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DEVELOPING A NEW PERSPECTIVE: USING NARRATIVE INQUIRY
AND VISUAL METHODS TO EXPLORE HEGEMONIC
MASCULINITY IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

BY

JEFFREY A. HEATH

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

AND

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

2018

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DISSERTATION

OF

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2018

Abstract

Developing a New Perspective: Using Visual Methods to Explore Hegemonic Masculinity in Physical Education

It has been said that the primary goal of public education is to deliver a diverse academic curriculum to all students (Ravitch, 2010). However, public schools have also long been identified as places where students are introduced to implicit messages of subordination and oppression (Foucault, 1975; Freire, 1970). In many cases, members of the school community that adhere to locally accepted notions of gender identity (Kimmel, 2008), sexuality (Pascoe, 2007), race-ethnicity (hooks, 1994), and/or general ways of being (Nakkula & Toshalis, 2006) experience routine success while their nonconforming peers are left on the educational periphery to fend for themselves. This has been shown to be particularly true in high school physical education where the marginalization of non-majority students has been described as the norm rather than the exception (Azzarito & Harrison, 2008; Fagrell, Larson, & Redelius, 2012). Stemming from these observations, along with my personal experiences as a physical education student, classroom physical educator, and teacher-educator, the primary purpose of this qualitative, narrative inquiry-based research was to explore what happens when visual methods are used to explore localized notions of masculinity amongst teachers and students in an eleventh grade physical education class.

Utilizing the framework of poststructuralist feminism, I chose to approach this research from an institutional perspective (Weedon, 1997). In concert with poststructuralist feminism, Hegemonic Masculinity Theory (Connell, 2005) has been

widely used to study social constructions of masculinity pertaining to institutions around the globe. However, Hegemonic Masculinity Theory has also been criticized for inappropriately associating adult understandings of masculinity to adolescents and children (Bartholomeus, 2011). As such, this study sought to better understand the unique experiences of late-stage adolescents (14-17 years old), their physical education teachers, and myself by enlisting the visual methodologies of photovoice (Wang, 1999) and first-person videography (Kindt, 2010). Once gathered, visual artifacts were then combined with data collected via semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, open-ended survey responses, and researcher journal entries to create individual participant narratives.

After analyzing the data, along with constructed narratives, it was determined that the form of localized masculinity promoted through the observed physical education class did in fact coincide with Connell's (2005) definition of hegemonic masculinity. Additionally, three overarching themes were revealed: Space as a multifarious commodity, Physical education as a void, and Teacher as cog. These themes, along with their associated findings, supported the assertion that traditional, team-sport centric physical education serves to galvanize a patriarchal, social order through the delivery of a strict, hegemonically masculine script. Ultimately, this study concludes by providing suggestions for policy makers, physical education teachers, teacher educators, and researchers along with directions for future research.

Acknowledgements

Wow... I never thought I would get to this point. While I have been engaged in writing this dissertation in a variety of capacities over the past 5 years, I can't help but think of this project as being heavily influenced by my first 32 years on the planet. That being said, I would first like to thank my family. Dad, thank you for teaching me the meaning of hard work and helping me to realize that intelligence exists in a variety of forms. It took me a long time to understand you as a person, but retrospectively I can't imagine having had a more dedicated, loving, hard-working father to help guide me on my way. Matt, thank you for your unconditional support and love. Your willingness to stand-up for those lacking the privileges that we grew up with is something that I both admire and hope to emulate as I continue on my personal and professional journey. Mom, without your support, care, guidance, and love this project would never have begun. Your passion for equity, equality, and fairness in all forms is something that you've instilled deep within me and is not something I will ever take for granted. Your dedication to sport and physical activity and its impact on my personal beliefs and professional path is something that I truly don't think I fully realized until I began working on this project. You've said in passing that playing in the backyard with Matt and I were some of the best years of your life. I want you to know that while I don't say it nearly as often as I should, they were some of the best years of my life as well and I wouldn't trade those memories for anything.

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Dedication

To Jaden

“Once there was a tree and he loved a little boy...”

~ The Giving Tree

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Chapter 6

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background of the Study

Introduction to the Research Study

Public education is one of the most widely accessed social institutions in the United States. On any given weekday, 15.1 million high school students (grades 9-12), wake-up and attend public schools around the country (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). Of this 15.1 million, just over 7.2 million students (48%) attend physical education class on one or more days per week with 2.1 million students (29%) participating in physical education every day (Kann, Kinchen, & Shanklin, 2013). On the other end of the spectrum, due to variations in state regulations, the remaining 5.8 million students only receive physical education sporadically throughout the school year. To put it another way, on any given day there are more students participating in daily physical education in the United States than there are people living in the country of Latvia (“List of countries by population (United Nations),” n.d.).

With such a large, diverse population of students receiving regularly scheduled, physical education, it stands to reason that individuals will experience and engage the taught curriculum differently. Past experiences, personal subjectivities, physical embodiment, and internalization of social stereotypes (Azzarito & Ennis, 2003) are just some of the variables that could mean the difference between a meaningful physical education experience or a developmental nightmare. Take for example, Andre. As a 6’0 tall, athletic white male Andre loves physical education describing it as a place where he can *“blow off some steam”* and *“play sports.”* Olivia, a high-achieving, white female values physical education in the sense that she can *“help Jayson and Lila (two students with special needs) with the activities.”* Johnnie wishes that some of the other people in

the class would “*stop making fun of (his) haircut*” while Neil “*(doesn’t) think making fun of (Johnnie) is a really big deal*” because “*he knows we’re just joking.*” Katrina tries “*to give 100% when (she) runs but (her) asthma makes it tough.*”

In many ways, the student experiences presented above represent a continuum of experience that exists within the landscape of high school physical education.

Additionally, these experiences are internalized and assigned value by students and teachers based on localized, social constructions of what it means to be successful in a physical activity setting (Azzarito & Ennis, 2003). Sam, a quiet student with shoulder-

Figure 1.1 The Guys Running

length brown hair
and a matching
goatee, quite
literally depicted
this continuum
after being
instructed to take
pictures in
response to the
question: “*How is
gender done in*

your physical education class?”

When asked to explain his picture (Figure 1.1), Sam described how several of the boys in his class had just sprinted by while he and another student named Isaac walked around the track. According to Sam, these students were “*sprinting*” so fast, he could

barely take the picture in time to catch them. Sam then went on to describe his next picture (Figure 1.2).

Here, Sam spoke to what he perceived as the girls' lack of agency in physical education. Sam described how the girls "*never really try*" in physical education and, more often than not, choose to "*walk, talk, and look at pictures*" rather than run on the track.

As depicted in Figures 1.1 and 1.2, Sam describes what he perceives to be a relatively clear difference between the

ways that boys and girls participate in physical education. By outwardly identifying how the boys are "*sprinting*" around the track, while the girls lag behind, "*walking, talking, and looking at pictures*" Sam orally and visually outlines a socially constructed continuum of experience in physical education that places the "*guys*" at the top and the "*girls*" on the bottom.

The vantage-point from which Sam took these two pictures is somewhat symbolic in that Sam appears to buy into a common, physical education narrative that champions

the efforts of the most athletic males while minimizing the experiences of everyone else. This is evident as Sam minimizes the girls' experience in physical education by making the observation that they "*never really try*" as demonstrated by their "*walking*" instead of "*sprinting*." The fact that Sam was also walking around the track at the moment this picture was taken is a moot point because as a "*guy*" he is exempt from occupying the lowest rungs on the continuum.

Following in the spirit of Sam's continuum, this study will seek to further explore the experiences of individual students and teachers in physical education with particular emphasis being placed on the voices of those who have historically been oppressed. In the context of physical education, these populations would predominantly include students and teachers who do not identify as masculine and/or athletic. While this is certainly not the first time where light has been shed on the experiences of marginalized populations in physical education (see Azzarito & Solomon, 2006; Snapp, McGuire, Sinclair, Gabrion, & Russell, 2015; Warren, 2005; Wright, 1999), there continues to be a myriad of obstacles that prevent certain populations from readily accessing physical activity as it is currently being offered in public schools.

Since the passage of Title IX in 1972 the rights of historically oppressed populations have been an educational concern (Azzarito, 2012; Koller, 2010; Stader & Surface, 2014). Despite this legislation, there is still compelling evidence that in recent years, stereotypical myths that perpetuate gender inequality, racial superiority, and social intolerance remain problematic in the culture of sport and physical activity (Azzarito & Solomon, 2006; Couturier, Chepko, & Coughlin, 2005; Nilges, 1998; Rose & Paisley, 2012; Stelzer, Ernest, Fenster, & Langford, 2004; Strand & Scantling, 1994). For

example, marginalized groups such as adolescent girls and non-gender conforming boys often express feelings of exclusion and alienation when forced to participate in hypercompetitive, team sport-centric physical education curricula (Azzarito, Solomon, & Harrison, 2006; Bernstein, Phillips, & Silverman, 2011; Ennis, 1999; Laberge & Albert, 1999; Pascoe, 2003). Moreover, misconceptions about the academic relevance of physical education by a wide array of students and adults has led to a deafening call for the reconceptualization of what is known to be the traditional, male-dominated physical education curriculum (Azzarito & Solomon, 2008; Couturier, Chepko, & Coughlin, 2005; Flintoff & Scranton, 2001; Strand & Scantling, 1994). Despite these calls for change, physical education classrooms around the world continue to emphasize instructional methodologies that focus on sport-skill acquisition and tactical sport strategies while ignoring the social context within which sport and physical activity are situated.

This study suggests that long-standing systems of oppression and related, implicit messages regarding perceptions of gender conformity amongst students and teachers are aspects of a larger social issue that could be addressed within the physical education classroom. For example, Schippers (2007) identified “gender hegemony” as an institutionalized system of conformity, dominance, and oppression” (p. 86). Hegemony has been described as “the command, influence, or predominance” of one group over another (Winter, 1996, p. 604). Furthermore, hegemony is institutional and systemic in the sense that existing social structures, often support a culture of inequality by perpetuating the status quo. Hegemony is also largely psychological in the sense that it convinces the oppressed that their lived oppression is in some way beneficial to their daily experience.

Conversely, the social, emotional, psychological, and moral distance created by the power wielders helps to objectify the oppressed, subsequently shaping the psychology of the individuals and the groups (Sue, 2004). Kipnis (1976), discusses additional psychological consequences of hegemony for the power wielders including: a) an exalted view of the self, b) a changed view of others, and c) a degraded moral sense and increased capacity to dehumanize. Following this logic, stereotypes that are often associated with the oppressed group are often left unchallenged and accepted as true representations of the group (Fiske, 1993). Prior to the passage of the 13th Amendment in 1865, the practice of slavery in the United States was one of the most clear-cut examples of hegemony at work. While white overseers routinely beat, tortured, manipulated, and ravaged slaves, many enslaved peoples expressed the belief that “things could be worse” citing provisions of shelter, food, water, and “favorable” care as reasons to remain complicit within the system. In similar fashion, I would argue that in the modern era, all women (and gender non-conforming men) are complicit to a system of oppression that is in large part supported by white, male patriarchy and hegemonic, masculine norms.

Connell (1996; 2005) identifies hegemonic masculinity as a particularly insidious force driving gender inequality amongst children and adults around the world. According to Connell (1996), hegemonic masculinity can be described as, “a highly-malleable form of masculinity that encourages anger, violence, oppression, and hyper-sexuality at the expense of anyone deemed by society as non-male” (p. 209, 1996). In an effort to challenge the traditionally male dominated educational environment where hegemonic forms of masculinity often reign supreme, some teachers have begun to introduce

alternative, feminist pedagogies into the classroom (Crabtree & Sapp, 2003; Robinson-Keilig., Hamill, Gwin-Vinsant, & Dashner, 2009).

The infusion of anti-oppressive world-views into schools is promising in the sense that when educational structures and feminist concepts have been combined, the results have been shown to help students achieve a greater critical consciousness of gender relations both inside and outside of the classroom (see Brown, 1992; Crabtree & Sapp, 2003; Connell, 1996; Robinson-Keilig, Hamill, Gwin-Vinsant, & Dashner, 2014; Sinacore & Boatwright, 2005). Despite the perpetuation of male hegemonic interests in public schools, little research has been conducted on how students in late-stage adolescence (14 – 17 years old) transmit and/or receive these messages in the public school physical education setting. Inspired by this gap in the research, the primary purpose of this qualitative, narrative inquiry-based study was to explore what happens when visual methods are used to explore institutionalized beliefs surrounding localized masculinity in a high school physical education class.

Rationale and Context

Beginning in 2008, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended that children receive a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity per day (CDC, 2015). In recognition of that goal, one of the long-standing objectives of public school physical education has been to provide students with opportunities to get up and get moving. In their most recent revision of the national physical education standards, The Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America has added to this primary objective by stating “...a physically literate individual must recognize the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social

interaction” (SHAPE America, 2014). In other words, public school physical education should seek to present students with (a) an understanding of the discourses surrounding physical activity and (b) ideas relating to how physical activity can be used to enhance an individual’s social and emotional health. Despite these recommendations, schools across the country continue to struggle when attempting to engage all students in regular physical education. This struggle, often results in the perception of physical education as an academic outcast when compared to other core subjects such as English, mathematics, and science.

There currently exists a myriad of reasons why certain students thrive in a public school physical education while others grapple to find their place. One of the most cited reasons why particular students succeed in the gym while others flounder is the chosen curriculum (Beightol, Jeverson, Carter, Gray, & Gass, 2012; Constantinou, Manson, & Silverman, 2009). More specifically, the lack of regular participation in physical education may be attributed to student disillusionment with a traditional, team sport-centric curriculum (Azzarito, Solomon, & Harrison, 2006; Bernstein, Phillips, & Silverman, 2011; Couturier, Chepko, & Coughlin, 2005; Hill & Hannon, 2008; Mears, 2008). Students may also be reluctant to participate in physical education due to the historically gendered nature of physical activities offered in physical education such as football and weightlifting (Ennis, 1999; Ennis, Solomon, Satina, Loftus., Mensch, & McCauley, 1999; Flintoff & Scranton, 2001; Strand & Scantling, 1998). Unlike many other subjects that require specified content to be taught as delineated by federal and state-mandated standardized tests, physical education often finds itself in a place of curricular autonomy as it is not included as a part of these assessments. As such, the

physical education teachers themselves often shape the curriculum as they were taught which in turn, perpetuates a culture that champions a highly competitive, team-sport centric model of instruction.

When speaking to the influence of physical education teachers themselves on gendered practices, the literature reports concerning results. Inadequate supervision and classroom intervention (Pope & O'Sullivan, 2003), support of pre-existing sex role stereotypes (Fagrell, Larson, & Redelius, 2012; Ronholt, 2002), and insufficient amounts of classroom experience (Parker & Curtner-Smith, 2012) have all been found to perpetuate a culture of marginalization and exclusion in public school physical education classes. Additional studies (see Skelton, 1996) have examined the influences of adult role models on the perpetuation of hegemonic practices outside of the school, within a community-setting and reported similar results. In both cases, teacher/role model behavior was found to heavily influence communal beliefs regarding gender, specifically masculinity. On the contrary, when educators and supportive adults are described as being engaged in their students' learning, while promoting a message of equality and change, shifts in fossilized understandings of gender and associated stereotypes have been shown to be possible at all educational levels (Chen and Curtner-Smith, 2013; Robinson-Keilig, Hamill, Gwin-Vinsant, & Dashner, 2014). In the context of this study, the ultimate take-away from these findings is that adolescents and teachers can be taught to critically examine notions of gender (in)equality if such practices are promoted within a safe, educational climate.

For this inquiry, I have chosen to explore localized notions of masculinity from a feminist perspective. While feminist research has routinely been associated with those

most effected by systemic oppression, as a middle-class, white male, I believe that meaningful, sustained social change must occur as a result of collaborative efforts that call upon all associated stakeholders. Rather than favor a Freiresque “bottom-up” approach in which the marginalized revolt against their oppressors or a “top-down” approach where the privileged few continue to assert their oppression on the less fortunate under the guise of charity and/or progressive thought, I believe that a collaborative effort that encourages all people to meet somewhere in the middle would prove most successful. Many would suggest that ideologically, feminism presents a compelling argument that the male-dominated, patriarchal order inevitably works to dehumanizes and desensitize all people. Of the same token, feminist research has encouraged all people to re-examine the current social order in an effort to find a more equitable, harmonious alternative. Unfortunately, I do not feel as though those who benefit most from (white) male patriarchy have done their part in promoting social equality. As a self-identified, privileged, middle class white male, I envision this research as a new chapter in my ongoing, personal praxis towards helping to create a more socially just society.

Additionally, I have chosen to explore masculinity from a feminist perspective to avoid inappropriate generalizations and/or interpretations that might obfuscate the findings of my research. As a white, middle class male, I am quite simply better situated to provide a more nuanced analysis of masculine discourses as I personally identify as masculine within this given demographic. Considering my positionality as a researcher, I would assert that exploring notions of femininity or alternative constructions of gender identity would be fundamentally flawed and ultimately, inaccurate (Campbell & Wasco,

2000; hooks, 2015). While I would argue that analyzing and reporting out on the experiences of these populations is absolutely essential, if I were to travel down this path, my personal understanding of participant discourses would at best be fundamentally limited and at worst inappropriately subjective when attempting to answer my research questions.

Operational Definitions and Phraseology

Throughout this study I found myself repeatedly confronting issues related to my choice of terminology and associated definitions. One that I wrestled most often throughout my research were “traditional physical education.” When speaking to “traditional physical education,” I envision a structure akin to an onion (see Figure 1.3). In this analogy, the center of the onion consists of the units most often experienced in secondary level (5-12) physical education classes with smaller, less emphasized units being represented on the outermost layers¹.

In this analogy, the onion’s center consists of team sport (i.e. basketball, flag football, baseball/ softball, soccer, volleyball, kickball, handball, lacrosse). Moving outward, the next layers include individual sport (i.e. racket sports, gymnastics, leisure activities, archery, golf variations). These activities are less common but still included in

¹ It should be noted that I do not include elementary (PK-4) physical education classes in this analogy as the curricular emphasis for these grade levels tend to focus more on activity exploration, introduction of game rules, and individual, physiological development (i.e. locomotor movement, maintenance of personal space) (SHAPE America, 2014). The less focused nature of this curricula along with my interest in secondary-level populations excludes these grade levels from my discussion.

the vast majority of physical education scope and sequence. Next up in the progression are fitness-based units including but not limited to weightlifting,

cardiovascular exercise programs, exercise circuits, fitness testing, personal program construction/maintenance, Crossfit®). From my personal experience as a physical education professional, the individual sport and fitness components of the curricula may be flip-flopped depending on the particular school, classroom teacher, and/or level of instruction (i.e. middle school vs. high school). The outer most layers of the onion consist of what one might label peripheral activities. While present in some physical education programs, these units are almost always shorter in length than their sport-related counterparts and are sometimes left off the syllabus completely. In the context of this research, peripheral activities would include dance, yoga, variations of aerobics, cooperative games/group initiative activities (i.e. Project Adventure, Adventure

Education), outdoor pursuits (i.e. hiking, orienteering, cross-country, speed walking), and alternative activities (i.e. cup stacking, table tennis, jump rope, indoor rock climbing).

Speaking more specifically to the center of the onion, instructional practices guiding traditional physical education call for the introduction, practice, and mastery of physical (i.e. psychomotor) skills that are most commonly utilized across a wide array of team sports (SHAPE America, 2014). In addition to psychomotor skills, traditional physical education instruction also emphasizes the strategic and tactical aspects of team sports and games (i.e. the cognitive domain). For example, when considering the cognitive aspects of traditional physical education, students may be asked to identify the strengths and weakness of zone defense in comparison to person to person defense in a competitive soccer match. Although displaying appropriate sportspersonship, winning and losing with humility, and celebrating the breakthroughs and successes of peers (i.e. the affective domain) are all included as core components of organized, physical education (SHAPE America, 2014), my personal experiences as a student, teacher, and teacher-educator have left me somewhat underwhelmed when speaking to affective teaching and learning.

While individual sport may also be included in this model of physical education, team sport is considered the favorite for several reasons including: more opportunities for student participation, lack of equipment for every student, and transferability of taught skills (i.e. certain skills are utilized across a wide variety of sports and athletic situations such as a “ready position” stance) (Mears, 2008; Stelzer, Ernest, Fenster, & Langford, 2004; Van Dusen, Kelder, Kohl, Ranjit, & Perry, 2011). Fitness based units, while often popular amongst students, experience difficulties similar to individual sport including

lack of resources (Mears, 2008). For example, supervising large numbers of students in a school fitness center (if the school even happens to have a fitness center) can be extremely difficult. Safety also could be seen as a major concern in this movement setting due to the potential for injury at all levels of instruction.

The activities on the outer layers of the onion are relegated to this space for a variety of reasons. Sometimes lack of personal experience on the part of the physical educator may contribute to such activities as cooperative games or orienteering being left off the activities list. At other times, in my experience, socially-constructed gender stereotypes based on hegemonic masculine norms (i.e. “Male physical educators can’t teach yoga...”) or perceptions about essential elements in the physical education classroom (i.e. “Competition is a must in the physical education classroom...”) serve to push these activities out towards the periphery.

My issue with using the phrase, “traditional physical education” is that the model presented in Figure 1.3 may not describe traditional physical education for all students. While this model accurately describes my experiences as a student, teacher, and teacher-educator, I can (or at least hope to) envision a body of students that may not have experienced physical education in this way. While I would suggest that this model exemplifies a common, hegemonic script (per my reading of the current research, personal stories, personal observations, understanding of national and state physical education standards and expectations), I still recognize that physical education experiences can differ from town to town, state to state, region to region, or country to country. Because of this, I am not claiming that my study is generalizable to all physical education classes. Instead, the goal of this study was to look more closely at the collateral

effects of hegemonic, physical education practices as experienced by students and teachers within one, eleventh grade physical education class. For a list of study-specific phraseology that played a central role in this research please refer to Appendix A.

Purpose of the Research Study

The primary purpose of this qualitative, narrative inquiry-based research was to examine what happens when visual methods are used to explore localized notions of masculinity amongst teachers and students in an eleventh grade physical education class. Over the course of four months, students and teachers were asked to document their lived experiences in physical education class using GoPro® video cameras and Sony® digital cameras. As experiences were captured, I selected random students to participate in individual and focus group interviews with the aim of obtaining a varied perspective of classroom dynamics. While concurrently examining visual artifacts, reflecting on personal observations, and considering formal and informal conversations, I sought to explore implicit (and explicit) messages surrounding the intersection of masculinity, public school, and physical activity from a poststructuralist, feminist perspective.

While this purpose satisfied my initial curiosities, it quickly became apparent that another, somewhat obscured purpose also helped to drive this study. As I worked through the iterative process that is attributed to praxis-based, qualitative research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Maguire, 1996) I could not help but consider how my own physical education narrative as a student, physical educator, and teacher educator has played a part in shaping my sense of self as a white, middle class, male researcher. It was my hope that by developing a better understanding of my personal positionality through a feminist lens I would be better prepared to use my privilege to engage others in conversations

promoting equality. For this reason, shortly after the study began, my research took on the secondary purpose of utilizing student narratives in physical education to better understand my beliefs, practices, and personal subjectivities as a physical education professional.

Research Questions

Three research questions were used to guide this study. Those research questions were:

- **Research Question 1:** How do localized notions of masculinity influence students' perceptions of themselves and others while participating in an eleventh grade physical education class?
- **Research Question 2:** How do physical education teachers perpetuate and/or disrupt localized notions of masculinity in an eleventh grade physical education class?
- **Research Question 3:** How do the narratives of eleventh grade physical education students and their teachers help me to uncover meaning in my personal narrative as an athletic, able-bodied, heterosexual, white male researcher?

Organization of the Research Study

In this first chapter, I have briefly introduced the foundational components of that were used to begin this research including the rationale and context of this inquiry as derived from my personal curiosities and previous research in the field of physical education. Additionally, I presented the purpose of this study as well as three, overarching research questions. These three questions served as the structural framework by which this study was supported. Following this chapter, Chapter 2 has been written in a way that situates this inquiry amongst the literature. In this section, I present research

that speaks to the theoretical framework of this study as well as related research that explores related topics such as education, gender, physical activity, physical literacy, policy, and more. Chapter 3 provides an in-depth look at the guiding methodologies and associated methods used in this study. After re-establishing the research questions, I explore the use of narrative inquiry and visual methodologies as a means to develop a better understanding of localized, masculine practices in physical education. Chapter 4 presents the constructed narratives of five stakeholders in this research including three students, one classroom physical educator, and myself. Chapter 5 presents the three themes uncovered as a result of this research and seeks to answer the research questions in the context of the collected data. Finally, Chapter 6 summarizes the findings of this study, establishes trustworthiness for the associated results, discusses implications, and identifies various limitations of the study. Suggested directions for future research are also presented.

Conclusion

This opening chapter has looked to provide the rational and context for this study particularly by problematizing the current climate of traditional physical education in public schools. In addition to establishing the justification for my study, I have used this chapter to better define the notions of “traditional physical education” and “students with special needs.” These two phrases routinely came up throughout the research and were seen as being especially important to this inquiry. Finally, Chapter 1 concluded with a presentation of the study’s purpose as well as the overarching research questions. Collectively, I would consider the items presented in this chapter to be the foundational components of this study’s framework. Chapter 2 will aim to continue this conversation

by situating this study amongst the current body of research in hegemonic masculinity, physical education, and sport.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction to the Literature Review

In recent years, gender has been a widely discussed topic amongst the American public (Bissinger, 2015; Reyes, 2013; Soloway, 2016). However, despite massive amounts of media coverage and tabloid attention, conversations pertaining to adolescent masculinity and femininity are often avoided. Moreover, much of the previous gender research has been criticized for inappropriately lumped notions of adult gender construction together with those of adolescents and children (Nakkula & Toshalis, 2006). As a result, little research has been conducted relating to the formation of gender, particularly relating to the development of masculinity, at the adolescent level (exceptions include Bartolomeus, 2011; Pasco, 2003). In addressing this gap, I sought to conduct my research in a setting where my personal experience has revealed that adolescent gender construction can readily be observed: high school physical education.

The ultimate purpose for this literature review is to situate my study amongst the current body of work relating to the construction of masculinity as experienced by adolescents in public schools. In the first portion of this review, I will look to set the theoretical backdrop that has served as the grounding reference for both this literature review and the overall project. In addition to presenting an in-depth discussion of the major theoretical frames that guided this inquiry, I will also explore the how each of the discussed theories came together to better define the contextual boundaries of this study. Taking a deductive approach (Creswell, 2014), I will begin by exploring the Theory of Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978). Social Constructivism was used to inform this research but was not chosen to be the central, theoretical frame due to the lack of

attention Vygotsky (1978) paid to structures of power and oppression. After speaking to the foundational components of social construction, I will then move to discuss the process of dehumanization as presented via a Critical worldview (Freire, 1970). I specifically honed-in on dehumanization to provide theoretical backing for my argument that, in addition to limiting the lived experiences of marginalized populations, oppressive social structures that promote various forms of violence and oppression also prevent the oppressors themselves from living a fully human experience. From here I will then provide a brief sampling of Feminist Theory (Wollstonecraft, 1792) with a focus on poststructuralist feminism (Gavey, 1989; Hansen, 2010; Scott, 1988; Sykes, 2010; Weedon, 1997). Poststructuralist feminism was chosen as one of the guiding theoretical frames for this study as it focuses on the institutionalized aspects of oppression, particularly as demonstrated by the demotion of all that is deemed to be feminine while promoting androcentric, masculine ways of being. Finally, I will discuss the primary theoretical frame that guides this inquiry, Hegemonic Masculinity Theory (Connell, 2005).

After discussing the central theories that guided this research, I will then unpack the social construction of masculinity, eventually moving to explore the relationship between oppressive masculinities and physical education class. While on the topic of power and oppression as related to physical education, I will then present research that examines the relationship between New Literacy Studies (Gee, 2015b) and the SHAPE America (2014) National Physical Education Standards. Finally, this section will conclude with a discussion surrounding physical education policy, namely Title IX, and

its relationship to the current climate of sport, physical activity, and physical education across the United States.

Foundational Theories

In his revolutionary text, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (1978), Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky challenged the belief that learning occurs as a result of children soaking up infallible, pre-existing knowledge as it relates to a particular question and/or problem. Rather, Vygotsky suggested that knowledge is collectively created as a result of collaboration and discourse amongst a population of people. Vygotsky also asserted that this learning process is most effective when a group can claim diverse backgrounds and experiences. Building from the idea that knowledge is created, not received, Vygotsky contended, “Learning is more than the acquisition of the ability to think; it is the acquisition of many specialized abilities for thinking about a variety of things” (p. 83). In the context of this statement, the presence of varied perspectives in a specific discourse works is advantageous in the sense that a phenomenon can be more completely analyzed and understood in the presence of people with differing levels of familiarity.

Vygotsky used his concept of Zone of Proximal Development (1978, p. 84) to explore this process as its associated effect on learning. In short, the Zone of Proximal Development states that when in the presence of more experienced others, a learner is more apt to rise to the occasion and erase existing gaps in understanding. Furthermore, rather than slow down the learning process of the more experienced partner, Vygotsky suggested that this relationship can prove beneficial for the more adept partner as well by providing an opportunity to look at an old problem from a fresh perspective. The

resulting outcome of this exchange helps to refine the expert's understanding of the subject while also collaboratively constructing a better understanding of the situation for the less experienced learner. As it relates to my research, the Zone of Proximal Development concept is not exclusively applicable to academic learning. Vygotsky (1978) also made the claim that the type of scaffolded learning that occurs within the Zone of Proximal Development can also be attributed to an individual's socio-emotional sphere through what Vygotsky referred to as "interpsychological development" (p. 57).

Interpsychological development asserts that each, individual mind develops through an interconnected relationship with the minds of others. More specifically, when examining the mechanisms of adolescent identity construction, interpsychological development has been used to explain "how individual psychological development is inherently relational process" by which "each individual mind develops within the context of other minds by which it can be influenced" (Nakkula & Toshalis, 2006, p. 9). In other words, when considering the social development of individual students and teachers as they exist within the school, it is essential to zoom out and consider the larger social networks to which these individuals are connected.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) took this notion of zooming out to explore the impact of various social systems on identity development even further by contemplating the impact of microsystems (i.e. immediate, daily influences) (loc. 378), mesosystems (i.e. combinations of microlevel influences) (loc. 419), exosystems (loc. 423) (i.e. somewhat removed yet important contexts to individuals), and macrosystems (loc. 426) (i.e. larger societal contexts) on individuals. Titled the "Ecology of Human Development," Bronfenbrenner defined his model as, "... the scientific study of the progressive, mutual

accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which these settings are embedded” (loc. 370). More recently, Nakkula and Toshalis, (2006), have built upon Brofenbrenner’s original model with their “Educational Ecology of Academic Development” (p. 249). Whereas Brofenbrenner’s model sought to consider the impact of various systems on a global scale, the goal of this model is to provide a more focused discussion around the school-specific variables associated with adolescent development.

As related to this inquiry, the model of interpsychological development as well as the Educational Ecology of Academic Development proved to be invaluable as I sought to explore how localized, masculine norms influenced the choices, behaviors, and overall experiences of adolescent, high school students. By zooming out from individual students, and taking a more panoramic view of classroom interactions along with the localized, social context within which these interactions were situated, I was able to better understand the motivations and thought processes that drove certain students to thrive in physical education class while others perpetually struggled to find their place.

Similar to Vygotsky, Paulo Freire also sought to better understand the complex social systems responsible for maintaining (or disrupting) a pre-established social order. Freire’s Critical worldview extends Vygotsky’s notion of social constructivism by contending that all knowledge is constructed within a climate of power and oppression (1970). In addition, Freire (1970) also believed that the ultimate goal of education is the freedom of oppressed peoples through , a type of socio-political action in which the oppressed rise up against their oppressors, a process that Freire labeled, praxis. Through

his revolution-minded concept of praxis, Freire believed that social neutrality is not a possible option. Instead, to remain neutral is to support an existing power structure that provides an elite with innumerable benefits at the expense of the (often unknowing) majority. To further explore the nature of this exploitation, Freire followed up with the concept of “dehumanization.”

Freire’s explanation of dehumanization provides a striking look into one of the most pervasive characteristics of the oppressor/oppressed relationship. According to Freire (1970),

“Dehumanization, which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also (though in a different way) those who have stolen it, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human... This struggle is possible only because dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed” (p. 44).

Putting it differently, Freire implies that while the dehumanization of the oppressed via the hand of their oppressors is an obvious fact, the oppressors themselves too suffer from a more implicit form of dehumanization. The oppressors’ dehumanization occurs through their own enslavement to an unjust social order that encourages them to mistreat others in order to maintain their social positioning. The take-away from this statement is that the oppressors themselves are also enslaved to a social system that encourages the perpetuation of violence and power. Ultimately, this cyclical process denies both the oppressed and the oppressor the joy of becoming “fully human” by denying innate human needs such as emotional connection and personal safety.

Following this description, one may be inclined to consider the various identities of those who are oppressed and their oppressors. One of the most commonly discussed representations of the oppressed/oppressor dynamic throughout history is that of man over woman. Feminist theory (Wollstonecraft, 1792) arose out of this conflict. Dedicated to the exploration of what is often described in terms of a masculine/feminine binary, feminism operates under the belief that all women suffer under the weight of patriarchal oppression (hooks, 2004).

In a way, Feminist theory can be described as a focused adaptation of Freire's notion of dehumanization (1970) used to explore the dynamic social relationship between males and females. Central to feminist teachings is the idea that global society is (and always has been) situated in an oppressive, patriarchal structure in which men are the benefactors of innumerable social benefits while women are often the victims of widespread exploitation and marginalization. While some would suggest that the feminist paradigm dates as far back as the 15th century, many researchers would agree that the roots of westernized feminist discourse can be traced back to the late 18th century through the writings of western European philosophers such as Wollstonecraft (1792), Bentham (1789), and De Gouge (1791). Heavily situated in a politicized context, these writings often challenged governing bodies to more closely examine the inequitable distribution of the political rights that favored men over women.

In the decades to follow, the feminist movement continued to gain traction throughout the world, ultimately taking hold of the American culture via The Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 (Aulette & Wittner, 2014). Organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, The Seneca Falls Convention sought to discuss the social,

civil, and religious condition and rights of women. At the conclusion of the two-day conference, attendees drafted The Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions (Stanton et al., 1848). The declaration begins with a list of male perpetrated transgressions followed by a list of collaborative, practical resolutions and is widely considered to signify the beginning of the modern, feminist movement (Aulette & Wittner, 2014).

Over the last 150 years, the feminist movement has experienced a myriad of shifts, changes, transformations, victories, and set-backs. Commonly grouped into 3 (or 4) distinct waves, feminist discourse has championed women's interests in a variety of social arenas. These arenas include (but are not limited to): suffrage, sexuality, reproduction, employment, legal representation, gender, social class, race-ethnicity, athletic representation, and identity (Aulette & Wittner, 2014). While each wave of feminism is considered to have unique, progressive successes as well as examples of patriarchal backlash (Faludi, 1991), the identification of divergent, feminist branches just prior to the "conclusion" of second wave feminism remains one of the most widely discussed, theoretical components of the feminist movement.

According to Lorber (1997), "... the reason for much of the change in feminist theories is that with deeper probing into the pervasiveness of gender inequality, feminists have developed more complex views about gender, sex, and sexuality" (p. 8). Said differently, as feminist research has examined the issue of gender inequality from a variety of perspectives, feminists have come to attribute the root causes of misogyny and oppression to a number of social, emotional, and environmental factors. While there is a vast array of feminist branches, I will speak to the similarities and differences associated

with three of the most commonly referenced branches: liberal, radical, and socialist feminisms (Campbell & Wasco, 2000).

One of the oldest branches of feminism, Liberal feminism asserts that conceptions of sex and gender are neutral and, as such, all human beings possess a common nature (Marilley, 1996). Key to liberal feminist beliefs is the idea that woman and men share the same rational nature and should be given the same educational and civil rights as men. Within the context of school, liberal feminists believe that the key to educational equality amongst men and women is the identification and removal of obstacles that prevent equal opportunities in the classroom (Acker, 1987). While liberal feminism emphasizes equal opportunity, throughout history it has been criticized for its belief that meaningful social change can be made within the current patriarchal order without there being a need to reimagine the current social order.

