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The Emotional Dimensions of Urban Teacher Change

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This study used an emotional geographies theoretical framework to analyze the emotional dimensions of urban teacher change. Fifteen urban physical education teachers involved in a comprehensive curriculum reform project were interviewed and observed multiple times across one school year. Data were analyzed using inductive analysis, and trustworthiness measures included triangulation, peer debriefing, researcher journals, and member checks. Teachers reported that emotional dimensions related to their urban students, colleagues, and status heavily influenced their engagement in the project. The discussion section maps the emotional dimensions of these teachers' change experiences onto an emotional geographies framework that situates their experiences in change literature and offers a roadmap for future reform initiatives.

Key words: professional development, emotion, curriculum reform

Assisting teachers in improving their practices has received a great deal of attention in recent years. Analyses of change have run the gamut from top-down, national perspectives (Curtner-Smith, 1999; Curtner-Smith, Todorovich, McCaughtry, & Lacon, 2001), to state and school district-wide multilevel change (Rink & Mitchell, 2003), to the influences of teachers' beliefs and biographies (Curtner-Smith; Ennis, 1994; Fullan, 1991; Rovegno & Bandhauer, 1997b), social environment (Ennis; Rovegno & Bandhauer, 1997a), and political context (Lipman, 1997). The result is

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an understanding that change is a complex process that couples teachers, students, administrators, parents, instruction, curriculum, and political agendas.

To date, most research on teacher change has focused on teacher and student outcomes, especially in physical education (Ward, 1999). Recently, however, Hargreaves (1998) suggested viewing change outcomes research cautiously because it often overlooks the complexities that spawn outcomes. That is, it often underreports the process that led to outcomes, especially from teachers' perspectives. Hargreaves' (1998) chief concern is that teachers' interpersonal and emotional lives might play a key role throughout the process—in whether they elect to change, how they interpret change, how they enact it, and how they navigate through challenges. For example, Hargreaves found that teachers' emotional connections with their students influenced most of their thinking and decisions about changes to school policies and their teaching. He suggested that teachers' emotional connections with their students served as "emotional filters" through which they interpreted most change issues. In an era when change is the mantra of education, Hargreaves provides a new way of wading into the complexities of the process of change by specifically looking at the role of emotion.

Not only has the role of emotion been omitted from change literature, but, as Armour and Yelling (2004) point out, the actual body of teacher change and professional development literature in physical education is rather sparse. In their attempts to understand how teachers experience and derive meaning from professional development, Armour and Yelling asserted, "there is very little published research evidence available on the professional development experiences of PE teachers in England and elsewhere" (p. 73). Their analysis sheds light on the somewhat limited body of research in physical education pertaining to how and why teachers change their professional practices through comprehensive reform projects.

Furthermore, it appears that no teacher change research in physical education has focused on the dynamics of urban teacher change. Like Anyon (1994), we believed that the urban/inner-city context might provide additional dynamics that influence teachers' work. It seems clear that a variety of factors position urban schools as unique environments in which to work. Factors such as: high levels of violence (Ennis et al., 1999), poverty (Reyes & Rodriguez, 2004; Kozol, 1991), academic underperformance (Bainbridge & Lasley, 2002; Thirunarayanan, 2004), high-stakes testing climates (Dantley, 2003; Demoss, 2002), culturally diverse students (Bainbridge & Lasley; Rong, & Brown, 2002), "basketball culture" (McNutt, 2002), decreased physical activity opportunities in the community (Wilson, White, & Fisher, 2001), and decreased teacher quality and numbers (Ng, 2003) almost surely provide contexts that could influence how teachers change their practices. Yet, it is thus far unclear how these dynamics might influence teachers as they encounter new curricular and pedagogical possibilities, evaluate them, and/or begin melding new possibilities with existing practices.

Therefore, this study attempted to address the shortage of teacher change literature in physical education examining the emotional dimensions of urban teacher change. Specifically, we used an emotional geographies theoretical framework to better understand how the context of urban schools influenced physical educators' emotional engagement and experiences with changes in their teaching practice during a district-wide reform project.

Emotional Geographies
of Teacher Change

As Hargreaves (1998), Rosiek (2003), and Zembylas (2002) have shown, teaching is emotional work. Hargreaves (1998, p. 838) states:

> In simpler words, as an emotional practice, teaching activates, colors, and expresses teachers' own feelings, and the actions in which those feelings are embedded (i.e., teachers' inner streams of experience). Likewise, as an emotional practice, teaching activates, colors, and otherwise affects the feelings and actions of those with whom teachers work and form relationships (i.e., teachers' outer streams of experiences).

Human experience is as much emotional and social as it is cognitive and physical, meaning that we think, feel, act, and interact simultaneously in the world (Dewey, 1938; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). As such, teaching must be viewed as an emotional enterprise, even more so given its status as a helping or caring occupation (Hargreaves, 1998; Hargreaves & Tucker, 1991). It requires that those in the profession not "go through the motions" but, rather, actively engage their students, immerse themselves in their world, and seek ways of helping them through life.

Recent studies into teacher thinking, for example, have illustrated that teachers' emotional connections with their students influence many of their decisions about educational content, curriculum, and pedagogy (Hargreaves, 2000a; McCaughtry, 2004; Rosiek, 2003). McCaughtry, for example, found that most teaching decisions are made at least partly in reference to how teachers interpret students' emotional lives.

