



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

***School of Education***

Te Kura Toi Tangata

**Waikato Journal of Education**

Te Hautaka Mātauranga o Waikato

Volume 10 : 2004

10th Anniversary Issue: Commentary by Professor Clive McGee  
Inaugural Addresses by Professors Bevan Grant & Doug Booth  
Special Section on Bodies in Motion

# WAIKATO JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

TE HAUTAKA MĀTAURANGA O WAIKATO

VOLUME 10, 2004

<b>Commentary: Ten Years of the Waikato Journal of Education</b> CLIVE MCGEE	3
<hr/>	
<b>Introduction to Special Section: Bodies in Motion: Sport, Health, Physical Activity and Physical Education</b> CLIVE C. POPE AND TONI BRUCE	7
<b>Commentary: Relecting and Asserting: Thoughts on a lengthy Career in Physical Education</b> BOB STOTHART	11
<b>Commentary: Physical Education as HPE: 'Rational' Reflections or Rueful Ruminations?</b> RICHARD TINNING	15
<b>Commentary: Evidence-based Practice in Health and Physical Education</b> DOUNE MACDONALD	21
<b>Commentary: School Physical Education: Reflections on Key Issues Shaping the Field</b> ALAN OVENS	27
<b>They're Not Doing Bad for their Age: Ageing, Leisure and Active Living</b> BEVAN C. GRANT	33
<b>Remnants of the Past, History and the Present</b> DOUGLAS BOOTH	51
<b>Challenges to State Physical Education: Tikanga Māori, Physical Education Curricula, Historical Deconstruction, Inclusivism and Decolonisation</b> BRENDAN HOKOWHITU	71
<b>The Indigenous Factor: The Role of Kapa Haka as a Culturally Responsive Learning Intervention</b> PAROA WHITINUI	85
<b>Whose Knowledge is of Most Worth? The Importance of Listening to the Voice of the Learner</b> MARGARET J. SCRATCHLEY	99

<b>The Ecology of Cooperative Learning in a High School Physical Education Programme</b>	
BEN DYSON AND KEVIN STRACHAN	117
<b>A Crucible of Competition and Cooperation: Where do the Concepts Fit in Recreation Activity Delivery?</b>	
DONNA E. LITTLE	141
<b>Knowing”What My Body Can Do”: Physical Moments in the Social Production of Physicality</b>	
MARTHA BELL	155
<b>Implementing a Game Sense Approach in Youth Sport Coaching: Challenges, Change and Resistance</b>	
RICHARD LIGHT	169
<b>Embodied Boarders: Snowboarding, Status and Style</b>	
HOLLY THORPE	181
<b>Playing to Win or Trying Your Best: Media Reprastations of National Anxieties over the Role of Sport Participation During the 2002 Commonwealth Games</b>	
EMMA H. WENSING, TONI BRUCE AND CLIVE POPE	203
<b>‘Tis Better to be Seen</b>	
RACHEL SAUNDERS	221
<b>Embodied Ways of Knowing</b>	
KAREN BARBOUR	227
<b>My Impossible Dream</b>	
JENNIFER L. WAGGONER	239
<hr/>	
<b>Improving Student Learning? Research Evidence About Teacher Feedback for Improvement in New Zealand Schools</b>	
GAYLE EYERS AND MARY HILL	251
<b>Policy Research and ‘Damaged Teachers’: Towards an Epistemologically Respectful Paradigm</b>	
JOHN SMYTH	263
<b>The Explanation of Social Differences in Reading Attainment: An Inspection of the PIRLS New Zealand Data</b>	
ROY NASH	283
<b>Juggling Priorities: A Comparison of Young and Mature Age Students’ Use of Time During Their First Semester of Teacher Eduction</b>	
PENNI CUSHMAN	299
<b>Children and Disability: Special or Included</b>	
KEITH BALLARD	315

## COMMENTARY

# REFLECTING AND ASSERTING: THOUGHTS ON A LENGTHY CAREER IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**BOB STOTHART**

*Long-time Educator, Life Member and  
Past President of Physical Education New Zealand*

The place of physical education in the New Zealand curriculum is not secure. It was almost obliterated, or at least watered down, when a curriculum review in the early 1990s, suggested that the subject be termed *physical wellbeing*. Only the combined efforts of physical educators throughout New Zealand convinced those advocating the name change to revert to *physical education*. But for teachers of physical education the insecurity remains. Curriculum writers of the future could well embed physical education so deeply within health education that the robust, kinesthetic pleasure of gross muscular movement will be lost or left to the army of quick fix programmes waiting for approval at the school gates. And then, where will the teaching of physical movement and skill reside? There is a universal consensus among physical education advocates that the learning of kinesthetic skills is fundamental to physical education and without it, the subject *should* be swept from the curriculum.