Contrary to Liberal feminists, Radical feminists believe that in order for women to escape the oppressive patriarchal structure, a new social order must be created. Additionally, radical feminism asserts that the root cause of oppression is sexuality – women are oppressed because they are women (Echols, 1989). To this end, radical feminists often focus on the subordination of women as a primary concern. Exploring how male power is exercised through sexual harassment, rape, pornography, prostitution, and even love and marriage are some of the concepts that dominate radical feminist discourse (Rowland & Klein, 1996). Educationally speaking, radical feminists explore the pervasive use of oppressive, androcentric language, as well as male-dominance of educational systems as phenomena of interest (Acker, 1987; Rich, 1986) While radical feminism is highly descriptive, it is often criticized for lacking practical application as

well as operating from the exclusively broad perspective that all males are willing supporters of a patriarchal society.

Drawing heavy influence from Marxism, psychoanalysis, and radical feminism, Socialist feminism is firmly situated in the belief that women's oppression is inextricably linked to a variety of factors including capitalism, social class, race-ethnicity, age, and sexuality. For socialist feminists, focusing in on one of the aforementioned variables without considering the others would render the analysis incomplete (Eisenstein, 1977). Following this logic, socialist feminists assert that women, like all human beings, are active participants within the social situations which they inhabit. As a result, a woman's life experience is equally shaped by these various dimensions. In the context of education, socialist feminists would argue that girls and boys are taught fundamentally different messages throughout their K-12 schooling regarding their place as contributing, social citizens both during their time as a student and post-graduation (Arnot, 1981). For example, socialist feminists would argue that males have an employment advantage over their female counterparts because males cannot get pregnant and as a result, are less likely to require extended, medical leave from a job (Aulette & Wittner, 2014). Advantages such as this tilt viable employment opportunities towards males while leaving women in a less than desirable position.

Unfortunately, due to the broad scope of feminist inquiry, much of the historical, feminist narrative has been inappropriately lumped together in a chronological, decades-based format. Because of this process, many historically-situated feminist arguments are considered by and large to be resolved despite the fact that there is still meaningful work to be done (Hemmings, 2005). This style of organization and resulting inaction presents

an issue because feminist theory is, at its heart, praxis oriented (Flax, 1990). In other words, feminist theory is fundamentally incapable of accepting neutrality. On the contrary there always is, and always will be, feminist work to be done (Bartky, 1990).

To this point, hooks (2004) argues that patriarchal dominance can be witnessed on a daily basis particularly through mass media messaging and social micro- and macro-aggressions geared towards oppressing non-majority populations. The non-majority population to which hooks identifies most is women of color. Furthermore, hooks as well as other feminist researchers (see Bartky, 1990; Butler & Laclau, 2000; Jonasdottir, 1994; Ortner, 1974), operate under the belief that in addition to solitary aggressive actions, societal norms such as gender role stereotyping serve to make patriarchy appear as the infallible, natural order of things.

Friedan (1963), speaks to this “natural order” through the interrogation of post-WWII domestic roles. In an effort to convince women who had ventured out into the work force to return home, the notion that women could only be truly fulfilled through child-rearing and house work dominated the social landscape. These same beliefs could arguably be readily identified in many modern, American households. For example, within the traditional nuclear family, it is not uncommon for the social construction of “dad” to be synonymous with descriptors such as bread-winner, disciplinarian, strong, unyielding, and dependable. To describe dad as the emotional, soft-spoken, stay-at-home, nurturing partner within this family dynamic may be considered by many to be ridiculous, perhaps even demeaning. As a result, dads that adhere to the latter description may be questioned and even criticized by others whereas the dads that more closely identify with the former description would most likely rarely receive criticism. In this

way, traditional gender stereotypes continue to receive support in modern society reinforcing the grip patriarchy has on the overarching, public consciousness.

Whereas all branches of feminism oppose patriarchy as the social order, not all branches of feminism provide space for males to participate in a pro-feminist discourse. As a white, heterosexual, middle class male it was important that I approached this research from a feminist perspective that acknowledges “male feminists” in order to avoid forcibly inserting myself into feminist conversations that, because of my positionality, I can know nothing about. For example, it would be inappropriate for me to claim a womanist perspective (see hooks, 1994) as womanism seeks to provide a space for oppressed, women of color to share their stories and battle all forms of patriarchal oppression. That being said, for the purpose of my inquiry, feminism has been defined as (a) the belief that women universally face some form of oppression or exploitation; (b) a commitment to uncover and understand what causes and sustains oppression, in all its forms and (c) a commitment to work individually and collectively in everyday life to end all forms of oppression (Maguire, 1987). Maguire’s definition of feminism fits as the guiding oath for a male feminist such as myself because unlike other definitions of feminism it does not posit that males are the problem. Instead, Maguire identifies oppression as the problem to be solved without labeling a specific population as the perpetrators of oppression.

A wide body of research has aimed to distinguish several of the more popular branches of feminist theory including social, liberal, radical, and womanist feminisms however, new additions as well as creative spins on long-established feminist theories continue to expand the nature of feminist inquiry (Acker, 1987; Campbell & Wasco,

2000; hooks, 2015; Weedon, 1997). In designing this research, I felt as though a merger between poststructuralist and feminist theories would provide a frame that would allow me to better explore the systemic perpetuation of oppressive structures without inappropriately pointing a finger at any one, specific population and/or phenomenon. From my reading, I gathered that much of the modern literature situated in poststructuralist discourses can be traced back to the teachings of French philosopher and social theorist, Michel Foucault.

According to Foucault (1975), well known social systems and representative structures play a central role in either challenging or perpetuating common social practices as determined through a political social hierarchy. For example, Foucault (1975) addresses this notion in the exploration of the relationship between criminal justice, the prison, and civilian perception. Using torture, surveillance, and prison architecture as prime examples, Foucault (1975) explores antiquated systems of oppression in which the social elite were able to subordinate the masses via public displays of gruesome punishment (i.e. lynching, beheading, public torture).

Furthermore, Foucault suggests that modern systems of oppression often call upon less visible methods (i.e. surveillance and propaganda) to keep the larger social order in check. Accepting Foucault's notion that social institutions play a central role in the perpetuation of societal norms is a key component to my theoretical frame as I would suggest that public schools are one of the most widely accessed, deep-seated social institutions in America. hooks (2004) echoed this relationship between social institutions such as schools and prisons stating, "... (boys) enter a patriarchal school system where rigid sex roles (are) enforced by peers as rigorously as they are in any adult male prison"

(p. 42). Following the combined logic of hooks and Foucault, I would argue that just as social agenda can be transmitted via the practices witnessed under the heading of criminal justice, explicit and implicit lessons relating to race-ethnicity, class, and gender are taught and maintained within the structures of formal, public schooling.

Chris Weedon (1997) bridged the gap between feminist teachings and poststructuralist theory by posing a new branch of feminism aptly titled, Feminist Poststructuralism. Weedon described feminist poststructuralism as "... a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change" (p. 40). Furthermore, poststructuralist rejection of absolute truth and objectivity fits nicely with the feminist belief that individual women represent unique, lived experiences that can be collectively analyzed in an attempt to better understand women's experience (Gavey, 1989).

As described above, I believe that public schools offer the ideal place to study these power relations as diverse populations of students and teachers meet daily with the shared goal of developing new ways of understanding reality. Moreover, the use of poststructuralist feminist theory has proven to be particularly useful in the past when exploring physical activity related experiences from a feminist perspective include constructions of gender in the hyper-masculine space of physical education class (L. Azzarito et al., 2006), homophobic silence amongst lesbian physical education teachers (Sykes, 2010), and girls' low participation patterns in physical education (Wright, 1995).

Unpacking Masculinity

From my personal experience as a secondary level physical educator, I have come to observe that definitions of gender and sex are often misunderstood and as a result, used interchangeably. For my research, it is important that I distinguish between the two by defining sex as a male/female continuum along which people are classified by their reproductive organs and hormonal profile (Aulette & Wittner, 2014). Comparatively, gender can be defined as “the ways we live our lives as sexed beings, with all the appropriate demeanors, emotions, understandings, and practices such living entails” (Aulette & Wittner, 2014). In essence, gender is described along a spectrum of masculinity and femininity with masculine stereotypes such as physical aggression and dominance being associated with men and feminine stereotypes such as passivity and hyper-emotion being associated with women. Also implied in this definition is that gender is not an innate characteristic but rather, an act or to use the term coined by Katz and Earp (1999), a “*guise*,” that people learn to wear in order to blend into this commonly accepted gender binary (Kimmel, 2008). Developing a clear understanding of the difference between sex and gender is an important distinction as it repudiates the assumption that all males identify as masculine and all females identify as feminine. Rather, using the aforementioned definitions, I was able to explore gender discourses as they were actively constructed by the observed eleventh grade students and teachers.

I would argue that in order to more accurately explore social constructions of gender, particularly masculinity, establishing a common understanding of the general social order is a must. We currently live in a time where throughout the vast majority of the world men are given the keys to the universe simply because of their status as men.

While the benefits procured from such an arrangement vary from person to person based on a myriad of variables (i.e. social class, race-ethnicity, sexual orientation, embodiment, home country, religious preference, age, marital status, etc.), all men benefit from an androcentric, patriarchal system of order.

Patriarchy has been defined as a political-social system that insists that males are “inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence” (hooks, 2004, p. 18). It has been suggested that if one were to take the lid off of patriarchy and examine its inner workings, one would see an innumerable array of male hegemonic practices that ensure the systemic survival (Connell, 2005b). Despite being the predominant cultural model for the vast majority of the world, patriarchy has been demonstrated as detrimental to the development of males as well as females in modern society (Connell, 2005; hooks, 2004). For example, males often participate in physically and emotionally risky behaviors due to unwritten masculine norms (Nakkula & Toshalis, 2006).

As a result, unintentional injuries continue to rank third (6.6%) amongst leading causes of male death per year (CDC, 2013). Perpetual issues with social disconnection, depression, drug addiction, and violence, round out some of the more concerning bi-products that can often be traced back to masculine hegemonic practices in the twenty first century. Kimmel (2008) explored many of these issues as they affect young males between the ages of 16 and 26. According to Kimmel, this formative period of a young men’s lives is most heavily influenced by feeling a need to impress other males, a

practice he dubs, “homosociality” (p. 13). This homosociality takes precedence over nearly all other facets of a young man’s life at this time including romantic relationships, professional ambitions, personal health, and overall lifestyle stability.

In reflecting upon Kimmel’s (2008) assertions as they relate to my personal life experience, I do find many striking similarities and logical explanations. That being said, I feel as though Kimmel’s description of what he describes as “Guyland” paints an extremely general picture of young men’s masculinity by situating the narrative of the proverbial, white, middle-class, college-experienced, heterosexual male at the center of his analyses. Rather than own this population as his unit of analysis, Kimmel fails to adequately acknowledge his focused descriptions largely omitting the experiences of young, non-white males in America. Additionally, rather than explore the social systems that allow and in many cases, encourage citizenship in “Guyland,” Kimmel places much of the blame for these practices on the backs of the individual males. While I would agree that each individual should be held accountable for their actions, I would also argue that by diverting attention from the larger social structures that encourage oppressive masculinities we as a global community are turning a blind eye to the crux of the problem.

Although they are slightly different than the regulations imposed in “Guyland,” middle-aged (30-50 years), adult masculine norms follow a similar, restrictive script. For example, at this stage masculinity may call for the “man of a household” to work long hours for the purpose of buying a large house, driving fancy cars, and traveling on lavish vacations (Aulette, & Wittner, 2014). However, if a man is required to spend long hours at an office he is unable to enjoy his large house. His fancy car will predominantly take

him from home to work. And his dream of lavish vacations will not be possible because his presence is required at the office. In addition, the current system implicitly suggests that men should engage in physically risky behaviors including the avoidance of professional health care, defending one's home in the face of grave danger, and routine binge drinking of alcoholic beverages; all of which could be detrimental to one's health (Connell, 2005; hooks, 2004). Despite the obvious dangers associated with the aforementioned practices, countless men around the world cling to these masculine qualifiers as proof of their maleness. Following this logic, two questions beg to be asked: If these forms of masculinity are so harmful to everyone, how does the entire system remain intact? Why does patriarchy not crumble under its own weight? The answer can be found in the insidious practice of hegemonic masculinity.

Hegemonic Masculinity and Physical Education

Over the years hegemonic practices have been used to describe oppressive phenomena in a myriad of contested arenas including politics (Butler, Laclau & Zizek, 2000), globalization (Robinson, 1996), and organizational identity (Humphreys & Brown, 2002). Amongst all hegemonic discourses, cultural hegemony (Jackson Lears, 1985) specifically seeks to connect oppressive cultural practices with underlying power and privilege in society. More specifically, cultural hegemony has been referred to as,

“...the ‘spontaneous’ constant given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this constant is ‘historically’ caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 12).

When considered in the context of gender, hegemony can be used to explore the interplay of power and oppression on socially constructed gender binaries (Schippers, 2007).

Perhaps the most well-known inquiry addressing the crossover between hegemony and gender is Connell's Hegemonic Masculinity Theory (Connell, 2005b).

Connell (2005b), describes hegemonic masculinity as "... the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (p. 77). Hegemonic Masculinity Theory purports that rather than describing masculinity as one, general concept, it is actually better understood in the context of a hierarchical ranking system. The highest, most sought-after form of masculinity is described as hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity calls for the unabated oppression of all that is feminine in both males and females. It requires the most contempt of all the masculinities for women and is considered the ultimate in the way of masculine ideals. This remains true despite the fact that many iconic figures considered to be hegemonically masculine (e.g. the Terminator, Rocky, The Incredible Hulk, Buzz Lightyear, Ted) are not actual people but rather movie characters or digitally created/enhanced computer animations.

Connell also identifies various other, commonly represented, forms of masculinity in this structure including subordinate and marginalized masculinities. Subordinate masculinities can best be described as masculine practices that do not actively support views of hegemonic masculinity but also do nothing to stop its harmful effects. Rather than upset the status quo, those described as subordinately masculine accept society for what it currently is and happily receive their piece of the patriarchal pie. Marginalized

masculinities are considered the lowliest of all the masculinities and often include non-majority populations such as men of color and men who identify with the LGBTQ community. By some populations, these masculinities are considered lowlier than even femininity as marginalized masculinities represent a contingent of men that have been perceived by their peers as consciously turning away from their maleness in search of something else (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

Research has also revealed that hegemonically masculine ideals are not uniform across all populations and can vary greatly depending on localized notions of masculinity (Connell, 2005b; Laberge & Albert, 1999; Kimmel, 2003; Pascoe, 2003; 2007). For example, Laberge and Albert (1999) explored varied definitions of hegemonic masculinity amongst working, middle, and upper class Canadian males. In this study, the researchers found that working class males heavily associated being masculine with physical strength and size, aggression, and ability to cause bodily harm to others. In a slight change, middle class males largely defined masculinity as one's ability to move up the social ladder and provide a better life for one's family. Finally, interviews with the upper-class males revealed less tangible, more symbolic ties to masculine identity such as the ability to lead other males and skill at delegating professional responsibilities.

It is important to note that each of the above definitions of classed masculinity are heavily situated in what is viewed as attainable by each population. Working class males for example, often receive their directives after they have been passed down the workplace chain of command. This process benefits a constituent of upper-class masculinity as in this system, they do not have to complete the work themselves. On the other hand, if the working-class male was to send a directive up the chain of command it

would go unanswered, demonstrating his lack of influence in the workplace and undercutting his associated masculinity. Following this logic, the working-class male then actively chooses not to define masculinity in terms of his position on the professional ladder but rather by his ability to, as my working-class father would say, “Kick (the shop foreman’s) sissy ass!” Other studies have also taken similar approaches in exploring varied definitions of masculinity particularly in relation to global constructions of masculinity and masculinity as viewed through association with high school athletics (Connell, 2003; Pascoe, 2003). In this study, I will be exploring hegemonic masculinity as it is defined in the northeastern United States.

The vast majority of physical education programs across the United States champion traditional physical education as it has been instructed for years. As presented in Chapter 1, I have defined traditional physical education as a team sport-centric curricular model of physical education in which the majority of instructional time is dedicated to skill acquisition and the understanding of physical activity and sport through the lens of strategy and tactic. Although some students undoubtedly enjoy participating in traditional physical education, a large body of research suggests that the majority of students at all levels of K-12 instruction would favor an alternative curricular model (L. Azzarito & Ennis, 2003; L. Azzarito & Solomon, 2005; Bernstein et al., 2011; Constantinou et al., 2009; L. E. Couturier et al., 2005; Ennis, 2000; Fagrell et al., 2012; Hill & Hannon, 2008). Despite this lack of popularity, schools around the country continue to promote a sport-centric model of physical education while alternative curricular models such as adventure education and fitness-based instruction are widely disregarded (Heath, 2017).

Failure to motivate students is not the only place where traditional physical education falls short. The unchecked understanding of sport as an exclusively masculine space where a few physically intimidating, hyper-competitive males win and everyone else loses perpetuates a larger system of inequity that extends far beyond the walls of the school gymnasium (Parker & Curtner-Smith, 2012; Pope & O'Sullivan, 2003). By taking a look at physical education through the eyes of various students and teachers, I hoped to gain a better perspective on how gender inequality influences individual experiences in a high school physical education. Furthermore, this research begs to ask what I would perceive to be the natural follow-up question: Can physical education serve the dual purpose of increasing the physical well-being of students and teachers while challenging them to confront their preconceived notions about sensitive topics such as gender and social inequality? While this study stops short of answering this question, as a physical education professional I personally believe that physical education is the ideal place within the school where these questions can be discussed and analyzed.

Due in large part to my experiences in and around physical education, when planning this study, I chose to focus specifically on physical education as a contested terrain where adolescent gender is constantly being challenged. To help describe this struggle as it specifically pertained to masculinity in the physical education classroom I chose to borrow from Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) concept of "capital." According to Bourdieu (1986) the idea of capital refers to a palpable aura based on one's social status. This status is said to be boosted by the acquisition finite, highly sought-after resources (i.e. money, cultural artifacts, family lineage). Similar to Hunter (2004), I would assert that a concept of masculine capital can be used to describe the culture of privilege that is

associated with male adolescents who fulfill socially constructed, localized, masculine criteria.

For example, in many settings men can receive masculine capital for a wide variety of voluntary tasks such as working in a historically masculine profession (e.g. military, construction, law enforcement), maintaining a muscular physique (e.g. through routine exercise or steroids), or partaking in the objectification of women. However, in a mainstream, hegemonic context, when women attempt to follow these same career pathways, exercise habits, and/or interpersonal exchanges they are penalized by the sharp sting of the patriarchal lash. In addition, men may also receive masculine capital for naturally determined, biological factors of which they have no selective control such as height (taller is better), amount of body hair (the more hirsute the better), and depth of voice (deeper is better). Conversely, opposing features such as petite stature, lack of body hair, and higher pitched vocals would be considered feminine and as a result, would detract from one's stockpile of masculine capital.

How adolescent males gain and lose masculine capital is important because the more masculine capital that an individual is able to procure, the more benefits of patriarchy they are afforded. Global examples of these benefits include perks for military veterans, higher levels of access to more lucrative jobs, even increased romantic attention from heterosexual women. Although slightly different, adolescents seen as possessing large amounts of masculine capital are entitled to benefits as well. In the case of physical education, masculine adolescents may receive access to better equipment (Pope & O'Sullivan, 2003), opportunities to attain higher grades in class (Evaldsson, 2003), increased notoriety amongst peers (Azzarito & Harrison, 2008), and a decreased

likelihood of receiving disciplinary consequence for disruptive behaviors (Clark-Ibanez, 2008).

One might argue that once a person gets to sample the flavors of the patriarchal bounty they are less likely to acknowledge the system's inequity. In keeping with this metaphor, the more a person is able to consume while sitting at this table, the more likely they are to support an oppressive power structure that ensures that men keep their seat at the table while others are forced to fend for the scraps on the floor. So how is it that adolescents learn the rules associated with the acquisition and forfeiture of masculine capital in physical education? I would suggest that the answer to this question goes hand in hand with current notions of "physical literacy" (SHAPE America, 2014).

Physical Education as a Practice of Literacy

In their most recent iteration of the national physical education standards, SHAPE America has clearly placed an emphasis on literacy by starting each of their 5 prescribed standards with the phrase "The physically literate individual..." (for a full list of the SHAPE National Physical Education Standards see Figure 2.1) (SHAPE America, 2014). As a former physical educator turned physical education teacher-educator, seeing this amendment for the first time took me somewhat by surprise. In my personal experience, literacy (in the traditional sense) and physical activity are rarely considered to be synonymous. As such, the use of the word "literate" as a derivative of "literacy" is a particularly relevant addition to these standards when considering the term from a New Literacies perspective (Gee, 1987). Simply put, New Literacy Studies address the question: What is literacy? (Gee, 1987). Additionally, New Literacy Studies argues that while traditional notions of literacy primarily address an individual's ability to read and

write (Gee, 2015, p. 30), a more complete understanding of literacy can be explored when various texts and their constructed meanings are considered from a social perspective (Gee, 1987). More specifically, Gee (2015) states:

“One does not learn to read texts of type X in way Y unless one has had experience in settings where texts of type X are read in way Y. These settings are various sorts of social institutions – like churches, banks, schools, government offices, or social groups – with certain sorts of interests – like baseball cards, comic books, chess, politics, novels, movies or what have you. One has to be socialised into a practice to learn to read texts of type X in way Y” (pg. 46).

In other words, the meaning of a specific text, be it a classic novel or a street sign, is always co-constructed by both the author and the reader. Because of this process of co-construction, the author’s intention when constructing a text is always somewhat different than how the reader interprets it. The degree to which the author’s intentions and the reader’s interpretation differ is largely dependent on each of the lived, social experiences of both parties. In the world of physical education, an example of this could manifest as a divide between teacher and student perceptions of fun in class. Teachers may perceive dodgeball as a fun activity because of its fast pace and high level of sideline

entertainment. Students on the other hand, may perceive dodgeball differently considering that they are the players who are getting hit with the balls.

Besides placing heavy emphasis on social influences Gee (1987, 2015) also argues that not all texts are capable of being accurately interpreted by all people. Certain texts require a measure of text-

Standard 1: The physically literate individual demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.

Standard 2: The physically literate individual applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance.

Standard 3: The physically literate individual demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.

Standard 4: The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

Standard 5: The physically literate individual recognizes the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

Figure 2.1 SHAPE America National Standards

specific socialization to understand. At times, the social experiences of the reader may be vastly different from those of the author the result of which manifests in an insurmountable disconnect between a text's intended meaning and the reader's ability to grasp the intended message. Moreover, the relationship between social experience and textual interpretation is not the only place where this gap is experienced. In addition to texts, language, orality, and conversation are also effected by a certain measure of (un)common, social experience. Gee uses the term 'Discourse' to encapsulate all of the:

“...distinctive ways of speaking/listening and writing/reading (along with) distinctive ways of acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, dressing, thinking,

believing with other people and with various objects, tools and technologies... enact specific socially recognizable identities engaged in specific socially recognizable activities” (2015, p. 171).

For Gee, people learn an initial Discourse early in life based on their immediate social circle and surroundings (i.e. family, culture, vernacular language). Later in life, as people begin to experience the public sphere (i.e. school, church), individuals attain a variety of secondary Discourses (p. 173). Gee argues that while secondary Discourses can be learned, primary Discourse are the only Discourses an individual can truly master (Gee, 2015, p. 197).

Delpit (2006) refutes this point suggesting that all Discourses, whether they be primary or secondary to specific individuals, can be mastered if given ample time and attention. Furthermore, Delpit (2006) asserts that Gee’s (2015) notions of Discourse uphold a deficit-based model of the social world as certain Discourses (i.e. white, masculine, middle class) are socially privileged over marginalized Discourses such as those associated with the working class and people of color (p. 154). Contrary to Gee’s understanding, Delpit (2006) argues that all students have the ability to learn and subsequently master secondary Discourses, so long as the teacher addresses the Discourse’s superficial features (i.e. grammar, style, mechanics) and subtle nuances (p. 156). Delpit contends that this observation is especially true when these secondary Discourses include aspects of a dominant Discourse.

Additional research relating to literacy echoes Delpit’s (2006) sentiment that literacy and related Discourse can be used “... as an emancipatory tool that helps empower the oppressed and raise the critical consciousness of the oppressor(s)” (Freire &

Macedo, 1987, p. 15). When considered in the context of public education, this statement can be understood as a call to action pressing teachers and administrators to consider using their platform not only to teach prescribed academic content, but to engage students in critical dialogue aimed at improving the social order. If one was to engage in such praxis, opportunities would arise where a multitude of individual perspectives could be shared ultimately creating a situation in which personal narratives could help reshape the foundations of formal, public education. In other words, the individual's unique interpretation of the 'word' (text) provides a purposeful opportunity to re-interpret or rewrite the 'world' (i.e. the social context in which the text is situated) (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

Gee's (1987, 2015) ideas surrounding literacies and Discourse, play an integral role in framing this research as localized perceptions of gender and masculinity could be classified as a prime example of a secondary Discourse. Since secondary Discourses are learned by way of secondary (public) institutions, it would make sense that schools serve as a place where adolescents learn social rules that contribute to a social constructed masculine/feminine gender binary. Furthermore, Delpit's (2006) addendum of Discourse mastery along with Freire and Macedo's (1987) emancipatory motivations seek to provide teachers, administrators, and teacher-educators alike with the inspiration need to revisit fossilized understandings of teaching and learning with the goal of ultimately moving in a direction of alternative classroom policies and pedagogies (see Brown, 1992; Crabtree & Sapp, 2001; Shrewsbury, 1987).

Physical Education and Educational Policy

Schools often house a vast amount of diversity. Moreover, the diversity that is found in schools can take many different forms. For example, variable compositions of race-ethnicity, social class, sex, gender, physical ability/disability, and cognitive intellect all but ensure that individual schools remain their own unique, living, breathing organisms. With this amount of variability, it is difficult to imagine that any federal mandated policy could fit snugly into the culture of a singular public school without first being amended by teachers and administrators at the building level. In light of this observation, it is important that professionals at the grass-roots levels carefully investigate both the intentions and architecture of policy decisions before delivery.

In taking a more analytic approach to categorizing educational policy, it has been suggested that policies can be separated into two groups: micro- and macro-policy (Bell & Stevenson, 2006). In the context of public schools, macro-policy can be defined as rules, regulations and guidelines created at the national and/or regional level with the intention of guiding the masses. Conversely, micro-policy can be described as a structural framework in which school administrators and teachers collaboratively work to establish rules, routines, and daily practices that are considered to have the greatest positive impact on students. Prior research has suggested that one way that these micro-policies are most commonly enacted within the school is through locally constructed curricula (Looney, 2001). In the context of my research, recognizing the micro- macro- distinction is important as I would argue that current educational macro **and** micro-policy, fall specifically short in addressing issues of gender-related marginalization in physical

education. To further exemplify this point, I now turn to a brief discussion of the most heavily-referenced macro-policy in the world of sport and physical education, Title IX.

Until recently there were very few safe-guards in place that protected individuals from sex discrimination in the workplace. In 1972, Title IX was passed in an attempt to make federal institutions places where sex equity was the norm as opposed to the exception. In paraphrasing the lengthy document, Title IX states that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Originally created to ensure equal rights for women in the workforce, Title IX is currently referenced in the world of sport more than anywhere else (Thelin, 2000; Yuracko, 2002). Although less than ten percent of the Title IX legislation references athletic mandates, sport and physical activity are the areas where Title IX has received the most public attention (Edwards, 2010).

Prior to the passage of Title IX by former President Nixon, the world of sport and physical activity was largely considered to be exclusively a male domain. While women did participate in athletic endeavors, various biological myths locked women out of physical activities in which males were routinely allowed to participate. One such myth, triumphantly disproved in 1967 by Katherine Switzer, stated that if a women was to run further than 10 miles, she would risk her uterus falling out of her body (Aulette & Wittner, 2014). Not only did Kathrine disprove this myth, but she did so in iconic fashion by finishing the “male only” Boston Marathon while disgruntled competitors pushed, pulled, shoved, and taunted her for the entire 26-mile race. Shortly after Switzer’s inspirational run, women’s professional tennis star, Billie-Jean King, followed suit

defeating male professional tennis player, Bobby Riggs 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 in what was billed as the “Battle of the Sexes II” in Houston, Texas. Both of these inspirational performances helped not only to insight social change but also focused the national spotlight on the concept of sex equity in the realms of sport and physical activity.

Flash forward to the year 2005. After administering a national survey, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) found that the number of young women participating in interscholastic sport had increased from fewer than 300,000 before the passage of Title IX to 2.95 million in 2005 (Stader & Surface, 2014). At first glance, Title IX appears to be wildly successful in providing a more equitable sporting experience amongst men and women in both interscholastic and intercollegiate sport. However, upon closer examination, Title IX is noticeably vague in relation to wording regarding issues surrounding gender and equality.

This sentiment is perhaps most visible in the world of intercollegiate sport. As part of its compliance with Title IX, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) requires that men’s and women’s athletic programs adhere to three major rules: (1) Provide participation opportunities for women and men that are substantially proportionate to their respective rates of enrolment of full-time, undergraduate students. (2) Demonstrate a history of continuing practice of program expansion for the underrepresented sex and (3) Fully and effectively accommodate the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex (“Title IX Frequently Asked Questions”, n.d.).

It is important to notice the word choice in these compliance regulations. For example, in Regulation 1, the NCAA does not require that male and female athletic programs receive the *same* facilities and/or equipment, but rather ensure that the

differences between resources is *not substantial* (Buchanan, 2012). This could be interpreted in innumerable ways but is most egregiously abused via Division I football programs. Despite football programs costing their institutions absorbent amounts of money, male football players routinely have access to the largest facilities, state of the art equipment, gourmet meals, and innumerable academic supports throughout the year. In opposition, one would be hard pressed to find a women's field hockey program that has access to similar amenities. Additionally, when examining Regulation 3, the vague language of "fully and effectively accommodate interests..." could be interpreted in a myriad of ways. Proving this point, during President George W. Bush's first term in office (2001-2004), universities were considered to be in compliance with Title IX if their athletic departments simply sent out an email survey to their female students asking which sports they would like to play. There was no requirement for how many responses the university had to receive in receipt (Buchanan, 2012). In spite of these obvious inequities that favor the male athlete, a wide body of scholarly literature continues to critique Title IX on the foundation that the legislation hamstring men by forcing schools to cut men's athletic programs in order to be considered compliant (Cullitan, 2010; Koller, 2010; Langton, 2009). The basis for these arguments is often flimsy at best and demonstrates the ever-present backlash of male privilege as related to feminist inspired social change.

While there are obvious fissures in Title IX implementation at the collegiate level, Title IX also came with a list of ill-defined requirements for public schools. In keeping with the theme of physical activity, under Title IX public schools are required to have co-ed physical education classes. Prior to 1972, it was common practice for the girls to have

a female physical educator guide them through “feminine” activities such as dance, gymnastics, walking, and badminton while boys, accompanied by their male teacher, would participate in “masculine” team-sport centric instruction such as football, basketball, baseball, and wrestling. Today, students are often allowed to choose which activities they will partake in with several options being offered throughout the course of the school year. Again, superficially all seems well. However, a more in-depth analysis reveals that stopping at the integration of the sexes may simply be equivalent to placing a Band-Aid over a broken bone.

The not-so-hidden cost of ignoring sex and gender inequity in the physical education classroom is that traditional gender stereotypes of what boys and girls can and cannot do are perpetuated if left to their own devices (Ronholt, 2002). Rather than utilize the gymnasium or athletic field to extinguish inequality in a sporting context, these harmful rites of masculine passage are often fanned as many physical education curricular models remain similar to their Title IX predecessors. Competitive, team sport and sport-specific skill development dominates students’ physical education experience while alternative activities such as dance, adventure education, fitness instruction, and cooperative games receive a relatively small amount of instructional attention (L. Azzarito & Solomon, 2005; Chen & Curtner-Smith, 2013; Constantinou et al., 2009; L. E. Couturier et al., 2005; Ennis, 2000; Fagrell et al., 2012; Flintoff & Scraton, 2001). In keeping with this curricular model, students’ preconceived notions are given a chance to play out in real-time for all to witness.

L. Azzarito and Harrison (2008) explored this assertion while observing two public high schools in the southeastern United States. The researchers in this study found

that both male and female students expressed a strong belief in the role of the black, superior male athlete and the white, inferior male athlete. Conversely students assigned classroom success and higher levels of intelligence to white males in the classroom while black males were often considered incapable of achieving high marks. In support of these findings, Pope and O'Sullivan (2003) noticed while observing a supervised, recreational basketball program offered during lunch at one high school, the main baskets and best equipment being dominated by large, physically imposing boys while smaller boys, girls, and non-majority students were forced to play on the periphery of the gym or, not play at all. These studies serve as prime examples of how racial and gender stereotypes, when left unchallenged, can be used as sign-posts to guide student experiences in and around physical activity. In attempting to better understand these phenomena, I actively searched for instances throughout this study where participants' beliefs surrounding gender and place in physical education appeared to dictate the behavior of students and teachers in the classroom.

Conclusion

The goal of this literature review was to provide an overarching picture of the theories, concepts, and educational practices that served as the foundational components of the study. Additionally, this chapter looked to present a variety of social issues associated with the current delivery of physical education in public schools as prescribed by local, federal, and professional agencies. These topics were presented in a way that was meant to demonstrate a clear need for research geared towards developing a better understanding of gender particularly as viewed through the lens of physical education. In the next chapter, I will discuss how I went about gaining a more complete picture of the

social landscape in one physical education class by presenting the research design and associated methodologies that were used to carry out this study.

Chapter 3: Research Design, Methodologies, and Methods

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the research design, methods, and methodology used to conduct this qualitative study along with the theoretical, philosophical, and interpretive frameworks upon which this study was built. This study was located within an interpretive, poststructuralist feminist paradigm (Gavey, 1989; Hansen, 2010; Scott, 1988; Sykes, 2010; Weedon, 1997) with the ultimate goal of utilizing an inductive approach (Creswell, 2014; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012; Thomas, 2006) to better understand the construction, transmission, and dissemination of messages regarding localized masculinity in the studied physical education classroom. Participants for this study included 15 eleventh grade physical education students, their 2 physical education teachers at a small, suburban high school in the northeastern United States. From this initial sample, a smaller subsample of 3 students and 1 teacher were selected to share their varied experiences in physical education as gendered beings. In addition to this sample of students and teachers, I also took an emergent, participatory role in this inquiry as the study progressed.

In its totality, this chapter seeks to provide an overarching view of my methodological choices used to guide this research. Additionally, the chapter looks to provide justification for each of these choices through reference to previously conducted research as well as personal considerations. I will also discuss methodological issues that arose throughout this study along with my attempts to remedy unanticipated circumstances. Together, as guided by the research paradigm of poststructuralist

feminism, these explanations seek to provide a working rationale for why this study was conducted using the chosen format.

To help facilitate the conversation, this chapter has been divided into several sections and subsections. Following this introduction, I will begin by discussing the research design and its associated purpose of this study. Next, I will present each of the three research questions that served as the structural framework for this inquiry along with explanations for how each question contributed to my larger curiosities. After the research questions have been addressed, I will then explore narrative inquiry and visual methods as the central methodologies of this study. This will be followed by a synopsis of the initial search and contact of the research site. Then, I will briefly situate the study within the town where the study took place. Finally, this chapter will conclude with an in-depth presentation the procedures used to carry out this research.

Research Design and Purpose

Qualitative research often prizes the experience and opinions of the researcher as a central component to all phases of the research (Patton, 2002). Often as a highly involved, hands-on fixture in the study, the qualitative researcher often openly calls upon their personal life experiences and subjectivities to help guide the direction of research (Ely, 2001; Merriam & Tisdell, 2009; Patton, 2002). Additionally, quantitative research often attempts to remove confounding variables and achieve objectivity throughout methodological procedures and resulting analyses (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). I would argue that objectivity is a mirage that does not exist in any form of research. From the moment that the researcher decides on their questions of interest, they are already entering into an inquiry with preconceived notions based on their previous, life

experiences (Gaukroger, 2012). Rather than bastardize and hide ones subjectivities, they should be used to better situate the research amongst a larger, social context (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Considering that my aim for this research was to gain an understanding of the individual experiences of various stakeholders in a high school physical education class, I determined early on in my process that qualitative research was the direction in which I was heading.

When considering the methodological foundations of research, it is essential to consider one's personal worldview. Personally, I find myself drawn to the Critical worldview more-so than a say a positivist, pragmatic, or social constructivist worldview (Creswell, 2014). As previously discussed (see Chapter 2), Paulo Freire is widely credited with introducing the Critical worldview into scholarly discourse. As expressed in his widely-cited text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970), Freire passionately believed that education should at its core be an emancipatory process that seeks to balance power structures between oppressed populations and their oppressors. Borrowing from the Freire's teachings, Creswell (2014) slightly modifies Freire's critical perspective by describing what he calls an advocacy/participatory worldview. The advocacy/participatory worldview calls for research to "contain an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher's life" (p. 9). In other words, research rooted in the advocacy/participatory world view acknowledges the ubiquitous nature of power and oppression in society and seeks to alter the balance of these constructs in the lives of both the researcher(s) and participants.