The process whereby teachers change their thinking and practice is equally emotional. It is riveted with ups and down, ebbs and flows, trial and error, confusion, frustration, joy, and accomplishment. Hargreaves (2000a, 2000b) recently provided a conceptual framework for mapping what he calls the "emotional geographies" of teaching and teacher change. He identified five emotional geographies that "consist of the spatial and experiential patterns of closeness and/or distance in human interactions and relationships that help create, configure and color the feelings and emotions we experience about ourselves, our world, and each other" (Hargreaves, 2000b, p. 815). These geographies are certainly not mutually exclusive and should be viewed collectively and in combinations as a heuristic for understanding how teachers' emotional feelings about teaching and change are influenced by their physical environment, schools as institutions, the social practice of education, and wider social forces that enable and constrain schooling. For this study, these emotional geographies were conceptualized as:

1. Sociocultural geographies, which include such issues as race, class, gender, sexualities, urbanization, ability/disability, and others that influence the emotional understandings that teachers have of their work.

2. Moral geographies, in which teachers' fundamental values and beliefs about education and the purposes of their work confront the realities of everyday classrooms and other stakeholders.

3. Professional geographies, in which images of the "professional" (e.g., appearance, demeanor, relationships with colleagues, participation in professional organizations) are negotiated and enacted.
4. Political geographies, which are locations and interactions in which school, district, state, and national bureaucratic forces shape teachers' agendas, thinking, and feeling.
5. Physical geographies, which comprise the organizational arrangements, facilities, and equipment that influence teachers' feelings about their role in education.

A framework of emotional geographies is meant to highlight the ways that teachers' physical and social culture mutually constitute their emotional perspectives on change, which then gives rise to broader and richer explanations for how teachers make sense of their work and why they behave the way they do. To understand why some teacher and student outcomes occur in certain classrooms and not others or why change can look so different across diverse contexts, it is important to understand the visceral level of feeling and emotion that pervades teachers' work within their various and diverse contexts. As outlined earlier, because the context of urban schools is riddled with unique and challenging factors, they might provide an excellent and important window into understanding how local culture and teacher emotion mutually constitute one another as teachers derive meaning from change efforts. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the emotional dimensions of urban teacher change.

Methods

In this study we used interpretive methodology to examine the emotional dimensions of urban teacher change. A year before the study, a large Midwestern U.S. urban school district partnered with the local university and secured funding to conduct physical education reform in its elementary schools ($N = 84$). The urban school district's K–12 enrollment was over 162,000 students. The student population was 88% African American, 7% White, and the remaining 5% represented other minority populations including Arab Americans, American Indians, Hispanics, and Hmongs. The district served predominantly low-income neighborhoods and more than 70% of the students qualified for the free or reduced-price lunch program. The city had a limited number of community sport and recreation programs and had struggled with high levels of crime and violence for years.

To begin attracting teachers to the project, an initial recruitment meeting was held for all elementary physical education teachers in the district who had previously attended training in the Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum (EPEC) after its adoption into the formal district curriculum several years earlier. The current project was explained and 15 teachers from 14 schools volunteered to participate in comprehensive change activities for one school year.

EPEC, the curriculum content of the reform, was developed and field-tested by a consortium of state educators (several from this urban district). The K–5 curriculum contains lessons in four content domains: motor skills (e.g., striking, throwing, catching), physical activity and fitness knowledge (e.g., benefits of physical

activity, cardiorespiratory fitness, stretching), fitness development, and personal and social skills (e.g., best effort, cooperation, compassion, following directions). Each grade level has an accompanying test that explains the rationale for the curriculum, its scope and sequence, and scripted lessons for 35 key objectives from each of the above content domains. The curriculum also comes with exhaustive pretest and posttest assessment materials and large laminated instructional posters for each curricular objective. Eighty percent of the state's school districts integrated it into curricula, and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) awarded it the "2002 Achievement in Prevention Research and Research Translation in Chronic Disease Award." EPEC was adopted into the district curriculum because it was developed specifically for this state's physical education teachers, and teachers in the district supported it.

The teachers, 10 women and 5 men, ranged in age (from 28–65), ethnic backgrounds (8 White, 6 African American, 1 Hispanic), and teaching experience (1–30 years, $M = 18.53$, $SD = 10.69$). All of them were tenured but one, and eight had completed Master's degrees. They also had attended one EPEC workshop in the previous 6 years. Studies of the teachers' EPEC implementation after these workshops, however, found they incorporated little, if any, of the material into their teaching (McCaughtry, Hodges Kulinna, & Cothran, 2004).

In the current project, teachers participated in three forms of professional development. First, they attended a day-long refresher EPEC workshop led by the state's Fitness Foundation, which included an EPEC overview, lengthy discussions, sample lessons, and introductions to EPEC assessments. After the workshop, each teacher received all curriculum materials (six textbooks with all lesson plans included and wall posters for all curriculum objectives) and the physical education equipment needed to teach it. Second, they attended two additional day-long workshops, which were teacher-focused with discussions of EPEC and issues of implementation. The workshops also included demonstration lessons taught by EPEC-experienced teachers and peer-taught lessons by the teachers themselves. These workshops were dialogical and designed around teachers' concerns and perceptions. Last, an experienced EPEC mentor visited each teacher for two half days to provide advice and support, which included the EPEC mentor teaching lessons, various lesson evaluations of the project teacher's lessons (e.g., systematic observation of time usage and feedback rates), and before-, between-, and after-class discussions.

