sociological methodology, it recognizes that all research involves a relationship between researcher and researched. The research project has developed out of a feminist theoretical position which recognizes women's oppression and sees the need to investigate an important aspect and experience of girls' and young women's lives in order to challenge gender divisions and inform future policy. Thus, as Harding [1987:6] points out:

the researcher appears to us not as an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individual with concrete, specific desires and interests.

Not only have feminist researchers criticized positivistic (quantitative) methodology. Naturalistic research has its origins in the early work of the Chicago School in the 1920s and 1930s³. Although sociology in the 1940s and 1950s attempted scientific credibility through the adoption of surveys and statistics as the dominant research form, the 1960s saw a return to the development of qualitative methodologies (interactionism, ethnography) from broader ethnographic work, at the basis of social interactionism

to the micro-world of ethnomethodology. It was argued by qualitative researchers [e.g. Schatzman and Strauss 1971; Lofland 1972; Johnson 1976] that:

in order to explain social actions we must understand the perspectives - the perceptions, interpretations, intentions and motives - of the people involved.... quantitative methods, by their very nature impose the researcher's own categories rather than exploring the perspectives of the people in the study.

[Hammersley 1983:3]

The use of qualitative methods, such as participant observation and ethnography, has become popular for research in educational settings [Hammersley 1983; Spindler 1982; Corrigan 1979; Willis 1978; Woods and Hammersley 1977]. Yet, while the concern has been less with 'objectivity' and 'hard' data, there often remains a gender bias in relation to both researched and researcher.⁴ There has been also a tendency to concentrate research attention on the investigation of the 'powerless' in society. The world of the powerless has provided the setting for in-depth micro-analysis, with the criticism that while it provides detailed and important evidence of experiences, it fails to locate these experiences within their structural contexts. As Smart [1984] argues:

in the context in which the powerful are never, or rarely, studied, more research on victims or powerless parties does create an overall impression that these

are the people that need to be researched, these are the ones that are out of step with 'social norms' or who are causing the problems. And we also know from experience that well-intentioned research which reveals the extent of poverty or oppression sexism or racism does not necessarily have any effect on state policies. It is discredited or ignored while generations of sociologists go on rediscovering the same or similar social conditions.

[Smart 1984:150]

Smart's argument is important, for while the debates between structural Marxist analysis and micro, in-depth investigation continue, particularly in educational circles, feminist research has begun to recognize the significance of practices, not just systems and structures, to the question of power [Smart 1984]. Also there is a direct link between feminist research and political action. Research informs practice. As Stanley and Wise [1983] state:

If we are to resist oppression, then we need the means to do so. ... Without knowing how oppression occurs we cannot possibly know why it occurs; and without knowing how and why it occurs we cannot find out how to avoid its occurrence, how it is that liberation might be achieved.

This research begins from an awareness and analysis of gender power relations and identifies the need to look at Physical Education both in its institutional, structural form and in the practices of those who hold power i.e. advisers, heads of department etc. Studying the structures of P.E. alone would not necessarily

reveal ideological positions and the aim of the research is to examine structures and practices which may sustain or reproduce gender inequalities, as well as the ideological underpinnings of this institutional form.

As has been discussed, a major question for research concerns the selection of appropriate methods of enquiry. In their criticisms of sociological research, feminists differ in their acceptance of traditional methods. Roberts [1981] argues for a non-sexist methodology which does not adopt sexist practices. Her emphasis is not concerned with adopting either quantitative or qualitative techniques but rather on the intent, practice and language of research. This is in agreement with Graham [1983] who criticizes work which relates objectivity and the production of factual, statistical data to research by and on men, with qualitative research deemed more suitable for the experiences of women. This, Graham argues, simply reinforces the divisions which feminist research sets out to challenge and destroy. Kelly [1978] also makes the point that 'feminism' can influence the choice and analysis of research but must, for her, remain separate from the research process. Thus, in her opinion, feminists can undertake quantitative 'traditionally scientific' research whilst remaining politically committed to feminism. Stanley and Wise [1983] emphasize different aspects of feminist research. They are in

agreement that there can be no simple relationship between feminist research and particular methodologies but stress that the research must be grounded in feminist consciousness, researchers as women, and the relationship between researched and researcher. This would appear to challenge Kelly's standpoint and suggest that feminist research cannot use conventional quantitative techniques in their traditional form.

There are, however, no clear answers to these methodological debates but the discussions which continue to take place within feminist circles have influenced and informed this research project. In agreement with Stanley and Wise [1983] the research is grounded in a feminist consciousness and is grounded in feminist theory (see Chapter One). In order to understand the structures, policies and practices of P.E., research is necessary at a range of levels. The research is based on a critical understanding of gender within capitalist patriarchy (see Chapter One) with the primary aim being to investigate how Physical Education, as a fundamental aspect of a state institution (education), contributes to the maintenance, production and reproduction of gender inequality. The adoption of quantitative techniques which reduce the analysis to a discussion of organisational 'facts' is inadequate and inappropriate for critical feminist research which situates gender inequalities in schooling in wider

structural and ideological contexts. While it is important to know what is taught to girls in their P.E. lessons, how often they have curricular and extra curricular activities etc., this can only identify inequality at an overt level. It is also necessary to look more deeply and qualitatively at the attitudes and ideas of those who are the decision makers in the school P.E. situation (i.e. Advisers, Heads of Department) and at their practices in the everyday situation of P.E. teaching.

Thus a number of research methods have been adopted in order to obtain a full and complete 'picture' of girls' P.E. These are:

1. Library Research. To provide informed historical and political contextualization for the contemporary material. It involved searches of primary and secondary source material including Educational documents and reports, original journals and autobiographical/biographical accounts of those involved in the pioneering of girls schooling and Physical Education in secondary education.

2. Structured, open-ended interviews with key decision-makers. These aimed to gather information in two categories:

- (i) General information about the teaching of P.E. in each secondary school of the research L.E.A. This included statistical data and detailed information on organisation, content, teaching methods, staffing etc.

- (ii) Personal attitudes of the interviewees towards girls' P.E. including girls' physical abilities and capacities, the suitability of girls for specific activities, aims and objectives

of their teaching, etc.

3. Observation in case study schools. This aspect of the research aimed to look at how the stated policies and personal attitudes of the key personnel in P.E. are articulated in practice. Thus the everyday practices of P.E. were observed with the opportunity to conduct more informal interviews and discussion with those involved in the teaching and organisation of girls' P.E. in selected schools.

Therefore the research does not use a 'feminist method' but is based on a feminist methodology which acknowledges the need for research on women and gender, is grounded in the experiences of researched and researcher, develops out of feminist theory and is subject to 'on-going attempts to understand, explain, re-explain, what is going on.' [Stanley and Wise 1983]. Most importantly, throughout the research process there is a continual link between theory, empirical research and political response.

The following section will consider the research method in more detail, particularly noting the techniques adopted and the difficulties encountered during the period of investigation.

Research Techniques and Data Collection

Access

Bell [1978] suggests that gaining access to 'powerful' people for research interviews can be problematic. Although teachers generally would not identify themselves as holding power, this research project considers that teachers of Physical Education are in a strong position in terms of policy decisions relating to the teaching of P.E. [Evans 1986]. Thus, having selected a research L.E.A., the first step in the research process was to gain access to the heads of department of girls' P.E. It is at this initial stage that the past experience of the researcher, rather than being ignored or denied, became invaluable. Unlike Bell's findings, this stage of the research, although time-consuming² presented few difficulties. The primary reason for this was that the researcher had been a teacher of P.E. within the research L.E.A. This confirmed the value of selecting a locality for the research which was not only known to the researcher but also where the researcher was known to the L.E.A. There exists a well-established suspicion within the teaching profession of researchers who are seen to live in a privileged world, with little real understanding of the 'chalkface' reality of everyday life in front of pupils. As the researcher was a qualified teacher who had taught in city comprehensive

schools, there developed an immediate bond between researcher and researched. This relationship existed throughout all the stages of the research and was important to the successful gathering of material.

Official access to educational research in schools is negotiated through the Local Authority Education Office via the specialist advisory staff. At this stage of the access procedure the P.E. Adviser was of central significance to the teaching of P.E. throughout the authority. Therefore, it was decided that an initial structured interview would be carried out with the female P.E. adviser. This interview was conducted as preliminary to the interviews with the heads of P.E. and the case study observations.

The Interviews

Before discussing in detail the different stages of interviewing it is necessary to consider interviews as a method of investigation and the particular issues that arise when interviewing women.

Interviewing Women

Traditionally interviews have been seen as one of the most important methods of finding out about people. As Shipman [1972:76] comments:

The asking of questions is the main source of social scientific information about everyday behaviour.

The interview is something viewed as a one-way process, where the interviewer gathers information but there is limited personal interaction between interviewee and interviewer [Goode and Hatt 1952; Benney and Hughes 1970]. The intention is to gain information from an 'objective' stance and the 'distance' established is aimed to establish data collection without the bias of personal meaning or intervention. Within this process there is a clear and intentional hierarchical relationship between interviewer and interviewee, with the former holding the expertise and the latter being the passive respondent.

Recent feminist work has developed a critique of this traditional textbook approach to interviewing which challenges many of these basic assumptions [Finch 1984; Oakley 1981; Stanley and Wise 1984].

Oakley [1981] argues that when women interview women they cannot stand 'outside' the research process, particularly when that research is grounded in consciousness and is attempting to validate and understand women's personal experiences. As Duxbury [1986:37] points out:

A feminist interviewing women is partially inside the culture and participating in what she is observing.

Oakley states that there can be no 'objective' stance and is in agreement with Bell and Encel [1978] who argue strongly that all research is political, whether it is investigating personal situations, state institutions or is carried out by large scale research organisations. Thus Oakley argues that in interviewing women she is putting her feminist politics into practice which, through necessity, must involve a two-way process. For this two-way process to evolve there must be interaction and response from the interviewer and a challenge to the inevitable power balance between interviewer and the women interviewed. In agreement, Stanley and Wise [1983] suggest that the interviewer must attempt to make herself 'more vulnerable' by responding to questions and contributing her own personal experiences to the interview - although Smart points out the limits of this when interviewing the powerful. As can be seen this is in direct contrast to the 'hygienic' research prescribed in the classic methodology texts on interviewing techniques.

This research project, as has been stated, is grounded in feminist theory and recognizes the importance of personal experience and politics to the research process. The interviews were initiated, therefore, from a position which was sympathetic to the critiques of

Oakley [1981], Finch [1984] and Stanley and Wise [1983]. The following sections will consider the various stages of interviewing and will identify the problems which arose in attempting to apply a feminist methodology of interviewing women to this particular research project.

The P.E. Adviser - the initial interview

This initial interview took place at the education offices and was arranged both to gain information from the adviser and to secure her support for future interviews in the schools of the L.E.A. A semi-structured interview schedule was used [See Appendix Four]. The introductory questions were aimed at obtaining factual information involving straightforward and direct responses. This was useful in that it provided important background material on the teaching of P.E. in the authority and provided a good introduction to the interview allowing time for both the interviewer and the adviser to relax into the interview situation. The second part of the interview introduced questions which were constructed around more specific issues but left more open-ended to encourage more detailed in-depth responses. In order to discuss openly her attitudes, ideas and values, the adviser had to feel comfortable in the situation and be given the opportunity to express herself freely. The open-ended nature of the questions meant that the adviser could

provide detail and discuss her attitudes and opinions without being cut short in her reply or forced into an immediate response which did not adequately reflect her feelings and ideas. It was for this reason that semi-structured interviews were considered more appropriate for this research than fixed-choice questionnaires. As Galtung [1967] points out, by using techniques such as questionnaires, information is lost by structuring the responses of the interviewee into preconceived categories and, also, by structuring the mind of the researcher into neat, distinct compartments of required information. The interview was taped using a small hand-held recorder, permission having been obtained prior to the interview.

The success of this initial interview with the P.E. adviser was evidenced not only by the material collected but also by the access it gave to the other teachers in the L.E.A. Following the interview the adviser invited the researcher to attend her next meeting with the heads of girls' P.E. throughout the authority. The researcher was invited to give a talk to the heads of department on the research and was provided with a forum to discuss the topic of 'equal opportunities' in a group situation.

This meeting proved invaluable because it not only gave the researcher the opportunity to meet the P.E. staff but it allowed contacts to be made, interviews arranged,

and discussion initiated. Furthermore it confirmed the support of the adviser for the research in the eyes of the teaching staff which ensured a positive response for requests for interviews from the majority of the heads of girls' P.E.

Pilot Interviews

Having interviewed the adviser and gained permission to approach each individual school in the L.E.A., an interview schedule was drawn up for the interviews with the heads of department. This was a similar format to the interview conducted with the adviser and it included some initial factual questions about P.E. in the school and then a series of open-ended questions probing, in detail, attitudes and ideas about girls' physical abilities, capacities; 'suitable' activities; constraints on participation etc. The literature review [Chapters One and Two] and most specifically the historical research and analysis [Chapter Three] informed the construction of the interview questions. Once the traditions and ideological underpinnings of the P.E. curriculum had been identified the main purpose of the interviews was to discover whether similar ideas and attitudes underpinned the policies of contemporary P.E.

This interview schedule was used in three pilot interviews which were conducted with P.E. teachers who

worked outside the research L.E.A. and were intended as a trial to determine whether the interview as it had been constructed achieved its aims. These pilot interviews proved most useful. Although the content was not changed significantly it provided vital technical and verbal experience of conducting the interviews. Although the questions were open-ended it soon became obvious that prompts were required to keep the respondent in the area of questioning. If left unstructured not only was there a considerable input of material which had no bearing on the research project, but it resulted, also, in over-long interviews. In addition, the pilot interviews were useful in gaining more experience of conducting interviews e.g. learning to listen; knowing when to probe or develop further questions; etc.

Following on from the adviser's interview, the interviews were tape recorded with permission. This was necessary as it would have been difficult to record in writing the responses to the open-ended questions. Although taping interviews involved lengthy transcriptions it proved a more accurate and efficient method of recording, collecting and comparing material than note-taking.

Interviews with the Heads of Department

Interviews were carried out with heads of girls' P.E. departments and with all peripatetic P.E. staff who worked within the authority. The interview schedule adapted from the pilot studies was used [See Appendix Four]. The interviews lasted between 30 minutes and 80 minutes depending on the situation and they were conducted in school during the lunch break, a 'free' teaching period, or immediately after school. Locating the interviews within school settings provided the opportunity to visit each girls' P.E. department and observe the facilities as they functioned. On the whole the teachers were keen to be interviewed and it became clear that the research credibility was enhanced by the researcher's previous experiences teaching in the authority. This created a relaxed rapport between interviewer and the teachers, with the acceptance of the researcher as 'one of them' rather than an 'outsider'. This was of particular importance given the pressures teachers were feeling, at the time of the research, over accountability, reorganization plans, etc⁶. Furthermore it provided an open forum in which the teachers appeared at ease, and willing to discuss personal attitudes and views about policies and practices of P.E. teaching. It was vital that the teachers did not feel threatened, undermined or that their working constraints were misunderstood. An 'outsider' could have had more

difficulty breaking through the 'research barrier' to reach the deeper, more personal attitudes and views held by the interviewees towards their teaching and P.E. in general.

Issues Arising From the Interviews

The interviews raised a number of important issues regarding their use as a research technique and, more specifically, the feminist critiques of women interviewing women. Smart [1984:153] identifies an area which she found crucial to her research into the law and the practices of solicitors, magistrates, etc. She comments:

One important element in all this vetting was how the researcher presented herself and a vital element of that was dress. Discussions on doing research rarely consider dress and yet this was experienced as a subtle but important aspect of doing the research.

In this quotation Smart identifies an aspect of research which was a constant consideration throughout this project. As Chapter Three has discussed, the traditions of P.E. centre around the 'correct' appearance and presentation of both pupils and teaching staff [Fletcher 1984]. Dress is a fundamental aspect of P.E. and is emphasised throughout P.E. teacher education. In this research situation, therefore, it was important that the researcher dressed in what would be considered as

an 'acceptable' style in order to retain credibility particularly with the P.E. adviser. In agreement with McRobbie [1982:54]:

If research has to change the way that people look at things, to challenge the structures which determine the conditions of existence, which in this case women and girls inhabit, then it has to be convincing.

This raises a further issue which creates problems with Oakley's analysis of interviewing women. Oakley [1981] considers that in her interviewing of women she is putting her feminist politics into practice. In her arguments there is an assumption that both the interviewer and the interviewee share the same or similar values [Smart 1984]. However, in this research there was a clear discrepancy between the feminist politics of the researcher and many of the attitudes held by the adviser and the heads of department. This posed a dilemma for the researcher in that at times it was necessary to listen to and record sexist comment and opinions. In this situation to respond as a 'feminist' would suggest challenging these opinions rather than sharing ideas in a two-way process. Smart [1984] found when faced with a similar dilemma in her research:

This meant that in order to express a dissenting view the interviewer not only had to find an opportunity but would have, in the process, shattered the inferential structure within which the interview was carried out. In other words

the interview would have become impossible.

This latter point of Smart's is crucial and is applicable to any critical research which involves research into state institutions. To place feminist politics to the forefront in this research would have created an immediate barrier and, potentially, distrust between the interviewee and the interviewer. Therefore feminism could provide the theoretical basis for the research, influence the direction and methodology but overtly could not be part of the practice of carrying out the research [Smart 1984]?

Oakley [1981] and Stanley and Wise [1983] discuss the need to break down the power relation between interviewer and interviewee with the assumption that the researcher holds the power in this situation. Again there are problems with this assumption when researching key figures of authority, decision-makers or the 'locally powerful' [Bell 1978]. Smart [1984:157] comments:

But my experience of researching the 'locally powerful' does not fit with this model at all and I suspect that their assumptions about the hierarchical structure of research derive from sociology's traditional concern with researching the underprivileged, the powerless or the so-called deviant. Half an hour spent with a bossy solicitor or pompous magistrate was enough to disabuse me of the belief, if I ever held it, that I was in a relatively more powerful

position than those I interviewed.

While the experience of being a former P.E. teacher proved invaluable for access it influenced the relationship between the researcher and the P.E. adviser. In this situation it was the adviser who perceived herself as being the 'expert' in relation to the research focus and this placed the researcher in a more vulnerable position. The researcher had to strive continually to present an acceptable, inquiring yet almost deferential manner in the interview situation.

With regard to conducting interviews with women who are institutionally in a relatively powerful position the issues raised suggest that feminist research techniques involve a complex form dependent upon specific research experiences. There is not one, universal feminist interview technique to be adopted for every situation. While feminist research acknowledges the centrality of feminist politics, is grounded in experience and is intent on using research to help create political action and change, the methods of carrying out this research are many and varied and must be adopted with regard to each specific research need.

Critical research, by its definition represents fundamentally a real challenge to the 'status quo' or the established order and practices of a social system. Therefore feminist research carries with it a political

intent. The interviews were carried out, in this research, within this context of feminism. Unlike traditional positivistic research there was no attempt to guarantee a mythical 'neutrality' or 'objectivity'. However in contrast to the arguments of Stanley and Wise, there was no attempt to be 'open' or 'up front' about feminist politics as this would have created a barrier that would have at best inhibited and at worst endangered the project. However, this did not mean that the interviews were simply a one-way hierarchical process in keeping with the methodological traditions. The interviews were conducted with as much sensitivity to the teachers' situation as possible. The researcher responded to any questions asked and there was a commitment to 'give back' to the research authority rather than simply extract the information and data required. This point will be considered further in the conclusion to this chapter.

The Case Study Observations

The Schools

Four schools were selected for intense periods of observation. The case study schools were selected as representative of the types of schools available in the city and each offered contrasting and quite different emphases in their approach to and practice of P.E.

teaching. Information gained from the first interviewing stage of the research informed this decision.

The schools selected were:

			<u>Pupils</u>
SCHOOL 'A':	Co-educational Inner City Comprehensive	Multi-racial Working Class intake	1400
SCHOOL 'B':	Co-educational Suburban Comprehensive	Working Class Middle Class intake	1400
SCHOOL 'C':	Single sex Inner City Comprehensive	White Working Class intake	1200 girls
SCHOOL 'D':	Single Sex Church of England Comprehensive	Middle Class intake negot- iated by diocese	750 girls

Profiles of the schools can be seen in Appendix Three.

Participant Observation as a Research Technique

Participant observation emerged as a popular research technique in the 1960s as qualitative methodology gained credibility in social science research. Emphasis was on research of the "in-group" which involved living with, working amongst, and being an integral part of a particular group that was being researched [e.g. Matza 1969; Gill 1974; Parker 1974; Young 1971]. It was a welcome challenge to quantitative, positivistic methods of research and considered valuable because it did not

work from preconceived ideas or strategies but allowed continuous development and reformation of the research project to ensure the researcher avoided misleading or unnecessary information [Becker and Greer 1970]. Criticisms of this approach, however, developed from a number of sources [Dean, Eichorn and Dean 1969; Taylor, Walton and Young 1975]. A major criticism was that close observation of group interaction often resulted in an over-emphasis on the group with little or no analysis of inter-group relations or social structures [Scruton 1976]. These critics saw the need for an analysis of wider structural contexts in order to provide full explanations of social action [Damer 1972; Gill 1974; Pearson 1975].

This does not invalidate participant observation as a useful method of gaining information and in-depth insight into a situation. As Scruton [1976:62] points out:

The researcher can never view the world as the 'actor' views it. The researcher, however, can gather and analyse the common-sense meanings given by the 'actor' as he/she experiences and internalises situations which happen "before the eyes" of the researcher. Careful analysis can explore the experiences upon which the 'actors' base their perceptions of situations and interpret their meaningfulness. In other words, sociological research can and must be reflexive in its analysis. Proximity to the 'actor' becomes all-important.

Thus this research used observation as part of a total 'package' of research methods. As Trow [1970:14] suggests (although using masculinist language):

different kinds of information about man and society are gathered more fully and economically in different ways, and that the problem under investigation properly dictates the methods of investigation.

Therefore, to return to the opening discussion of this chapter, there is a need in the analysis of gender and girls' P.E. to look at both social structure and the practices of agents. The methodology reflects this in that it utilizes historical evidence, statistical data, interviews and observation. The period of observation in four case study schools was necessary in order to discover more about the practices of P.E. in schools. The research highlights the traditions and ideological underpinnings of P.E. (Chapter Three) and researches the organizational aspects of staffing, activities, etc. The interviews provided the formal policies of the key decision makers and the attitudes and ideas of the P.E. staff. The next stage, therefore, was to investigate how these stated policies were articulated in practice and whether attitudes and ideas held by the teachers could be observed within their day to day practices of P.E. teaching.

Various levels of Participant observation have been identified and they are dependent on the research

situation. Gold [1954] discusses the continuum between complete participant and complete observer:

These range from the complete participant at one extreme to the complete observer at the other. Between these, but nearer to the former is the participant-as-observer; nearer the latter is the observer-as-participant. The true identity and purposes of the complete participant.. are not known to those whom he observes. He interacts with them as naturally as possible in whatever areas interest him and are accessible to him... the participant as observer role differs significantly in that both field worker and informant are aware that theirs is a field relationship... the observer-as-participant role is used in studies involved in on-visit interviews... the complete observer removes the fieldworker completely from social interaction from informants... people need not take him into account.

[cited in Scraton 1976]

During the case study visits several roles were occupied by the researcher.

Complete Participant On a few occasions the researcher took over the teaching of some extra-curricular activities. In these instances the pupils appeared to view the researcher as 'their P.E. staff' and the teachers identified the researcher as 'one of them'.

Participant-as-Observer In this situation the researcher fully participated in discussions and interactions with the P.E. staff but did not have the identity of a full member of the team.

Observer-as-Participant Related to interaction with other members of staff in the

schools, informal interviews etc. and interaction with pupils during the school day.

Complete Observer

Related to situations were the researcher observed formal teaching situations but did not contribute to the interaction other than by 'being there'.

These levels of participant observation were seen to be the most efficient means of gathering information about the everyday world of P.E. teaching.

Participant Observation in Practice

Approximately half a term (six weeks) was spent full time in each of the case study schools (a total of two terms participant observation). The aim was to be attached to the P.E. department and spend time in each of the various roles described above as observer/participant. In each school, written information was collected on the stated policy and organization of both the school in general and P.E. in particular. Once again previous experience as a P.E. teacher made it easier for the researcher to 'fit' into the department and a knowledge of P.E. conventions and traditional ethos proved invaluable in many situations. Being aware of the general routines of P.E. teaching helped full use to be made of the period in each school with little time needed to familiarize the researcher with the research situation.

Apart from gathering written policy statements, daily observations were recorded in a field diary. It was essential that a "systematic reflection" [Wright Mills 1970] was carried out by careful documentation of events, discussions and observations. It was dependent on which role was occupied as to how the information was recorded. As a 'complete observer', notes could be made during the observation period with interactions, comments, action recorded as they occurred. As 'observer-as-participant' either a tape recorder was used for more formal and informal interviews/discussions, or notes were written up immediately after the interactions/meetings. As participant-as-observer it was more difficult to simultaneously record events, as in this situation the researcher was accepted very much as 'one of the staff'. Any attempt to tape or record events and conversations would have proved inhibiting to the research and resulted in less open interaction between the P.E. staff and the researcher. Consequently full notes had to be written as soon as was possible. A similar situation occurred on the few occasions the researcher acted as complete participant. Obviously it was impossible to record events while involved in teaching. In all instances where note-taking or taping was prohibitive it proved vital that observations were recorded as soon as possible to ensure a full recall of events. The fieldwork diary was completed at the end of each day

noting general observations and thoughts together with more specific comment.

Conclusions

The fieldwork involved a number of different techniques and as has been shown was grounded in a feminist methodology. A year was spent in the research L.E.A. either interviewing or observing full time in schools. Because the research was grounded in a feminist consciousness and was undertaken in order to link theory through to practical action and change, it was considered important that the researcher should not only 'take' from the research situation. Thus, having made contacts throughout the schools the researcher tried to 'pay back' by becoming involved in various anti-sexist/equal opportunity^a initiatives that began to develop in the following years in several of the L.E.A. schools. This involved taking part in and contributing to meetings arranged by working parties (equal opportunities/anti-sexist) within some of the schools and spending some time discussing policy initiatives with equal opportunity co-ordinators who were appointed in the authority following reorganization in the year after the research had been completed.

CHAPTER FIVE

PART I - THE LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

- social/political/economic context

PART II - PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE CITY:

- a descriptive introduction

Introduction

This chapter attempts to locate the research in the social, political and economic context of the research L.E.A. Part I includes an introduction to the L.E.A. thus providing the context in which to place the descriptive account of P.E. within the authority. Part II presents the empirical material collected in the interviews and visits to all the schools in the research authority. This provides an overall picture of P.E. across the authority in relation to organization, staffing, facilities, content and examinations. Throughout this section issues will be raised by this descriptive material, many of which will be taken up and considered in more detail in the future case study chapters [Chapters Six and Seven] and in the analysis of the major issues arising from the research in Chapter Eight.

PART I - THE RESEARCH LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Introduction

Research in schools needs to take account of the context in which the schools are situated. L.E.A.s work with a degree of discretion, although they are under financial pressure and need to respond to curriculum issues raised by the DES, HMI, MSC etc. The research authority, as a large industrial city, has a history of immigration with a large degree of unskilled, casual labour throughout its workforce:

... it has always been a city of immigrants. In the nineteenth century large numbers of Irish men and women settled here, mainly Catholics from the South, but also a fair number of Protestants from Ulster. Large numbers of Scots, Welsh, Jewish, West African, Carribean and Chinese people have also put down roots in (....). All these groups brought their own political traditions and expectations and (....)'s politics have been moulded by them in different ways.

[Merseyside Socialist Research Group 1980:75]

These communities settled within the inner city and helped form a city based on cultural and religious diversity. However, as with other cities, over the past fifty years there has been experienced a gradual breaking up of inner city communities and the extension of the city out into suburban industrial estates and the 'new town' developments. This movement outwards

primarily consisted of white working class families moving to the 'new town' promise of jobs in the developing manufacturing industries sited on the periphery of the city. The Afro-Caribbean, Asian and Chinese populations remained within the inner-city in communities faced with rising unemployment, decaying housing and in many situations, extreme poverty. In the 1980s socially and economically the city is in decline with the population decreasing, unemployment reaching approximately 20%, and certain areas experiencing intense deprivation and poverty. The gap between the working class inner city areas and the green, leafy outer suburbs of the middle classes has become more obvious as the recession bites deep. It was in this context that, in 1983, the Labour council reassessed and ultimately introduced plans for the reorganization of the state secondary schools of the authority. [See Appendix One for more details of the social, economic and political history of the city.]

Secondary Schooling in the City

Various socio-economic issues were high on the agenda for discussion as Labour took control in 1983. Several of these had a direct relationship to educational concerns:

- 1) Decreasing population - resultant falling rolls in the schools indicated

that fewer schools were needed in the city.

2) Impact of the Recession

- rising unemployment especially in the 16-19 yr group (34.3% - Census 1981) had direct implications for school - labour market relations.

3) Geographical distribution

- inner city clearances and the increased concentration of better off social areas had led to a changing demand for school places.

This latter point is illustrated by the fact that an inner city Comprehensive, purpose-built in the late 1960s for an expected roll of approximately 2,000 pupils, had just 248 pupils in total in the Autumn term of 1983. A sixth-form entry Community Comprehensive School situated also in an inner city area retained its pupil population but it was clear that parental choice led many pupils away from their 'local' school to the former grammar schools in the middle class suburbs. As the headteacher writes in her report to the governors in 1979:

... the neighbourhood has always looked up to former Grammar Schools and colleges. A glance in the old log books of the four former schools will illustrate the point. In the 1920s log book of the Wellington School, the pupils were given a holiday each time any of their number 'won a place' to Aigburth Vale, St Margarets etc. For nearly 60 years our area has 'looked out' to seek a better education.

[cited in Bush & Gethins 1981:17]

[emphasis added]

The 'problem' that this has raised for this comprehensive school is that the school is comprehensive in name but not in intake, with many of the children with academic aspirations being 'creamed off' to schools outside the area. Until the Labour Party came into office, this system had been indirectly encouraged by an L.E.A. which based its state secondary school allocation of places on parental choice.¹

The move to comprehensive schooling occurred in the city from the mid 1960s. This was in response to a directive from central government via the D.E.S. However, due to the system of local control, the L.E.A.s were free to implement this major educational development. As a consequence there was considerable variation in implementation between authorities and also, as illustrated by this research, within an authority. Initially, district Comprehensive Schools were introduced throughout the city although these existed alongside High (Grammar) schools which were retained (particularly in the south of the city) and secondary modern schools (in the south and central). In 1972/1973 there was further rationalization with the amalgamation of several of the original high schools and secondary modern schools to form 'new' comprehensive schools. These were 'new' in name but many were dependent on their existing school buildings². However, due to considerable parental pressure, single-sex grammar

(high) schools continued to exist within the authority.

Secondary schooling reflects also the religious traditions in the city. There is a large Catholic sector which is self-contained and as such independent of the L.E.A. This sector retained selection procedures until September 1983 when it underwent comprehensive reorganization. The new system of Catholic secondary schooling retained a number of single-sex schools but provided a rationalized system of schooling with the amalgamation of many former grammar and secondary modern schools. Although these schools are not under the direct control of the L.E.A., they are included in the interviews of heads of department of girls' P.E. for this research project in an attempt to secure city wide representation of girls P.E. teaching.

In addition the Protestant community have provided, traditionally, their own schools within the Church of England sector. These Anglican Grammar Schools came under the joint control of the Diocesan Board of Education and the Local Education Authority in the mid 1970s and changed to a non-selective, comprehensive intake in September 1980. Admission to these schools, while academically non-selective, remains largely based on religious criteria negotiated between the Diocese and the L.E.A.

Schooling in the L.E.A. therefore, has undergone considerable change. The development and growth in the secondary sector reflected the post war baby boom and economic expansion of the 1960s with comprehensive plans being realized in new schools and new buildings. The spending cuts of the 1970s led gradually to a need to rationalize educational provision as the city experienced economic decline, increased unemployment, geographical distribution and change in its housing policies. The political uncertainty of the local council has resulted in indecision and difficulty in the implementation of proposals for school reorganization. An example of this can be found under the Liberal leadership in 1980-1983. The Liberals were successful in their closure of a comprehensive secondary school in 1982 but the extent of opposition to the closure, within the local community and the Labour Party, produced the unusual outcome of the school being reopened by the local community and run outside of L.E.A. provision. Further plans by the Liberals in 1982 to reorganize secondary schools into 11-16 schools and sixth form community colleges also failed to receive the necessary support. These plans had to be dropped and once more reorganization was suspended due to the lack of an overall majority in the council.

However the school year of 1983-1984, when the majority of the school-based research for this project was

undertaken, was the year that the Labour Party took overall control of the council (in May 1983) and immediately formulated their own plans for secondary school reorganization. By the beginning of the school year in September 1983 their plans were revealed amidst much controversy.

The proposals included the closure of all the twenty five existing secondary schools (i.e. those under the direct control of the L.E.A. - exclusive of the Catholic and Anglican sector) and the establishment in their place of seventeen co-educational community based, 11-18 age comprehensive schools. These plans were produced without consultation with teaching staff and parents and the opposition was intense. Not unexpectedly Liberals and Conservatives opposed the proposals. The Liberals had revealed their preference for 11-16 age schools with sixth-form colleges and the Tories were concerned to retain the schools with a tradition of grammar school education and single sex provision. Parents were organized, also, in their opposition with a petition drawn up with over 70,000 signatures and delivered by delegation to the Secretary of State for Education in London.

The teaching staff understandably were concerned about their immediate future. All staff throughout the city were to lose their jobs and have to reapply for posts in

the seventeen newly reorganized schools. The unrest that this produced is reflected in the following comments by teaching staff in the Autumn term of 1983 after the proposals were revealed.

"Who knows where we'll be next year. It's just impossible to plan or organize when your future feels so insecure."

"I've been here in this school for 7 years but that means nothing. All that hard work building up a satisfactory situation to be knocked down in one fell swoop."

"I can see that something must be done to make the schools a more practical size but it's hard to see all your hard work and stability taken away. I'm too old to start battling from scratch again."

One of the main oppositions to the proposals was the elimination of single-sex schooling from the city. The L.E.A., traditionally, had retained a considerable proportion of single sex schooling which had resulted in parental support of these schools as they tended also to be the original grammar (high) schools of the city. This, together with racial and religious arguments for the retention of single-sex schooling, provided the strongest opposition to the proposals³.

As with all L.E.A. reorganization proposals, they require approval from the Secretary of State before implementation. In the school year 1983-1984 the proposals were in the hands of the D.E.S. awaiting ratification. Implementation was due for September 1984

and it was in this context of uncertainty and insecurity that the research was undertaken. As it happens the response from the Secretary of State was not received in time for reorganization to occur in September 1984. This was due to the proposal for an amendment to include the retention of two single sex establishments. Implementation eventually took place in September 1985 with the retention of two single-sex schools, as suggested by the D.E.S.

Although the research project was not concerned directly with reorganization plans, or the general organization of secondary schooling in the city, the atmosphere of unrest and the concern for future employment was as intense in the girls' P.E. departments as in other areas of the school curriculum. Furthermore the central issue of single-sex schooling versus co-educational provision had direct bearing on the emergence of a concern over single sex versus co-educational P.E. This was a primary issue raised by the P.E. teachers in the study and will be considered more specifically in Chapter Eight.

This introduction to the social, political and economic climate of the L.E.A. provides the context in which the research project was initiated. The second part of this chapter will provide an overall picture of P.E. across the authority, using the information gained from the structured interviews with the heads of department. Thus

the general situation of girls' P.E. across the city will provide the framework for the more specific material to be considered in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

PART II - GIRLS' PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE RESEARCH

LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Introduction

The following section provides detail of girls' P.E. in the research L.E.A. in relation to organization, pupils, staffing, facilities, showers, curriculum and examinations. It should be noted that at the time of the research there was no official policy or statements on equal opportunities in schooling or P.E. for the authority. However, since the research was conducted there have been appointments of equal opportunity coordinators in each school and one adviser has had equal opportunities added to their job description. The following discussion, therefore, provides the backdrop for the more detailed discussion which follows in later chapters in relation to gender and girls' P.E.

Organization

i) Schools

As discussed in the previous section, secondary schooling in the L.E.A. (1983-1984) was a combination of state controlled comprehensive schools, Catholic comprehensive schools, Anglican comprehensive schools and one Jewish secondary school. The following schools were used for the project:

FULLY STATE CONTROLLED	12 co-educational comp. 6 girls' comp.	} TOTAL 18
CATHOLIC	6 co-educational comp. 5 girls' comp.	} TOTAL 11
C. OF E.	2 girls' non-selective	} TOTAL 2
JEWISH	1 co-educational non-selective	} TOTAL 1
		<u>TOTAL NO. SCHOOLS 32</u>

Across the city these schools showed great diversity in size and buildings ranging from an all girls' comprehensive of more than 1400 girls to a mixed comprehensive of less than 250 pupils. This reflects the movement of communities out of the city centre and the popularity and reputation of some of the traditional single-sex ex-grammar schools.

As will be discussed later, this diversity has led to considerable differences in the quantity and quality of physical education on offer.

ii) Pupils

Grouping - The organization of pupils for P.E. throughout the city was predominantly in single-sex, mixed ability grouping. Of the 19 mixed schools visited, all taught years one to three in single-sex classes. Above the third year there were considerable differences in organization relating to the content taught. 5 of the

19 schools retained single sex grouping throughout the five years of compulsory secondary schooling introducing mixed lessons during the sixth form only. The remainder introduced some activities as mixed in the final year of compulsory schooling with 8 schools opting for some mixed P.E. in the fourth year upwards. The issue of whether mixed P.E. in theory is mixed P.E. in practice will receive more analytical consideration in Chapter Eight.*

Compulsion - Physical education for girls throughout the city was compulsory, in line with compulsory schooling, to the age of 16 years. The one exception was in the inner city comprehensive with a small pupil number. Here the girls were taught in year groups, as follows:

	<u>TOTAL NO. OF GIRLS</u>
1st year	13
2nd year	20
3rd year	19
4th year	21
5th year	11

In the fourth and fifth year P.E. became optional in line with their other examination subjects. This organization was specific to this one situation and was not representative of any other school in the city.

Approximately one third of the schools continued compulsory P.E. into the sixth form although some doubts were raised as to the success of the implementation of compulsion for this age group. Over two thirds of the

schools offered P.E. as an optional activity for their lower and upper sixth groups.

Uniform - All the schools in the study insisted on a change of clothing in physical education for reasons of hygiene. 30 out of the 32 schools had a specific P.E. uniform which was compulsory up to school leaving age. It should be noted, also, that all the schools had a general school uniform. The primary justification for a set P.E. kit rested on a perceived desirability for uniformity and neatness:

"P.E. kit is very important. I think the kids think it very important too. When they've been all the same in their kit they feel themselves the same."

"Every girl is expected to have a P.E. kit. They like to be one of a group - sense of belonging."

"Yes P.E. kit is compulsory 1st to 4th year. Some girls can't afford fashions and it's important that you're one school and together. I always say to anyone without a kit that if you don't want to wear 'x' kit then don't come to 'x' school."

The two schools without a set P.E. kit were inner city comprehensive schools with a predominantly working class intake. The argument against a set kit rested on financial limitations and was an adaptation to a particular situation. Both heads of department would have insisted on a set uniform in different circumstances:

"We don't really have a P.E. kit. When I first came here we tried to get navy blue skirts and white tee-shirts but really knowing the situation some of the families were in I couldn't possibly insist on them having the P.E. kit, so really over the last 2-3 years it has been either skirt or shorts and top. But I do think that if a school is in uniform it gives a good impression to the outside world. It looks as if that school is working together. Even some of the kids would like a uniform but it's not possible financially."

"Really if they bring some kit, that's what matters. It just isn't worth the time and effort trying to insist on a proper uniform, most just couldn't or wouldn't provide it."

Throughout the authority the majority of heads of girls' P.E. insisted on a traditional 'suitable' P.E. uniform which consisted of games skirt, tee shirt, socks and pumps of a specific colour and style. Most schools adopted strategies to ensure that all girls could provide such a uniform regardless of their financial background. These strategies included second-hand 'pools' of clothing that were lent out to pupils, payment for kit in instalments and second hand 'shops' to sell P.E. kit. Just under half of the heads of department [14] commented that tracksuits were encouraged for use outside in cold weather.

The implications of this compulsory set P.E. uniform for adolescent young women in relation to sexuality and sub-cultural pressure and conflict, will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

Staffing

(i) Advisory Staff

Bolam et al [1976] in a study of 235 advisers in 14 L.E.A.s identified the following tasks to be important in advisory work: staff appointments (85%), advising individual staff on personal and professional matters (85%), evaluation and career development of individual staff (66%), advising in a single institution (62%), general inspection of schools or colleges (50%), school visits (100%), INSET (93%), L.E.A. wide curriculum projects (70%), L.E.A. structural and organizational change (47%), advising on materials and equipment (60%) reporting to the education committee (52%), disbursement of funds (59%), administrative and clerical work (80%). The percentages in the brackets denote the proportion of the respondents in the study who reported activity in each specific task.

The advisory service forms an important link between the L.E.A. and the schools. In the research authority there was a male and female physical education adviser serving boys' P.E. and girls' P.E. respectively. This was in contrast to many authorities which do not differentiate advisory duties between girls' and boys' P.E. but tend to organize their authority into areas (e.g. Cheshire). The separation into two distinct and different departments can serve to reinforce the notion of

separate and distinct P.E. for girls and boys. The woman P.E. adviser commented:

"Yes - there are separate male and female advisers for girls and boys P.E. because they are quite different situations. In (---) there is a very strong boys games tradition, therefore they need a man. In (---) schools there are separate boys and girls heads of department. I know this is unusual but they are quite different departments"

This point will be considered in more detail in Chapter Eight where the reinforcement of gender ideologies about physical ability and capacity will be discussed in relation to the historical material of Chapter Three.

The amount of contact between the adviser and the P.E. teachers varied considerably between schools. The adviser organized meetings twice yearly between 4.30 pm and 6.30 pm. for all female P.E. teachers. These were well attended and provided an important forum for communication and discussion. Although Bolam et al [1976] found that school visits by advisers constituted the most important task named in their study, the amount of contact between the adviser and individual school departments varied considerably. The following comments from heads of department of P.E. indicated the relatively small amount of personal contact between staff and the adviser. These comments are representative of the response throughout the schools.