Building from Creswell's (2014) description of an advocacy/participatory worldview, my study sought to enlist a poststructuralist feminist (Gavey, 1988; Hansen, 2010; Weedon, 1997) worldview to describe the perpetuation of social inequities as they occur in middle school physical education class. More specifically, my goal was to explore the adverse effects of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005b) on unifying physical education as a gender equitable or, potentially, gender neutral space within the existing structure of traditional, public schooling. By choosing this worldview, (or perhaps more accurately, allowing this worldview to choose me) I was whole-heartedly dedicated to exploring the dynamic influence of masculinity on adolescent physical activity.

Exploring the Research Questions

Albert Einstein once famously stated, "If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?" (Goodreads, 2018). As such, my final research questions were decided upon through an iterative process of reflection where I paid particular attention to unresolved, personal curiosities involving what I would describe as a cross-over between localized masculinity and physical education. This component of the research was particularly difficult for me as it forced me to think long and hard about what it was that I truly was interested in exploring. After originally considering a praxis-based (Freire, 1970) project that would look to explore potential alternatives to current modes of public school physical education, I eventually arrived at the conclusion that I was more interested in delving deeper into manifestations of masculine messages in physical education. In this section I will look to present my three research questions

followed by a brief discussion of how each question uniquely contributed to this research.

The three, overarching research questions that guided this inquiry were:

(RQ1) How do localized notions of masculinity influence students' perceptions of themselves and others while participating in an eleventh grade physical education class?

(RQ2) How do physical education teachers perpetuate and/or disrupt localized notions of masculinity in an eleventh grade physical education class? and

(RQ3) How do the narratives of eleventh grade physical education students and their teachers help me to uncover meaning in my personal narrative as an athletic, able-bodied, heterosexual, white male researcher?

Research Question 1: *How do localized notions of masculinity influence students' perceptions of themselves and others while participating in an eleventh grade physical education class?*

This research question sought to examine localized definitions, ideas, and understandings that eleventh grade students had regarding the socio-emotional manifestations of masculinity in and around SHS physical education. Stemming from these definitions, this question also looked to explore the weight individual students placed on masculinity as a contributing factor to (a) their personally constructed, adolescent gender and (b) their relative perceptions of other students and teachers in class as gendered beings. Initially, my reason for targeting this population was the lack of documented research that explored the relationship between gender construction, physical activity, and late-stage (ages 15-17) adolescence (exceptions include Azzarito & Harrison, 2008; Kimmel, 2008; Pascoe, 2007). This observation was supported by the

fact that several of the most commonly cited theories regarding masculinity construction (see Bem, 1981; Butler, 2004; Connell, 2005; Lorber, 2013) have encountered a large amount of criticism as they have been accused of generalizing adult understandings of masculinity to people of all ages (Demetriou, 2001; Moller, 2007). As such, the mechanisms by which late-stage adolescents actively construct their identities in and around the space of physical education is largely unknown.

Shortly after the study began, a second, previously obscured motivation for answering this question arose. After composing numerous personal journal entries, longitudinally debriefing with critical friends, and introspectively reflecting on the influence of physical education and sport on my own identity, I came to the realization that late-stage adolescence was a particularly difficult time for me as an unsure, tremendously insecure young person. At this time, rather than speak to my uncertainties, I actively chose to project an image of self-confidence, physical toughness, and reliability. In recognition of my personal experiences with physical education and sport, along with the research gap associated with the late-stage adolescent population, I felt as though this question fulfilled a primal need to better understand the implicit messages being processed by malleable, young minds in physical education.

In the spirit of providing ontological transparency, particularly as it pertains to my underlying beliefs about masculinity and the sharing of participant narratives, I would also like to highlight several words and phrases embedded within the question that are particularly important. The first phrase that I wish to draw attention to is “localized notions of masculinity.” Here I have intentionally used this phrase to support the assertion that masculinity is in fact a fluid, socially-constructed concept that is

inextricably linked to factors such as socio-economic status (Connell, 1996; Laberge & Albert, 1999) race-ethnicity (Aulette & Wittner, 2014, p.3; Azzarito & Harrison, 2008; Connell, 2005; Pascoe 2007) biological sex (Aulette & Wittner, 2014, p.20; Clark-Ibanez, 2008; Pascoe, 2007) sexual orientation (Connell, 2005; Kimmel, 2003; Pascoe, 2007), geographic location (Aulette & Wittner, 2014, p.1; Connell, 2005b) chronological age (Kimmel, 2008) and physical embodiment (Azzarito, 2010;2012).

Understanding my inquiry in the context of this representation of masculinity is essential as issues surrounding gender are often presented via mass media messaging as a strict binary (Lazarus, Wunderlich, Stallone, & Vitagliano, 1979). To accept the assertion that gender can be classified simply using dichotomous terminology (i.e. masculine/feminine) is to essentially deny what may be better described as a near-endless continuum of gender possibilities. When speaking specifically to masculinity, rather than accept the idea that masculinity can be described using a fixed definition across all environments I have chosen to identify with an understanding of masculinity as a multilayered social construct in which the *how* masculinity is enacted and understood is directly impacted by *who, what, where, when, and why* of a specific local (Connell, 2005; Kimmel, 2003; Pascoe, 2003).

The word “participating” also plays an important role in this question and calls for further explanation. In many physical education classes, participation specifically refers to a measure of students’ psychomotor involvement in class activities. I would argue that regardless of psychomotor involvement, all students present in the physical education class are, in fact, participating (Ennis 1999; 2000). In other words, students do not necessarily have to be moving and/or competing in prescribed physical education

activities to be considered as actively participating in physical education class.

Acknowledging that adolescents have their own individual motivations for behaving in specific ways at specific times (Nakkula & Toshalis, 2006) students' refusal to engage in certain class activities provide just as much (if not more) information to physical educators as those who are engaged in classroom instruction. All things considered, when "participation" is approached from this perspective I would assert that there is a myriad of ways students are actively involved in the physical education milieu at any given moment in time.

In sum, this question seeks to explore the transferability of localized, socially constructed, masculine messages as they are experienced by all students in the physical education classroom. Furthermore, by acknowledging that gender more closely resembles a fluid continuum rather than a rigid dichotomy, I was able to paint a more detailed portrait when constructing the individual narratives of students, teachers, and myself. This level of detail is what eventually allowed me to develop a greater understanding of the various connections between gender identity, late-stage adolescence, and the implicit and explicit messages delivered through participation in a public school physical education.

Research Question 2: *How do physical education teachers perpetuate and/or disrupt localized notions of masculinity in an eleventh grade physical education class?*

As mentioned in Chapter 2, it has been suggested that the most important players in delivering educational policy to students are classroom teachers (Heineke, Ryan, & Tocci, 2015). It has also been suggested that educational policies can be separated into two groups: micro- and macro-policy (Bell & Stevenson, 2006). Following this logic,

macro-policy can be defined as rules, regulations and guidelines created at the national and/or regional level with the intention of guiding the masses. Conversely, micro-policy can be described as a structural framework in which school administrators and teachers collaboratively work to establish rules, routines, and daily practices that are perceived to have the greatest positive impact on students. Because classroom educators often serve as the messengers charged with the task of delivering of macro-level, federal policy to students, classroom educators could be considered to be the most influential policy enactors of all (Heineke, Ryan, & Tocci, 2015). On the micro-level, teachers often find creative ways to adhere to policy demands while integrating their pedagogical style and core values (Alfrey, O'Connor, & Jeanes, 2016). After all, it is not the board room executives but the local, neighborhood teacher who has the most face-to-face time with their students. In the context of my research, recognizing the micro- macro- distinction is an important concept as I propose current educational macro and micro-policy, fall specifically short in addressing issues of gender-related marginalization in physical education.

This research question looked to take this declaration one step further by moving past the notion of physical educator as movement expert and into the realm of the classroom teacher as an institutionally empowered figure. In this role, teachers are pawns, used by the larger institutions (i.e. schools) to transmit communal messages such as those that reinforce and/or disrupt localized, masculine norms. This question specifically sought to focus on how two middle-aged, white, male physical educators systematically negotiated their roles as community representatives of localized masculinity. Furthermore, this question helped to explore the extent to which individual physical

education teachers (a) identify themselves as symbols representative of localized masculinity within the school community and (b) personally negotiated localized notions of masculinity as defined by the local community, SHS physical education, and the larger, public school physical education landscape.

Research Question 3: *How do the narratives of eleventh grade physical education students and their teachers help me to uncover meaning in my personal narrative as an athletic, able-bodied, heterosexual, white male researcher?*

In order to truly engage in qualitative inquiry, phenomena must be studied with the realization that researchers themselves are dynamic, interacting individuals that can never be completely removed from the situation(s) of interest (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001; Hamilton, Smith, & Worthington, 2008; Messner, 1999). While I found myself initially keeping this inquiry at arm's length, it became apparent as the study progressed that my experience as a former Springfield student and physical education teacher added another meaningful layer to the project. As a person with first-hand exposure to the localized masculinity enacted in Springfield, I also felt like this study provided me with the perfect opportunity to take an introspective look at my experiences as a white, male physical education student/teacher through my newly acquired, feminist lens. It was my hope in exploring this question that my evolving perspective regarding the juxtaposition of educational practice, gender, and physical activity could help shed light on how I validate the influence that masculine norms have on my personal life as well as my professional practices as a former physical education teacher-educator.

Feldman (2003) suggests that engaging in self-study research is both a political and a moral endeavor because of the researcher's desire to share their story as a means to

encourage some type of social change. In this study, it was of paramount importance that I provided space for the physical education students to share their narratives with the hopes that local stakeholders could gain a better idea of how physical education practices can help and/or hinder adolescent identity development. I also found it important for adult, physical education specialists such as teachers to share their narratives because in many ways, these professionals are required via the written (i.e. policy) and unwritten rules of the school to deliver an institutional agenda that they may or may not support. Personally speaking, while I was serving as a physical education teacher I often felt like there were specific expectations for who I *should* be as well as what I *needed* to represent within the school community. In many ways these expectations confined me to a relatively small box that often conflicted with my own philosophical beliefs regarding such topics as affective components of physical education, community access to physical activity, and the professional role of the physical educator within the school building.

Later, when serving as a physical education teacher-educator, I often found myself adhering an educational model that paid homage to federal educational standards and mandates. By pouring so much time and energy into the hard science of physical activity, little to no room was left for critical thought and reflection regarding the experiences of pre-service physical educators. This question was, in part, born out of this void. As such, this question challenged me to make what was once familiar, unfamiliar (Cook, 1998) by calling for me to deconstruct my personal experiences in high school physical education with the goal of gaining a better understanding of how my high school physical education experience affected my socially constructed identity as a white male.

This question aims to explore the parallels and discrepancies associated with localized masculinity across time as represented by my i.e. the researcher) own recollection along with those of the study participants. It is my hope that by undergoing an authentic, reflexive process geared towards challenging my notions of gender others physical education professionals will be open to exploring their own perceptions of gender and its place in the physical education classroom (Kleinmann & Copp, 1993). As a secondary, more personal motivation, this question also will help me to push my thinking as a physical education professional influencing my personal practice to reflect a more just, equitable, and accepting model of physical education for all students. Ideally, I would look to pass along my new-found understandings to aspiring physical education teachers with the hope of influencing the overall landscape of physical education as a respected, educational discipline.

Merging Methodologies: Using Narrative Inquiry & Visual Methods

Although narrative inquiry and the use of visual methods have independently proved to be valid pathways to uncovering meaning, when combined the two methodologies have demonstrated a unique ability to make deeper meaning of recorded phenomena (Simmonds, 2015). Heading into this study, I anticipated some level of student pushback in relation to the topic of gender as previous research has shown that adolescents can have a particularly difficult time talking about sex and gender, particularly when they are internally struggling with these concepts at the time of questioning (Payne & Smith, 2012). As such, I felt as though a methodological approach that enlisted both narrative inquiry and visual methods gave me the best chance at achieving the kind of depth in understanding that I initially set out to achieve.

Additionally, because both narrative inquiry and visual-based research seek to provide research participants with a space to share their lived experiences using their own voices (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Wang 1997), I felt as though this approach would help me to preserve participants' voices in a way that helped to bring their stories to life. Below I will look to further explain how narrative inquiry and visual methods were used to answer my prescribed research questions.

Sharing stories: Using narrative inquiry to explore participants' lived experiences.

Supported by a Deweyan (1938) perspective that experience and education are inextricably linked, narrative inquiry has been described as a research methodology that “brings theoretical ideas about the nature of human life as lived to bear on educational experience as lived” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990, p. 3). In other words, individual educational experiences do not exist in a vacuum but rather, can be analyzed to develop a better understanding of the overarching human experience (Caine, Estefan, & Clandinin, 2013). More specifically, Clandinin and Connelly (2006) define narrative inquiry in the following context:

“Arguments for the use and development of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which, humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful” (p. 477).

In these terms, people's lived experiences are subconsciously translated into a storied form once they occur. Furthermore, because these stories are influenced by confounding factors such as personal subjectivities, past experience, and time decay, they are often considered to have been subconsciously reworked or "re-storied" by the time that they are initially shared (Ely, 2007; Xu, 2010). This process of re-storying often creates fluid boundaries around shared stories that ultimately, shed light on an individual's personal interpretation of an experience while concurrently unveiling how an experience may be transformed when examined in the context of the larger, social landscape.

Because experience is inevitably a social construction, when instituting a narrative research design, conversation between participants and the researcher(s) is a crucial (Hickson, 2016; Hollingsworth and Dybdahl, 2007). Since narratives can be used to communicate a point of view while taking into consideration the participants' purpose for sharing (Luttrell, 2010b), narrative inquiry has been used to help bridge gaps in understanding between populations with varied amounts of privilege (Cardwell, 2002; Cole, 2009). In this study, I have chosen to use narrative inquiry to explore individual and collective notions of localized masculinity present in an eleventh grade physical education class. To do this, I elected to create student narratives based predominantly on individual and focus group interviews, informal conversations, and GoPro® video transcriptions.

When relying on researcher-generated narratives to accurately portray participant experiences, researchers must take great care to paint as close to a real-life picture as possible. To achieve this, researchers must provide ample justification for choosing this type of research over alternative designs. As suggested by Clandinin, Pushor, and Orr

(2007), I have elected to address three kinds of justification: the personal, practical, and the social. Personal justification recommends that the researcher situate themselves within the study particularly through the researcher's interest and relationship to the associated inquiry. For my study, I have looked to achieve this by looking to participant narratives to better understand my physical education experience (see Research Question 3). Practical justification asks the researcher to use gathered narratives to think about how current practice can be improved. I have used this type of justification as my driving motivation for completing this research. While practical intervention in physical education is beyond the scope of this research, my hope is that this research will act as a springboard for future professionals seeking to change the conversation around how we “do” physical education in public schools. Finally, social justification is said to consider the relevance of this research when viewed by larger society. Because gender inequity has been previously identified as a major issue at all educational levels (Acker, 1987; Azzarito, Solomon, & Harrison, 2006; Brown, 1992; Crabtree & Sapp, 2001; Snapp, McGuire, Sinclair, Gabrion, & Russell, 2015), I would argue that addressing gender disparities in the classroom should be at the top of the priority list when considering how to make school a more meaningful place for all students.

Developing perspective: Using visual methods to explore participants' lived experiences.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of researchers using visual methods as a tool when conducting critically-framed, scholarly research (Clark-Ibanez, 2008; Carlson, Engebretson, & Chamberlain, 2006; Hussey, 2001; Nulman, 2014; Robinson-Keilig, Hamill, Gwin-Vinsant, Dashner, 2014; Simmonds,

Cornelia, & ter Avest, 2015; Walsh, 2007; Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchinson, Bell, & Pestronk, 2004). This spike is particularly visible when referencing studies that seek to provide children and adolescents a platform to use their voices while limiting adult interference (Burke, 2005; Clark-Ibanez, 2008; Leitch, 2008; Luttrell, 2010b; Prosser, 2007; Wang, 2006).

Additionally, visual methods continue to play a major role in research exploring the fields of physical activity, health, and wellness as they have been shown to be a highly effective way to explore questions of interest (Azzarito, 2012; Azzarito & Katzew, 2010; Beets, Banda, Erwin, & Beighle, 2011; Burke, 2005; Phoenix, 2010). Azzarito (2012) offers a partial explanation for the use of visual methods in the aforementioned fields stating, “Visual research often offers innovative tools for understanding which can frame the context through more authentic lenses, revealing the economic-cultural educational factors having an impact on health, access to physical activity, and the body” (p. 296). As I read Azzarito’s statement, I feel a strong call to not only use visual research as a tool to examine the *what* of health, physical activity, and the body but also the *who*, and the *why*. As such, my goal in marrying my research with visual methods was to further explore the intersection of hegemonic masculinity and physical education by providing classroom researchers with an opportunity to have an authentic, unfiltered platform to share their voices (Luttrell, 2010b).

Photovoice.

Since both photovoice (Wang, 1997) and narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990) seek to explore personal experiences through the use of shared stories and associated discourses, the meshing of the two methodologies has been previously

utilized to gain a more holistic picture of observed phenomena (see Kettle, 2010). Originally created by Wang and Burris (1997) to explore health promotion experiences amongst women in China, photovoice has been described as an innovative research technique that promotes critical consciousness, feminist theory, and nontraditional approaches to documentary photography (Wang 1999). Heavily situated in the critical paradigm (Guido, Chavez, & Lincoln, 2010), photovoice calls for participants to use cameras to document their lived experiences (Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchinson, Bell, & Pestronk, 2004). As such, when using photovoice as a research methodology, participants are transformed from “passive research subjects to (active creators) of meaning and knowledge” (Robinson-Keilig, Hamill, Gwin-Vinsant, & Dashner, 2004). After being produced, pictures are often then collectively analyzed and used to promote social change (Wang, 2004).

Wang (1999) further describes photovoice as a methodology aims to achieve three main goals: (1) to record and reflect on personal and community concerns, (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through group discussions of photographs, and (3) to reach policy makers. In the context of this study these 3 goals were achieved by a means of zooming in and zooming out of macro and micro-discourses regarding the intersection of gender and organized physical activity. As such a conscious effort was made to consider broad, transferable policy-related applications for this research as well as more focused, localized solutions to gender inequity in the physical education classroom.

By its very nature, photovoice seeks to amplify the voices of participants providing those who are most affected by phenomena a platform to incite meaningful

change. In so doing, the researcher must be willing to relinquish some level of control over the study in order to allow participants the space needed to “... enact their own agency” (Horwitz, 2012; p. 15). In the spirit of taking a risk and allowing participants to document their own lived experiences, many photo-based projects have aimed to critically examine social issues poisoned by inequitable power dynamics. Some of these projects include: adolescent perceptions of embodiment (Azzarito, 2010; 2012), historical representations of gender as depicted in school photography (Margolis, 1999), exploring the potential for children’s physical activity interventions in the community (Beets, Banda, Erwin, & Beighle, 2011), female to male transexuals’ experience with health care (Hussey, 2001), and youth experiences from around the globe with HIV/AIDS (Larkin, Lombardo, Walker, Bahreini, Tharao, Mitchell, & Dubazane, 2007). However, as is the case with any research methodology, photovoice has its flaws.

Critiques of photovoice often site ethical considerations as the most vulnerable part of this methodology (Azzarito, 2012; Carlson, Engebretson, & Chamberlain, 2006; Warne, Snyder, Gadin, 2013). Considerations relating to how to best maintain participant anonymity (Prosser, 2000; Royce, Parra-Medina, & Messias, 2006), how to preserve participant voice (Robinson-Keilig, Hamil, Gwin-Vinsant, & Dashnet, 2014), and how to disseminate praxis-based implications to a larger audience (Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Bell, & Pestronk, 2004) all contribute to the difficulties associated with closing-out a photovoice project. However, I would argue that there are several more difficulties one must consider when carrying out a photovoice project.

For example, after piloting a classroom-based, photovoice project in early 2016, I found that during follow-up photo elicitation interviews, there were several instances

where student participants struggled to remember their motivations for taking a specific picture several days after the photos had initially been taken. Because of this phenomenon, many photos that students had taken were only superficially explored or, in some cases, not explored at all. Additionally, I found that the flavor of social interactions in the classroom, particularly as relating to dynamic, non-verbal cues and voice inflections were near impossible to capture by solely using the photovoice methodology. Simply put, unless a participant vividly recalls a particular event, nuanced details that are not directly depicted in the still photos are lost in translation. In an effort to fill-in these gaps in this research project, I elected to have several students in each class videotape their experiences while many of their peers concurrently participated in a photovoice protocol.

GoPro® videography.

In the past, due to the expenses associated with video equipment and production, research involving video recordings was not considered to be a feasible option for many researchers (Jewitt, 2012). However, due to recent advances in technology, researchers have been granted much greater access to video as a means to explore topics of interest. Mitchell (2011) suggests that one strength of videomaking is that it can help shed a brighter light on youth identity construction (p. 89). Furthermore, video has been described as being a particularly useful medium for “helping ‘ordinary people’ participate in research because it can help them articulate a voice through visual rather than written text” (Haw, 2008, p. 193). However, some video-based research projects have been critiqued as they have attempted to assign a first-person recollection of events without

truly recording associated experiences from a near first-person perspective (Catalani, Veneziante, Campbell. Butler, Springgate, & Minkler, 2012).

According to Pink (2015), wearable cameras have the ability to record specific evidence of a participant's perspective related to people, feelings, and things. This perspective was particularly important for me to achieve as one of the major challenges associated with my use of a poststructuralist feminist theoretical frame was to maximize the amount of space participants had to share their story, using *their* words. As a white, male physical education specialist it would be borderline negligent to not acknowledge my privileged positionality within the exact structures I wished to explore (Haw, 2008). That being said, I spent a long time brainstorming how I might be able to authentically record participants' physical education experiences. After extensive reading, a brief pilot study, and extensive, personal consideration, I ultimately chose to introduce GoPro® video cameras as a second method through which participants could collect visual artifacts.

Claiming to be the “world’s most versatile camera,” (“GoPro,” 2017) GoPro® video cameras provide the opportunity for users to attach a relatively small (2.5 x 3 inch), lightweight (0.45 pound) video camera to an object or person using a variety of specialized attachments and harnesses. Despite their small size, GoPro ® cameras have a reputation amongst users for being extremely durable and producing high quality, wide-angled video. Recent research has demonstrated the adaptability and benefits of using GoPro® cameras as a methodological tool. Since their 2006 introduction, GoPros® have been used to study a wide array of phenomena including instructional communication practices in a collegiate classroom (Kindt, 2010; 2013), material failure mechanisms in a

university laboratory (McCaslin, Young, & Kesireddy, 2014), wayfinding experiences in a library (Kinsley, Schoonover, & Splitler, 2016), and supporting the skill development of adult and child play-work practitioners (Nilsen, 2017).

Initial Search and Contact

When it came time to pick a site for my research, my initial thought was that SHS would serve as strictly a “backup” option. Seeing as to how I had spent the entirety of my K-12 educational career in Springfield and returned to the district as a teacher for nearly a decade after graduating college, I was curious to see if some of my preconceived notions of the intersectionality between gender and physical education existed in other schools. While the literature suggested that it does (Azzarito & Katzew, 2010; Chen & Curtner-Smith, 2013; Constantinou, Manson, & Silverman, 2009; Cullitan, 2010; Hickey, 2008; Hunter, 2004; Meador, 2012), I wanted to explore these connections for myself.

Another reason that Springfield was not my original choice related to my pre-existing relationship with the students, faculty, and administrators in the district. I was not sure how my insider status might affect my position as a researcher in a district where I was formerly employed. I was nervous that (a) I might have trouble broaching the topic of gender in sport with teachers and students as I myself was formerly an athlete that “bought in” to hegemonic norms in the school (b) I figured that my positionality would lend itself towards “too much” subjectivity and would somehow taint my research and (c) I was somewhat nervous for what I might see via my new lens as a male feminist researcher and the accompanying difficulty I might have accurately analyzing and representing my findings. Would this research require me to “expose” my friends, colleagues, and in many cases, adolescent role models as “bad professionals” or worse

“bad people?” Moreover, these thoughts led me to introspectively question: Does my liking these people say something negative about myself personally and/or professionally?

With these questions in mind, I didn’t initially make any effort to contact Springfield with my research project. Rather, I asked several members of my dissertation committee and members of my college health and physical education department to contact their high school and/or middle school contacts to see if any schools might be interested in collaborating on my research. After a month of unanswered phone calls and emails I began to realize that finding a site might be more difficult than I had originally anticipated. While several schools in the area had been contacted, many expressed some concern about the “visual” nature of my project. With a few conditional, tentative approvals and zero outright “Yes” responses I began to consider if Springfield would be a better option. It was then, out of the blue, Sean Cole, one of the physical education teachers at SHS texted me asking if I had any projects that we could collaborate on. Mr. Cole is a former colleague and friend of mine from when I worked in the district. I responded that I did have a potential project and the process of gaining entry to the Springfield High School began.

In the beginning, Sean and I spoke informally about what I had in mind via numerous phone calls and text messages. Sean repeatedly expressed his indifference over the content of the project, he was just looking for an opportunity to collaborate (Sean would later express to me that his motivation for collaborating was that he was looking to strengthen his resume with hopes of moving into K-12 administration or higher education). Shortly after our conversations began, Sean pledged his support of the project

and offered his physical education classroom as a potential research site. Sean also mentioned that he would tell the current principal of the school, Mr. Lyons, that I would be contacting him in the near future with more details.

I emailed Mr. Lyons approximately a week after contacting Sean and set up a face-to-face meeting at SHS. I went into the meeting knowing that it would be important to sell the project in a way that was true to my design but did not threaten the reputation of the school or faculty. From what I had learned via my rejection from other sites, not only was my visual methodology causing problems, but my contacts expressed that discussions about gender could potentially make some schools weary of getting involved. Of all the contacts and appointments, I was the most nervous about my meeting with Principal Lyons. This was largely because while I was familiar with the vast majority of teachers and administrators in the Springfield school system, I did not personally know Mr. Lyons.

Hired just this year from outside of the district it was rumored by members of the town that Principal Lyons had a was appointed to change the culture and establish more rigorous expectations at SHS. For this reason, I had no idea what to expect at our meeting. When I sat with Principal Lyons I was pleasantly surprised to see how supportive he was of my research concept. After approximately one hour of discussion, questioning, and further clarification, Principal Lyons gave me his verbal permission to proceed with the project using SHS as my site. At this time, Principal Lyons also informed me that he would be sending an email on SHS letterhead giving official permission to proceed pending proof of IRB approval.

Eventually, after several weeks of submissions and revisions, IRB approval was granted and I had one more meeting with Sean at the school to provide a more detailed description of what I would be looking to do. At this meeting, I also presented Sean with a tentative timeline for the project. It was at this point that Sean alerted me to an imminent administrative change that could potentially affect my research. Due to unexpected changes in central administration, Sean had been recruited to fill-in as the assistant principal of SHS for the first half of the project. If the project was to continue as planned, I would have to work with Mr. Lawson, a long-term substitute physical educator that had previously been employed at Springfield Middle School. Most likely because of my level of insider privilege at the school, after sharing my project with Mr. Lawson he agreed to help in any way that he could.

After receiving permission to move forward with my research from Principal Lyons, Mr. Cole, and Mr. Lawrence, my next course of action was to see if I could borrow digital camera equipment to fulfill the visual component of my study. I decided to contact Ms. Toni Roberson, the chair of the Springfield Prevention Coalition (SPC). The SPC is a local non-profit organization dedicated to “promoting the health and safety of all Springfield residents.” Because of the SPC’s close alignment with the mission of Springfield High, the SPC has an office in the high school. When I was teaching in the district, I often applied for small grants from the SPC to fund classroom projects. One such grant acquired in the winter of 2014 allowed me to buy 12 digital cameras and 2 Go Pro video cameras to be used for an after-school, intramural photography program. After conducting the program, I returned the SPC’s cameras with an open-ended invitation from Ms. Roberson to “use (the cameras) any time.” I sent an email to Ms. Roberson

asking if I could use the SPC's equipment for my research. She was more than happy to lend me the equipment for the duration of the project. After receiving permission to use the cameras, I made a trip to the SPC office several days before on-site data collection was to begin in late April 2017. At this time, I was lent the equipment to use for the duration of my project.

Location of the Study

Springfield is a small, predominantly white town located in the northeastern United States. While Springfield is centrally located amongst the surrounding towns of Ogdenville, Shelbyville, Cypress Creek, and Brockway, residents often speak of the town as sandwiched in between Brockway and Cypress Creek. The community of Springfield feels a strong cultural pull from the neighboring city of Brockway and the town of Cypress Creek that quite literally divides the town into halves. The north side of Springfield abuts Brockway. In the late 1800s Brockway was one of the largest industrialized hubs in the United States. With a smattering of large, brick factories and expansive mill buildings Brockway was once a national leader in the production of cotton textiles. As the textile industry floundered in early 1900s, so too did Brockway's sense of prosperity. Today, all that remains from this cloth renaissance are massive, dilapidated mills many of which are vacant and crumbling. Now viewed in the region as a relatively small, urban city, residents of Springfield often speak of Brockway's issues with crime, poverty, drugs, and immigration. Because of North Springfield's close proximity to Brockway, it is widely considered by town residents as an undesirable place to live.

Abutting Springfield's south side is the town of Cypress Creek. Rural and expansive, Cypress Creek is the wealthiest town per capita in the area. Intentionally kept

rustic, when driving through the town it feels like visitors have taken a time warp into the distance past, to a time where the street lights are lit by torch and horse and carriage occupy the road. With no commercial chains, mom and pop shops are the norm in Cypress Creek. There are very few street signs (which make the town a bear to navigate for anyone that is not familiar) and one, privately owned gas station. Cypress Creek townspeople proudly boast about their yearly fireworks display and accompanying summer fair held at the town's only public school, Williams School (K-8).

Because Cypress Creek does not have a high school, the town uses tax-payer funds to transport their students to another local district for grades 9-12. The choice of where residents will send their children comes as a result of public vote once every 3 years. Repeatedly, year after year, the townspeople of Cypress Creek vote to bus students *through* Springfield in order to deliver their children to the much larger Shelbyville School District. Barring the opinions of Springfield residents, Shelbyville schools are generally perceived across the state as possessing a higher level of academic and athletic prestige. Accompanying this choice are increased fees and lengthy bus rides, concessions the town is presumably willing to make.

The buildings and landscape throughout South Springfield mirror these old colonial sentiments. Rolling hills, farms, vineyards, and lakes serve as the backdrop in this section of town. South Springfield is considered to be the more desirable side of town by many families and increased home prices reflect the shift in socio-economic status. As one moves towards the town center these juxtaposed identities become merged to the point where much of the town mirrors the stereotypical, white suburbia as seen depicted on television shows like *The Wonder Years* or *7th Heaven*. Although those living near

town center experience much less of the paradox found near town limits, nearly all Springfielders can readily identify (a) If they live in North or South Springfield and (b) (when applicable) did they grow up in the North or South part of town. This identification is particularly revealing considering that the socio-economic difference between the vast majority of North and South families is relatively small.

Located directly at the center of this push and pull are the town's schools. A large contingent of townspeople advocate for more of a "South Springfield feel" in which there are little to no commercial interests "tainting" the small-town atmosphere valued by many residents. Under this model, resident property taxes are predominantly responsible for funding the town's schools and municipalities. Directly opposed to this view are those who prefer a more "North Springfield feel" in which commercial interests are encouraged to set up shop in the town offsetting the burden of placed on the residential property tax. Under this model townspeople would presumably feel less of a tax burden but risk the loss of the "town's idyllic charm."

As a former teacher in the district, I can personally relate to ever-present dis-ease accompanying the town's financial woes. Going into my fifth year of teaching in the district my position as the middle school health educator was on the docket to be cut if a lowered town tax rate was approved at the annual

Town Meeting. The meeting took place in the high school gymnasium. Over 400 townspeople gathered to decide on the proposed cut. After hours of testimonials by residents on both sides a vote of hands was taken. Lucky for me, the tax cut was narrowly voted down by show of hands and I was able to retain my position.

Springfield High School represents a microcosm of the larger town. According to the department of education, SHS services a population of approximately 550 students grades 9-12. 28% of students at the school qualify for subsidized lunch compared to a state average of 48%. Less than 1% of students in this school receive Bilingual/ESL educational services (Rhode Island Department of Education, 2017). A graphic breakdown of student race-ethnicities is depicted in Figure 3.1.

Procedures

Despite being highly prescriptive in nature, formal academic inquiry offers researchers a myriad of ways to address the research questions of interest (Patton, 2002). All things considered, an astute researcher must take into account a vast array of managerial considerations when conceptualizing, designing, and implementing a research study. Questions such as: How might I obtain consent from my intended participants? Which sampling procedure would provide the best opportunity to answer my questions of interest? And How might I collect data? all should inform the resulting methodology (Creswell, 2014). In order to address these questions, this section has been divided into several, smaller subsections specific to my procedural frameworks. Beginning with a brief discussion of the steps taken to obtain consent, I will then discuss sampling procedures and study participants. After this I will move to discuss the various data collection methods I used throughout the course of this study including visual methods, open-ended surveys, non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and researcher journaling, respectively.

Obtaining consent.

Because this research was conducted within a public school my first contact regarding consent was to the building principal. After having a meeting with Principal Lyons in late November 2016 discussing the project at length, I was granted verbal permission to use Springfield High School as my research site. At this meeting, I also provided the principal with a summary sheet of what I planned on accomplishing in the months leading up to the study as well as what he might expect once the study began. Items included on this summary sheet included my anticipated timeline for the IRB

revisions process, first meetings with classroom physical educators and students, and introduction and conclusion of photo and video use in physical education classroom. Shortly after our meeting, in early December 2016, Principal Lyons provided me an official letter of consent on school letterhead to be submitted along with my IRB application.

Despite a slight delay in Early February regarding my IRB approval, the permissions process followed my anticipated timeline and continued into early March 2017. At this point I was invited by Mr. Cole to address the two physical education classes that would be participating in the study during a regularly scheduled physical education class. I addressed the group in the gymnasium and verbally presented the purpose, methods, and tentative timeline for the project. I also spoke at length to the visual nature of the project and what students and teachers could expect in regards to acting as photographer/videographers as well as serving as subjects for their classmates' photographs and/or videos. In preparing for this conversation I was sure to consider the necessity of using age-appropriate descriptive language that would help students and teachers understand the purpose of the proposed study AND grasp their use of visual methods as a conduit to achieve these goals (Burke, 2005; Clark, 1999).

All students and teachers within the selected classes were offered the opportunity to participate in the project. At this time, it was also discussed that students and teachers should not feel pressured to participate in the project as choosing to abstain would not take away from their regularly scheduled class time or affect their physical education grade. Teachers were also assured that participating in the study would not add to or subtract from their regular classroom duties. I then opened up the presentation to any

questions that audience members might have. Several students asked questions that I answered according to my study parameters. At this time, I provided students and teachers with the necessary consent and assent forms specific to their situation. Participants were asked to return their permissions to their classroom teacher as soon as possible with a preliminary deadline of March 24, 2017.

When conducting projects that call upon the use of visual methods Wang and Redwood-Jones (2001) suggest that in order to best avoid future ethical issues, researchers provide participants with specific consent forms that address their individual role(s) in the proposed research. For this reason, a total of four consent forms were created for this research project. The first form was a parental consent to be signed by the guardians of children under 18 years of age. The second was a child assent to be signed by participants under 18 years of age. The third form was a consent specifically designed for the classroom physical educators. The fourth, and final form was an adult consent form to be signed by participants over 18 years of age. When this form was created, I had senior students that had already reached their 18th birthday in mind however, as the study progressed this form was also used to attain permission from classroom support staff such as special education aids. The vast majority of potential participants received the child assent and adult consent forms as they were under 18 years old. To see all consent forms please refer to Appendix B.

By the first scheduled deadline I was pleased to have received all 15 child assent forms, and 2 out of 3 teacher consent forms. I had also received parent consent forms from all but 4 participants. Anticipating that I might encounter some difficulty receiving all permissions by the first deadline, I had planned to extend the permissions deadline to

April 3, 2017 (the first scheduled day of image capture in the classroom). At the close of the week extension 2 of the 4 students had turned in their parental consent forms and the final teacher turned his permission in as well. Forms for the final two students were slightly more difficult to attain but were retrieved approximately half-way into the study. For ethical purposes, images depicting these two students were withheld from photo elicitation interviews and presentations until the appropriate consents were received.