Data Collection

Individual and small group teacher interviews were the primary method of data collection. First, teachers were interviewed individually at the start of the project to obtain their biographies, teaching histories, perceptions of EPEC, and their previous training, rationale for participating in the project, and initial concerns about the upcoming activities. Second, teachers were again interviewed individually midway through the school year to obtain their developing perceptions about learning the new curriculum. Third, teachers were interviewed individually during the last month of the school year and were asked to reflect on their experiences throughout the entire year, the professional development activities, the curriculum, implementing it in their urban classrooms, and suggestions for future EPEC projects. Finally, the teachers were also interviewed in small groups of five immediately

after the workshops. They were asked about their perceptions of the curriculum and the professional development activities.

All interviews lasted between 65 and 90 minutes, followed an interview guide, and were conducted by an experienced qualitative researcher or one of two trained interviewers. The novice interviewers had each taken a graduate level research methods course and also underwent three additional forms of training. First, they were trained during several discussion sessions in interview methodology and strategies. Second, they observed the experienced researcher conduct several interviews and discussed them afterward. Last, the novice interviewers conducted interviews while being observed by the experienced researcher and discussed it afterward. In the small group interviews, the experienced researchers and each of the two trained interviewers interviewed a small group of five teachers. The same groups of teachers were interviewed by the same interviewer at the end of each of the project workshops. The two trained interviewers conducted a majority of all individual interviews (some with the guidance of the experienced researcher) and did so with the same teachers each time. The content of the interviews followed the direction offered by the teachers' responses. Probes were used often to obtain clarification and elaboration. The interviewers did not ask questions related to emotional content; instead, they asked for teachers' perceptions of issues and pursued emotional themes only when teachers reported them.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using inductive constant comparison (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Interviews were transcribed, read by the interviewer, each excerpt of data was given a code according to its content, and data with similar codes were manually placed into categories for further analysis. The interviewers kept research journals in which they explained the categories that emerged. Bi-weekly, the interviewers met together with a peer debriefer (the experienced qualitative researcher) to discuss categories they had developed and share supporting data. The early meetings helped to develop an initial sense of the data across the interviewers and to build interview guides for the next round of interviews. The interviews were the same across all the teachers/small groups for each round of individual or small group interviews, regardless of the interviewer, and the interview guides were designed together by the entire research team before to each round of interviewing. Particular attention was paid during analysis to any data reflecting teacher emotion. As data collection and analysis meetings continued, numerous categories emerged and were consistent across the interviewers. These categories were then refined into themes that explained how teacher emotion influenced their change efforts.

Strategies were used to facilitate trustworthiness in the interpretations. First, the peer debriefer served as a critical sounding board for each interviewer, forcing them to prove their assertions with data and be as clear and specific as possible. Second, a peer debriefer and multiple interviewers helped to triangulate study interpretations and ensure that categories of interpretation were not specific to any one interviewer. Only categories of interpretation that were found by all interviewers were included as research themes. Third, member checks were conducted with the teachers during the second half of the final interview. Interviewers explained

the study interpretations to the teachers and asked for their refutation, support, or clarification. Last, a negative case analysis was conducted to weigh themes against unsupportive data. A striking instance of this occurred when teachers talked in emotional terms about support within their schools for change. At first they seemed to suggest that lack of support led to disengagement from change. But, as negative cases were found in the data and infused into subsequent interviews asking teachers to clarify, it turned out the teachers did not disengage because of a lack of support, but rather their lack of support seemed to intensify their resolve to change.

Findings

The main finding from this study was that these urban teachers' emotions were intertwined in almost every aspect of the reform project. In fact, the emotional ebbs and flows these teachers experienced on a day-to-day and month-to-month basis directly influenced how they viewed the project and their engagement. In working with these teachers across one school year, we found many important emotional dimensions embedded in their change efforts. This section describes urban student, urban peer, and urban status emotional dimensions that were of utmost importance in understanding why these experienced teachers elected to participate in the first place, how they experienced reform in their classrooms, the role their peers played in shaping the process, and the critical influence that status can have on energies to change.

Urban Student Dimensions

Like the teachers described by Hargreaves (1998), the emotional connections these teachers had with their students served as "filters" through which they interpreted the change process. In particular, their emotional connections with their urban students partially influenced why they elected to participate and how they felt while implementing EPEC in their classes.

Meeting the Needs of Urban Youth.   Several factors associated with urban youth continually surfaced as explanations for why these long-since tenured teachers volunteered to participate in a massive curricular reform despite no real mandate to change. First and foremost, almost every one of the teachers was acutely aware of the rising obesity and sedentary lifestyle crisis endemic to this urban center. Talk of overweight and inactive city children pervaded local news, city policy statements, and school discourse. As a result, many teachers viewed themselves on the "front line" of the obesity epidemic. Charde (one of the teachers) said, "we're on the front lines of this overweight problem that's getting worse and worse, just look at these kids!" Because many had gone through teacher education programs before fitness education had become popular, few teachers were familiar with curricula that targeted health outcomes. EPEC's focus on physical activity and fitness was particularly attractive to them for its potential to get students to be more active and healthy, even if it meant, in many cases, wholesale changes in their approaches. Ron seemed to capture the sentiments of many, "Some people are opposed to change, I'm not one of those. I'm not opposed to new things especially when it's going to get our kids more physically active."

Second, many of the teachers were also concerned about the emotional stability of their many transient urban students. In the city it is not uncommon for children to attend up to three or four elementary schools during a year, depending on who their caregiver is at any given time (e.g., mother, father, grandmother, aunt, friend of the family). Normally, this creates a problem in that students are forced to transition into very different physical education programs. They reasoned that, with EPEC's comprehensive scope and sequence, if it were implemented across the district, then transient students could make more seamless transitions to new schools. Doug said,

> The structure throughout the district would be good, because when kids transfer schools it is always a question, "what skills has this kid learned?" It would be nice to know what objectives they had learned. If you had to cover this, this, and this so that when students go to another school, we know what they've been taught.