"... if they [adviser] think you are

functioning then you just carry on. Where they know someone is not functioning then they go in. I suppose no visits are good news!"

"... in twelve years the adviser has visited once and that was my probationary year. She goes into good schools, sits and listens and does nothing."

"I suppose we see the adviser in here maybe two or three times a year."

"... we may see her [adviser] once a year in school if we're lucky."

The adviser in the authority was viewed by most of the staff as a figurehead for P.E. who could provide advice and practical help, particularly in relation to issues that were the responsibility of the L.E.A. e.g. maintenance and repair of equipment and facilities. However, in relation to actual teaching practices and content, the adviser appeared to have little direct control. She provided discussion and advice but in the final instance the teacher retained her autonomous position.

"she [adviser] doesn't stop me doing anything. She'll help me in many ways but over what I teach and why I teach it she doesn't agree with my policy at all. She believes I should be doing compulsory gym to 5th year and it just doesn't work in this school, so I do what I feel is best."

"there is no pressure from Miss _ . I can make any alterations to the curriculum that I like."

"Miss _ has offered support etc. but I really don't see her that often and I don't think she knows what is going on in the schools. I make the decisions about what is taught here."

"Well the adviser does have a say in what is taught but really in the final instance it is the head of department who has the last say on content."

These comments which demonstrate that the adviser was seen very much in an 'advisory' capacity rather than as someone in a power position, were reiterated by the adviser herself when discussing a curriculum issue:

"Dance has died out a great deal. (--) don't do it anymore. They just didn't have the staff so decided to go for quality rather than quantity. P.H. and I argued over it but I suppose I could see her point. Yet I think dance is the most important part of the curriculum. If they only had time for one activity I would choose dance everytime."

It was the heads of department in P.E. teaching who made the final decisions over the curriculum with the adviser primarily taking on an organizational and consultative role within the authority.

(ii) Peripatetic Staff

The L.E.A. maintained a team of peripatetic staff that worked throughout the authority in junior, secondary and special schools. They were divided into two sections, one dealing specifically with dance teaching and the other with skills/games teaching. As primary and special schools tended not to employ specialist P.E. teachers it was in these areas that the peripatetic P.E. staff concentrated much of their time and attention. However, in specific instances they did contribute to secondary

school P.E. teaching.

The team of seven peripatetic dance staff worked in the primary schools although four also taught in separate secondary schools during 1983/1984 for up to one day a week. They entered the schools initially on the invitation of the head of the department through liaison with the P.E. adviser. Their work was to provide specialist teaching to supplement the skills of the resident P.E. staff. As the head of department, in a school which incorporated a dance peripatetic teacher for one day a week to teach dance to second and fourth years, described:

"When I first came, the fourth and fifth years used to have keep fit instructors from the authority. I was very unhappy because there was no dance at all. I was prepared to teach some dance but felt it should be established in the curriculum by a specialist. After two years we have made some in-roads with peripatetic staff. I, the second in department now also teaches dance so we have it in the second, third and fourth years.

This use of specialist dance staff to provide expertise was considered to be particularly important in the authority at the time of the research as dance was seen to be being removed gradually from the curriculum throughout the city (this will be considered in the section dealing with content). The explanation for this was seen to be related to the changes in teacher training during the 1970s with the move to a degree system, the removal of specialism within training and

the economic cuts hitting peripheral courses the hardest e.g. dance-drama⁵. Where peripatetic staff were included they were intended to provide specialist, supplementary teaching and an element of in-service training for the permanent staff. They were used, in general, on a temporary basis in the hope that once dance was established the permanent staff could take over. This was being achieved in one school that had used this service:

"What I did was that whatever we did with one first year group I then did the other half on my own later on in the week. I used her ideas, not always in the same way as I couldn't be as abstract as her, but this still goes on. We're now into the third year and it's fabulous because I get loads of ideas from her. Sometimes I can't use her ideas, they're beyond me. I haven't got the movement - word vocabulary that she has but it motivates me. I've just learned so much over the past couple of years and it's given me so much confidence to do dance. I always did dance but I felt I did it as a P.E. teacher and not as a dancer."

[Interview - head of department]

However, the peripatetic dance staff were used in a very limited capacity in the secondary schools [four schools out of thirty-two]. It is important to note, also, that the schools using this service were all single-sex ex-grammar/high schools in the city/state sector or the Catholic schooling system.

The peripatetic section dealing with skills and games teaching had a similar function to the dance staff in the secondary schools. An example of its use was the

introduction of hockey, in an extra-curricular capacity, by a peripatetic teacher to supplement and encourage the introduction of this game throughout the school. In general, however, secondary school P.E. staff were expected to have the necessary games skills to provide adequate teaching in this area. This, to some extent, reflects the games orientation of P.E. teaching in contrast to a dance/movement approach. Again this point will be considered more fully in the section dealing with the curriculum.

(iii) Coaching Staff

Ten of the thirty two schools investigated used external coaches provided by the authority in addition to peripatetic staff. Eight out of the ten of these coaches were women who taught keep fit throughout the authority within the option programme for fourth, fifth or sixth formers. One school had a judo coach and an archery coach for their fourth year programme and one school utilized a basketball coach. These findings are not consistent with a questionnaire administered by the advisory staff in 1981 in a review of P.E. teaching across the city. Their results indicated that of the thirty returns received from schools teaching girls' physical education, fifteen acknowledged the benefit of outside coaches in their departments. However interviews with staff in 1983-1984 suggest that extra help was being withdrawn as economic pressures became more

intense. Coaches were no longer being introduced into schools and those that retained this service were schools with a long tradition of such assistance. Unlike peripatetic staff, who were contributing to the core elements of games' skills and dance teaching, coaching staff provided wider opportunities for physical activity within the upper school option programme. During financial cut-backs this had become an optional extra which could easily be withdrawn.

(iv) School Staff

The staffing for physical education was dependent on the overall size of the school which, as has been mentioned, varies considerably throughout the city. All the schools had at least one specialist P.E. teacher, with the larger schools dealing with up to 1600 girls having departments of four full-time staff. In most of the departments some members of the P.E. staff taught at least one other subject for part of the week. Full details of staffing numbers can be found in Table One [Appendix Two].

The majority of the P.E. in the authority was taught by specialist trained staff^e apart from five schools where non-specialist staff taught between one and three periods of P.E. per week. It was the responsibility of the specialist trained staff, also, to undertake most of

the extra-curricular school work. As Table One, Appendix Two shows, only nine schools received any assistance in out of school activities. This was commented upon by every head of department interviewed and in the co-educational schools a direct comparison was made to the boys' P.E. departments:

"We have one woman who does badminton whereas the boys have five members of staff who help with soccer teams"

"There is no help from other members of staff. The men do and we don't. Never have done. I run five netball teams by myself and it's really hard going."

"Help from other staff? - no! Mind you the boys get a lot of help with teams."

"Help - the men's department does but not the women's. There isn't anybody competent in taking teams. Men help with basketball and soccer teams. There are a number of men in school who are no longer teaching P.E. but were P.E. teachers or did P.E. as their second subject in college."

"No we don't get any help. They come here and at interviews they promise the earth, they're going to run teams etc. but when the time comes... The men run eleven soccer teams. With the men they all fancy being soccer managers. They even run staff teams for the men, there are that many interested."

"We have one year tutor who was originally P.E. trained who helps with the hockey. Now the men - the two P.E. staff only share one soccer team 'cos they have help with the rest. 'L' takes four years of netball teams and I take four years of hockey teams on our own."

"The boys get help. They've got a member of staff for every football team. It's a pity but there is no-one here interested. If there was I would certainly co-opt them. I get tired doing it all myself."

"It's a shame, it's really where I do think it wrong. By the time you've run the hockey for each year, netball each year, gym etc. there is no time left. Yet girls will come up and say 'can we have a badminton club at lunchtime?' There are just not enough lunch hours. It's a problem of staffing and facilities whereas on the boy's side they have no problems as they get loads of help."

[Interviews with heads of departments]

The lack of extra-curricular teaching support in girls' P.E. raises important issues about restricted opportunities to participate, the lack of fit between girls' P.E. and female staff's leisure/sport interests, the lower profile of girls' physical activity in comparison to the high profile of boys' extra-curricular activities and sports, and the pressures on the time and abilities of female P.E. staff to have to teach all extra-curricular activities. Issues relating to these areas will be discussed in the sections considering gender ideologies about 'the physical' and motherhood in Chapters Six and Eight.

Table One, Appendix Two refers to the training and years of service of the heads of department in the city schools. This is included to demonstrate the importance of the local specialist teacher training establishment. Twenty three of the thirty two heads of department were trained at this college which is situated in a suburb of the city. Six of the remaining nine heads of department were trained at Catholic Colleges which reflects the large Catholic sector of

secondary schooling. The dominance of one teacher training establishment is an important consideration when reflecting on the strength of tradition and uniformity in teaching throughout a geographical area.

It is important, also, to note the years of teaching undertaken as heads of department within the authority. Schools S - CC are included in brackets as these were Catholic secondary schools in their first year of reorganization. The figures in the brackets refer to the number of years that the heads of department had served within the authority. The average number of years of service was eight. This was a considerable length of service given that it was an all-female profession traditionally serviced by women in their twenties or early thirties⁷. The explanation for this was suggested by the following observations from P.E. teachers:

"The turn-over of staff is nowhere near as much as it used to be so we have less new, enthusiastic teachers entering. This has happened since 1974-1975 when the job situation became more difficult. Women are more likely to stay in when they have kids and just take maternity leave. They can't afford to give up their jobs anymore."

"Women used to take time out to have a family but now they stay and take maternity leave. There has been far less movement of staff in and out of the authority in the past ten years or so. People couldn't move even if they wanted to because there aren't the openings for promotion anymore. If staff have reached head of department they are staying put."

P.E., during the period of the research, reflected the

national situation in teaching where economic recession and educational cut-backs have led to fewer jobs and a static job market. This is confirmed by Flanagan H.M.I., the Staff Inspector for P.E. and Dance. In his opening address at the 1985 B.A.A.L.P.E.⁹ Congress he commented that since 1977:

"falling school rolls, a lack of movement, and restricted avenues for promotion had made for a smaller force, an older force and individuals staying longer in the same posts."

In relation to girls' P.E. the implications of such staffing changes include:

- a) innovations at teacher training level take longer to permeate through to the schools as staffing remains static;
- b) as women remain longer in a post, their personal responsibilities often become greater. Thus an increased number of married women and mothers in the profession can lead to constraints on time as women's dual role in the labour market and in domestic and child-care situations becomes more intensified.⁹ This is the case especially in P.E. where extra-curricular work is so important. [See Chapter Six for further discussion.]
- c) fewer promotional prospects in relation to status and pay levels can result in more disillusionment and less willingness to undertake extra-curricular duties¹⁰.

Facilities

Figure One [Appendix Two] shows the number of schools which had access to a gymnasium, swimming pool, sports hall, outside hard-surface playing area, playing fields and/or a commercial sports centre. As can be seen all

schools had the basic amenities of a gymnasium and an outside hard-surface playing area. (The one school without a gymnasium did have a large sports hall in which gymnastics could take place.) However, only five schools had swimming pools on site and six schools a sports centre within their sporting complex. Although twenty four schools did have playing fields on site and the rest had access to off-site field use, the condition and maintenance of these facilities was a cause for concern amongst many of the heads of department:

"... if you see the condition of the pitches we have to play on, there's more holes and bunkers in it than a golf course... they just don't have the chance to master the basic skills."

"... the pitches are just always muddy and the girls have inadequate footwear. Half the time we just can't get out onto the fields."

"... the facilities are really poor for hockey. There is no drainage so they are unusable most of the winter. It means there is no suitable grass for athletics either."

"The fields are always muddy and you can't see the lines. Girls just don't have hockey boots so the fields are impossible to use."

It is important to recognize that the presence of facilities does not necessarily relate to their use.

The limited number of schools having swimming pools and sports centres on site affected, also, the breadth and diversity of the activities on offer to girls in P.E. Schools without swimming pools could offer only limited opportunities for swimming teaching. (Twenty-one schools

included swimming but only as a minor portion of the total P.E. time). In secondary schools the teaching of swimming tended to be restricted to the first years, as financial priority was given to primary schools and lower secondary classes. Leisure research [Deem 1986] indicates that swimming is the most popular post-school leisure activity for women. Given that one of the primary aims of P.E. teaching was identified by the teaching staff as 'preparation for leisure', (see curriculum - this chapter) the lack of swimming facilities would seem to be problematic in relation to the successful achievement of aims and the inclusion of activities meaningful and relevant to young women's lives (See Chapter Eight for further discussion).

As only six schools across the city had a sports hall for their use, this further influenced the range of activities on offer for P.E. Twenty-six of the thirty-two heads of department expressed a concern about the lack of indoor facilities, particularly for the older pupils. These staff identified the need for large indoor areas, preferably in the form of sports halls, in order to cater for the desired wide range of activities in a programme of 'options' at the top end of the school. It is apparent that the facilities available were a limiting factor on P.E. teaching. As will be discussed later, there appears to be a conflict between the stated aims and intentions of P.E. teachers and the P.E. programmes that have been developed. Access to

facilities has a direct bearing on this anomaly. Furthermore adequate indoor facilities were seen by P.E. teachers as essential in order to provide a satisfactory programme in poor weather conditions. Interestingly, this raises the question of what constitutes poor weather conditions for girls. On the whole, wet, cold, muddy fields were not seen by those teaching P.E. as suitable for girls' activities:

"We never go out in the rain, ice or fog. If it's very cold I only go out if we're doing something very active. There's no point in making it a punishment."

"Girls just won't go out once it's cold. If they do they just stand around and complain."

"Once the fields are muddy it just isn't worth taking the girls out. They complain and no one achieves anything."

While these comments reflect a fairly rational approach to a situation in which adverse weather conditions clearly affect the participation in and achievement of physical objectives, similar views were not expressed in relation to boys' experiences:

"Oh boys go out regardless of the weather but it doesn't matter to them. They seem to enjoy getting muddy."

"Certainly the boys seem to go out more often than the girls but after all rugby is all about rolling about in the mud."

"I think it's different for most boys. They seem to not mind going out in the cold. Probably boys are so much more active that they don't feel it the same."

Clearly these views do not reflect the reality of the situation, in that it would seem likely that many boys find going out in cold, wet, muddy conditions as unpleasant as do their female counterparts. However, what emerged from the interviews with the teachers is the strength of the images and ideas held about the differences between girls and boys in relation to their ability to withstand cold, wet conditions and their desirability to do so. These issues will be discussed more fully in Chapter Six. It is sufficient to stress here that these images and ideas have definite implications for the teaching of P.E. to girls.

The Liverpool Physical Education Teachers Study Group [1981], whose main brief was to "review the Physical Education Curriculum - its current trends and future needs", considered the following issues to be of significance in relation to facilities:

- a) Much teaching time is lost because bad weather interrupts the indoor programme. This frequently occurs when other facilities (not affected by climatic conditions) are already fully utilized. As a result there is a need for more sports hall provision and links with sports centres.
- b) Where space is available the provision of on-site, all-weather playing areas could do much to reduce the amount of travelling required by schools whose 'field' facilities are located some distance away.
- c) That the 'gymnasium' provided a most important facility and that the need for indoor accommodation could not always be satisfied by sports hall type buildings on their own.
- d) Schools should have access to swimming baths.

Similar problems were prioritized by the teachers in the research project indicating that these issues were not resolved for the schools. Most developments would be dependent on increased financial commitment which was unlikely in the economic climate.

Showers

The facility for showering following P.E. was available, in theory, for all the schools. However, this facility was considered unusable by some schools for a number of reasons. The major constraint identified in seven schools was the time available in a P.E. lesson, e.g.:

"We don't use the showers there just isn't time. I'd rather use what little time we have to teach."

"There just isn't time. In forty minutes when they also have to change they hardly have time to break into a sweat. I expect if we had longer lessons then we would shower."

"We just don't have the time for showers. I let them choose to have one if their lesson is just before lunch or home time."

[Interviews - heads of departments]

Structural and practical problems with the actual showering facilities created further restrictions:

"We only have six showers, so class showers are just not practical. They are an option though not an option taken up a great deal."

"We have showers but no shower curtains"

so they won't use them. I don't blame them. The authority just won't give us the money for curtains and it isn't a priority for our capitation money."

"The showers are in the sports hall so they can only be used when using that facility."

"We do have showers but can't use them because the floor is lethal."

[Interviews - heads of departments]

Ten schools included compulsory showers in their P.E. teaching for years one to four with one school enforcing compulsory showers until the end of the fifth year. Therefore over two-thirds of the schools in the research did not have compulsory showers for any age group. Many commented that this was a change that had occurred over the past ten years. Restricted time, inadequate facilities and the view that showering can create unnecessary worry and tension for girls were the primary reasons given for non-showering. As one head of department commented:

"By the second year showering becomes really difficult because they are so self-conscious and embarrassed. I wouldn't make staff force kids through showers. I think it is one sure way to put girls off P.E."

This is one crucial aspect of the relationship of P.E. to young women's developing sexuality. The question of this relationship will be discussed further in Chapter Eight.

Curriculum

i) Aims

The heads of department were consistent in their stated aims for P.E. In answer to the question "what is your main aim of teaching girls' P.E.?" three main aims were suggested: enjoyment, preparation for leisure and 'standards'¹¹. In thirty-one of the thirty-two schools studied, enjoyment and preparation for leisure were proposed as the two most important aims. These were seen to be closely interconnected. The following were typical comments from the heads of department:

"We aim to give them an interest in sport in general, something they'll enjoy doing so that they'll want to carry on in something when they leave school."

"I'd like to think that when they'd left they had found one activity that they enjoyed enough to keep up. My first aim is the enjoyment of the lesson."

"To get them to enjoy physical activity so that they will continue it. Because if you enjoy something you will carry on. It is going to be good for you, healthy for you whereas if you do something you hate, you won't continue."

"I'd say that participation and enjoyment are the most important aims of P.E. so that they will continue some activity throughout life."

[Interviews - heads of department]

In relation to 'standards' the main comments were:

"I can see for some people it is a good

way for disciplining. Team games give good discipline."

"I have very high standards and they are an important aspect of my teaching: punctuality, dress, appearance etc. I aim to encourage the girls to also have high personal standards."

"P.E. aims to give social guidance. That's what we can do in P.E. - please and thank you, opening doors for people. Self-discipline is one of my main aims."

"I think in P.E. rather than in any other subject it's teaching them manners, self-discipline, good appearance. I think we do a good job for the school more than any other subject. We're more disciplined than any other part of the school."

A major survey of P.E. in secondary schools, conducted for the Schools Council and published in 1974, listed nine objectives for P.E. which were ranked in order of importance by P.E. teachers. The use of the term 'objective' was justified in that:

The fact is that most of the pertinent physical education literature fails to distinguish clearly between aims and objectives, and it was from this literature that the objectives of physical education were identified for the purposes of the enquiry.

[Kane 1974:60]

The aims of P.E. identified by the heads of department in this research project were very much 'long-term' aims rather than 'short-term' objectives. However it is useful to compare them to Kane's findings for the Schools Council. The 1974 survey [Kane 1974:35] found the following objectives ranked in order by women

teachers:

1. Motor skills
2. Self realisation
3. Emotional stability
4. Leisure
5. Moral development
6. Social competence
7. Cognitive development
8. Organic development
9. Aesthetic appreciation

It is interesting to note the contrasting findings to this research project. Certainly motor skills and 'physical' development were mentioned by only two heads of department and in each case as of secondary importance. Leisure and 'moral development', which compare directly to the 'preparation for leisure' and 'standards' aims identified in the present research, were ranked only fourth and fifth in the 1974 study. The explanation for this must rest with speculation, but would seem to involve a relationship to the changing social, economic and political climate of the 1980s. It must be noted, also, that the primary aim of 'enjoyment' was not included in the questionnaire for the 1974 Survey. However this omission was noted by the teachers responding to this section of the survey. The report commented that:

The most often mentioned additional objectives were concerned with enjoyment and satisfaction in physical education.

[Kane 1974:31]

It would appear that 'enjoyment' remains a primary aim of P.E. teaching.

A number of issues are raised by the findings relating to the stated aims of heads of department of P.E. These can be summarized as follows:

- a) the 'physical' - the development of physical skill was not considered to be of primary importance by the teachers in the research. This is supported by observational material from the case study schools, to be discussed in Chapter Seven. The relationship of P.E. to ideologies of the physical and male-female physical power relations emerges as a crucial area for analysis and discussion.
- b) 'preparation for leisure' - the importance of this aim for contemporary P.E. must be considered in relation to the feminist literature on 'women and leisure' cited in Chapter Two and to the social, economic and political climate in the city.
- c) 'enjoyment' - enjoyment as an achievable aim for P.E. needs consideration alongside the literature on young women's subcultures (Chapter Two) and in relation to the activities on offer to girls and young women in schools. How relevant is physical activity, in particular traditional team games, to the lives of adolescent young women? The conflicts and resistances of young women must be considered in relation to the stated 'drop out' or lessening of interest of young women at fourteen or fifteen years old [Chapter Six].

This latter issue was identified as an aspect of girls' P.E. by the majority of P.E. teachers interviewed. For example:

"Up to the third year they're really keen. It's probably adolescence, more aware of lads, fed up of doing same thing day in and day out. They just get turned off P.E."

"There's a definite drop of interest in the fourth year but there again girls drop out of everything in the fourth year. The only way to retain interest is through a broad curriculum."

"Yes - girls lose interest in the third or fourth year. It's the social idea of women and sport. Boys tend to continue to enjoy football etc. but it's not the same for girls."

"I know it's the classic one but it's the third year - past the Christmas term. They lose interest because they're doing things that they can't easily carry over. You get girls coming up to you and saying: "what's the sense in us learning to play hockey - we'll never do it. What's the use in learning to run the 100m. I'm not going to be a 100m runner." I suppose they just don't see the point. We also get complaints about the style of P.E. kit."

Issues concerning the relevance of P.E. to adolescent girls and the influence of the social construction of sport/physical activity as a 'male' pursuit demand further consideration.

- d) 'standards' - the importance of 'standards' (discipline, appearance, behaviour) in both the traditions and contemporary practice of P.E. raises important questions relating to the ideology of female sexuality.

These four issues will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six using the material from the interviews of heads of department, in the more detailed observation in the case study schools [Chapter Seven], and in the analysis of Chapter Eight.

ii) Programme of activities

a) Curricular

Figures Three to Seven (Appendix Two) represent the activities which were taught in the five years of compulsory secondary schooling.

The most obvious feature to emerge was the existence in years one to three of a common core curriculum, across the majority of schools¹². This included gymnastics, netball, rounders, athletics, swimming, tennis and hockey. Dance was taught in twelve schools only in years one and three and in fourteen schools during year two. The adviser reflected that there have been few changes in the activities offered to girls over the years, apart from a drop in the number doing dance:

"There have been some slight subtle changes but no major changes... the activities are much the same. Gym has mellowed a little. There is now more structure to educational gymnastics than in the mid 1960s. Dance has died out a great deal especially since the late '60s - early '70s.... yet I think dance is the

most important part of the curriculum."

The Liverpool study 1981 found that dance was taught in sixteen of the thirty schools who replied to their survey. In total they concluded that dance involved only 6.8% of the total curricular time spent on girls' P.E. in comparison to team games which took up 51.6% of the total time.¹³

Team games have continued to dominate the main programme of activities with netball and/or hockey, rounders and tennis played in the majority of schools in years one to three. However, gymnastics remained the "backbone" of P.E. with all but one school offering it throughout the three years. The term 'gymnastics' can cover a wide range of activities but when questioned all described the gymnastics taught in the lower half of the school as 'modern educational gymnastics'. However, several heads of department reiterated the adviser's comment that gymnastics over the past 10-15 years has become more structured than the educational gymnastics of the early 1970s.¹⁴ Swimming was taught in 28 of the 32 schools in Year One but it was replaced in some schools in Year Two and remained on the timetable of only fifteen schools by Year Three. This reflected the lack of access to swimming pools for many schools and the economic constraints which have resulted in swimming being prioritized in upper juniors and year one of secondary school only. All heads of department stressed a commitment to the desirability of swimming being taught

throughout secondary schooling and regretted the constraints which did not allow this to take place.

Figures Six and Seven (Appendix Two) describe the activities taught across the city in years four and five. There was a considerable change from the core-curriculum of the first three years to the broader 'option' based programme of the upper school. A wide range of activities were taught during these years of schooling and there was little consistency apart from badminton which was taught in twenty-six schools in year four and twenty nine schools in year five.

During the fourth year a number of schools retained a commitment to the core activities which had formed the structure of P.E. in the lower school. However, gymnastics lost favour in a large number of schools leaving it as an activity in only nine schools. Athletics was totally absent from the fourth year curriculum but netball (21 schools), tennis (21 schools), rounders (14 schools) and hockey (9 schools) remained an integral part of the programme. The major change in the programme was the introduction of a wide range of 'leisure' activities e.g. trampolining, volleyball, judo, keep-fit etc. In 21 of the 32 schools the fourth year activities formed a programme of "options" where an element of choice was introduced for the first time. This innovation over the past 15-20 years had been a direct intervention in order to provide a more interesting and

relevant curriculum for adolescent girls and in response to the raising of the school leaving age [ROSLA] in 1972. The 'success' of this change will be discussed in Chapter Eight. Certainly the P.E. staff viewed it as the most important curricular change during the 1970s and 1980s:

"Options have certainly been a positive development. Once you've introduced an option scheme, if it works successfully and if the curriculum is designed around the option scheme at the top end you can bring in lots of new ideas fairly easily whereas without the option scheme or you haven't got the staff available you stick to things that will keep the most people occupied for the best length of time - which tends to be the traditional method."

"At the fourth or fifth year they need to know what they can enjoy and carry on. It is important that they aren't forced to go out and play hockey and they hate it. I rather they played table tennis, as long as they enjoy it. In lots of schools kids are forced - choice is a good thing. They must be able to make their choice."

"Options have come into the fifth year in this school where we are even discussing the fact that they might possibly come into the fourth year... Things like badminton and squash are becoming more important because more children play them outside of school."

By the fifth year the 'traditional' activities had become less popular with tennis and netball retained in 14 and 10 schools respectively but with swimming (6 schools), rounders (3 schools), hockey (2 schools) and gymnastics (2 schools) very much minor activities across the city.

Figures One to Four (Appendix Two) show more clearly the changing emphases in activities across the five years of secondary schooling. The traditional team games netball, rounders and hockey showed a marked decline in popularity following the third year whereas volleyball was played in 18 schools in the fourth and fifth year in comparison to none in the first and second year and only one in the third year. Basketball remained a marginal activity with few schools (four in the fourth year and five in the fifth year) offering it to girls even in the upper school. This was primarily because netball was viewed by most P.E. staff as the 'female' sport and basketball as the more 'suitable' male option.

"Boys don't want to play netball they play basketball. That's a much more vigorous, spunky game. It's much more suitable for boys than girls."

"I do think that there are definite boys' activities and girls' activities. Boys do basketball and we do netball which I think is more suitable. The two are similar but I just think netball is more appropriate."

Not all the staff necessarily saw netball as more physically appropriate but they did recognize the importance of tradition.

"I wouldn't think netball necessarily more appropriate. I'd say it's tradition because really in netball the first thing you are teaching them to do is stop. If we started with basketball it would be more relevant 'cos at least they could keep moving with the ball. Then there is more skill involved. However netball is more traditional so that's what we stick

with."

This issue will be considered in more detail in the discussion of gender ideologies about physical ability/capacity in Chapter Six.

Figures Two and Three (Appendix Two) demonstrate clearly the marked decline in athletics and swimming over the five years of compulsory schooling. The other activities noted were cross-country, canoeing, trampolining, judo. These were the only individual sports that were undertaken in more than one school. The schools including these individual activities, in general, included them from the third year.

Tennis, as a racquet sport forming part of the core curriculum in the majority of schools in years one to three, was dropped by some schools in years four to five although it remained in 14 schools in year five. This is significantly more than for the other core activities and appears to reflect the recreational nature of the activity. Certainly tennis in both private clubs and public parks is more accessible for many young women post school than the other activities included in the core curriculum. Thus it was retained in 22 and 14 schools for years four and five respectively, as an 'option' leisure-linked activity. Badminton, in contrast, was absent from any school in the first two years and then showed a dramatic increase resulting in 29 schools including it by year five. Once more this

reflects the recreational aspect of badminton in that it is viewed as an activity that can be continued after school but is not suitable for a physical education curriculum in the early years of secondary schooling. This can be linked to the lack of indoor facilities which made it difficult for many schools in the research to involve a large number of girls in badminton at any one time. Also, it was considered by the staff as particularly suitable for adolescents:

"Girls like badminton when they're 14 or 15 because you don't have to use any energy or run around. It's just a case of putting the shuttle across a net."

"They're keen on badminton 'cos it's an easy option. They're indoors, warm, dry and they don't have to get hot and sweaty. It suits young ladies!"

"I think badminton's popular because it fits in with their expectations at that particular time. They can play at their own pace, they don't have to concentrate - it's relatively easy."

[Interviews - heads of departments]

This latter comment from one head of department raises the interesting relationship between P.E. and young women's subcultures during adolescence. Certainly there appears to be an expectation from many of the staff that young adolescent women will not want to be active, get hot, work at a high skill level or concentrate! The area of options and the change from lower school to upper school, in relation to physical education, young women's subcultures and teaching staff expectations, are important issues for further discussion. These will be

taken up in Chapter Eight.

Figure Four (Appendix Two) shows the inverse relationship of gymnastics and dance with popmobility/keep-fit/aerobics. These latter activities have been bracketed together as there are no clear definitions in this area. In some schools activities defined as keep-fit were identical to another school's popmobility programme. Once more the divide between education and recreation was evident. Gymnastics is viewed in P.E. literature as an educational activity with broad educational objectives:

Of the physical education subjects offered in school, educational dance and educational gymnastics are those which most directly contribute to the personal development of children.

[Morrison 1969:23]

Popmobility, keep-fit and aerobics are recreational pursuits popular for their emphasis on health and their suitability for young women. These activities are very much 'feminine' pursuits almost exclusive to the female sex. It is interesting that no school offered the girls the 'masculine' equivalent - fitness training, circuit training or weight training. Keep fit and aerobics were justified by many staff as a suitable activity for young women. Comments included:

"Keep-fit is very popular now because they are very figure conscious. We use this to encourage the girls."

"Yes girls want to do keep-fit and aerobics at this time because they are conscious of their appearance and want to work at looking good."

"We can get the girls to do keep-fit because it's the in-thing isn't it? They can get the fancy leotards and jogging suits. They see it as a means to improve their shape and make them look good."

[Interviews - heads of departments]

The relationship of physical education for adolescent girls and developing sexuality is an important issue raised by the research. The emphasis on figure, appearance and generally 'looking good' must be considered in relation to the literature on young women's sexuality [Jackson 1982; Lees 1986]. Radical feminist theory [see Chapter One] analyses the relationship of sexuality to women's subordination in society. A critical examination of the teaching of girls' P.E. must consider the theoretical implications of this for the practice of P.E. teaching. This analysis will be more fully discussed in Chapters Six and Eight.

b) Extra-curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities across the city were an extension of curricular time in that the same activities were offered to the girls at lunchtime and after school. The general pattern was to organize netball, hockey, rounders, athletics and tennis teams, where these were taught in the formal programme, plus a gym club and a dance club. Schools that had a swimming pool on site

offered a variety of swimming activities e.g. swimming teams, personal survival awards and life saving. One school offered a sub-aqua club. The main 'option' activity on offer in extra-curricula time was badminton (26 schools) with a volleyball club organized in a small number of schools (4 schools).

The main constraints on extra-curricular activities were identified by heads of department as lack of staff and facilities. These areas have been discussed previously, with the staffing problem being of particular concern to the female P.E. staff as indicated in the section dealing with staffing. The lack of involvement in girls' activities, by women staff other than the P.E. specialists, has resulted in fewer opportunities for girls to participate, a lower profile afforded to girls' activities and increased pressure on the female P.E. staff in relation to time and commitment to a wide range of physical pursuits. Women P.E. teachers need to be a 'Jane"-of-all-trades' in order to ensure that a variety of activities are on offer.

Extra-curricular time, traditionally has been the time for the development of competitive physical situations. The question of the validity of competition in physical education has been the theme of considerable debate during the 1970s and 1980s. Morgan [1974:15] articulates the main concern over competition in P.E.:

Competition is an essential part of a whole range of games and contests which boys and girls have traditionally enjoyed and rightly handled, the competitive element may raise the level of interest to a point of high excitement which is still completely enjoyable. But it can have the effect of bringing individual deficiencies into prominence, it can cloak rough and insensitive behaviour and it can be used to confer on games and athletics a status which appears to many people as out of all proportion to their true value to play.

While being unable to address these debates in any depth, the "problem" of competition particularly as it relates to girls and physical education will be discussed in the following chapter dealing with ideologies of 'femininity'. In relation to competition in the context of P.E., its place traditionally had been situated in out of school activities. Thus inter-school team practices and matches have formed the backbone of the extra-curricular programme. Kane [1974] found that of teachers (male and female) involved in extra-curricular activities, 98% were regularly involved in competitive team games. Interviews with the heads of girls' P.E. in this research suggests that the organization and coaching of teams remained a priority in many schools. However there can be identified a changing emphasis away from inter-school competition. 19 of the 32 schools commented that they now play far fewer matches than they did five years ago. This was not necessarily due to teacher choice. All recognized that financial cut-backs and constraints were adversely

affecting their programme of inter-school fixtures. Even more crucial seemed to be the restrictions that girls experienced from a number of sources. Several heads of department suggested that there has been a steady increase in girls taking part-time evening and Saturday jobs. Saturday morning fixtures, in particular, had decreased dramatically during the 1980s. Only 6 schools participated in a full Saturday fixture programme and these schools, consequently, had to travel out of the city boundaries to find opposition. The head of department of one of these schools made an interesting observation:

"But I never have difficulties getting teams out but I think that it is the type of girls that we've got. Its nothing to do with me, it's just the type of girl. They don't have to have Saturday jobs and they are so keen and willing to take part. They have parental support and are proud to come and represent the school on a Saturday."

The inclusion of Saturday fixtures appears to be related directly to the class location of the school. The schools opting to continue this tradition were ex-grammar schools in middle-class suburbs of the city or Anglican non-selective schools which drew from the diocese, also with an ex-grammar school intake. The growing divide between middle-class schools whose parents' associations support and provide financial assistance and schools which have to rely on their local education authority grants, is demonstrated by the presence in some schools of mini-buses, team kit,

tracksuits etc. which had been provided by organized fund-raising and parental contributions¹⁵.

Although all schools took part in some inter-school competition, primarily after school hours during the week, further constraints on the participation of girls were noted by a significant number of teachers:

"A lot of girls are expected to do babysitting and get paid for babysitting and so it is an incentive for them not to come to practices and things. That's why we now use all the lunchtimes."

"When it gets dark we have to finish earlier. This applies to girls not boys. We also rarely have Saturday matches now, due to Saturday jobs."

"We have the problem of girls having to pick up younger kids and do the housework etc."

"There is a problem of away matches because parents don't like them travelling across the city in winter."

[Interviews - heads of department]

These constraints influenced the participation of some girls in the whole range of extra curricular activities not just team games. They appear to be class related, also, as in the case of part-time jobs and Saturday fixtures. These issues that have been identified: domestic responsibilities; child-care responsibilities; protection of girls on dark evenings and class differences in opportunity will be considered in the more detailed analysis in Chapters Seven and Eight. Interestingly, not all P.E. teachers accepted these

constraints as an inevitable influence on participation.

As one head of department related:

"About two years ago there was a real pressure on girls to go home instead of to trampolining club to look after the little ones. So we had the little ones picked up and brought to trampolining club! Some minded them in the corner. Eventually even the little ones, some seven and eight, were having a go too and the club has continued to thrive."

[Recorded interview]

It is important to recognize that teachers are not always passive recipients of their circumstances. Throughout the study many demonstrated the ability to negotiate their existence and challenge difficult or controversial situations. Again these will be discussed more explicitly when considering the teachers' attitudes to various issues and the case-study material. Furthermore, the theoretical debates around the desirability of competition have not remained between the pages of the journals and in P.E. texts. Although competitive team games have continued to dominate extra-curricular time, several schools have adopted a club system across all activities to avoid the selective competitive element. The most comprehensive example of this, in relation to an extra-curricular programme, was in Townley School. A full description of this programme will be included in Chapter Seven.

Examinations

During the 1970s there was a growing interest and subsequent development in examinations in physical education.¹⁶ In September 1976 there were 13 examination boards across the country which approved syllabuses for C.S.E. Mode III examinations. These were registered under a number of titles and with differing emphases e.g. modern educational dance; physical education; outdoor pursuits; art of movement; theory and practice of physical education; human movement studies; physical education, recreation and health etc. [Schools Council Occasional Bulletin 1977]. The controversy over examinations, which involved a debate over the desirability and value of formal examinations in a traditionally practical-based subject, was at its height in the late 1970s and early 1980s¹⁷ [Carroll 1981]. More recently P.E. literature has indicated a move away from the debates over examinations to a newly awakened concern for competition in the curriculum, particularly in relation to the demise of British professional sporting activity [Leaman 1986], and the developments in health-related fitness and health based P.E. programmes.¹⁸ Recent references to examinations in P.E. have concentrated on the developments at 'A' level [White 1983; B.J.P.E.1985] whereas the earlier work concentrated on C.S.E. Mode III [Carroll 1979, 1980].

This research study reveals that there were no schools

undertaking formal examinations in girls' P.E. Three schools noted that previously they had entered groups for various C.S.E. examinations but had decided that they were not particularly successful. The following comments from heads of departments indicated their reservations over examinations:

"I do think exams are a good thing but you have to be so careful that it isn't a dumping ground. That's what tended to happen here but the kids must be able enough to do it."

"We don't do exams. We used to do dance C.S.E. but you got all the 'riff-raff in it'. It was good for the lower ability child but you were left with the dregs. I think it's coming to something when you need to justify your subject with an examination."

Overall there was generally a negative response to the question of examinations. Most saw examinations in P.E. as indicative of a need to justify P.E. in relation to other academic subjects. Most P.E. staff rejected this and felt that P.E. was worthwhile and justifiable on its own grounds without having to enter the race for qualifications:

"It is not necessary for us to push prestige or justify our subject. It's the other staff who want to do that. I suppose for some it would be useful, like those going on to P.E. college, but for most it's a waste of time."

"There is absolutely no point in P.E. exams."

"I have my doubts about them. The idea that became popular was that it was the opportunity for the less academically

able who were physically able to shine but then when you looked at courses there was so much theory attached to them it just wasn't possible for less academically able to shine. ... I don't think there should be an exam as such. I think it would curtail the work, if you were thinking of assessment continually then the tendency might be to train simply towards the assessment."

"I don't believe in them. It should be fun and doing not how you write."

[Interviews - heads of department]

As this study has looked only at girls' P.E. there can be no conclusions drawn as to whether boys' P.E. has followed a similar path in rejecting examinations. However, given that the majority of research and literature on examinations is dominated by male physical educationalists and that male P.E. has an historical emphasis on the 'scientific' study of P.E. with tests and measurements at the forefront¹⁹, it is reasonable to hypothesize that there could be significant gender divisions in the emphasis and practice of examinations in P.E. Certainly the legacy of Laban and the emphasis on 'movement', which strongly influenced post World War Two women's P.E., suggests an historical aversion to the measurement and evaluation inherent in a competitive, hierarchical examination system.

Conclusion

Part I of this chapter has located the research in its social, economic and political context by providing an introductory overview of the local education authority.

Using empirical data collected through structured interviews throughout the secondary school girls' P.E. departments, Part II has provided descriptive detail of the organization, staffing, facilities, curriculum and evaluation of P.E. in the authority. Several important issues have been raised by this material. Relating back to the historical analysis in Chapter Three and the literature review in Chapters One and Two, the following areas emerge as important considerations for a feminist analysis of contemporary girls' P.E.:

- mixed versus single-sex organisation;
- the relationship of P.E. to young women's developing sexuality in relation to showers, P.E. kit, emphasis on 'standards' (appearance, behaviour etc.
- 'separate and different P.E. for girls and boys'. Gender ideologies about the 'physical' in contemporary P.E.: curricular opportunities, extra-curricular activities, aims of girls' P.E.
- the relationship of girls' P.E. to young women's subcultures: the relevance of the stated aims of P.E. (enjoyment, preparation for leisure) to young women's lives and the potential conflicts to be negotiated within young women's subcultures.

These questions have emerged from the information collected from the heads of department stating what actually happens in the schools. This largely empirical, descriptive material, however, has begun to raise questions relating to the significance of gender in the teaching of girls' P.E. This will be explored in the next chapter when the interview responses of the heads

of girls' P.E. will be analyzed in more detail in relation to the gender ideologies identified in the historical material of Chapter Three. It is the relationship of gender to girls' P.E. which underpins the questions that are beginning to emerge from this research investigation. Therefore, gender is of central importance in the following analytical chapters which begin to analyse and discuss the complex issues relating to gender and girls' P.E. This analysis is fundamental to a feminist approach to girls' P.E. and crucial if future, non-sexist developments in this aspect of girls' education are to be recognised and ultimately implemented (see Chapter Nine).

CHAPTER SIX

IMAGES OF FEMININITY:

The Responses of the Female P.E. Teachers

Introduction

Chapter Three placed women's physical education in its historical context considering the traditions of P.E. and the relationship of P.E. to ideologies of femininity throughout its development. Historically P.E. has been premised on the notion that girls require 'separate and different' P.E. in school. As suggested in Chapter Three, underpinning this provision were assumptions around 'femininity' which could be categorised into three areas: physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality. Following from this historical analysis Chapter Five looked at the situation of contemporary P.E. using the research authority as a case study and providing detail of the organisation, staffing, content and evaluation of P.E. in a large city L.E.A. This chapter seeks to consider whether similar questions and assumptions, resulting from this historical legacy can be identified in the attitudes and ideas commonly held by those both involved in the policy and the practices of contemporary P.E. In order to do this the extensive definitions and justifications of 'good practice' given by teachers and the adviser and collated from the interview transcripts are considered [see Methodology - Chapter Four]. However ideas and images about 'femininity' are not restricted to the level of commonsense assumptions to be 'achieved' by some individuals and challenged by others. It is the extent to which commonsense assumptions come together to

form ideologies¹ of femininity and thus are formulated and articulated in social practice (P.E.) which will provide the extension of this chapter in Chapter Seven.