Sampling.

Heading into this study my intent was to utilize a purposive, convenience sample of two physical education classes grades 11 and 12 and 3 of their associated physical education teachers (Patton, 2002). The sample was purposive in the respect that Springfield is generally regarded as a middle-class, white community that has historically, been exposed to a relatively small amount of socio-economic and racial diversity. It was important for me to target this demographic population because white, middle class males have previously been identified as being extra-susceptible to hegemonic forms of masculinity (Connell, 2005; Patton, 2003; hooks, 2004). Additionally, eleventh and twelfth grade students were chosen as the proposed study's population of interest as student interest in physical education begins to decline in the latter years of middle school and continues to nose-dive until the conclusion of twelfth grade (Bernstein, Phillips, & Silverman, 2011; Couturier, Chepko, & Coughlin, 2005). I can personally attest to this decline as a former secondary school physical educator where I witnessed a similar disillusionment with physical education amongst many students as they progressed to upper grades.

This sample also served as a sample of convenience (Patton, 2002) for several reasons. First, as a former health and physical education teacher in Springfield and close colleague of the physical education teaching staff at SHS, I was able to gain access to the research site with relative ease. Additionally, this sample also classified as a sample of convenience as students were recruited based on their enrollment in specific physical education classes at the school (Creswell, 2014). While these classes were selected via a collaborative effort between the school physical education teachers and administration, my initial sample was restricted to students enrolled in these two classes. Prior to the start of data collection students in both classes were made aware by myself and the classroom teachers that they could refuse participation in the study without penalty. To further curb any pressure students may have felt to participate, child assent and parental consent forms were given to students to review and sign with their guardians before being officially accepted into the study.

After a period of two weeks, 28 out of 48 total students (50%) across the two classes had returned the appropriate documentation and consented to participate in the study. All three physical education teachers had also signed consent documents indicating their willingness to participate in the study. Shortly after receiving these consent forms I was surprised to see the entire twelfth grade class missing from the gymnasium just prior to one of my first on-site observation. It was then that I was informed by Mr. Lawson that while the eleventh grade students would still present, students enrolled in the twelfth grade class (33 students in all) had transitioned from physical education class to health class for the final quarter of the school year. This transition had been overlooked by Mr.

Lawson as he was filling in for Mr. Cole in a long-term substitute position at the time and was still somewhat unfamiliar with the course rotation.

In light of this change, I made the decision to narrow my sample to eleventh grade students only (i.e. the remaining class). This change reduced the number of student-participants in my final sample from 48 potential students and three physical educators to 15 students and two physical educators. This reduction in sample size actually came as somewhat of a welcome change when considering the feasibility of conducting the type of in-depth, focused qualitative inquiry that I initially set out to achieve. Although some might argue that this reduction might limit the generalizability of obtained results, it has been stated that the goal of qualitative research is not necessarily generalizability to larger populations but rather, to study one specific sample in depth so that findings might be considered transferable to similar populations using similar methodologies (Creswell, 2014; Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012; Patton, 2002). To see a list of student-participants included in the final sample please refer to Table 3.1.

The vast majority of my data (i.e. observation notes, researcher journal entries, visual methods, preliminary surveys) was collected from this larger, 17-person (15 students, 2 teachers) sample. However, in order to gain a deeper understanding of localized masculinity as it appeared in the classroom, I elected to establish a second, subsample of students to participate in semi-structured interviews. These semi-structured interviews were conducted in both individual and focus group format. In order to determine which students would be selected for the interview subsample I assigned each student a number (1-15) and used Google's random number generator (see Appendix C for more detail).

Participants.

After the unintentional narrowing of the initial sample, this research study was primarily conducted with a class of 15 eleventh grade students aged 15 or 16 years and their 2 physical education teachers at Springfield High School. According to self-reported data gathered from students' preliminary surveys, 9 participants identified as male and 6 participants identified as female and 0 participants identified as other. Regarding the physical educators both self-identified as males. All 15 students and both physical educators reported their race-ethnicity as white.

Participant Pseudonyms	Sex	Age	Race-Ethnicity
Bell, Johnnie	M	16	White
Carr, Isaac	M	15	White
Collier, Sarah	F	16	White
Crawford, Jayson	M	15	White
Dixon, Mae	F	15	White
Floyd, David	M	15	White
Frazier, Drew	M	16	White
McCoy, Peter	M	15	White
McDaniel, Andre	M	16	White
McKinney, Olivia	F	15	White
Perry, Maggie	F	15	White
Ross, Katrina	F	16	White
Sharp, Lila	F	16	White
Spencer, Neil	M	16	White
Wright, Ben	M	15	White
* Cole, Sean	M	41	White
* Lawson, Matt	M	29	White

Table 3.1: Participant Demographics

* Used to identify classroom teachers

Collection and use of visual data.

As suggested by Wang and Redwood-Jones (2001) when collecting visual artifacts, it is important for researchers and facilitators to understand that the camera is not a shield and as such, cannot protect study participants from all of the potential dangers that may arise as a result of recording and sharing their personal experiences. For this reason it is extremely important that the researcher carefully consider how images will be obtained, stored, and shared both inside and outside of the academic community (Carlson, Engebretson, & Chamberlain, 2006; Royce, Parra-Medina, & Messias, 2006; Walsh, 2007; Warne, Snyder, & Gadin, 2013) According to Prosser (2000), because visual research has not been long recognized as a viable research methodology when compared to many more traditional methodologies there are several important criticisms that visual researchers must address. In this section I have used Prosser's suggestions as a framework to address some of the more serious ethical concerns associated with the use of visual methods as related to this research.

First, Prosser asserts that visual researchers must ensure that the photographers whose photos are being used have been appropriately credited for their work and have provided both written and verbal consent for their work to be used for the specific purpose of the associated study. Addressing this concern, prior to the start of visual data collection all students, teachers, and, para-professionals present in the sampled physical education class were provided with consent documents that explicitly described the purpose and context of the study. There were several students and adults that managed to enter into photographs taken in during class time whose consent was not attained prior to the study. In these instances, consent was obtained to use these pictures in both written

and verbal form as soon as possible after the picture was taken. For students who were under 18 years of age, a parental consent form was also required for participation in the study. All consent forms clearly stated that although pictures would still be taken during physical education class regardless of whether or not a student/teacher wished to participate, any photos that included the likeness of an unwilling participant would be deleted immediately.

Additionally, when organizing digital images and video each file was stored in a named folder that corresponded to each participant photographer. This added step ensured that each image/video could be traced back to the original creator. When naming photos, rather than assigning an arbitrary name to the photo of interest, the photographer responsible for that particular photo was asked to provide a working title for their image. My purpose for having students and teachers name their photos was to continue the theme of providing individual participants with meaningful voice while minimizing my interference as an outside researcher.

Prosser's second assertion is that visual researchers must address the outside concern that photographs (and the photographic process) could depict a purposefully inaccurate representation of the setting/phenomena/participants being studied. For example, critics may suggest that participants staged a specific picture to elicit a desired response or the researcher may have used digital editing software to adjust the content of a picture to satisfy a preconceived agenda. Speaking first to the potential staging of data, as a non-participant observer that was frequently at SHS during visual data collection I can personally verify that I do not presume to have witnessed any participants "staging" photos during physical education class.

That being said, Prosser (2000) suggests that because no photograph can be said to be totally free of the photographer's interpretive influence, reconstructing a specific scene is not necessarily deceitful (p. 120-123). Karlsson (2007) echoes this sentiment stating, "Construction might be accepted when it represents a faithful rendering of an occurrence so long as the researcher acknowledges the process and discloses information about the staging and his/her intention in this" (p. 190). To ensure that all images were taken as a "good faith" representation of student/teacher class experiences all participants were provided with multiple opportunities (both during formal interviews and informal conversation) to discuss potential alternative motivations for taking pictures and videos with myself and/or their peers. To my knowledge, at no time throughout the study did any participant indicate that they had recorded anything other than what had been assigned via the guiding questions.

Addressing the concern of digital editing, it was expressed in all consent documents that there was the potential for participant-generated visual artifacts to be edited should they be determined to fall outside of the study's ethical boundaries. It was expressed that edits would take place *only if*: (a) a highly inappropriate picture that would damage the reputation and/or integrity of a student or the school was taken (i.e. nudity, violence) (b) depictions that revealed the research location (i.e. school signs, logos) were visible in the frame (c) a non-participating student was depicted in the video/photo. While there were no photos/video that called for deletion due to inappropriate actions, approximately 8 photos were discarded because of the presence of a non-participating student in-frame. Several videos were also edited to obscure the name of the school as it was depicted on a wall in the gym. Finally, a Gaussian blur effect was used on several

videos to obscure the faces of student-participants who had chosen this option of participation on their consent documents. Although the process of obscuring participant identities has been questioned in cases where participants have been marginalized because of their identities (Karlsson, 2007), I considered this a necessary option to include in my study as I would prefer to document the experience of a Gaussian-blurred student than no student at all.

Prosser (2000) also mentions that when taking pictures in the open space of a public establishment participants risk compromising others' individual rights to privacy. This concern is somewhat alleviated by the sampling procedure used in this study. Because all students, teachers, and peripheral aids in the class were required to sign and return consent documents that included permissions to use their image in photographs and video, general privacy rights for regular class participants was not a major concern. When unexpected visitors came into the gym (i.e. other students or teachers), I documented who they were in my observation jot notes. If the visitor's likeness ended up on video or photograph during later review I was sure to seek them out and obtain their consent in the school building.

Prosser's fourth and final ethical consideration addresses the idea of data ownership rights and sharing. In an effort to resolve the issue of ownership and future use, a section in each consent form was dedicated to my explanation of dual-ownership rights. Following from previous research, this agreement would grant both me and the participant-photographers ownership over the visual images created during this project (Banks, 2001; Pink, 2001). Participants were promised a 1Gb storage drive at the close of the project that would have digital copies of all their photos for personal use while I

would be granted permission to use the photos and video for future professional publications and/or presentations (Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001). In addressing some of these ethical concerns relating specifically to the dissemination of video, it was decided that publicly presented GoPro® videos would be stored on a private, Youtube channel and would not be made available for re-use (Noyes, 2008). I felt that my rights to ownership were justified in this study as I laid claim to the intellectual property rights over the research design and its outputs (Pink, 2001). Because participant-generated photos and video would be considered as falling under the umbrella of these rights, my reuse of participant images and videos for academic purposes should be considered well within the boundaries of ethical practice when using visual methods.

In this study, the phrase visual artifacts was used when referring to the researcher-generated digital photographs and GoPro® videos (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). These visual artifacts were used as a means of documenting student perspective, social interactions, and other pertinent events that occurred during the course of the studied physical education classes. Once participants were provided with guiding questions they were given the freedom to document their physical education experience as they saw fit. There was only one limitation placed on participants during this time: visual artifacts could only be taken in the gymnasium, on the outside athletic fields, or in transit to one of these places.

In the interest of answering my research questions I elected to have participants perform 2 rounds of visual data collection. Each round was scheduled to take place over 5 regularly scheduled class periods with the option of extending/reducing the time relative to student and/or teacher suggestions (Azzarito, 2012, Clark-Ibanez, 2004). I chose to

administer 2 rounds of visual data collection for several different reasons. First, I wanted to provide students and teachers with ample opportunity to learn the GoPro© and digital camera functions as well as experiment with how the cameras could be used in class. After administering a similar visual project several years ago while still teaching physical education, I noticed that mastering the use of each camera took students several class periods. My thought was that the more time participants had to use and experiment with the equipment the more focused their pictures could be in addressing the topic(s) of most interest. Second, Wang (1997) suggests giving researchers a guiding prompt to help focus researchers' visual artifacts. Acknowledging the importance of project focus, I established 2 guiding questions for students and teachers address via their photographs and video recordings. For Round 1, I chose to use the guiding question: ***What does your experience in physical education class look like if you were to share it with someone not in your class?*** The aim of this question was to record the variety of different ways students and teachers experience physical education class.

The second guiding question was delivered to the researchers just prior to Round 2 and sought to answer: ***How is gender 'done' in your physical education class?*** (Butler, 2004; Lorber, 2013; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Slightly more focused than guiding question 1, the second question asked students and teachers to actively consider the how gender is enacted in their class. I chose to use the term "gender" instead of "masculinity" because I did not want students and teachers to misconstrue masculinity as adhering only to male physical education experiences. By using the term gender, I hoped that researchers would speak to a spectrum of experiences and related gender identities without marginalizing any one group or individual's behavior(s). From here I could sift

through the data searching for instances where hegemonic masculinity appeared to have an impact on classroom behaviors and events.

The third and final reason why I chose to administer 2 rounds of visual data collection was to ensure that an abundance of visual data was available should technical difficulties arise at some point during the project. When the project started I honestly did not expect to have to deal with this issue considering it to be more of a formality than a possible reality. As luck would have it, shortly after the first round of data collection began an external hard drive I was using to store some of my data crashed rendering approximately 7 student GoPro® videos useless. Fortunately, I had stored the vast majority of written and visual data on other drives limiting my loss. While I elected to *redo* the lost videos by having the same student-researchers wear a GoPro® for an additional class, I did have the safe-guard of knowing that another round of visual data collection was still to come if for whatever reason students could not help to *replace*² the lost data.

The day before the researchers were to begin collecting their visual artifacts, I addressed the participating classes with the aim of achieving the following objectives: (a) familiarize participating students with the features and capabilities of the digital and GoPro® cameras (Clark-Ibanez, 2004; Wang, 1997; 1999; Wang-Redwood-Jones, 2001) (b) introduce students and teachers to ethical considerations when taking pictures and recording video (Karlsson, 2007; Wang 1999), and (c) present the project timetable and peripheral requirements (i.e. researchers with digital cameras were asked to take a

² The terms *redo* and *replace* have been italicized here as this data could not be redone exactly as it had been originally recorded. Rather, student-researchers were simply asked to wear their GoPro® again recording their experience during another class period

minimum of 3 pictures per class). At this time, I also provided all students and teachers with an information “cheat sheet” outlining the guiding research question(s), important definitions to consider, rules for using each of the cameras, general instructions on how to use the cameras, and answers to potential student/teacher questions (Azzarito, 2012; Clark-Ibanez, 2004; Wang, 2006). To see a copy of the camera information sheet delivered to the classroom researchers see Appendix D.

In addition to the digital cameras, 2 GoPro® Hero video cameras were used to record the first-person perspectives of student-researchers while in physical education class. This perspective was achieved by attaching each GoPro® camera to a participant via a specialized, head harness. From personal experience, I would suggest that this perspective encourages viewers to immerse themselves in class from the student-researcher’s visual point of view allowing for a deeper understanding of student interactions as they unfolded throughout class. Perspective removed, the GoPro® video cameras provided several additional advantages when recording participants’ in class experiences including (a) the ability to withstand impacts from athletic balls and participant abuse (i.e. dropping, slapping, poking) (b) one button start and stop recording functionality, (c) the ability to record close-range conversations and sounds, and (d) the freedom to allow students to participate in class with use of both hands (a luxury that would not have been possible using a traditional video camera, tablet, or smart phone) (Kindt, 2010).

All students that were willing to wear the GoPro® camera received at least one in-class opportunity to do so. To ensure that all students received an opportunity to use 1 of the 2 GoPro® cameras, I arbitrarily scheduled students’ GoPro® opportunities for

specified dates prior to the start of the study. If a student refused to wear the GoPro® on their assigned date for any reason, another student who had not yet had an opportunity to wear the GoPro® was asked. This process continued until someone agreed to wear the camera. That night, when I returned home, my camera assignment schedule was subsequently adjusted to document the day's changes. Once all students that had agreed to wear the GoPro® had an opportunity, I cycled back to the first student on the list and repeated the procedure. To see the final schedule documenting researchers' GoPro® use refer to Appendix E.

As soon as possible after class GoPro® recordings were uploaded and transcribed using Microsoft Word. My purpose for transcribing the GoPro® videos was multifaceted. First, I felt that by watching the videos and taking detailed notes on what I saw I could gain a better understanding of what physical education class at Springfield High looked like through students' eyes. Second, I was able to better wrap my arms around the recorded GoPro® data by taking the time to watch and analyze each student's video(s). In watching these videos, I was always careful to "zoom out" and consider my own positionality in recognition that my subjectivities could potentially have a major impact on what I subconsciously (and at times consciously) decided to transcribe versus what I decided to leave out.

With this in mind, I made the choice to write what was happening in the foreground and background of the video along with any audible student and/or teacher speech. My transcriptions also included notes describing voice intonations and other peripheral information that I could not have gathered from still pictures and/or documents alone. This peripheral information later proved to play a central role in helping to answer

several of the research questions. I also included time stamps throughout these transcriptions so that I was able to quickly find associated video footage when referring back to the GoPro® data during my analyses.

Preliminary surveys.

To begin this study, I administered a brief, open-ended survey to all students. This survey was designed to reveal the existing perceptions of students relating to gender, classroom social relations, and the overall physical education experience at Springfield High School. Prior to the start of data collection, I compiled a list of 15 questions that I felt gave insight into students' general feelings about being a physical education student at Springfield High. I enlisted the help of 2 critical friends, to review the survey and provide suggestions. After an iterative process of review and revision the survey was narrowed to 12 questions (to see the final, preliminary student survey refer to Appendix F). Demographic prompts that allowed for the self-reporting of students' name, sex, age, and race-ethnicity were also added to the survey. Descriptive terminology (i.e. sex, race-ethnicity) and associated response options were also carefully considered in order to allow for students to answer as accurately as possible.

During the first week of data collection, all students enrolled in Mr. Lawson and Mr. Walsh's physical education classes were asked to complete the survey during regularly scheduled class time. Surveys were administered and subsequently collected by the teachers who had both been trained on delivering the survey as part of our initial meeting. Students were briefed by their respective teacher on the survey directions and told that in order to preserve the confidentiality of their responses, all surveys would be stored in a manila envelope once finished. Students were also informed by the classroom

teachers that only surveys completed by students interested in participating in the research study would be reviewed and analyzed. Surveys completed by students wishing to not participate in the study as well as surveys completed by students that did not submit both a parent consent and child assent by the predetermined collection date were shredded and discarded.

To help preserve the anonymity of individual respondents, students were told that while their answers may be shared as part of the reporting of this research, their names would be replaced with pseudonyms. Ultimately, because of student absenteeism, the surveys were administered by the classroom teachers at the beginning of two separate class periods. In total 37 out of 48 students (77%) enrolled across both Mr. Lawson and Mr. Walsh's classes filled out surveys. Of those 37 surveys, 28 students (58%) had also returned the appropriate consent/assent documentation and were accepted into the final survey sample for later analysis. The remaining 9 surveys were shredded and discarded in accordance with the prescribed protocol.

Observations.

Direct, on-site observations were considered to be a necessity in this study as they (a) helped to establish a context within which participants interact (b) allowed me to be more open-minded and less dependent on prior conceptualizations of the setting, and (c) made visible situations of interest that might routinely escape members of the associated sample (Patton, 2002, p. 263). As previously research has demonstrated, (see Azzarito, & Harrison, 2008; Chen & Curtner-Smith, 2013; Pope & O'Sullivan, 2003; Skelton, 1996) on-site observation and associated field notes can prove to be particularly valuable when gathering data in a movement-rich setting. With these benefits in mind, I committed to

attending the assigned physical education classes as a non-participant observer (Patton, 2002) at least once weekly for the duration of the research project. In this role, I would remain on the periphery of the class environment without directly becoming involved in in-class activities and/or instruction.

Springfield schools operate on a rotating class schedule of 6 days with 7 rotating class periods per day. In reviewing the SHS schedule, it was evident that physical education classes meet 1 – 2 times per week for approximately 60 minutes each. To minimize interruptions in the observation schedule, prior to my first observation I mapped out all foreseeable obstacles that might interrupt my visits to the school (i.e. school vacations, assemblies, and testing windows). Once mapped out, the final schedule revealed that I would have an opportunity to observe 20 physical education classes beginning in early March and concluding in the second week of June 2017.

As my observations started, I entered the site with the goal of casting a broad net to capture any data that might be perceived as relevant as the study progressed. To achieve this goal, I relied heavily on what Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2002) refer to as “jottings.” Jottings are “... brief written records of events and impressions captured in key words and phrases” (p. 29). I routinely recorded these jottings along with general, descriptive notes using a clipboard, pen, and blank white page. As the study progressed it became apparent that I would need to refine my data collection techniques in order to more accurately focus in on classroom phenomena that specifically related to my research questions and emerging curiosities. To achieve this goal, I created an original observation protocol (Creswell, 2014, p. 193).

After trying several different formats for my observation protocol, I ended up with a two-column design. In the first column, I took great care to record field notes regarding exactly what I heard and/or observed during class using the third person perspective. This perspective was taken in an effort to not mix my speech with that of the study participants. As I foresaw a large portion of my research as paying homage to participants' stories I felt an ethical obligation to keep their voice separate from my own. I completed the second column of my observation document which expressed my personal thoughts, feelings, subjectivities, and questions regarding the events I had observed as soon as possible after an observation had concluded (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995, p. 49). Often this practice took place while I was still in the school in a secluded corner of the library or when possible, the physical education office. When I could not immediately fill-in my ideas, I quickly took brief jot notes on my thoughts and elaborated on them when I returned home. On two occasions where I was really pressed for time I used my cell phone to record a verbal memo of my thoughts while driving away from the research site. These voice memos were then used to help me to work through the second column of my observation notes when I was able to sit down and write.

After initially transcribing my notes by hand I then transferred them onto an identical template that I created on Microsoft Word (to see an example of an observation transcription see Appendix G). I chose to transcribe my observation notes for two purposes. First, transcribing the notes a second time via computer allowed me an opportunity to revisit the data making it more vivid in my mind's eye for later comparative review with other collected data. Second, in order to begin making meaning

of recorded observation notes, I engaged in what Guest, MacQueen, and Namey (2012) refer to as “text segmentation.” When electronically transcribing my observation notes, I took great care to group like items together categorically, in a descending format down the columns. This process helped me to think about how specific data points may be interrelated, painting a larger picture of potential emergent themes throughout the research. Finally, this process helped me to refine my observational focus during each subsequent observation allowing me to zoom-in on particularly intriguing interactions and phenomena.

While I had mapped all of the foreseeable obstacles that I perceived as potentially interfering with my observation schedule it became apparent early in the study that I would have to be flexible with my initial expectations. Issues with teacher and student absenteeism due to extra-curricular activities and illness caused issues with observing individual students and teachers. Several times throughout the project students were dismissed from school early to attend a variety of athletic competitions and social events (including junior and senior prom). On one occasion the vast majority of the class was away on a field trip leaving only 2 students in physical education. Finally, there were several instances when I attended the school only to be told that the classroom physical educator had either called in sick or left early due to illness.

On top of absence-related conundrums, snow cancelations delayed the start of my observations by approximately one week. Observations scheduled for the end of the school year proved to be no easier. Per tradition at the school, physical education class was placed on hold approximately one week before senior graduation. Because graduation ceremonies take place in Springfield High’s gymnasium, the setup of the

stage, chairs, band area, audio/visual station, and various other items for the event occupied the gymnasium. As a result, my final 2 observations were cancelled as students were once again, sent to Senior Lounge in place of physical education. All things spoken, by the close of the study I was able to observe 12 physical education classes, somewhat less than my original goal of 20.

Semi-structured interviews.

When using visual methodologies, it is not uncommon for researchers to supplement the collection of visual artifacts with follow-up interviews (Azzarito, 2012; Clark-Ibanex, 2004; Leitch, 2008; Walsh, 2007). In this study, visual methods were primarily used to provide an image-based representation of participant experiences in physical education, while individual and focus group interviews helped to shed light on the more nuanced details of participant narratives. Packaged with non-participant observations (Tousignant & Seidentop, 1984), a reflective, researcher journal (Creswell, 2014; Luttrell, 2010), and preliminary student surveys (Steckler, McLeroy, Goodman, Bird, & McCormick, 1992), interviews helped me to achieve a level of detail when attempting to re-story student narratives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) that would not have otherwise been possible.

According to Patton (2002), the purpose of interviewing is to “allow (researchers) to enter into another person’s perspective...” as well as “to gather other people’s stories” (p. 341). Because this study was conducted via a feminist perspective, interviews also sought to draw participants into critical reflection regarding their both their place and perceived identities in physical education class (Galletta, 2013, p. 93). To achieve this goal, a semi-structured, interview guide approach (Roulston, 2010) was used during both

focus group and individual interviews. This approach calls for the researcher to carefully draft interview questions and probes prior to the start of the interview in order to help focus the conversation around the research questions of interest (Galletta, 2013; Patton, 2002).

One major advantage to using this approach over a closed-question, closed-response interview (Patton, 2002) is that it allows the researcher to stray from the predetermined protocol should unanticipated, potentially valuable information arise. Over the course of this study there were several instances during student and teacher interviews where I found myself in the midst of unanticipated, revealing conversations. In each of these instances I elected to temporarily place my interview protocol on hold in order to continue discussion around topics of interest.

In order to preserve conversations for later review, all interviews were recorded using both a digital tape recorder and an iPhone voice recorder. I chose to use two devices to safeguard against the loss of data should one device fail mid-way through an interview. Because some of the most valuable information collected during interviews happens before and after the formal, interview protocol occurs, I made it a point to start recordings as soon as I sat at the interview table and did not turn off the recording devices until all participants had left the interview space (Vaccaro, 2015). I elected not to stop recording when the formal questions of the interview concluded with the understanding that valuable information could be presented in the form of informal conversation once the “official” interview had concluded.

Once recorded, I personally transcribed each interview taking care to record conversations verbatim. Verbatim transcription was used to ensure that participant voices

were not overshadowed by the voice of the researcher (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). Referential time stamps were also added to the transcriptions at various points to help me better retrieve information as needed for analysis. My choice to personally transcribe interviews was deliberate in the sense that I wanted to maximize my exposure to the conversations so that I might better internalize the information presented by individual participants (Roulston, 2010). Transcribing my own interviews also allowed me to include situational notes regarding participant body language, gestures, outsider interference, voice inflections, and intangible feelings that I had while conducting various interviews (Barbour, 2007, p. 104). This information supplementary information proved

to be extremely helpful in developing relevant codes and eventually themes throughout the project.

Another benefit that came with personally transcribing my interviews was that the practice gave me the opportunity to reflect on my presence as a novice researcher during the conversations. In review, I

was able to critically reflect on what I noticed to be presentation-related issues that hindered certain interviews including the repetitive use of “crutch” words (i.e. like, cool,

so), poorly timed verbal and non-verbal affirmations, overuse of transitional phrases, and unintentional dominance of conversation. Along this same thread, I was also able to recognize techniques that worked for me during interviews such as using participant-friendly language when describing concepts, maintaining a conversational tone throughout interviews, and redirecting dialogue that had veered off-track. Recognizing what I did well as an interviewer as well as what items needed improvement helped me to refine my skills throughout the research process. If I were to have others transcribe my data, I would have almost certainly missed out these valuable learning experiences both as the study progressed and during the final write-up.

Focus group interview.

In preparing for my focus group interviews I was careful to consider Krueger's (2010) 10 Quality Factors in Focus Group Research (for a list of these factors see Figure 3.2). Keeping these 10 items in mind, I began the task of outlining a focus group question protocol that would "...foster the permissive climate of the focus group and also capture the non-directed (sic) nature of the interactions" (Krueger, 2001, p. 76). Similar to my individual interviews I chose to use a semi-structured, guided interview approach (Patton, 2002). This interview format allowed me space as the researcher to facilitate the conversation through use of predetermined questions and probes while still providing participants with the freedom to share small stories and embellish on topics of their choosing. Questions were organized into 4 domains: general school questions, individual physical education experiences, groupings in physical education, and the role of the teacher. The final question asked student-participants to share anything else that I might

have missed in my line of questioning. To see a complete list of the focus group questions, refer to Appendix H.

Originally scheduled to have two focus group interviews, I was unfortunately only able to conduct one focus group in this study. Despite numerous attempts at scheduling a second interview, as the study progressed I found it to be increasingly difficult to schedule a follow-up date that worked for all participants. The lone focus group interview was conducted in early May 2017. Taking into account the students' need for transportation (several of the focus group participants needed to take a late bus home), the interview was held directly after-school in the SHS library. The focus group interview lasted approximately one hour.

Morgan (1997) suggests that while there is no ideal number of focus group participants, the researcher should base their final number on several factors including how much each participant is expected to contribute to the conversation, the level of detail needed in participant responses, existing relationship dynamics amongst group members, and managerial considerations that will allow the facilitator/researcher to effectively guide the conversation (p. 42). When considering the number of students that I wished to include in my focus group sub-sample, I carefully considered the working dynamics of students in the class. Up until this point I had observed what appeared to be respectful working relationships between the students in the class. Students in the class had also appeared to be more than willing to engage with me during informal conversations during, before, and after class. Finally, above all else, I wanted to remain true to my goal of providing participants with enough space to share their experiences without having to sacrifice depth for breadth of information. All things considered, I

decided that the focus group would consist of a 4 student-participants. Students chosen for the focus group were selected at random using Google's online random number generator (see Appendix C for more detail).

During the focus group interview my goal as the researcher was to facilitate an ongoing dialogue between participating students. Taking cues from student language use in the classroom, I aimed to access the cultural frameworks of students by presenting focus group prompts in a non-threatening, informal manner (Barbour, 2007). Assisting me in this process was my "insider status" as a long time, Springfield town resident, former student, and teacher at SHS. I am certain that my former experiences as a student, teacher, and resident of the town presented me with a unique opportunity to share components of a primary Discourse (Gee, 2015a; 2015b) with interview participants. I believe this shared Discourse introduced a level of candor to the interviews which ultimately resulted in an increased depth of the revelation and understanding.

While I felt as though the conversation (and subsequent data) that came about via the focus group interview was helpful in adding another layer to my research, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge my difficulties with the transcription of the focus group conversation. Although the group only consisted of 5 people (4 participants and myself), sifting through the voices on the recording proved to be a labor of patience. This was especially true when multiple student-researchers were speaking at once. Moreover, determining whether or not to include what I termed "side affirmations" (i.e. when a student-researcher would affirm or add to another's statement by saying things such as "Yeah..." or "Cool") was something that I wrestled with. Ultimately, I decided to include these affirmations which added to the richness of the transcription but also dramatically

increased the amount of time that it took to complete the written record (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011).

Individual interviews.

Individual interviews with student participants were administered from late April until the first week of June 2017, Teacher participant interviews were originally scheduled to be conducted during the same time frame however due to unanticipated circumstances these interview dates were pushed back into mid-June 2017 and early July 2017. Mr. Lawson's interview was delayed as he was unexpectedly reassigned to another long-term substitute position in a local elementary school approximately six weeks into the project. While Mr. Cole and I scheduled several interview dates for the end of the school year, each date was interrupted by a seemingly different issue. Teacher illness, family emergency, and unforeseen administrative duties all made Mr. Cole's interview the most difficult to schedule. Eventually, Mr. Cole and I were finally to meet for an interview early into the summer vacation at a local coffee shop.

As for interviews with student participants, most were conducted directly after the regular school-day. In the last week of the study, permission was sought from Mr. Cole to conduct interviews during physical education class due to the fact that the senior graduation ceremony had displaced all physical education classes from the gymnasium. Mr. Cole granted permission to interview students during class time and as such, the final 2 interviews were conducted during school hours. All individual interviews were conducted in the school cafeteria. Interviews that took place after school were conducted in an empty cafeteria while the 2 interviews conducted during school hours were administered in a secluded corner of the SHS cafeteria.

Interviews with students lasted between 30 and 70 minutes and were delivered using a hybrid approach consisting of an autodriven, photo elicitation interview protocol (Clark, 1999; Clark-Ibanez, 2004; Harper 2002) and a semi-structured, narrative interview approach (Kvale, 2007). The first phase of individual interviews was conducted using the autodriven, photo elicitation format (Clark, 1999; Clark-Ibanez, 2004, 2008; Harper, 2002). “Autodriven” interviews are described as interviews that are “driven” by the participant who sees or hears their own recorded behavior(s) and speaks to the presented image and/or sound-byte (Heisley & Levy, 1991). When conducting this style of interview, it is important to “... empower the child to ‘teach’ the adult about the child’s own experience” (Clark, 1999, p. 43). In the context of this study, an effort was made to allow both student and teacher participants to shed light on the implicit and explicit influence localized notions of masculinity had on the class.

Borrowing from Burke (2005), I elected to include a structure to photo-elicitation interviews that allowed for the interests of the photographer to take center stage while still providing space on the periphery for the interests of myself, the researcher. Just prior to the start of these interviews, a complete collection of the participant’s photographs was placed on the table for review. The participant was then asked to sift through the pictures selecting the single picture that best represented the associated guiding question. For the first round, researchers were asked to use their pictures to answer the question: *What does your experience in physical education look like if you were to share it with someone not in your class?* Once all interviews from the first round were completed, transcribed, and reviewed the second round of photography began. The guiding question associated with the second round of pictures asked students and teachers to think more about

representations of gender in their class: *How is gender “done” in your physical education class?* Follow-up interviews were then conducted in a format that mirrored round one allowing student and teachers the first choice of the photo to be discussed.

After the participant and I spoke about the first photo, I then selected a second photo from the participant’s collection to review. When selecting the second photo I purposefully tried to select a photo that was either (a) completely different from the interviewee’s first choice or (b) an image that I perceived to make no sense in the context of the prescribed questions (Burke, 2005). It was important to include my choice as a privileged, adult male physical education professional as I was able to hear (and process) the participant’s reasoning for taking the selected picture. While I did not find myself to be overly surprised with the responses provided by teachers to this second picture, I did find this process to elicit eye-opening revelations that may have otherwise been obscured from my understanding if not for the remarkably succinct explanations of the student participants. As a researcher, this methodological revelation was extremely important to me as it clearly demonstrated that the power of photovoice does not lie within individual pictures but rather, in the associated voices of the photographers themselves. In a way, students were able to make what was once invisible, visible adjusting my perspective so that I could better assimilate individual student narratives into my own understanding of how localized notions of masculinity were impacting the class.

To guide photo elicitation interviews I chose to use the PHOTO protocol (Hussey, 2001). The acronym PHOTO helps to establish the core questions of this interview protocol as depicted in Figure 3.3 below. I chose to keep 4 out of the 5 questions the same however I did elect to modify the fifth question to better align with the research

Tharao, Mitchell, & Dubazane, 2007; Royce, Parra-Medina, Messias, 2006; Wang, 1999; 2004; Warne, Snyder, & Gadin, 2013). Similar to the PHOTO protocol, SHOWeD is an acronym for the associated photo elicitation questions (see Wang, 1999 for more detail). After originally considering this protocol as a potential guideline for my interviews I eventually arrived made the decision that the PHOTO protocol better aligned with the purpose of this study. Simply put, I believe that the syntax of the PHOTO protocol was better situated to encourage the participants to share personal narratives related to their photos.

The second phase of individual interviews set to answer more participant-specific questions regarding their lived experiences as members of Springfield's physical education community using a narrative approach (Kvale, 2007). As such, this portion of

questions of this study. I consciously made the choice to choose this specific protocol over more popular photo elicitation techniques (see Wang 1999). For example, I noticed the SHOWeD protocol (Wallerstein and Bernstein, 1988; Wang, 1999) to be widely used when integrating interviews with visual methods (Larkin, Lombardo, Walker, Bahreini,

the interview was conducted in a way that promoted study participants to share personal stories, reflections, and anecdotes that they deemed relevant as related to the interview questions. In contrast to the photo elicitation component of the interview where participants were asked to respond to the prescribed PHOTO interview protocol (Hussey 2001) the narrative portion of the interview encouraged participants to construct short stories highlighting the participants' personal physical education narratives (Kvale, 2007).

Participants for individual interviews were selected via the same random number process that was used to select students for the focus group interview previously described (see Appendix C). Unlike the focus group where 1 student opted out of being interviewed, all 3 students and both teachers agreed to be interviewed for the project. While I retrospectively would have liked to interview more student-participants regarding their experiences in the sampled physical education class I was limited to interviewing a maximum of 4 students per my approved research proposal. Ideally, individual interviews would have been conducted until the point of data saturation (Creswell, 2014) however, in considering my relatively small sample size (15 students) I ultimately determined that delving into the in-depth experiences of 3 students and 2 physical education teachers would suffice in answering my questions of interest.