Third, some of the teachers believed that the project and curriculum would help them connect better with their urban students' culture. Some were relatively new to the city schools and some had recently transferred from secondary to elementary schools. Therefore, learning how to connect curriculum with inner-city youth was appealing. Some of the older teachers admitted feeling their curriculum was "out-of-date" and that EPEC's content, activities, and learning scenarios were more meaningful to today's urban culture. Juanita suggested,

> When you've been teaching as long as I have, you lose that connection with the kids, you just keep teaching the same things, and next thing you know, you can't even relate. If you can't relate with these kids you're done for.

Two teachers who recently moved back to the elementary level felt that learning EPEC provided a "refresher" on understanding elementary students' interests. Tyrone claimed,

> This helped me get more organized, because the first year coming back I was kind of lost because I had been away from it so long, some of my terminology and activities were ancient but this was really helpful for me to get back into it and connect with the kids.

Feeling Comfortable Teaching new Content to Urban Youth.   Whereas meeting the needs of urban youth served as an energizing force to get them started down the road toward change, actually teaching the new curriculum to their urban youth proved far more unsettling. The teachers felt that urban youth are teachers' harshest critics. Most of the experienced teachers admitted skepticism and anxiety about change because they had grown comfortable with their previous practices. Most importantly, however, they claimed that urban students "get used to certain ways of doing things" such as learning only team sports, and basketball being the prominent sport (described in McCaughtry, Barnard, Martin, & Cothran, 2004). They felt their students' had a powerful emotional connection to and passion for basketball, similar to McNutt's (2002) description of urban basketball culture. Then, according to these teachers, when they attempted to diversify the curriculum beyond basketball and team sports, students were much more likely to vocally

disapprove and reject change outright than would rural or suburban youth. In particular, when they began implementing EPEC lessons with their students, they reported a strong and visceral sense of uncomfortableness in front of students as they "rolled their eyes," grumbled, and complained loudly and disrespectfully. This uncomfortableness with the "new" ultimately had a heavy bearing on whether the teachers accepted or rejected changing. Cedric said, "I think that's [uncomfortableness] a big reason why more teachers don't incorporate this after those workshops. It's different and you feel weird up there learning to teach something you maybe never taught before." On the upside, many teachers warmed up to change as they grew more comfortable and less anxious in front of students.

Feeling comfortable with teaching EPEC seemed to depend on three main things: whether students were receptive, whether they were learning, and teaching in front of supportive peers. In particular, the teachers felt increasingly comfortable teaching EPEC as students realized that team sports, particularly basketball, would not be the center of physical education curriculum any longer. The teachers often described how students gradually grew less resistant to curricula that focused on fundamental motor skills, lead-up games, and social content. This receptiveness to something other than team sports and basketball dramatically increased the teachers' comfort levels in learning to teach EPEC lessons. Douglas, for example, found that receptive students made him feel more strongly about giving the new curriculum a shot:

> At the workshop, we learned to teach a compassion lesson. I came back here and taught the kids about compassion and they had all sorts of things to say like, "I show compassion to my brother when I share my ball." They're still talking about that lesson, so I've gotten to think, "Well, OK, cool." Most of the time they just want to get playing, but when we got into talking about compassion, they really enjoyed it.

The teachers suggested they were often willing to persevere if they saw students learning. Paula developed a routine for teaching social themes, which enabled students to learn quickly.

> I really bought into the social stuff because we just gather around the wall chart and talk about it, then we get into activities, and if they mess up, I send them back to the chart to think about that [social theme], and they come back to me about what they learned.

Peer teaching new content lessons to supportive urban peers during workshops before teaching their students also reduced anxiety and facilitated comfort. Tyrone said,

> It has made me a lot more comfortable being able to share these [new lessons] with everyone. I felt awkward at first, but they all gave me some really good suggestions, so I guess the process of doing it and people really wanting to help you makes a difference.

In the end, why these teachers elected to participate in significant reform and how they continued changing was influenced by their urban students. Factors such as urban health, urban transience, and connecting with urban youth served

as strong emotional rationales to get these teachers "in the door." Then, once in, it was the emotional sense of "being on display," trial and error, and perseverance that explained why some teachers continued with change, whereas others slowed their pace or quit altogether. A critical and unmitigated factor that influenced both deciding to participate and deciding to continue, however, was the urban dimensions of their students.

Urban Peer Dimension

These teachers drew a substantial amount of emotional energy from the opportunities to communicate with their urban peers throughout the project. They attended three day-long workshops in which their curricular and pedagogical needs directed the focus. Sometimes the content of the additional workshops was more content structured (e.g., teachers peer teaching EPEC lessons to one another), but many times the process shifted to interests or problems teachers were encountering—often beyond the scope of EPEC implementation.

Other than this project, elementary physical education teachers in this school district rarely have opportunities to communicate with one another because of decade-long reductions in professional development and the number of schools in the district. Teachers described themselves as "on an island," and conceded that most elementary physical education teachers experience a sense of isolation, but that it is even more pronounced and hurtful for urban teachers because of the myriad of social forces surrounding them. This unique opportunity to talk with other like-minded teachers had important motivating influences. Sandra suggested, "Just being with other people who are interested in developing and having knowledge reinforces what we're doing, so you don't feel like you're all alone out there." Max also said,

> One of the main things is that we're talking. We've got a small group of enthusiastic people. Just talking to them about the problems and what happens in their school and how they do this and how they do that has been enriching, certainly for me anyway.