Therefore, this chapter sets out to answer questions relating to the gender categories of physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality in contemporary P.E. Can assumptions around these three areas be identified in the ideas and attitudes of female P.E. teachers and are the assumptions of different teachers consistent? Do the views of P.E. teachers reflect a 'new' liberated image of women in the 1980s unfettered by gender assumptions?

Physical Ability/Capacity

The historical material identified the deeply embedded traditions relating to an ideology of the physical at the core of the subject. The dominant ethos that was established stressed 'different' physical exercise and sport for girls and women which encouraged the development of specifically 'feminine' attributes. The evidence discussed in Chapter Five suggests that the notion of 'separate' and 'different' physical opportunities and experiences for girls remains a central concept across the L.E.A.'s secondary schools. This is reflected in the continuing organization of the majority of P.E. in single sex groupings and the 'traditional female' curriculum identified in all the

schools in years one to three and in several schools until the end of compulsory schooling. At the meeting of heads of girls' P.E. departments held on 26th September 1983 in the research authority, the question of single sex teaching was raised with the thirty-nine heads of department in attendance and the two P.E. advisers (one female and one male). All thirty nine heads of department plus the female adviser supported the continuance of single sex teaching with only the male adviser enthusiastic for a move towards mixed sex teaching. He supported mixed P.E. "in the formative years of secondary education but not beyond the third year". His justification for this organization rested on the complementary abilities of both male and female pupils and male and female teachers:

"Boys and girls offer each other different abilities and strengths therefore they can help and encourage each other. It is the same for the teachers. I think in some respects men tend to be by and large games players and teachers and possibly their expertise in terms of games and analyses might help girls understand games a bit more. I think women tend to be au fait and naturally adapted to style and rhythm of movement from the gymnastic point of view. I think women in respect of that can also help the boys."

The implications of his assumptions around male and female strengths in teaching will be considered in Chapter Eight when the issue of mixed versus single sex P.E. will be discussed more fully.

In addition a further point that will be taken up in Chapter Eight is the male adviser's reasoning behind the need to return to single sex teaching after the third year in school. He saw this as linked clearly to the differing needs and interests of young women and young men in relation to their preparation for future leisure. He recognized that "an awful lot of girls become anti-team games or more anti-team games beyond the third year. I feel they go away from that and look for quality of movement, experiences in individual sports rather than team games". Although he admitted that some boys also drop out from team games at this age he saw quite clearly the desirability of boys continuing but failed to make a similar argument for girls. This related directly to opportunities out of school:

"the benefit that boys have is that they can join such things as pub teams on a Sunday where they can get a game of soccer not necessarily for the game of soccer itself more for the social thing."

These comments by the male P.E. adviser raise fundamental questions relating to the sexual division of leisure, youth sub-cultural influences of sports participation and the sexual division of sport in popular culture. These will be returned to in later chapters. This chapter seeks to establish the justifications given by the female heads of department for the continuance of single sex organization and to assess whether the traditional 'female' content of P.E. continues to be supported by P.E. staff and, if so,

their reasons for such an emphasis.

The historical material identified clear biological and ideological justifications for a different and separate P.E. curriculum for girls resting on innate physiological differences resulting in specific female physical abilities and capacities. Weiss, whose work formed a core element in many P.E. teacher training courses and remains on the reading list of many colleges today, wrote as recently as 1969:

One way of dealing with these disparities between the athletic promise and achievements of men and women is to view women as truncated males. As such they can be permitted to engage in the same sports that men do... but in foreshortened versions... so far as excellence of performance depends mainly on the kind of muscles, bones, size, strength that one has, women can be dealt with as fractional men.

[Weiss 1969:215-216]

This powerful statement about women's abilities (or lack of them) raises several issues. First, women are viewed as deviant males - indeed as "truncated males" or "fractional men". Furthermore, because Weiss claims that women are inferior in "muscles, bones, size and strength" they need to adapt the sports in which they participate. Overall there is little doubt as to where the power, ability and control in sports lies according to Weiss. The fact that women will be permitted (by men) to engage in the same sports placed power firmly and without doubt in male control.

The structured interview with the female P.E. adviser provides evidence that she was in agreement both with Weiss [1969] and with the opinion of the male adviser, that girls and boys have different and complementary physical abilities.

"A lot of people, myself included, feel that boys can give the girls much more daring, adventure, excitement and of course girls can give grace and finish, those things that they are better at."

Although not viewing girls or women as 'truncated males' she accepted clearly that women are different in a number of physical areas and need, therefore to play games and sports to suit their capabilities:

"... let's face it boys have far more strength, speed, daring. Women are much more the devious species. We need to play the games to suit our abilities."

[Taped interview: P.E. adviser]

Out of the fifty-six interviews with those in a position of responsibility for decisions relating to the teaching of P.E. in the authority, i.e. advisory staff, heads of department, peripatetic teaching staff, fifty-four referred to the existence of clear physical differences between boys and girls. The following quotes are representative of the views of P.E. teachers about these differences:

"Look at gymnastics, boys have no finesse but all little girls are poised. Little boys just throw themselves about."

"... Boys and girls complement each other. They are different and we shouldn't be trying to make them the same. They can give to each other - girls subtlety and control. Boys can stretch the girls and make them want to try harder."

"... very few girls are willing to launch themselves out of line... it's a physical difference. They've [boys] got spunk - girls naturally don't launch themselves."

"Boys give girls much more daring, adventure, excitement and of course girls can give grace and 'finish' those things they are better at".

"I think boys are much more rowdier and noisier and therefore shouldn't be put with girls."

"The majority of girls are far more reserved than boys. In a lesson the boys will throw themselves at a ball. The girls will move to the side."

"We tend to make them do things to their own ability. When we do athletics we do 'standards' - our standards need to be lower than the boys standards because we do not achieve the same capabilities."

"A lot of girls haven't got much spirit to them. Most of them wouldn't want to go on an expedition. They wouldn't enjoy it. They don't enjoy physical discomfort. Again it's quite different for boys."

"Boys are far more enthusiastic, boisterous, lively than girls. Boys are very keen on P.E., more so than girls. Girls are much quieter and less enthusiastic."

"Boys are stronger, taller, faster. It's just a physical difference."

[Interview transcripts]

The interview transcripts suggest the existence of strong images and ideas about girls' and boys' physical

capabilities. As can be seen in the above quotes, boys are viewed as:

daring, exciting, rowdy, noisy, enthusiastic, boisterous, strong, tall, fast, spunky, willing to launch themselves.

In contrast girls are seen to possess:

finesse, poise, subtlety, control, grace, finish, quietness.

The explanations for the existence of these two distinct groupings of male and female characteristics fall into two categories. First, fifty-three out of the fifty-six interviewees referred to the existence of 'natural' differences in physical ability:

"Boys have a lot of 'natural' ability 'cos they do things on their own. Girls are more shy and timid. Most girls don't have a lot of natural ability."

"I support the fact that there are clear natural differences between boys and girls - most definitely."

"There are definitely clear natural physical differences between boys and girls."

"Boys are far more naturally extrovert than girls."

"Boys are more aggressive definitely - it's natural and shows in their physical abilities."

[Interview transcripts]

Thus there was an acceptance that differences between boys and girls are biologically determined. Yet these

powerful stereotypes held by the teachers are not supported so definitively by research evidence. Dyer [1982] suggests that in relation to sporting ability and physical capacity, physical sex differences are relevant only at the highest competitive level and even here it remains difficult to identify 'biological fact' from the social effects of socialization, training opportunities etc. Certainly, observation of P.E. classes of thirteen year old girls in the case study schools supports Talbot's [1979] view that there are as many physical differences in relation to physique, strength and co-ordination within the group as there are in comparison to a similar age group of boys.

The majority of the P.E. staff interviewed accepted also that social tradition and cultural determination are significant explanations for the differences between boys and girls. Many retained the notion of 'natural' differences but acknowledged that tradition and socialization were important variables:

*"There are differences mainly for physical reasons - basic natural power. But look at little girls, they don't play netball but little boys are all playing football. It's the way they are brought up."*²

"I think perhaps they are socialized into not competing but there is a certain element that is natural difference and human nature. I don't think boys have more of it necessarily than girls but boys are encouraged to develop it [competition] that much more!"

"It's expectation and socialization but

also natural differences."

[Interview transcripts]

Only three P.E. staff disregarded biologically determined explanations and clearly situated their explanation for different physical and psychological characteristics in social convention and tradition.

".... it's nothing to do with their ability, it's tradition - just what's always happened and what's always expected."

"I'm sure it isn't that girls can't do it... I don't think we expect the same from them, it's tradition."

"It's from the past - tradition. If you talk to girls about it they would rather do the games that they see taking place on the television."

[Interview transcripts]

However, what does become evident from the interviews is that whether or not differences between girls and boys are identified as biological or cultural, the differences are viewed as being inevitable and certainly beyond the control of teachers. This attitude is well illustrated and typified by the following comment:

"I think it is tradition but I'm part of that tradition and convention and I wouldn't want to or be able to change it."

This female and 'feminine' tradition was discussed in Chapter Three and most succinctly described by Fletcher [1984] in her book 'Women First'. It is this tradition

which encouraged the development of separate and distinct P.E. for women and it is this tradition which continues to inform contemporary P.E. The interviews indicate that there remain powerful attitudes about girls' physical abilities and capacities which are based on the assumption that girls are physically less capable than boys and, in general, exhibit specific female/feminine characteristics e.g. poise, grace, control, finesse, sensitivity. Although the interviews show a difference in opinion as to whether these differences are rooted in biology or culture the emphasis remains on the acceptance of physical sex differences and the desirability to reproduce these differences through the teaching of P.E. Consequently these ideas and images are used to justify the type of activity offered to girls:

"We have just not got the fore-arm strength to play hockey like the boys. Changes in the rules are a disastrous development. Netball is the same - it is especially suitable for girls."

"I don't think boys would be satisfied doing netball. It's far too static a game for boys. They [boys] need more excitement and freedom."

"Definitely not netball for boys because boys wouldn't enjoy it. They couldn't enjoy playing a game like netball. They're far more open with their movements, they want to go far more than girls. Lads are usually more skilful and faster."

"A lot of girls wouldn't be comfortable doing 1500m, so we don't make the girls do it. 400m is the most they do and they do it at their own pace."

Where a traditionally female activity such as modern

educational dance² is considered for boys there is seen to be a need to adapt it to 'masculinity':

"Dance as a subject lends itself to girls but there is a place for boys as well even if fitness training to music or something like that."

"Dance is fine for boys so long as you use appropriate themes. They would need to do stronger, more assertive movements probably with a more dramatic element."

[Interview transcripts]

Overall the female P.E. staff considered that dance is quite acceptable for boys even if it requires a different approach to that developed for girls. It is interesting to note, however, that the Liverpool Study of P.E.⁴ carried out in 1981 showed that there was no dance taught to boys at secondary level throughout the authority. An important development out of this research project would be a study of male physical educationalist's ideas and attitudes about gender, and their opinions as to the suitability of traditionally 'feminine' activities such as dance for the teaching of boys' physical education.

However, it was in the discussion of traditionally male activities e.g. soccer and rugby that the strongest views were expressed by the female P.E. staff. While many teachers agreed that girls are capable of the physical skill to play soccer, the following quotes represent the strength of attitude against soccer as a desirable female activity:

"I have yet to see an elegant woman footballer. Maybe I'm just prejudiced but they just look horrible. I just don't like seeing women play football. If they did I would definitely want to modify it. The pitch is far too big and the ball too hard. No I certainly wouldn't ever want to see girls playing football."

"Football! - I have a personal thing about this. I've been to a woman's football match and there's nothing sorer to my feminine eyes than a big bust and a big behind and the attracted crowd and spectators... I won't let the girls play because it is very, very unfeminine - I associate that with a man I feel very strongly that I will never let the girls play soccer."

[Interview transcripts]

It is not the biological constraints which deem football unsuitable for girls but the undesirability of it in relation to definitions of femininity. Football displays those qualities previously associated by the P.E. staff with boys - noisy, fast, boisterous with the need to launch themselves about the pitch. Therefore it is not seen as a suitable or desirable activity to be encouraged for girls in P.E. As one head of department commented:

"If girls want to go off and play football then they can go and play in a park or a club. It is definitely not our place to encourage those activities in school time."

In some respects this concern about 'desirable' female activity can be compared to the attitudes expressed about girls playing outside in wet, windy, inclement conditions [See Chapter Five]. As indicated in Chapter 5

it is not so much that girls physically cannot cope with such conditions but that they should not be expected to do so. In comparison there is the expectation that boys should cope with such conditions. For boys it is seen to be a positive experience for which there remains a character building element - "it will make a man of you". Whether all boys see these experiences as positive is a contentious issue and one demanding further qualitative research.

Soccer raised the strongest antagonism amongst the women teachers primarily because it was acknowledged that girls can and do play soccer. Therefore the need to challenge any demand for its inclusion in the P.E. timetable seemed necessary. Other 'masculine' pursuits such as rugby and boxing were dismissed by all the P.E. staff as undesirable and unsuitable for girls.

"I'm too stereotyped to even think of women playing rugby."

"No way rugby - that's even more extreme than soccer. Apart from the physical contact it is also about tradition but in these cases it is definitely right. I think I'm a bit inflexible in my way of thinking."

[Interview transcripts]

The reasons for their opposition to 'masculine' pursuits rested on traditional assumptions about desirable 'feminine' behaviour and a concern about physical contact between girls. This issue of physical contact relates directly to the social construction of female

sexuality and will be discussed later in the chapter.

Motherhood/Domesticity

If there has to be some difference in the physical education of girls at school, this will need to concern the specifically female functions of their organism and to aim at countering the infirmities brought about by the unnatural life of women in the civilized world... From this point of view their physical education will need to be supplemented by exercises strengthening them in their specifically female role of childbearing. It should include training for motherhood.

[Pantazopoulou 1979:1]

This view of the link between P.E. and girls' training for their future role in motherhood relates back to the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century and the historical material discussed in Chapter Three. Today there is little evidence that similar attitudes relating to motherhood are held by women P.E. teachers. Whereas historically P.E. was seen as health related, ensuring the future well-being of the race, today health objectives tend to be concerned with 'encouraging and promoting an active lifestyle' and 'making the most of oneself' [Almond 1984]. In the interviews, a majority of P.E. staff saw P.E. as a means of encouraging fitness to counteract the problems and excesses of nutrition, alcohol, smoking and an increasingly sedentary lifestyle.

"If we don't encourage the girls at this age to try to be a little fitter then they've got no chance in the future. So

many adults are overweight and lethargic these days."

"I think we've got to try to make girls think about being active. Let's face it socially we're not a very fit society - all that booze and cream cakes."

Physical fitness for motherhood was not viewed overtly as an essential factor in the education of girls. Medical care, the National Health Service, developments in techniques in childbirth and improved infant health care were seen to have diminished the assumed necessity for education to concentrate on this aspect of physical fitness. However this does not deny the significance of the ideology of motherhood in determining women's central contemporary role. P.E. teachers promoted 'fitness for life' rather than stressing 'fitness for motherhood'. However, 'life' for girls was assumed to encompass being a wife and mother.

"They'll all be married within a couple of years with a couple of kids to look after."

"In this day and age most of the girls will have kids quite soon. With unemployment there's little alternative really."

[Interview transcripts]

The strength of ideologies of motherhood and domesticity lie in their inevitability for most girls and young women. The constraints imposed by motherhood and domesticity are experienced in the lived reality of many female P.E. teachers and are an expectation for their female pupils. This supports Griffin's [1985] finding

that young women themselves see childcare and domestic responsibilities as central to their future lives. Evidence confirms that unique constraints on time are experienced by women, be they daughter, sister, wife or mother [Deem 1984; Griffin 1985; Oakley 1974]. The expectation is that it is the woman who undertakes the 'caring' role [E.O.C. 1984; Oakley 1974]. Women P.E. staff recognize the restrictions they experience, the consequences of which govern their opportunities to offer comprehensive and detailed extra-curricular programmes. They are well aware from their own experiences that the primary responsibility for collecting children, buying food, cooking dinner, cleaning and organizing the household lies with women. The P.E. staff interviewed commented for example:

"It's okay for the men, they stay at school running the clubs, organizing teams until about 7 p.m. Go home and sit down to their meal and then relax, put their feet up or go for a drink so that they are refreshed for another day. We have to fit in the shopping etc. around our working day."

"There is the problem that most outdoor education staff are men. After all women have far greater family commitments than men. Men do far more out of school than women because they have the time."

[Interview transcripts]

Domestic responsibilities are not experienced only by married women although a survey of the interviewees showed that 55% were married and of these 75% had children. The remaining 45%, however, also had domestic responsibilities either for dependent relatives, or on a

shared basis with flat-mates etc. None of the female heads of department were free from the majority of domestic chores. There are indications, also, that women P.E. staff are remaining in larger numbers in full-time employment after having children. Although there is no reliable statistical evidence for this, several of the heads of department with children commented that they had returned immediately after having children because of economic necessity rather than choice. When asked about this trend, the female P.E. adviser agreed that:

"Women used to take time out to have a family but now they stay with maternity leave. That change is most noticeable over the past ten years."

However, her analysis left no doubts as to where she saw women's primary responsibility once they have children:

"Maternity leave is the biggest load of rubbish. I know it might be old fashioned but I think no household should have both parents in full-time jobs. It is good for a child to have their mother, or maybe their father, around the house. I can see that it is good for women with small children to have part-time jobs. In fact that is very important for the women and the children but it is wrong to have full-time work. It is only storing problems for society."

[my emphases]

Certainly the responsibility for organizing child-care remains with the woman [E.O.C. 1984]. These societal expectations of women's role in child-care and domesticity have severe repercussions on female P.E.

staff's lived reality in relation to time and commitment to extra-curricular teaching and thus directly on female pupils' opportunities to participate. As one member of staff commented:

"I would love to offer more things after school for the girls and at weekends but it is just impossible. I have to pick up my little girl from the nursery by 5 p.m. and then start on all the things that need doing at home. I just haven't got the time..."

Similarly, as discussed in Chapter Five, young women students are restricted often by similar domestic and childcare 'duties' [Dorn and South 1983, Griffin 1985]. Clearly this has consequences for their opportunities to participate:

"... there are girls who are unable to take part because of commitments at home - going to collect younger brothers and sisters. In some cases part-time jobs. I know they feel that they have to do it where brothers don't - collecting children, making tea etc..."

"Boys don't have problems of staying. Some kids have to pick up younger kids from junior school etc. The girls tend to do the messages don't they?"

"Lots of girls would stay but they have to pick up little brothers and sisters from school, get the family allowance etc. Boys don't have the same commitments."

"Girls are the ones that do the laundry and household tasks. That is so obvious with women if you look at Sunday league football."

[Interview transcripts]

Over a third of the heads of department commented on

similar constraints on girls and young women. However two thirds of the staff did not feel that these 'problems' were significant. If the schools were categorized by their catchment areas, it is interesting to note that the P.E. staff who commented on the significant constraints on their female pupils time from domestic/childcare tasks were schools with a predominantly working class, inner city or New Town intake from low income homes. While there can be no generalized conclusion from these findings, it stresses the importance of the interconnection and complexity of class-gender relations [see theoretical debate - Chapter One]. Within this study it would seem that girls from working class homes potentially experience greater pressure from household responsibilities which can affect their freedom to participate in extra-curricula P.E. activities. This does not mean that all working class girls experience these pressures or that no middle class girl has similar responsibilities. However class position as a variable must be considered. Is it class location or gender which is most important in constraining young women's opportunities in this situation? If it is class location why is it that their working class brothers seem not to be expected to take on similar responsibilities for the household? It is at this point that a theoretical questioning of class-gender relations must be utilized as discussed in Chapter One. To return to Cockburn's [1983] analysis, young women do not 'live two lives, one as a member of a

class and the other as a man or a woman. Everything we do takes its meaning from our membership of both systems'. However, whether a young person is male or female does influence certain assumptions relating to their future life regardless of their class location. Within this study there were certain expectations, assumptions made by those involved in teaching P.E. about young women's physical abilities and capabilities and their future role in life as wife and mother. These appear to cut across class boundaries for they were as firmly articulated in the single sex Anglican secondary school with its predominantly middle class, white intake as in the working class, multi-racial, inner city comprehensive, where the majority of the pupils were from low income homes many suffering the effects of unemployment and extreme poverty. However as Griffin [1985:477], in her work with young women, suggests:

Gender was an ever-present influence which could not be ignored, but it interacted with social relations based on age, race and class in complicated and not always consistent ways.

Thus this complexity is experienced by young women and has implications for the reality of young women's lives. In an explicit sense, ideal images of motherhood and domesticity no longer appear to influence directly the content and teaching of P.E. However, it is the dominance and internalization of these ideological constructions of the 'woman's place' which places indirect but substantial limitations on P.E. through

restrictions on the experiences and opportunities afforded both to women staff and young women students. Age and class are important influences within this construction and more intensive research specifically into the relationship of these variables would be an important development for our understanding of these complex issues.⁵ Tentatively this study suggests that age is important in that the transition from childhood to adulthood is a period when expectations relating to gender ideologies of motherhood and domesticity are heightened and internalised by many young women [Griffin 1985]. Furthermore a young woman's class location may influence how she experiences these expectations. For many working class girls it results in a reality which includes childcare and domestic responsibilities at an early age which inevitably places constraints on her opportunities and choices in various aspects of her life. However, adult womanhood would appear to secure women's position at the centre of childcare and domestic responsibility for the vast majority of women irrespective of whether they could be defined as working class or middle class. This is reflected in the responses from the P.E. staff in this study and confirmed by a range of evidence and literature [E.C.C. 1984; Oakley 1974].

In relation to images of motherhood, while P.E. teachers no longer identify their central objective as being the preparation of physically fit young women for healthy

motherhood, neither do they identify the need to challenge directly societal expectations of women's primary roles being those of wife and mother. Indeed many still view this as woman's natural function or, if not biologically determined then culturally expected. P.E. does not overtly reinforce such expectations but they remain on the hidden agenda of attitudes and ethos which underpin the curriculum.

Sexuality

Discipline, good behaviour and appearance, so much a part of the tradition and 'standards' set by P.E. in the pioneering girls' schools of the late nineteenth century continue to be stressed today. Every head of department of girls' P.E. throughout the city L.E.A. studied, identified the maintenance of 'standards' relating to dress, appearance, discipline and good behaviour as first or second in their priorities for P.E. teaching:

"I think there must be very high standards."

"Within P.E. departments girls can't get away with much. Standards are set quite high - we impose standards which other teachers may not impose."

"I think the standards in all the schools need to be high. I think P.E. people quite often have higher standards than a lot of people... we expect a higher standard of behaviour and attitude - loyalty almost."

[Interview transcripts]

This priority, however, was not extended by the heads of

girls' P.E. to teaching priorities for boys. As one teacher commented:

"I think we do stipulate more, trying to make them into 'young ladies'."

The emphasis on 'young ladies' implies a particular conception of 'standards' relating to both expectations of behaviour and appearance. Acceptable female behaviour involves restraint, quietness and orderliness.

"We are quite strict on discipline, for example we make sure the girls are orderly, lined up and ready for a lesson before they start."

"The girls know that they go into the gym, find a space and sit down quietly. They know that's expected of them. If you watch the boys they just rush in and start climbing wall bars and things. We expect different things for the girls."

"We spend a lot of time making sure the girls are in a quiet line before they even go into the gym or outside. I know it takes some time but those standards are important."

[Interview transcripts]

Young [1980:153] argues that girls learn throughout childhood to protect their bodies and to inhabit a very limited personal body space. As a girl reaches adolescence she:

... learns actively to hamper her movements. She is told that she must be careful not to get hurt, not to get dirty, not to tear her clothes, that the things she desires to do are dangerous to her. Thus she develops a bodily timidity which increases with age. In assuming

herself as a girl she takes herself up as fragile.

Restraint on movement is the potential outcome of the control and discipline seen by P.E. staff as essential for 'successful' girls' physical education. Although girls are encouraged to be physically active the comments of the P.E. staff suggest that girls are not expected to be adventurous in their movements. 'Neatness', 'finish', 'controlled movements' were constantly mentioned as 'female' characteristics. Furthermore, as mentioned in the historical chapter, the development of girls' sports was premised on such notions of "femininity" - netball with its restricted movement and use of space, hockey with close control with the stick and rules governing spatial movement.⁶

One head of department offered an explanation for these constraints:

"The problem is that girls are being taught by women who have been through the system and aren't as adventurous, pushing etc."

However she recognized that it was not only in the minds of the teaching staff that such views were embedded. One assistant teacher in a case study school commented:

"The hierarchy in girls P.E. are constantly worried about safety etc. Therefore, that transmits to teachers. 'You mustn't do this, you mustn't do that.' For example Miss ___ [adviser] took out trampettes years ago because of

one accident. She came and watched my gym lesson and then my lunchtime gym club. She didn't say anything to me but my head of department saw me and said, 'I think you ought to tone down your gym club because Miss ___ is very worried there is going to be an accident'. I've never had one. I don't think the boys are restricted in anything like the same way. They're expected to bounce off trampettes and try new things."

Thus it would appear that ideas and images relating to the freedom of girls to use space and the need to protect them from injury have been incorporated into the policy and practice of P.E. as exemplified by the removal of trampettes, and as such have far-reaching effects. The next chapter, which looks at the case study material, will assess more fully how far these images of femininity are reasserted in practice. It seems justified to suggest that the restrictions on contact and the use of physical space embodied in the rules of girls' sports, together with assumptions around the need to restrict and control girls' movements, encourage the position whereby young women learn that their bodies need protecting and they must remain enclosed within personal space. Young [1980:153] emphasized that in physical development girls "acquire many subtle habits of feminine bodily comportment - walking like a girl, tilting her head like a girl etc." Whereas physical exercise and sport encourages a wider and explorative use of space, the activities offered and the attitudes held by many people responsible for their teaching reinforces a limited extension of this bodily use. Young [1980:154] argues an interesting point:

To open her body in free activity and extension and bold outward directedness is for a woman to invite objectification ... She also lives the threat of invasion of her body space. The most extreme form of such spacial and bodily invasion is the threat of rape... I would suggest that the enclosed space which has been described as a modality of feminine spaciality is in part a defence against such invasion.

P.E. teaching accepts to a certain extent these limitations and the responsibilities women have for their own protection. An understanding of P.E. from a feminist perspective must develop a critique of the teaching of P.E. as it relates to a politics of sexuality which defines women as responsible yet vulnerable and therefore in need of protection. The following chapters will look more closely at this relationship in the practice of P.E. (Chapter Seven), provide a fuller theoretical analysis (Chapter Eight) and discuss the implications these factors have for future developments incorporating a feminist approach (Chapter Nine).

'Standards' for girls centre, also, on expectations about appearance:

"We don't just teach the girls P.E. we always include a lot of other bits and pieces e.g. hygiene, cleanliness, dressing well in P.E. kit, uniform."

"I teach them to have correct uniform, kit, hair tied back, attention to detail."

Even during lessons girls are encouraged to look good and not be over boisterous. As one head of department summed up:

"The whole thing is dictated by the fact that there is a very female atmosphere in P.E. here and the look of the thing is as important as the doing it. It's not so for the boys - they look as scruffy going onto the rugby pitch as they do coming off it."

Feminist literature on sexuality emphasizes that, in their appearance, women are defined in relation to sexual attractiveness but not sexual availability [Dworkin 1981; Jeffreys 1981; Coward 1984; Coveney et al 1985]. Appearance is central to female sexuality. The female body is defined and portrayed in a specific form geared to an 'ideal' image of femininity. Coward [1984:77] argues:

Because the female body is the main object of attention, it is on women's bodies, or women's looks that prevailing sexual definitions are placed... The emphasis on women's looks becomes a crucial way in which society exercises control over women's sexuality.

Certainly the heads of department placed considerable emphasis on appearance and defined that appearance as the stereotypical image of 'ideal' femininity. There is an assumption that young women should look good, presentable and be concerned with self image. The historical analysis showed how P.E., although liberating in its encouragement of increased activity and the

breaking of some dress conventions, was careful to protect the sexuality of young women by a reaffirmation of 'feminine' modesty and 'desirable' dignity. The continuing emphasis by those involved in the policies and practices of P.E. on standards of dress, appearance and behaviour raises important questions about the relationship of P.E. to ideologies of the physical and the politics of sexuality [Chapter Eight].

Chapter Five noted that all schools have a set P.E. kit and discussed the justifications made by the staff for its use. These included the desire to produce a uniform appearance for the group with emphasis on 'neatness' and 'tidiness'. The P.E. teachers interviewed were unanimous in the view that a 'suitable', 'uniform' P.E. kit was essential. Yet this P.E. kit remains the 'traditional' uniform of standard tee-shirt, regulation shorts/skirt, ankle socks and pumps/plimsolls. School uniform is itself a contentious issue with many school pupils. Whyld [1983:23] states:

Collar, tie and jacket for boys and skirt and blouse (or twin set!) for girls imitate the conventional dress of the middle aged and middle class, a group which few pupils will identify with, and against which most will rebel.

P.E. kit, however, not only presents a class related image as suggested by Whyld but furthermore presents a childlike mode of dress with sexual connotations. P.E. continues to ignore young women's developing sexuality

by enforcing a P.E. kit which, for many, results in embarrassment and indignity. Jackson [1982] suggests that female sexuality stresses the need to be attractive sexually but not active. Women who project their sexuality through dress/style and promote active sexuality are unacceptable and considered to be 'dangerous' for they are 'asking for trouble'. Ultimately women rather than men are held responsible for morality by the ideological construction of female sexuality. The emphasis on a traditional P.E. uniform is a continuation of the 'moral' standards promoted in the development of P.E. and discussed in the historical chapter in relation to the creation of the gymslip. Just as the gymslip replaced the previous restrictive garments so it, itself, has been replaced by a physically freer uniform. However, the ideas around female sexuality underpinning the choice of P.E. uniform appear to continue unchallenged by the majority of P.E. staff. However, these ideas do not escape the challenge of many girls themselves. This issue will be discussed in Chapter Eight in a consideration of the relationship of P.E. to female youth subcultures.

In relation to sexuality the issue of physical contact between girls must be addressed. P.E. staff interviewed stressed:

"I don't see any place for rugby taught in school because of the contact."

"I think girls could probably try

anything within reason. Girls shouldn't be doing weights and I don't think I'd put girls into rugby tackling for physical reasons. They could hurt themselves about the chest as they are tackling someone."

"I don't mind boys playing rugby but I don't think its a girl's sport. It's like boxing really. They might enjoy it but I wouldn't enjoy seeing them battering each other."

[Interview transcripts]

Although girls in general are seen as being physically capable of contact sports, such activity does not befit a 'young lady'. Some interviewees, however, did not seem to mind boys 'battering each other':

"Well it's different for boys, they enjoy it. I just don't think it would be particularly good for girls."

There appear to be two major objections to physical contact between women both of which relate to female sexuality. The P.E. adviser puts forward the first argument with clarity:

"... there is a physiological point. If we put adolescent girls into that situation I am very concerned about the damage they might do to their breasts with hard knocks. After all hockey, although a tough game, there is an implement between yourself and the ball. You can protect yourself, it isn't bust to bust!"

This is the same argument put forward in the late nineteenth century to justify the development of separate and 'suitable' games for girls. There is a concern here about female physical vulnerability. This

concern is most intense in relation to the need to 'protect' areas of the body which have either a reproductive function or sexual meaning in our society. No one commented on the problem of potential injury to the face, arms etc. but several of those interviewed were concerned at knocks that might harm breasts or buttocks. Physical contact is viewed as undesirable in relation to assumed female vulnerability which is inextricably linked to ideologies about female sexuality. Yet the vulnerability of women's bodies is a curious assertion given the location of male reproductive organs! As Hall [1979:28] comments:

We see man the protector raging against contact sports for females on the grounds that they will irreparably damage, among other things, their naturally protected reproductive organs, whereas the fact that the exposed male genitals have to be protected is never considered problematic.

Hall also, offers a second explanation that can be put forward to explain the objection to physical contact between women:

For a woman to subdue another woman through physical force and bodily contact is categorically unacceptable, the innuendo sexual and the act considered unnatural. There exists an age old prohibition against aggressive physical contact between women.

[Hall 1978:79]

The acceptance of aggressive and violent physical contact, be it between men or women, is questionable.

Yet there remains a double standard whereby only women's behaviour and activity is seen to require regulation. The demonstration of power and assertion between women seems unacceptable in relation to female sexuality. Desirable female sexuality is a passive, responsible, heterosexuality and women engaged in contact sports immediately raise doubts about the status of their sexuality. It is the power expressed through physical strength in contact sports which is problematic rather than the physical touch. Indeed girls and women express their emotion and sensitivity, acceptable female traits, through physical contact. However, Coveney et al [1985] and Jeffries [1981] argue that heterosexual relations are premised on unequal power relations between men and women, with women expected to take the subordinate, passive role. Contact sport between women places one partner in the aggressive dominant position, a situation untenable in 'acceptable' female sexuality. The disapproval of P.E. staff of contact sport between girls cannot be seen simplistically as a concern for potential physical injury. This concern is directed specifically towards young women and must be analysed in relation to ideas around "acceptable" female sexuality which would appear to be centred on a heterosexuality based on notions of passivity, vulnerability and subordination.

Finally, an issue identified by many P.E. teachers can be related, also, to this notion of acceptable female sexuality. The majority of P.E. staff commented on the

fact that many girls could not stay for extra curricular activities during the winter months because of travelling home in the dark. Often it was the parents who enforce such restrictions:

"From about November some girls can't stay to clubs or practices because they're not allowed to walk home in the dark."

"There is a big problem of darkness especially with first and second year girls."

"The main restriction on girls staying is darkness and the distance they have to travel home."

"There's a real problem with away matches because parents don't like them travelling across the city in the winter in the dark."

[Interview transcripts]

The concern is the need to protect girls primarily from the dangers of sexual attack. Implicit in this concern is the recognition of men's direct physical control and dominance over women which potentially can find expression in physical/sexual attack or abuse⁷. The idea that girls and women require protection after dark is a substantiated reality. Most women feel vulnerable at night and this has implications for young women's participation in both extra-curricular activities in school and during their leisure time. The fear of sexual attack has implications for women independent of their class location although middle class women have been

shown to have more opportunity, through increased access to private transport etc., to negotiate this constraint [Deem 1984].

Conclusion

This chapter set out to question whether images of femininity, as identified in the historical legacy continue to find expression in the assumptions of women P.E. staff. What becomes clear is that there remain powerful assumptions around femininity in relation to physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality. However these images have not remained static reassertions of a nineteenth century view of femininity but have changed and developed over time. Thus physical expectations of women's capabilities have changed in that there is an acceptance that women are not physically restricted to the same degree as was assumed at the turn of the twentieth century. The twentieth century has witnessed a gradual increase in women's opportunities to experience and compete in a wider variety of physical pursuits [see Chapter Three]. Women P.E. staff acknowledge this increased participation and consequently their expectations of girls' abilities have increased. However, underpinning this increased awareness remains a powerful reaffirmation of a 'femininity' which deems young women and women as weaker, less physically powerful, less aggressive than their male counterparts while retaining more grace,

poise, finesse, flexibility and balance. The importance is not in the reality of these stereotypes (indeed many young women exhibit such qualities) or in the arguments around how far these differences are biologically determined or culturally produced, but as Willis [1982:119] contends:

... that to know, more exactly, why it is that women can muster only 90 per cent of a man's strength cannot help us to comprehend, explain or change the massive feeling in our society that a woman has no business flexing her muscles anyway.

It is this latter statement of Willis' which this research confirms in relation to girls' P.E. Women P.E. teachers have clear notions that a young woman indeed has 'no business flexing her muscles'. Although, perhaps, there is an acceptance that women can partake in physical activities and reach levels of physical capability previously thought impossible in the female sporting world, there are precise and articulated constraints which set the limits and barriers across which young women must not stray. Furthermore the research suggests that such images and attitudes relating to young women's physical abilities, motherhood/ domesticity and sexuality are reflected across class locations applying to young women be they working class or middle class.^a However, the research does indicate the complexity of the interconnections between gender and class. For example ideas around domesticity and motherhood would appear to provide more

direct constraints on young working class women, many of whom bear the burden of childcare and domestic chores from an early age. However, it remains young working class women who bear this burden in social practice. Images and ideas around gender remain powerful across class location, although they are experienced to different degrees by members of different classes. The limits to this particular research which concentrates on gender does not allow for a full consideration of racial differences. Within the study no distinctions emerged relating specifically to race and images of femininity although this is an area that warrants more detailed consideration for future work.

CHAPTER SEVEN

IMAGES IN ACTION

The Case Study Schools

Introduction

As discussed in Chapter Four the research project included an observation period of half a term (six to eight weeks) in four selected case study schools. This chapter considers in detail the schools' P.E. programmes concentrating on organisation, staffing, facilities, aims and objectives and curriculum content. A general profile of each of the case study schools is included in Appendix Three.

Central to this chapter are the issues raised in Chapter One concerning ideology and its significance to an interpretation of the curriculum. Hall [1982:25] states:

... ideas do not arise spontaneously from inside our individual heads or from the depths of our individual consciousness! Ideas exist outside us, in society: in the discourses we use, the institutions we live and work in, in the way things are arranged. Ideology is a social process.

Chapter Six considered the ideas and images held by the heads of department, the teachers and the adviser in the authority studied concerning the teaching of P.E. However, it is not enough simply to identify sexist attitudes relating to physicality, domesticity/motherhood and sexuality. As Hall succinctly states, ideologies do not just spontaneously arise in the heads of individuals but they exist within and are transmitted through the institutions of society, their policies and their practices. If ideology was reduced simply to

individual attitudes then reform focussing on gender and physical education would be straightforward: remove the individuals holding sexist assumptions from the schooling process, and gender differences would disappear! (i.e. the 'equal opportunities' approach). However, literature and research into gender and schooling [Arnot and Weiner 1987; Spender and Sarah 1980; Weiner and Arnot 1987] suggests that it is the institutionalization of gender ideas and images which reinforces the means by which gender differences come to be taken-for-granted. This process creates powerful gender ideologies which can be identified in the policies, priorities and practices of schooling.

The identification of ideology, however, does not address the extent to which ideas and images are taken up and assimilated by girls in the learning situation⁴. It is hoped that future work will develop the framework of this project (historical analysis and contemporary investigation into the policies, priorities and practices of P.E. teaching), in order to give greater insight into how girls/young women experience, understand and make sense of their physical education.

CASE STUDY I - HEYFIELD SCHOOL

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL

I Organization

a) Grouping

The first three years of P.E. were organized in single sex mixed ability groups with the exception of first year dance which was a mixed sex activity. At the time of the research this was experimental, initiated the previous year by the appointment of a part-time member of staff who previously taught on a Manpower Service Commission dance scheme at the school. The mixed sex teaching had not been carried through into the second year primarily due to staffing constraints. All fourth and fifth year activities were time-tabled as mixed activities.

During the observation period, first year classes 1SH, 1FL and 1DP were observed over a period of five weeks. The sessions appeared to work successfully with both girls and boys taking part with apparent enjoyment. Throughout the period of observation the theme of 'Time' was used. This included the use of a short written piece as stimulus and music as accompaniment. However, within this mixed sex teaching situation sexual divisions continued to exist. As the dance developed over the

weeks boys continued to work together and the dance became choreographed into 'boys' sections and 'girls' sections. Although these sections were of equivalent length and importance within the whole dance it was interesting that the groupings used sex as the dividing factor. It was noted during the period of observation that the girls and boys were at different stages of physical development. Some of the girls had begun to develop physically and were quite tall and developed. All of the boys were pre-pubescent and many had a small physique. Possibly it would have been more valid to choreograph dance using size as a consideration rather than sex. The grouping of the girls and boys by sex was further exacerbated by the responses of the pupils. When asked to work in pairs or threes they tended to be self-selective in sex groupings. There was no positive intervention by the teacher to regroup the girls and boys into mixed-sex groupings.

The importance of observing mixed-group teaching is highlighted by this situation and raises several important questions: e.g. is mixed sex teaching in theory, mixed sex teaching in practice?; is the organization alone enough or is positive intervention necessary in order to encourage girls and boys to work together? Observation of the fourth and fifth year option sessions confirmed the need to address these questions. The option activities were timetabled as mixed activities. In practice, however, girls opted

primarily for badminton and basketball in mixed groups. A large proportion opted for keep-fit which was chosen only by girls, with nine girls in the fifth year opting for 'Health and Beauty'. This course was run by the head of department and offered only to the girls. The justification for the Health and Beauty course was derived from the presumed need (as defined by the head of department) to offer activities which would attract and maintain the interest of fifth year girls. They spent the sessions considering make-up, hair style, 'beauty-tips' and fashion. The emphasis was on appearance not on physical health. It was significant that a relatively small number of girls opted for this session given that it was a positive attempt to provide the girls with "what they want" [Head of Department].

Similar situations were observed in the mixed badminton sessions in the sports hall. The badminton was 'coached' by a male member of staff. Throughout the observation period, five classes were observed. On three occasions each game on each court (doubles) was single-sex: boys played boys and girls played girls. The only exceptions were the five remaining players (three girls and two boys) who played against each other. On two occasions one pair of boys opted to play against one pair of girls (or vice versa) although each of the other courts were single-sex. At no time was there an attempt by the member of staff to intervene and alter the organization. The sessions were pupil-led in that they

organized themselves and were supervised primarily by the staff member who offered some comments of encouragement and help and made occasional disciplinary interventions.

In the fourth and fifth year the only 'non-traditional' choice made by the girls was the decision by five girls on two occasions to join the soccer group. Although mixed in theory, in practice outdoor team games such as football and netball remained single sex. However, on the occasion when the girls first opted to join the soccer group the head of department's comment as they left the changing room summed up the underlying attitude to girls playing soccer:

"Football, you must be mad - you should have been born a lad."

Although both in theory and practice girls had the opportunity to participate in soccer, effectively it remained at the level of equal access. In terms of their experience they ran the gauntlet of comment before leaving the changing room. Having joined the soccer group they were integrated into a male soccer group with a male member of staff. These boys had received soccer coaching throughout their five years at secondary school and for a minimum of four years at primary school. This was the first opportunity to play soccer offered to the girls in a formal school teaching situation. Observation of the lesson suggested that equality of access cannot

be equated with equality of experience or equality of outcome. The girls were given the opportunity to participate but it was a situation in which their lack of coaching and experience resulted in peripheral, rather than central, participation in the game.