Much in the same way that I found the focus group interview helpful in providing insight into power dynamics as they existed between members of the Springfield High community, I found individual interviews to act like windows revealing the thoughts, actions, motivations, and perceptions of the participants while in physical education class. In many instances, I found that the printed photos served a dual purpose. First, the photos

served as symbolic artifacts representative of participant's associated narratives. Amongst other things these artifacts appeared to help interviewees recall previously forgotten events, provide more detailed narratives, and question their own perceptions regarding the intersection of power dynamics and physical education. Second, photos worked as tangible objects that quite literally existed as a buffer between myself and the participant(s) during interviews. This buffer has been cited as helping to facilitate difficult conversations in the sense that participants are provided with a "safety barrier" as well as an object upon which they might focus when eye-contact with the interviewer becomes exceedingly difficult (Burke, 2005).

Despite my efforts to establish rapport and trust with all students and teachers, there were some individual interviews that proved to be exceedingly difficult. In addition to (or possibly as a result of) my language issues as a novice researcher, I found 2 of the 3 students (1 boy, 1 girl) to be rather guarded during the interview process. I expressed my recognition of this situation in an excerpt from one of my researcher journal entries:

"Even more still during various interviews students occasionally used various road blocks including the silent treatment in which the student would respond to my questions with one word answers, short, repeated phrases (i.e. "I dunno...") or no answers at all and/or repetitious, diversionary answers such as "you know?" or "you get what I mean..." to halt my probes (a tactic that I can retrospectively say DID throw me off of my game and was successful in stopping further probes)."

June 11, 2017 "Inside Man" Journal Entry

While I do feel as though valuable information was gathered from all of my interviews, facilitating focused conversation with these students was one of the more challenging aspects of the project.

Researcher interview.

In order to get a better grasp on my experiences in physical education, I too participated in a semi-structured interview. As I was unable to interview myself, my interview was administered by a critical friend that had a relatively high level of familiarity with this project. Using a slightly modified prompt, this critical friend asked questions focused on my experience in physical education as a student, teacher, and eventually, teacher-educator. As was done with the other individual interviews, my interview was also audio recorded and later transcribed. After transcription, I borrowed heavily from the statements, phrases, and mini-themes I had uncovered when constructing my personal, physical education narrative. While I was initially somewhat skeptical of this process as I thought it might be difficult to mentally step-away from my research questions and purpose, I was pleasantly surprised to see how easy it was to engage in free-flowing conversation with my interviewer. Ultimately, this experience turned out to me one of the most personally meaningful for me in the entire project as it pushed me to uncover some of my most repressed biases and subjectivities, particularly relating to my adolescent experiences in physical education.

Researcher journal.

My ultimate goal in creating a researcher journal was to provide myself a space to "... make my thinking visible" (Luttrell, 2010, p. 469) as it related to myself, study logistics, and the study participants. When piecing together journal entries I paid little

attention to grammatical structure or format. Rather, I often pictured myself drafting an informal memo to an unidentified friend with the hope that they may help me to work through my swirling thoughts. Early in the process I went into each entry writing about what I perceived to be isolated topics that may have some impact on my research methodology and/or eventual findings. However, as time progressed I found that my journal entries became more interconnected, often circling back to address uncertainties that I had acknowledged in earlier writing.

In the months leading up to the project (November 2016 – February 2017), I found myself recording 2 – 3 journal entries per week. Anticipating a time-crunch once the study began, I set a goal of recording at least one journal entry per week with the flexibility to write more as situations of interest arose. I made it common practice to share my entries with critical friends including members of my dissertation committee and cohort so that I could receive feedback, pushback, and “I have your back” as it was sorely needed as I worked to better understand my philosophical stance as feminist-in-progress.

In the early stages of the project prompts were often used to jumpstart reflexive writing sessions. Sometimes these prompts were suggested by my major professor (i.e. “What hesitations do I have about returning to Springfield High?”). At other times, I would be inspired by a suggested prompt in my reading (I.e. “Think about the social categories related to your research topic. Write a memo that specifies the terms you are using and why you’ve chosen them” (Luttrell, 2010, p. 471)). Most often, journal entries arose organically from experiences I had witnessed and/or taken part in while immersed in the data (i.e. “Why wouldn’t Mae speak with me during our interview?”; “Why do I catch myself using negative descriptors to address many of the girls’ actions in the

gym?”). Inspiration aside, journal entries played a central role in helping me to work through my thoughts, issues, curiosities, and questions throughout the duration of the project. I also used my journal as a space to relive my past experiences, explore memorable student-teacher and student-student interactions in greater depth, and run with synthesized thoughts relating to the role and representation of masculinity in traditional physical education.

Towards the close of my study, I noticed that many of my journal entries took on a more introspective, philosophical tone. During this period, I began to explore my personal subjectivities and life experiences in the context of the localized, masculine norms I was observing in the Springfield classroom. I found this introspective look to be particularly cathartic as I struggled to understand (and at times rethink) my worldview. In many ways, this process allowed me to take a deeper look at what Ely, Vinz, Downing, and Azul (2001) describe as the personal ‘baggage’ that I brought to the project. By opening myself up to the mess (Cook, 1998), I feel that I was able to look past the “low-hanging fruit” present in my data allowing me to attain a more in depth of understanding that may have otherwise not been possible.

While working through the journaling process was one of the most revealing components of my study it was also the one that I found most difficult. Although I knew that each journal entry was moving me closer to refining my research questions and possible answers, I often found myself subconsciously avoiding the task. This was particularly true during the middle phase (April - May 2017) of my research when much of my time and energy was dedicated to the collection, editing, storage, and analyses of digital artifacts collected by participants. During this period of time I felt torn between

cataloguing new data and developing analytic insights regarding data already collected (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 2005, p. 125). Each night I found myself making mental excuses for why it was “not a good time” to write an entry (Kleinmann & Copp, 1993, p. 19).

Retrospectively, I feel like this avoidance was rooted in the realization that my journal entries often served as a mirror that, when reread using a feminist lens, reflected my personal biases and shortcomings. Confronting these flaws was not something that was easy for me to do however, over time I learned to embrace the process with the understanding that each entry helped me inch closer to answering my researcher questions and perhaps more importantly, developing a better understanding of the metamorphic process I was experiencing as a white male doing feminist research. To see an excerpt from one of my journal entries addressing difficulties I was having with phraseology see Appendix I.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to present the research design, methods, and methodology used to conduct this research along with the theoretical, philosophical, and interpretive frameworks upon which this study was built. Through the combined use of narrative inquiry and visual methodologies, my goal was to relay participant voices as accurately as possible in describing the interplay of localized masculinity and participants’ unique, physical education experiences. In the following chapter, researcher-constructed narratives will be used to better understand the experiences of three students, one classroom physical educator, and the researcher himself. Ultimately, these narratives

will be presented to help better understand the various ways that localized masculinity impacted the SHS physical education classroom.

Chapter 4: Participant Narratives

Introduction

Zora Neale Hurston (1991) once wrote, “There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside of you” (p. 121). This chapter seeks to share the untold stories of three students, one classroom teacher, and myself as related to each person’s experience with public school physical education. Stories have been identified as an important unit of analyses because they often serve as a conduit through which larger society can gain access into an individual, human experience (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p. 4). When referring to narrative inquiry guided research, shared stories are often deconstructed and pieced back together in an iterative process known as “re-storying” to construct an overarching narrative of individual experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Xu, 2010). Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that each narrative has undoubtedly been influenced by my personal experiences and subjectivities (Crenshaw, 1995; McIntosh, 2001). In light of this realization, I was careful to avoid the pitfalls of “narrative smoothing” (i.e. when data is over-refined for the sake of readability) and “the Hollywood ending” (i.e. when each story ends happily ever after) (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 10) which may have served to distort the representation of each participant’s reality.

I have chosen to include multiple examples of these narratives to better portray the “competing stories” (Clandinin, Murphy, Huber, & Orr, 2010, p. 82) that existed amongst various participants in a high school physical education class. The narratives found in this chapter were constructed primarily using participants’ own words as gathered through interviews and informal conversation (Hollingsworth & Dybdahl, 2007,

p. 147). Within each participant interview, several questions were included with the goal of gaining a better understanding of place, space, and time as related to participants' physical education experiences. This portion of each interview encouraged participants to share small stories highlighting their personal experiences and were later used to construct individual narratives (Bamberg, & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Daiute, C., 2014; Kvale, 2007). Each narrative was constructed using first-person perspective (Ely, 2007, p. 573) for the dual purpose of maintaining participant language and coinciding with the first-person visual theme expressed through my use of visual methodologies. Ever-cognizant of my research interests, narratives were constructed through use of the two, previously mentioned, guiding visual methodology questions: (a) What is your experience in physical education class? (b) How is gender done in your PE class? Driven by these questions, along with a steadfast commitment to accurately preserving each stakeholder's unique voice, this chapter looks to present a snapshot of several different classroom characters.

First, I will share three participating students' respective physical education stories. Mae, Sam, and Andre, while members of the same class, actively represent a small sample of the innumerable ways that high school students "do" physical education. The stories of these three students were purposively selected to demonstrate the eclectic mix of experiences that concurrently unfolded during a series of physical education classes. Next, I will present a narrative designed to give insight into the experience of substitute physical educator, Mr. Marc Lawson. Although Mr. Cole was the regularly scheduled classroom teacher, Mr. Lawson oversaw the vast majority of instruction

throughout the duration of this study due to Mr. Cole's reassignment to an interim, administrative role in the building.

I felt that it was important to include a teacher narrative as using teacher voice alongside student voice has been suggested to be potentially helpful when considering how to bridge existing gaps between teacher and student understandings of events in the classroom (Cardwell 2002). Moreover, teachers often possess a unique expertise not only on delivery of content, but on the day-to-day happenings at the school that makes them particularly valuable to educational research (Kennedy-Lewis, 2012). As a relative neophyte to physical education instruction, Mr. Lawson's recent graduation from a teacher preparation program, along with his apparent willingness to engage students in personal conversation was seen as adding an additional (albeit unanticipated) element to the research. This behavior echoed sentiments from prior research that have suggested teachers with 1-5 years of teaching experience are more likely to have experienced culturally relevant practices in turn, making them more likely to implement culturally responsive methods in the classroom (Culp & Chepyator-Thomson, 2011).

The final narrative included in this section outlines my own physical education experience. It has been suggested that self-narratives, when written by those who have extensive life experience within a given field, can lend a different yet valuable dimension to research (LaBoskey, 2002; Kennedy-Lewis, 2012). This sentiment is particularly true when self-narrative is considered in concert with traditional, more well-established, data collection methods such as interviews, observations, and journaling (Xu & Connelly, 2010). As a former physical education student, teacher, and teacher-educator turned researcher I would suggest that my experience places me well within this purview.

Due to their “heightened awareness of classroom ecologies” (p. 108), the self-narratives of both teachers and teacher educators have been said to provide a heightened awareness of nuanced experiences in classrooms and schools (Schwandt, 1994 as cited by Kennedy-Lewis, 2012). While I would agree that the perspectives of teachers and teacher educators are invaluable in understanding the happenings in their classrooms and schools, I am cautious to certify their perceptions as all-encompassing of classroom ecologies. As a former teacher and teacher educator myself, I would assert that my persona narrative possesses a weighted value when studying how individuals experience physical education. Following this logic, I have included my physical education narrative as part of this chapter. I have shared my story last in recognition of the fact that while I was once a Springfield High School physical education student, and later teacher, I was not an active participant in the observed class.

Construction of Narratives

The process used to construct each narrative was procedural in nature mirroring the socio-culturally oriented approach suggested by Squire (2012, p. 48). First, I reviewed all data relating to the main character’s experience including individual interviews, the focus group interview, informal class conversations, video recordings, and preliminary survey responses. After review, I organized the data with the goal of extracting several key sub-themes from each student’s recollection. These sub-themes were then used as grounding for each story. From here I cut, copy, and pasted excerpts gathered directly from each associated data pile into an organized sequence that painted a picture of how each student performed in physical education.

As often as possible participant narratives were constructed using direct quotations. In instances where this was not possible because of unfinished and/or inaudible sentences, I attempted to fill gaps using a derivation of my personal observations and/or class notes. In cases where there were no related notes, I considered my interactions with the student(s) during my observations and filled-in the gaps through personal recollection. In an effort to increase the readability of each narrative, I also adjusted formulaic components of the writing when necessary (i.e. changing of tense, selection of transitional phrases, syntax, and paragraph breaking). To distinguish between participant language and my language I have used Times New Roman (italicized) font for language/ideas used by participants and regular font to identify my improvisational writing as the researcher.

As an additional safe-guard used to preserve students' voices, I have included Q-R codes that may be accessed by the reader. Similar to bar codes, these embedded symbols (see Figure 4.1 below as an example) can be scanned into a smart device (i.e. an iPhone, Android phone, iPad) using the device's camera along with any number of Q-R scanner apps. A wide variety of Q-R scanner apps can be downloaded via an online marketplace (i.e. Apple Store, Google Play marketplace) free of charge. Once scanned using a Q-R scanner app, the smart device will play the referenced segment of the participant's GoPro® recording for the reader in the form of a brief, unlisted YouTube® video. The fact that each video is unlisted means that only people who (a) have the exact, extensive web address or (b) have scanned the associated Q-R code may view the recordings. This protection was used to help prevent participant experiences from being shared publicly across the web. Considering the importance of individual voice to this

project, along with the recognition that each individual will approach this research with a unique mix of personal experiences and subjectivities, I feel as though it is essential to provide discursive space so that readers can develop their own understanding of classroom events as viewed through the participants' eyes.

The same process that was used to construct student-participant narratives was used to construct the teacher's (Mr. Lawson) narrative with one exception. Because Mr. Lawson did not wear a GoPro® or fill out a preliminary survey, these methods of data collection could not be used to construct his story. However, because snippets of other participants videos often contained Mr. Lawson, there were times in constructing his narrative where I could cross-check my understandings using other participant videos. Generally speaking, the vast majority of Mr. Lawson's narrative came about by way of informal conversation as well as his individual interview which took place soon after the study had concluded. Once constructed, all participant narratives were member checked for accuracy. Written feedback pertaining to each narrative has been provided by each participant. Footnotes regarding participants' response to their associated narrative have been included in each respective section.

Regarding my researcher narrative, it was suggested that I reach enlist the help a critical friend that was familiar with my research who could interview me using a similar questioning protocol to that which I used with research participants. I then repeated the same process I used to construct the previous four narratives. First, I transcribed the interview. Then, I rearranged various interview excerpts around common ideas. Finally, I inserted transitional phrases as a means to tie each idea together effectively creating a re-storied version of my physical education experience. Ultimately, I would assert that in

tandem with other collected artifacts, each of the stories presented in this chapter can be used to gain a better understanding of the various ways that notions of localized, hegemonic masculinity influenced the experiences of the students, teachers, and researcher in this physical education class.

I purposefully chose to present the following narratives in an order that highlighted the populations that have been provided the least amount of social agency first progressing towards those with the highest amounts of social agency last. For this reason, Mae's narrative is presented first. As a non-gender conforming male with subordinately masculine tendencies, Sam's story is next. Despite having a large amount of masculine capital, Andre's positionality as a student in the school justifies his story's place as third in the progression. In consideration of his place as the white, male classroom teacher, Mr. Lawson's narrative is presented fourth. Finally, my narrative closes out this chapter as I have the most agency within this project as the researcher. Now we begin with the narrative of Mae Dixon.

Mae Dixon

As 1 of 5 girls in this physical education class, Mae Dixon (16), often chose to remain on the periphery of class activity. While Mae does participate, several of her classmates (most often larger, masculine boys) make repeated attempts to physically and socially control her actions in the class. During our conversation, Mae repeatedly alluded to her physical education experience as being less than ideal and at times, outright miserable. Mae frequently affirmed these feelings on her GoPro® videos by making self-defeating and self-doubting comments quietly under her breath. As such, Mae's

performance could be described as an ebb and flow of relinquishing and reclaiming her agency as a mover within the class.

Throughout this study Mae also sought out opportunities to passively object to the rules and routines of physical education class in a variety of different ways. From refusing to change into athletic wear (as required by the classroom teachers) to using her cell phone at forbidden times, to actively walking (rather than running) around the track during timed laps, Mae selectively chose to push the boundaries of what was deemed acceptable by the teachers and her peers in physical education. During competitive class activities, Mae often participated alongside her friend, Katrina, rather than placing herself in the middle of the game. When Mae did choose to take a more active role in games, Katrina was often close-by. For a glimpse into Mae's class experience scan the Q-R code depicted above in Figure 4.1.

“You’re You and I’m Me”: Mae’s narrative

*I don’t consider myself to be really all that interesting, so when I was asked to talk about my experience in gym class I was pretty surprised. I guess I was also surprised because I’m not really what you would call a “sporty person.” Some people like, my brother Tom, watch sports on TV or whatever but I’ve never been into them. Tom didn’t play any sports when he was in school but he was **all into** gym. I’m not the gym-classy type (is that even a word? If not I’m making it one). Like in class, I don’t really change and I get an 80 or 70 average and I’m cool with that. Well, actually, that’s not totally*

true. I didn't make honor roll in the second quarter because I got a 78 in gym for not changing. Oh my God I was so mad!

I was telling my dad about it one day in the kitchen and Tom overheard me. He was all like, "Mae, why don't you even try in gym? Why don't you change?" And I was just like, "Because I don't care!" Then he said, "But gym was so fun..." and I'm like, "That's because you're you and I'm me!" He just doesn't get it. Like most girls don't really like gym! Gym is more fun for the guys. I just feel like most girls, unless you're really athletic or whatever, don't really care about playing in gym. Take me for example, I'm more of a sit-on-the-couch type of person than a sit-on-a-bike type of person.

I haven't always been like that though. Back when I first got to the high school I was more into like trying at things. Freshman year I started in drama and I was really into it. I loved it because like I had a bunch of people with me. A lot of my friends did drama too and it was really cool. That year I felt like drama was sort of like a family, everyone was friends with each other and it was great. That kind of changed over the course of Sophomore and Junior year. There really weren't many people in there anymore that I talked to so I was just like, "I'm just gonna scootch back outta this..." and that's what I did. So, I don't do drama anymore. Sometimes I miss it but I like having my free time now too.

Okay, back to gym class... If I had to think about my experience with gym class I would have to say that elementary school was when my interest in gym was highest. I tried so hard back then. We would play soccer and I would be like running all over the field. The ball would never come to me but I would still run after it all the time, no matter what! I was such a little champ! Back then I also played softball outside of school. I had

like a pink bat that said 'Princess' or something like that on it and I called it my lucky bat. Thinking back, I don't remember hitting the ball all that much so I guess the bat wasn't all that lucky after all!

When I got to the middle school the expectations in gym were still pretty low. I guess because I was younger, gym just seemed more fun. I remember seeing gym on my schedule and being like, "Oh yeah I have gym! Lets do this!" I was always just so pumped to get in there and run around. It was also cool because I had a really close friend in my class all four years of middle school. We would talk about all kinds of crazy stuff during class like traveling the world and adopting twins. I kind of miss those conversations.

When I got to the high school I didn't know what to expect in gym. I can remember not having any of my friends in gym class Freshman year. It was so horrible! I just kind of stayed in the back and didn't really do anything... it was really boring. Sophomore year was a little bit better because I had a few friends in my class but none of us ever changed or anything. Now, I just don't care anymore. Sometimes in gym I find myself thinking, "Eh... what can I not do? What can I sort of participate in enough so that I get a good grade in this class?" When I figure it out, I usually just do that... no more, no less.

Because of my personality I think that the other kids in gym class and maybe even the teachers might think I'm quiet or whatever but I'm really not... I just don't have much

Figure 4.2 Mae and Katrina on the Track

to say to them.

When I'm

around my

friends I

actually talk A

LOT! Just ask

Katrina! She's

in gym class

with me and

we do a lot of

the stuff

together. I actually had Olivia take a picture of us on the track one day when we were messing around (see Figure 4.2) so.... *Yeah. Katrina and I talk about a lot of different stuff in class like our cars, our friends, and our families. Katrina actually comes from a really athletic family. Like her whole family is into soccer... BIG-TIME... but Katrina doesn't really like it. She used to play like back in elementary school but she doesn't anymore. At first, I think her parents and grandma were really mad that she didn't want to play, but that was a while ago. Now, I feel like they don't care as much. It's just really cool to have someone like Katrina around to talk to... it makes gym go by so much faster. Especially considering that we do most of the same stuff every time that we have gym.*

At our school, we start each gym class running laps either outside, on the track, or in the gym if it's too cold or raining or whatever. Sometimes I have trouble running the laps because of my asthma but Katrina has asthma too so a lot of times we walk together. Other days we walk because we're just not that into the whole physical activity thing. A lot of the people in our class, well besides Andre and Isaac and stuff, walk instead of run. The teachers really don't seem to care all that much... unless you step on the football field. I've seen Mr. Miles get super-mad and like lose his mind when kids go onto the field. I guess he thinks it's going to get messed-up or something?

Besides walking laps, we actually play like a lot of other games in gym class like dodgeball, Scadenavian handball, and Ghattoball. Last year we did archery outside and I really liked that but we didn't get to do that this year because we had to get new arrows and stuff. The gym teachers said that the arrows they ordered didn't get here in time so we had to do different things... which I was kind of upset about because archery's really fun (and I'm actually okay at it too). Instead, they had us play dodgeball for like 3 weeks which kind of stunk. I don't really care about playing against the guys or whatever but when we play dodgeball they all just go like super-intense and whip the ball at each other and I'm just like, "Please, don't hit me! I'm gonna die!"

No, but seriously, they throw it so hard at each other! The good news is that they don't usually throw super-hard at the people who really don't try and play... only when we get in the way. Even when we're the last ones left, a lot of the guys will sort of slowly throw the ball at us so we can catch it and everyone can get back in... you know, so the game can keep going on. Once everyone's back in they start whipping the ball at each

other again and I'm like, "Um... Calm down." I think that they throw it super-hard as like a way of showing-off in front of their friends or some of the girls or whatever.

Take Andre McDaniel for example. I feel like Andre tries to show-off all the time. Other times, when he takes a break from showing off, Andre and some of the other guys rag on each other like "Oh, c'mon man! You can do better than that?!" I think for the most part Andre does it for fun but other times I think he does it just because he can.... Sort of like, "Why not?" Maybe it's a testosterone thing? Neil Spencer tries to show-off and rag on people too. When Neil yells it's really funny because he kind of gives me a slightly feminine vibe. Like for Neil everything has to be perfect... his shoes, his hair... his clothes, it all has to be perfect. One time I thought he was going to cry because someone stepped on his shoes by accident in the hallway. So, when he yells at me or any of the other people in class I'm like, "Umm... okay." I don't really care.

*Also, Neil and some of the other kids in class take it **way too** seriously. They are always like "Oh... I've gotta win" no matter what we're playing. Take Drew Frazier for example. Whenever we make teams, Drew always run over to the more athletic kids or whatever so he can win. If I end up on his team sometimes he'll like yell at me. He'll say stuff like, "Mae! C'mon... do **something!**" and I'm just like, "I don't want to... it's gym class... it's like last period... I'm cool." Andre does this too. Like today, he was yelling at me to run faster in kickball. He kept doing it so I finally yelled back, "Why? For what?" I mean I was really proud of myself for kicking the ball and here he is taking it all seriously and yelling at me... so annoying.*

I don't have a problem standing-up to them when I have to. Sometimes, when the guys in class get all rough and stuff during the games, I'll step right in front of them even

*though they're much bigger than me. I don't care. I definitely get bruises and stuff but I also tell myself, "I can block the pain... this is what I **can** do! I can't run to the ball, but I can block the pain!" My foot still hurts from when Andre stepped on it during Scandenavian handball the other day... but I'll be alright.*

I wish sometimes that the teachers would say something when the boys get all rough and annoying, but they barely ever do. Other than that, I guess the gym teachers are pretty cool. They're really laid back. They let us take out or cell phones most of the time which is cool because most of the other teachers don't let us do that. Last year I had Mr. Walsh and he was like so chill. Like there would be days where I just really wasn't feelin' gym at all I would just like sit down. On those days Mr. Walsh would say, "Okay if you play for 5 minutes I'll give you an 'A' for today" and I was just like, "I got you Mr. Walsh" and I'd play for a few minutes... just enough to get my A. I guess I really don't really care what we do in gym. For me, I'd rather just be with my friends.¹

¹ **Member checked – January 25, 2018** – *I would say that this story pretty much covers my experience in gym class. I liked the part about Katrina because having her in class really helps me. The part about the boys was really good too. When they get all into it like that it makes me want to play gym even less. (Mae)*

Sam McCoy

While Mae's narrative highlights the importance of peer support and friendship within a physical education setting, other students placed less importance on these types of relationships. Enter Sam McCoy (17). From Sam's perspective, the chance to go outside was the greatest benefit provided by physical education class. Although

Sam actively participated in many of the psychomotor aspects of class, he routinely maintained a social distance, rarely interacting with any of his classmates during physical education. This absence of interpersonal contact was visible during physical education classes but was also unintentionally represented through participant photographs. Out of 469 total participant photographs Sam is only visible in 9 photos (0.02%), by far the least of any student in the class. Of these 9 photographs Sam is in the foreground of only 1 photo.

Despite being hazed in the vast majority of classes, Sam continued to assert himself by giving "the best effort that he could." Unfortunately, Sam's obvious effort often led to contemptuous cheering from the other students. Sam appeared to be in tune to the hazing as well considering that he never responded to the attention and kept his distance from those students who "cheered" for him most often. Sam also recorded the shortest GoPro® videos of any student in the class and was the only student to take several short clips (the shortest lasting a duration of 3 seconds) rather than recording the 15-30 minute videos that were routinely provided by all other participating students.

Even with all of this negative attention, Sam was able to showcase a remarkable level of self-awareness, restraint, and personal fortitude that allowed him an opportunity to make the best of a difficult physical education experience.

“I can deal with Simple Sam...”: Sam’s narrative.

For me, the best part about PE is running on the track and going outside.

Normally when people see the track they think of running but in gym class I mainly think of the first lap as a free lap. We just walk it, enjoy ourselves, and talk a bit. Then next lap is when most of us start jogging and stuff. See, during a regular school day, we really

don’t get to go outside all that much. Like I get having to stay in if it’s raining outside or something but if it’s really nice out, like it was yesterday, you really shouldn’t

Figure 4.4 Sam Taking a Picture of Drew

keep students cooped up inside of school. You know? I get so tired of being inside all day so it’s nice to have a chance in gym to go outside and just relax.

If the classes where we go outside are the best gym classes, then I would have to say that the classes where we have to do fitness testing are some of the worst. These are

the days where the gym teachers make us like run the mile or do the Pacer Test or something. During one of these classes I think Dom... no maybe it was Brooke... ahh I don't remember... it doesn't matter... someone took a picture of Drew doing the Sit-and-Reach Test. That's me in the background with my camera (see Figure 4.4). On fitness testing days, we have to be all serious and stuff. Last year, after the mile, I almost threw up... that wasn't really fun. I think it was because I just don't really have good stamina and I kept trying to push myself to get a good score. Right after I ran I was immediately like, "I don't feel so good..." and I had to sit down. I didn't end up puking but I almost did. I learned a valuable lesson from that though. Now, whenever I'm being timed in class, I just try to go out there and like say to myself, "You don't have to sprint, Sam. Go at your own pace."

*Thankfully, these fitness testing days are kind of rare. Normally, we don't get tested in gym or anything like that. It's not like English or science where you have to memorize things. The vibe in gym is more like, "Hey you're going to play a nice little game... you're going to like stretch out your muscles and things... then we'll change and go on about our day." I couldn't even imagine like taking a test in gym class. It's just like, I don't know. It's **gym class**. Like, I don't really think of it as an actual class. I always think of gym as a time for students to move around and unwind and stuff, not take tests.*

One of the things that I wish I could change about gym is that I wish we had more say in which activities we do. I guess the gym teachers could take more of our suggestions. Like sometimes, when we're doing volleyball and stuff it's like, "Can we do something else? We've been doing this for a while now." The teachers are always just

like “Nope.” It’s really kind of disheartening. Especially after we’ve been playing volleyball for like 3 weeks on 2 crappy nets that get all loose every time you go near them! It’s almost like the teachers think, “We’ve done it this way for all these years now and we’re not going to stop! I don’t care that it’s boring! More volleyball! More volleyball!”

I guess the reason the teachers don’t change it up very often in class also has to do with the school having no money. I mean heck, we already have the nets why buy anything else? **It’s not like anyone EVER gets sick of volleyball...** Give me a break. I think everyone likes when we switch it up a little bit you know? Take me for example. I’m not like Joe Super-Athlete or anything but I do have fun playing ping pong and tennis. Last year, I was playing ping pong with one of my friends in class and we were like going crazy. See, the school doesn’t have the money to buy ping pong tables so we basically play on sheets of plywood. That day we weren’t giving all that much effort so I was like, “What if we do extreme ping pong?” So, we started like putting 2 tables next to each other. Then, we were like, “No no no... this isn’t enough...” So then we took a bunch of steps back from the tables and we were like slamming the ball across the room and like onto the table. We tried to play it like that for a while and it was pretty fun. No one else really cared that we were doing that but I remember that being really cool.

Besides ping pong, tennis is by far my favorite game. I don’t play tennis here at school because I’m already on yearbook and the chess team. That and I’m kind of still looking for a job so I wouldn’t have time for the tournaments and stuff but I do wish we played it more in gym. I bet one of the reasons why we don’t play more is because our school has like no money, you know, to buy rackets and balls and stuff. I bet if they got

creative though they could scrounge up some money though to buy new equipment.

Maybe they could scrap those new prison doors they have next to the main office and use the money from that?

We got a new principal this year and his first day here he got us those new doors. The first time I saw them I was like, "Oh who needs locks on the bathroom stalls? We'll just spend the money on steel reinforced doors! Who needs general level classes or textbooks that aren't from the Stone Age? Computers.... We don't need computers in this school! But hey, have you seen our new reinforced, impenetrable, steel doors out front?" It's ridiculous how this school spends money. The other day, I went to yoga with my mom (it was like me and a bunch of 30 year-old women... meh) and we talked about it almost the whole way home. My mom has been a teacher in Springfield for over 10 years and she totally agrees with me, the way this town spends money on the schools is maddening!

The other thing that drives me crazy about this school are the different social groups. So, like look at gym class. I feel like there's a clear divide between the kids that know how to play the sports and the kids who don't. You don't have to be a genius to see that like Neil, and Andre, and Drew just love to play sports and stuff. Like they really get into it. Andre has got the muscles, he's tall, and he's active. When we play dodgeball, if I'm on Andre's team, I make sure that he always has a ball. I'll even give him mine if I need to! Neil is always busting on people. He doesn't say much to me but he really gets on Isaac and Johnnie. I feel like he's just joking around most of the time, like he's trying to be funny. I don't think he realizes that it's not really funny... but I can see where he's trying. Drew isn't as loud as Neil or as big as Andre but he really gets into the games

too. He's always fixing his hair and stuff and Mr. Cole is always making fun of him for wearing "Sh-medium" t-shirts. I think Drew tries hard to impress the girls.

Then on the other side, you have like Mae or Maggie, who just like sit there all of the time. They look miserable! Like they're probably not the ones playing football after school or something like that. Honestly, I think that most of the girls probably just want to talk instead of playing in gym. A lot of them just like sit out in class. Like for the baseball thing that we're doing, sometimes they'll just sit on the bench and just purposely move to the back so they don't have to bat. Usually the guys in the class will take their spot and no one even notices the difference.

Me, I'm one of the kids that doesn't associate with the cliques and stuff. Both the guys and the girls are kind of indifferent towards me really. I'm just there. Sometimes they'll say, "Hi" to me or they'll be like, "Yeah, go for it" and stuff like that but generally I just do my thing and they do theirs. When class is done, I usually just like sit down and watch people shooting hoops and everything. I would shoot too but I stink at basketball. I couldn't hit a shot if my life depended on it. It's kind of ironic how there are the people who don't want to leave gym ever and 30 feet away there are the people who are sitting on the bleachers who have wanted to sit on the bleachers since class started. I don't think I'd put myself in either group. I kind of just like try and be laid back for gym. Like when I'm up for bat everyone's being like, "Yeah Sam!" and I'm just thinking like, "I'm just gonna go hit it and run. I might power walk, but at least I'll try." I put in the effort when I can but I'm not the best at playing the games.

When it comes to the rules and stuff, I feel like the gym teachers are a little more lenient than other teachers in the building. Like I mean, once class is over you can kind

of just go on your phone and you can't really do that in other classes. If you do, you get it taken away. I would also say that Mr. Cole and Mr. Lawson are fun, eccentric teachers that want other people to have fun. They don't want gym to be just another boring class. They want like the people to get up and get moving. Sometimes they participate in the games that we play especially when they're seeing that the game is clearly not fun because it is so one-sided. Like they'll catch the ball and throw it to us sometimes when we play baseball. I think this helps to make them good teachers. Like when I think of a good teacher I think of someone who will be active and like help the kids and stuff. Not just in phys. ed., but with other subjects too. Good teachers help and try to understand rather than just like sit and watch and just be like, "Meh... do that... do this..." You know? Mr. Cole also has nicknames for everyone in class. Some people seem to like this while others can't stand it! He calls me Simple Sam. I don't really know why he calls me that but I guess it doesn't really bother me, kids have called me worse things in the past... I can deal with Simple Sam.²

² **Member checked – January 25, 2018 – Yeah this looks about right to me. (Sam)**

Andre McDaniel

At approximately 6'0 tall and 210 pounds, Andre McDaniel (17), was the largest person in this class. Relatively new to Springfield, Andre had started his high school career in suburban Ohio before transferring into Springfield High in the middle of his Sophomore year. Although Andre had not attended Springfield schools for as long as some of the other students, when asked to identify the “class leader” participants repeatedly picked Andre. Andre was also most commonly identified by his peers as being “the most masculine student” in class. Students would often synonymously attribute these qualities of leadership and masculinity to traits Andre possessed such as: his above average height/weight, his position as a Varsity football player, his enthusiasm for gym class, and his hot and cold, sometimes confrontational disposition. Whereas Sam was only visible in 9 of the 469 photos taken for this study, Andre can be seen in 53 photos (11%), the most of any student in the class.

Speaking further to this point, Andre volunteered to participate in this study more than any other student in the class. Often asking to wear the GoPro® camera when other students would decline and/or refuse. As such,

Andre’s experience in class was well documented.

By the end of the study I had accumulated 11 different videos of various lengths displaying Andre’s experience (the average number of videos for all other student-participants was 6). During

interviews and informal discussions, Andre often would make known his feelings about various teachers in the school, administrative hiring decisions, his preference of physical

education activity for the day, and his aspirations as a Varsity football player. When Andre was not preoccupied with the competitive class activities he often would be found lingering around the girls in the class attempting to touch, tease, and badger. Despite repeatedly being turned away by each of the girls in class, Andre repeated this behavior throughout the study with varied levels of tenacity.

Andre also appeared to place the most emphasis on the rules of each activity in class. During class, he would often remind other students of the game rules, oversee managerial components of games (i.e. choosing teams, policing batting orders), and keep track of the score by announcing it aloud at various points in each class. When someone veered from Mr. Lawson and/or Mr. Cole's rules, Andre would serve as the de facto enforcer, verbally and physically imposing their will in an attempt to regain social control of the game. The teachers appeared to appreciate Andre's allegiance on more than one observed occasion.

“I’m one of the nice ones:” Andre’s narrative.

Even though I liked last year’s gym class a little better (the kids in there were more aggressive) this year’s gym class has been alright so far. I really like all of the activities that we do in gym, but I hate playing with people that stand around and do nothing. Like let me see if I can explain. There’s definitely different groups in our gym class. You’ll have like the athletic kids, then you’ll have the outcasts, and then the lazy kids or whatever. The outcasts and the lazy kids barely ever do anything. I mean, are there some days where I’m not feeling it so I don’t try? Definitely. But those kids like don’t do anything ever and it completely ruins the class. It’s really annoying. Just to throw out a name... say Ben. Ben doesn’t change for class... no matter what... ever. I

don't get it because I really don't think changing is that big of a deal. I change pretty much every class but for Ben and some other kids, I guess it's a chance to be rebellious or whatever. It's like they have a failing grade so they're like "Meh, whatever" and they don't even try.

I think the amount of effort kids give also has a lot to do with the fact that we pretty much exclusively play sports. Take the girls for example. When we play in gym, most of the girls kind of just stand off to the side or way in the back. I'm not saying that girls can't play sports, I just think that when people think of sports they think of guys. A lot of times like when we play dodgeball, the girls just stand in the back. They just stand there until everybody else who is actually trying gets out and then like we have no choice but to throw it at them. I try not to throw it hard at them but sometimes that's just how the game goes. Most of the time when I hit them it's by accident. I'm like so inaccurate when we play dodgeball because I have huge hands! The dodgeballs are so small, it's really hard to be accurate with them. I can whip them for sure, but sometimes they go where I don't want them to. The other day I tagged Drew in the face! I thought he was hurt at first but then I realized that he was alright. He wasn't out though because head shots don't count.