Grace claimed that these kinds of emotional connections are even more important for older, more experienced teachers: "I think older teachers need that. Senior teachers need to feed off one another, because newer teachers, they're already gung ho." Given the isolation reported by all the teachers, breaking it and meeting regularly was pivotal. Douglas said,

> The camaraderie is a really good benefit. Being with adults in my expertise is very beneficial. I enjoyed realizing that we all are in the same boat and we have similar situations and, as the week goes on, we are all tired and things like that.

Connecting to physical education teachers, as opposed to classroom teachers, was another important aspect. "You're an island by yourself and other first grade teachers aren't going to want to talk about what's the best way to get them to learn to step, or skip, or whatever." (Tyrone)

The teachers also reported valuing the personal and practical instructional knowledge of other dedicated urban teachers. Alexandra claimed, "I love comparing

notes. We all have the same situations, with some variations. It's, 'oh yeah, I remember that, OK, I'll keep that in mind next time if that situation takes place.' I like being with PE people." Cedric suggested that sharing his experienced perspective made him feel good: "You know you got a good program, so being able to tell people what you do and see them acknowledge that and see you in a positive light, that feels good." Each and every teacher claimed that their urban context yielded significant obstacles and challenges, and that connecting with one another in a supportive environment armed them not only with strategies to make the curriculum work in their settings but also with energy and momentum to continue with change even when it grew difficult.

Urban Status Dimensions

The fact that this project was federally funded and was enacted with a developmental philosophy contributed to the teachers' feelings about change because of the enhanced status they felt (and sometimes did not feel) through their participation. Moreover, their various feelings of status were also intertwined with their perception of their urban environment and the dilemmas it posed. We were able to identify three emotional dimensions that involved feelings of status relative to status and control in the project execution, status as a discipline in the district, and status in their home schools.

Status in the Project.   Ownership and status were additional emotional dimensions of the project they collectively voiced. Most of the teachers agreed that, in the past, change efforts were mandated from upper-level administrators. In this project, however, they appreciated the absence of specific learning and implementation mandates and that they were allowed to evaluate the new curriculum and incorporate it into their classrooms "on their terms." This was important because the teachers often talked about ways that their urban schools presented unique challenges that would alter the ways in which EPEC could normally be adopted. Ownership to adapt and adopt the curriculum to their urban environment, which they knew best, had a lot to do with whether they ultimately emotionally bought into and accepted the change process. Most viewed the professional development as a toolbox giving them support to adapt their programs in their own ways. Ron said, "You definitely have a choice of whether you want to implement it or not. You were given every possible tool to learn it and adapt it to your program. They weren't saying, 'teach it or die.'" The lack of implementation mandates seemed to foster a more relaxed and collegial learning environment:

> I feel a lot more relaxed because they're not breathing down our neck and like, "learn this and do it just the way you see it or else." It gave me a lot more confidence because I was even encouraged to break the rules on EPEC and that was OK. I did it a little different and mixed with other stuff I've already been doing. They helped me see where EPEC could be useful in accomplishing the goals that I have for my kids. (Grace)

Status in the District.   Many of the teachers grew excited about participating in the project because they viewed EPEC's comprehensivity and credibility on a par with other academic subjects such as math and reading. For example, Ron claimed, "EPEC is our first program for physical education teachers that lined up

objectives and had it written up in such a way like you have in the core subjects. So I think it is a breakthrough for PE." Douglas agreed, "I think it's about time we got a guideline like everyone else. We've been treated like second-class citizens for quite awhile." In this urban district, students have been underperforming on the state achievement exams in the core subjects (e.g., math, literacy, science) for quite some time. This underperformance in the core knowledge areas had become the foremost political issue in the district and had gathered most of the attention and resources. As a result, all noncore subjects were viewed as extras that could be underfunded, eliminated altogether, or taught by anyone with an interest. Having a project and curriculum of this funding and scope brought new legitimacy in many of the teachers' eyes. Juanita, for example, viewed EPEC as a roadmap:

> Physical education teachers never had a program like EPEC. PE is like the other electives, you get some skills to teach, but there is no map to follow like you do in science and the other core subjects. PE teachers never had that because nothing had ever been developed. Now EPEC has given you a roadmap.

Beyond the curriculum, the teachers also reported feeling strongly about the increased status they felt by having such extensive and visible physical education-specific professional development. In the past, professional development for physical education typically meant workshops related to other disciplines (e.g., a reading seminar). Max said, "We need to see more PE rather than me having to go through some kind of English or math or individual thing in my office." Many had grown apathetic toward professional development but now reported finding renewed vigor as a result of the particular focus on physical education. Sharde agreed, "We need to have more of this. It's nice to get with your counterparts, just that camaraderie."

Status in Their Home Schools.   The status that the teachers felt in their home schools for participating in this project hinged in important ways on the reactions and support of their administrators and fellow teachers. For many of these teachers, learning and improvement often occurred in spite of their principals and fellow classroom teachers rather than because of them. Although some had principals and fellow teachers who were supportive, the majority had principals who gave them little recognition and fellow classrooms teachers who gave the impression that they "could care less what we're doing down here [in physical education]." (Sue) In general, these teachers persevered through an ethos of general apathy among other school personnel.