The issue of the integration of girls into traditional boys' activities, and the subsequent problems, had been discussed previously with the head of department. She stated:

"We do some football. We have done now and again but I wouldn't put the girls in against the boys unless they wanted to. They'd have a go but they couldn't physically compete against them. They'd enjoy playing traditional boys games themselves - they'd enjoy it more. The boys wouldn't give them a touch of the ball unless they are very very good. We've got some girls who are very good but the majority of girls are more reserved than boys."

This quote is revealing for a number of reasons. First, it highlights the gulf between stated policy and practice. The stated policy recognizes the problems of girls being integrated into boys' soccer solely on the basis of choice. However, in practice this was exactly what happened, with the only opportunity for girls' soccer being the opportunity of access to the boys' soccer group. Furthermore, the justifications of, and explanations for, girls finding mixed soccer a problem were based on physical differences: "girls are more reserved", "they couldn't physically compete". There is

an implicit expectation that this is a 'natural' state of affairs. Thus when some girls challenge this by taking part in soccer it is their "womanhood" which is questioned: "you should have been born a lad". These issues will be returned to in Chapter Eight.

A final issue, regarding mixed-sex teaching concerned race. The dance option for the fifth years produced a group of nine young men and two young women. Eight of the group were black Afro-Caribbean male youth. This session was taken by the female part-time member of staff. This involvement in dance by young black men reflected an interest within the local community of male dance. The local arts centre ran a thriving male dance group and the youth club, run at school, gave considerable attention to dance. The dance session over the six week observation period concentrated on a modern dance routine to Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' and introductory work on bodeyopping and breakdance. It was noted that these latter activities were led by three male group members who helped to teach the white female member of staff. It is interesting that dance, a traditionally female activity in secondary P.E., was most popular at fifth form level with black male youth. On three occasions there were no girls/young women present. This raises interesting questions about race-gender interaction and it would be interesting to discover whether the young women were put off the sessions because they were in a minority in the group

situation. Certainly the school situation appeared to be influenced by the cultural experiences out of school and the fairly unique opportunities in dance presented to young men in the local community.

b) Time Allocated to Physical Education

Years One, Two, Three and Five were timetabled for three 55 minute sessions per week. Year Four had two 55 minute sessions with Year One in addition having a mixed dance session timetabled as dance/drama. P.E. was compulsory throughout the school (11 -16 years). The head of department stated:

"From the first to third year P.E. should be and is compulsory. After that (I know I'm cutting my own throat) it maybe should be offered as an option for fourth and fifth year. I still force them to do it at the moment. They probably might do better with another option - secretarial, english, fabrics, cookery."

In theory, therefore, all girls between 11 and 16 were compelled to attend P.E. classes although some doubts as to the value of compulsion above the age of fourteen were expressed by the head of department³.

These doubts were perhaps justified when P.E. attendance was observed over the research period. Although P.E. was compulsory up to and including the fifth year it was noted that attendance fell after the third year. By the fifth year there was up to 60% absenteeism from

timetabled P.E. lessons. This reflected a general increased absenteeism throughout all the fourth and fifth year lessons [School Report 1982]. Although registers were kept on each option group there was little attempt to enforce attendance at physical education. A P.E. staff member commented that:

"I doubt if there would be any difference in attendance if we made P.E. voluntary after the third year."

In years One to Three there was an average four to six pupils sitting out of each lesson. The reasons for non-participation varied but were primarily health related backed by a parental letter. However, if the rules concerning kit had been adhered to, more girls would have missed lessons.

Concerning P.E. uniform the following guidelines were published in the school guide 1983-1984:

P.E. Kit

GIRLS

Blouse, preferably sleeveless.
Navy blue knickers OR shorts OR
short navy wrap-round skirt.
White socks, pumps.

Optional

Navy blue leotard - an all purpose garment which can be worn for gym, games, dance or swimming. It can be bought through school and paid for weekly. We highly recommend this as the cheapest alternative.
Tracksuit. Hockey boots.

These firm guidelines issued from the official school

prospectus were not so firmly reiterated by the head of department. She denied the necessity for girls to have such a precise kit although she accepted the official guidelines which were distributed to parents. However, she indicated that the final decision concerning P.E. kit was not her sole responsibility:

"We used to have no skirt for gymnastics in the upper school but the head jumped in and said that she thought girls ought to wear a skirt in the third year. So girls from the third year upwards now wear a skirt."

This is a significant example of the power (although often latent) which headteachers hold within their institutions. Decisions over uniforms as with other aspects of policy often spring from the ideas and values held by the headteacher (and often the governors), although the decisions are implemented in practice by directives from heads of departments or faculties.

The liberal approach to P.E. kit articulated by the head of department was not so obvious in her observed practice. It was recorded throughout the fieldwork that a considerable amount of time was lost to P.E. teaching through controversies over P.E. kit. Every P.E. lesson observed involved a minimum of three to five minutes discussion and checking of P.E. kit. This did not necessarily involve enforcing schedules governing the correct kit, rather it was concerned with ensuring that as many pupils as possible changed into some form of

alternative clothing or, at the least, removed skirts, shoes and socks. Further time was lost in the removal of jewellery and the organization of hair. In timing the P.E. lessons over a three day period, on average sixteen minutes were lost at the beginning of each lesson in changing, sorting out kit, jewellery and hair. This was more than a quarter of the whole teaching time. Between eight and ten minutes were left at the end of each class for changing back into school uniform thus resulting in a loss of almost 50% (average) of P.E. teaching time. Thus, although a set amount of time was allocated for P.E., absenteeism and issues relating to P.E. kit created a situation in practice where many girls received a minimal amount of taught P.E. each week.

c) Showers

This aspect of the organization of P.E. was considered by the research project because it is an issue identified in the previous experience of the researcher as producing negative responses from the girls and an area identified in the work of Measor [1984] as of significance for young women. The P.E. booklet at Heyfield which set out the P.E. curriculum stated:

*Showers should be taken if time permits
except where a medical excuse is given.*

This official statement was not so firmly reiterated verbally by the head of department:

"The first years only have compulsory showers because it takes too long. It is optional for the others."

During the observation period no showers were taken in years one to three. In year five several girls opted for showers when their P.E. class took place during the final period of the afternoon on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. Given the amount of time lost to organization of the class, the argument made by the head of department that showers "take too long" was understandable. However the stated policy was that first years should have compulsory showers although this did not occur in practice.

Staffing

Two members of staff taught girls' P.E. full time. In addition one woman attached to the Return and Learn scheme taught part-time P.E. including first year dance (all classes), second year gymnastics and fourth and fifth year Options. One further woman was timetabled for one session with fourth years.

On the other hand the boys' P.E. department had two full-time members of staff but with an additional eight male members of staff timetabled for various sessions of P.E. Of these, six male staff were timetabled primarily for fourth and fifth year P.E. This is significant for at this stage P.E. was a mixed activity across the male and female departments. These sessions, however, were

staffed by more male teachers thus leading to a far greater emphasis on male teaching of the activities offered. The female P.E. department received no extra help with extra-curricular activities. Both the heads of department (female and male) were on the same salary scale but in the boys' department the second full-time member of P.E. staff was on a Scale 2, whereas in the female department, the second full-time member of staff remained on Scale 1 after seven years at the school. The head of department had been at the school for eight years. Both had been trained at the local specialist college of P.E.

The women P.E. staff worked as a self-contained unit within the school. They had a small room in the P.E. wing in which they spent most of their non-teaching time. The room was equipped with a kettle and they spent coffee breaks and lunch hours in the P.E. area. On only one or two occasions per week did they go to the main staff room and that coincided with their official break duties or when they needed to speak to other members of staff. During the observation period there was no additional teaching contribution, in curricular or extra-curricular time, from any staff other than the two full-time and one part-time member of staff. During the fourth and fifth year options the badminton and soccer were taught by male P.E. staff. Other options (e.g. table tennis, trampolining, weight training) were taught by the male department but failed to recruit girls.

During the six weeks in the school it became clear that both the full-time female members of staff had heavy domestic and childcare responsibilities. The head of department had a two and a half year old child who was in a nursery about half a mile from the school. She dropped off the child at 8.30 a.m. before arriving in school and had to collect her by 5 p.m. This meant that at no time could she finish an after-school session later than 4.30 p.m. if she was to lock up the wing before leaving the school. On several occasions she had to use her lunch break to collect shopping.

The second teacher in the department had a fourteen month old baby and she had returned recently from maternity leave. She had similar restrictions on time, having to collect her baby from a childminder. During this period she was awakened once or twice each night and she commented upon this regularly as she felt tired during the day. During the observation period her child had to visit the hospital on two occasions. On both occasions she had the responsibility for arranging and taking her child to the appointment (as opposed to her partner).

III Facilities

The facilities for P.E. had been improved by the building of the sports hall in the late 1970s. They were

organized into a P.E. block to the side of the school and they included large changing area, staff changing room (small), and a gymnasium. Next door was the large sports hall which had facilities for badminton, basket ball, 5-a-side, trampolining, volleyball, matting for various activities with the space for indoor alternatives to traditionally outdoor activities e.g. hockey, tennis, netball etc. The sports hall was shared between the girls' and boys' departments with the boys having their own similar block of changing rooms and a gymnasium. Outside, the school had netball/tennis courts and a football pitch with some space for athletics.

The facilities for P.E. were good and appeared to be shared successfully between the boys' and girls' departments. The boys had more use of the sports hall but that reflected the fact that more male staff were involved in P.E. at both formal and informal levels. Consequently more boys' activities were offered requiring more use of the sports hall.

The self-contained nature of the P.E. block was an advantage in reducing interference from the hierarchy of the school and although the department worked in isolation the teachers had complete autonomy. Because of the relatively large access to indoor facilities it was noticeable that all the teaching during the observation

period took place indoors apart from the few girls in the fifth year who opted for soccer. This had the advantage that the poor weather did not influence the programme but it raises the question whether P.E. should be a totally indoors experience. The interview with the head of department suggested that they did teach outdoors:

"You can make P.E. attractive for girls. You have to show compassion - if it is cold - let them wear gloves, hats etc."

In practice it appeared that a decision had been made not to teach outside during the months January to March. This was made possible with adequate indoor facilities. The male P.E. department taught outdoor games regularly each week and the boys went on cross-country runs. The underlying assumption was that girls would be "put off" by cold weather and therefore it was more successful to encourage them to be active in a warm environment. In practice this decision was made by the P.E. staff and it resulted in the abandonment of all outdoor work. It was difficult to ascertain whether this decision reflected the wishes and demands of the pupils or whether it had been taken to ease the staff's potential discipline problems with a proportion of the girls.

IV Aims and Objectives

The written aims of P.E. in the official syllabus prepared by the head of department were:

- 1) To give children a wide variety of activities and therefore a wide experience of movement.
- 2) To become aware of their powers of movement.
- 3) To master their movement and therefore to move with fluency and control.
- 4) To help the children to apply the knowledge and the mastery of movement they have acquired to specific skills - games, swimming, athletics, dance and educational gymnastics.
- 5) To promote enjoyment of physical activity.
- 6) To aid awareness of the necessity for health and hygiene.
- 7) To help establish self discipline.
- 8) To check health and remedy any physical defects. Good organization is a very necessary component of a successful lesson. The sooner the class gets into the basic routine of lining up, getting a partner etc. the more time they have on the actual physical task set. Establish in the first few weeks exactly how you expect the children to behave when they receive equipment, put it away, set mats out etc.
- 9) To promote physical activity after leaving school.

[P.E. Syllabus p4]

Verbally the head of department stressed the aims of self-discipline, 'standards' and education for leisure. She put little stress on physical skill acquisition:

"Self discipline is one of the main ones [aims] and I think that is the hardest to get here... we have a whole week on manners - the kids need mothering they need social guidance. That's what we do in P.E. - please and thank you, opening doors for people. These come before I ever worry about what goes on in the gym or sports hall. The children are not disciplined they have no self

discipline... in ball skills for example they're not learning to throw a ball they're learning to do what Miss tells them when she tells them."

The head of department recognized that this emphasis on manners and behaviour was not quite so strong in the boys' department:

"The boys are not quite so pedantic over discipline as we tend to be. They spend more time playing the games."

This emphasis on standards and discipline, so evident in the historical development of girls' P.E. and stressed by the heads of department across the city in the interview material, is central to the stated policy of Heyfield. The period of observation was important in establishing how far this stated policy (written and verbal) was translated into practice.

The only other aim of P.E. given emphasis verbally by the head of department was that of educating for leisure:

"Educating for leisure is really important especially round here cos the job expectations are virtually nil unfortunately. This affects what we do. I think if you're educating for leisure now you need 14 people to play a game of netball and 22 for hockey but only 2 for badminton. Lets face it there just aren't enough girls interested in sport to make team games a practical leisure pursuit."

Clearly team games were not seen by the head of department as future leisure pursuits for the majority

of girls. In reality this appears accurate [Deem 1986; Woodward, Hebron and Green 1987]. However, it is important to observe how these expectations influence practice in P.E. and to analyse and understand both the theoretical and practical implications of assumptions about women's leisure which do not address the critical issues concerning definitions of leisure for women in society [see Chapter Eight].

As discussed in the previous section on 'organization' a substantial amount of time was spent on enforcing and maintaining 'standards'. This was stated as a primary aim of P.E. teaching and observation of practice substantiated this claim. Standards could be defined (as observed) as appearance and discipline (behaviour). If this was a major aim, as claimed, then the fact that up to half the teaching time was spent in pursuing this aim could be justified. Each lesson was prefaced by attention to kit, removal of make-up and jewellery an insistence on silence in a straight line before entering the gym or sports hall. On three occasions during the observation period no teaching at all took place due to problems in enforcing silence and the correct appearance. It is interesting to note that the disciplinary methods used when these situations occurred consisted of enforced activity. On all three occasions the following week's lesson was replaced by a circuit of physical training/exercise in the gym. On one occasion

the deputy head (male) was brought in to discipline the group first and then to observe their 'punishment'. It was revealing that physical activity was used as a punishment within physical education. Indeed, it reinforced the observation that in fact P.E. consisted of very little physical exertion. The only times that any girls were observed to be physically exerted, showing symptoms of quickening of heart-rate etc, were during these 'punishment periods'. It was interesting that many of the girls appeared to enjoy these circuits and were happy to leave the gym physically tired.

The verbal admonition from the deputy head contained continual references to behaviour "befitting young ladies". The implication was that there were certain acceptable ways of behaving and presenting oneself which had direct associations with developing as a young woman. He stated:

"I am disappointed in you all. You should care about how you look - remember to bring your kit. You should take pleasure in your appearance, look and behave like young ladies! You are a disgrace to yourselves and the school."

This was to a second year group of twelve and thirteen year olds.

Overall the lack of emphasis on physical exertion and the development of physical skill, as suggested in the stated policy, was confirmed in practice. The major stated

stated aim of enjoyment, however, was difficult to assess. As with all school subjects there was a proportion of girls who appeared to thoroughly enjoy the lessons, some who were indifferent and some who were clearly antagonistic. Antagonism to P.E. was expressed either through direct opposition (i.e. no kit and refusal to participate) or, usually less directly, through disinterest. This involved standing chatting instead of taking part or persistent inactivity even when directly encouraged by the staff. There was antagonism in all classes above the first year. The first year participated with enthusiasm and little opposition. However, the second and third year groups presented many problems of discipline with a proportion of the class disinterested or antagonistic. It was these two years which posed the most problems and lost the most teaching time through "misbehaviour". It can be assumed that increased absenteeism in the fourth and fifth year, as noted previously, removed the 'problem' group thus allowing classes to continue with fewer interruptions.

Throughout the period of observation it was noted that the aim of 'enjoyment' seemed to be achieved most successfully in the changing rooms. Here animated chatter and enthusiasm were constant reminders that the girls found the changing room a release from the confines of the classroom. All years appeared pleased to chat together while changing into their kit.

The third most important aim stated in both written and verbal policy was the preparation of girls for future leisure experiences. There were no posters/notices in the P.E. area advertising physical leisure opportunities. When asked how important P.E. was in influencing leisure, the head of department replied:

"Social pressures determine it. Every book you open - Woman, Woman's Own - what diet are you on? What exercise are you doing? It's more and more now - there's the Pineapple Studios. More are doing it now - girls play squash and badminton. It's a social change - we've labelled keep fit aerobics. We do aerobics and they think it's great. All it is is keep fit but harder. They think it great 'cos Jane Fonda does aerobics and we do aerobics. We have to fit in to social pressures.

It is notable that P.E. is viewed as fitting into social conventions, thus maintaining the status quo.

In practice the activities offered to the girls in the fourth and fifth year did relate to their future leisure opportunities. The majority opted for badminton, keep fit/aerobics with a small group doing 'Health and Beauty'. The badminton and keep fit are high on the list of physical activities undertaken by women post school [Deem 1986] and 'Health and Beauty' is central to the culture of femininity. However, it is important to question whether P.E. is/should be reinforcing/reproducing women's leisure or should be challenging existing definitions of leisure. These questions will be

discussed fully in Chapter Eight.

V Activities

a) Curricular

The syllabus included the following major activities: netball, indoor hockey, badminton, basketball, volleyball, athletics, tennis, rounders, swimming (ball skills - for first years). Appendix Three, Table One, shows the breakdown of these activities across the years.

A statement from the head of department, however, indicated that swimming had been temporarily stopped "cos cockroaches outnumber the children so we don't go!" Hockey had been stopped two years previous to the research because:

- "(i) wasn't popular*
- (ii) declining in Liverpool.*
- (iii) no hockey surface - playground has glass and litter on it.*
- (iv) our girls just weren't enjoying it. We tried indoor hockey but they don't really like it."*

Thus the major outdoor team game had been stopped and replaced by basketball in the sports hall and more indoor netball. Clearly this reflects the personal interests of the staff. As the head of department mentioned in relation to netball and basketball:

"I'm keen and therefore I get a response from the girls."

Appendix Three, Table Two shows the timetable of activities for the seven week period of observation. The observation took place during the first half of the spring term.

A main issue to emerge from the observation of classes at Heyfield School was that all teaching took place indoors. Also it was noticeable that classes timetabled at the same time were regularly taught together by both members of staff. The consequence of this was that the timetabled lessons of ballskills or gymnastics, in practice became indoor team games or relay races. Consequently the stated objectives of the lessons, as set out in the syllabus, were not achieved. The stated emphasis on teaching, then, was replaced by activities geared to occupying curriculum time. As has been noted, the activities tended to be of secondary importance, attention being centred on 'standards' of appearance and discipline.

b) Extra Curricular

Appendix Three, Table Three shows the timetable for extra curricular activities. The dance timetabled for four evenings after school was first year dance production rehearsals, which were taken by the part time

dance teacher. In addition there were 'twilight' sessions [see School Profile - Appendix Three] in the sports hall and in the gymnasium organized and taught by members of staff employed by the Adult Education Centre or Return and Learn Scheme. There was no direct contact or liaison between the P.E. department and the organisers of these additional leisure sessions.

The extra-curricular programme was followed but there were no netball or badminton matches. The reason given for this was difficulty in arranging matches after school as transport was rarely available and few schools had teams available to play. Also it had proved difficult to find enough girls willing and able to stay after school. Certainly the other after-school clubs were quite poorly attended. The girls who went to lunch time sessions were asked why they did not attend the late afternoon clubs. Overwhelmingly family or domestic commitments dominated their explanations:

"I have to pick up our Paul from Juniors."

"Me Mum usually wants me to go to the shops. It's too much hassle after school."

"I've got to look after Tracey and Emma 'til everyone else gets home."

This confirms the views of the teachers interviewed (see Chapter Six) which recognised that many girls cannot participate in extra-curricular clubs because of domestic responsibilities.

CASE STUDY II - ROSEHILL SCHOOL

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL

I Organization

a) Grouping

The first five years were single sex mixed ability groups for physical education. In the sixth form the young women and young men were offered the same options thus allowing the opportunity for mixed activities. The organization of the first five years in single sex groups reflects the head of department's negative view of mixed P.E.:

"... when I first came here the P.E. was separate. It was pretty horrific but it mainly needed general organization. Then we tried mixed games and that was worse. I used to have to lock myself in the gym with these bad boys - fifth formers - 'cos lads have a different set of standards. I think if it is going to be mixed it's got to be from the start but I certainly wouldn't want that."

The comment relating to 'standards' will be discussed more fully later. However, the consequence of her position was that there was limited contact between the female and male P.E. departments. The sixth form students were offered the same activities as the boys at the same time. By this stage, however, P.E. was optional and dependent on the examination course being followed.

Some students did not have the option of P.E. as it clashed with other subjects. In practice no girls attended P.E. during the timetabled time of Day Four and only five or six attended on Day Six. Consequently on Day Four the female member of staff timetabled to teach sixth form P.E. had a class of boys for basketball and on Day Five had a mixed group of seven boys and three girls for trampolining. The other two or three girls opted for swimming which was a mixed activity with a male member of staff. There was, however, a higher attendance of boys whose options were: badminton, soccer, swimming, basketball, trampolining or cross-country. Consequently the only group that could be observed in a mixed group setting was the sixth form trampolining. This class was observed over four weeks.

The lesson appeared to run smoothly using two trampolines and non-participants as spotters. The girls and boys took part on equal terms and received the same tuition. The only obvious problem created by the mixed setting was the embarrassment experienced by two of the girls through wearing P.E. skirts. While this highlighted the problems faced by girls in wearing short P.E. skirts it could have been remedied as the girls had the freedom to wear tracksuit bottoms. In practice what happened was that the girls in skirts spent more time and attention in holding down their skirts or keeping them tucked in than on acquiring trampolining skills. The inappropriate use of skirts for physical activity

was highlighted by this observation. It demonstrated well the restrictions often placed on girls' concentration and skill acquisition. The young women were acutely conscious of their sexuality in this situation and were embarrassed and intent on 'protecting' their appearance and presentation of self. The young men reacted initially with laughs and comments between themselves (inaudible). However, after a few minutes several young men showed their impatience in that it was 'wasting good trampolining time'. One commented:

"For goodness' sake we see you in the pool in a 'cossie', leave your skirt alone!"

Observation at Rosehill reinforces the position at Heyfields School that mixed P.E. in theory is rarely mixed P.E. in practice. Although the timetable allowed the young women the opportunity to participate in mixed activities few took advantage of the opportunity. Furthermore, the practice of mixed P.E. highlights the significance of gender and sexuality for the experiences of girls/young women in a mixed setting of physical activity. This will be discussed more fully in Chapter Eight.

b) Time Allocated to Physical Education

Years One, Two and Three were timetabled for two single and one double P.E. lesson per six days (i.e. 160 minutes per six days). Fourth and Fifth years were

timetabled for one double period per six days (80 minutes) and the sixth form for two single periods (80 minutes). P.E. was compulsory in years one to five but optional in the sixth form.

Although P.E. was compulsory for the first five years of secondary school there were certain exceptions within the structure. In the first year pupils requiring extra English with reading and/or writing difficulties were given their extra tuition during P.E. timetabled time. Also, extra music lessons (e.g. guitar, flute etc.) were taken out of P.E. time. From the third year upwards those who opted for Latin received no P.E. at all. In practice this related only to one or two girls each year although it was clear that 'compulsory P.E.' in theory had several variations in practice.

Attendance at P.E. was good until the optional sixth form year. In years One and Two there was an average of one or two girls absent from each group with one or two without some of their kit (P.E. kit was compulsory in Years One to Five). The P.E. department kept a store of kit which was lent to them. The impression was that lack of kit was not recognized as a legitimate reason to miss the lesson. Consequently kit was not 'forgotten' in order to 'drop out' of P.E. as it was learned quickly that borrowed kit would have to be worn. As the quality, size and shape of this spare kit could not be guaranteed most of the girls opted to 'remember' their own! Notes

for excusal on health grounds meant that on occasion there were one or two girls sitting out. Colds were not accepted as a legitimate excuse by the P.E. staff with the comment heard several times:

"If you are fit enough to come to school and spread your cold you are fit enough to do P.E."

Swimming was treated slightly differently with the P.E. staff more sympathetic to excusal on health grounds and girls automatically being excused for periods. A note of periods was kept so that too frequent cycles could be investigated!!

The third, fourth and fifth years were similarly regular in attendance although in general there were a few more girls without blouse and/or skirt of their kit. Again they were not allowed to miss the lesson. On average only three to four minutes were spent during changing time on checking and enforcing the correct kit. However the 'rules' and routine of P.E. which involved lining up in silence in the changing rooms before moving to their lesson meant considerably more time taken up with organization. This routine was enforced with all groups in years One to Four. With one group of third years and one group of fourth years it resulted twice in the lesson being missed. Furthermore, while leaving the changing room comments from the P.E. staff stressed the girls' appearance and posture:

"Stand up straight."

"Stop leaning on the wall and stand straight."

"You look really scruffy, tie your hair back more neatly."

This emphasis on discipline, quite obvious in practice, was reiterated further by the head of department:

"We're more disciplined than any other part of the school. Girls respect us for it."

Again this relates to the discussion in Chapters Three (History) and Six (Interviews) on 'standards' expected for girls/young women. This will be discussed fully in Chapter Eight.

c) Showers

Showers were not compulsory in the school and this was explained by the head of department:

"No they're not compulsory, there's no time, I'd rather teach."

Showers had been discontinued four years prior to the research period and during the observation no showers were taken.

II Staffing

There were three female P.E. staff. All staff taught several periods a week of another subject. All were specialist P.E. trained and were concerned primarily with the P.E. department. One woman staff member (Chemistry) took volleyball as a lunchtime activity on a Monday. This was the only 'extra' help received by women P.E. staff.

The male P.E. department also had three members of staff and were paid on the same salary scales as their female colleagues. The male department had 'extra' help from six members of staff with various extra-curricular activities.

The head of department had been at the school for fourteen years - her first and only teaching post. The second in department had been there six years and the third member of staff two years. All three had been trained at the same, local specialist college of physical education.

The female staff worked closely as a team. The head of department (Scale 3) and second in department (Scale 2) were based primarily in one wing of the school with the main female P.E. facilities. This wing had been the former girls' Grammar School. The third in the department taught mainly first and second year classes

and she was based in the smallest of the three wings, in the former secondary modern school. Her Art teaching commitment was also in that building.

The P.E. staff had little contact with other staff in the school. During the observation period the P.E. staff only went to the staffroom for an official contact or enquiry. Lunch hours and breaks were taken in the P.E. wing where they had facilities for making coffee. There was no contact with the male P.E. department other than for official organizational reasons.

All three P.E. staff lived within a three mile radius of the school and all had private transport. The head of department lived alone in a flat with no obvious or stated personal responsibilities. The other two members of staff shared accommodation with female friends. At no time during the period of observation did personal commitments appear to interfere with curricular or extra-curricular teaching.

III Facilities

As mentioned the school was organized from three sites. Two sites were adjacent with the smaller site for the first and second years approximately five to ten minutes walk away. The female P.E. block was situated in the former girls' Grammar School building and had a gymnasium, hall (used also for meetings, assemblies etc)

field and two netball/tennis courts. The boys' P.E. wing had similar facilities and between the two (but actually on the female P.E. site), was a swimming pool shared between the two departments. The smaller school site had a small gymnasium, a field and an undersized netball/tennis court. The female P.E. area had a large changing room which opened on to the gymnasium and a small staff changing room.

To a large extent the facilities determined the curriculum that was offered. The availability of an on-site swimming pool allowed swimming to be offered as a core activity in years One to Four and as a main option at fifth and sixth form levels. Further, it was offered as an extra-curricular activity in three lunch breaks and on two evenings after school per week. The emphasis on these occasions was on competitive training for team events and on personal survival and life-saving awards. Swimming as a core activity clearly had influenced the selection of staff. The second in department had been appointed partly due to her qualifications and personal interest in swimming coaching. As the head of department confirmed:

"When we appointed 'G' it was vital that we got someone who was good and keen on swimming. If you've got the bonus of a pool you need to use it."

The main problem was that the pool was heavily timetabled for both the girls and boys and thus it

continually was in need of servicing attention. During the observation period the pool was out of action for one complete week and on two other occasions. The consequence was that those timetabled for the pool had to share the indoor facilities (often only the gym) with another group and this disrupted two timetabled activities.

The facilities in the first and second year wing of the school were poor. The gym was small, bare and very cold. In all the classes observed the girls complained of the cold and many did not appear to warm up throughout the entire lesson.

The split in facilities resulted in a split in staffing with the two staff members in the main block spending far more time together. This tended to isolate the third in department. However the location of the facilities on the periphery of the main school meant that the department itself was self-contained and physically isolated from the rest of the school. During the observation period no other staff member visited the P.E. wing.

The outdoor facilities were limited to two netball courts and a field. During the winter months only the netball courts were used. Poor weather meant that an average three days per week (during the observation period) were too wet, frosty or windy for outdoor games.

As with the swimming this resulted in doubling up in the limited indoor areas and thus significant disruption to the timetable.

IV Aims and Objectives

The aims of physical education as written in the syllabus of work were:

1. To assist the optimum balanced growth of each individual by the development of not only her physical resources and their skilled and efficient use, but also her capacity for creative and imaginative work.
2. To assist in the development of initiative, moral and social attitudes and responsible behaviour.
3. To provide purposeful and enjoyable experience in a sufficient range of physical activities; to encourage increasing responsibility in the choice of such activities while at school, to promote some sense of achievement and positive attitudes towards participation in post-school recreation.

These aims were reiterated by the head of department verbally although she emphasized numbers two and three and included 'enjoyment' as a primary objective:

"Preparation for leisure is most important now and enjoyment. We're building a person aren't we? We're not just teaching them P.E. It isn't only the physical. I think in P.E. rather than any other subject it's teaching them manners, self-discipline. I think we do a good job for the school more than any other subject. We're more disciplined than any other part of school. Girls respect us for it."

Thus the major stated emphases for P.E. in Rosehill were 'preparation for leisure' and 'standards' i.e. self discipline, manners. The head of department stated that

these had become more important over the past four years and were now a priority over previous emphases on physical skill development and experience.

As discussed in the section on organization, the observed practice confirmed the emphasis on self-discipline and manners. Throughout the observation the following comment was typical:

"There is a big concentration on standing properly in silence. It wastes a large proportion of skill teaching time."

"Standing properly" clearly related to the correct posture associated with girls and their development as 'young ladies'. On two occasions when the girls were lined up to leave the gym the staff commented:

"Walk out and leave the gym like Miss World. That's right, shoulders back, tummies in, show how good you look."

The aim of preparation for leisure was realized partly through access to swimming as a major activity. This remained a popular activity in the options for the fifth and sixth forms and was an activity clearly transferred into their leisure time. However, the lack of interest in P.E. by the sixth form suggests that the girls/young women at this age were not enthusiastic to participate in physical activity during school hours as a leisure pursuit. They had the opportunity to select from a number of activities but, as mentioned previously, there

were only a few participants in trampolining and swimming.

There was no obvious direction given to the girls relating to future leisure opportunities. There were no posters specifically informing the girls about activities locally which could be of interest. Girls were directed to a local swimming club but this was at a competitive level and was not necessarily available for or appropriate to post-school experience. Previously girls had been introduced to ice-skating and horse-riding (both 'female' defined sports) in the fourth and fifth years. However this was dropped as:

"... it was a lot of bother for staff so we keep them in school now."

The emphasis on discipline and behaviour was a further factor in abandoning these out of school activities:

"There was so much more truancy then, now we get little truancy and I'm sure they get more out of it. It is much harder to keep discipline once you are out of school."

The fifth year options were offered as particularly "suitable" for girls and their future interests. These were badminton, keep fit, trampolining and swimming. The latter two, however were more a reflection of the availability of facilities and staff interest.

V Activities

a) Curricular

The timetable was organized on the basis of a six day week. The first and second year received one double period split between gym and netball and one single period each of swimming and dance. The third years had the same timetable except the dance session was switched from the modern educational dance of years one and two to a session of country dance. The fourth years were offered the option of gymnastics, swimming or netball during their 80 minute lesson. Therefore, they were given choice but within the core activities. The fifth years had the option of badminton, keep fit, trampolining or swimming. The swimming was a mixed session. The sixth form had a voluntary 80 minutes of P.E. in which they were offered table tennis, trampolining, swimming, keep fit, dance or any appropriate option of their choice (see Appendix Three, Table Four, for a breakdown of the six day timetable with staffing).

The observation period suggested that the timetable was followed closely unless bad weather or swimming pool closure created problems.

Gymnastics was observed for all four years. Similar teaching methods were employed for years one to four

although P.E. was more formally structured in the third and fourth year. The warm up involved primarily free-moving activities involving running and stretching. In years one and two there was then a section of floorwork in which fairly structured tasks were set (e.g. stretching, rolling and jumping). Time was spent teaching actual physical activities (e.g. backward roll, star-jump etc). The apparatus was arranged in groups with a set task on each apparatus. The third and fourth years went straight into apparatus work. This was more formally organized, each group working across the gym. For example in the fourth year session the apparatus consisted of:

Group 1:	3 layers of box -> mattress
Group 2:	Springboard -> box -> mat
Group 3:	Trampette -> mattress
Group 4:	Bench -> horse -> mat

Due to the formal, orderly positioning of the apparatus, on which each person took a turn to 'perform', there was no opportunity to opt out. The set physical tasks were relatively easy and thus each individual, to some extent, 'succeeded'. There was considerable encouragement from the staff and continual skill-teaching throughout the sessions.

Overall the gym sessions were physically demanding. There was use of group competition (i.e. in apparatus work) but not individual competition. The girls were encouraged to use their bodies and try new movements.

The relative simplicity of the set tasks meant that no girl appeared under undue pressure. Although some girls were relatively unenthusiastic, demonstrated by their reluctance to do anything more than the set task, the overall mood of the gym lessons was one of enjoyment and enthusiasm. The girls were allowed to chat during their activity so long as the noise level was not excessive. It was noticeable that in the changing rooms there was some opposition from both the third and fourth years to the 'thought' of a gym class. In practice, however, the same girls clearly enjoyed the class once they became involved in the activities. The majority of first and second years showed enthusiasm to change quickly and get on with the activities.

The first and second years had a single lesson of modern dance each week. In contrast to gymnastics there was greater ambivalence to dance as an activity. Some were enthusiastic but several girls showed their disinterest by standing about, complaining about the cold and moving with little enthusiasm. The main observation from the dance lessons was that it was in these sessions that the differing stages of physical development between the girls became most obvious. Some had changed shape and were much bigger and physically developed. In all the classes observed it was the more 'developed' girls who tended to find dance 'silly', were 'giggly' and obviously found it embarrassing crawling around the floor.

The same dance theme was used for both first and second year lessons with the use of a short piece of classical music. The member of staff teaching the class commented that she was:

"inhibited from using any pop music because the head doesn't like it. He doesn't think it is educational."

There was little physical energy expended during these sessions and the staff suggested that the main objective of the lesson was to satisfy the general aim "for creative and imaginative work" as stated in the P.E. syllabus. However, observation indicated that there was limited enjoyment and little enthusiasm. The content and activities included appeared to be irrelevant for many of the girls. There were no explanations as to why certain activities were included and there seemed little relationship to dance experienced by girls in their social time.

Swimming was a popular activity and this reflected the facilities and the staff expertise. The opportunity to participate regularly in swimming resulted in the majority of girls being able to swim by the end of year one with the few non-swimmers in the school tending to be pupils that had moved into the area recently. The popularity of swimming was emphasized in years Four, Five and Six when it became optional but still attracted large numbers of participants. The content of the

lessons suggested a structured approach to learning with group work at particular skill levels and considerable emphasis placed on skill learning. Also it was noticeable that the swimming lessons appeared the most physically arduous of the curricular activities with all the girls leaving the pool having expended considerable physical energy.

One area that came to the forefront during this case-study observation was the problem for Asian girls of taking part in some of the P.E. activities. It was highlighted in this school because Asians constituted the largest non-white ethnic group in the school. They were, however, still very much a minority group, with only five or six in each year. The issue came to the forefront because swimming was so central within the curriculum. All the Asian girls did take part in swimming, some wearing tracksuits in the pool. It was observed, however, that no Asian girls opted for swimming once it became a mixed activity in years Five and Six.

The only team game played was netball. Traditionally, as a Grammar School, it had been one of the few schools on Merseyside (and one of the only State schools) to play lacrosse. However, the head of department commented:

"We've taken lacrosse off now 'cos it was beyond them. There were so few rules it became a free for all and quite dangerous. Netball is a much more suitable game."

Unlike swimming, netball did not retain its popularity above the third year. The first three years played the game with enthusiasm but once it became an option in the fifth year it was not selected. The fourth years had a choice between swimming, gym or netball. Netball had the fewest participants each week, often twelve or less. In practice the weather influenced the amount of netball taught. In theory, years one to four had one single lesson of netball per week. In practice it became apparent that it was this activity which most had to be reorganized due to poor weather. Several netball sessions were cancelled due to wet, snow and extreme cold. In these cases the lack of indoor facilities resulted in two or more classes being taught together - a circuit or team activities were the usual alternatives.

The most popular activities with the fifth year were keep fit, swimming and trampolining. In practice the fifth years were given considerably more freedom with considerable less discipline. They wore P.E. clothes of their choice so long as it constituted a change and they moved on to their chosen activity as soon as they were ready. It was noticeably a more informal atmosphere and the lesson provided the girls with a period of relaxation away from their academic work. The emphasis was more on their leisure rather than on formal learning. In swimming they were free to use the pool as they wished (within normal pool regulations) although

skills were taught if requested. Similarly trampolining was student-led. Although, through necessity it was more skill orientated, the young women were free to opt to do what they wanted at whatever level they chose. However, records of attendance were kept and this was enforced and followed up in cases of absenteeism. Thus compulsory attendance remained under careful scrutiny even though other areas of discipline and organization were relaxed.

The situation was the same for the sixth form although, as has been noted, very few girls opted for P.E. once it became entirely voluntary. The basketball class on offer by a female member of staff consisted of ten to twelve boys. It was significant that the only two team games offered at sixth form level were basketball and soccer. Both these activities were core activities for the younger boys but neither were on the girls' timetable. In her interview the head of department commented:

"The problem here is on the basketball side. They do basketball and do netball which I think is far more suitable. The two are similar but it is difficult to link them."

In practice the girls showed no inclination to take part. The two activities on offer were traditionally 'male' sports. Whether the lack of participation from the female sixth formers reflected a lack of confidence in their ability to participate in a new activity or simply reflected a lack of interest in team games in

general is difficult to surmise. However the problem of mixed activities being often male activities offered to mixed sex groups will be discussed in Chapter Eight in the section dealing with mixed versus single sex teaching.

b) Extra-Curricular

Appendix Three, Table Five shows the time-table for extra-curricular activities.

The three P.E. staff taught the extra-curricular activities. They were each involved four out of six lunchtimes and on three evenings after school. The staff badminton on a Friday after school was not organised by the P.E. staff but the facilities were made available. The extra-curricular programme was extensive and was closely followed. Activities were not cancelled by staff except for staff meetings or other unavoidable commitments. The activities on offer reflected the formal curriculum, apart from badminton and volleyball. The badminton was for fourth years upwards and open to both boys and girls. During the period of observation only two or three girls per session took part in this extra-curricular activity. The volleyball was the only session taught by a member of the female academic staff. On average ten girls attended each week. The other activities were well attended. The netball was for teams although there was open access regardless of ability.

The teams played after school. They rarely had Saturday matches as:

"due originally to Saturday jobs but now it is the same across (____). Few schools want Saturday matches anymore."

[Head of department]

While at the school it was noticeable that the boys played team games on both Saturdays and weekdays. A high profile was given to team results both during assemblies and in the Sports Bulletin issued regularly in the school.

It was noted by the P.E. staff that some girls did not attend extra-curricular activities because of domestic commitments and that in the first and second year especially, the dark nights stopped attendance for several girls.

CASE STUDY III - TOWNLEY SCHOOL

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL

I Organization

a) Grouping

The school was single sex and the classes were grouped in bands according to academic achievement.

b) Time Allocated to Physical Education

All five years were timetabled for two double P.E. periods per week i.e. 2 x 70 mins. From the second year, however, the top band groups had one period less (35 mins). This was replaced with a second language. In the first three years all classes received two double and one single period of English, Maths and French (Top Band Spanish in addition) with History, Geography, R.E., Home Economics, Art, Music, Social Education each receiving one double or two single lessons per week.

P.E. was compulsory through the first five years of school but the sixth form received no timetabled P.E. and any interested students had to make voluntary, individual arrangements.

The official P.E. kit was a white aertex blouse, navy

blue knickers, white or black gym shoes and a navy blue wrap-around games skirt. Track suits could be worn in winter for outdoor games only and leotards could be worn for gymnastics and dance. The standards of P.E. kit were enforced but without excessive attention to detail. As long as each girl had a skirt and a white tee-shirt then the type of skirt and shirt were ignored. If they did not have kit then they were lent spare kit. There was little problem over enforcing this as the girls appeared to recognize the expected standards and knew that they would be "in trouble" if they forgot their kit and that they would still have to participate in the lesson. Throughout the period of observation there were, on average, one/two pupils sitting out of lessons (except swimming). Sitting-out was allowed only if they had an official note from a doctor or parent. Again this was a consistent part of the organization of P.E. and no exceptions were made. Consequently the girls knew the expectations and thus the majority appeared to accept them. During each lesson four or five minutes were spent rejecting the claims of some girls that they were unfit or unable to participate. Eventually the same standards were enforced.

More time was lost on behavioural problems. All classes had to line up in silence before moving to their teaching area. Consistently this took several minutes to enforce and was most problematic with the third and fourth years. On the whole the first and second years

responded quickly to disciplined 'commands' but there were constant 'battles' with the third years with as much as thirty minutes regularly lost from each lesson.

The head of department had a reputation as a stern disciplinarian and this reputation appeared to influence the whole department. She was also Year Head for the fourth years and consequently her authority carried considerable weight. The department had a reputation throughout the school for being very efficiently organized with firm discipline. This contrasted with the stated view by a number of the staff that the school in general suffered considerable "discipline problems" throughout all years.

c) Showers

There were showers in the school but no shower curtains.

The head of department explained:

"We have showers but no curtains so we won't use them. By the second year they are really difficult 'cos self conscious and embarrassed. If we get shower curtains I may use them but I wouldn't make the staff force kids through showers."

[Head of department interview]

II Staffing

There were four female P.E. staff. Each taught another subject although three were primarily timetabled for

P.E. The head of department taught the least P.E. classes. She was timetabled half-time for human biology and was a Head of Year. Thus less than half of her teaching and administrative time was spent in the P.E. department.