On what basis do I make these assertive statements? I have been fortunate to have a lengthy career in physical education, recreation and leisure. I have held senior positions in physical education, health education and recreation as lecturer, administrator, curriculum and resource developer and as a vociferous contributor to national debates. I have been president of the professional physical education organisation, taught in colleges of education and universities, contributed to professional conferences in New Zealand and overseas and I have shared many views on what is increasingly being called 'the movement culture' in academic journals in New Zealand and overseas. I have rarely been satisfied with the status quo and I have argued consistently for change and innovation throughout my career. Let me briefly reflect upon some of those personal experiences to provide a context for some further comment.

When I started my career in physical education (in the 1950s), I was one of a national team of some seventy-five itinerant physical education specialists, originally called organisers and later on advisers. Part of our role was to take demonstration lessons for teachers on all aspects of the physical education curriculum and to all age groups from junior classes to senior secondary classes. We worked in the old regional education board areas, which existed before "Tomorrow's Schools" transformed the educational landscape. We taught children and teachers ball handling, gymnastics, swimming, swimming pool water treatment, folk dancing, modern dance, outdoor education, athletics, fitness and made occasional forays into Māori activities. We organised inter-school events, conducted in-service training for teachers, introduced playground equipment,

passed on the innovations, experimented with teaching techniques and addressed meetings of parents. Significantly, we were influential in the development of outdoor education as it expanded in schools during the 1960s and 1970s. We were a resource for teachers and schools, available for consultation about any aspect of the physical education programme. Our senior people wrote the handbooks and syllabi (to replace various borrowings from England and elsewhere) and maintained the liaison with education bureaucrats and we enjoyed assertive, central (Department of Education) advocacy. We were trained for our role and were imbued with a philosophy of bringing a wide range of enjoyable physical activities to children and teachers. We firmly believed that we made a difference to the educational experiences of children. It was endlessly challenging, often frustrating but always exciting, providing countless opportunities for our own personal growth and learning.

Equipped with this array of experiences I joined the physical education staff at Wellington Teachers College (in the 1960s), finished a degree, wrote for the physical education journal and learned my craft from senior colleagues and scholars. I moved then to take up a position as Physical Welfare Officer at Victoria University (1970s), providing recreation programmes for staff and students. I became president of the New Zealand Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation and served as a member of the original New Zealand Council for Recreation and Sport. To advance the Council's recreation education programme I was seconded to the staff of the Council to initiate the Council's diploma and to assist my colleague Allan Laidler to set up the first degree course in recreation at Victoria University.

Believing that the growth of recreation and leisure in New Zealand society was a significant phenomenon, I became Director of the Council for Recreation and Sport and was involved in promoting the concept of community recreation, encouraging the development of outdoor recreation as well as continuing my interest in recreation education. A change in government and the advent of the Hillary Commission for Recreation and Sport hastened my move to the Department of Education to head up the Health Education Resources Project, which developed resources for schools in drug education, smoking cessation and alcohol awareness.

I mention these things not to impress but merely to indicate the breadth of my professional experience and to show that I gained some unique, privileged insights into New Zealand physical education, health education and recreation. When the Department of Education was disbanded by the onslaught of Tomorrow's Schools, I became Associate Principal at Wellington College of Education. Throughout this time I maintained my special interest in physical education, lecturing by invitation in various university programmes and serving as Chair of the Sport, Fitness and Recreation Industry Training Organisation, chairing the Tongariro Natural History Society and writing and debating issues of the day.

I always saw physical education as the conduit to lifetime enjoyment of physical recreation, health education, outdoor education and dance. It was a simple, sequential progression I thought but now those aspects of the physical education programme have taken on lives of their own with their specialist experts, advocates and devotees. So what is left for physical education? What is the core, the essence, the central focus of physical education? Why should it remain part of the core of the curriculum? Why should it continue to be resourced especially when national sports organisations, enthusiastic individuals and sports

coaches have programmes that schools could easily adopt? Observe the recent demise of the teaching of swimming in primary schools. The once innovative learner pools are now deteriorating, the concrete cracking and schools willingly bus their students to the nearest public pool, pay a fee and stand aside while professionals do the teaching. Could this happen in other areas of the physical education domain? If it did, who would care?

The emaciated advisory service is no longer in a position to provide the leadership required to transform the curriculum. The service has been decimated, whittled away by a series of political, cost saving, exercises and the remnants attached to colleges of education with jobs too large to derive complete satisfaction from. Teacher training too has resulted in trainees getting fewer hours on curriculum study than was previously available. Central leadership has been obliterated, resource development slowed and despite the efforts of the professional organisation, Physical Education New Zealand (PENZ), to produce resources and provide professional development, I believe physical education faces an uncertain future.