The teachers reported a range of emotional reactions to the project from their school principals. Those who sensed support felt gratified and energized to continue. Juanita said,

> My principal is a great lady and I feel respected by her. I told her that I got the EPEC invitation and she said, "I knew you would and I knew you'd find a way to help your kids. I know you're working hard." I feel respected by that.

Similarly, Grace stated, "After I explained EPEC and this [project] to her, she's very gung ho. She's always been receptive to things I've done to improve my program and that makes me want to try harder." A couple of teachers reported

principals who seemed interested when they found out that they would be receiving physical education equipment. "I didn't think she cared, but when I told her about the equipment, she was just beaming" (Mary). Some principals showed interest only when they found out about the equipment because they would no longer have to support physical education.

Much worse, a majority of the teachers described principals who showed no interest or impeded their efforts. Most principals showed little interest and were primarily concerned with subjects that were tested by the state exam. The same high-stakes testing climate that pervaded the district administration also influenced the attention and funding directions of school principals. It appeared to the teachers that principals felt "on the hot seat" to improve core subject test scores, which resulted in little support for noncore subjects. Tyrone said, "I don't think he cares one way or the other. His major concern is academic support for the classroom subjects so we can raise those test scores so we don't get on probation." Teachers reported being routinely moved to teach academic subjects when there were insufficient substitute teachers. Sharde recollected, "If we don't have enough subs when teachers are absent, guess who's going to a classroom? This is very demeaning because it makes my subject less important. I'm trying to do new things down here." One principal claimed he had no funds to support the teacher's efforts, yet when a classroom teacher wanted to start a "little tyke" basketball team, the principal quickly purchased flashy uniforms.

Somewhat surprisingly, the teachers managed to stay positive, and even sometimes defiant, in the face of little overall support from their principals. At a workshop, Ron seemed to capture the feelings of the group. "I know they think they pay me to babysit these kids, but I have to put that aside. If I let that get to me, I'd have to quit because it really hurts." Instead, most of the teachers claimed they mustered momentum and enthusiasm to change from the outcomes they saw in their students and the emotional support they received from their project peers. Max, for example, said, "I get my energy from being around these people [other teachers in the project] and seeing what this does in the classroom."

Classroom teachers also showed very little support for their physical education reforms. Only one teacher claimed that she felt supported by other classroom teachers in her school. Several claimed that classroom teachers told them that they supported physical education simply because it meant extra preparation times and that students expended their energies and were less "antsy" at their desks. Sandra said, "We're still prep people to them, even if we're trying to do something important. They don't look in to see what we're doing with their kids." Classroom teachers also undermined physical education teachers by using physical education to have students complete classroom assignments or as punishment for misbehaving. Paula exclaimed, "They use PE as punishment because they know kids really want to go and they can get them to behave if they threaten them with not going to PE." Ron was particularly bitter because he had tried to share the project with fellow classroom teachers during lunch one day, but was interrupted because the teachers instead wanted to talk about another teacher sleeping with the custodian. Most of the teachers, although disappointed, chalked up the classroom teachers' lack of support to ignorance and not recognizing the long-term value of physical education for children.

> They don't see our content as important because they don't realize the health implications for these kids. They don't realize that what we are doing dictates whether they're going to be physically active or not. They just don't see the implications of what we do. (Paula)

One would think that these teachers would be livid at these types of ignorance and disrespect, but, as mostly veterans, the teachers had learned to accept and live with their second-class status within their schools and to find motivation to pursue positive change in the face of disappointment elsewhere—whether from a respectable curriculum, other energetic physical education teachers, or a commitment to meeting students' needs.

Discussion

This study found that the process of urban teacher change is far more complex than whether teachers understand curriculum or can enact it in their classrooms. Instead, we found that teacher emotion plays a key role in many facets of change, from why teachers volunteer even though they already have tenure, to how they view professional development, and to why they stay invested in the process. Hargreaves' (2000a, 2000b) framework for mapping the emotional geographies of teaching offers some useful insights for understanding how these findings fit with broader teacher change and professional development literature. His typology of emotional geographies offers five areas for locating and conceptualizing how teacher emotion is central to teaching and, in this case, teacher change. Those geographies are: sociocultural, moral, professional, political, and physical. Each of these provides an expanded layer of interpretation for how the teachers feel about change and cautiously suggests some implications for fostering urban physical education change. Mapping these teachers' feelings about teaching onto Hargreaves' (2000a) typology of emotional geographies is important in two respects. First, it will show that an emotional geographies framework can also help to explain how urban teachers, in addition to the more suburban and rural teachers studied by Hargreaves, view change. Second, it helps us better understand the emotional geographies of physical education teachers, a segment of the teaching force not previously included in most typologies of teacher emotion. Mapping these teachers' feelings about change onto an emotional geographies framework is not meant to downplay or disregard the complexity and interconnectedness of the geographies of teacher affect in the urban environment. Rather, it is meant to continue building a typology of teacher emotion and include the impact of the urban environment on physical education teachers while simultaneously acknowledging the interwoven nature of the geographies themselves.