The department had the support of an archery and a judo coach (both female) who came into the school two days of the week. One member of staff helped with a badminton club one lunchtime a week. The staff responsibilities were split with one member of staff teaching primarily first years in the annexe to the school and the head of department spending a considerable amount of time in the main school building on year business. This created some resentment in the department:

"There's a major problem really with E. being head but not teaching much. She doesn't know as much about what's going on as we do."

[Teacher - interview]

Also, it resulted in the head of department regularly being late for her lessons, especially first period, in the morning and the period after lunch. This tension was compounded by the second in department previously being the head of department at another school prior to its closure. The staff did not remain in the P.E. block for their breaks but went to the main staffroom for coffee and lunch. Consequently, they had considerable social contact with other staff and the academic staff showed

an interest in what was happening in P.E.

The two junior members of staff had no personal responsibilities for others at home, both lived in flats with other women. The second in department had a fifteen month old baby. During the period of observation she was up each night with the baby. Although this did not affect her attendance, on her own admission she felt exhausted with little spare energy or patience to cope with the more difficult groups. The head of department lived with a male partner but her domestic responsibilities did not appear to affect her teaching time. This could only be surmised by talking to her and observing her practice.

The judo teacher was a peripatetic teacher who had worked for the authority for approximately twenty years. She normally taught fourth and fifth year option classes but during the period of observation she had small groups selected from third year groups. She was an experienced judo coach and a black belt 2nd Dan.

Apart from these coaches there was no other support for either curricular or extra-curricular teaching.

III Facilities

The school's facilities were built in 1963 when the school opened as a Comprehensive. There was a separate

P.E. block attached to the main school by a covered archway. This P.E. block had its own lockable main entrance. The facilities consisted of a central large changing area, three separate changing rooms, store cupboards, two gymnasias, a swimming pool and an outside yard. There were no field facilities. The staff had their own changing room and small staff area. This P.E. centre was totally self-sufficient with the swimming pool and gymnasias leading directly off from the main areas.

The Annexe, which was approximately one mile from the main site, had no changing rooms so the girls changed in a classroom. There was a hall for dance and an outside yard.

The main P.E. centre was an excellent facility. As it was self-contained it gave the impression of walking into a sports' 'world', totally separate from school. This helped the department earn a positive reputation separate from the reputation of the school as a whole. The facilities were well-maintained with no graffiti on the walls. (This was present elsewhere in the school.) The facility was maintained by constant supervision, the locking of all facilities when not in use and heavily enforced penalties for abuse of the facilities. The P.E. department had a large supply of equipment for a wide range of activities including canoes for use in the swimming pool and full sets of

judo jackets. Again considerable attention was given to checking and maintaining equipment.

The main weakness was in the lack of field facilities which was reflected in the timetabled activities. However the yard area was large and could facilitate two groups for netball, tennis or rounders. During the period of observation full use of the facilities was made. The swimming pool was in use most lessons and during lunchtime and after school. When not timetabled the pool was used by the local primary schools. Having two gymnasias was beneficial and in bad weather no classes needed to be put together or rearranged into makeshift lessons. All groups had their own space, inside or outdoors.

IV Aims and Objectives

There were no written objectives for the teaching of physical education but the head of department clearly stated her main aims:

"To get them to enjoy physical activity so that they will continue it because if you enjoy something you will carry on. It is going to be good for you, healthy for you whereas if you do something you hate you won't continue."

To a certain extent the two main aims of enjoyment and preparation for leisure were met. The girls seemed to enjoy physical education, evidenced by their laughter,

chatter and physical contributions to the classes. On average approximately 80% of the girls showed enthusiasm for their lessons. Those who appeared reluctant, tended to take part in theory but made little effort in their participation. They would stand around in twos or threes, talking and would only participate when directly instructed. Throughout the observations, there were constant notes made as follows:

"The girls appeared to enjoy the lesson and the skill level was good."

"Good response from the first years. They were very keen and enthusiastic."

"They all enjoyed it and high skill level."

The P.E. centre displayed many posters relating to sport and physical activity with information boards on sports, how to get started, sports centres, local teams etc. The excellent facilities meant that there could be a wide range of activities offered both in curricular and extra-curricular time. There were the traditional P.E. core activities but with canoeing, swimming, judo, archery, trampolining, badminton and volleyball additionally offered. As the head of department stated:

"We offer as many activities as possible so that they might find something which they will have the confidence to continue after school."

In addition a sports centre in the park opposite was used for fourth and fifth years which meant that the

girls were introduced to a leisure complex and made aware of and familiar with this leisure setting.

Although there were only two stated aims for the P.E. teaching in Townley School the most obvious objective in the department was discipline. As discussed, the department had a reputation for its firm discipline and this was emphasized by each of the members of staff and appeared central to their teaching. Discipline was reinforced at the beginning of each lesson when the expected standards were reiterated. These were quiet, controlled behaviour and neat appearance with the class prepared for the activity by leaving the changing areas in silent orderly lines. Once involved in the activity the girls were encouraged to relax more but the lessons observed suggested that they were kept busy with physical activity so that on the whole behaviour remained closely regulated.

V Activities

a) Curricular

The first, second and third years were taught a programme of swimming, netball, gym and dance in the winter months with swimming, rounders and tennis in the summer term. In the fourth year they were offered half a term each of archery, badminton, canoeing, volleyball, trampolining and judo. These were not optional

activities but provided a change from the core programme. In the fifth year the girls were allowed to choose two of the fourth year activities which they then followed for one term each [Appendix Three, Table Six].

The period of observation took place in the first part of the summer term so that activities on the timetable in the first three years were swimming, rounders and tennis. The main observation was that the timetable was followed strictly with no alterations made unless extreme weather conditions made it impossible to go outside. If lessons had to be rearranged inside, gymnastics was used as a wet weather alternative. The good facilities allowed the timetable to be followed without having to double up on classes.

The swimming classes observed were well-planned and demanded hard work from the girls. Each session involved some teaching of stroke technique, more advanced techniques in the third year (e.g. tumble turns) with the groups divided into smaller groups by ability. At the end of each session the girls were allowed some time for free activity. It was noticeable that there were no non-swimmers in any of the years and only one or two weak swimmers in each class. Again, an on-site swimming pool resulted in swimming not only having a high profile but achieving high standards of ability. Each class had a reasonable period in the water as, unlike most school provision, no time was lost in travelling to the

swimming pool.

The rounders lessons were popular with all three years and seemed particularly popular with the lower band third year groups which presented the most discipline problems. One third year class observed were considered the 'worst' class and described by the staff as all the 'troublemakers' put together. Staff room talk suggested that many members of staff had trouble maintaining acceptable discipline with this group and they tended to spend most of their academic time being 'controlled' or disciplined. In P.E. however, they worked extremely hard. They were allocated the head of department of P.E. as their teacher since she had the reputation for being the firmest disciplinarian. Although she maintained firm discipline all members of the class participated, played well and achieved a good standard in their rounders sessions. The girls were asked what they felt about P.E. and the overwhelming response was positive:

"It's great - the best lesson in the school."

"I like rounders especially. It's a real good laugh."

"P.E.'s pretty good really. You know where you stand here and what to expect. You can't get away with anything mind or they'll have you."

"The P.E. department's the best. They're strict but you know what you can and can't do."

"I like the teachers, they treat you okay."

Yet even within this positive atmosphere various issues relating to gender were noted. Three out of the four staff continually referred to the girls as "young ladies". They were often asked to "walk in like young ladies", "imagine you're in a beauty parade". Although there were positive reinforcements for female sport in the posters on display it was noted that examples of good practice were constantly given with male sportspersons or activities. For example, on four occasions male tennis stars were used as illustrations:

"Notice how Borg stands when he serves."

"Do you think you're McEnroe? - don't hit the ball so hard."

At no time were female tennis players used as positive examples. On other occasions the girls were encouraged:

"to move your feet like a boxer."

"attack the net. Move forward with determination. It's like going for goal in football - be positive."

The judo sessions observed were interesting as they were taught by a judo coach rather than a full-time P.E. teacher. During the period of observation she took small groups of third years (approximately eight girls) as her usual fourth and fifth years were doing examinations. One class observed was a group of eight girls randomly selected from the bottom band third year. The girls were unenthusiastic at first but by the end of the session they were excited and keen to continue with the

activity. Mrs E. had a quiet approach and treated the girls with considerable respect and encouragement. She never shouted or raised her voice but was firm in her approach. She considered that, on the whole, girls were more successful to teach than boys as they "used skill but not brute strength". She had won all her personal judo competitions against men up to black belt standard. Her style of positive encouragement and belief in the girls' abilities gained a positive response from the girls. They worked hard, soon left their "giggly stage" and appeared to gain confidence and skill from the session.

The teaching style used in the judo sessions suggested that girls at this stage of adolescence responded to positive encouragement and a belief that they were capable of achieving high standards. Arguably a positive response would be the norm for such a positive style of approach. Most interesting was the fact that when the girls were not subjected to gender stereotyping they responded by gaining confidence and a belief in their abilities beyond the gender stereotypes of femininity. It would suggest that when gender stereotypes are challenged there is a possibility that less gendered outcomes will be achieved.

Other non-traditional activities (e.g. canoeing) were equally successful. This was helped by the fact that by the fourth year the majority of the girls were confident

and competent in the water. It was noticeable that quite a large number (fourteen girls) had opted for the term of canoeing in the fifth year. Once more when gender stereotyping of activities and expected outcomes are challenged there appeared some possibilities that less stereotypical outcomes can be achieved.

Tennis was introduced to the first years using padder bats and short tennis racquets. This quickly produced a good skill level. As a method for teaching first years it was efficient as all the class observed could keep a short rally going and could enjoy the feel of playing tennis with a partner. Also they developed backhand skills as successfully as forehand skills which the staff commented was unusual for inexperienced players.

b) Extra-Curricular

The timetable for extra-curricular activities is shown in Appendix Three, Table Seven.

Activities, as such, were not timetabled apart from Gym Club on Monday lunchtime, Badminton Club on Friday lunchhour, Canoe Club on Thursday evening and Trampolining Club on Monday evening. Apart from this the timetable provided access to facilities with one member of staff in charge of supervision and for coaching if necessary.

The extra-curricular activities were organized as open access to the P.E. centre. Participants chose their activities freely in the three areas: the pool, the gymnasium and the outside courts. Also access was provided to the changing areas for board games, chess or simply to meet and talk. There was no emphasis on teams although if girls wanted to play as a team then friendly matches were organized with other schools. Each area was supervised by a member of staff who was responsible for the loan of equipment and to provide help and teaching when necessary. On two lunchtimes there was a judo club (Junior and Senior) held at the Sports Centre in the Park.

The P.E. centre was well used in lunch hours and after school. Several groups of girls always went down to the centre to chat and to talk to the staff. This helped to build good relationships between staff and pupils. The conscious aim of reducing competition did not appear to have any detrimental effect on the take-up of extra-curricular activities. Indeed, it was noticeable that this system attracted pupils with a wide range of abilities thus not confining participation to those girls/young women with a high skill level.

The canoe club and trampolining club were activities that required close supervision and coaching. All other sessions were pupil-led, under their own choice and direction. This worked well with all areas of the

facilities in use. The girls used the facilities as they would a local sports centre. This arrangement also relieved the staff of 'instructional' pressure and they tended to view their extra-curricular time as a relaxed supervisory time even though on observation they did provide teaching in all the situations. The facilities were used by all year groups although they seemed to be most popular with the upper section of the school. First years attended gym club but did not use the other facilities, with the exception of one or two girls, who went swimming.

CASE STUDY IV - ARCHWAY SCHOOL

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL

I Organization

a) Grouping

The girls were grouped in academic streams for all areas of the curriculum. As shown in the school profile in Appendix Three the Archway School was a single sex school although in the sixth form a programme of activities was organized in conjunction with two other schools. These were both single sex Anglican schools - one a boys' school and the other a girls' school. However although mixed teaching was timetabled at sixth form level, during the period of research there were no activities being undertaken in a mixed group. Some young women did join the other schools for dry skiing and squash but although both males and females participated in the activities they did so in single sex groups. There was therefore no mixed sex teaching to observe.

b) Time Allocated to Physical Education

First year pupils were timetabled for one double (70 minutes) and two single (35 minutes) lessons each week. Years Two to Five had one double and one single period per week with the sixth form timetabled for recreational

activities on Wednesday afternoons. P.E. was compulsory throughout the school although sixth form students could opt for non-physical recreational activities.

The period of observation confirmed that few girls missed or sat out of their P.E. lessons. Most classes had two or three girls who had brought a request for excusal from their parents. Periods were not accepted as a legitimate reason to miss a lesson unless specific medical reasons were given. There was no obvious absenteeism which was in direct contrast to Heyfield School which was less than one mile away. It would seem that the explanation for this might be related to the school's relatively greater ability to select pupils and/or the emphasis given to strict discipline throughout the school.

Although the enforcement of discipline was not a problem, the department staff still emphasized this aspect of organization. Each lesson began by the girls lining up in a straight line and in silence. However, once the lesson began there were few occasions when disciplinary actions or verbal admonitions needed to be imposed. This was most noticeable during the athletics sessions which took place in a park approximately five minutes walk from the school. It was recorded in the field notes that the girls were:

*"very good - extremely well disciplined.
We could walk around the park [P.E. staff*

and researcher] without even watching them.

[Fieldwork Diary]

On two occasions during the research a member of staff was absent from a fourth year and fifth year lesson. On both occasions the girls were sent out unsupervised to play tennis which they did efficiently and with no fuss. It was recorded that:

"there are no discipline problems. They seem to be enjoying themselves and there is an adult atmosphere."

[Fieldwork Diary]

It is interesting to question here the relationship between gender and class. In all the case study schools a certain expectation of behaviour relating specifically to stereotypes of gender was observed. The lack of resistance to the enforcement of discipline in Archway School reflected a class response to a middle class institution with expectations which seemed more acceptable to the girls and not in conflict with expectations they received outside the school. Clarricoates [1980] argues from her research in primary schools that there are ideologies of femininity but that these are reflected and experienced differently in different class locations. Historically, P.E. has been shown to have developed within middle class schools originally for the daughters of the middle classes. The location of contemporary P.E. is within this historical context and the ethos and values relating to

expectations of middle class femininity continue to underpin the training of teachers [Fletcher 1984] and teaching in secondary school P.E.. For the girls and young women at Archway School this probably did not contradict their experiences with their peers, family and, especially in this situation, their religion. It is likely that the girls and young women of Heyfield School, sometimes experienced contradictory expectations thus perhaps explaining their greater resistance to their experiences. This will be discussed more fully in Chapter Eight but is an important insight into the complexities of the class-gender relation.

The P.E. kit also reflected the girls greater access to financial resources. The compulsory uniform consisted of a navy skirt, white blouse and school sweater. Tracksuits were allowed in cold weather and white tennis kit was encouraged for dance and leotards for gymnastics.

Unlike the other three case study schools there was little problem in enforcing the regulations concerning P.E. uniform. It was recorded that ninety percent of the girls brought their own tennis racquets to school and in winter a similar percentage had their own hockey sticks. Over ninety percent of the girls wore white tennis dresses for their tennis lessons and all had leotards and tights for dance. Many of these leotards were the latest colours and styles and their outfits included footless tights, dance shoes and headband.

However, the emphasis on appearance observed in the previous schools was similar in Archway School. The girls were expected to look neat and smart in their P.E. kit and any exceptions to this expectation were firmly admonished and the girls' kit checked thoroughly on the next occasion.

c) Showers

There were no showers after P.E. lessons because of the shortage of time. However, when the present headteacher started at the school four years previously, he had insisted on compulsory showers. This brought a powerful reaction from parents who complained about this decision, including two who threatened to write to the Bishop of the diocese. Several objected to the fact that P.E. teachers would be in a position to watch their daughters in the showers. Consequently the head removed his insistence on showers and they have remained unused since that time.

II Staffing

There were two full-time members of P.E. staff. Both were heads of year also, and the head of department taught careers for two periods a week to the fourth and fifth year. Both staff had been teaching at the school for eight years and both had trained at the local

college of P.E.. The head of department had held a similar post previously for five years at a girls' direct grant grammar school. A home economics teacher taught ball skills one period a week to the first years and a male member of staff ran a junior cricket team.

The P.E. staff worked closely together but also were integrated within the total staff group. Breaks and lunch hours were spent in the main staff room whenever possible.

The staff list confirmed that the staff were mainly women (twenty nine women and eleven men). It was interesting to note, however, that the following positions were all held by men:

Headmaster; Head of Mathematics; Senior Teacher i/c Academic Studies/Head of Geography; Head of Modern Languages; Head of Biology; Head of English; Head of Physics.

The women staff members were not permitted to wear trousers in school. As the head of P.E. commented:

"It's [P.E.] not a proper subject for a lot of kids 'cos you walk round dressed in not proper clothes. You're dressed in a tracksuit. As a staff we are not permitted to wear trousers for general wear so I'm viewed as a rather strangely dressed person - not by my colleagues - they see it as my overalls but that is another thing that puts you in a different category."

Both P.E. staff commented on their personal domestic

responsibilities with the head of department having to collect her child by 5 p.m. each evening.

It was noticeable that the strong personality and individuality of the head of department was reflected, to some extent, in the curriculum. Her personal interests and commitments (dance, tennis) had gradually made their mark and become dominant within the curriculum.

Both P.E. staff accepted the school regulation for female staff dress and always wore skirts and dresses into school, changing only for their P.E. teaching commitments. This was a conscious choice as it had been stated by the headteacher that the P.E. staff could dress in 'suitable' attire for their work. Both P.E. staff, however, commented on the fact that it was important for them to stress their 'femininity' by wearing 'feminine' clothes to school.

III Facilities

The school had one gymnasium attached to the changing areas, the use of a hall and a yard with six tennis courts/two netball courts marked out. They travelled to fields to play hockey and used a local swimming pool approximately three miles away. The school was situated on the internal road of a very large park. Athletics facilities were used in the park (approx. five minutes walk from the school). The staff had a small staff

changing-room off the main changing areas.

The facilities were limited and this was reflected in the curriculum offered. When the head of department had arrived in the school there had been a school yard and one court. She had organized a sponsored swim, raised £3,000 and converted the school yard into six tennis courts. While on observation the P.E. department held a sponsored keep-fit which raised £1,800. Part of this was to be ploughed back into equipment and facilities.² It was noticeable that individual items of equipment (e.g. racquets, sticks) were not essential as most of the girls provided their own.

The need to travel to hockey/athletic facilities was inconvenient. However, little time was lost enforcing kit and/or attendance and there were few discipline problems. The walk to these facilities created few problems and used up approximately fifteen minutes of the lesson. Wherever possible these activities were timetabled to finish at break, lunch or the end of the day, so that only the five to seven minutes walk at the beginning of the lesson encroached on teaching time.

Minimum indoor facilities, however, not only restricted the activities offered but meant that classes had to be 'doubled up' when weather restricted outdoor use. Observation suggested that when this happened the timetabled activities were abandoned and indoor rounders

or relay games were supervised instead.

IV Aims and Objectives

There were no official written aims for P.E. but the following statements were made:

"We must encourage them to enjoy leisure activities. I suppose enjoyment and future participation are the most important aims."

"Communication and confidence are more important than what you are actually teaching. I'm not here to teach a child how to play table tennis but to teach a child that they can play and to go perhaps to Mum and Dad to buy them a table at Xmas. The actual activity is a by-product to something else that should be gained."

"... the subject is the vehicle, important, but my teaching is more important than the subject. I think that even more as time goes on.... All I'm here to do is to give them a taste and motivate them."

[Head of department - taped interview]

Both staff communicated with the girls in a firm but relaxed manner. Throughout the observation the following descriptions were used constantly when addressing the girls: 'dear' 'love', 'ladies', 'young ladies', 'madam'. The emphasis appeared to be on defining and encouraging behaviour and activities suitable and appropriate for young ladies. In terms of fulfilling the stated aims of motivating them to continue to participate in physical activity this appeared to be being achieved by concentrating primarily on two activities which were

directly related to possible leisure pursuits (i.e. tennis and dance). Many of the girls belonged to private tennis clubs and a number were members of dance classes/organizations. Dance also seemed to be an activity central to the girls' cultural experiences and several talked about 'working out routines' at home with their friends:

"We spend ages together working out dance sequences to records - it's good fun."

"Dance is great here, especially when we do routines which can be practised at home."

Thus the aims of motivation, communication and experience of future activities appeared to be realized but these were within clear boundaries defined by 'femininity' and 'appropriate' female leisure activities. This issue will be discussed more fully in Chapter Eight.

The girls were noted (recorded observation) as enjoying their P.E. lessons. Perhaps this was because their P.E. experiences reinforced but did not contradict or challenge their home lifestyle or values. However, it was interesting to note that on six occasions girls were asked what activities they would most like to do given the complete choice. The following activities were mentioned most by all those asked: football, baseball, volleyball, outdoor rounders and cricket. Yet they recognized that these choices would not be realized and

accepted that the activities that they did do were enjoyable and 'more appropriate':

"I'd love to try football and baseball but I know that we couldn't do them here. I do like dance though - it's good fun."

"Football, cricket, rounders, that's what I'd like to do. We do rounders and tennis here which is okay, I quite like tennis as well."

"I'd like to try football, volleyball and baseball. I watch them on TV and they look great. Still girls don't usually play much and there's no chance we'd be allowed here. Still I quite like what we do do."

It is interesting that the girls obviously would like to have the opportunity to try sports/activities more usually associated with boys/men but most accept that as girls these activities would be inappropriate. The ideology of femininity and suitable female sport/physical activity is firmly reinforced and internalized by the majority of the girls.

V Activities

a) Curricular

The first years had a winter programme of swimming (double period with half-a-term gymnastics and half-a-term dance (single period) and one period of ball skills. In the summer the double lesson was timetabled for tennis with the single lessons being split between dance and rounders. The second and third

years had half-a-term netball and half-a-term 5-a-side hockey in the winter with gym and dance alternately for the single session. In the summer, the double period was timetabled for half-a-term tennis and half-a-term athletics with the single period either rounders or dance. In the winter the fourth and fifth year were given the choice of dance, volleyball or netball for the double session and single badminton, table tennis or dance. In the summer the choice became dance inside or tennis outside [see Appendix Three, Table Eight].

The sixth form were timetabled with two other schools and had the choice of a range of activities including dry skiing, squash, swimming and ice-skating. All these activities took place at other schools or off campus.

The observation took place during the summer term. During the eight weeks of observation only three activities took place during first to third year lessons - tennis, athletics and indoor rounders. The timetable was not strictly adhered to although on average the first years had a double athletics session per week with a single tennis session and indoor rounders session. The second and third years had double tennis and single indoor rounders. On the few occasions when the weather interrupted the programme either indoor rounders took place in the gymnasium or, if there was more than one class, relay team games were organized.

There had been changes immediately prior to the research which had resulted in the addition of athletics to the timetable. This had been on the insistence of the headteacher that the school should have a sports day for its summer programme. Consequently the decision was made to remove dance and gym from the summer timetable and to offer dance as a wet-weather alternative. In practice this did not occur and in poor weather, rounders or indoor games were offered.

The teaching observed involved tennis coaching across all five years. Time was spent during the first and second year teaching basic skills, usually to small groups. Throughout the observation recordings the most consistent entry concerned the relaxed approach maintained by the staff. These included the following:

"The lesson is very relaxed. Each court plays with the staff walking around and coaching individual small groups."

[First years]

"There is little formal class teaching. The staff just coach on occasional points."

[Third years]

"On the whole there are good tennis skills, the kids get on and play themselves."

[Third years]

"Little formal teaching they are just left to play on their own - which they do."

[Fourth years]

The indoor lessons did not involve any skill teaching but primarily were supervised games of danish rounders.

b) Extra-Curricular

There was a programme of extra-curricular activities which included tennis (summer), rounders (summer), and dance [see Appendix Three, Table Nine].

The staff justified a rather limited extra-curricular programme as follows:

"It is better to teach properly and have fewer clubs. Also most of the girls have to travel so they can't stay after school. Their parents aren't keen on them staying either unless it's a big dance production or something."

During the period of observation there was no extra-curricular teaching. The girls played tennis in their lunch hour but it was not organized formally. The staff commented that they felt that they were too busy to be constantly involved out of school time and so during the summer months they had decided against formal extra-curricular activities.

CONCLUSION

The case studies in this chapter are important in assessing how far the practices of P.E. teachers relate to their ideas and beliefs as discussed in Chapter Six. Chapter Six concluded that there remain powerful assumptions held by P.E. teachers about femininity in relation to physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality. These images of femininity, while not identical to those identified in the traditions of P.E. in the nineteenth century, remain powerfully articulated by P.E. teachers and by some of the pupils and their headteachers. These assumptions have implications for all aspects of P.E. teaching. This chapter suggests that there are clear links between the stated policies and the observed practices of P.E. teachers in that within the practices of P.E. teaching there can be identified aspects of organization, staffing, facilities, aims/objectives which clearly reinforce gender in relation to physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality. However, the relationship between stated policy and observed practice is not always direct or straightforward. Across all the schools there were occasions when there were clear gaps between policy and practice significant to a critical understanding of gender and girls P.E..

The most obvious example of this is the issue of mixed

sex teaching. In both the co-educational schools (Heyfield and Rosehill) there was a policy of some mixed sex teaching. However, when observed in practice many complex questions relating to mixed teaching were identified. In practice few mixed sessions actually took place. When they did, for the majority of the time the girls remained together in single sex units within the mixed setting. Furthermore, the observation at Rosehill School identified the crucial issue of P.E. kit and the problems of mixed P.E. in relation to developing female sexuality. Throughout all the research - in the interviews across the city and in the case study observations - mixed versus single sex organization continually has resurfaced as significant in relation to gender and P.E.. Consequently Chapter Eight will consider this issue in more detail.

A further issue of significance illustrated by the research is the reinforcement of ideologies about the physical - physicality and sexuality - through the teaching of P.E.. This issue has arisen in the historical material and the contemporary research into stated policies/practices and observed practice. This is in relation not only to what is taught but also how it is taught and the emphases within P.E. In all the research schools, the core activities remained the female defined activities which have developed from the historical origins of girls P.E.. However, it was the enforcement of 'standards' which was emphasized across

all the schools irrespective of whether they were single sex/co-educational, middle class/working class. It was noted that in all the schools, time was lost in relation to the enforcement of gender related standards defined in terms of expected female behaviour and appearance. These expectations were reinforced through aims, objectives and practice and resulted in considerable time being lost from the P.E. lesson. Furthermore, there was little verbal or observable emphasis on physical effort in the observed schools, and the development of physical skill or fitness did not appear to be an emphasis in girls' P.E.. Again these issues will be taken up in Chapter Eight.

The research interviews in Chapter Six identified the need to examine critically the relationship of P.E. to girls' leisure outside the school, cultures of femininity and girls' future leisure opportunities. Again this area was identified in the case study observations. Leisure was viewed as a primary objective for girls' P.E. but this was not generally reflected in practice. Only Townley School provided any practical links with external leisure facilities and provided information on local clubs, organizations etc. Again there seems a gap between stated intentions and practical application in many schools. Part of the problem would seem to be the need to be able to critically define what leisure means for the majority of women. This will be addressed in a more detailed

discussion in Chapter Eight.

Overall, the case studies have provided an insight into the day-to-day organization and teaching of girls' P.E. Many of the issues highlighted in the case studies will be considered in Chapter Eight. However, it is clear that although staffing, organization and facilities may differ there was a consistency across the schools in relation to content, aims and objectives and the emphases brought out during P.E. teaching. Many of these are related directly to gender and thus as the research has progressed it has become more apparent that girls' P.E. is part of the process of the reinforcement and reproduction of gender ideologies through schooling. The final two chapters will draw more detailed conclusions.

Finally it is important to note that the case studies have raised a range of issues with regard to class and its analysis. The difficulties and theoretical implications for the analysis of the interrelationship of class, gender and race to a critical understanding of P.E. will be considered in Chapter Nine.

CHAPTER EIGHT

PRIORITIES, POLICIES & PRACTICE

Major issues raised by the research

Introduction

The historical analysis in Chapter One identified ideological assumptions around femininity in the development of P.E. within the categories of physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality. Chapter Six discussed the persistence and consolidation of assumptions and emphases around 'femininity' prevalent in the attitudes and beliefs of P.E. teachers in contemporary schooling. Chapter Seven, in its focus on four case study schools, looked in detail at the practice of P.E. and provided a more developed and complete understanding of the practices of P.E. teachers in relation to their beliefs and attitudes. This chapter considers some of the major issues concerning the relationship between gender and girls' P.E. which have emerged from the case study observations and have developed out of both the historical and contemporary research material.

IDEOLOGIES OF THE PHYSICAL AND
THE POLITICS OF SEXUALITY

This research was initiated as an attempt to extend recent research on the relationship between schooling and the maintenance of a sexually differentiated system of power relations [e.g. Deem 1980; Spender 1982; Stanworth 1981] to include a consideration of physical education. Throughout the research two interrelated constructs have been consistently central to the analysis of gender and girls' P.E.: 'physicality' and sexuality.

PHYSICALITY

The historical analysis in Chapter Three considered the origins of P.E. and discussed how ideologies of the physical and sexuality underpinned the development of P.E. and, consequently, have become central to its traditions and ethos. Although P.E. may have contributed historically to the liberation of girls and young women in relation to dress, opportunities for physical activity and access to a future women's profession, P.E. also reaffirmed clear physical sex differences in ability and capacity within generalised boundaries and limitations of women's sexuality.

In the policy and practices of contemporary P.E. the social and ideological construction of the 'physical' is of central significance. An H.M.I. report in 1979 confirmed that:

P.E. is the part of the curriculum that can contribute most to the physical experience of the pupils. Its aims are concerned with the development of psycho-motor competence in order to facilitate participation in worthwhile activities during the critical years of puberty and maturation to adulthood. Its unique contribution is that it focuses on the body and on experience in activities in which bodily movement plays a significant part.

In this statement no distinction is made between girls' and boys' P.E. However, this research project highlights the need to unpack what 'the physical experience' of the pupils actually means in practice. It establishes that the unique contribution of P.E. is that it 'focuses on the body' but it is important to understand what this means specifically for girls' P.E.

Chapter Six concluded from the interview material that there remain powerful images of femininity in the ideas and attitudes of P.E. teachers. These portray women as weaker and less physically powerful than men while reiterating the desirability for female grace, poise, finesse, flexibility and balance. Chapter Seven confirmed that in practice, physical activities which were developed historically to encourage such feminine virtues (e.g. dance, gymnastics, netball) continue to dominate the core P.E. curriculum. Furthermore, neither

the stated priorities and policies nor the observed practices in girls' P.E. teaching stress the development of psycho-motor competence as suggested in the H.M.I. Report [1979]. Indeed the period of observation in all four case study schools reinforced the notion that girls are not stretched physically in P.E. either with regard to skill acquisition or, more specifically, with regard to the development of physical strength and to general fitness. Indeed in Heyfield School physical effort was used as a punishment for misbehaviour rather than as a positive and necessary part of physical education. This finding confirms recent evidence which reports growing professional concern about the lack of physical fitness and skill development of children in schools throughout the 1980s and questions the standards and motives of contemporary P.E. teaching. This research project suggests that the issues of health, fitness and skill acquisition are pertinent especially for girls and young women. While ideologies of the physical remain embedded in the policies, priorities and practices of P.E. a construct of 'female physicality' is produced and reproduced through P.E. in secondary schools. This has implications not only for a critical examination of future P.E. teaching [See Chapter Nine] but also for an understanding of male-female physical power relations as an integral and crucial aspect of patriarchy.

Physical Power Relations

Until recently feminist theory has concentrated on male-female power relations without including or defining a politics of physical power [see Chapter One]. Cockburn [1981: 4] suggests:

Socialist feminist theory has abandoned a concept of the superior physical effectivity of men on account of a very reasonable fear of that biologism and essentialism which may nullify our struggle. I suspect, however, that we have thrown out something we need with the radical feminist bathwater. We cannot do without a politics of physical power.

As discussed in previous chapters explanations for physical sex differences based on biological determinants have been the subject of much academic, as well as popular, debate [Ferris 1978; Dyer 1982]. Whether differences in physical ability primarily are biologically determined or socially conditioned remains controversial albeit, to some extent, irrelevant [Cockburn 1981].² What has become increasingly clear, and this was emphasized by the P.E. teachers in the research [see Chapter Six], is that physiological differences between girls and boys, women and men, are seen as 'natural' and 'inevitable' rather than socially constructed and culturally reproduced. Furthermore, differences between women or between men are not considered to be important.

Ideas about the physical, however, are not restricted solely to commonsense assumptions, 'achieved' by some

individuals and challenged by others. Taken collectively they form ideologies of the physical which are formulated and articulated in cultures of masculinity and femininity. For the experiences and regulation of women it is the institutionalization of an ideology of the physical - incorporating ideas about their biology, physiology and psychology - which comes to define 'womanhood'. In the criminal justice system, media, health service and schooling, this process is powerful in constructing, reinforcing and maintaining gender divisions in society. Furthermore this ideology of physicality is central in the restriction and subordination of women in all aspects of their participation in social practices. Such restrictions are experienced by women at a range of levels. First through a virtual monopoly over physical strength and technical capacity men maintain control over technology and manual occupation. Cockburn [1981] suggests:

The appropriation of muscle, capability, tools and machinery by men is an important source of women's subordination, indeed it is part of the process by which females are constituted as women.

In a more thorough and developed account of her research into the male domain of the printing industry she argues:

Small biological differences are turned into bigger physical differences which themselves are turned into the gambits of social, political and ideological powerplay..... women are first tendered

weak; the weakness, is transformed to vulnerability; and vulnerability opens up the way to intimidation and exploitation. It is difficult to exaggerate the scale and longevity of the oppression that has resulted.

Cockburn [1983:204]

This emphasizes the social construction of female physicality and the consequent cycle of oppression. Furthermore, ideologies of the physical reinforce women's dependancy in domestic situations. The image of the male 'handyman' (i.e. changing the tyre, mending the fuse, and performing physically 'skilful' tasks) remains prevalent. In reality women perform many arduous domestic tasks but these are defined as 'everyday', mundane chores. The sexual division of labour in the home, and the ideology which supports it, leaves women dependent on men to perform the more 'skilful' or 'craft' based jobs.

However, ideologies of the physical have consequences at a more threatening and direct level concerning men's direct physical control and domination of women. Evidence from recent feminist research into male violence against women highlights the extent of direct physical dominance by men over wives, partners, girlfriends, mothers, daughters. (Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Hall 1985; Radford and Laffy 1985). Radford and Laffy emphasize the discrepancy between official statistics on male physical violence and the results of

surveys and studies by women themselves. In their study they found that three quarters of the women who had suffered male violence did not report it. The extent to which women experience both the threat and the reality of male violence is considerable. Hanmer and Saunders (1984) found that of the 129 women interviewed 59% had experienced 'threatening, violent or sexually harassing behaviour'. This is supported by Hall (1985) who reports that out of the sample of 1,236 women, more than one sixth had been raped and 31% sexually assaulted. Furthermore, in addition to the actual experience of male violence, Hall found, that the majority of women felt restricted and fearful of rape and assault. Indeed Radford and Laffy report that 92% of the women in their study did not experience the streets as safe territory for women either during the day or at night.² These studies highlight the significance of both the reality and the threat of physical violence by men on women. The consequence of which is the pronounced restriction on the social freedom of most women. This physical advantage over and oppression of women is maintained at an ideological level. The strength of ideologies of the physical make many situations of male sexual harassment and violence seem inevitable. Men's physical power is an acceptable feature of male sexuality and as Stanko [1985:70] comments:

Women's experience of sexual and/or physical intimidation and violence - much of it the result of what is assumed to be typical male behaviour - is an

integral part of women's lives.

The physical and/or sexual abuse of women is a manifestation of male domination itself, it has been seen to be a natural right of man.

The importance of contemporary feminist research on male violence is that it identifies ' physical power relations at both ideological and political levels and places sexuality as central to the analysis and understanding of women's oppression. It includes a critical examination of the ideological construction of male physical dominance as an integral part of male sexuality used directly or indirectly in order to control and discipline women.

Sexuality

Coveney et al [1985:19] explain how they see male sexuality as a multi-dimensional form of social control over women:

by confining us in terms of the space we may move in, by dictating the way we look, by restricting the work we do and how and when we do it ..., and by constraining the social life we engage in. The effect is to undermine our confidence and reinforce our inferior status, to alienate us from our bodies and to induce a timid and careful response to men.

Female and male sexuality each incorporate an ideology of the physical which has become so internalised and a generally accepted part of everyday life that it appears

to be both natural and inevitable. The ideology of the physical which is specific to female sexuality is constructed around assumptions about strength and appearance (Lenskyj 1987). In terms of the generally accepted stereotype of 'ideal female sexuality', women are expected to be passive, dependent and vulnerable yet remain responsible for their own sexuality. As Coward [1984:2] comments:

It is acknowledged that women have a sexuality but it is a sexuality which pervades their bodies almost in spite of themselves. It is up to women to protect themselves by only allowing this sexual message to be transmitted in contexts where it will be received responsibly, that is, in heterosexual, potentially permanent situations.

Furthermore in their appearance women are defined in relation to sexual attractiveness. For women the primary objective in relation to the 'physical' is to look good for others and, most significantly, for men. As Coward (1984:81/82) says:

Every minute region of the body is now exposed to this scrutiny by the ideal. Mouth, hair, eyes, eyelashes, nails, fingers, hands, skin, teeth, lips, cheeks, shoulders, arms, legs, feet - all these and many more have become areas requiring work. Each area requires potions, moisturizers, conditioners, night creams, creams to cover up blemishes. Moisturize, display, clean off, rejuvenate - we could well be at it all day, preparing the face to meet the faces that we meet.

Female sexuality stresses the need to be attractive but not physically or sexually active [Jackson 1982]. Women

who project their sexuality through dress/style and promote active sexuality are unacceptable and 'dangerous'. They are 'looking for trouble' [Lees 1986]. Women ultimately are responsible for morality. The harassment of prostitutes and the stigma and debates around prostitution highlight this polarity between 'normal' and 'dangerous' women. As Bland [1984:187], in discussing the case of Peter Sutcliffe, notes:

With Jayne's death came press and police horror that the Ripper had made an 'error' in his killing of an 'innocent, perfectly respectable' victim. By implication, prostitutes were deemed non-innocent, non-respectable victims, who had brought death upon themselves ...

It has been established in the earlier chapters that female sexuality, incorporating expectations around appearance and behaviour, is an integral part of the traditions and contemporary policies and practices of girls' P.E.. The case study observations in all the schools noted an emphasis on 'standards' of appearance, presentation and specific 'ladylike' behaviour. For girls and young women P.E. reinforces one primary objective of the 'physical' i.e. to look good for others with a central concern for personal appearance. Although P.E. is not concerned directly with the time-consuming quest for the 'ideal' feminine appearance as described previously by Coward [1985] there remains a central emphasis on 'acceptable' feminine standards of appearance and presentation of self.

The introduction of an option course in P.E. entitled 'Health and Beauty' in one of the case study schools represents an attempt to maintain adolescent girls' interest in P.E. through an emphasis on the culture of femininity.³ Clearly in this situation, the definition of 'physical' education is taken to include an emphasis on appearance and 'beauty'.

The message in relation to female sexuality remains clearly articulated through P.E.. Women's bodies are physically developed in order to look good and presentable (particularly to men), yet they must be protected from over development and physical contact in order to avoid 'unnatural' or 'unhealthy' touch and danger to 'delicate parts'. Attempts to impose this ideological construction of the 'ideal woman' are clear in P.E. practice. As the case study observations show a considerable amount of the total teaching time for P.E. is devoted to discipline over appearance and correct dress or uniform.

Furthermore, young women's anxieties concerning participation in P.E., for a long time has centred on the embarrassment caused by showering after a lesson. It is common that, when asked to reminisce about their former P.E. experiences, women comment on their memories of showers. In her research, Measor [1984] identified a general reluctance shared by young women to take showers in group situations. It is summarised in the following:

Pat: I don't like showers. On the first day we were ever so shy. Everyone has got things different ... some people have got hairs and some haven't.

Carol: There is one big girl in our group ... She is big chested, and that and she walks through the showers all covered up. Its best to be in between, we all giggle and throw our towels down. She finally went into the shower with her towel. There is one really little girl, who sits there making faces, she looks at everyone, she makes you feel embarrassed.

The explanations of the problems faced by young women in coping with showering and 'exposure' are clearly grounded in physiology and the physical changes of puberty. However, it is the interaction of physical development and cultural expectations which is important. It is not the actual physical changes of the young women's bodies which cause the anxiety but the culturally determined responses to these changes. Those who are 'in-between' or average in their development can cope with the situation. They meet the expectations for desired shape and development. These who deviate from the expected norm face acute embarrassment and often unkind comment. Given that there is a societal emphasis on the desired physique for adult femininity, those who become aware of their differences during adolescence are caused anxiety and often retreat or 'hide' from public scrutiny. Traditionally P.E. has provided the context in which physical differences have been unmasked and made public. Most adult women are not expected to expose their bodies

and are encouraged to dislike their body shape unless it conforms to the 'ideal' feminine stereotype. This research, however, indicates that showering no longer remains a central aspect of the P.E. lesson. Few schools in the authority had compulsory showers [See Chapter Five] and none of the case study schools used showers during the period of observation. The removal of showers was justified as a concern to save valuable teaching time [See Chapter Six] rather than a positive move to avoid the embarrassment or humiliation caused to young women concerning their developing sexuality. The link between P.E. and sexuality is confirmed in this discussion of showering although the removal of showers is justified for structural, organizational reasons.

Townley School [See Chapter Seven] highlights that the relationship between P.E. and sexuality is complex and requires consideration. As reported in Chapter Seven, the headteacher of Townley School was forced to reverse his insistence on showers by parental pressure. Parents were concerned not only that girls would be forced into being naked in a group situation but, most importantly, that P.E. staff would be able to watch their daughters in the showers. This reaction implies a concern not only to protect their daughters' sexuality i.e. a protected, hidden, heterosexuality, but a homophobic assumption that female P.E. teachers' heterosexuality is 'questionable'. Clearly the stereotype of the lesbian

female P.E. teacher is linked to the 'masculine' definition of physical activity/sport [Lenskyj 1986]. Women who undertake physical activity, develop strength and muscle and have chosen a career in this area are stereotyped as having "'questionable sexuality'. This implies lesbianism and its assumed non-feminine attributes. Lees [1986] found similar situations in her research on adolescent girls and cites many instances of girls taunted with 'lezzie' chants.