*I do admit that sometimes, I can get a little **too** into it in gym. Sometimes I get like so caught up in the game that I get really competitive or excited or whatever. I think this is why Maggie hates me. One time, after we won at Scandinavian handball, I like ran over to her and picked her up. I was like "WE WON! WE WON!" She called me a "Psycho" and told me to "Put her down" like all annoyed. When I did put her down, it was kind of awkward or whatever. I didn't want to make her feel like just because she's a*

girl I picked her up so then I was like, “Hey... Sam!” and I picked him up too. I was just picking her up because she was the closest one to me when we scored the winning goal but I don’t think she took it that way. That definitely sucked.

It’s tough because sometimes I feel like a little behind getting to know the different personalities of the kids in class. You see, I’ve only been at Springfield for a little over a year. I originally came here from Ohio. You’ve probably heard about the defensive back that the Patriots just drafted out of Saschawa State. My town was about a 30-minute drive from there. Well anyways, at my old school, there were like as many kids in my grade as are in this entire school. It was really big. There you were just like a name on a board but here, it’s like everyone knows you. Here it’s also really laid back and everyone is kind of accepted for who they are or whatever, out there, if you weren’t an

Figure 4.6 Andre (Left) walks with Isaac

athlete, you were a nobody. Trust me, I know firsthand.

Back in Ohio I was kind of like the weird fat kid in gym class. I would just kind of keep to myself and try

and have fun, you know? It’s actually one of the reasons why I decided to play sports. At

my old school, I played Freshman football and Freshman lacrosse. I was pretty good too but at the beginning of last year my dad was reassigned and we moved to Springfield. My dad is in the military. My mom and my little brother moved here too. Sometimes I kind of feel bad for my little brother because like I'm the older brother and the athletic one, so everybody here knows me. People are like, "Oh, you're Andre's brother!" I don't think he likes that. Like he plays sports for the town and all but he just doesn't have his heart in it.

*Sometimes when we're busting kids balls in class I feel kind of bad, because I wouldn't want anyone busting my little brother's ass like that. Usually I don't even really hate the kid we're making fun of in class, it's just some people make it easy, you know? Like take J-Bell for example. His first name is John but we all call him Keith. We call him that because of his stupid haircut. It's almost like we've given his haircut a name because it looks like a haircut that some guy named Keith would have. He gets **so pissed** when we call him that but a lot of the other kids laugh when me and the other guys do so whatever. It's actually really funny. Some of the other guys go too far with it sometimes but we all know that they're only joking so it's like whatever.*

Me, I think I'm one of the nice ones in gym. I know when to back-off. I mean, it comes with experience. Like I coached football with my dad for the Pop Warner team Freshman year in Ohio. I'm actually surprised how I did it because I was on the honor roll, playing Freshman football, and coaching the same time! I was like a force! But coaching definitely taught me like how to press kids and back-off at certain times. I kind of feel like you have to treat people equally no matter how good or bad they are at sports or if they're like gay or straight or whatever, you know?

*It's funny because sometimes I think about how students here at the high school are treated and they're definitely **not** all treated equally. I know like I try and treat everyone the same but there are some people in grades that would be like "Oh... you like a boy and you're a boy? Well you're **this** and you're a loser." Then there are like a lot of other people that just shun away... it even happens to people in middle schools sometimes. My younger brother says that down there, people call each other all kinds of different homophobic names and stuff. It's not cool. I might razz on people but I really try not to use those words, that's like going too far in my opinion.*

I have my own feelings on the gender and sexuality thing but I keep them to myself mostly because I don't want people labeling me as a racist or a sexist or whatever. I've learned to just keep my mouth shut because, well, I don't want to say the wrong thing. I guess I just don't want people shoving it in my face, you know? For example, not to throw out names, but this kid Nolan in our school is well, he's gay. This year, during Spirit Week he got into a big fight with this redneck kid, Ryan, over the flag. See, one of the days we have for Spirit Week is Flag Day. On Flag Day, people all are supposed to wear the American flag or whatever. Well, Nolan decided to bring a Gay Pride like, rainbow flag instead of the American flag and wave it all around at pep rally. I think it was in retaliation for like something that I guess happened on Gay Pride Day or whatever. It really wasn't cool. I was like ready to jump up out of the stands and like get him myself! I didn't have to though. In the end, the school got him and he got suspended and everything so justice was served. He must have known that he was going to get in trouble. He knew he was starting stuff.

The school tries to make sure these things don't happen by fighting those stereotypes and stuff but I really don't think they do a good job. Take for instance last week, during advisory period. We had an assembly and it was like homosexual and lesbian people telling their stories and stuff. I didn't like it one bit. I thought that it felt really forced. Like why do I have to sit and listen to this? Towards the end of the assembly I also heard that same kid, Nolan, talking about like sexual stuff in front of teachers too and they didn't do anything about it. I thought that was like really messed up. Like I don't have an issue with gay people or whatever but keep it to yourselves. I mean, if he said that shit in front of the wrong person, like someone who might have had a bad experience with a homosexual or something, he probably would have got his ass beat and rightfully so.

Ms. Corrigan is one of the new gym teachers and she's like really involved with this kind of stuff. She's one of the teachers that supports the school's Gay-Straight Alliance. I don't know if she's gay or what but I do know that a lot of the guys in school think she's hot. I haven't had Ms. Corrigan in class because she teaches mainly Freshman but I have heard that she's pretty chill from other people. In fact, all the gym teachers here at Springfield are pretty different but pretty chill at the same time. Take Mr. Miles, he'll teach you every aspect of the game. He's like the middle school gym teacher that teaches the kids the game before they even play it. All of the other gym teachers go straight into the game because like, you're in high school, so you should know how to play all of the sports at this point, right? Mr. Walsh kind of does this also but not as much. Mr. Miles also has coached football here for like 130 years and has his favorites. Like, if you're a star on the football team like Dom Mendez, you're guaranteed

an 'A' in gym. I play football here too so I know, even though I've never been in Mr. Miles' class.

Lawson is like a joking around kind of guy. I mean he's laid back but he can be serious at some points. Cole... well let's just say he's Cole and leave it at that! Walsh is chill but he also can get very short-tempered. One time, I saw Ethan really get on his nerves and he was like, "Ethan... I swear to God if you open up your mouth one more time I'll smash that damn phone of yours!" Most of the time he's cool but once in a blue moon he will like lose his shit. Although I will say that Walsh is like one of those role models that like you want to take after. Like if some fat 300-pound guy came up to me and was like "I want you to run 2 miles" I would be like, "I want to see you run a mile first, fat-ass." Walsh runs all the time and is super fit so I can definitely respect that.

While all the gym teachers here are really nice, Mr. Grimes in science is my favorite. He's just a chill guy, and he's young, and he likes to like crack jokes. He's always making fun of me for something to do with my girlfriend or whatever because we're together in the hallways all the time. I really hope that if Springfield administrators read this paper that they give Mr. Grimes a full-time position because he's a really good teacher and deserves it way more than some of the older teachers like Mrs. Sanders. She absolutely sucks! That's all I've got for now. Go Tigers! ³

³ **Member checked – February 1, 2018** – *This kind of shows what it's like in gym. It's funny to see some of the things I said that I didn't even really think about when we were talking. I feel like the part about Johnnie isn't as bad in real life as it sounds here. He really doesn't get THAT mad when we call him Keith, most of the time he fakes like he's mad but he's really not. The part where I talked about my brother too... I would change that. He is actually pretty good at sports for his age. (Andre)*

Mr. Lawson

Marc Lawson (27), served as a long-term substitute teacher for the full-time physical educator, Mr. Cole, for the majority of this study. As a former graduate of the Springfield school district and now adult resident of the town, Mr. Lawson made it known to myself and the students that he had an uncanny familiarity with the way physical education was taught at Springfield High. By proctoring games such as dodgeball and kickball, Mr. Lawson stressed the importance of student participation in each class. As long as the majority of students were up and moving, Mr. Lawson appeared to be happy.

Regarding his teaching style, Mr. Lawson worked to infuse energy, humor, and levity into the class. Citing the other physical educators as an inspiration for his teaching, Mr. Lawson attempted to model his instruction after many of the same practices as Mr. Cole, Mr. Walsh, and Mr. Miles. On par with the departmental norm, Mr. Lawson's verbal instruction was overwhelmingly loud and enthusiastic. His jokes, would regularly be rewarded with student laughter despite the fact that many of them came at the expense of various students in the class.

Besides verbally engaging the students, Mr. Lawson would also physically engage them by jumping in and out of class activities for what he described to be a variety of purposes. Sometimes Mr. Lawson would participate as a pseudo body-guard for the students with special needs in the class, ensuring that they were given chances to participate and were not struck with errant balls. At other times, Mr. Lawson would jump in to rectify what he perceived to be a competitive imbalance within the game itself. Motivation aside, I observed Mr. Lawson participate in every physical education class that I observed prior to his reassignment in May.

“It’s just kind of the way they do things here”: Mr. Lawson’s narrative.

So where to begin? I guess I should start by saying that I graduated from the local college with a degree in physical education about 5 years ago. Since I graduated I’ve been searching for a full-time job as a PE teacher but at this point, all that have really been open are long-term sub positions so I’ve been taking them as much as possible. I’ve previously subbed at a couple of schools: Ferreira Elementary School, in Ogdenville, Springfield Middle School, and I did some student teaching in a couple of elementary schools in Capitol City before that. My time at each school varied dependent on the circumstances of my appointment.

One constant that I find as I move from school to school is that no matter where I’m teaching, there’s always a large amount the diversity across individual PE classes. There are always the students that are really into PE. These students like perform really well and do what you ask them to do. Then there are the students that don’t perform as well. These kids give off a vibe that they’re not interested at all and would rather be anywhere else. Getting these kids to participate is almost like pulling teeth, they really can make the job tough. Maybe I shouldn’t say this but I think at the high school level, you could put the students in a room and you can glance at them and just know, “Alright this kid probably gets an ‘A’ in class... this kid gets a ‘D’ in class because he rarely ever shows up.” It’s just the way it is. The ‘A’ students usually have a high energy level and for the most part, have no problem talking and engaging the other students around the class.

When I see a student that shows these types of characteristics right away I think, "Alright, maybe this kid will be a little bit better than the kid that's sitting over there or not talking to anybody." Take Andre McDaniel here at Springfield for example. I know he gets a ton out of PE because he changes his clothes every day, he's the first out of the locker room, he plays by the rules, and he gives max effort. Isaac Carr and Neil Spencer are in the same boat. Olivia McKinney fits that mold too. Even though skill-wise she might not be able to hang with the big dogs, she never stops trying and doesn't shy away from giving a solid effort.

The 'D' students are not like that. They don't ever change, they're really not into participating at all. It's like pulling teeth to get a lot of them to do anything! Like take the smaller girl with the glasses for example, what was her name? Oh yeah, Mae. Take Mae, she knows that she's not great at anything we do in PE so I can kind of understand why she has that demeanor like, "Why try? Why get that much involved if I'm just going to fail?" I mean she does participate to some extent but she is never like sprinting up and down the floor trying to block somebody. My buddy, David Floyd, is another one. I feel like he doesn't value phys ed class. If I am being truthful I just think that kid is in school because he has to go... period.

I would say that this leads to one of the biggest challenges being a PE teacher, keeping kids engaged. I find that keeping the different students interested or engaged is really tough. Co-ed PE, especially at the high school level, is somewhat difficult to manage because you've got some big, strong men and even some big, strong women that are all into it and then you've got your others who are not so into it. On the flip side of that, I love teaching PE because it gives me an opportunity to see students in

environments that they're comfortable in. It also gives me a chance to see students in situations that they're not comfortable in. I feel like this dichotomy lets you learn more about the student's strengths and weaknesses and it exposes them to potential new activities or new things which I think is always a good thing.

*This is my third time serving as a long-term sub at Springfield High and from my understanding, I should be here through the end of the school year. Honestly though, you never know with this place! I've been involved with this system long enough to know that anything could happen, especially in PE. Unfortunately, PE is not the top priority here. In fact, I don't know if I would say it's in the top 25 on the priority list. I think I can describe it best through an analogy. If I were to sum up the physical education program at Springfield High in one activity, the first thing I think of is that 'Ghettoball' game we play where I'm like pitching the Gatorskin dodgeball and students are hitting it with the tennis racket. You know, it's sort of like baseball but, well the ghetto version. Now **THAT** is the embodiment of Springfield High School phys ed. It's like very low budget, minimal equipment is needed, so it works with limited resources. It's too bad that there are so many budget restrictions for the phys ed program here. We only get a small amount of money from the school per year to spend on equipment, and even then, the other teachers just spend it on the same things year after year like badminton birdies and ping pong balls. I mean, obviously some of those things need to get replaced, but I wish we would get something new, something different. I think the only new thing that was introduced within the past 2 years was the backyard game, SpikeBall®. Even then, I'm pretty sure that Cole bought it with his own money and they used it in class.*

While we're talking about activities I guess this would be a good place to address Springfield's phys ed curriculum. *Here, like many other programs, we spend a lot of time exploring different avenues relating to team sports, individual sports, and dual sports. Sports are just kind of like the center-piece of most PE programs. From there I think a good PE program branches-off from the set rules, regulations, and objectives to explore the various skills that are used a lot across different sports. I have heard of other programs that introduce things like creative movements or group initiative types of activities into PE but in my experience, and I've been to a bunch of different schools, I rarely see them. One thing that I have not seen though is a PE program that excludes sports or doesn't place heavy emphasis on sport-related skills. That just doesn't happen. It's really just always been the way it is.*

In other words, I feel like phys ed in general is one of those classes that doesn't change much over time. The kids still do a lot of the same activities and follow the same class structure that I did when I was a student here. That's right. before I started working as a long-term sub in PE I was a student myself at Springfield High. I actually had most of the same phys ed teachers that the students have today. Mr. Miles, Mr. Walsh, you know, the crew. I actually had Mr. Walsh at all 3 schools: elementary, middle, and high school so when I think of PE I think of him right away. Mr. Walsh always offered a mix of activities but what sticks with me most about him now that I'm a teacher is his kind of style and his way of motivating students. He's always really upbeat and uses a lot of humor and things. I try to model that in my own teaching.

Partly because the PE routine here is just so familiar to everyone, including me,

Figure 4.7 Mr. Lawson Stretching

when I'm

teaching I try

and keep it the

same as it has

always been. At

the beginning

of each class, I

take

attendance.

Most of the

students sit in

*the bleachers while I sit on the floor and mark them present or absent. After that, we go to the middle of the floor and stretch. See the good-looking guy up in the front of that first picture doing his hamstring stretch? That's me (see Figure 4.5). I'm glad to see David, right behind me in that picture, giving his regular, **great effort**. After we stretch we usually go up to the track and do a few laps, like 2 or 3 unless it's raining. If it's raining we just do the laps inside. This gets students ready for the mile run later in the year which accounts for the largest part of their term grade.*

Once those things are done, we usually spend the rest of class playing some type of game. Kickball, dodgeball, basketball, Scandinavian handball, and GhettoBall are some of the go-to favorites. I usually just let the game go but I will jump into games from time to time, usually when the action gets a little dull or when I think that the students are

starting to drag their feet a little bit. I might also jump in if one of the teams is getting dominated or if the score is out of hand just to keep it interesting. In these cases, I try and jump in to help out the team that is getting scored on. I think for the most part, when I jump in I think it helps pick up the pace a little bit.

Occasionally I'll hop into a game to help one of the kids with special needs, like Jayson so that he can be more successful. *I know he likes to participate and be active with the other students but unfortunately, his school para(professional) really doesn't do all that much to get him involved with the others. Personally, when I see things getting more competitive I get in the game and try to make sure that he doesn't get really hurt or get in the way of anyone else who is really trying to participate. It's tough to tell but I think that he really responds well to me jumping into the games. That is pretty much how phys ed classes run. Generally speaking it's a routine that I'm familiar with, students are familiar with, so it works.*

Speaking more to my experience as PE student in Springfield, other than having Mr. Walsh as a PE teacher, I don't really remember much about my elementary school phys ed. I do remember in middle school the curriculum was very-much sport related. I also remember how structured class was. You would come in, get to your attendance spot we do this stretch every day, we break up and some of us would do football while others would like dance or something, it was very regimented. Once I got to high school, things were a little more laid back. I wasn't the best student in class skill-wise, but I probably was in the top half of the class. I remember just appreciating the fact that I wasn't being watched as much or graded on every move whereas you know, when I was in middle school I felt like if I wasn't stretching and touching my toes then I was going to fail. Yeah

so like by high school I knew the deal. If there was a day where I wanted to slack off then I would slack off because I didn't feel like I had that pressure of people watching me.

Now that I'm a PE teacher I try to display the persona a pretty fair, easy-going, structured PE teacher. I'm not overly strict but students in my classes definitely what was expected of them. For example, take somebody showed up to class a few minutes late because they had boyfriend or girlfriend issues. I probably wouldn't bust balls over that because that's just how high school is. I mean the way that I see it is that I'm not asking for the world, just come, get what we have to get done, done, and keep it moving. I'm not really all that difficult to figure out.

I don't really let many things get to me when I'm teaching but one thing that really does get me fired up sometimes are the kids that don't show up to their own PE class but want to get into other PE classes to play throughout the day! Like buddy, you don't even play in your own class, why would I ever let you just come into someone else's class to play? Play in your own class first then we can talk about extra classes. Maybe these kids want into a specific class because they have more friends in there or something so they want to be in PE with them? I don't know. I will say that there are some students (but not many) that I let into other classes when they ask. When I do this I'm usually making my decision based off of past experiences. Like if they participate in their own class and they're not in trouble all of the time, then I let them come in. If it is somebody that I had previously threw out like a Tyler Welchman, who I think I've kicked out like 20 times this year, then I would send them packing and back to whatever class they're supposed to be in.

I do get why students look to get out of class to come to the gym though. A lot of other mainstream, academic classes are so guided and strict. There's like no room for students to breath. I've always felt like students are a little bit more open-minded in the gym. I also think that the kids are allowed to be more expressive in PE than other classes. They tell me what's going on outside of school more and share more of their personal outside-of-school stuff. Whereas in science class or a math class they might not open up about their day as much, in PE they're just overall friendlier. Some outside teachers might see students as more disrespectful in PE or PE teachers as less professional because of how we choose to engage the students. I totally disagree. I think that PE is simply more interactive than their classes. A lot of them could learn a thing or two by watching how things are done in PE. It's really too bad that there are so many negative ideas about what PE is and why students have to take it in school.

*It's almost like, there's always going to be misconceptions around sport and PE and about the differences between guys and girls and their place in physical activity. Things like "men are innately more active" or "the boys are going to be better than the girls" or "the small, tiny, unmuscular student won't perform as well as the big football jock" are always just under the surface for teachers and students. I think students start to recognize this stuff in the middle school but it's more like an elephant in the room at that level. In high school, these ideas are more visible and I think that students recognize and react to them. It's almost like, **"Oh we're picking teams again...great. I'm going to get picked last so I'm just going to disappear into the locker room for the next 30 minutes."***

*I also see these types of things happening in games. Say a less athletic kid tried to step up and give a real effort, the kids might make jokes or be like “Whoa... what’s this?! Where did this come from?” At other times, he might give a maximum effort and it still is not enough to be successful so he’s like, “**Whomp Whomp... I really do suck at PE.**” Whereas at the elementary level maybe the students feel these things but it doesn’t really interfere with class or the games, in high school these types of situations really have an impact on the flow of the class. Sometimes I wish I knew why the like PE superstars acted this way towards the other kids, if I did I might do things differently in PE. But honestly, I think by high school people accept who they are or they accept what they think things are supposed to be. They might be like “... this is PE class, this is high school... and I’m a dork and this is how it’s going to be...” or “why try and change.”⁴*

⁴ **Member checked – January 18, 2018** – *I think you captured it for the most part. I mean, I don’t think PE is like this everywhere, but at this school the administration really doesn’t seem to pay much attention to it. Also, when I read the part about just knowing which students were going to be successful in PE, I don’t really think that’s the case. I think because I’m familiar with the district and the students, that kind of plays into that knowing who’s athletic and who’s not part of it. (Mr. Lawson)*

Jeff Heath

Throughout my life I have often envisioned myself as the stereotypical “guy.” I’m a 33 year-old, 6 foot tall white male. I live with my wife, young son, and German Shepherd in a suburban, middle class neighborhood. My house is situated at the end of a quiet road and is quite literally surrounded by a white, picket fence. As I too am a product of Springfield schools, I attended a white-washed school district where less than 2% of the student population identified as non-white. Until I was recently charged with the difficult task of confronting my privilege, experience, and related subjectivities I really had not given much thought to my life circumstances and related professional path. Moreover, I had given even less thought to the life circumstances and academic/professional experiences of others.

In constructing the following narrative, I pushed myself to delve into my initial motivations for participating in sport and physical activity throughout school. While I initially presumed my personal narrative would be the easiest of the five to construct I quickly found it to be far and away, the most challenging. The multitude of layers that encapsulate, what I consider in large in part to be, my sport-centric identity proved to be thick and difficult to penetrate. Using the same protocol as the previous four narratives, my narrative was crafted from words that I had taken from various data points including my researcher journal. I also had a critical friend administer an interview protocol to me in order to facilitate a conversation around my longitudinal experiences as a physical education student. After multiple edits, inclusions, omissions, and revelations, I was able to construct a brief, but personally important narrative that helps describe my experience with physical activity and more specifically, physical education.

“I wasn’t going to go on the trampoline...”: Jeff’s narrative.

Probably my first major influence relating to physical education and physical activity was my mom’s sister, Amy. Now retired, my Aunt Amy was a physical educator at Ogdenville High School for over 30 years. She has always been into sport and physical activity. I can remember my mom, my brother, and me visiting her house all of the time growing up. While my mom and aunt caught up inside, my brother and I would play games like croquet in her back yard. Sometimes, Aunt Amy and my mom would take us to the public tennis courts to hit balls using these old Martina Navratilova rackets. When we would go it was never organized or anything, we would just mess around. Every so often, my mom would take us to have lunch with my aunt when she was working at the school. Times were different back then in the sense that people could just open the door and come in to the school pretty much whenever they wanted. We would walk into what I remember to be an enormous building, McDonald’s bag in tow, and head straight to the gym. I haven’t been in that building in over 25 years but I feel like I would still know the way to the girls’ locker room, where her office was. Some of my earliest memories are of me ducking under the volleyball nets in the gym, just like her students did on the way out of class. I wanted to be tall and athletic just like them.

Shortly after, when I started elementary school, my own PE experience began. I was always super-excited to participate in phys. ed. which was, without a doubt, my favorite subject. I loved how PE gave us a chance to get up and move around which was a nice change of pace after sitting at desks all day. I also remember really looking up to my elementary PE teacher, Mr. Mackey. To me it just always felt like Mr. Mackey was “one of the boys.” I can remember a student asking him once on the playground, “Hey!

Mr. Mackey! Are you ever going to get **married**?” He laughed and rather matter-of-factly responded, “Nope!” I thought that was just the coolest thing... I knew it... one of the boys for life! A few years later my mom showed me an announcement in the paper where Mr. Mackey had in fact, got married. I remember being really disappointed at that without really understanding why.

In addition to being my favorite teacher, Mr. Mackey would play two-hand touch football with us almost every day at recess. On the days when he didn't play, there was a group of boys who always wanted to play tackle football, which was against the rules. I can remember not outwardly saying that I preferred to play two-hand touch football but when those older, bigger boys wanted to play tackle I was always a little bit nervous about getting hurt. As a kid that was on the smaller side, I usually did end up getting hurt when we played tackle but I kept coming back anyway despite the bumps and bruises.

Occasionally, I would take a break from football at recess. I never really was affected by the Cooties thing when I was little so early on, I was always trying to be like a little ladies' man. There were a lot of times where I was exceptionally interested in what the girls were doing at recess, especially Emma Wilson. I used to follow Emma around everywhere. My mom and her mom thought it was cute so we would go and have like play dates and things over at her house on the weekends. Sometimes at recess, me, Emma and some of the other kids would make a mix of wood chips and dead flowers and stuff. We would put the mix in lunch baggies and call it “potpourri.” Then, we would pretend to open up a shop by an old, gnarly tree in the corner of the playground and try to sell our mash-up to other students.

When we got back into class on “potpourri days” I was all but lost in the conversation with the other boys. They would run in and talk about the cool play that somebody made at the football game or debate about the final score and I can remember being like ‘Okay... I hope they don’t ask me to chime in.’ I was always nervous on those days that they were going to quiz me like, ‘What were you doing at recess?’ and I wouldn’t have a good answer. I don’t remember any of them ever calling me on it, but I knew early on, like as early as first grade, not to advertise that I was making “potpourri” at recess instead of playing football. There were a few occasions where some of the other boys like my best friend, Jake, and Robbie McCormick would play the “potpourri” game with us but we would never talk about it after recess.

The only time us guys ever really interacted related to those types of things were in the form of little wrestling matches over the girls that we were playing with. I can remember one time specifically in third grade during field day, we were eating hot dogs and drinking lemonade and I was talking to Sammy Janson. Out of no-where Robbie came up behind me and did like a really awkward, weird drop kick to the back of my legs... I think because he was jealous. We wrestled on the ground for a minute before it was done. Initially, I didn’t even see him coming but when it was over I was really nervous that we would get in trouble for fighting. I don’t think any teachers saw it happen because we didn’t get in trouble afterwards.

In middle school, Robbie ended up being one of those mangy types of kids that would always borrow sneakers out of the “loaner” box for PE. They had a similar “loaner box” at the high school but there was the perception that you might get gonorrhea if you went next to it. While a few kids did get sneakers from the “loaner box” in middle school

I don't remember anybody going near that box in high school, whether they needed to or not. I knew I didn't want to associate with kids that used that box because they had that stigma of being poor and dirty. I mean, my family was probably lower middle class and I didn't grow up with a ton of money, but even I brought in junky sneakers to school for gym.

When I started at the middle school I didn't wear sneakers to school because my dad forbade my mom from buying them for my brother and I. Dad couldn't rationalize spending 100 bucks on a pair of basketball sneakers, so he really pushed hard for me to get a pair of combat boots. From his perspective, they would last a whole lot longer, and they were similar to what he would wear to work. My dad was a welder and often wore steel toe boots because of the cold and dropping things on his toe and what have you. I would go to school with those combat boots on and get verbally abused in the boys' locker room by the other guys for not wearing sneakers. Like 'Seriously? Look at those things?! Look at Jeff! Hahaha! Hey Sarge!' I would routinely go home, upset about it, and my dad would tell me, "If anyone makes fun of you kick em' right in the balls with them! Then they won't make fun of you anymore!" After going through a week or two of what felt like endless razzing and torment, my mom caved and bought me a pair of sneakers.

While I liked my middle school PE teachers for the most part, my seventh grade English teacher, Mr. Landry was my favorite. This guy just looked academic. He wore glasses, a shirt, and a tie every day. He was an athletic guy, very stern, and very knowledgeable. He would assign us books like *The Outsiders*, *The Eyes of the Dragon*, and *Hatchet* to read for class. His English class was one of the first times where I

realized, “Oh wow, every book **doesn’t** suck!” Mr. Landry also hosted a school club called Fantasy Football that I really looked forward to. Now-a-days, fantasy football is all on computers, but back then he would actually take the newspapers out and look through the stats and make photocopies for us. Looking back, that must it must have taken him **hours** to get the statistics for each kid! Funny coincidence, when I was hired to my first teaching job back in Springfield I worked down the hall from Mr. Landry who was still there.

When it was time to go to the high school, those same kids that would scrounge sneakers from the middle school “loaner bin” often ended up being the kids that sat out of phys. ed. completely. I can remember having a sort of bully mentality towards those kids. I wouldn’t call them out directly, but I would say things in my mind like, “Look at that kid... he doesn’t even change? It looks like he hasn’t even showered in like 3 days.” Sometimes, I would get invited to hang out with some of those kids outside of school for one reason or another but I would never go. I would always come up with an excuse or say that something else came up.

Instead, I spent most of my time hanging out with the guys on my sports teams or later on, my girlfriend. I was with Jake Duffy the most. He and I were pretty much attached at the hip all the way from Kindergarten through college. Jake and I grew up playing sports with the other neighborhood kids almost every day. While I could take most of the other kids, Jake would beat me at pretty much anything we played. It drove me nuts! I was physically larger than him and I felt like I was smarter than him, but he would beat me like a drum at pretty much everything. Various people, including my mom, would talk about how good Jake was at basketball and it would piss me off that she

wasn't talking about me. Jake didn't play football in high school because he thought that he was too small, but he did play basketball and made like every all-star team there was to make.

Later, we played tennis in college together. Jake was the #2 and I was the #5. This was kind of ironic because when we were younger and I wanted to play tennis in the driveway Jake was always like, "Tennis?! We're playing fucking tennis? Let's go play Wiffleball... tennis is so gay." Eventually he started playing in the driveway too. No surprise, he ended up being really good at tennis and made the varsity team our Freshman year. We still get along famously even though we don't hang out much anymore. He has a big-time job now and drives a brand-new Jaguar, but when we do talk every couple of months we always pick right back up where we left off. There's still some of that competitive banter, but we get along really well, it's just one of those things.

Personally, I just wish there weren't those boxes that people are expected to fit into in PE. Take me for example. I always felt confined to a box in the sense that I had to play football when it was offered as a choice. Even if I wanted to go across the gym and jump on the trampoline with the kids who had picked gymnastics I would **never**. I may have thought it looked cool or fun or whatever but I wasn't going to go on the trampoline because every boy in class was playing football except for the "weirdos." I think having that freedom and having that safety to just try things, even if it's just for one class would be awesome for students at all levels.

Along that same line, I also wish that kids could pick what we did in class and what was interesting to them. Even if the teacher just listed something and we collaboratively figured out alright instead of saying that we're doing football right now,

we're doing basketball after that, and then we have field hockey set up after that, and then we're going to do yoga. Like have some type of ongoing conversation with the people that are actually in the class and say "Hey, what are you into?" Like, "I suck... I know nothing about yoga, but let's watch some YouTube videos and give it a try..." or "I know a lot about football but I don't know everything about football and if that's what y'all want to do like let's go... maybe we can think about some different ways to run this play or try this or try that..." or "I have no experience at all with aerial arts and ribbons but let's go on a field trip and all just act a fool at this place and just feel what it's like and see if it's something that anybody's into..." because who knows, from then on maybe people get involved in it as a student, as a teacher, as a faculty, whatever. I just would love to see those types of things. But it's not that easy. I still feel like there's just those same invisible walls today that stopped me from jumping on the trampoline when I was in high school.

Narrative Intersectionality

When referencing masculinity and adolescent identity, physical education is without a doubt, a contested domain (Azzarito & Solomon, 2005; Hartmann, 2000; Pope & O'Sullivan, 2003). While Mae actively negotiates her position in the class, Andre is afforded all of the benefits provided to white males in a larger, patriarchal system. Sam also collects many of the benefits from this system while remaining on its periphery, outwardly rejecting many of the most egregious ideations associated with male hegemony. Even though Mr. Lawson is able to exercise his position of power as a classroom teacher over his students, he is still relegated to a lower professional tier by building administrators who provide a significant lack of program funding for his content

area. Finally, my narrative takes a retrospective look at my experiences in SHS as both a student and a teacher helping me to identify the invisible boxes of masculine expectation that I was directed to exist in for so long.

While each narrative is inextricably linked within the context of physical education, the above narratives have been presented in a way that seeks to shed light on the complexities of individual stories while avoiding inappropriate generalizations (Cole, 2009). Rather than present one, overarching narrative for the entire class, I consciously chose to parse out the small stories of individuals as they provide a more inclusive view of physical education practices. In other words, as each individual stakeholder participated in some facet of SHS physical education, each stakeholder had their own unique interpretations of class phenomena based on their personal subjectivities and lived experiences. In recognition of this point, rather than treating each narrative as a piece of factual evidence, each narrative should be considered as a “situated interpretation of the studied phenomena – a metaphor within which knowledge is to be understood” (Josselson, 2006, p. 8).

I also chose to present the narratives as five, distinct short stories, in the hopes of establishing an “Inquiry of discomfort” (Wolgemuth & Donohue, 2006, p. 1012) that seeks to further interrogate the multifaceted nature of inequity that is present in high school physical education. In Chapter 5, I will continue to establish the need for this inquiry along with a better understanding of the influence that localized definitions of masculinity had on participant experiences in physical education.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the re-storied narratives of five physical education class stakeholders (3 students, 1 classroom physical educator, and myself). While each narrative was constructed separate from the others, all narratives relied almost exclusively on the stakeholder's original words as they were used to describe their experiences with public school, physical education. In Chapter 5 I will discuss the processes and procedures by which these narratives were analyzed in concert with other collected data. I will then present several themes that arose as a result of these data analysis procedures along with supporting evidence for each theme. Finally, I will examine these themes to provide answers to the overarching research questions that inspired this research.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Interpretation: Making Meaning

Out of the Mess

Introduction

When referring to collected data, making meaning out of the mess can be difficult in any qualitative inquiry (Cook, 1998). Due to an influx of new methodologies, along with a recent resurgence of interest in reevaluating sociological factors associated with exercise, physical activity, and sport, the mess within this type of research can be particularly difficult to resolve (Cook, 1998; Krane, 2016). In this chapter, I have sought to make meaning out of a mountain of collected data. First, I will begin by discussing my analytic procedures as guided by previous research. Once the procedural elements of my data analysis have been discussed, I will then present an operational definition of localized masculinity based on the collected data as it existed at Springfield High. Following this, I will use the constructed narratives presented in Chapter 4, along with subsequent visual data, observation notes, and excerpts from my researcher journal to explore the three major themes that were revealed as a result of this research. Finally, this chapter will conclude by addressing the underlying research questions that provided the guiding framework for this study.

Data was analyzed through use of the constant comparative method of analyses (Fram 2013; Glaser, 1965) in search of preliminary codes. When possible, while constructing codes an en vivo coding scheme was used to preserve the voice of study participants. All preliminary codes were assigned an abbreviation that was used throughout the duration of the coding procedure. Some examples of preliminary codes included: Occupation of Space (OoS), Adolescent Embodiment (AE), Implicit Rules

(IR), Perception of Place (PoP), and Allusion to Socio-economic Status (AtSES). As the process continued, some codes were combined, while others were eliminated or adjusted as called for by the data. During this process of combining and collapsing preliminary codes, I leaned heavily on Wolcott's (1994) three-part model for transforming qualitative data to better understand the relationship (or lack there-of) between individual artifacts. As such, I feel like the outlined process of describing, analyzing, and interpreting helped

me to navigate the analysis process ultimately helping me to synthesize more meaningful connections as they arose throughout the research. Finally, once the data was collected and examined via Wolcott's (1994) model, I

reviewed the list of codes one last time to ensure alignment. I found it helpful to then take these codes and depict them via a graphic organizer to get a more complete picture of how individual codes related to one another. Finally, I organized the remaining items into relevant themes. These themes were categorized as a priori or emergent depending on their relation to the initial research questions and were later refined into the three, overarching themes presented in Figure 5.1 and explored in depth below.

Defining Springfield's Localized Masculinity

As I have previously mentioned in Chapter 2, definitions of masculinity are socially constructed and can vary widely depending on a myriad of contributing factors (see Aullette & Wittner, 2014 p. 30; Connell, 2005b; Kimmel, 2003; Laberge & Albert, 1999; Pascoe, 2003). These contributing factors include but are not limited to: sociocultural norms and cultural traditions (Kimmel 2003), oral history (Aullette & Wittner, 2014), demographic location (Kimmel, 2008), perceptions of embodiment (Azzarito, 2012), roles in the workplace (Laberge & Albert, 1999), and expectations surrounding emotion (hooks, 2004). After reviewing the data, there appeared to be a variety of well-represented guidelines that served to define localized masculinity as it existed in Springfield. Below I have presented a series of 9, researcher-created statements that outline what I understood to be the most significant, contributing factors to “Springfield Masculinity.” Along with each statement I have provided summarized data from my research that provides backing for each guideline.

According to the students and teachers at Springfield High School:

- 1) Masculine individuals must have large bodies and occupy space.** When asked who was the most masculine person in the class students almost universally identified the largest person, Andre. Neil demonstrated this sentiment during his personal interview:

R: ...who's the most masculine person in your phys ed. class?

Neil: Does it have to be a kid?

R: No.

Neil: Then probably... meh... actually.... Masculine?

R: Yup...

Neil: Then I'd probably say McDaniel because he's just... bigger and... I dunno... with height comes masculinity...