Sociocultural Geographies

Sociocultural geographies highlight the ways that social categories and arrangements such as race, class, gender, urban cities, and others influence the emotions that teachers experience regarding students, curriculum, and instruction. We found that the sociocultural dynamics of the "urban student" played a key emotional role in how these teachers viewed and experienced change. For example, whereas

Ennis (1994) found that urban teachers focused more on social objectives because of their perceptions of urban youth behavioral difficulties, we found that teachers feelings about curriculum and change were more intertwined with their concerns about urban youth obesity, transience, and multiculturalism. It seemed like their vision of urban students was more guided by an ethic of care (Noddings, 1992) for urban students' health, emotional stability, and connection to the teacher through culturally relevant instruction (Rosiek, 2004) than by teaching appropriate social behavior (Ennis). Urban communities might provide an additional sociocultural layer to the reasons why teachers might engage in change. Of course, youth are obese in nonurban settings as well, and they switch schools even in rural communities, and minority youth live in many suburbs, yet, it is the degree to which the teachers in this study felt these factors were intensified in this urban setting that uniquely influenced their feelings about change.

Urban students also influenced the teachers' comfort level with teaching new content. They indicated that their students' strong connections to team sports, particularly basketball, and willingness to openly resist a fitness and fundamental skill curriculum led to visceral feelings of discomfort in front of their students. Fullan (1991) suggested that, when implementing new curriculum, things tend to get worse before they get better, labeling this "the implementation dip." These teachers' implementation dips seemed to be more pronounced as a result partly of their students' strong emotional bonds to sports such as basketball (described by McNutt, 2002, as urban "basketball culture") and their hostility toward change. This seems to reinforce Cothran's (2001) finding that student receptivity plays a key role in whether teachers ultimately change. This study, however, might also signal that urban student culture plays an even more complex role in teacher comfort with new instruction.

For urban teachers, the inner-city community and its students provide a layer of emotional geography that likely influences how teachers evaluate change and why they persist or resist. Hence, those who introduce urban change efforts would do well to first understand how their teachers view the challenges and complexities of urban culture, a claim echoed by McCaughtry, Hodges Kulinna, and Cothran (2004), because those perceptions might harbor an emotional link between new curriculum and urban students. As Hargreaves (1998) noted, teachers, especially teachers at the elementary level (Hargreaves, 2000b), interpret change through an emotional filter: how it will improve the quality of their students' lives. It seems that urban youth might serve as a unique filter, perhaps different from rural or suburban students, and might require up-front attention in any urban change process. Knowing that urban students might play a challenging role during the implementation process can help teachers and professional development specialists foresee roadblocks and prepare urban teachers for slightly rougher implementation dips and help them devise strategies to reduce and cope with it when it surfaces.

Moral Geographies

Teachers' work is also guided by moral geographies, which explain how beliefs and values about the purposes and ethics of schooling dictate how teachers behave. It is clear that teachers' educational values and beliefs play a key role in whether, how, and why they implement change, even when mandated by national curriculum

with accountability structures (Curtner-Smith, 1999). Armour and Yelling (2004) report that teachers want continuing professional development that addresses their priorities, and Sparkes (1987, 1991) and Curtner-Smith illustrate that when the underlying values of change are not aligned with the values and beliefs of teachers, then they are likely to offer "strategic rhetoric" (voicing change even when little is occurring in their classes), adopt surface level changes for survival, or interpret and enact curriculum in starkly different ways than intended. These studies point to the unfortunate outcomes when the values underlying change fail to resonate with the values of teachers. This study, however, like the work of Ward and colleagues (1999), suggests that when the values and beliefs underlying change meld with those of the teachers enacting change, then that resonance can be a powerful and energizing force propelling change forward.

By implication, one of the first and most critical aspects of change must be to help teachers find resonance between change and their own beliefs and values for teaching. This is particularly the case with tenured teachers, who have no real professional mandate to change, especially in the U.S. This first step might be described as establishing emotional groundwork. Many projects overlook this initial step and have "outsiders" provide one-shot workshops for teachers that focus on the nuts and bolts of the content of change (Ward, 1999). They forego the important first layer in which teachers search for the connections between change and their own values. Starting point strategies, such as understanding teachers' values first, making explicit the value of new curriculum, or having teachers discuss how new curriculum might help them better enact what they believe about teaching are all too often omitted in favor of expedient and cost-effective knowledge dissemination. Unfortunately, when the initial connection between teacher values and change are not established, it seems clear that teachers are likely to resist. But, it also appears that when the emotional groundwork is undertaken from the beginning, and teachers see the link between what they believe and the process of change, then that resonance can create enthusiasm among teachers.

Professional Geographies

Professional emotional geographies delve into the "image" or what it means to be a professional teacher. This includes how a teacher conceptualizes proper dress; body type; language; relationships with students, parents, colleagues; and the general appearance of their subject matter, teaching space, and classroom mechanics. In this study, several professional geographies stood out clearly, namely the role of professional communities, the image of the curriculum as professional, and the image of the persevering physical educator. First, these teachers viewed their working group as a professional community, similar to that suggested by Armour and Yelling (2004), which facilitated curriculum learning, teaching demonstrations, and support. Their professional community experiences led to two key outcomes: gaining comfort with new curriculum and pedagogies through peer discussions that included constructive feedback, and increased energy from sharing perspectives with fellow urban physical educators also seeking change. As Curtner-Smith (1999) reported, professional communities of teachers tend to interpret change collectively and develop shared visions of what new curriculum might mean in their context. But, it appears that professional communities might also provide emotional stability

and support that should not be overlooked. They might help teachers learn the "nuts and bolts" of new approaches, but they might also contribute significantly to helping teachers through change by supporting feelings such enthusiasm, momentum, perseverance, comfort, anxiety, and joy.

The teachers' views of EPEC also contributed to their images of professionalism. Rovegno (1993) pointed out over a decade ago that pride in subject matter is an important emotional hurdle in teacher development. For these teachers, a new and burgeoning sense of professionalism emerged as they learned and implemented EPEC. They saw it as something to be proud of alongside other professional subjects like math and science. This feeling of pride, in turn, meant a great deal to them in terms of how they felt about their role in curriculum change.