Ideologies of the physical and the politics of sexuality clearly create problems for P.E. as a subject the result of which, as has been shown throughout the research is that P.E. reinforces its links with 'acceptable' femininity and sexuality in order to challenge the stereotype of P.E. as 'butch', 'masculine' and, inevitably, 'lesbian'. It is significant to compare this with the media portrayal of women athletes. Women athletes are presented positively as conforming to the desired image of femininity; Zola Budd - 'the waif'; Donna Hartley - 'the golden girl'; Joyce Smith - 'mother of two'. Alternatively, the negative construction is that of having overstepped the boundaries of femininity: Martina Navratilova - 'the lesbian', 'the machine'; Jarmila Kratchvilova - 'the man'.

Coward [1984:41] suggests that the ideal sexual image of woman today:

... is not of a demure, classically 'feminine' girl but a vigorous and immature adolescent. Nevertheless, it is not a shape which suggests power or force. The sexually immature body of the current ideal ... presents a body which is sexual - it 'exudes' sexuality in its vigorous and vibrant and firm good health - but it is not the body of a woman who has an adult and powerful control over that sexuality. The image is of a highly sexualized female whose sexuality is still one of response to the active sexuality of a man.

Very few women 'achieve' this ideal, image, although it remains reinforced powerfully by media presentation. This research argues that the 'ideal' image is upheld also through the institution of schooling and, more specifically, physical education. P.E., more than other subjects on the curriculum, encourages girls to be 'vigorous', 'vibrant' and to develop 'good health' but within the constraints of an ideology of the physical which sets limitations on female activity and physical contact and concentrates attention on personal appearance. Together this contributes to the development of acceptable female heterosexuality. However it must be stressed that this is by no means straightforward or simplistic and there is no inevitable, determined result from this process. Indeed considerable conflict is experienced by teachers and pupils working in a subject area centred on 'the physical' yet clearly limited by social and ideological expectations relating to cultures of femininity. There are resistances and negotiations within this process and it is this complex area relating to female youth

cultures, femininity and P.E. which will be discussed more fully in the next section.

Over a decade ago, as the 'second wave' of feminism became established, Simone de Beauvoir [1974:178] defined the objectification of the female body and its subsequent inactivity:

The ideal of feminine beauty is variable, but certain demands remain constant, for one thing, since woman is destined to be possessed, her body must present the inert and passive qualities of an object. Virile beauty lies in the fitness of the body for action in strength, agility, flexibility, it is the manifestation of transcendence animating a flesh that must never sink back on itself ... Her body is not perceived as the radiation of a subjective personality, but as a thing, sunk deeply in its own immanence; it is not for such a body to have reference to the rest of the world, it must not be the promise of things other than itself: it must end the desire it arouses.

Today 'fitness of the body for action in strength, agility, flexibility' remains the ideology of male physicality. Men's control over women is generated by an acceptable heterosexuality reinforced and justified by this ideology. For women the ideology of the physical is, as De Beauvoir suggests, constrained in action and experienced as subordinate to and, especially in appearance, defined by men. For women to develop the basis for achieving they need to gain control over their

sexuality. Implicitly, this requires a redefinition of the 'physical' for both women and men. This research has highlighted the areas in which P.E. contributes to a predominant definition of woman-as-object. Not only must P.E. critically relate its teaching to a feminist analysis of physical power relations but it must use this analysis to instigate positive change for girls and young women [See Chapter Nine]. The physical is central to patriarchal power relations and thus physical education within schooling is in a unique position to challenge the structural relations and social arrangements of oppression and inequality.

YOUNG WOMEN'S SUBCULTURES, LEISURE AND P.E.

'Loss of Interest' in P.E. - biological v cultural explanations

Chapter Two reviewed the literature on young women's subcultures addressing the complexities of counter school resistances and how, for many young women, these resistances at the same time serve to reinforce, negotiate and challenge the 'culture of femininity'. Resistance to P.E. by young women has been an issue of concern within the P.E. profession. 'Loss of interest' in P.E. was confirmed by the majority of heads of department interviewed in the research. The following statements reflect this concern:

"... girls at this stage are going through ... they're changing fairly rapidly. They get embarrassed very easily. They change shape more and feel more self-conscious than lads do. They just lose all interest in physical activity at this time, its just natural."

"Once in the 3rd or 4th year many girls just don't like physical activity much. They'll do it but only because they have to. They're much more interested in other things - boys, discos I suppose".

"... I've talked to my girls and they always say "we're just beginning to be interested in outside." They lose interest in P.E. at school. If they go to a disco they expend more energy than they ever would in a P.E. lesson."

The most common explanation for 'loss of interest' was

that it is 'natural' - an inevitable, developmental problem inherent in adolescent young women. As discussed previously, the stereotypical view of young women during adolescence is that of significantly less commitment to physical activity than young men, a period of development characterised by lethargy and inactivity. The research indicates that this stereotype is a gender expectation which cuts across class and ethnic divisions (although articulated to different degrees) and P.E. teachers tend to generalise the stereotype and apply it to all young women. While this may reflect the reality of the experience for many girls, the explanation must involve more than a simplistic biological determinism. It is clear that young women experience certain biological changes during puberty, a process which occurs on average between the ages of nine and thirteen. These developments are dramatic, often including major changes in body shape and they are related to the onset of menstruation and occur over a relatively short period of time. The findings in the Case Study Schools emphasise this point with regular comments by teachers on the differing physiques of girls in the 1st and 2nd year classes [See Chapter Seven]. How far these biological changes influence young women's responses to P.E. remains in the past as an inhibition to young women's physical movement, in recent times research has challenged such assumptions and claims them to be mythical [See Ferris 1978]. It is now accepted widely

that in most situations menstruation does not directly affect women's ability to participate in physical activity.* What is more important is the social construction of young women's biology - the ideology of biology i.e. the expectations placed on young women as to how they should be reacting to these changes. It is reasonable to assume that for some young women the changes of puberty produce such distinct changes in body shape that they find it difficult to retain the levels of mobility and movement which they have developed as children. Again this is confirmed in the research from the observations carried out in gymnastic lessons. However, it is important to emphasise that social and ideological pressures, linked to sexuality and body physique (as discussed in the previous section), together produce inhibitions on mobility and movement rather than biologically determined restrictions. Young women's developing awareness and exposure to the culture of femininity reinforces an expectation of the 'physical' defined by inactivity, passivity and neatness. As established earlier, this culture of femininity is accepted by the majority of P.E. staff and it is intensified further by peer group pressure. The small friendship group, identified as crucial to the reinforcement and maintenance of the culture of femininity [McRobbie 1978; Griffin 1985], influences the take up of activities in physical education. While a young woman may retain an interest in playing netball or

swimming in the team often it is pressure from friends which encourages her to 'drop out' or, at best, diminishes her enthusiasm. On several occasions in Heyfield and Townley Schools it was evident that girls did not attend extra-curricular activities because:

"No-one else will do canoeing so I'm not."

"They've not got their kit."

[Recorded statements from female pupils]

Certainly many potential senior team members are lost, not through lack of personal interest or commitment but because of the subcultural influences and pressures experienced by young women.

Teachers' Responses

The research has raised the important question of what happens when the P.E. on offer in secondary education encounters the young women for which it is intended. The research on young women's subcultures suggests that the culture of femininity could be in conflict with a subject centred on education through the physical. The meeting place is the lesson and it is here that the relationship between secondary school P.E. and young women's subcultures becomes potentially either the 'problem' for the teacher or the negotiation and resistance of the student.

The research has highlighted what is on offer to young women in the P.E. lesson. Chapters Five, Six and Seven examined the activities and curriculum content, the ethos of 'good practice' stressing discipline and standards, and the primary aims and objectives of the teaching. The P.E. on offer to adolescent girls was shown to be influenced, both structurally and ideologically, by a number of interrelated factors. Young women's responses need to be understood in relation to physiological changes, the culture of femininity and pressure from the peer group. In theory many teachers explain the conflict and loss of interest of girls in biological terms. In practice they tackle the issue by reiterating their belief and commitment to the values and ideals of the P.E. on offer. Participation is enforced through compulsion and discipline. This was apparent in all the schools observed although, the need to discipline and enforce standards varied according to the class location of the school [See Chapter Seven]. Archway School appeared to be particularly 'successful' in maintaining participation in P.E. through firm discipline. However it is impossible to determine through observation whether participation can be equated with continued interest and motivation. Although the majority of the girls at Archway appeared to take part in the P.E. lesson without too much resistance it remains significant that as soon as compulsion was removed in the sixth form the numbers of young women continuing with physical education dropped

dramatically. Thus it is questionable whether interest and enjoyment placed so high by all P.E. teachers on their list of aims and objectives [See Chapter Six] can be achieved by use of hierarchical and disciplinarian methods.

A second strategy adopted by teachers to alleviate any conflict between P.E. and young women's experiences is the adaptation of the curriculum to make it more 'relevant' to the needs and requirements of young women. Over the previous decade the schools in all the Local Education Authority had introduced a scheme of options for the upper school age group.⁵ Although in some cases, these options had been introduced for economic reasons (i.e. shortage of staff and facilities) the primary justification given by the teachers interviewed was that they were more suitable for adolescent young women and more appropriate for future leisure participation. These 'option' activities, while retaining the compulsory element of P.E., allowed more choice of content. In all the schools within the authority the bulk of the 'options' comprised of individually-based activities which were recognized by the teachers as being 'more appropriate for older girls'. The observation period emphasized that option sessions were primarily indoor activities, justified as 'an activity which won't mess up their hair or make them too sweaty' [Interview, P.E. teacher]. Indeed, observation in all the schools

suggested that all P.E. for girls was becoming indoor-based, primarily to avoid disaffecting girls and to reduce any potential conflict. The above quote typifies the response from P.E. teachers in that care has to be taken not to challenge too seriously the culture of femininity which emphasizes appearance. As the previous section has discussed the ideology of female physicality and the politics of female sexuality set clear guidelines which relate to appearance and behaviour which must not be transcended. In some schools the activities introduced into the curriculum related directly and purposefully to appearance and to the development of an 'attractive' figure and body shape. Keep-fit was offered as an upper school option in most of the authority's schools and an extreme example of an 'appropriate option' was the introduction of the 'Health and Beauty' course in Heyfield. The main issue raised by these developments in P.E. is that they are derived in and directly reinforce the cultural expectations of femininity. Once more, as McRobbie (1978a) suggests, young women become 'both saved by and locked in the culture of femininity'. The message that is being transmitted in these situations is that young women should not be interested and involved in physical activity in order to develop strength, muscle and fitness, rather they should be concerned with enhancing their appearance (i.e. in making themselves more 'attractive' particularly to men). Consequently teachers, in order to negotiate the potential conflicts

between physical activity/P.E. and the culture of femininity, create situations which avoid confrontation while reinforcing the cultural definitions of femininity which prevail elsewhere in the school and outside in the wider community. Teachers are trapped within this difficult dichotomy.

Girls'/Young Women's Resistances to P.E.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two suggested that girls and young women adopt gender-based resistances in schooling. Similarly it was clear from the research project that the responses from young women to P.E. also involved forms of resistance. Statements from the teachers and observation of practice suggested that resistances based on appearance [McRobbie 1978; Griffin 1985] develop intensified forms when related to physical education. As has been discussed, appearance in relation to 'standards' and 'good practice' is an integral part of the ethos of P.E. teaching. Young women who use their appearance to challenge their school experiences confront P.E. by contesting its central ideological tenet. In all the schools researched there were observed occasions when young women refused to wear the required P.E. uniform. They wore make-up and jewellery and refused to consent to the 'golden rule of P.E.' (i.e. 'tying your hair back'). These challenges to authority were more obvious in the changing room than elsewhere in the school. Potentially

they produce confrontations which can be avoided by other school staff. While other teachers can choose to ignore the wearing of a ring or earrings which contravene school regulations, P.E. teachers not only uphold their own standards and values concerning appearance but they have the added concern, which can involve litigation, for safety during physical activity. Rings, earrings, necklaces, badges and long hair are dangerous in a range of physical activity and injury would carry the professional, and possibly civil law, charge of negligence.⁶

A further 'resistance' identified in the research was the 'sullen stare' described by Chris Griffin [1981]. It takes on particular significance in P.E. A sullen, silent 'participant' on the netball court or in the gymnasium effectively 'opting out' of the activity, is inordinately difficult to manage. In the classroom a young woman using the 'sullen stare' will often simply encourage less attention from the teacher. In mixed groups, where boys have been shown to dominate the lesson and receive more attention from the teacher (Spender 1982; Stanworth 1981), a silent, sullen female member of the group provides little overt challenge to the success of the lesson. Indeed, it reinforces the view of the stereotypical female pupil as being passive, quiet, less articulate and disinterested. In P.E., however, where some degree of lively, active behaviour is demanded, a

silent, sullen participant produces far more conflict and can affect the participation of the whole group. It was observed to be a particularly successful resistance to P.E., for adolescent young women, in that it caused considerable disruption.

Towards a Feminist Explanation for the Relationship of P.E. to Young Women's Subcultures

What becomes increasingly clear in relating theoretical analysis of young women's subcultures to the priorities, policies and practical observations of P.E. in secondary schools is that biological explanations for young women's loss of interest in and resistances to P.E. as given by many P.E. teachers are inadequate. While acknowledging the physiological changes of puberty, an understanding of cultural expectations is vital to an understanding of young women's experiences, attitudes and behaviours. It could be argued that the P.E. on offer to young women is, to some extent, in conflict with their interests and attitudes not simply because they are undergoing biological changes of puberty but also because the cultural expectations of gender specific attitudes, behaviour and role are at odds with both what is on offer and the values, ideals and ethos which underpin P.E.

The research has identified some of the main points of conflict between P.E. and the experience of adolescent

young women. An understanding of why such conflict occurs must draw on feminist critiques of sport, leisure and young women's subcultures. First, Chapter Six identified a P.E. programme across the authority dominated by team games i.e. netball, hockey, rounders. Although in practice there were questions raised by the research observation as to the real extent of the dominance of outdoor games, team games were observed in all the schools either in their outside traditional form or indoors as wet weather replacements.⁷ Team games are seen as synonymous with sport which in our society is problematic for female participants [See Chapter Two]. The relationship of sport to masculinity is well documented [Young 1980; Hargreaves 1982]. Sport celebrates a specific expression of masculinity, with its sporting heroes dominating the headlines on the sports pages of all newspapers. It is clear from the earlier discussion that for young women what is reproduced is a culture of femininity and romance, reinforced through the magazines they read, the television they watch and their everyday experiences [Chapter Two]. P.E. appears incompatible with their expected lifestyle and the expectations of 'young womanhood' in popular culture. Sport is seen primarily as a male pursuit and participation in sport remains bound up with masculine values. Young women spectate, support and admire, they do not expect, normally, to participate. Furthermore team games are problematic for young women not only by

definition but also in form. Young women's cultures which emphasize the 'best friend' or small groupings [Griffin 1981] do not relate easily to large collective team situations, particularly as teams tend to be selected for them whereas they are free to choose their own friends. P.E. stresses collective identity through team sports, gymnastic clubs, dance groups and athletic teams. Young women often reject these situations as being incompatible with their expectations of adult femininity [Leaman 1984]. Young, fit, 'virile' men are expected to revel in group camaraderie and team spirit. It is less acceptable for their adolescent sisters.⁹

One of the primary aims of P.E. teaching stated by the teachers in the research was 'preparation for leisure'. Various issues, relating to the problems of this aim in practice, were raised in Chapter Seven. Theoretically this aim needs to be evaluated in relation to the recent literature on women's leisure [See Chapter Two] which emphasizes the complexities of defining leisure for women. As has been shown, women's leisure is constrained by many factors including class, race, age and not least, 'men, collectively and as individuals' [Deem 1986]. Deem [1982], Griffin et al [1982] and Green [1986] question the very existence of 'leisure' for women as it has been defined traditionally. They insist that in order to explain women's leisure, or lack of it, both the public and the private spheres of women's experiences must be

understood. As Griffin et al [1982] state:

... women's position in waged and unwaged work in relation to the family means that the existence of 'leisure' as a pure category for women is questionable.

The notion of 'preparation for leisure' is problematic for many women, especially in the realm of physical leisure activities. Deem's [1984:6] research confirms this, for in her study of 168 women drawn at random from the areas of a new town, she found, "scarcely any adult women who continued with any sport or physical activity done at school once they had left, with swimming the only widespread exception to this". Similar statistical evidence can be found in Social Trends [1985] and the Sheffield study of women's leisure conducted by Green, Hebron and Woodward [1987]. Therefore 'preparation for leisure' is a dubious objective for young women's P.E. unless it is approached through a critical analysis. Not only does leisure not exist for many women but when women have opportunities for physical leisure the most frequently pursued activity is swimming [Deem 1984:5]. The research project found that the offering of swimming to adolescent young women as an option in the curriculum was dependent on the school having a swimming pool on site. In the local authority researched this facility was very limited.

The emphasis on leisure as a realistic objective for

young women seemed ironic given that many P.E. teachers, as recorded in the interviews and confirmed in the case study schools, recognised their own personal limitations on time and opportunities in their private lives. Many of the P.E. teachers described the problems they faced concerning family and domestic responsibilities which restricted their opportunity to spend more time on extra-curricular activities or personal leisure pursuits. The failure to realistically assess the problems of using leisure as a relevant and useful concept for women produces a contradictory and, in many ways, an unachievable aim for P.E. teaching. P.E. teachers need to look more critically at both structural constraints and the realities of everyday experiences for women in physical leisure activities in order to provide a more relevant link between school and future participation in physical activities. The recognition of a gender division of leisure as well as a sexual division of labour by all teachers is an important aspect of the teaching of girls in schools. Literature [Nava 1984; Griffin 1982] suggests that young women themselves often recognise the constraints on their 'leisure' time. This research has highlighted the constraints of domesticity and childcare experienced by both female staff and female pupils which influences their experiences and opportunities for both in-school and out-of-school activities. Even when girls and women succeed in challenging their lack of access to time,

space etc. (more easily achieved by middle class young women as in Townley School) they often face unequal provision of facilities and opportunities for participation. Their present reality confirms and predisposes for young women their future leisure participation [Nava and McRobbie 1984].

Finally it must be stressed that the crucial relationships between P.E., physicality and sexuality, as discussed earlier in this chapter, are central to a feminist explanation of the relationship between P.E., leisure and young women's subcultures. The issues relating to showering, P.E. uniform, and homophobia must be considered if P.E. is to relate to and understand the complex transition from girlhood to womanhood and the integral conflicts and confusions this creates for many young women.

This section has argued that school P.E. fails to provide 'meaningful experiences' for many young adolescent women because it appears at odds with the prevailing culture of femininity and does not realistically link with women's future leisure participation. It is acceptable for the 'tomboy' in junior school or lower secondary school to participate in and enjoy these activities but it is not acceptable for it to persist in the transition to adult femininity. However, the commonsense perception of P.E. - as

involved in the physical, concerned with the development of muscle, sweat, communal showers childish asexual P.E. kit, low status activities - in practice is not so simplistically reproduced.

It is a subject which centres on physical activity which in our society is male defined and low-status for women but attempts to circumnavigate these crucial issues by reinforcing a culture of femininity which has been shown to be inherent in its traditions and continues to be reproduced in its contemporary practice. As shown, therefore, P.E. remains trapped within possibilities which will 'appeal' to young women but will consequently reinforce the culture of femininity. Possible directions for P.E. which could provide qualitative shifts in the definition of the 'physical' for young women while being aware of the issues raised in this chapter, will be considered in chapter nine.

Mixed v Single Sex P.E. - the implications for girls.

Throughout the research the issue of mixed or single sex P.E. was raised continually by the teachers themselves and in observations of their practices. Indeed recently co-education has become one of the most controversial issues in P.E. gaining considerable support from those concerned with offering 'equal opportunities' across the secondary curriculum [Browne et al 1984; I.L.E.A.

1984]. The P.E. teachers interviewed in the research L.E.A. were unanimous in their concern about mixed sex groupings but were not united in their desire to promote co-educational P.E. [see Chapter Six]. Indeed, the research evidence suggests that moves towards co-education remain primarily within the upper section of secondary schooling with a core single-sex curriculum taught in years 1-3 [see Chapter Five]. This is in contrast to I.L.E.A. which identified 'a general enthusiasm' for mixed teaching throughout the authority with its recent study showing eight secondary schools teaching all or most of their curriculum in the first three years to mixed groups and twenty eight schools organizing the fourth year upwards on a mixed basis [I.L.E.A. 1984].

Taking the research authority and I.L.E.A. as contrasting examples confirms that there are no consistent national developments in mixed P.E. teaching, rather, any initiatives remain on an ad hoc basis. Apart from I.L.E.A., developments have emerged either from the enthusiasm and innovation of individual staff members [see Heyfield School - Chapter Seven] or for administrative convenience particularly in the top years of secondary schooling [Evans et al 1985]. Evidence suggests that the majority of initiatives relating to mixed P.E. did not develop until the late 1970s/early 1980s. Kane [1974] in his Schools Council study, using

study, using a one in ten random sample of secondary schools in England and Wales, investigated P.E. teaching in 575 schools. It is significant that the issue of mixed versus single sex teaching was not addressed by the study. Furthermore both the D.E.S. [1975] and Hendry and Whitehead [1976] found P.E. to be taught predominantly in single sex groups in separate departments. Thus the question of mixed versus single sex teaching has become a major topic of interest only within the past decade.

This is hardly surprising given the historical development of girls (and boys) P.E. as discussed in Chapter Three. This analysis identified the development of girls' P.E. as a subject traditionally situated within an ethos of 'separate and different' P.E. provision for girls and boys. Ideologies of gender relating to femininity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality powerfully underpinned the development of different 'suitable' activities, teaching priorities and distinct, separate teacher training [see Fletcher 1985]. The implications for P.E. is that it has developed as a discipline on quite distinctive gender lines with different aims and expectations. It is important to note, however, that historical evidence indicates that there has not been a total absence of mixed P.E. teaching at secondary level. Brehony [1984] emphasises that there were various policies adopted for the

teaching of games and P.E. in the few mixed secondary schools which existed in the nineteenth century. He states, however, that:

This area was one which caused the inspectorate to express most unease about co-education.

[Brehony 1984]

Clearly any alternative which potentially challenged the dominant gender ideologies of femininity particularly within the sphere of the physical was viewed by the educational authorities with concern and suspicion and remained the exception rather than the norm. Through to the 1970s, then, P.E. in secondary schooling reflected a popular culture within which men's and women's sports and leisure activities have been clearly demarcated and distinct ideologies of masculinity and femininity continually reinforced [Hargreaves 1979].

The mixed sex initiatives in P.E. exemplified by I.L.E.A. which have developed in the late 1970s, early 1980s have their foundations both in co-education/equal opportunities philosophy and economic necessity. Within education in general there has been a trend, since the 1960s, away from the traditional single sex secondary school towards co-educational comprehensivization.

The concept of equality of educational opportunity was given formal recognition in the 1944 Education Act. Throughout the 1960s it was class inequalities which

created most concern. However, with the second wave of feminism and the growing awareness of both gender and race inequalities within education, new initiatives concerned with social inequality encompassing class, race and gender have begun to receive increasing attention. The official response was the implementation of the Sex Discrimination Act [1975] and the Race Relations Act [1976]. Within schooling the Equal Opportunities Commission recognized:

... if true equality of opportunity is to be achieved for girls/boys then it is essential that during the schooling process boys and girls receive the same educational access to further and higher education courses, training and employment opportunities.

[E.O.C. 1982:1]

However, sport and physical activity was exempted from the Sex Discrimination Act and although co-education was seen as essential across the school curriculum for ensuring equal opportunities for girls and boys, P.E. has remained predominantly single sex in secondary schools warranting little critical consideration. It has been only in the 1980s with the growing literature on various aspects of gender relations and schooling that the issue of mixed P.E. has received attention. The recognition that P.E. fast became the last bastion of single sex teaching in many co-educational comprehensive schools has forced researchers such as Rosen [1987:152] to comment:

The case for mixed P.E. hardly needs to be

stated The guiding principle in schools should be that pupils must never be segregated by sex (or race, colour or any other innate character) unless there are absolutely compelling reasons for doing so.

Thus mixed P.E. has been perceived by some critics as a progressive move towards the fulfilment of a complete equal opportunities policy in schooling which offers equal access across all areas of the curriculum [Browne et al 1985; O'Brien 1987; Rosen 1987]. As the research interviews with all the heads of department [Chapter Six] indicated, however, this positive response to mixed P.E. is by no means universal. There are indications that much of the mixed teaching in the research L.E.A., which takes place primarily in the upper school options programmes, is as much through economic necessity and the rationalisation of limited teaching resources and facilities, than because of a committed educational philosophy. This confirms the findings of Evans et al [1985] in their study of mixed sex P.E. initiatives in three schools. They found that:

The strategic response of mixed sex groupings at Martsons and Cherry Tree were the expression of the liberal, even radical, motivations of innovatory teachers. At Greenwood on the other hand, it was largely contingent upon conditions of severe financial or staffing constraint.

[Evans J. et al 1985:9]

The ad hoc basis of much of the educational innovation in this area is further confirmed by the lack of

commitment to mixed P.E. by the officers of the L.E.A.. It is significant that while the education authority in 1984 was about to institute co-educational community schools throughout the city, the question of mixed P.E. had been ignored by those implementing the change. In answer to a question as to whether there was concern about P.E. remaining the only single sex subject on the curriculum within an authority openly committed to co-educational teaching, one county councillor involved in the appointment of new P.E. department heads for the reorganized authority replied:

The Labour Party generally hasn't given any serious thought to that issue - not at all. If you've got these kids of 13 or 14 stripping off together - you can't have young bodies in that situation! It is really going to be at that level.

[Taped interview]

This statement suggests that when dealing with the 'physical', attitudes around sexuality, rather than the politics of sexuality, overshadow education priorities and justifications. Clearly, as already discussed not only biological justifications for physical differences between boys and girls but also issues concerned with sexuality place P.E. in a unique position with regard to debates about co-education and equal opportunities.

The experience of the research L.E.A. is typical of the general lack of thought and consideration given to P.E. in a broader co-educational structure. The concern and

unease expressed by the P.E. teachers in the research over the possibilities of re-organization into mixed P.E. teaching centred on several issues.

First they identified clear differences between the teaching of girls' P.E. and boys' P.E.. The P.E. adviser identified clear differences between women's and men's perceptions of physical education. She commented:

I feel passionately that women's perception of physical education is at least as relevant as men's. We have quite different emphases - not just the activities we teach but also our whole ethos.

This view was reiterated by a majority of the heads of department interviewed. Furthermore, the periods of observation confirmed that girls' P.E. remains totally separated from boys P.E. not only spatially but by perceived philosophy. Although the research study made no formal contact with the male P.E. departments the girls' P.E. departments visited were considered by the women teachers to be involved in separate and distinct areas of work. Evans et al [1987] utilizes the concept of subject sub-culture developed by Ball [1987] in order to understand the differences between female and male P.E.. This analysis recognizes two distinct sub-cultures within the one subject area with male and female P.E. teachers having 'quite different conceptions of how and what to teach' [Evans et al 1985:61]. The concern shown by the female P.E. teachers in the

research L.E.A. was that implementing organizational change would not result necessarily in unified teaching. The gender specific sub-cultures of P.E. teachers would, as recognized by Evans et al:

... tamper only with the surface of educational practice, leaving paradigmatic and pedagogic views and practice largely untouched ...

[Evans et al 1987:6]

The historical analysis of Chapter Three identified the separate development of girls' P.E. and together with Fletcher's [1985] findings relating to the development of separate training for girls' P.E. teachers it supports the teachers' concern about the enforced mixing of the separate sub-cultures within P.E. Although developments in teacher training throughout the 1980s have resulted in a gradual change from single sex specialist secondary P.E. teacher training to mixed sex P.E. courses there is little evidence yet that there has developed a new ethos within P.E. which unites the two areas. Furthermore, as Chapter Five shows, the women P.E. teachers had worked in the authority on average for eight years, the majority having trained in single sex establishments. This highlights that even if new initiatives and new developments were taking place at the teacher training level [and this is an extremely doubtful assumption], it takes a long time for new approaches to filter into the schools. As Chapter Nine

will conclude, in-service work becomes vital if major innovations are to take place in the current practice of schools. Yet local in-service work depends on the role of the adviser and, as the interview evidence demonstrates, the advisers are a product of a traditional system committed to the ethos of P.E. as it has developed from its historical roots. Thus P.E. exists in a gender differentiated form ideologically and structurally underpinned by gender assumptions. P.E. teachers are aware that the superficial merging of two separate identities will not result easily in the production of a new unified whole. Given the historical analysis and the interview material of this research, which identifies the continuing strength of gender ideology at the foundations of the teaching of girls P.E., their doubts and concerns are justified.

The second concern of the women P.E. teachers, with regard to mixed P.E. teaching, was that the girls would reject such an innovation and its implications. The following quotes were typical:

"I am sure the girls themselves would not want to do it".

"The girls wouldn't be happy about it. They are terribly lacking in confidence and when the boys are around they're worse".

"It could be mixed but our girls have enough of the boys in class - our girls are quite happy to be on their own. How many times do you hear the girls ask to play with the boys? Never! They'll play out together at lunch and after school quite happily but

girls don't want to be with the boys".

"It's the middle years really when they don't (mix) and want to be on their own with their own peer group. Girls don't want mixed games. They'd also be too embarrassed".

These comments made by women P.E. teachers, raise a number of significant questions. The main reasons for believing that the girls would not want mixed P.E. relate primarily to girls' embarrassment during adolescence and their confidence. Although these are teachers' perceptions, rather than the girl's responses, the evidence from qualitative research into mixed sex teaching situations in other secondary subjects supports this concern [Mahony 1985; Spencer 1982; Stanworth 1981]. Arnot [1984] succinctly sums up the findings of this research:

We get glimpses of the extent of boys' disruption of the classroom: their noisiness, their sexual harassment of girls, their demands for attention and their need of disciplining and their attitudes to girls as the silent or the 'faceless' bunch.

Soames [1984] suggests that secondary school P.E. teachers in mixed lessons 'have to learn when to ignore blatantly sexist remarks, and when to use them to positive educational ends'. The problem of sexual harassment (verbal, emotional and physical) potentially

are intensified when dealing with activities centred on the physical. There is growing evidence that girls have to cope with severe sexual harassment throughout their daily lives, especially in mixed settings in schools [Lees 1986; Jones 1984]. Although there were few mixed teaching situations to be observed in the case study school, many of the teachers confirmed that there were problems faced by girls and young women in mixed P.E.. The annual mixed swimming galas and athletics meetings were a main focus of harassment.

"Oh, the girls have to put up with remarks from the lads. That's why they all wear tee-shirts over their costumes while they wait for their race."

"You can see the boys eyeing up the girls and comparing them. The girls are obviously aware of this - some of them just refuse to swim in the galas. I think at a certain age they just prefer to opt out."

In these situations girls run the gauntlet of persistent comment on their physical appearance and sexuality. While some girls respond by attempting to disguise their bodies by dressing in loose clothing many others opt out to avoid being the target of innuendo and sexist comment. Clearly the assumptions about women's bodies as objects to be looked at, admired and criticised is intensified in mixed settings of physical activity

particularly during the sensitive years of adolescence.

This does not deny the problems faced by boys during adolescence with regard to sexuality, but while boys are judged by 'achievement' with regard to masculinity, girls are judged 'against' masculinity. Given societal and cultural expectations of 'attractive femininity' (Connell 1987 refers to 'emphasized femininity') girls are expected to respond to the stereotype in order to achieve male gratification. Their femininity is, literally, 'up for grabs' [Jones 1984]. There is a possibility that given sensitive, aware teaching, mixed P.E. might provide a positive challenge to sexism in schools. However, its potential must be placed in context. This research has shown that the past and present structure and organization of teacher training, the practices of teaching in schools and the cultural demands on schools to reinforce the the traditions of female - male behaviour, prevents mixed P.E. from instituting a less sexist experience for girls. On the contrary, it could condemn adolescent girls to an intensification of sexual abuse. Consequently the answer for many girls would be to opt out of P.E. altogether.

Further, the significance of self-confidence and the restrictions on girls' participation improved by a lack of confidence is substantial given the evidence of

research into classroom interaction in mixed settings. The indication is that boys have far more contact with the teacher, receive more attention, talk more in class and are far more 'visible' [Stanworth 1981; Spender 1982]. The evidence suggests that mixed P.E. would probably not be that different. Mixed P.E. generates problems concerning levels of participation and degrees of confidence. In principle there might be equal participation but in practice girls usually are less involved. The observation of mixed lessons showed this to be the case. In both mixed volleyball and basketball classes the boys dominated the action with girls only involved occasionally as active participants. Research by Graydon, Gilroy and Webb [1985] found similar results in their observations of mixed P.E. teaching. They found the boys control over the mixed setting to be crucial:

Generally we found that girls were tolerated by boys in the lesson as long as their contribution was kept within certain bounds and the boys didn't lose control.

Also:

Another issue in ball game situations is the girls' involvement in the game. Many complained that the boys wouldn't pass the ball to them in basketball and soccer. The boys freely admitted this to be the case.

As has been noted in classroom based work, the boys tend to make the decisions, are loud and demand more of the teacher's attention. Furthermore, as the teachers interviewed recognized (see Chapter Six) by the time

children arrive at secondary school physical skills have been considerably influenced by their socialisation and by junior teaching. Many of the teachers noted that girls at eleven on average do not start from an equal position to boys both in terms of physical skill and hand-eye coordination. In many cases girls have not been encouraged to develop ball skills and have been literally taught to 'throw like a girl' [Young 1980]. This does not mean that girls are incapable of reaching similar skill levels but mixed teaching, given the available evidence, would seem unlikely to assist with this development. As Deem (1984) recognizes:

...The sexes do not stand equal on admission to secondary school, and offering both girls and boys the same opportunities and facilities cannot lead to equality of opportunity, still less equality of outcome.

The teachers themselves recognize many of the potential problems of moving towards co-educational P.E. in schools. The adviser raised a further important issue:

"One of my big worries is that there are already more men teaching P.E. than women for the 11-15 year olds. The problem I can see is that if it goes mixed then there will be fewer women teaching especially with the fact that a woman's career structure is often interrupted. I can see men moving in if we aren't careful."

These serious reservations concerning women's jobs and status are justifiable. Statistics on the position of women teachers on pay, status and promotion point to considerable inequalities. This is particularly marked

with regard to the percentage of women in senior management positions as heads, deputy heads and heads of departments in comprehensive schools (N.U.T. 1980). In schools where there are separate P.E. departments the evidence shows that in the majority of cases the male is the overall head of department. Evans and Williams [1988] found that:

Although most of the schools in the sample operated with a male and a female in charge of boys and girls P.E., in 84% of these schools it is the male teacher who holds responsibility as overall Head of P.E. department.

In the research authority the tradition of separate girls and boys P.E. (reinforced by the fact that it is one of the few authorities with a male and a female P.E. advisor) resulted in women heads of department for girls' P.E. in all the schools. However in 66% of the co-educational schools studied the male head of boys' P.E. was on a higher salary scale than the girls' head of department. Thus while women P.E. teachers hold status within the girls' department in the majority of schools the male head of department has higher status and, ultimately, power concerning P.E. within the context of the whole school. Given the evidence from co-education in other subjects, the concern about the career prospects of women P.E. staff and their potential loss of control over girls' P.E. in a move towards mixed P.E. teaching within one joint department, is justified. Further, loss of control by women P.E. teachers in mixed

settings has been exacerbated by economic constraints and cuts in education. Evans and Williams [1988] suggest that women are more likely to leave their jobs or take a career break. They state:

It has tended to be women who have left their jobs, not from any lack of commitment but because of lack of opportunity and the power of some men to enact their gendered stereotypical imagery upon the careers of men and women.

Over one third of the women heads of department in the research study had taken a break from teaching for childbirth or family responsibilities. If this trend continues then in a single department teaching the same activities to girls and boys there is a danger that women will be replaced by men. Evans and Williams [1987] found also that the ideology of 'familism', the view that the family is where women should experience their self-fulfilment remains pre-eminent in views about and responses to women P.E. teachers who are mothers. This ideology generates substantial constraints on women's career opportunities. The research undertaken for this study demonstrates that such ideology is not solely a male construct! The female P.E. adviser when interviewed stated:

After all women have far greater family commitments than men. Women used to take time out to have a family but now they stay with maternity leave. Maternity leave is the biggest load of rubbish. I know it might be old fashioned but I think

no household should have both parents in full time jobs. It is good for a child to have their mother around the house. I can see that it is good for women with small children to have part-time jobs. In fact that is very important for the women and the children but it is wrong to have full time work. It is only storing problems for society.

Given the contemporary consolidation of ideologies of motherhood and domesticity and the substantial structural constraints on women in British society any move towards mixed P.E. must be treated with caution particularly with respect to the status and career opportunities for women P.E. teachers.

The historical material in Chapter Three identifies the strength of ideologies of femininity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality in the traditions and development of female P.E.. The interview material in Chapter Six confirms that women P.E. teachers still hold stereotypical views of femininity with ideologies of gender continuing to underpin girls' P.E. curricula. Observation of mixed P.E. together with awareness of further research in this area suggests that organizational innovation towards co-education teaching must be treated with caution. Equality of access through organizational policy does not automatically result in equality in outcome and practice. Mixed P.E. does not necessarily create a less gendered structure of girls' P.E. nor experience for the young women on the receiving end. Girls' P.E. must be considered within

broader feminist theoretical analyses of schooling and women's position in society.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed in some detail the main issues raised by the historical and contemporary research material. Overall the impression created is one of pessimism. Girls' P.E. can be seen to be underpinned by gender ideology. Many teachers continue to hold stereotypical gendered opinions and attitudes. Structurally and ideologically girls' P.E. has been shown to be very much a part of the institutionalization of gender through its policies, practices and priorities. Yet the analysis must not remain at this level. Theoretically, feminist frameworks [Chapter One] contribute to an understanding and explanation of what is happening in girls' P.E.. But, as discussed in the opening chapter, feminist theory is closely related to feminist political action. Girls' P.E. is not totally determined by the structural and/or ideological strength of a capitalist patriarchy. Some teachers do challenge the system - some female pupils refuse to have their 'femininity' defined and determined by a dominant culture. It is these chinks of optimism which must inform the recommendations for the future of girls' P.E..

The final chapter will consider how the teaching of girls' P.E. contributes to the reproduction of the social relations of gender. Further, it will propose that a feminist politics of P.E. can contribute to a less gendered teaching of P.E. for girls and young women and thus contribute to the overall struggle of women in opposing and resisting broader gender divisions in society.

CHAPTER 9 - CONCLUSION

PART I: Theory, Practice and Politics

PART II: Future Policy, Future Directions

Introduction

This research project was conceived and initiated with the aim of examining and analyzing the relationship between gender and girls' physical education. Clearly this relationship is significant for the experiences of girls and their eventual participation in sport and leisure activities as women. It is of particular importance given that physical education is the only compulsory, separate and distinct curriculum area in secondary schooling which remains predominantly single-sex taught by women to groups of girls and young women¹. Also, it has inherited particular historical traditions which inform this unique separation. Unlike many other curriculum areas in which gender differentiation has been researched and analyzed, girls' physical education is a subject area exclusively concerned with girls' experiences which provides a curriculum for girls taught by women. One project cannot cover all aspects of this unique aspect of schooling and there is work to be done which considers in depth the experiences and responses of girls and young women to physical education. Also, there is parallel work to be developed on boys and young men and the relationship between gender, sexuality and masculinity in the context of physical education.

This final chapter draws together the main findings of the research project. It identifies four significant

dimensions of enquiry and analysis:

- i) teachers' perceptions - attitudes and ideas
- ii) structural analysis²
- iii) historical context
- iv) cultural responses and resistances.

It will be argued that "all four dimensions have been found to be crucial in developing both a theoretical understanding of gender and an informed, critical analysis of the teaching of girls' physical education. Gender and girls' physical education are essentially a dialectical relationship in which gender is identified as a central construct of girls' P.E. and an analysis of girls' physical education is seen as an essential contribution to the theoretical debates concerning gender (see Chapter One). The project emphasises the importance of the connection between theory, practice and politics². For example, the research identifies the need to recognise and develop the importance of physical power relations as part of the social relations of gender (see Chapter Eight). This has been considered not only at a theoretical level but at the level of everyday practice in girls' physical education teaching. Arising from this consideration is the question of whether and/or how the social relations of gender might be transformed through the transformation of girls' physical education. In other words, whether the politics of girls' P.E. can include strategies and policies which

will not only change girls' P.E. but also contribute to changes in the social relations of gender.

PART I: THEORY, PRACTICE AND POLITICS

I) Teachers' Perceptions, Attitudes and Ideas

Chapter Six, through analysis of the interview material, identified the presence of powerful assumptions about femininity in relation to girls/young women's physical ability/capacity, sexuality, motherhood and domesticity. These gender stereotypes were accepted and explained by most heads of department interviewed as being 'natural'. This 'naturalism' was defined either as a biological or a cultural inevitability. The interpretation of gender differences as 'natural' is surprising particularly with regard to physical ability/capacity because the reality is so obviously different. The stereotype of girls as weaker, less powerful, neater and precise in their movements is factually inaccurate. The research observations (Chapter Seven) confirmed that the physical differences within one sex are far greater and more obvious than those between the sexes. Furthermore, the appearance of many of the teachers themselves was in direct contradiction to their own stereotyped views, as many were strong, powerful, muscularly developed women. Connell [1987] argues that in attempting to understand gender, 'nature' is often used as a justification rather than as an explanation. This suggests that the teachers felt the need to justify their practice of stereotyping and used biology as an explanation even though their own reality

and experience were in variance with their views. What this suggests is the existence of a powerful ideology of biology which will be considered in more detail later in the chapter.

A major explanation put forward for gender stereotyping is sex role theory which concentrates on the importance of socialisation and sex role learning. This is a central consideration within liberal feminist analysis (see Chapter One). However, there are many critiques of this perspective which emphasize: the lack of an adequate theorizing of power relations within liberal feminism; the neglect of an historical analysis; the over-reliance on individualism and voluntarism; the tendency to reduce gender to the biological dichotomy of male and female [Connell 1983,1987]. This research project contributes to an understanding of both the strengths and weaknesses of this theoretical analysis which focuses on socialization and sex role stereotyping.