Sport too, once integral to physical education, now casts a lurking shadow. Technological innovation, professionalism, commercial sponsorship, drugs and the advent of the sports lawyer have transformed community sport. Sport itself has become a pervasive form of mass entertainment. New sports, especially American sports, are part of our regular experience, either as players or spectators. The attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of celebrity sportsmen and women are chronicled in the various media to the point of overload. The associated clothing, caps, bags, shirts and shoes are worn wittingly or unwittingly, as statements of allegiance. And the impact on schools is clearly evident. For a small number of students, a career as a professional sportsperson is an achievable aim. Sports academies have evolved in many secondary schools to cater for elite levels of sports achievement. But most secondary schools cannot offer the range of choice now available in the community so how can they meet the expectations of parents, let alone students? What is the role of physical education in ameliorating this sociological and recreational transformation?

As dance, health education, outdoor education and other aspects of physical education have splintered off to establish their own curriculum space, other subject areas have also proliferated. It was common (and worrying to many curriculum purists) during the 1980s and 1990s to add to the curriculum rather than delete. So we had passionate advocates for trade union education, law-related education, values education, inter-personal relationship programmes and so on. Not only that, but whenever a community social 'problem' burst into the media, there would be pressure to add the process for a cure to the over-crowded curriculum. Travelling businessmen and women would observe programmes in Canada, America and the United Kingdom (for example) and upon return to New Zealand would press that the programmes they had observed be immediately adopted here, often unaltered or culturally adapted.

Schools have been beset (over time) by parental, political and community pressures to adopt daily physical education, to promote fitness, to coach sports, at the exclusion of most other aspects of the curriculum. Teachers are expected to eradicate obesity, and to address an array of social and health issues: pubertal development, adolescent sex, alcohol and drug education, to name but a few. Where does the ongoing need to learn movement skills reside in this heady mix of challenges?

This fragmentation has resulted in a curriculum grossly overcrowded with traditional, new and, dare I say, irrelevant subjects. The next step, I believe, is to step back and completely review the situation. Strong leadership will be required and PENZ will need to play a key role. It disturbs me however, that less than 50 per cent of secondary schools are members of the organisation. Moreover, very few physical educators maintain individual membership. Hence my assertion that physical education is vulnerable: its curriculum place insecure. Worrying too, is the limited support PENZ conferences receive from the tertiary sector of New Zealand physical education. It is inconceivable to me that anyone working in physical education in New Zealand is not a member of the national organisation. Unlike engineers, architects, veterinary surgeons and many other professionals, physical educators seem not to value this connection with their peers. PENZ struggles to provide professional development, a journal of comment and political advocacy on behalf of all teachers of physical education, on very limited resources. PENZ competes for government funding through Sport and Recreation New Zealand (Sparc) and it is a Herculean competition yielding limited annual assistance.

Curriculum change is inevitable. How will mainstream physical education shape the curriculum of the future? How will the voice of the teachers and lecturers be presented? Who will provide the advocacy to strengthen the place of physical education? How will the fragments be analysed and brought together in an exciting, logical whole? How will changes within the movement culture be coordinated and incorporated for the benefit of learners? Who will listen and, more importantly, who will take action? These are worrying questions which deserve widespread debate and resolution.

For me, what is needed in physical education is a step in the direction of skill learning. An education in the movement culture leading to satisfying lives as consumers of leisure and physical recreation. My curriculum would be based on the theories of Guy Claxton who advocates learning to learn and active learning. I would pay attention too to the lifetime work of Graham Nuttall, retiring Professor of Education at the University of Canterbury, whose research shows that learning is the most important component of the educational transaction, not teaching. I'd thread all this with Gardiner's theory of multiple intelligences where he identifies kinesthetic skill as a form of intelligence. And the context of learning would be through solving real tasks, challenges and problems: what used to be called 'the project method' of learning. Students would then become active participants in determining their own learning needs and in resolving issues which confront them on a daily basis. This change would bring to our curriculum, immediacy, relevance and the opportunity to really cater for individual differences.

What then is the next step for you? What would your curriculum look like? How would you resolve the fragmentation of physical education that I have referred to in this essay? What is the role of PENZ in helping physical education to take bold steps to avoid an uncertain future? What part will the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Qualification Authority play? Where will the leadership come from? How will outstanding young professionals be nurtured and encouraged? How will innovation be promulgated? Prevarication is not an option: the issues are urgent, important and fundamental to all learners. I urge you to enter the debate and take the next step.

Copyright of *Waikato Journal of Education* is the property of *Waikato Journal of Education* and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.