(Neil's Individual Interview, 5-9)

In response to my question "...who's the most masculine person in your physical education class?" Neil initially considers someone other than a student ("*does it have to be a kid?*"). In this instance, Neil is presumably considering his teacher, Mr. Lawson to be the most masculine individual in class considering he is the only individual who does not qualify as "... *a kid*". After a brief moment of silence, along with some reconsideration ("*Then probably... meh...*"), Neil identifies "(Andre) McDaniel". Neil explains, "(Andre's) *just... bigger and... I dunno... with height comes masculinity...*" Neil's physical education teacher, Mr. Lawson, is notably comparable in height to Andre although, Andre weighs more and is visibly wider. Because Andre is visibly larger than Mr. Lawson, Neil considers Andre to be the "most masculine" person in his physical education class even more-so than his adult, male physical education teacher.

2) Masculine individuals must participate in competitive, physical activity and

routinely perform at a high level in the activity of choice. During Mae's first interview both Katrina and Mae described competitive, athletic participation as a qualifier:

R: If you had to pick one person that was uber-masculine...

Katrina: I've got my answer...

R: Give it maybe it will help... What's your answer?

Katrina: Um... I'm torn between Isaac and Andre.

Mae: *Yeah. That's what I was thinking... yeah.*

R: Okay. So why them? Why are you torn between them?

Katrina: *Because they actually like it and they actually participate... and get all into it...*

Mae: *And they're always like ragging on each other if they're on different teams or if they're on the same team like they're still ragging on each other like "Oh c'mon you can do better than that!"*

(Mae's Individual Interview, Rd 1)

When initially asked to name an “uber-masculine” person in class, Mae is at a loss. However, Mae’s friend, Katrina, is also sitting at the table and has her answer right away (“... *I’m torn between Isaac and Andre*”). Mae responds by affirming her friend’s choice (“*Yeah.. that’s what I was thinking... yeah*”). Katrina then justifies her choices by stating “... *they actually like it*” and “... *they get all into it*”. The impersonal, “*they*” is used by Katrina to describe Andre and Isaac. Katrina’s also uses the term “*it*” to simultaneously reference both physical education and competitive, physical activity (the predominant, method of physical education instruction at SHS). While those unfamiliar with SHS physical education might miss this allusion, Mae picks-up on Katrina’s implied meaning and speaks further to Andre and Isaac’s interactions during competitive class activities (“*they’re always like ragging on each other if they’re on different teams or if they’re on the same team like they’re still ragging on each other*”). In this way, both girls recognize Isaac and Andre as decidedly masculine because of their enjoyment, effort, and confrontational banter during competitive class activities.

While Katrina does mention Isaac as being one of the most masculine individuals in her response, many of the other students disqualified Isaac due to the perception that

he was a “try hard.” The “try hard” label was often attributed to students in class that gave a concentrate effort in class but still were unable to achieve the highest levels of success during class activity. Also, while Isaac participated on several school sponsored, interscholastic sports teams, he was not a participant on many Varsity level teams. Because of his position as a Junior Varsity athlete, many of the students in the class (and occasionally the teachers) razzed Isaac about his status. This practice was exemplified in a later classroom observation:

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>Isaac’s Bad Day</p> <p>Isaac is the first to bat in the game. He hits a short ball just past the mound and says aloud, “It’s so weird to hit that ball.” It appears as though Isaac had to justify why he hit the ball so short to the class.</p> <p>Shortly after, Isaac is on base and gets tagged out between 1st and 2nd (really no fault of his own). Andre yells, “JV baseball” which seems like a dig to Isaac (maybe he plays on the JV team?) Isaac gets pissed and yells over his shoulder while he walks off “Andre shut up!” Neil yells this at Isaac again later in class to embarrass him while he bats. David laughs at the comment. Neil asks Kathryn, “Is there a JV softball team?” Kathryn pretends not to know (playing along with the razz).</p>	<p>Isaac justifying the “soft” hit? Does he feel like he has to? Have something to prove?</p> <p>This seems to hit a soft-spot on Isaac... he’s really upset with the comment. Even though he attempts to stand up for himself he gets squashed by the more athletic (popular) boys</p>

(Classroom Observation Notes, 5-3)

In the excerpt from my classroom observations above Isaac starts class by kicking the ball (during a class kickball game) just past the pitcher’s mound. Because Isaac is perceived as being athletically competent by his peers he immediately recognizes that scrutiny he is about to receive for the short kick and attempts to hedge any questionable

comments by blaming the ball aloud, for his poor kick (*"It's so weird to hit that ball."*). While his classmates appear to let his mis-kick slide, shortly after, while Isaac attempts to run from first to second base the razzing begins. After Andre tags Isaac out, he yells *"JV Baseball"* for others to hear. This is an apparent shot at Isaac who is a member on the *"JV"* (not the Varsity) baseball team. Although Isaac is an interscholastic athlete, his position on the JV as opposed to the Varsity baseball team makes him "less than" in comparison to other boys in the class who are on the Varsity team (i.e. Andre, Neil). This challenge visibly upsets Isaac who yells *"Shut up!"* over his shoulder. Isaac noticeably does not turn his shoulders or walk towards Andre when he says this. Isaac's continued path of travel away from Andre after the hurtful comment indicates that while he is obviously upset over Andre's harassment, he is not in the physical or social position to challenge Andre in front of the class.

Physically, Andre is much bigger than Isaac and could seriously injure him. Socially, Andre has more masculine allies in class (as demonstrated by my observation that Neil continues to harass Isaac in a similar fashion even after Andre has stopped by asking Kathryn (*"Is there a JV softball team?"*)). Neil's choice to ask a girl in the class whether or not there is a *"JV softball team"* along with her complicit response (*Kathryn pretends not to know...*) both supports the hegemonic masculinity that exists in this class while simultaneously amplifying the *"JV"* razz by insinuating that girls' athletic teams don't even acknowledge Junior Varsity players. This type of recognition pertaining to what level of athletic prowess individuals in the class had within their sports of interest served to include (or in Isaac's case, exclude) students from the "most masculine" conversation.

3) Masculine individuals are heterosexual. Additionally, masculine individuals must routinely make their heterosexuality known to others. Throughout the study many of the students identified to be masculine by their peers could be seen flirting with and following the more popular girls in the class. At times these boys would playfully greet or touch the girls while other times these interactions could be more aptly identified as sexual harassment. In these instances, the girls would visibly rebuke the boys' advances however the boys would continue their behaviors. Most often, the boys spoke about girls both inside and outside of the class amongst. This was captured in the GoPro® transcription excerpts below.

9:50-11:25: (*Walking up towards the outdoor track*) Johnnie announces to Isaac, "Yo McDaniel is back there flirting with the ladies!" Isaac looks back to see and says, "True... Ladies man McDaniel!" Isaac goes on to say, "Hopefully he hears this on camera!" Isaac then repeats louder, "Ladies-Man Andre McDaniel!"

(Isaac Carr GoPro® Transcription, 5-1)

In this example, Johnnie and Isaac, two of the subordinately masculine males in the class are highly aware of Mr. Masculinity's (i.e. Andre's) heterosexual behavior while walking to the track (*"Yo McDaniel is back there flirting with the ladies!"*). Isaac then feels it necessary to make Andre's flirting known to the larger group by publicly announcing *"True... Ladies man McDaniel!"* Isaac's motive for making this comment appears to be embarrassment as he mentions *"Hopefully (Andre) hears this on camera!"*

Isaac yells out a similar, embarrassment-laden phrase, “*Ladies-Man Andre McDaniel!*” but again, does not receive a laugh or any sort of encouragement from any of his peers. This lack of support for Isaac’s joke works to (a) reinforce the idea that Andre’s behavior is normalized in the class and, as such, is not embarrassing at all and (b) shows that subordinate males in this class were aware of the heterosexual actions of their hegemonically masculine counterparts.

In another instance, Isaac and Johnnie are again recording talking about girls:

2:31-7:40: (*While waiting to kick during a kickball game*) Isaac announces “Maggie.. you’re up/” She goes to the plate and kicks. She reaches base. Johnnie says, “Nice job Maggie!” Isaac then says to him, “Johnnie, stop flirting...” Johnnie replies, “I can flirt with whoever I want.” Isaac then says, “You have a girlfriend.” To which Johnnie replies, “No I don’t...” As the 2 boys go into the field they talk about how Johnnie’s girlfriend recently broke up with her because “(She) doesn’t trust him.”

(Isaac Carr GoPro® Transcription, 5-1)

In this excerpt Isaac accuses Johnnie of flirting (“*Johnnie, stop flirting...*” after Johnnie compliments Maggie’s kickball performance “*Nice job, Maggie!*” Johnnie’s comment is perceived as flirting first, because of the person it was directed at (i.e. Maggie). In this class, Maggie received by far the most male attention. It was extremely common for boys in the class to touch, flirt with, and harass Maggie. Even the classroom teachers would often make public comments about Maggie as “...*potential prom date*”

for several of the male students. Maggie often chose not to react to these comments and maintained her default, stoic facial expression and arms-crossed, body position. In addition to the target of the compliment, it was also extremely uncommon for boys in the class to compliment the performance of any girl. For Johnnie to publicly yell out “*Nice job Maggie!*” was out of the ordinary and as a result, was perceived as having ulterior motives by Isaac.

Instead of refuting Isaac’s claim that he was “*flirting*”, Johnnie then brazenly makes the comment “*I can flirt with whoever I want...*” This response, followed by the boys’ disagreement as to whether or not Johnnie has a girlfriend again serves to put Johnnie’s heterosexuality on display in an act of what Kimmel (2003) would label “homosociality.” Here Johnnie not only wants to reinforce to Isaac that he is an active, viable, heterosexual male, but he also amplifies this male bravado by alluding to the fact that his girlfriend in question recently broke up with him because she “... *can’t trust him.*” Johnnie’s mention of his (ex)girlfriend’s questions about his ability to be faithful (and potentially monogamous) only reinforce his identification as a viable, heterosexual male.

4) Masculine individuals embrace a culture of whiteness. Occasionally, various students were observed making comments and/or having conversations that negatively targeted people of color. While these instances were less common than the sexual harassment and razzing that regularly took place in the class, they existed none-the-less. The most accurate depiction of this practice can be

witnessed by accessing one of Andre's pre-activity experiences shooting a basketball as demonstrated in Figure 5.5 (p.175).

In the aforementioned video Andre, the de facto masculine heir to the class, repeatedly makes racist comments aloud to both his peers and the camera while taking shots at a center basketball hoop. As Andre takes each shot he yells out derivations of the phrase "*White Guy!*" which coincides with his horrible display of basketball skill. This is reinforced as Andre does not make any of his three shots and routinely is unable to hit the rim with the ball. Andre concludes the video clip by stating "*That's how 'White Guys' play basketball.*" Andre's repetitive use of this phrase insinuates the race-driven, athletic stereotype that in order for people to be successful at the sport of basketball, they must be Black. Because Andre says this phrase before he shoots he is essentially attempting to buffer his poor performance by using the excuse that he's White and as such, incapable of being good at basketball. These comments go unchecked by his peers and the teacher (who are all White) and do not appear to diminish his status as a masculine individual within the class. Since Andre is allowed to make these comments, unchecked, I have included the embrace of a culture of whiteness into the definition of Springfield Masculinity.

- 5) Masculine individuals self-identify as males.** This statement is arguably best represented by non-examples. Despite the fact that informal conversations and scheduled interviews with students often addressed the topics of gender and masculinity, no student (or teacher) ever referred to any of the girls as

“masculine” at any point throughout the study. Additionally, none of the girls in the class self-identified as masculine.

6) Masculine individuals are expected to defend their positionality when challenged through use of verbal and, if necessary, physical aggression.

Although there were no physical altercations in physical education class, throughout this study there appeared to be several near misses. Andre McDaniel was often the student who teetered on escalating verbal aggression into physical aggression. This most often occurred when Andre engaged in the occasional, heated exchange with other male students. During each of these exchanges, the boy(s) opposite Andre took steps to deescalate the situation before it reached fever pitch. I have outlined one such incident below as it occurred one afternoon on the outdoor track:

5:58-7:00: *(Students have just begun jogging around the outdoor track)* ...Soon after they start running Andre passes Johnnie (who is walking)... Andre says, “Yo... you can run with Jay (Jay is a student in the class with special needs... Andre’s attempting to insult Johnnie’s running ability).” As Andre continues to pass him Johnnie says something (inaudible) directed at Andre. Andre turns and stops running and replies, “What was that bitch?” Johnnie laughs and crouches... Andre walks back towards him as if to beat him up. Johnnie maneuvers and tries to dodge Andre who is now coming at him. Ben approaches from behind and

helps Andre restrain Johnnie. The 2 boys playfully beat on Johnnie over on the far side of the track, away from the teacher.

(Andre McDaniel GoPro® Transcription, 4-13)

In this example Andre begins by criticizing Johnnie (who is walking the track instead of running). Andre then asserts that because Johnnie is exhibiting low running ability (by not running at all), he should “... *go run with Jay* (a student with special needs in the class).” When Johnnie makes an inaudible comment that appears to challenge Andre, Andre stops and replies using a sex-based epithet (“*What was that bitch?*”) Andre’s use of the term “*bitch*” not only challenges Johnnie, but also detracts from his masculine capital as “*bitch*” is a decidedly derogatory term that is used within to denote a feminine way of being. Because he has been challenged by a “lesser” male in the class, Andre is forced to take social and potentially, physical action in defense of his position. Physically outmatched, Johnnie attempts to de-escalate the situation by *laughing and crouching*. While the act of crouching further demonstrates Johnnie’s unwillingness to engage Andre in a physical altercation, Andre is still required to make Johnnie pay for his comment. At the risk of losing some masculine capital, Andre accepts Johnnie’s act of subordination by hedging from an aggressive, defensive disposition a playful “I’ll show you” disposition. Recognizing the opportunity to garner favor with Andre and gain some masculine capital of his own, Ben then jumps into the fray and surprises Johnnie from behind, holding him while Andre proceeds to playfully beat on Johnnie using open-palm slaps and headlocks. Although the boys are in line of sight with the teacher during this exchange, Mr. Lawson allows the hazing to continue before the boys continue moving

around the track. Mr. Lawson's lack of action demonstrates an acceptance of this behavior and helps to empower Andre during the exchange.

7) Masculine individuals must be perceived by others as belonging to an elite

social class. In this study participants actively sought to distance themselves from being identified as having a low socioeconomic status. Isaac's disagreement with Mr. Cole regarding whether or not his house is located in north Springfield as well as Drew's identification of his new truck both exemplify this practice.

In the instance where Isaac refuses to accept Mr. Cole's recognition that he lives on the north-side of Springfield, Isaac is outwardly demonstrating his displeasure at being labeled as living amongst the lower social class in town by attempting to disobey Mr. Cole's placement electing to move to the south-side team instead. When Isaac is publicly called out for making the switch in front of the class he verbally challenges the teacher in order to remain on his desired team. Later, as represented in Figure 5.5, Drew makes certain to point out his "*fresh, new truck*" in the student parking lot. Drew's outward identification of his truck along with his addressing me via the GoPro® ("*Hey Mr. Heath*") demonstrates his pride in having a new truck. This comment is particularly relevant considering that the vast majority of cars in the student parking lot are used (and somewhat beat up). By directing the comment at me, a white male researcher with insider, Springfield Masculinity experience, Drew is assuming that I will be impressed with his truck by means of a common, unspoken masculine discourse.

- 8) Masculine individuals most often demonstrate emotions of apathy, aggression, or disappointment.** While students that were identified as being representative of masculinity within the class often responded to classroom events with one or more of these emotions. Responses that could be outwardly classified as sympathetic, passive, or excited were rarely observed. Furthermore, when masculine students did show these “soft” emotions, it was often in small company, out of the classroom spotlight.
- 9) Masculine individuals are expected to trivialize the skills and experiences of those perceived as being less than masculine as outlined by the above statements.** This was perhaps one of the most well represented statements outlining masculinity at Springfield High. With seemingly innumerable examples to choose from, students who identified as masculine often put down those in the class were perceived as being “less than.” These exchanges appeared to be more likely to happen when large groups of peers were present, in a way that the exchange could be on display for others. An example of one such incident occurs in the latter portion of Andre’s GoPro® video depicted in Figure 4.4 when Andre tells a blurred-out student named Simon to “*Fuck off*” because “*Nobody likes (him).*”

These 9 statements outlined what it meant to be masculine in Springfield High physical education. While students could still receive the masculine label without satisfying all 9 statements, the students who were described by their peers as the “most

masculine” tended to fit the vast majority of these statements. In many ways, students were assigned a specified amount of masculine credibility that was directly related on the number of statements that the student could readily check-off. Borrowing from the work of Bourdieu (1986), and later Hunter (2004), I would suggest that this form of masculine credibility could be re-named “masculine capital” (to see an in-depth explanation of masculine capital see Chapter 2).

As previously discussed, the process of thematic meaning-making was one that required me to thoughtfully zoom in and zoom out from my data. In the following section I will present three prevalent themes in support of this assertion that were identified as a result of this study. These themes will include: Space as a multifarious commodity, Physical education as a void, and Teacher as a cog. In order to preserve participant anonymity, when discussing each of the aforementioned themes, the actual names of students and teachers have been replaced by pseudonyms.

Theme 1: Space as a multifarious commodity

The most evident manifestation of privilege associated with students possessing large amounts of masculine capital in this physical education class came in the way of space. In the context of this theme, space has been defined as “... a complex construction and production of an environment – both real and imagined, influenced by socio-political processes, cultural norms, and institutional arrangements which provoke different ways of being, belonging, and inhabiting” (Phadke, 2007, p. 53). In the context of this research, I have used the term space to reference the intangible physical and social areas that students could access during physical education class. Since this class was bounded by variables such as the dimensions of the gymnasium/area of play, time, and number of

opportunities for interpersonal interaction, each expression of space could, on its own, be viewed as an exhaustible commodity (Beebe, Davis, & Gleadle, 2012). Following with this analogy, because there was only a finite amount of space up for grabs in this class, space was a highly valued resource that many students actively sought to attain.

Physical space.

While theoretically, students had the freedom to occupy as much space as they wanted, it quickly became apparent that those students who were described as being “the most masculine” were also awarded access to the largest amounts of physical space in the class. Additionally, on top of receiving a greater amount of physical space, these hyper-masculine students appeared to have more autonomy to use each space as they deemed appropriate. This spatial inequity manifested itself in several ways including: (a) observable difference in students’ body language (b) patterns of student movement before and during class. and (c) varied accessibility of “privileged places” within the physical education landscape.

Body language and the occupation of space.

As defined by Pease & Pease (2004), “Body language is an outward reflection of a person’s emotional condition” (p. 11). Throughout this study, participant body language often provided insight into the inner, emotional reactions of students and teachers. Generally speaking, students possessing less masculine capital in physical education appeared to be far more likely to demonstrate body language that depicted fear, uncertainty, discomfort, anxiety, and disengagement. Take for example the practice of folded arms. Folding one’s arms in front of the chest often indicates an “unconscious attempt to block out what we see as a threat or undesirable circumstances” (Pease &

Pease, 2004, p. 90). In similar fashion, crossed legs “show a closed, submissive, or defensive attitude...” (Pease & Pease, 2004, p. 214). This type of defensive body language was most commonly demonstrated by students with less masculine capital during the portion of class where teams were being chosen. The recorded observation below which occurred prior to a class kickball game serves as an example of this phenomenon:

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>Logistics/Class Management</p> <p>Mr. Lawson calls Neil and Isaac to the front of the class to serve as captains when choosing teams. As he usually does he announces, “I’m going to go get the ball... When I get back I want to see even teams.” The 2 boys begin picking students out of the crowd playground-style to be on their team. The girls are the last 5 picked. Kathryn and Samantha announce “We’re a package deal” indicating that they want to be on the same team... they succeed and get their wish.</p>	<p>When Mr. Lawson announced that he wants to see even teams it was interesting to see how students physically reacted. 4 of the 5 girls in the class (who all stood towards the back end of the group) crossed their arms and/or legs. Sam crossed his arms as well. Prior to this they were all standing around with their arms hanging by their sides or gesturing in conversation</p>

(Observation 5-3)

In the exchange documented above, Mr. Lawson starts class by choosing Neil and Isaac, two athletic males, to be captains for the class. In the role of captain, these two boys will be required to alternately select student to join their teams until there are no students left to choose. After notably selecting two athletic males, Mr. Lawson proceeds to leave the space so that he might “... *go get the balls*” for the upcoming game. Mr. Lawson’s exiting of the scene demonstrates a brief exchange of power from the adult, male educator to what he perceives to be like-minded, athletic students in the class. Rather than choose students that do not represent the masculine norms to which Mr.

Lawson (and many of the other students in class) prescribe, he uses this situation to select students that will almost certainly adhere to the masculine, physical education script.

Mr. Lawson appears to recognize this unspoken script on some level when he makes the parting comment, “*When I get back I want to see even teams*”. By making this, over-the shoulder comment Mr. Lawson first is insinuating that in previous instances when he has instituted this practice of choosing teams, students (presumably athletic male students) have selected teams that were competitively uneven. In other words, athletic males in the class used their masculine capital to figure out a way to place the biggest, most physically talented students on one team while leaving other students to serve as sacrificial lambs.

Paechter & Clark (2007) witnessed boys using similar practices on the primary school playground during unstructured recess as a means to exclude girls from participating in sport (i.e. soccer). As the situation plays out in this example, Neil, being the captain with more masculine capital, is more likely to retain the most physically dominating students in the class while Isaac is assigned students that are not perceived as having the same amount of masculine capital. Also, the fact that Mr. Lawson says “*When I get back I want to see even teams*” as a parting remark indicates the lack of conviction with which the comment is made. Because the comment is made as something of an after-thought, students are not likely to place much stock into his instruction resulting in the two, athletic males selecting teams as they see fit in Mr. Lawson’s stead.

As Mr. Lawson exits the scene the body language of non-gender conforming males and female students noticeably shifts. Prior to the announcement that teams will be selected in this format nearly all students in the class were observed maintaining open-

body positions (i.e. hands and arms by their sides or behind their backs) (Pease & Pease, 2004). Almost immediately after Mr. Lawson selects captains, the girls and Sam all adjust their body positions so that their arms are folded in front of their chests. This shift in stance demonstrates a move to a closed body position which indicates the subconscious perception of a social or physical threat (Pease & Pease, 2004). The action of crossing arms provides insight into the aversion these students have to the practice of having athletic, masculine boys select teams as the less masculine students are most likely to experience the social embarrassment that accompanies being picked last. Sam and Kathryn attempt to hedge this embarrassment by announcing that they must be picked together as “*a package deal*.” The concern associated with being last picked was validated shortly after the selection process began as Sam and the 5 girls were the final 6 students picked for teams. Despite this process, Sam and the 5 girls all took their places on their associated teams and participated in class activity. This observation supports Henley’s (1977) assertion that non-verbal communication and body language, in particular, can be viewed as a micropolitical means of revealing, justifying, and reinforcing inequality. The shift between open and closed body positioning based on surrounding phenomena clearly represents a sensitivity to hegemonically masculine practices as they unfolded in the gymnasium.

The practice of closed body positioning during the choosing of teams was also visible during Drew’s GoPro® video (see Figure 5.5). As the video begins, focus should be on Maggie and Sarah as they stand with their backs against the bleachers towards the video background. With arms and legs crossed, the two girls provide a near perfect example of closed body language during the process of choosing teams. In addition to

closed body positions, this video also depicts the importance of foreground and background positions in the class. Just as was the case in the observation described above, students with less masculine capital remain in the back of the scene, on the extreme periphery of the gymnasium (i.e. Maggie and Sarah remain against the bleachers while many of the most masculine students gravitate towards a more centralized location in the gym). In addition to Maggie and Sarah, Sam also can be observed demonstrating a somewhat uncertain occupation of space in the video by visibly lingering near a group of more athletic boys by the designated “home plate” area.

Home plate is a relatively important space in the game of kickball as it symbolizes the literal and symbolic start and finish of the game. One student begins play by kicking the ball from this position while all others watch. Conversely, this space is also important to the competitive aspect of the game as one must cross home plate (after rounding the other bases) to score points in the game. In recognition of home plate’s importance, many of the most masculine boys in the class congregate around the space once teams are all but chosen. Sam can be observe lingering in the background of home plate somewhat removed from the other boys in the class. Sam’s positioning indicates that while Sam desires to be a part of this masculine crowd, his identification as a non-gender conforming male with lesser amounts of masculine capital excludes him from fulling interacting with the group. As a result of Sam’s positionality, the group of boys visibly ignore his presence.

In both the observation notes and video, after the announcement that teams will be picked by the students, the most masculine students (Andre, Drew, Johnnie) demonstrate open body positions, with their limbs by their sides and casual, open stances. Open body

positions, such as the ones seen in this video portray comfort and confidence (Pease & Pease, 2004). This makes sense seeing as to how the large, masculine boys were always the first picked by their peers. As such, the selection of teams for the most masculine boys was not a nerve-wracking occurrence but rather an opportunity to receive an ego boost. On the contrary, the less masculine students (Sarah, Maggie, Samantha) demonstrate closed body positions shortly after Mr. Lawson makes the team announcement. This is most likely because the students viewed as least masculine (i.e. the girls) in the class were almost always picked last for teams. Recognizing this process of public, social shaming is about to occur, these students subconsciously close themselves off to the presented social threat by crossing their limbs and, in turn, occupying less physical space.

Patterns of student movement throughout space.

Also, as depicted in Figure 5.2, students with more masculine capital moved about the space much more freely than their peers before, during, and after class activities. While Spain (1992) and McDowell (1999) allude to the practice of masculine spatial domination by on a global/macro scale, similar practices were

observed on a micro, classroom level throughout this study. In other words, hyper-masculine students silently claimed ownership of the physical space in physical education. This practice would begin prior to class activities as the masculine boys would mill about the gymnasium socializing and razzing one another while many of the less

masculine students remained seated in the bleachers. During class activities, the domination of the physical education space by hyper-masculine boys was perhaps most visible. To illustrate this phenomenon, I have included a video of Andre's experience during a dodgeball game (see Figure 5.2). In this video, note the difference between the way Andre moves around the dodgeball court in comparison to the stationary positions occupied by Maggie, Katrina, and Mae in the far back/periphery of the court.

While Andre ranges all over the play space, the 3 visible girls remain in the far back of the court standing relatively stationary. Coupled with the observation that many of the hyper-masculine boys roamed freely around the court pre- and post-activity, it appeared as though boys with the most masculine capital were granted some type of silent ownership of the physical education space. Perhaps most intriguing was the realization that this ownership of the physical education space continued even after a hyper-masculine male vacated the space. For example, Andre runs in an unobscured pattern around the court during the class dodgeball game. Even when he invades a space that is currently occupied by another student, the other student moves to accommodate Andre's travel. These subtle avoidance maneuvers indicate a larger, more pervasive recognition of who is perceived by students as owning the physical education space and who is perceived as visiting.

While all students in the class are required by the teacher to participate for the sake of assessment, individual students are left to decide which intensity is most appropriate for them during class activities. In the video above, many of the hyper-masculine boys in class can be seen ducking, diving, dodging, and throwing in the context of the game. The most masculine students are heavily involved in the game are

arguably the easiest to see on the video. On the other hand, the less masculine students are more difficult to see and remain, for the most part, stationary on the periphery of the court. Mae alluded to this practice during her personal narrative:

I don't really care about playing against the guys or whatever but when we play dodgeball they all just go like super-intense and whip the ball at each other and I'm just like, "Please, don't hit me! I'm gonna die!"

No, but seriously, they throw it so hard at each other! *The good news is that they don't usually throw super-hard at the people who really don't try and play... only when we get in the way. Even when we're the last ones left, a lot of the guys will sort of slowly throw the ball at us so we can catch it and everyone can get back in... you know, so the game can keep going on.*

(Excerpt from Mae's Narrative)

Mae's playful comment of "*Please don't hit me! I'm gonna die!*" indicates a fear for her personal safety as one of the main reasons why she chooses to occupy a relatively small amount of space on the dodgeball court. In addition to this, Mae also suggests that "*(the guys) don't usually throw super-hard at the people who don't try and play.*" In this instance, Mae indicates that she is not actively trying to occupy more space on the dodgeball court, rather she is trying to remove herself from the game altogether. Following this logic, Mae's final comment stating that "*the guys*" only throw at her "*when we get in the way*" reveals Mae's perception of her right to space in the class. Even though Mae's stationary position (and relatively small embodiment) occupy a

minimal amount of physical space in the gymnasium, she perceives herself as “*getting in the way*” of the action (i.e. boys throwing at other boys) that is taking place during the dodgeball game.

While less masculine students visibly occupied less space in the gymnasium, this did not stop hyper-masculine boys from invading this space whenever they wanted. This practice most commonly occurred when hyper-masculine boys violated the physical space of girls and less masculine boys in the class. Andre referenced one such instance that occurred during a game of Scandinavian Handball below during our focus group interview:

Katrina: Yeah like (***speaking directly to Andre***) you incorporate everybody in the game like... if you're like sitting out...

Sarah: Yeah... even like the special needs kids too

Andre: That's why I think Maggie doesn't like me... Cuz I picked her up once I was like (***Super excited***) 'WE WONNN!!'

Katrina: Oh my God! She was like... Nooo... (***laughing***)

Andre: Yeah... she called me a maniac... She called me a 'Psycho' I was like... 'SAM!' (***everyone is laughing for real... including me***). I was like I don't want to make you feel like... just cuz you're a girl I like picked you up... I was like just picking you up because you were the closest one and you scored the winning thing...

(Focus Group Interview)

I took note of this particular exchange during my observation notes as well:

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>“Andre the Bully”</p> <p>As class ends, Maggie receives a pass and scores. Andre runs over to her yelling “We Won! We Won!” (this despite the fact that they would’ve won with or without her last-second goal). Andre picks up Maggie by the waist and spins her around. She’s red in the face and laughing (awkward?). I feel the awkwardness of the move and I think Andre might too... Once he puts her down Maggie says something negative that I didn’t catch from my position on the sideline... Andre runs over to Sam who is standing close by and picks him up and spins him in much the same way.</p>	<p>This gave me the willies as well. Andre blatantly wanted to touch Maggie and tries to do it in a non-invasive way (or what he perceives as non-invasive anyway). The picking her up adds to the awkwardness b/c she now is completely out of control of her own body. It’s also fascinating to see that Andre seems to feel this as well and “off-sets” any concerns she may have by going and doing the same thing to Sam (i.e. “I wouldn’t do this to a guy if it were coming from a place of flirting...see?!” - Andre)</p>

(Jeff’s Observation 4-25)

Despite Andre’s position as a masculine power broker in physical education class the interview transcription presented above begins with Katrina and Sarah complimenting Andre on his ability to include others in class (***Katrina:** Yeah like (speaking directly to Andre) you incorporate everybody in the game like... if you’re like sitting out... Sarah: Yeah... even like the special needs kids too*). By attributing the ability to include (or not include) other classmates “in the game” Katrina is outwardly identifying Andre as a powerful student in class – Andre, not individual students have the ability to decide who participates and who does not in physical education. As an addendum to Katrina’s comment, Sarah adds on that Andre “even (includes) the special needs kids too”. Sarah’s need to add the “special needs kids” also addresses both the scope of Andre’s inclusion (i.e. he is a great guy because he will even include the “special needs kids”) but also speaks to Sarah’s perception of the level of dis-ability associated with these students. Put another way, despite the fact that Andre routinely asserts his power as a way to limit the

experiences of these girls and others from fully participating in class, the girls are outwardly praising him for his *inclusive-minded* approach to oppression and domination.

Andre responds to these comments by citing an interaction he recently had with Maggie, another girl in the class (*That's why I think Maggie doesn't like me... Cuz I picked her up once I was like (Super excited) 'WE WONNN!!'*) Andre's assertion that "... think that's why Maggie doesn't like me..." reveals his accusatory perception that as a girl, Maggie obviously does not want to participate in class. Because Andre is inclusive-minded he presents his motives for lifting Maggie up as celebratory (i.e. Andre lifted Maggie up because "*WE WONNN!!*"). However, when viewed from a poststructuralist feminist perspective (Gavey, 1989; Weedon, 1997), when Andre lifts Maggie up by the waist and spins her without permission, Andre is using his masculinity as a justification for invading Maggie's space. The action of physically touching Maggie and lifting her off of the ground into a position where she is not in control is in and of itself an exercise in power and domination. Andre lifts Maggie because *he* wants to and engages in the action without Maggie's permission. Once she was lifted, Maggie's non-verbal cues demonstrated that she didn't like being picked-up, so much so that I was able to feel her discomfort from across the gymnasium. Andre verified my conclusion when he revealed that Maggie called him "*A Psycho*" and told him to "*put her down.*"

The awkwardness of this exchange was felt by many different observers as demonstrated by Katrina's immediate comment following Andre's initial allusion to the interaction ("*Oh my God! She was like... Nooo...*"). In an attempt to rectify the awkwardness and alleviate any suspicion of sexual harassment, Andre then "*picks up Sam*" in the same manner. Because Sam is a male, and Andre has repeatedly self-

identified as heterosexual to his peers, Andre picks up Sam in an attempt to off-set any suspicion that he lifted Maggie for flirtatious/sexually charged reasons (i.e. See I'm picking up a guy just like I picked up Maggie! Nothing weird here!) Andre's invasion of Maggie's space (and later Sam's) further demonstrates the idea that in physical education, students possessing the most masculine capital feel entitled to whatever space they desire, even if the space is already claimed by another student. By picking other targeted students such as Maggie, the girl that received the most male attention in class, and Sam, the male student who arguably possessed the least amount of masculine capital, Andre asserts his dominance over their bodies and in so doing, takes control of their personal space.

Dominating access to privileged places in the classroom.

The third and final way that the physical space in SHS physical education was dominated by the most masculine students was by monopolizing the access to "privileged places" within the gym. Often times this took the shape of masculine students performing in more visible places while limiting the access to these same places for less masculine students. The place where this was most evident in the gym was at the center basketball hoops on the basketball court. Before most classes began and after most classes ended, a handful of students would take to the center basketball hoops to shoot around. Although I witnessed minor variations in who was allowed to shoot at these hoops, more often than not many of the most masculine students dominated this space. Mae attempted to document this practice in her first photovoice photo (see Figure 5.3):

R: So, what's happening in the picture?

Mae: Um... some kids are playing basketball and I was attempting to take a picture and (**Katrina:** I got in the way...) she decided to put her hand in the picture.

Figure 5.3 Peace Guys!

R: It was funny because you put 2 fingers up... like why did you put 2 fingers up? Just throwing a peace sign?

Katrina Yeah I was like... (**She demonstrates how she throws up a peace sign with her**

hands).

Mae: Yeah.

R: Cool... alright... And why did you take a picture of the boys playing basketball? In the picture there's 2 guys it looks like..

Mae: I mean... it was something that was... I dunno... gym classy.

(Mae's Individual Interview)

Here Mae's expressed motivation was to take a picture of several "kids" in class playing on one of the center basketball hoops. As the photographer Mae is noticeably taking this picture from a distance, off to the side of the court. This distance, along with

Mae's off-the-court positioning demonstrates the lack of access Mae (and Katrina) regularly have to privileged spaces in the gym. When asked why she chose to take this picture Mae's response (*"I mean... it was something that was... I dunno... gym classy"*) alludes to Mae's understanding of herself as an "outsider" SHS physical education – Shooting baskets on the center basket is something that "gym-classy (boys)" do while Mae and Katrina are expected to watch from the sidelines. While Mae and Katrina are interacting off to the side of the court, two boys have used their privilege to access the highly visible, center basket to shoot around. Sam referenced a similar phenomenon as part of his narrative:

When class is done, I usually just like sit down and watch people shooting hoops and everything. I would shoot too but I stink at basketball. I couldn't hit a shot if my life depended on it. It's kind of ironic how there are the people who don't want to leave gym ever and 30 feet away there are the people who are sitting on the bleachers who have wanted to sit on the bleachers since class started.

(Sam's Narrative)

In describing this practice of shooting around, Sam references his position as an observer rather than a participant (*"...I usually just sit down and watch people shooting hoops..."*). When justifying his choice to sit, Sam states, *"I would shoot but I stink at basketball. I couldn't hit a shot if my life depended on it"*. Sam indicates that he is not averse to shooting the ball (*"I would shoot..."*) but his subsequent revelation that *"(he stinks) at basketball. I couldn't hit a shot if my life depended on it"* is situated in a

traditional, rigid definition of athletic success that is commonly presented in physical education class: if you miss a basketball shot, you are a basketball failure. Because of this fear of missing, Sam elects not to participate altogether.