At a positive level the research material on teachers' perceptions of gender and girls' P.E. is important in that it describes how teachers hold and promote expectations based on gender stereotypes. In considering attitudes and ideas the research confirms that women P.E. teachers have clear expectations about girls and young women which are constructed around a notion of 'femininity'. This 'femininity' encompasses ideas about

physical ability/capacity, sexuality, domesticity and motherhood. Crucially the research demonstrates that this construction does not remain simply in the minds of individual teachers but it is generalised and both informs and influences P.E. practice. This is reflected in the choice of 'suitable' activities for girls, class organization and teacher-pupil interaction. The dominant ethos of 'separate and different' P.E. for girls, prevalent throughout the research L.E.A., is supported and maintained by the construction of 'femininity'. In their professional practice, then, women physical education teachers are agents of socialization, transmitting gendered messages to pupils through their interaction, language and teaching. It is a process derived from expectations around femininity.

However, it is necessary to return to the criticisms of this analysis. While research into attitudes and ideas contributes significantly to an understanding of the importance of gender in girls' P.E., particularly at the level of description, it fails to give an adequate account of the relationship between gender and girls' P.E. Focusing on attitudes and ideas there is a tendency to concentrate on differences between the sexes. This is evident in the responses of the P.E. teachers to the interview questions. Considerable emphasis was given by them to differences between girls and boys and the importance of 'these differences in practice. Although this is understandable given their training, if the

analysis remains at this level, there is a danger of considering femininity and masculinity as polar opposites, with the assignment of girls to ascribed roles and behaviour using the dichotomy of sex as its organizing principle. The 'problem' of gender is then reduced to biological sex differences. What is missing in this analysis is the vital element of structure and, implicit within this, 'an understanding of power relations. Girls' P.E. cannot be studied outside its historical and structural context. It does not exist in a vacuum influenced only by individuals with 'free-floating' ideas that can be changed simply by raising awareness and challenging attitudes. Such initiatives are significant but they must be located and analysed within the broader relations of ideology (see Chapters One and Six) and situated within contemporary structural and institutional contexts. The 'tip of the iceberg' has been illuminated by researching attitudes of teachers but the broader underlying structural complexities require further investigation and analysis.

II) Structural Analysis

The case study material, obtained from periods of observation in selected schools, concentrated on the daily reality of teaching physical education in its institutional setting. From the evidence presented in Chapter Seven it is clear that gender is a significant factor in the structuring of girls' P.E., which can be

identified in its organization, staffing, facilities, aims and objectives and curricular content.

However, this research also contributes to an understanding of the structures of gender as power relations. Three significant areas have emerged from the research, each of which is concerned with the wider social relations of gender, rather than solely with the specific context of gender and girls' P.E. Although, for ease and clarity of discussion, these areas will be discussed separately it is acknowledged that they are interrelated, overlap in many instances and cannot be viewed independently.

(i) Patriarchal Power - the importance of the 'physical'

The research set out to investigate the contribution of girls' P.E. to the reinforcement and maintenance of patriarchal power relations. Chapter Two discussed the complexities of the concept 'patriarchy' and the importance of analysis which identifies male-female power relations at the economic, social, political and ideological levels. Two major issues have emerged from the project which warrant consideration.

First, it is necessary to question the use of 'male' power as a definition of structural power relations. There is a tendency, not surprisingly, to associate male

power with all men. While acknowledging that this is an accurate application in many, or indeed most, situations, the power of men over women cannot be viewed as a universal and inevitable theory of domination. Eisenstein [1984] introduces the concept of 'false universalism' to describe literature and analysis which talks of the experiences and subordination of all women regardless of other structural relations such as race, ethnicity, class and age. Similarly, 'false universalism' can be applied to the notion of 'male power'. Yet there remains a need for a concept that can describe the relevance and importance of patriarchal power relations without resorting to simple biological reductionism. The significance of this research project is that it identifies the presence of gender power relations in an area which usually is exclusive to women. In fact everyone concerned with the research - advisers, teachers, pupils - were women. Therefore it is not direct, overt 'male power' which is identified in the teaching of girls' P.E. but, as Connell [1987] observes, the power of 'hegemonic masculinity' or 'the maintenance of practices that institutionalize men's dominance over women'. Interpreting hegemony is crucial to this analysis and is well defined by Williams [1977:27], drawing on the work of Gramsci:

... hegemony supposes the existence of something which is truly total, which is not merely secondary or superstructural, like the weak sense of ideology, but which is lived at such a depth, which saturates the society to such an extent,

and which, as Gramsci put it, even constitutes the limit of consciousness for most people under its sway, that it corresponds to the reality of social experience.

[emphases added]

Thus gender needs to be theorized as being structured by a dominant hegemonic masculinity which not only forms the basis of male relationships but also is conveyed and internalised, through institutions and social practice. Girls' P.E. does not exist in isolation, outside this hegemonic order. Despite being a female institution, it remains an institutional form which internalizes, supports, maintains and reinforces hegemonic masculinity.

The second area identified by the research is the significance of physical power relations as a central construct of this hegemonic masculinity (see Chapter Eight). The relationship between men's physical activity, prowess, strength and the contemporary Western definitions of masculinity is well referenced [Young 1980; Dunning et al 1987]. This relationship finds particular expression in the competitive sporting world [Hall 1984; Connell 1987]. Within feminist literature the importance of men's power has been defined primarily in terms of economic, social and political power. Chapter Eight discussed the importance of including and defining a politics of physical power and concluded that the physical is central specifically to the teaching of girls' P.E. and, more generally, to patriarchal power

relations. The recognition that ideologies of the physical contribute to the definition of woman-as-object and, reinforce women's physical subordination, both at the overt level of physical violence and confrontation and at the more subtle level of self confidence, bodily awareness and the stereotyping of women as weak and passive, should underpin all analyses of gender power relations. The relationship between girls' P.E. and the structures of gender as power relations must be recognized both for future P.E. policy and feminist politics. Physical power inequalities are experienced as direct physical force and violence but also they contribute to that aspect of hegemonic masculinity which defines women as weak, passive, inactive and, inevitably, submissive. Women in authority (e.g. teachers and advisers) are part of that hegemonic process and, as the research shows, can be significant agents in the conveyance of gender ideology.

By focussing on an aspect of social practice which is concerned with the body and physical activity, biological explanations for the totality of gender differences can be challenged effectively. As noted in the research, one of the reasons sport and physical education have been neglected until recently by feminist analyses is that research that focuses on the body and physical action is assumed to be rather too close to biology for comfort! As Connell [1987:83] points out:

Even to speak of contradiction between social process and the body is not to have moved far enough from doctrines of natural difference and biological determination. For this is still to treat the body as unmoved mover, as what is fixed in relation to what is fluid, as what gives meaning and does not receive it. The body in relation to the social system still seems like the monster looming outside the bright lights of the space station, alien and immovable, compelling by its sheer presence.

This research, clearly related to 'women's bodies' and women's physicality, stresses the need to move away from analysis which focuses on assumed 'differences' and to recognise how social practice easily can be reduced to biology by emphasizing and naturalising difference. The interview material demonstrated the strength of ideologies of biology which found expression in and were conveyed via the teaching of girls' P.E.

ii) Sexuality

Throughout the research the significance of sexuality to an understanding of both gender and girls' P.E. has appeared consistently important. What is apparent is that the construction of an 'ideal' heterosexuality is a crucial aspect of the structuring of gender relations. As discussed in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight, P.E. can be identified as a major force in the process of sexualising young women into heterosexual 'objects'. This finds expression not only in the persistent concentration on appearance, clothing, specific behaviour and desirable body shape which together

contribute to the reinforcement of 'feminine' heterosexual appeal. 'Sexuality' for girls and young women does not develop in isolation, it is a social construction with male heterosexuality of central significance to its formation. As Connell [1987] argues, 'emphasised femininity' is the response to the dominance of 'hegemonic masculinity'. Girls' P.E. is shown by the research to be part of the social process whereby girls and young women, during the important period of adolescence, are encouraged to develop an 'acceptable' feminine sexuality organized around heterosexual appeal, desire, objectivity and subordination. This is not a simplistic, over-determined process readily received and incorporated into the lives, experiences and behaviours of all young women. As will be discussed later, these structures and relations of gender power are by no means totally determining but are complex and can produce, also, strategies of resistance and negotiation in girls and young women. However, it remains important to identify the structural relations of gender within social institutions and practice. Girls' P.E. contributes significantly to the maintenance and re-inforcement of a subordinate 'feminine' sexuality and as a consequence feminist analyses of schooling should recognise girls' P.E. as potentially a most significant site for the building and maintenance of gender and sexuality.

The research also shows that an analysis of gender must

include sexuality as a central concern. Adult femininity is intricately tied to a constructed and compulsory heterosexuality. Again, research which focuses on the body and physicality contributes significantly to this understanding. The body and sexuality are not related simply through biology but through the social construction and use of the female body as sexual object, be it an object of 'desire' or an object of reproduction [O'Brien 1981]. Adolescence is a vital period in the lives of young women. Physical biological changes have profound social significance. At this stage of physical development and sexual maturation women's bodies become public property, developed for and controlled by others. In many spheres women's bodies are on show, open to comment and abuse. The body moves to public ownership and control which for many young women creates private anguish. The conflict for young women at this stage is immense. Unless they conform to 'ideal' femininity in relation to appearance and presentation of self, they are open to verbal abuse and their sexuality becomes questioned and scrutinized. P.E. provides a situation where 'the body' is on show and therefore at its most vulnerable. This is evidenced in the recognition by women teachers in the research, that many young women have to face comment and abuse in mixed settings such as swimming galas and athletics meetings [see Chapter Eight]. However, this 'public possession' of, or public control over, women's bodies is not a 'natural' development - a biological inevitability. It

is part of hegemonic masculinity whereby men can gain and maintain control over women, not only in relation to their sexuality, but also in relation to the use of social space². P.E. teaching in secondary schools must be made conscious of this conflict for young women and recognise how it contributes to the maintenance of hegemonic masculinity. It is not necessarily a conscious reinforcement but through the language used by teachers and the organisation of P.E. (content, P.E. kit, changing rooms etc. - see chapters Six and Seven) that it becomes part of the institution of P.E. and, as such, is central to the relationship between gender and girls' P.E.

iii) Division of Labour

The structural analysis so far has focused on patriarchal power relations, and physicality and sexuality. Throughout the research, however, it became apparent that an analysis of gender and girls' P.E. should consider the relationship between schooling and other social institutions. It is clear from the research that female teachers and female pupils are influenced considerably by the social relations of the family. The sexual division of labour in the family whereby women, as wives, mothers and daughters, bear the major responsibility for both domestic work and childcare, is

identified in the research as having major implications for teachers and pupils in P.E. (see Chapters Six and Seven) e.g. opportunities to participate, extra-curricular programme, teacher career structures etc.). Economic power relations, however, are not restricted to the family. They extend to encompass all aspects of the sexual division of labour. They exist in the work place, in the community and are clearly in evidence in education at all levels. In girls' P.E. despite being a subject exclusively female in its teaching and practice, the relative financing of male and female departments is significant. The research shows that where the female P.E. department exists alongside a male department in a mixed school, there is often gender differentiation in terms of salary scales and status (Chapter Five). Even though girls' P.E. has its own history and cultural context, often it is the male P.E. department which retains and wields the economic power. Where there are two distinct departments in a school the holding of economic status and power by the boys' P.E. department often has implications for the future and development of the girls' department. The research highlights the need to consider carefully the staffing implications of initiatives such as mixed P.E. where economic power and status are likely to move increasingly into the male P.E. world (see Chapter Eight)⁶.

Much of the work on the relationship between schooling and the sexual division of labour concentrates on the

place of schooling in the preparation of girls and boys for differential positions, within the labour market [McDonald 1980; Deem 1980; Spender and Sarah 1980]. However, it is not only the transition of school to work which warrants attention. This research shows that there is a need also to understand the sexual division of leisure, particularly in the transition from school to leisure where future opportunities and leisure experiences are concerned. The research shows how girls' P.E. contributes to a gendered leisure and sports experience for women. Clearly gender divisions in leisure are not solely dependent on girls' experiences at school but their P.E. experiences are a significant part of their reproduction. It is interesting to note that for girls this is often a negative experience and influence whereas by contrast it tends to be positive for boys. In constituting a critical analysis of leisure other institutional contexts are significant (i.e. family, sport, etc.) but it is clear that girls' P.E. is central to the development of these complex and inter-related determinants. Gender and girls' P.E., then, is both informed by and informs gender relations in other social institutions.

Consideration of the 'division of labour' and the 'division of leisure' emphasizes, as shown by the research, the need to theorize the complex relationship between gender and class. Although the research is concerned primarily with gender and girls' P.E. the class location of schools, teachers and pupils emerges

as significant. Throughout the research the impact of class on the experiences of both women teachers and female pupils was evident (see Chapters Six and Seven). Chapter One introduced some of the complexities and problems associated with theorizing the relationship between gender and class. The inadequacy of analyses which concentrate solely on class, incorporating gender as a secondary determining structure, or which point to the universality of patriarchy and relegate class to the periphery, is confirmed in this research (see Chapter Two). Certainly hegemonic masculinity and sexuality have been discussed and shown to be important, regardless of class location. It is important to stress, however, that gender, through ideologies of femininity and the material of masculine power, is not static, pre-given and experienced as a common, universal form. While gender both constructs and is reinforced by girls' P.E. it is constantly cross-cut by class location and it is dependent on specific contexts for its expression and influence. This conclusion is closest to feminist analyses which identify capitalism and patriarchy as comprehensive social systems which interact, and are most usefully defined as constituting a capitalist patriarchy [Cockburn 1983; Eisenstein 1984]. While this brings the theoretical understanding of the complex interaction of class and gender no nearer it contributes research evidence to the proposition that a 'dual analysis' perspective provides the potential for a more adequate, coherent and comprehensive theory of social relations. Most importantly, this research contributes

not only to the theoretical debates around gender but also to the politics of action. Although starting from an analysis of gender relations it is clear that a feminist analysis of girls' P.E., which is to inform and change practice and politics, must take into account the complexities of both gender and class.

While the research illuminates the need for an integrated analysis of gender and class, the neglect of race throughout the research has become apparent. Again, the research shows that the analysis of gender, within a schooling system which is a predominantly white, middle class, male institution, must attempt to theorize the interconnections between gender, race and class. Black feminists [Carby 1982; Amos and Parmar 1982; Hooks 1981] have correctly identified the ethnocentrism of much feminist analysis and research. This research project began with a concern to explore the relationship of gender and girls' P.E. but it concludes that race and institutionalized racism needs to be incorporated into future work in this area. Certainly the research shows how aspects of gender cut across race divisions and are experienced by all girls and young women. Throughout the research, however, there has developed a growing awareness that black Afro-Caribbean and Asian girls and young women need to have their experiences situated more centrally within analyses of gender relations and that structures of race and racism cannot simply be added to the analysis. One outcome of this research is the recommendation that there needs to be future work which

considers the experiences of black young women, particularly in relation to the teaching of girls' P.E.

The preceding section on the importance of a structural analysis of gender and girls' P.E. identifies the need to locate both gender and girls' P.E. within the broader social and institutional context. Beyond this, in order to challenge assumptions that critical analysis is inevitably over deterministic, it is important to consider two further areas of investigation.

iii) Historical Context

In discussing sport in N. America, Lenskyj [1986:139] comments:

Medical professionals played a major role in determining those sports and levels of participation that were safe for female anatomy and physiology. Not coincidentally, these activities were seen to enhance femininity, a socially constructed and historically specific concept encompassing personality, appearance and comportment. Acceptable activities promoted the physical and the psychological characteristics that males, as the dominant sex, pronounced appropriate and appealing for females: general and productive health, heterosexual attractiveness, passivity and conformity. On all of these issues, physical educators, sports administrators, journalists and the general public treated medical opinion as the voice of reason and authority.

[emphases added]

The material in Chapter Three identified similar influences on the development of girls' P.E. in

nineteenth century Britain. The roots and underpinnings of this female subject, as noted, are centred on male medical opinion which was conveyed and institutionalized as ideologies concerned with girls' physical ability/capacity, motherhood/domesticity and sexuality. It is important to situate contemporary girls' P.E. within its historical contexts in order to recognize that "structure is not pre-given but historically composed" [Connell 1987:63]. It is important to realise the historicity of gender relations in order to challenge the 'false universalism' of gender [Eisenstein 1984]. The historical analysis in *Chapter Three* contributes to a fuller understanding of gender and girls' P.E., because it demonstrates that 'femininity', whilst continually present and central to girls' P.E., is not a fixed or immutable category. The identification of gender in girls' P.E. in the 1980s cannot be interpreted as identical to that which emerges from historical accounts. Femininity is not to be equated with some transcendent biological category of being a woman but is both socially constructed and historically specific.

However, by identifying the influence of male professionals and the strengths of ideologies of gender on the development of girls' P.E., it becomes possible to understand the part played by girls' P.E. in the institutionalization of gender rather than understanding gender as simply the manifestation of attitudes and ideas held by unenlightened individuals. Girls' P.E. is another aspect of schooling in which gender has become

institutionalized and is conveyed through the practice of everyday teaching?. Thus the historical evidence gives weight to the argument that a structural analysis of gender and girls' P.E. is crucial while identifying where change and negotiation can and does take place. As Kessler et al [1987:235], note:

Gender relations, then, are historical. The pattern they assume in any society is produced by its particular history and is always in a process of transformation. Even when change is slow to the point of being invisible, the principle should be kept in mind, because it directs attention to the ways in which the patterns of gender are constantly being produced in everyday life.

The relationship between 'structure' and 'cultural practice' leads on to the final level of analysis identified by the research.

iv) Cultural Responses and Resistances

The relationship between 'structure' and 'agency' has been a central concern of sociological theory². As discussed in Chapter One 'reproduction theory' has been used to explain how the social order is constantly reproduced. In this analysis gender is seen to be determined and reproduced by the structures of patriarchy and/or capitalist economic relations [see Chapter One]. This research suggests that this analysis is inadequate. Although gender can be shown to be reproduced through the institution of girls' P.E.,

structured by a hegemonic masculinity, this is not the whole story. The research also highlights aspects of girls' P.E. which involve resistance, and negotiation, to the structures of gender. All girls do not accept passively the definitions of femininity which place them in a weaker and physically subordinate position. Teachers are not all passive agents within a process of cultural reproduction. Some women P.E. staff in their responses and practices negotiate gender stereotypes and encourage girls to develop and challenge 'femininity'. Girls resist some of the institutionalized definitions and practices of girls' P.E. which relate to femininity (appearance, suitable 'ladylike' behaviour etc.). Although this research did not set out to investigate girls' responses to P.E., the periods of observation in schools show that girls' P.E. is by no means a straightforward process of gender ideology and identity reproduction (see Chapter Eight). Giddens' [1979] analysis of 'structuration' in which he attempts to theorize the dialectical relationship between 'structure' and 'agency' helps move towards a more satisfactory analysis. The research identifies the structures of 'patriarchal power', 'sexuality' and the 'division of labour' as central to an understanding of gender - girls' P.E. being an institutional form which maintains and reinforces these structures. Also, however, it identifies the need for a cultural analysis which allows for those involved in girls' P.E. to resist, negotiate and, indeed, transform both the institution of P.E. and ultimately the 'structures' of

gender (see Chapter Eight). This dialectical relationship between structure and agency is crucial to interpreting the politics of girls' P.E. While the research shows the power and influence of hegemonic masculinity over girls' P.E. which maintains, reinforces and produces femininity⁹, it demonstrates, also, the potential of resistance and challenge. It is with this potential that the foundations of transforming girls' P.E. and the social relations of gender can be laid.

Part II of this chapter discusses the policy implications arising from the research. Although this first section has provided a powerful argument for the importance and influence of dominant ideologies of gender in the structuring of girls' P.E. and gender relations, it needs to be stressed that the future for girls' P.E. need not necessarily be totally determined nor negative. Davidson [1968:45] outlines Gramsci's arguments in relation to social change:

... rationality, intelligence, ideas, ideologies and those who made these ideas and ideologies are most important. And who are these but the intellectuals? Furthermore, if the common man cannot, when faced with a bourgeois hegemony of ideas, articulate his own coherent philosophy of life, it must be supplied from outside by the intellectuals.

Although speaking about 'men' and class relations, Gramsci's notion of the 'role of intellectuals'¹⁰ is useful for an understanding of hegemony and social change as it relates to hegemonic masculinity, the structures of gender relations and P.E. and the future

potential for challenge and resistance. This challenge can be initiated by those in authority over P.E. i.e. the teachers and the advisers, although the complexities of the structure-agency relationship cannot be ignored or simplified.

Chapter Eight discussed how strategies for increased participation and interest that are adopted in girls' P.E. often are based on their potential appeal to young women (e.g. health and beauty, keep-fit). Such strategies inevitably reinforce the culture of femininity, locking girls' P.E. within 'emphasized femininity'.¹¹ However, the research also shows that girls' P.E. has the potential to develop policies and directions which could transform P.E. and provide a platform for building resistance to the culture of femininity. The case studies highlighted the autonomy of P.E. within the overall school system. P.E. departments are usually situated away from the rest of the school, the heads of department have authority over the curriculum and, in most instances, the teaching of girls' P.E. is carried out in a private sphere unfettered by the restrictions of examinations or the critical eyes of school hierarchies. Thus girls' P.E. has the potential for change even within a schooling system which is becoming more rigidly defined by central government interventions¹².

Weiner and Arnot [1987:354] comment that:

Teachers have played a central role in challenges to the traditional sexual divisions of schooling... Teachers' potential to initiate change and the long history of teacher inspired innovation are rarely referred to or acknowledged.

This research agrees that it is possible for P.E. teachers to initiate change although the stereotyping by, and entrenched attitudes of, many of the women heads of department illustrates that change will not be automatic or straightforward.

Gender initiatives in education have been outlined and evaluated in a range of literature [Acker 1985; Weiner 1985, Weiner and Arnot 1987; Whyte et al 1985]. Weiner [1985] identifies two main approaches to have emerged as challenges to sexism and sex differentiation in schools; an equal opportunities approach, concentrating on equality of access to all educational benefits (girl-friendly) and an anti-sexist approach, concentrating on girl-centred education with its main objective being the 'relationship between patriarchy, power and women's subordination'. The 'equal opportunities' approach encompasses initiatives in girls' P.E. which emphasize equal access to facilities, activities and curricular/extra-curricular time. Chapter Eight discussed one such organizational change which has been developed in order to provide 'equal opportunities' in P.E. - co-educational teaching. As pointed out in the discussion of mixed P.E. initiatives, there are problems with strategies based on equal access without questioning the structures and power relations of the institution to which equal access is sought. 'Equal opportunities' initiatives stem from a liberal feminist perspective on gender and schooling [see Chapter One]. Weiner [1985:10] articulates the main

criticisms of this approach:

Expanding equal opportunities is not just a question of juggling resources or rearranging option choices... To liberalize access to an inadequate system may be acceptable in the short term but for more permanent change a major restructuring of all social institutions, including schools is needed.

However, it is important to acknowledge that some 'equal opportunities' initiatives, introduced by teachers committed to reform, are an important political response to generations of limitations imposed on young women in all aspects of school and related activities. As Yates [1985:225] comments:

Schooling is a limited venue for producing social change, but it does help to form the consciousness of the next generation.

Pessimism in the face of structural and institutional inequalities provides no route towards change. Although this research firmly establishes that a feminist analysis of gender and girls' P.E. must be situated within a structural analysis of capitalist patriarchy it acknowledges the usefulness of some short-term strategic reforms. Indeed, unlike Weiner [1985] who draws clear-cut boundaries between the inadequate equal opportunities approach and the more long-term radical anti-sexist strategies, this research recommends that strategic gains can be made in both areas.¹⁹ The important issue is that policy does not remain locked into an equal opportunities approach within girls' P.E. but must work

towards a more radical restructuring of girls' P.E. in order to attempt to transform the power bases of gender identified throughout the research. This challenge is not a straightforward task. The powerless can attempt to appropriate their rightful situation but for the powerful to relinquish their position demands considerable material change. As Connell [1987:285] recognizes:

In a gender order where men are advantaged and women are disadvantaged, major structural reform is, on the face of it, against men's interests.

Furthermore, although this research and its recommendations are concerned with gender and girls' P.E., a more integrated strategy for change must also be recognized. Theoretically the research is located within a framework which neither identifies gender as the dominant social relation nor as a secondary factor in relation to primary class inequalities. The complexities of the interrelationship between gender, class and race are essential to the analysis, and changes in the structure of gender relations should be concerned with structural inequalities of race and class. Consequently the connections between and across institutions and strategies for institutional change should be analysed and developed. As discussed in Part I of this chapter, any potential changes in girls' P.E. must be made with the awareness of the need for fundamental changes in the structures of the family, the labour process, sport, leisure etc.

At first sight this appears to be a substantial and unattainable objective. However, the importance of inter-institutional links can point towards more positive directions. There is considerable evidence to demonstrate that young and adult women's experiences are not totally determined by structural inequalities. Since the early 1970s there has been a substantial shift, through the development of new directions, in the reconstruction of women's sexuality and consciousness. These include the development of self-help groups in medical care/mental health, the emergence of well-women clinics and other all women projects geared to giving women more control over their own health and bodies. Women's groups have developed, resisting male violence through rape crisis centres, women's refuges and counselling. Within education new initiatives, such as N.O.W. courses¹⁴, 'outreach' projects, women's writing groups, have developed and have encouraged women to gain confidence and assertiveness in intellectual situations. The emergence of self-defence/assertiveness training and women's fitness programmes which are geared to developing health, strength and physical well-being, rather than the stereotypical construction of 'femininity' around appearance and body physique, have given women greater control over their physicality [see Lenskyj 1986]. These latter developments indicate a qualitative shift in definitions of the 'physical' (see Chapter Eight). Women in these programmes are reclaiming the right to physical development and appearance on

their own terms rather than on the terms laid down in the traditions of 'feminine culture' which are learned and reinforced in youth and, as this research shows, in their P.E. experiences at school. Lenskyj [1982], in describing her own experiences, suggests that after years of upbringing women are:

alienated from our bodies not knowing the extent of our physical strength and endurance and not daring to find out. Those of us who have dared have found a new avenue for self-realisation as women and as feminists - joyful at the discovery that our bodies are strong and resilient, capable of hard work and hard play.

Advocates of girls' physical education should not rely on 'emphasized femininity' in order to encourage young women to participate. Not all young women are steeped in a deterministic 'Jackie' mentality¹⁵ and developments in adult women's projects should point the way towards more optimistic initiatives. The historical section in Chapter Three showed that girls' P.E. and women's sport in the nineteenth century contributed positively to a redefinition of women's femininity and, in particular, women's physical potential. While this remained within the clear boundaries of 'acceptable' behaviour, women's struggles this century have shown that women can challenge inequalities at all levels. Girls' P.E. has the real potential to challenge contemporary patriarchal definitions of women's submissiveness, passivity and dependence. While this is not straightforward the following recommendations, arising from the research, provide a foundation for future policy directions. These

recommendations are not ranked but should be interpreted as the basis for constructive moves to a more critical and radical feminist form of P.E. teaching.

i) Girl-Centred Organization .

The discussion of mixed P.E. teaching in Chapter Eight indicates that girl-centred organization should be retained. This raises the problem of retaining boy-centred organization in male P.E. and the attendant implications. In the short-term, however, girls require both the space and the time to develop their potential. In some instances this could involve the retention of a single-sex programme as the norm throughout the secondary school with selective periods of mixed teaching, if appropriate, for specific activities. It is crucial that the politics of gender and sexuality are understood by the staff involved in mixed activity sessions. With sensitive, understanding teaching, which may require positive intervention and leadership (see Chapter Eight), mixed teaching can provide the forum for increased pupil awareness of gender issues and also challenge existing gender expectations and inequalities. If single sex teaching remains the long-term goal then the future is bleak for a comprehensive overthrow of gender inequalities. Yet there needs to be a short-term strategy to ensure girls receive opportunities, time, space and understanding to redress the traditional base of gender imbalance.

ii) Female-only Space

This is linked directly to the arguments made for girl-centred organization. For it is not only the formal organization of single-sex teaching which must be retained but also the provision of informal female-only space. Girls and young women need space to develop their confidence and realise their interests and to be in control of that social space. In co-educational schools the evidence shows that boys and men dominate space - in all social situations - physically and verbally [Spender 1982; Young 1980]. In both co-educational and single-sex schools the main female-only space is in the toilets, the cloakrooms and the changing rooms. These are the areas where young women 'hang out', where they spend time together away from 'the lads' and/or the teachers [Griffin et al 1982]. It would be a positive move for women P.E. teachers to recognize the need for young women to have their own space for conversation, making plans or, simply, 'having a laugh'. Clearly this poses problems for school organization and the enforcement of school rules and regulations. However, as Townley School shows, it can be a positive move to open up changing rooms and facilities during breaks, lunchtime and after school, to provide open access to extra-curricular time and to encourage girls/young women to use the space available for their 'leisure' whether it be 'formally'

for netball, table tennis or 'informally' for chatting with a friend. Too often young women's access to the P.E. wing is restricted solely to participation in organized, formal P.E. activities. It would be a significant development to enable young women to develop greater control over their extra-curricular activities and therefore provide the space for meeting and socializing without interference from boys or teachers.

A further symbolic - and practical - policy change would be to allow girls effective choice concerning clothes worn for P.E. The research shows that formal P.E. kit remains the norm. While there are arguments for and against school uniform it is clear that, within specific safety guidelines, adolescent girls should be able to determine appropriate clothes for physical activity. The earlier discussion argued that from puberty girls come to experience their bodies as 'public property' - defined, compared, criticized and often, degraded. Within P.E., especially given the contexts of movement, girls need to have effective control over the 'presentation' of their physicality in dress and style. Consequently, P.E. teachers need to develop a greater sensitivity to and awareness of the pressures on young women regarding body shape and appearance¹⁶. Young women's bodies are on display during physical activity and P.E. teachers must realise the ease with which they can contribute to the alienation of young women with regard to their bodies.

iii) Collectivity/Confidence

The unifying feature of the women's projects mentioned previously is the emphasis on collective support. P.E. is, in an ideal situation, to offer young women opportunities for collective support through co-operative and enjoyable physical activity. While the relationship between teacher and student inevitably will reflect an institutionalized power relationship based on age and status, young women can be encouraged to work closely together, and with their teachers, through activities such as dance, outdoor pursuits and self-defence. Many boys and young men thrive on their collective 'rugby club' experiences. Indeed hegemonic masculinity is sustained and reinforced by male collective experiences. Young women also need the space for collective physical experience while rejecting and challenging the competitive, 'macho' values of the male sporting ethos. This emphasizes the need for women to gain access to the positive aspects of the sporting world. These positive aspects include collectivity, co-operation and a sense of community, all of which can be encouraged through physical activity. Adolescence is a time to develop group and collective experiences rather than the channelling of young women into individually-based activities (see Chapter Five) which deny opportunities to develop group confidence and ability. This is particularly important for young women where group membership and experience tends to be played down. P.E. can contribute to developing a sense

of solidarity between young women, thus defining a female-based construct of confidence and motivation. In many ways the 'movement' approach of girls' P.E. prevalent in the 1950s and 1970s, and to some extent perpetuated in schools today, has emphasized these qualities. Where it has failed, however, is in its tendency to reinforce gender stereotypes and emphasize gender divisions while encouraging a level of co-operation and a sense of community.

What is clear is that equal access to the contemporary sporting world would involve access to male-defined dominant, aggressive institutions. P.E. needs to take a lead in the encouragement of a redefinition of male-dominant sport. Such a proposition clearly is idealist in its construction. Sport in British society is dominated by competition, commercialism, sponsorship and professionalism [Whannel 1983]. Revolutionary change would be required even to begin to challenge a sporting world predominantly controlled and defined by men [White and Brackenridge 1985] and situated within a capitalist economic structure. Yet change within the institution of sport has to be a long term objective for feminist struggle given that sport is an arena centrally involved in the reinforcement and reproduction of hegemonic masculinity [see Chapter One]. Part of this long-term struggle must come from P.E. within the schools at both primary and secondary levels. Changes in the institution of sport will not come from policy introduced from the 'top' or dominant hierarchies

involved in sport. As [White and Brackenridge 1985] have shown, sport is owned, controlled and organized by white, middle class men. Change, however, can be encouraged at grassroots level. Sport can be redefined only if those involved in sport at this level begin this process of redefinition. Willis [1982] reflects this position thus:

A sport could be presented as a form of activity which emphasizes human similarity and not dissimilarity, a form of activity which expresses values which are indeed immeasurable, a form of activity which is concerned with individual well-being and satisfaction rather than with comparison.

Within physical education it should be a priority to consider alternative forms of sport which in the long-term will not only encourage different values but also will encourage girls and boys, and eventually women and men, to enjoy sport on equal terms¹⁷. This may mean educators and those involved in sport developing new games and activities and taking seriously sports such as handball and korfbal as activities appropriate to both girls' and boys' P.E. Although P.E. is not synonymous with sport, sport remains the emphasis within the curriculum¹⁸. This emphasis will remain, particularly if P.E. continues to be identified as preparation for future leisure activities. If girls' P.E. is not going to simply reinforce the gender divisions of leisure and sport in society then it must begin to question what it is preparing for and how it can begin the process of challenge and redefinition.

iv) Physicality - muscles, strength and physical power

The research highlights the need to locate physicality and physical power relations as central to the analysis of gender relations. Therefore the development of individual potential in physical strength and power for girls must be a primary objective of girls' P.E. This requires effective challenges to the ideology of the physical, identified and discussed in this research, so that girls effectively can develop confidence and assertiveness and, ultimately, greater control over their bodies. The most obvious recommendation in this area is to include self-defence as an essential core element of girls' P.E. teaching. Just as adult women are beginning to reclaim the right to control and develop their own bodies for intrinsic satisfaction rather than sexual exploitation, so P.E. must emphasize these values for young women. They must be encouraged to enjoy physical movement; to develop strength and muscular potential; to work together to discover body awareness and confidence. As Lenskjy [1982] says, women tend to be alienated from their bodies and unaware of their physical potential. Girls' P.E. must move away from stereotypical expectations of girls' physical potential and look to new directions which may motivate young women to be active, fit and physically developed. This may mean the development and introduction of 'new' sports or perhaps the development of new teaching approaches to the traditional games. The practical implications are

difficult to determine and would require considerable research - for example as action research in schools. The important issue remains the need for the fulfilment of physical potential and the awareness that muscular development, physical power and strength do not need to be the prerogative of men. The ideology of physicality is as powerful as the actual appropriation of muscle and strength by men. Girls and young women need to be encouraged to see the positive arguments concerning the development of physical strength and to challenge their construction as the passive recipients of male aggression and strength. 'Women fighting back' is an important slogan in the struggle to gain equality between the sexes. Part of this 'fight back' must be the realisation that women too can be "strong and resilient, capable of hard work and hard play" [Lenskyj 1982]. As Lenskyj argues, in a development of her work:

Women's increasing participation in fitness-related activities, from dance exercise to body building, is potentially liberating. To feel at ease with one's body and to be aware of its strengths and weaknesses is to know oneself better. Moreover, the sense of achievement derived from physical fitness gains encourages women to tackle either physical or mental challenges.

[Lenskyj 1988:137]

This research shows that girls' P.E. remains locked within an emphasized femininity and the reinforcement of a 'feminine' physical potential. However the research indicates, also, that P.E. is in a powerful position to challenge this crucial aspect of gender relations.

v) Consciousness-Raising

In order to achieve the first four recommendations of this research, teachers, advisers and pupils need to develop an awareness of the significance of these issues. This implies that gender should be placed high on the agenda of initial teacher education courses, in-service courses, staff meetings and teacher-pupil discussion. From the evidence it is clear that the issue of gender is not a core component of the initial training of P.E. teachers. However, this must become a priority if any of the recommendations of this research are to be implemented. As this research shows, many of the women P.E. teachers currently in a position to initiate change were trained years ago and clearly retain gender-stereotyped attitudes. As Deem [1986] emphasizes in relation to policy implementation, teachers must admit first that there is a problem before they will question their practice. Pratt [1985] found that P.E. teachers are generally unsympathetic to the notion of equal opportunities between girls and boys in school. This research shows that powerful gender ideologies remain embedded in the traditions and teaching of girls' P.E. Yet teacher commitment is necessary for change to be implemented. This research concludes that it is vital that gender is discussed and action initiated at advisory level, in teacher education and in in-service training. Initially the setting up of teacher support groups for those teachers with a personal commitment to anti-sexist

strategies within P.E. would be a positive move of support for those isolated at work in sceptical, and even hostile, environments. Within schools P.E. can contribute to the creation of a positive 'female' atmosphere by the use of photographs and displays in the P.E. areas. In many schools the research found either a lack of display material or the use of posters exhibiting typically male sporting 'heroes'. There should be positive images of women which challenge the stereotyped ideas of women in relation to appearance, body image, shape and dress and which encourage young women's participation in, and enjoyment of, physical activity.

Related to this, is the need to promote active teacher-pupil discussion about the main issues of 'physicality' and 'sexuality'. Adolescent young women require encouragement in addressing these issues within a broader political framework. If physical 'education' is to move beyond its rigid traditions then it must tackle directly issues contextualized within the politics of sexuality and the structures of gender divisions. This confirms the priority of situating P.E. within broader structural relations not only theoretically but also at a practical level with the pupils. There must be an awareness that social relations outside the school (e.g. in the family) directly influence gender in school P.E. Pupils need to be aware and question who it is who supports their P.E. activity by providing them with clean P.E. kit and, indeed, what the reality is for out-of-school and post school sport

and leisure opportunities for young women. These issues need to be addressed both formally in P.E. time but also constantly in the informal contacts between staff and pupils.

vi) Future Research

Finally, this research raises a number of issues which require future investigation.

(i) Boys, masculinity and P.E.

This research concentrates on girls' P.E. However, if gender divisions are to be challenged then there must be concern for the physical education of both girls and boys. There is a need for research which looks at the relationship between boys' P.E. and the reinforcement, production and reproduction of hegemonic masculinity. If girls' P.E. reproduces an ideology of the physical which constructs young women as physically subordinate to men then there is a need to consider the proposition that male P.E. reproduces an ideology of the physical which underpins a culture of masculinity emphasizing strength, toughness, competitiveness and physical domination. Without identifying and challenging the dynamics of gender in the schooling of boys, male-female power relations cannot change.

(2) P.E.: towards an analysis of race, class and gender

As discussed previously, there is a need for future research to concentrate on the relationships between race, class and gender within P.E. There is a lack of research into race and sport or leisure although race and schooling is a developing area. Future research into P.E. should centre its analysis on an understanding of race, racism and P.E. teaching.

(3) Gender and P.E.: pupils' perceptions and expectations

This research concentrates on teachers and the teaching of P.E. in relation to gender. However, there is a need for more in-depth cultural research which would provide analyses of pupils' perceptions and expectations about gender and P.E.

(4) Initial training and in-service training

This area is recognized as of crucial importance for future policy initiatives. Future research needs to assess the impact of current debates about gender on both P.E. initial training courses and in-service P.E. courses. This research is necessary in order to identify the gaps and weaknesses in these areas, assess current projects/courses/initiatives relating to gender and point towards future directions.

(5) P.E. - sport, leisure, family, division of labour

This research indicates the need for more research concerned with the relationships between institutions to provide a fuller analysis of gender, race and class. Research, for example, which looks at the connections between the family and P.E. experiences and teachings, the relationship between P.E. and future leisure/sport experiences.

(6) Primary school P.E. and gender

Throughout the research it became clear that the teaching of secondary school P.E. is heavily dependent on the primary school P.E. curriculum. There needs to be in-depth qualitative research which questions both girls' and boys' experiences of P.E. at primary school level, and a structural analysis of primary school P.E. looking at the primary school curriculum and teaching in relation to gender, class and race.

(7) The national curriculum, gender and P.E.

As the 1980s witnesses considerable change in the structure of secondary schooling there is a need for research to consider the implications of the national curriculum for the future P.E. of both girls and boys. In particular, it will be important to monitor the impact of the national curriculum on equal opportunity policies and initiatives.

These are recommendations general to both short-term and long-term reforms in the 'classroom' of P.E. Although the implementation of 'reforms' are of value, however, in the long-term P.E. needs to question fundamental issues around physicality and sexuality. For 'physical' power relations and, ultimately, the politics of patriarchy to be challenged, girls and young women should be encouraged to enjoy physical movement on their terms and develop confidence, assertiveness and control over their own bodies. Most importantly, gender relations cannot be altered fundamentally by women alone. It is for men also to take up the challenge, both in P.E. and in the wider society, for any future radical restructuring of gender relations to take place.

However, this research does show that all feminist analyses of schooling must include a full consideration of the complex relationships between gender and P.E. P.E. is in a position to initiate change which will influence not only those teachers and pupils directly involved in feminist innovations in P.E. but also, in the long-term, it can contribute effectively to a redefinition of gender. There is a need for a feminist analysis and approach to P.E. and this research highlights its importance for future P.E. policy and for a fuller understanding of gender relations in society. Hall [1985:40] points out that:

.... nowhere is there a recognition among feminist theorists/scholars as to the fact that sport plays a considerable role in the reproduction of a specifically

patriarchal social order and could, therefore, be significant in the transformation of that order. At the very least it can provide a site of resistance. Let us get on with the analysis and historical work necessary. By doing so we will be making an important contribution to some essential thinking about the sociology of sport - as well as to feminist theory.

This research argues that Hall's concern for the sociology of sport needs to be extended to an analysis of physical education. This thesis has begun the debate by combining empirical investigation and theoretical analysis and it contributes to essential debate and future action concerning girls' physical education and feminist theoretical analysis.

Footnotes

Introduction

1. For the purposes of this thesis P.E. is used to denote girls' physical education.
2. A further point is that debates about P.E. unlike those about science, language, mathematics, have tended to be directed to specialist audiences only.
3. During the research two publications appeared in relation to equal opportunities in P.E. - ILEA (1984); Leaman (1984).
4. See Eichler M. (1980) for an interesting discussion on the complex definition of 'sex and gender'. For the purposes of this thesis the most commonly accepted definitions will be used: 'sex' refers to the biological aspects of being female or male and 'gender' as the social/cultural construction of 'femininity' and 'masculinity'.
5. The 1980s have seen some developments in this area. See: Hall (1987); Gilroy (1988); Scraton (1988).
6. It is acknowledged that during the 1980s there have been a number of schools throughout the country which have introduced mixed-sex P.E. However, in the research authority P.E. teaching was predominantly single sex.