In addition, these teachers saw themselves as professionals who persevere. This is significant because some teachers report guilt (Hargreaves & Tucker, 1991) or role conflict (Ward, 1999) when change grows difficult and increased energy, time, and commitment is required. These teachers reported that despite resistance from students, uncomfortableness, periodic confusion, and little respect or support in their home schools, they moved forward. In listening to their discussions, the teachers often voiced "us against the world" and "if we don't do it who will?" perspectives. This image of themselves as persevering teachers was connected with the support they felt from one another and their feelings about the status and legitimacy of the curriculum. Together the teachers had a sense of themselves as action oriented and capable, as opposed to passive victims overwhelmed by the difficulties of their workplaces.

Political Geographies

Schools are political institutions in which micro- and macro-contingencies influence change (Ward, 1999). These teachers felt both empowered and impinged upon by the political forces shaping their workplace. First, unlike the teachers described by Armour and Duncombe (2004) and Curtner-Smith (1999) who were pessimistic regarding national teacher change and professional development initiatives, these teachers felt empowered by the U.S. Department of Education funds that sustained their change efforts. These teachers felt that federal money potentially indicated a change in the status of physical education and hence felt energized to be part of such a widespread and collective mission. The key difference might lie in the focus of national initiatives. Whereas Armour and Duncombe and Curtner-Smith reported on UK teachers at the bottom of top-down mandates for curriculum change and professional development, teachers in this study were involved in more bottom-up change designed locally but using external funds. This distinction might mean a great deal to teachers in terms of how they view the politics of change.

Also related to empowerment, these teachers described feelings of ownership and control over many aspects of the project. For example, teachers and administrators in the district choose EPEC as the content of the change intervention, teacher input steered much of the project activities, and few mandates were given forcing teachers to implement the curriculum in lock-step fashion. Having control and ownership over change appears to be a powerful theme in teacher change (Cothran, 2001; Ward, 1999; Wirszyla, 2002). Perhaps this study and others reinforce Armour and Yelling's (2004) call for shifting the social construction of professional development

from its current emphases on teacher passivity, training, and implementation of externally imposed mandates toward a notion of "professional learning" in which teachers are at the heart of the process and interpret curriculum in a local context. Although not entirely teacher driven, this project suggests that professional learning might envelop important emotional overtones that could move more teachers to consider and seek change.

On the other hand, the high-stakes testing atmosphere of the state, district, and home schools had a frustrating and sometimes debilitating effect on the teachers' feelings about change. The negative influences of subject-matter status on teachers' feelings about their work are nothing new in physical education. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that urban environments might provide an even more hostile climate than other teaching contexts simply because a majority of underperforming schools in the U.S. are located in urban centers (Voltz, 1998). Combined with other economic, student, and community challenges, the pressure for urban schools to produce positive test scores in core subjects can be immense and pervade all aspects of urban school culture. As seen here, the focus, recognition, and diversion of resources toward core subjects in urban schools produces a complex and challenging context for physical education reform.

Physical Geographies

Teachers' workplaces also entail emotional physical geographies. In this setting, the most central feature of the physical geographies of these teachers' schools involved isolation. Feelings of isolation are endemic to both elementary and secondary physical education teachers (Stroot, Collier, O'Sullivan, & England, 1994). Similar to addressing teachers' values at the beginning of any reform initiative, this study suggests that breaking the physical isolation of physical education teachers can have powerful emotional benefits. These teachers believed that their task of reform was more difficult than change for other teachers simply by virtue of their urban contexts, but that breaking their school isolation helped tremendously in emotionally engaging them in the process.

The Interconnectedness
of Emotional Geographies

Emotional geographies are lived experiences and, as such, need to be viewed as continuous, interconnected, and mutually dependent. It is only by viewing emotional geographies collectively that we can begin to see how teacher emotion is both many sided and simultaneously interwoven. This framework provided a useful way of situating these teachers' stories in the wider context of their personal and work lives. It also provides a typology for those who seek teacher change. Those individuals might do well to consider how the sociocultural, moral, professional, political, and physical geographies of teachers' work will influence their efforts toward change.

Although a typology of emotional geographies offers some useful insights into the ways that urban physical educators experience change, it is quite important not to underappreciate how interconnected and complex emotional geographies are in the social world. In fact, some might suggest that it is in the interconnectedness

and complexity where the real and valuable insights lie. For example, the political geographies in which these urban teachers worked, particularly the high-stakes testing climate, were intimately connected with these teachers' professional and physical geographies. It was difficult, for instance, for these teachers to continue seeing themselves as real and professional teachers when they felt the classroom teachers and principals viewed them as "prep timers" or "babysitters." Similarly, the teachers' political geographies influenced their physical geographies; because administrators were more focused on subjects involved in high-stakes testing, these teachers felt it was unimportant to administrators to break their physical isolation by providing physical education oriented professional development. Hence, these teachers often lived lives segregated from both classroom teachers and their subject matter, making the possibilities and practicality of change more difficult.

Most importantly, this framework paints a better picture of the complexity in any school initiative. Teachers are not passive recipients of the latest and greatest educational advancements designed and given down from above. Rather, they are emotional actors who interpret and enact as they see fit. Failing to understanding how teachers experience change risks losing some of the best educational ideas on the shelf because they might not be transformed into the meaning that teachers give to their work.

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