CHAPTER ONE

1. The importance of class location, culture, ethnicity, etc. must be recognized.
2. See Yates L. (1983) for further discussion.
3. See Acker (1984:67) for a discussion of divisions within radical feminism e.g. revolutionary, separatist-lesbian.
4. Refer back to the introduction for further discussion of this point.
5. See also: Gorbutt (1972); Young and Whitty (1977).
6. For reference to recent ethnographic work see Hammersley and Woods (1984).
7. See Apple (1979); Sharpe and Green (1976) and Bowles and Gintis (1976) for further work on the relationship of schooling to the reproduction of the social relations of capitalist production.
8. See: Hall (1977); Macpherson (1977).
9. For attempts to integrate 'micro' and 'macro' explanations within educational theory see West (1983).
10. Sex differences have been described previously but until now accepted as unproblematic.
11. The complexities are discussed by Beechey (1979) on patriarchy;

- Willis (1981) on reproduction theory and CCCS (1977) on ideology.
12. See: Tiger (1969); Morris (1969).
 13. Biological divisions are not totally rejected by all feminists. See: Firestone (1971).
 14. See Sayers (1982) for further discussion of this point.
 15. See Eichler (1980) and Sayers (1982) for a discussion of the complexities of the definitions for 'sex' and 'gender'.
 16. See Althusser (1971) for details of this position.
 17. A fuller critique of Althusser can be found in Johnston (1981).
 18. Bowles and Gintis' (1976) work was a major development in critical educational theory.
 19. Willis (1981:58) defines culture as: "a relatively coherent system of material practices and interlocking symbolic systems having, according to the region, their own practices and objectives which constitute the ordinary milieu of social life through which amongst other things, social agents come to a collective, mediated, lived awareness of their condition of existence and relationship to other classes."
 20. The major debates concerning 'patriarchy' can be found in Beechey (1979).
 21. See: Hall et al (1978); Shaw (1975).
 22. See: De Beauvoir (1953); Friedan (1963) Greer (1970).
 23. 'New Wave' refers to feminists in the postwar period.
 24. See also: Kelly (1981, 1985); Harding (1980).
 25. See: Whyde (1983); Whyte et al (1985); Sutherland (1981).
 26. See also: Delphy (1980).
 27. It should be noted that not all feminist lesbians necessarily hold a radical feminist position.
 28. See Coveney et al (1984:10/21) for fuller discussion of these issues.
 29. Mahony uses 'social maleness' to avoid slipping back towards biological determinism which she sees as sometimes a danger when men are defined as the 'problem'. Social maleness allows for the possibility of change.
 30. See Weiner (1985) for a more detailed account of anti-sexist strategies in school. See also the discussion in Chapter Nine.

31. The issue of single sex versus mixed sex schooling will be considered in more detail in Chapter Eight. See: Deem (1984); Mahony (1985).
32. See Levitas (1974 - Chapter Five) for a discussion of the concept of 'class'.
33. See Barrett (1980) and Kuhn and Wolpe (1978) a discussion of the sexual division of labour.
34. See: Wolpe (1977); Deem (1978); David (1980).
35. See Arnot (1981) and Barrett (1980) for a discussion of Wolpe's work.
36. See: Hough, J. (1988); National Union of Teachers (1980).
37. There is a problem of categorising under specific labels. See: Acker (1985).
38. See: Sargent (1981) and Eisenstein (1984).
39. Refer back to the sections on 'reproduction' and 'ideology' at the beginning of this chapter.
40. See Rubin (1975) for a justification of the usage of the term 'sex-gender perspective'.
41. See: Willis (1977) and Corrigan (1979) for work on male counter-school culture.
42. Sexual division of leisure is seen as an important concept which can be viewed as a parallel to the sexual division of labour.

CHAPTER TWO

1. There was literature from North America and Europe prior to the 1970s.
2. See Clarke and Critcher (1985, Chapter One) for a fuller critique of the sociology of leisure.
3. There is evidence to suggest that the 'nuclear' family is no longer in the majority and there are many types of family organization.
4. Refer back to Chapter One for a discussion of Marxist perspectives on education.
5. Stanley (1980) argues that women are not an homogenous group and therefore women's leisure is different for women in different circumstances. See also: Dixey and Talbot (1982).
6. For Further Discussion of the domestic labour debate see: Comer (1974); Oakley (1974); Seccombe (1974); West (1982).
7. Green et al (1986) found in their research that 97% of women were responsible for the majority of housework.

8. As noted by Stanley (1980:3) that "one person's free and untrammelled leisure can be and often is another person's pain in the neck".
9. Much of women's leisure has been shown to involve the servicing of others. See: Talbot (1979); Deem (1986).
10. Patriarchy is not always clearly defined in the literature and the complexity of the concept needs to be noted.
11. Class location can influence women's access to private transport to leisure activities; financial freedom to participate etc.
12. The use of Barrett (1980) as the main literature used by Clarke and Critcher reflects the limitations of their analysis and a lack of thorough consideration of the wealth of feminist literature that is available.
13. See also: Lees (1986).
14. This is confirmed in the research of Dorn (1983) and Dorn and South (1983/1984).
15. The definitions of 'culture' and 'sub-culture' are complex and there is a need to reflect that girls' experiences cannot be subsumed under a male definition.
16. Refer back to Chapter One for a full discussion of girls' schooling.
17. Much of the mainstream literature on the sociology of sport comes from North America and is rooted in structural functionalist analysis.
18. 'A structural framework' suggests the need to consider sport within the wider structures of society. This issue will be taken up in Chapter Nine.
19. Metheny's work looked at the irreconcilability of female traits and athletic ability. It was an early contribution which was extremely influential in sex role theory and sport.
20. This explanation does not consider sport within its wider social context.
21. There is a growing literature on sex differences in sport. See: Mees (1979).
22. Refer to the Report of A Commission of Enquiry - Physical Education in Schools - March 1987.
23. See Mangan (1973) who discusses the positive functions of P E. as being part of the socialization process and central as an integrative role.

24. See Chapter One. An example is Whyte et al (1985) which provides no reference to P.E.
25. For further discussion see: Whyld (1984).
26. See the research of Deem (1986); Green et al (1986); Talbot (1980).
27. See Evans (1986) for a criticism of this position.
28. Refer to: Roberts (1976).
29. An interesting and significant set of papers relating to homophobia and sport were presented at the workshop on Homophobia in Physical Education, Sport and Dance at Missouri April 1988.
30. For example, The teacher education/training courses in P.E. at Leeds Polytechnic draw on this full range of academic disciplines.

CHAPTER THREE.

1. Refer back to Chapter One for a discussion of ideology.
2. School attendance was compulsory between the ages of five and thirteen. However, there were numerous by-laws including one which exempted girls for domestic duties.
3. The National Union for the Education of Girls was set up in 1871 by Maria Grey and Emily Sherriff.
4. See: Howarth (1985).
5. The Technical Instruction Act (1889) did enable grants and scholarships to be awarded to working class girls but the number of girls was limited.
6. See: Dyhouse (1981). The control of finance, governing bodies etc. remained with the men but the teaching and ancillary staff were all female.
7. See: Metcalf (1974).
8. It should be recognised that working class men also had less leisure time.
9. See: Mason (1983); Dobie (1973) and Guttman (1978).
10. Cunningham (1935); Lauer (1937).
11. For example: 'The Ladies Sanitary Dress Association' (1857) and 'The Dress Reform League' (1861).
12. Swedish exercises were developed from the work of Ling.
13. For a full account of the life and work of Madame Bergman Osterberg see: May (1969).

14. See May (1969) for details of P.E. appointments.
15. An example of this was the 1909 Syllabus for P.E.
16. Ehrenrich and English (1975) note that the middle class woman was defined as 'sick' and the working class woman as 'sickening'.
17. Medical inspection was part of a whole trend towards a greater public awareness of health and hygiene, e.g. school milk.
18. There was a recommendation in 1921 for increased playing fields and gymnasias but this was not a reality for most schools for many years.
19. This relationship is epitomised in John Bowlby's work which was used throughout teachers' training.
20. Refer to Fletcher (1984) for a discussion of 'wing' colleges.
21. Male P.E. developed at the teachers training colleges of Carnegie and Loughborough.
22. This was also true in other curricular areas e.g. crafts.
23. Sports science courses developed in the Universities in the 1970s. This reflected, also, the need to broaden and despecialize training in response to the James Report.

CHAPTER FOUR.

1. 'Hygienic' research, traditionally, has implied that the research process is neutral and free from subjective values, opinions, etc. Feminist researchers challenge this assumption.
2. See Stanley and Wise (1983) for a development of this argument.
3. See Taylor, Walton and Young (1975) for further information and a critique of these positions.
4. Although more qualitative, 'soft' data has been utilized in participant observation and ethnography, it remains dominated by male researchers investigating male experiences.
5. It is important to note that access can create problems in the research process. In this instance many hours were used attempting to contact busy teachers by telephone.
6. During the period of the research the L.E.A. was planning to reorganize secondary schooling. See: Chapter Five.
7. See also: Stanley and Wise (1983).
8. Various schools in the authority were attempting to initiate policies. I was invited to give a staff seminar to one of the

case study schools.

CHAPTER FIVE.

1. The 1980 Education Bill gives parents the right to state their preference and to have this taken into account.
2. An example of this is Heyfield School which opened in 1973 as an amalgamation of four secondary schools.
3. This issue of the right of ethnic groups to have separate schooling is complex and beyond the scope of this thesis.
4. See: Deem (1984); Mahony (1985).
5. See the final chapter of Fletcher (1984) for a discussion of these points.
6. Specialist P.E. training refers to that received at a College of Physical Education or a 'wing' college. See Fletcher (1984) for clarification of this organization.
7. The 1977 Staffing Survey (H.M.I.) found the average age of P.E. specialist women staff to be 25 to 26 years.
8. B.A.A.L.P.E. (British Association of Advisers and Lecturers of Physical Education).
9. Women often have a dual role in domestic work and the labour force, even when not married e.g. in the parental home.
10. The recent union action demonstrated this point.
11. 'Standards' were defined as: manners, self-discipline and appearance.
12. This is consistent with Critchley's (1985) survey of P.E. in eight L.E.A.s.
13. Similar results were found by Hill (1985).
14. See early texts on gymnastics e.g. Morrison (1969)
15. This was reiterated in the Panorama programme (May 1986).
16. This interest has returned in the 1980s particularly with the National Curriculum and increased assessment.
17. It is interesting to note that the publications in this field are dominated by male commentators and researchers.
18. The H.E.C./P.E.A. Health and P.E. Project is based at the University of Technology, Loughborough, Leicestershire.
19. Fletcher (1984:153) discusses the 'male' approach to P.E. as:
 "the bio-mechanical approach to movement, the voice of exercise physiology, which seeks to measure, rather than evaluate and is linked historically,

with circuit training rather than the insights of Laban."

CHAPTER SIX.

1. See Chapter One for a definition of ideology.
2. This quote demonstrates stereotypical assumptions about boys. The reality is not that all little boys play football.
3. Modern educational dance developing from the work on Laban has remained primarily a girls' activity in secondary schools.
4. This study was conducted in 1981 by the advisory staff in order to provide an overall 'picture' of P.E. across the authority.
5. Race must be acknowledged, also, as important but beyond the scope of this research.
6. For example: rules of 'sticks' and 'turning'.
7. See Chapter Eight for a fuller discussion of this.
8. There is a need for further research which focuses on race and P.E.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

1. It is difficult to assess the extent to which ideology is internalised by individuals. Critiques of research on reading schemes and sexist literature highlight this issue. There is a need for fuller research specifically on the responses of girls and young women to extend the work of McRobbie (1978) and Griffin (1985).
2. The names of the Case Study Schools are fictitious.
3. This reflects the increasing reliance on parental contributions and money raised. The Panorama programme, March 6th 1986, focused on this issue.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

1. The important issue is not whether there are biological sex differences but why these differences create unequal gender divisions.
2. Similar results were found in studies of women's leisure e.g. Green et al (1986); Deem (1986).
3. Refer back to the literature review (Chapter Two) on young women's subcultures.
4. It must be acknowledged that menstruation can be painful and can cause discomfort which may influence girls'/young women's attitudes towards participation.

5. This was paralleled by the introduction of options in other areas.
6. The issue of legal liability in P.E. is complex and the focus of increased interest.
7. Supported by the 1987 study of P.E. in secondary schools (H.M.I.).
8. Connell (1987) considers this issue in detail.
9. With cuts in expenditure some L.E.A.s offer swimming only to younger children. The future is unclear and will depend on the 1988 Act.

CHAPTER NINE.

1. This was the situation at the time of the research although the proposed core National Curriculum will create changes in secondary schools. P.E. is named as a foundation subject but with the guidelines still to be published.
2. Structural analysis is used in the context of this research as expressed by Giddens (1979:60):
 Structural analysis whether applied to language, to myth, literature or art, or more generally to social relationships, is considered to penetrate below the level of surface appearances.
 However, Connell (1987:92) argues that the concept of social structure expresses the constraints that lie in a given form of social organisation. Attempts to decode social structure generally begins by analyzing institutions. Structural analysis is concerned also with the pattern of constraints on practice inherent in a set of social relations. In the case of this research: gender relations. The issue of structure and structural analysis is complex and is well discussed in Connell (1987), Chapter Five.
3. Feminist research and methodology stresses the importance of the relationship between theory and practice. Theory develops out of experience and informs political action. See Stanley and Wise (1983).
4. For young women the emphasis on clothing, fashion and expectations of femininity create a public 'face' for young women's bodies. However, in contrast, certain aspects of a woman's body remain private (e.g. menstruation), thus creating difficult and often conflicting situations.
5. See Mahony (1983) for a discussion of the control of school playgrounds by boys and Stanley (1980) on women's leisure.
6. See Fletcher (1984 - final chapter) for a discussion of this point.

7. Institutionalization is the creation of conditions which makes cyclical practice probable. See: Giddens (1979).
8. The work of Giddens (1979) is of importance, in particular his theory of 'structuration'. See also Connell (1987) for a discussion of structure and agency.
9. See the discussion in Chapter One of Willis (1981) on production and reproduction.
10. See Davidson (1968), Chapter IV for a full account of Gramsci's ideas on the 'role of intellectuals'.
11. The term 'emphasized femininity' is used by Connell (1987:183) to describe a form of femininity around compliance with subordination to men, "and is oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men."
12. This may change under the guidelines for the new National Curriculum.
13. Deem (1986) argues, also, that the two approaches are not as separate as Weiner suggests.
14. New Opportunities for Women (N.O.W.).
15. See McRobbie (1982) for a discussion of the magazine 'Jackie' and cultures of femininity.
16. Presumably many P.E. teachers find this difficult because they do not experience these pressures themselves.
17. See English (1978) for a discussion of this point.
18. This is confirmed in the report on school P.E. conducted by the Inspectorate in 1987.

APPENDIX ONE.

A Brief Introduction to the City.

The history of the city in which the research project was based is dominated by its geographical location on an estuary and its development as a thriving and successful port.

The importance of the port and port-based activities has been the key to (-----) economic development over the last two centuries. Other smaller industries like pottery, china, watch and clock making declined after 1800 mainly because (-----) needs as a port turned her into a commercial rather than an industrial centre. Trading activities yielded a far higher return on capital invested and as the major distribution centre for the import of raw materials the export of manufactured goods, (-----) rose to become the wealthiest provincial town in this the "First Industrial Nation".
(Merseyside Socialist Research Group
(1980:27)

During the first decade of the twentieth century the docklands of the city were busy and economically active. Although the city coped continually with irregular employment and associated poverty, the shipping trade ensured a certain level of employment in the docks, shipyards and port-related businesses. However, with the change to container trading and the gradual decline in the shipping industry the city experienced economic recession and during the 1970s this produced economic crisis in an intensified form. The outdated docks gradually became redundant and industries closed or moved to areas which provided better and more efficient road and rail communications. This decline has been felt not only in the inner city areas but has extended to the peripheral estates and beyond to the post-war towns. The manufacturing industries, which contributed initially to inner

city decline by promoting migration of the unemployed to seek work in the new factories, also experienced a dramatic decline during the 1970s. Consequently, the city of the 1980s bears the marks of urban decline and economic recession with unemployment well above the national average and long term structural unemployment facing a growing proportion of the population. This social and economic climate of decline consolidated alongside local political uncertainty. Until the mid 1950s the dominant Protestant working class ensured the continued re-election of a conservative City Council. As the Merseyside Socialist Research Group (1989:76) comments:

Merchants and casual workers, rich and poor, owners and creators of wealth, all were united by a Protestantism, resulting in a shared political focus. So solidly working class areas which were predominantly protestant like St. Domingo, Kirkdale, Netherfield and Breckfield elected either Tory or Orange councillors (often one and the same) right up to the 1950s and 1960s.

However, one result of the post-war slum clearance programmes and the decline and break-up of the inner city, has been the fragmentation of communities and the diversification of the strongholds of Catholicism and Protestantism. During the 1960s the Labour Party gained some ground and through to the reorganisation of local government in 1973 the Tories and the Labour Party vied for power in what was essentially a two-party contest. Following re-organization, however, the Liberal Party gathered support with its electioneering emphasis on 'community politics', the result of which was a three-cornered battle with the years 1974 to 1983 notable for the absence of an overall majority on the council. The election of 1983 produced the first Labour council

after reorganization (Bush and Gettins, 1981). It was this council which began the process of reorganising the state secondary schools of the city.

APPENDIX TWO

TABLE ONE STAFFING ACROSS THE RESEARCH L.E.A.

SCHOOL	STAFFING (PE)		EXTRA- CURRICULAR	HEADS OF PE DEPT. TRAINING	YEARS AT SCHOOL
	<u>FULL TIME (PE)</u>	<u>PE & OTHER SUBJECT</u>	<u>HELP</u>		
A	1	1	1 (badminton)	LOCAL	3
B	2	1	-	LOCAL	8
C	2	1	-	LOCAL	14
D	0	1	-	LOCAL	4
E	2	2	1 (badminton)	LOCAL	18
F	2	0	1 (hockey)	OTHER	16
G	0	3	-	CATHOLIC	9
H	1	2	2 (volleyball) (swimming)	LOCAL	17
I	1	1	-	CATHOLIC	5
J	2	1	1 (badminton)	LOCAL	6
K	1	1	-	LOCAL	8
L	2	1	-	LOCAL	5
M	2	0	-	LOCAL	4
N	2	2	-	LOCAL	8
O	1	2	1 (swimming)	LOCAL	5
P	4	0	2 (netball) (dance)	LOCAL	4
Q	2	1	-	OTHER	6
R	1	-	-	LOCAL	5
S	2	-	1 (badminton)	LOCAL	-(9)
T	1	0	-	CATHOLIC	-(3)
U	4	1	-	LOCAL	-(12)
V	4	-	-	OTHER	-(9)
W	1	1	-	CATHOLIC	-(15)
X	2	-	1 (badminton)	CATHOLIC	-(12)
Y	2	-	-	OTHER	-(6)
Z	1	1	-	CATHOLIC	-(4)
AA	2	1	-	LOCAL	-(9)
BB	2	1	-	LOCAL	-(10)
CC	1	1	-	LOCAL	-(13)
DD	2	1	-	LOCAL	4
EE	0	2	-	LOCAL	8
FF	1	0	-	LOCAL	2

TABLE TWO CHANGES IN NUMBER OF SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN P.E.
ACTIVITIES DURING YEARS ONE TO FIVE

NO. OF SCHOOLS IN YEARS ONE TO FIVE

	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>	Yr. 1	2	3	4	5
BALL GAMES	<u>Netball</u>	31	31	31	21	10
	<u>Rounders</u>	29	29	29	14	3
	<u>Hockey</u>	22	23	21	9	2
	<u>Volleyball</u>	0	0	0	18	18
	<u>Basketball</u>	0	0	1	4	5
	<u>Athletics</u>	29	29	27	0	3
INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES	<u>Swimming</u>	29	24	15	11	6
	<u>Cross Country</u>	1	1	1	2	2
	<u>Canoeing</u>	1	1	1	2	2
	<u>Trampolining</u>	1	1	1	5	8
	<u>Judo</u>	0	0	0	4	4
RACQUET SPORTS	<u>Tennis</u>	26	26	27	21	14
	<u>Badminton</u>	0	0	4	26	29
	<u>Table Tennis</u>	0	0	0	9	9
	<u>Gymnastics</u>	32	32	31	9	2
MOVEMENT	<u>Dance (M.E.D.)</u>	14	12	12	3	2
	<u>Popmobility</u>	0	0	0	18	26
	<u>Country Dance</u>	0	0	0	4	0

FIGURE ONE FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR P.E.

NO. OF SCHOOLS IN BRACKETS

FACILITIES	NO. OF SCHOOLS IN BRACKETS
	GYMNASIUM (31)
SWIMMING POOL (5)	
SPORTS HALL (6)	
	OUTSIDE HARD SURFACE (32)
	PLAYING FIELDS (24)
COMMERCIAL SPORTS CENTRE (5)	

FIGURE TWO FIRST YEAR P.E. ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE L.E.A.

NO. OF SCHOOLS IN BRACKETS

ACTIVITIES	
	GYMNASTICS (32)
	NETBALL (31)
	ROUNDERS (29)
	ATHLETICS (29)
	SWIMMING (28)
	TENNIS (26)
	HOCKEY (22)
	DANCE (14)
LACROSSE (1)	
TRAMPOLINING (1)	
CROSS COUNTRY (1)	

FIGURE THREE SECOND YEAR P.E. ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE L.E.A.

NO. OF SCHOOLS IN BRACKETS

ACTIVITIES	
	GYMNASTICS (32)
	NETBALL (31)
	ROUNDERS (29)
	ATHLETICS (29)
	TENNIS (26)
	SWIMMING (24)
	HOCKEY (23)
	DANCE (13)
LACROSSE (1)	
TRAMPOLINING (1)	
CROSS COUNTRY (1)	

FIGURE FOUR THIRD YEAR P.E. ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE L.E.A.

NO. OF SCHOOLS IN BRACKETS

ACTIVITIES	
	GYMNASTICS (31)
	NETBALL (31)
	ROUNDERS (29)
	ATHLETICS (27)
	TENNIS (27)
	HOCKEY (21)
	SWIMMING (15)
	DANCE (12)
	BADMINTON (4)
BASKETBALL	(1)
TRAMPOLINING	(1)
CROSS COUNTRY	(1)

FIGURE FIVE FOURTH YEAR P.E. ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE L.E.A.

ACTIVITIES	NO. OF SCHOOLS IN BRACKETS
	BADMINTON (26)
	NETBALL (21)
	TENNIS (21)
	VOLLEYBALL (18)
	ROUNDERS (14)
	KEEP FIT (12)
	SWIMMING (11)
	HOCKEY (9)
	GYMNASTICS (9)
	TABLE TENNIS (9)
	TRAMPOLINING (5)
	AEROBICS (4)
	BASKETBALL (4)
	COUNTRY DANCING (4)
	JUDO (4)
	DANCE (MODERN ED) (3)
	POPMOBILITY (2)
	SQUASH (2)
	CANOEING (2)
	CROSS COUNTRY (2)
	GOLF (1)
	ARCHERY (1)

FIGURE SIX FIFTH YEAR P.E. ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE L.E.A.

NO. OF SCHOOLS IN BRACKETS	
ACTIVITIES	BADMINTON (29)
	KEEP FIT (19)
	VOLLEYBALL (18)
	TENNIS (14)
	NETBALL (10)
	TABLE TENNIS (9)
	TRAMPOLINING (8)
	SWIMMING (6)
	BASKETBALL (5)
	AEROBICS (5)
	JUDO (4)
	SQUASH (4)
	ROUNDERS (3)
	CANOEING (2)
	CROSS COUNTRY (2)
	POPMOBILITY (2)
	HOCKEY (2)
	DANCE (2)
	GYMNASTICS (2)
	ATHLETICS (2)
	ARCHERY (1)
	GOLF (1)
	ICE
	SKATING (1)

APPENDIX THREE

SCHOOL PROFILES.I. Heyfield School.

Heyfield is a split-site mixed 11-18 six-form entry community comprehensive school. It is situated in the inner city and is designated a Social Priority School. It opened in 1973 with the amalgamation of four previous secondary schools and now operates from two sites approximately 400 metres apart. At the time of the research there were 1,058 pupils on the roll. The catchment area is a multi-racial district of Liverpool with approximately one quarter of the school population black. It is an area which is recognised as having endured substantial social and economic problems and it has some of the poorest housing and highest rates of unemployment in a city which suffers acutely from 'regionalised' economic recession. The catchment area is bounded by derelict dockland to the south, which at the time of the research was being converted into a controversial International Garden Festival Site. Most of the children live locally in nineteenth century terraced housing or in privately rented flats in large Victorian houses which suffer from many years of neglect and poor maintenance. At the time of the research over one quarter of the children were entitled to free school meals. However, even in the face of falling school rolls and rising youth and adult unemployment, the school continues to maintain a sixth form which, at the time of the study, consisted of seventy full-time, fifty part-time and forty-seven day release students.

Although the majority of the school entrants each year are designated

as having below average I.Q. the school achieves considerable 'success' in its examination results. The H.M.I. report published in 1982 recognized this fact commenting that over 230 'O' level and C.S.E. Grade One passes were being recorded most years even though the level set for 'average' children by exam boards is C.S.E. Grade Four.

This 'success' is not altogether surprising. On entering the school buildings, which externally are old and bleak, there is an atmosphere of hard work and enthusiasm reflected in imaginative displays of creative work. The ethos of the school stems from the strong personal qualities of the headteacher who is respected throughout the authority for her enthusiasm and commitment to comprehensive education and the concept of 'community education'. She was described by several members of staff as a "strong, forceful personality" who had firm ideals. Even though decision-making in the school involve consultation and delegation many staff concluded that there was no mistaking the headteacher's personal "authority and power over what happens both in the short-term and over long-term plans."

The Head's commitment to community education is reflected in the fact that since 1976 the school has been designated a community school. This is a relatively new concept for the city with only one other community school operating in the authority. To this end the school has incorporated into its system the local Adult Education Centre and now offers a wide range of adult and youth education, leisure activities and clubs.

In 1977 the school began a 'Return and Learn' scheme which from 1979 has been funded under the Manpower Service Commission's Special Tem-

porary Employment Programme (S.T.E.P.). In this scheme unemployed people attend classes for up to twenty one hours per week while retaining eligibility for unemployment and supplementary benefit. At the time of the research there were twenty five 'Return and Learn' students engaged primarily in literacy and numeracy schemes.

The school day runs from 8a.m. until 10p.m. thus incorporating the community element into its education provision. Staff involved in evening sessions or 'twilight' sessions (4 to 7p.m.) receive extra pay. There is a youth club in the school on four evenings each week.

The school has a uniform of navy skirt, white blouse and navy sweater/cardigan. Although a uniform is encouraged it relates primarily to a school colour with considerable flexibility around style, material etc.

II. ROSEHILL SCHOOL.

Rosehill is a mixed comprehensive school for 11-18 year olds. At the time of the research there were approximately 1400 pupils including one hundred and eighty in the sixth form. The school is situated in a middle class suburb three miles from the city centre. It comprises the amalgamation of three former secondary schools (two grammar and one secondary modern) and works from these three sites.

The immediate area is residential with most houses medium size, private and semi-detached. Many of the children live here although a proportion travel from areas closer to the city centre (the 1980

Education Act allows for parental choice). The school attracts a number of pupils gaining a reputation from the traditions of the two former grammar schools. The school population is predominantly middle class with a small core of working class children. The majority of the pupils are white with one or two Afro-Caribbean and/or Chinese pupils and several Asian pupils in each year.

The academic structure of the school is unstreamed. There are no examinations on entry and the pupils are placed alphabetically in eight forms. From Christmas of the 1st year the pupils are 'set' in each subject which is preferred to streaming because:

A pupil could be in a top set for one subject, a middle set for another and a bottom set for a third. Weakness in one subject will not prevent a boy or girl from being in the top set in another subject in which he or she is strong.
(School Guide 1983:3)

It is interesting to note that this system does not apply to P.E. In 1982 69 5th formers sat at least 5 'O' levels gaining 399 grades A,B,C. The average number of subjects per pupil was 5.77. A further 268 Grade One C.S.E. examinations were gained by other pupils. Overall the school has a good academic reputation. The School Guide emphasizes that as a result of 'A' level examinations approximately 700 girls and boys have entered University, including Oxford and Cambridge since the school was reorganized in 1967. It was 'proud to announce' that in 1980 47 pupils entered University with others gaining places at Polytechnics and Colleges of Higher Education.

The school day runs from 9.15a.m. until 3.45p.m. and is divided into seven 40 minute periods with lunch and afternoon registration taking place between 12.35p.m. and 1.45p.m. The timetable is organized into six teaching days thus lessons are structured over these six days rather than a calendar week. School uniform is worn in the first four years and for girls it consists of a navy blue flared or pleated skirt, a plain pastel-blue school blouse, navy blue cardigan or pullover, plain white or navy blue three quarter socks or tights. Trousers may be worn in the winter months but not jeans. The School Guide points out that:

These items are available in many stores and as all the items are widely stocked and commonly worn, prices are relatively low.

The fifth year and sixth form do not wear school uniform and their dress is "at the parents' discretion."

III. TOWNLEY SCHOOL.

Townley is a single-sex comprehensive school of approximately 1200 pupils (11-18 years). The school was formed in 1963 and was previously a secondary modern school. Its original building was extended to provide new classrooms, a wing for Home Economics and Science and a Physical Education block. The school is situated to the north of the city between two major first division football grounds. The housing in the area is dominated by streets of nineteenth century terraced housing with areas of semi-detached, private housing ap-

proximately one mile away to the North-East. The school buildings are opposite a large park which has a sports complex and all-weather play areas. It is traditionally a white, protestant area of the city and this is reflected in the school intake - there are no black children in the school.

The school is designated a seven form entry school but each year is taught in eight forms to give certain classes small group teaching. Each year is also divided into three bands of ability with two forms in the 'top' band, four in the 'middle' and two in the 'bottom' band (School Prospectus). Within each band there is mixed-ability teaching with some setting in Mathematics and English. The sixth form is open access, allowing students to follow 'A' level courses or a course in which examinations are not of significance.

The development of the school from a secondary modern is reflected in the school's weak academic reputation. As a girls' single-sex comprehensive catering for a predominantly white working-class intake, the school is of particular interest. This is in contrast to the other single sex schools in the city which are either Catholic or Anglican and which have predominantly middle-class rolls and good academic reputations.

The school day begins at 8.45a.m. with lessons beginning at 9.20 a.m. and continuing as eight periods of 35 minutes. The school uniform consists of navy blue skirt or trousers (no jeans), white blouse or white polo neck sweater, navy cardigan or pullover. First years must wear white or navy socks and older pupils are allowed tights. A blazer and school tie are optional and available from a designated

retail outlet.

IV. ARCHWAY SCHOOL .

Archway was established in 1894 by the Community of the Sisters of the Church, an Anglican Order of Nuns. The Sisters ran the school until the mid 1970s when it became the responsibility of the Diocese. In September 1980 the school became a four-form entry comprehensive school for girls. At the time of the research there were 746 children on the roll.

The policy regarding admission of pupils is negotiated between the Diocesan Board of Education and the L.E.A. The school has a city-wide intake, prospective pupils being recommended by each parish. Although it has a mixed ability comprehensive intake the school maintains a prestigious reputation within the Church and selection for admission is dependent on fulfilling 'suitability' requirements within the local parish. Although the school is situated in a working class city area (approximately one mile from Heyfield School), there is no 'local' catchment area and the pupils attend from areas across the city.

The school has a strong academic reputation with a large sixth form and emphasis on 'O' level and 'A' level achievement. In the first year all pupils are taught in mixed ability groups with setting taking place in Maths and French in later years. Latin is introduced in the second year for those pupils judged to have high ability levels and the remainder are taught classical studies.

The school day begins at 8.40a.m. and ends at 3.35p.m., the day being divided into 8×35 minute lessons. There are strict regulations covering school uniform. It consists of blouse, skirt, school sweater, blazer (from one retailer only, cost £49) and school hat.

TABLE ONE: Heyfield School Timetable of Curricular Activities

TERM	CHRISTMAS	SPRING	SUMMER
YEAR 1:	Ball skills/Netball Gymnastics Dance	Ball skills Gymnastics Dance	Athletics Rounders/Swimming Dance
YEAR 2:	Netball Gymnastics Dance	Netball Gymnastics Dance	Athletics Rounders/Swimming Dance
YEAR 3:	Netball/Hockey Gymnastics/Dance Volleyball/Badminton	Badminton/Volleyball Hockey/Netball Basketball/Badminton	Tennis Rounders Athletics/Swimming
[Choice between activities offered e.g. netball OR hockey.]			
YEAR 4:	Netball/Badminton/ Dance/Volleyball/ Trampolining	Hockey/Badminton/ Gym/Basketball/ Cross Country	Tennis/Baseball/ Rounders/ Athletics
YEAR 5:	Netball/Badminton/ Keep Fit/Volleyball/ Trampolining/Table Tennis	Badminton/Basketball/ Keep Fit/Volleyball/ Trampolining/Table Tennis	Athletics/ Rounders/ Baseball

TABLE TWO: Heyfield School Timetable of Curricular Activities

	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.
9.25 am	1ST YR. DANCE	1ST YR. DANCE		1ST YR. DANCE	1ST YR. DANCE
-	3RD YR. (3SHSF) NETBALL/ VOLLEYBALL		3HRF KEEP FIT/ BADMINTON		3LDSP MINOR GAMES
10.20 am	BADMINTON/ TRAMPOLINING		CROSS-COUNTRY/ BASKETBALL		
10.20 am	4OG DANCE	4OG (OPTIONS)	4OF	5OG	2ND YR.
-					
11.15 am					
	← - - - -	- B R E A K	- - - -	- - - -	- - - - →
11.30 am					
-	3LDSP	1SHF (BATHS) 1LDP (BATHS)	1ST YR. DANCE	2ND YR.	3SHRF
12.25 pm					
	← - - - -	.D I N N E R	- - - -	- - - -	- - - - →

Continued...

TABLE TWO: Continued

	<u>MON.</u>	<u>TUES.</u>	<u>WED.</u>	<u>THURS.</u>	<u>FRI.</u>
1.20 pm	1SHF GYM 1LDP SKILLS	2ND YR. GYM/DANCE BALL SKILLS	3LDCP KEEP FIT/ BADMINGTON CROSS COUNTRY/ BASKETBALL	1SHF BALL SKILLS 1LDP GYM	50X
- 2.25 pm					
2.25 pm	50F	50F 1ST YR. DANCE	50G	40X	40F
- 3.20 pm					
3.20 - 3:30 pm	← - C L A S S . R E G I S T R A T I O N - - - →				

TABLE THREE: Heyfield School Timetable of Extra-Curricular Activities

	<u>MON.</u>	<u>TUES.</u>	<u>WED.</u>	<u>THURS.</u>	<u>FRI.</u>
<u>LUNCHTIME</u>	NETBALL	INTER-CLASS	BADMINTON/ JNR. NETBALL	JNR. BADMINTON/ GYM	BASKETBALL
<u>AFTER SCHOOL</u>	NETBALL/ GYM DANCE	NETBALL MATCHES DANCE	BADMINTON MATCHES DANCE	NETBALL DANCE	-

TABLE FIVE: Rosehill School Timetable of Extra-Curricular Activities

	<u>DAY 1</u>	<u>DAY 2</u>	<u>DAY 3</u>	<u>DAY 4</u>	<u>DAY 5</u>	<u>DAY 6</u>
<u>LUNCHTIME</u>	SWIMMING SENIOR GYM	1ST YR. NETBALL 2ND YR. NETBALL	4TH YR. BADMINTON SWIMMING	JUNIOR GYM	SWIMMING 3RD YR. NETBALL	4TH YR. NETBALL
<u>AFTER SCHOOL</u>	MONDAY SWIMMING VOLLEYBALL TRAMPOLINING	TUESDAY SWIMMING 2ND YR. NETBALL	WEDNESDAY 1ST YR. NETBALL	THURSDAY 3RD/4TH/5TH NETBALL DANCE CLUB	FRIDAY STAFF BADMINTON	

TABLE SIX: Townley School Timetable of Curricular Activities

	<u>MON.</u>	<u>TUES.</u>	<u>WED.</u>	<u>THURS.</u>	<u>FRI.</u>
PERIOD 1	2K Swimming 2N Rounders	1S Rounders 2S Swimming	IVth YR.	Vth YR.	2Y Tennis 1E Tennis 1N Gym 2L Swimming
PERIOD 2	2K Games 2N Swimming	1S Swimming 2S Tennis	IVth YR.	Vth YR.	2Y Tennis 1E Tennis 1N Dance 2L Rounders
PERIOD 3	1L Swimming 3R Gym 3M ¹ Tennis	1T Swimming 2L Tennis	Vth YR.	3M ³ Rounders 3R Swimming	1T Gym 1K Swimming
PERIOD 4	1L Rounders 3R Dance 3M ¹ Tennis	1T Rounders 2L Dance	Vth YR.	3M ³ Swimming 3R Tennis	1T Swimming
	L	U	N	C	H

Continued...

TABLE SIX: Continued

	<u>MON.</u>	<u>TUES.</u>	<u>WED.</u>	<u>THURS.</u>	<u>FRI.</u>
PERIOD 5	1E Rounders 2R Games	2Y ² Rounders 3M ² Tennis	1K Tennis 2E Swimming	3M ¹ Swimming	1S Tennis 2T ⁴ Tennis 3M ⁴ Swimming sK Gym
PERIOD 6	1E Dance 2R Swimming	2Y ² Swimming 3M ² Tennis	1K Tennis 2E Rounders	3M ¹ Rounders	1S Tennis 2T ⁴ Tennis 3M ⁴ Rounders 2K Dance
PERIOD 7	1N ² Tennis 3M ² Gym 3M ⁴ Gym	3M ³ Tennis 3S Rounders 2E Tennis 3T Swimming	1L Tennis 2S Rounders	IVth YR.	2N Tennis 2R Gym
PERIOD 8	1N ² Swimming 3M ² Dance 3M ⁴ Dance	3M ³ Tennis 3S Swimming 2E Rounders 3T Tennis	1L Tennis 3T Tennis 3S Dance	IVth YR.	2N Tennis 2R Dance

TABLE SEVEN: Townley School Timetable of Extra-Curricular Supervision

LUNCHTIME

	<u>Gymnasium</u>	<u>Swimming Pool</u>	<u>Courts</u>
<u>MON.</u>	Miss M. Miss S. (Gym Club)	Mrs R.	-
<u>TUES.</u>	Miss S.	Miss M.	-
<u>WED.</u>	Mrs C.	Mrs P.	-
<u>THURS.</u>	Mrs P.	Mrs C.	-
<u>FRI.</u>	Miss B. (Badminton Club)	-	-

AFTER SCHOOL

	<u>Gymnasium</u>	<u>Swimming Pool</u>	<u>Courts</u>
<u>MON.</u>	Mrs P.	Miss S.	Miss M. (Trampoling)
<u>TUES.</u>	Miss S.	Mrs P.	Miss M.
<u>WED.</u>	Miss S.	Mrs C.	Miss M.
<u>THURS.</u>	Miss M. Miss S.	Mrs C. (Canoe Club)	-
<u>FRI.</u>	-	-	-

TABLE EIGHT: Archway School Timetable of Curricular Activities

	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.
PERIOD 1	TENNIS/ 2R/M ROUNDERS ↓	2M ROUNDERS 3C ROUNDERS ↓	3M TENNIS 5TH YR DANCE/ TENNIS ↓	2R DANCE 4C/D ROUNDERS ↓	4R ROUNDERS ↓
PERIOD 2					
PERIOD 3	TENNIS 5TH YR DANCE ↓	1D/M TENNIS ↓	BADMINTON/ 5R DANCE ↓	3R TENNIS ↓	TENNIS/ 1R ATHLETICS ↓
PERIOD 4			2C DANCE		
	L U N C H				
PERIOD 5	1D ROUNDERS	2D ATHLETICS 3D TENNIS ↓	6TH FORM OPTIONS 1R DANCE 1M DANCE ↓	1M ROUNDERS 2D DANCE	
PERIOD 6	2C ROUNDERS			BADMINTON/ 4M DANCE	DANCE/ 4C/D ROUNDERS/ VOLLEYBALL ↓
PERIOD 7	1C ROUNDERS	TENNIS/ 4R ATHLETICS ↓	3C ATHLETICS ↓	BADMINTON/ 5C DANCE 1R DANCE	
PERIOD 8	3R DANCE 3D ROUNDERS		3M ROUNDERS ↓	BADMINTON/ 5D DANCE	1D DANCE

APPENDIX FOUR

Structured Interview Question (Heads of Department).

1. What activities do you teach?
2. Why do you teach these activities?
3. Do you see netball and hockey as especially suitable for girls?
4. Do you think some activities are more suitable for boys and some for girls?
5. What are the reasons for this?
6. Should girls be allowed to do football, cricket, rugby, boxing?
7. Should boys do dance, netball?.
8. Do you see any restrictions on girls doing physical activity?
9. Do you see any restrictions on boys doing physical activity?
10. Has the curriculum altered much over the past ten years?
11. Is the introduction of 'options' a positive development?
12. Where do you see their place in the curriculum?
13. Do girls and boys require different approaches in P.E. teaching? Why?
14. Who determines what and how activities are taught in your school?
15. Do you meet as a staff to discuss content?
16. Where were you trained?
17. How important was your training on influencing what and how you teach?
18. What do you see as your main aim in teaching P.E.?
19. Are the aims of girls and boys P.E. the same?
20. Should there be different emphases?
21. How important do you think P.E. is in influencing girls' future leisure pursuits?
22. Do you have contact with leisure facilities in you local area?
23. Is it important to encourage girls to continue physical activities after school?
24. Do you think P.E. could/should be a mixed activity?
25. Do you see any problems with mixed P.E.?
26. What do you think are the reasons behind separate P.E. depart-

ments?

27. How important is competition in your P.E. programme?
28. Are girls competitive?
29. Do you have P.E. exams?
30. Do you think P.E. should be compulsory for all girls?
31. What do you offer in extra-curricular time?
32. Do many girls take part?
33. Are these activities optional or compulsory?
34. Are there any restrictions on girls staying after school or weekends?
35. How many staff are there? Full-time/Part-time?
36. Do you get help from other members of staff?
37. Do girls have outside coaching?
38. Do you notice that girls drop out/lose interest in P.E. at any time?
39. How do you try to retain girls' interest in P.E.
40. Do you have a set P.E. Kit?
41. Do you have compulsory showers?
42. Do you have problems enforcing this?
43. Are girls allowed to be excused P.E. for reasons associated with periods?
44. Do you adapt your programme due to weather conditions?
45. Given adequate financial resources are there any changes you would like to see for girls' P.E.?

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