Directly after making this comment Sam makes a cryptic comparison of students in the class *“It’s kind of ironic how there are the people who don’t want to leave gym ever and 30 feet away there are the people who are sitting on the bleachers who have wanted to sit on the bleachers since class started.”* Here Sam is using his words to describe what I would perceive to be the most masculine students in the class in comparison to himself. Sam’s allusion to people who *“don’t want to leave the gym”* is a reference to the hyper-masculine, athletic males in the class that dominate the privileged physical education spaces. Sam’s next comment, *“30 feet away there are people who are sitting in the bleachers who have wanted to sit on the bleachers since class started”* is a veiled reference to his own positionality in the class. Rather than identify himself as one of these *“people who are sitting in the bleachers”* Sam removes himself from the description by using the impersonal other. We know this because in his opening sentence, Sam describes what happens when class ends, *“I usually just like sit down and watch people shooting hoops...”* Sam’s recognition that students shoot at the central basket, coupled with the realization that he does not have the same access to the basket as those students because *“(I) couldn’t hit a shot if my life depended on it”* goes to show that not only girls in the class but less masculine boys as well were excluded from the gymnasium’s historically valued spaces.

Retrospectively, my notion of masculine students limiting access to privileged places in

the gym was one of the first things I noticed when observing SHS physical education.

Below I have an excerpt from my first week of observational notes:

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>Hegemonic Masculinity at its Finest</p> <p>As soon as class ended 4 boys take out a basketball and begin playing on the center hoop. Skylar watches them take turns shooting from close-by and drops her bag/cell phone. She goes onto the court and says “Hey I want a shot” Skylar claps her hands, heads to the top of the key, and holds her arms up as if to prep for a pass. The 4 boys completely ignore her for the better part of 4 minutes. Skylar just stands on the court while they shoot and ignore her. Eventually she gives up, walks back off the court, picks up her items, and leaves the gym texting on her phone. She doesn’t come back.</p> <p>As students with for the final dismissal bell I notice about 9 boys mill about on the basketball court. I notice that all of these boys were heavily active in the class (minus Andrew F., a boy with special needs... the only boy to play volleyball today). This group included Drew, Isaac, Jalen R., Jack Q., Tommy L., Johnnie... All of the other students including all of the girls sit on the periphery of the gym mainly in the folder bleachers waiting for the final bell to ring.</p>	<p>Wow... this was telling for sure. Maybe the most outward display of hegemonic masculinity in the gym I’ve seen yet</p> <p>Again, the athletic males seem to be owning their space... while others are relegated to the sidelines</p>

(Jeff’s Observation Notes 3-28)

Above I document the exact situation that occurred at the conclusion of many physical education classes. In this example, one of Mr. Walsh’s students, Skylar, attempts to engage several of the more masculine boys as they shoot around on the center basket. The boys use their privilege to completely ignore her for nearly 5 minutes! Eventually, Skylar gives up on wanting a turn and leaves the court.

While many students in the class appeared to value the historically privileged places in the gym (i.e. the center baskets, stations with premium equipment, visible places), other students elected to stay away from these places. Take for example Olivia. Olivia routinely assisted Lila, a girl with special needs, participate in physical education.

Often times, this led to Olivia taking a peripheral role in class, rarely competing in activities herself. To exemplify this point, in response to the question: What is the best part about physical education? Posed on the preliminary survey, Olivia wrote “*Lila.*” From a feminist perspective (Phadke, 2007), Olivia used her agency to reject traditional, hegemonically valued spaces in physical education in favor of what she attributed to be more valuable places en route to a more fulfilling physical education experience.

Social space.

As discussed above, physical space was recognized as a finite commodity that masculine students in the class sought to control. However, in addition to the physical space of the classroom, the social space located in and around physical education was also a site of unresolved tension amongst students. In the context of this theme, social space was defined as the limited opportunities in which students and teachers could publically share their voice in a way that contributed to the existing social landscape (McDowell, 1999). When considering adolescent development, these social spaces are particularly important as they often play a major part in adolescent identity construction (Nakkula & Toshalis, 2004). As such, the more social space that students possessed in class, the more freedom they had to identify themselves as movers and, in a larger context, as people.

Mirroring what was observed in the realm of physical space, students possessing the most masculine capital also appeared to be granted greater access to social space in SHS physical education by their teachers and peers. Additionally, the most masculine students were given more freedom to use this social space as they saw fit when compared to their less masculine peers. As this spatial disequilibrium continued to tilt towards

hyper-masculine students, classroom inequity became all the more apparent. These spatial inequities were most visible through: (a) hyper-awareness of one's social class as well as the social class of others (b) the autonomy to use this space to try-on masculine guise and (c) the expressed importance of interpersonal relationships.

Hyper-awareness of social class in physical education.

Although most research referring to social class in education is synonymous with the idea of socio-economic status, social class in the context of this research is used to describe a "class habitus, the internalized form of a class condition and of the conditionings it entails whereby members of a group develop distinct, yet fluid and generative practices that value and influence worldviews" (Hunt & Seiver, 2018, p.344). In other words, conceptions of social class reach much farther than economic status extending into the discourses and associated ways of being within varied social circles. Operating from this definition, physical education has been identified as a place where social class often impact student performance in physical activity settings (Evans & Davies, 2006). Students' social class was one frequently discussed topic that provided a glimpse into the distribution of social space in class. As described in Chapter 3, Springfield is an overwhelmingly white, middle class, suburban town situated between the affluent, rural township of Cyprus Creek and the financially-strapped, urban community of Brockway. As such, stakeholders in this physical education class routinely alluded to (a) their personal social class (b) the social class of their classmates and (c) stereotypical notions of social class associated with unknown others as a way to gain masculine capital and commandeer social space from other students in the class.

One example of how social class was used by students to gain masculine capital in SHS physical education was through dialogue about student-owned vehicles. Each day, when the class walked up to the outdoor track, participants were required to walk by the student parking lot. During this walk, students often spoke about driving, obtaining their driver's license, and cars. Take for example Drew. Drew would often brag to the other students about his new truck in class. This was captured during the latter portion of Drew's GoPro® video (Figure 5.5). In the video, Drew and Ben exit the gym proceed to run ahead of their classmates towards the outdoor track. While running, Drew points out his barely visible truck in the parking lot and directly address me through the GoPro® boasting, *"Hey Mr. Heath! See that fresh F-150 down there? See it... the red one? Fresh truck, right?!"*.

Drew's outward identification of his *"fresh"* new truck along with his repeated conversation about the vehicle recorded through class observation, demonstrate the pride he has for the vehicle. While many of the other cars in the parking lot are used and older, Drew's truck serves as a symbol of his elevated social class when compared to other students. Drew points out the truck to Ben and me as a way to demonstrate not only his elite social class, but also to validate the masculine capital he receives as a result of owning a brand-new truck with two masculine competitors. Although no spoken dialogue exists between myself, Ben, and Drew, Drew is relying upon an implicit discourse of Springfield masculinity along with my insider status (Yost & Chmielewski, 2013) as a former Springfield student-turned-teacher to get his message across to both Ben and me.

In other instances, the teachers would get involved in the social class conversation along with the students, sometimes even driving the conversation. Such practice was recorded in my observation notes below.

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>Team Division</p> <p>Rather than let students pick their own teams Mr. Cole divides teams by where they live in town (North or South side as divided by a central road). The north side of town is considered a less desirable place to live by residents while the south side is more rural and usually considered more desirable. Mr. Cole prefaces this by saying in a joking tone, “If you live out where the sun shines a little brighter and the grass is a little greener... aka the south side... come over here...” 4 students walk to that side... One student, Isaac, appears to be confused... he starts to the south side but Mr. Cole calls him out and says his house is on the north side. Isaac laughs and claims he “...doesn’t live in the hood” Mr. Cole doesn’t want to hear it and Isaac goes to the north team.</p> <p>Mr. Cole mentions that he lives in the North side and is happy that this class has “a lot of hood rats.” Many students laugh and seem to embrace the comment. During this whole time period, I notice similar body language characteristics to when Mr. Lawson was here, Mae, Maggie, and Katrina stand with arms crossed off to the side. Many of the more athletic students wander in space on the court.</p> <p>As the teams score in the game Mr. Cole continues to use the North-South analogies “2-0 North End Posse” “2-1 South-Siders score”</p> <p>Mr. Cole calls the north end kids “hood rats” repeatedly throughout class while they don’t outwardly object to the comment... many even smile.</p>	<p>This was the most fascinating part of class for me... The division of students by their address was interesting but it’s also interesting the play on “hood rat” and “ghetto” terminology in the class. It’s done in a pseudo-playful way particularly because Springfield is so White, middle class. Granted it abuts a relatively poor city (Brockway)... but there really are no “bad parts” or town. Because the North end is closer to Brockway it gets more of a bad rep... Students often discuss these differences in class... here Mr. Cole perpetuates it... but it’s safe for him because he and his family live in the north end... so he’s almost poking fun at himself. With the current, changing town demographic this may not be funny to all students...</p>

(Class Observation 5-11)

During the class outlined above, Mr. Cole, a Springfield resident himself, divided teams in class based on student’s addresses. Students who resided on the “north side” of town were placed on one team while students who resided on the “south side” of town

were placed on the opposing team. Here, Mr. Cole uses his power as the classroom teacher to make visible the Springfield social class divide. While Mr. Cole's high level of masculine capital and authoritative position as the class teacher makes him relatively immune to the social repercussions of being a north-sider himself, many of his students are not privy to the same social exemptions. As a safeguard against any tension that the potentially hurtful analogy will create, Mr. Cole uses his positionality as both a "north-sider" and the teacher as to infuse humor into the conversation by labeling himself and north-side students "*hood rats*."

While most students laugh at Mr. Cole's analogy, Isaac avoids being labeled a north-sider and slowly makes his way over to the south-side team. Isaac's recognition of the characteristics associated with north-side students (i.e. poor, dirty, unpolished) was something he did not identify with and as a result, motivated him to place himself on the south-side team. Furthermore, as a male with second-tier masculine capital, Isaac is fully exposed to the social consequences of being labeled as a north side student. In part, it is this realization that drives Isaac to try and join the south side team unnoticed.

While it is safe to say that the division of teams based on social class is not a viable way to manage teaming in physical education class, here Mr. Cole uses his agency to act as some sort of de facto Robin Hood for north-side students. As a north-side resident himself, Mr. Cole is playfully embracing the lower social class label that comes with Springfield's north side and as such, is providing space for north-side students to embrace their place within the class. However, as demonstrated by Isaac's confusion, not all students buy into the playful allegory. Isaac wishes to be identified as a south-sider and, after being called out publicly, openly argues his reasoning to the teacher. At this

time, Mr. Cole takes an authoritative stance as the classroom teacher and forces Isaac over to the north-side team effectively shedding the playful nature of the exchange and revealing a more sensitive issue.

As a former Springfield student, I surprisingly found myself echoing a similar awareness regarding social class when constructing my personal narrative Below I recall a memory of the “loaner sneaker box” from my K-12 experience:

In middle school Robbie ended up being one of those mangy types of kids that would always borrow sneakers out of the “loaner box” for PE. They had a similar “loaner box” at the high school but there was the perception that you might get gonorrhea if you went next to it. While a few kids did get sneakers from the “loaner box” in middle school I don’t remember anybody going near that box in high school, whether they needed to or not. I knew I didn’t want to associate with kids that used that box because they had that stigma of being poor and dirty. I mean, my family was probably lower middle class and I didn’t grow up with a ton of money, but even I brought in junky sneakers to school for gym.

(Excerpt taken from Jeff’s Narrative)

The excerpt above begins with me identifying one of my former classmates, Robby as “*one of those mangy types of kids*” due to his need for borrowing sneakers from the “loaner box” to participate in physical education. The association between being “mangy” and having to use the “loaner box” is expressed as an identifying characteristic for students that were perceived as belonging to a lower social class. After reading my

narrative I could not help but recall Drew identifying his new truck. While Drew looks to draw attention to his membership in an elite social class, as a student who lacked elite status, I worked to divert attention away from my family's social class. In the excerpt above I mention a box full of "loaner shoes" that students would use if they did not have sneakers for physical education. My narrative demonstrates a clear aversion to associating with anyone using shoes from that box or from ever having to use the box myself. This aversion does not stem from sanitary concerns (i.e. are the shoes clean?), but more-so from an awareness of how my peers might perceive students who either (a) borrow shoes from the loaner box or (b) associate with those wearing loaner shoes. By steering clear of the "loaner box" I was hoping to hide the fact that I myself was a member of a lower-middle class family. Additionally, when constructing my narrative, I was able to vividly recall an incident from middle school where I was not able to avoid this unwanted attention:

When I started at the middle school I didn't wear sneakers to school because my dad forbade my mom from buying them for my brother and I. Dad couldn't rationalize spending 100 bucks on a pair of basketball sneakers, so he really pushed hard for me to get a pair of combat boots. From his perspective, they would last a whole lot longer, and they were similar to what he would wear to work. My dad was a welder and often wore steel toe boots because of the cold and dropping things on his toe and what have you. I would go to school with those combat boots on and get verbally abused in the boys' locker room by the other guys for not wearing sneakers. Like 'Seriously? Look at those things?! Look at

Jeff! Hahaha! Hey Sarge!’ I would routinely go home, upset about it, and my dad would tell me, “If anyone makes fun of you kick em’ right in the balls with them! Then they won’t make fun of you anymore!” After going through a week or two of what felt like endless razzing and torment, my mom caved and bought me a pair of sneakers.

(Excerpt taken from Jeff’s Narrative)

In the excerpt above, my father begins by exercising his position as head of the household to direct my mother to not buy sneakers for my brother and I. As a welder, my dad’s work environment required him to wear heavy-duty boots, a practice that he insisted my brother and I copy. The suggestion of “kick(ing) (other students) right in the balls” for making fun of me demonstrates a localized understanding of how I might regain masculinity through use of physical violence. Further supporting this notion of winning back masculinity is the idea that my dad didn’t suggest “kicking in the face” or “punching in the head” but rather kicking in the male genitalia (i.e. “the balls”). The targeting of the reproductive organs is demonstrative of an association between the symbolic association between my emotions as a male and the male reproductive organs. In the end, my mother gives in or as I put it, “caves” to buy me a pair of sneakers so that I will no longer be made fun of in class.

Autonomy to use social space to try-on masculine guise.

In addition to personal allusions to social class (Hunt & Siever, 2018), students and teachers often playfully brought up the economic struggle of unknown “others.” These anecdotes were often used in a deflective manner, poking an odd sense of fun at

the reality of participants' lived experiences. Throughout the study, participants frequently called-upon stereotype-based, hegemonic forms of humor based on social representations of poverty to make light of daily physical education at Springfield High. This humor was enacted in almost every observed physical education class and was often directed at some unseen, impoverished other. These utterances ranged from nonsensical titles for games lacking necessary equipment (i.e. Scandenavian Handball, Ghattoball) to outright promotion of racial stereotypes surrounding sport and physical activity.

Andre demonstrates this practice in Figure 5.4. In the video, Andre repeatedly shouts the phrase “*White guy*” as he and other white, male classmates shoot a basketball. The phrase is used in a way that promotes the racial stereotype that people of color are inherently better basketball

players than “*White guys*.” As such, Andre is using the term as a social buffer to excuse himself (and potentially, other “*White guys*” in the class) for missing jump shots in front of their peers. The video also includes a segment where Andre misses a baseline shot badly (off the side of the backboard) and subsequently announces, “*That’s how white people play basketball...*”

While somewhat shocking to see, from my personal experience in the gym, comments such as this are all too common in white-washed, suburban communities such as Springfield. Because there are no people of color in this class, and very few people of color in the entire school, Andre playfully makes these comments aloud with little fear of repercussion. While these statements would stand a better chance of being challenged in a

more racially diverse community, here in Springfield, the unabashed, racist commentary is left unchallenged. As such, Andre is allowed to continue making oppressive, racially charged comments without being checked. This in turn, qualifies his language as appropriate within the Springfield physical education discourse. Although this exchange clearly represents the existence of deep-seated, racial stereotypes in the SHS physical education classroom, for the purposes of this research I will limit my discussion to inequity as it related to gender in the classroom.

As individual students continued to actively construct their identities within the social space of physical education, I witnessed several students, such as Andre, trying on what Katz (1999) has previously referred to as the “masculine guise.” This phenomenon took the

form of several members of the class experimenting with behaviors often considered to be synonymous with hegemonic masculinity. These actions included, but were not limited to, displays of sexism, racism, homophobia, sexual harassment, physical and verbal aggression, hazing, and social dominance over peers. These experiments often manifested in these students performing hegemonic acts towards inanimate objects (i.e. doors, equipment) and/or other members of the class. I purposefully refer to these acts as experiments in this discussion as these hegemonic displays were often immediately followed by sentiments of remorse and/or regret.

Take for example the following transcription excerpt documenting the experience of Drew as viewed through the lens of his assigned GoPro® video camera (see Figure 5.5).

After realizing that he is going to be required to wear the GoPro® and head harness outside, the recording begins with Drew saying, “*Oh shit, we’re going outside*” to his friend, Ben. After attempting to jump and touch the basketball net, Drew turns to back towards his classmates who are making their way outside. Drew then acknowledges Ben for a second time before greeting Maggie, “*Yo, what’s up Maggie?*” (note that this greeting was edited out of the video presented in Figure 5.6 to preserve Maggie’s identity). In response, Maggie makes an inaudible comment to which Drew replies, “*I know.*” Then, Drew turns and fireman kicks the gym’s exterior door open as he leads the class outside. Ben then comments from off-screen, “*(The door) was already open*” to which Drew shakily replies, “*I don’t care*”.

(Drew Frazier GoPro® Transcription 4-3)

Drew’s greeting of Maggie, followed directly after by his use of a fireman kick to open the exterior gym door appear to be directly related. By kicking the door as a means to getting outside, Drew is adhering to what has been previously been identified as a “culture of protection” (Kimmel, 2008, p. 63). From this perspective, Kimmel (2008) argues that within our modern patriarchal culture, young, white males are commonly encouraged to push social and regulatory boundaries to their limits under a type of

pseudo-biological, false narrative of boyhood. By kicking the door open rather than simply using his hands, Drew is fulfilling what he perceives to be his role as a masculine boy in class. However, when Drew is questioned by his peers directly after kicking the door, one can feel the uncertainty present in his response (i.e. *"I don't care"*). In many ways, it feels as if Drew immediately knew that kicking the door open was not appropriate and harmful to the class environment. In this brief moment of uncertainty, Drew questions his actions and perhaps considers less detrimental alternatives to kicking the door.

Several students took this aggression one step farther by asserting their dominance over peers. Andre was one of several students that repeatedly sought to exercise this dominance over his classmates throughout the study. Take for example, Andre's GoPro® experience documented in Figure 4.5 (see p. 124).

After objecting to the teacher's declaration that the class activity for the day will be dodgeball, Andre walks towards the far end of the gym to join his friends on their team. While walking, a classmate named Simon makes an inaudible comment to Andre to which he responds, *"Nah... Fuck you, Simon. You know what? You do you... You do you."* Andre then directs Simon to the other side of the court, away from his team yelling for others to hear, *"You know what, you go over there. No one likes you! You go over there!"* Simon begins to turn and walk towards the other side of the court (1:27). Immediately after this exchange, Andre says, *"Nah.. I'm only kidding. Minecraft later?"* The exchange ends with Simon

turning and shrugging his shoulders back towards Andre as if to say “*Maybe*” while Andre’s friends can be heard laughing in the background.

(Andre McDaniel GoPro® Transcription, 5-11)

In this scene Andre takes full advantage of an opportunity to belittle one of the less masculine boys in the class by publicly ridiculing him in front of several other male students through use of profanity and verbal aggression (“*Nah... Fuck you, Simon. You know what? You do you... You do you.*”). However, immediately after the outburst, Andre appears to regret his ostentatious response and follows-up with a friendly, peace offering suggesting that he and Simon meet up digitally to play a not-so-masculine videogame (“*Nah.. I’m only kidding. Minecraft later?*”). Simon then masks any outward displays of being hurt by Andre’s outburst and shrugs in a playful manner as if to leave the invite an open-ended possibility. This response to Andre’s verbal aggression is once again an example of how a culture of hegemonic masculinity existed in the SHS physical education classroom. Rather than challenge Andre or ignore his conciliatory follow up (“*... Minecraft later?*”), Simon shrugs at the possibility in a way that seemingly ignores Andre’s aggressive outburst.

Neil was identified by many students as another person that regularly hazed others in the class. Sam spoke to Neil’s disposition in his narrative:

Neil is always busting on people. He doesn’t say much to me but he really gets on Isaac and Johnnie. I feel like he’s just joking around most of the time, like he’s

trying to be funny. I don't think he realizes that it's not really funny... but I can see where he's trying.

(Excerpt from Sam's narrative)

Similar to Simon's acceptance of Andre's outburst presented above, Sam too appears to give Neil a pass for razzing on Isaac and Johnnie (*"I feel like he's just joking around most of the time..."*). Sam's qualifiers of *"...he's just joking..."* and *"...he's trying to be funny..."* further exemplify this point in the sense that he is downplaying Neil's hurtful comments. Additionally, Sam's recognition that *"(Neil) really doesn't say much to me..."* serves as somewhat of a pass for Neil to razz other students, as long as it doesn't directly affect Sam. As a result, in this example Sam clearly exemplifies what Connell (2005) would label as a subordinate masculinity as he is alright with Neil's hurtful comments towards others, as long as they are not directed at him.

When confronted about this hazing during a later interview, Neil affirms his role in the practice while resisting the thought that his comments have weighted social consequences:

R: So for instance, when you make fun of Isaac you guys go hard...right? And when you make fun of Drew, you bust his butt differently... Like do you feel that at all? Or are you...

Neil: *Honestly not really... I kinda just like... (Laughing) One of the major things I tell Drew is that he is like ugly or something and it like pisses him off like a little bit to get... where it's enjoyable but it doesn't piss him off too much cuz they still know I'm joking. But... I never really... felt that... I honestly feel like I'm kinda like.... People are like a lot worse to Isaac and I kinda take it into consideration. But like... even then, it's like... I know I probably shouldn't do it... but it's just*

like... it's just like for a laugh and like they usually laugh at it too. They call me ugly and I'm like (Half laughing) 'Yeah... I already know that' so... you know what I mean? So it's... it kinda like goes both ways.

R: So now why do other people make fun of Isaac too? I don't know Isaac well enough to know why he gets his butt busted.

Neil: *I think he's just one of those kids that's just like he's just like an easy.... Not that he's an easy target but he doesn't like... when people say something bad about him he won't do anything and I just think that people kinda think that. But like... after I say something to him I'm like... 'Wow... I kinda feel like a dick' after like 'Sorry Isaac' (half laughing). You know what I mean? But I think that's why... some people like take it too far and I'm kinda just like chill...*

(Neil's Individual Interview)

In the excerpt above, Neil outwardly acknowledges the fact that he hazes Isaac and Drew in class (“*One of the major things I tell Drew is that he is like ugly or something and it like pisses him off like a little bit to get... where it's enjoyable but it doesn't piss him off too much...*”) (“*People are like a lot worse to Isaac and I kinda take it into consideration. But like... even then, it's like...*”) By stating “*I know I probably shouldn't do it... but it's just like... it's just like for a laugh and like they usually laugh at it too*”, Neil briefly demonstrates an understanding of his hurtful behavior. However, Neil quickly goes on to justify his actions stating that his razzing is all done in fun and he too, is often the recipient of similar harassment in class (“*They call me ugly and I'm like (Half laughing) 'Yeah... I already know that' so... you know what I mean? So it's... it kinda like goes both ways.. .*”). Presumably Neil's allusion to “*they*” speaks to Isaac, Johnnie, and other male peers in his class. In his final statement of the excerpt, Neil expresses some remorse for his comments but immediately distances himself away from being

labeled as the bully as. “...*some people like take it too far and I’m kinda just like chill...*”

Neil’s remorse demonstrates an understanding of “a better way.” However, while Neil recognizes that razzing other students in the class might not be the most appropriate practice, he intermittently continues the practice throughout the class as it gives him an opportunity to gain masculine capital.

The importance of interpersonal relationships.

The third and final way that students used the social space in and around physical education was for the development of interpersonal relationships. As indicated by their answers on the preliminary survey, many students denied that different social groups existed in their physical education class, it quickly became apparent through observation that individual students in the class did in fact gravitate towards specific peers while steering clear of others. Additionally, in the observed class, I noted that these groups were often implicitly framed by students as existing along biological sex and gender-based boundaries. From here, students in the class appeared to use this informal, social space for different purposes.

Take for example the way that Andre utilized his extensive amount of social space. Because Andre possessed a large amount of masculine capital, he often used his informal, interpersonal space to remind other boys in the class of his position as top dog. While many students voluntarily followed Andre around in class, Andre routinely ignored many of these followers choosing to engage with that students he perceived as having less masculine capital than himself instead. During these interactions, Andre was often observed berating and razzing these students in class. This was best depicted by Andre’s hot and cold relationship with Isaac. As one of the physically smaller, less

athletically talented boys in the class Andre made sure to remind Isaac of his position early and often. Despite Isaac's hustle and consistent effort to actively contribute to class, Andre continually reminded Isaac of his inferiority. This situation came to a head during one kickball class as outlined in my notes below:

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>Isaac's Bad Day Isaac is the first to bat in the game. He hits a weak ball just past the mound and says aloud, "It's so weird to hit that ball." It appears as though Isaac had to justify why he hit the ball so short to the class.</p> <p>Shortly after, Isaac is on base and gets tagged out between 1st and 2nd (really no fault of his own). Andre yells, "JV baseball" which seems like a dig to Isaac (maybe he plays on the JV team?) Isaac gets pissed and yells over his shoulder while he walks off "Andre shut up!" Neil yells this at Isaac again later in class to embarrass him while he bats. David laughs at the comment. Neil asks Kathryn, "Is there a JV softball team?" Kathryn pretends not to know (playing along with the razz).</p>	<p>Isaac justifying the "soft" hit? Does he feel like he has to? Have something to prove?</p> <p>This seems to hit a soft-spot on Isaac... he's really upset with the comment. Even though he attempts to stand up for himself he gets squashed by the more athletic (popular) boys</p>

(Classroom Observation Notes, 5-3)

In this excerpt, Andre continuously uses the "JV (sport)" label to remind Isaac of his inferior position in the class. Whereas Isaac often took these insults offered up by Andre and the other students in class without outwardly demonstrating his emotions, in this instance he was visibly upset. With emotions boiling over and on the verge of tears, Isaac drummed up the courage to yell back at Andre over his shoulder. Rather than alleviate the situation, Isaac's response drew the interest of Neil who often had a habit of instigating hot situations in class. Neil continues to shout out the "JV" label and

eventually brings Kathryn into the razz by way of a sarcastic conversation that apparently questions if “JV” teams even exist in “girl sports.” Neil’s comment takes the razz to another level by insinuating that “*girls’ sports*” in and of themselves are less prestigious than boys’ sports. Following this thread, girls’ JV sports would be considered the lowliest of all competitive sports teams in the school. Between Andre, and later Neil’s comments, Isaac is left stripped of the masculine capital he would have been granted as an athlete in the school. Andre and Neil do this in an attempt to make visible the chasm that exists between Isaac’s level of masculine capital and their own.

In contrast to Andre and Neil, several other students sought to use the informal, social spaces of class to strengthen personal bonds and further develop friendships. Perhaps the best representation of this was demonstrated by the relationship between Mae and Katrina (see Figure 4.2). Nearly inseparable, Mae and Katrina frequently were observed supporting, defending, and validating one another in class. Often times, when one of the girls was verbally and/or physically challenged by the masculine boys in the class, the other would come to the rescue by outwardly challenging the presented threat. In this way, the two girls fought back against the social oppression promoted by hyper-masculine boys. Mae alluded to the high level of importance she placed on friendship in physical education during her individual interview:

R: If you were to describe your ideal gym class what would it be like?

Mae: *Um... I dunno... I guess all of my friends would be in my class so we could actually just like... maybe I actually would try harder in gym kind like... you know I’d actually wanna be... I’d actually want to do something because I mean like I have my friends with me so I mean it’s like it’s more fun...*

(Mae’s Individual Interview, Rd 1)

Here Mae asserts that her ideal gym class would be one that included “*all of (her) friends*”. Although Mae does not provide a concrete reason for having her friends in class, she clearly states that having more of her friends in class would motivate her to “*try harder in gym*”. Because Mae has few friends (exceptions being Katrina and to some extent, Olivia) in her class right now, she does not think of physical education as a “*fun*” class, decreasing her willingness to participate in a way that is aligned with the class’s structured expectations. An increased number of allies in class could help Mae in overcoming strict, masculine norms that limit her level of agency in the gymnasium.

Finally, Oliva McKinney chose to use her space in a similar way by assisting and engaging Lila, one of the students with special needs in the class. Throughout my time at the school, Olivia was observed assisting Lila in the daily stretching routines, outdoor laps, and class activities. In many instances, Olivia appeared to be providing more support to Lila than her assigned, school paraprofessional. While Olivia was not interviewed during the course of this study, her passion for helping Lila was evident as demonstrated on her response on the preliminary survey. When asked the question “What is the best part of physical education?” Olivia responded with one word, “*Lila.*”

Conclusion.

Throughout the study it was evident that the classroom identities of all stakeholders were heavily influenced by the thoughts, words, and deeds of people in the physical education class. In this way, localized understandings of how different people were expected to “do” physical education largely influenced individual participants’ classroom choices and related outcomes. By taking a closer look at the various ways that

students chose to access and use the limited amount of physical and social space in the classroom, I was able to gain a better insight into perceptions of who was awarded masculine capital in SHS and why. In addition to who received masculine capital and why they received it, I was also able to explore the apparent benefits that this form of capital provided to its recipients. Just as this theme describes the concept of space as multifarious, the reasons why individual students received masculine capital in physical education were also demonstrated to be diverse. There was however, one qualifier that appeared to supersede all others: participating in competitive, interscholastic athletics. And with that, I move to present the second theme revealed as a result of this study: Physical education as a void.

Theme 2: Physical education as a void

The second, major theme uncovered as a result of this research was that within SHS, physical education appeared to serve as something of an academic void. While on paper SHS pays mind to physical education as a respected discipline (all students are required to pass 4 years of physical education prior to graduation), both students and teachers expressed the feeling that the taught physical education curriculum was not nearly as important as some of its academic counterparts (Azzarito & Ennis, 2003; Couturier, Chepko, & Coughlin, 2005). In other words, the content presented in English, math, science, and history classes was viewed by participants as being far more important than the content delivered in physical education. In SHS, this lack of importance associated with physical education began at the top of the administrative structure and trickled down to classroom teachers and students.

To this point, I was informed by teachers and students that building administrators routinely stopped into English, math, and science classrooms to observe instruction but rarely entered the gymnasium. From my personal observations, I can support this assertion as over the course of three months, I only observed administrators in the gymnasium once or twice. Even Mr. Cole, the classroom physical educator-turned-interim administrator, only came into the gymnasium sporadically while he was in the main office. Moreover, during one of our informal conversations, Mr. Cole told me that the purpose of his visits was not to observe instruction but rather, to pull aside students with unresolved, behavioral situations so that they could receive their disciplinary consequences in a class that did not detract from “*core academic time.*”

Devaluing physical education as an academic subject.

When compared to other classes, the lack of administrative presence in and around the gym sent the clear message to students and faculty that physical education was on a lower-level than classes such as biology, algebra, and American literature. Students clearly received this message that physical education was less valued than other subjects as demonstrated by Sam’s excerpt below:

***Sam:** ... most of the time we just try and have fun with (PE class)... other times like when we have to like... like when it’s like the... umm.... Tests and everything... well not the tests but the Pacer Test and stuff like that... we have to be all serious and stuff.*

R: Yup. How do you like those?

***Sam:** Meh... they’re okay... Not the best gym class but...*

R: Yeah, When you say that do you mean like boring or... like what do you mean?

Sam: It's just like... it's kinda like gym class like... I don't really think of it as an actual class like, 'Oh I gotta do this...' It's just like gym class is a time to unwind and stuff.... And like look... move around and stuff...

(Sam's Interview Rd 1)

Sam begins by suggesting that physical education is a class where “fun” is paramount. Sam hints at the fact that other students feel this way as well by using a non-descript “we” to support his feelings. Sam then contrasts this “*fun*” time with the times when students have to take “*tests and everything*” in physical education. However, when making this statement, Sam stops himself before finishing the thought clarifying that his use of the term “*tests*” is meant to describe the “*Pacer Test and stuff like that*”. The Pacer Test is a commonly administered, field-based fitness test that requires students to run back and forth across a given area as cued by an audio cadence. Designed to roughly measure muscular and respiratory endurance, the Pacer Test does not include a pen and paper component. Rather, students continue to run back and forth until either (a) they are too tired to continue or (b) are unable to make it across the prescribed area before the next “ding” occurs on the audio track. Sam’s hesitation to include the “*Pacer Test*” under the broader category of “*...tests and everything*” demonstrates a cognitive divide that he places between the types of assessment administered in his physical education class and the types of assessment he is accustomed to receiving in his other academic classes. Because the Pacer Test is not administered in a quiet, seated environment with a paper and pencil, Sam reveals that although he acknowledges the Pacer Test as an assessment, it is not as important as say an English or math test.

Later in the excerpt, Sam explicitly identifies this divide stating, “*I don’t really think of (PE) as a real class.*” Sam and I spoke further about his feelings towards physical education during his second interview:

R: So in our previous interview you mentioned something along the lines of ‘You don’t think PE... or you don’t feel like PE I should say is a real class...’

Sam: *Yeah...*

R: So I’m curious... what do you mean? Why is that?

Sam: *It’s more like um... you don’t get tested or anything like that... you don’t have to memorize things... it’s just like ‘Hey you’re going to play a nice little game... you’re going to like stretch out your muscles...’*

R: Okay... So that assessment portion you would say is what separates maybe English from PE? Or at least one of the things...

Sam: *Yeah... Yeah*

(Sam’s Interview, Rd 2)

In this follow-up conversation Sam again references the lack of testing in physical education as a reason why he does not define physical education as a “*real class.*” Sam concludes his explanation by describing physical education in the first-person voice of the teacher identifying physical education as a place where students can “... *play a nice little game...*” and “*stretch out your muscles.*” The inclusion of the qualifier “*little*” to describe the “*games*” played in physical education further works to demonstrate the lack of rigor Sam associates with the class. Sam also mentions a relatively, passive activity (i.e. “*stretch(ing) out your muscles*”) to further support his point that physical education is a low-key, low-stakes, academic environment when compared to other classes he takes in school.

The lack of importance associated with the physical education curriculum by Sam and other students led to the characterization of physical education as having no real academic purpose. Following this assertion, I would argue that the void left by physical education's lack of institutional purpose created a vacuum that allowed the classroom physical educators to deliver any curriculum they chose. When speaking to the psychomotor (i.e. physical) and cognitive (i.e. intellectual) domains, the classroom physical educators very clearly expressed their motivations for delivering a team-sport centric curriculum as continuing a physical education tradition that they were "*familiar with.*" The affective (i.e. attitudinal) domain on the other hand was somewhat neglected as the taught content failed to address the socio-emotional components of sport and physical activity such as sportspersonship, humility, compassion, and mutual respect.

The resulting socio-emotional void that existed in SHS physical education was quickly filled by one of the most powerful social movements in the school: SHS masculinity. Once SHS masculinity was subconsciously adopted as the *modus operandi* for student-student, teacher-teacher, and student-teacher interactions, the physical education class actively represented a space where students and teachers could experiment with institutionalized, masculine norms that reinforced the local flavor of hegemonic masculinity without fear of institutional consequence. Rather than spending a large amount of energy learning how to shoot a basketball, or understanding how to defeat a zone defense, students and teachers in the SHS physical education class spent much of their time tacitly practicing/receiving various forms of patriarchal domination and oppression in a variety of social and physical contexts. In this way, sport based instruction and athletic excellence in physical education was used as a *façade* to reward

many of the most loyal followers of SHS masculinity: male interscholastic student-athletes.

The places of SHS physical education.

Much to the same extent that physical education was devalued in the school, the athletic programs in SHS were conversely lauded. One way that this was represented within the school was through maintenance of physical education places. The places where physical education occurred could be considered some of the most well-maintained spaces on the SHS campus. Generally speaking, during my tenure as a student, and later as a teacher at Springfield High, I can remember that the building's infrastructure was a common point of discontent for students, teachers, and administrators. Peeling paint, nonfunctional windows, damaged bathroom stalls, leaky ceiling lights, and dirty hallways defined the aesthetic norm rather than the exception.

Upon my reentering the building, it quickly became apparent that many of these problems had only gotten worse since I had left the school. I found this to be true for nearly all spaces in and around the building with two exceptions: the gymnasium and the outdoor, athletic facilities. In fact, as reported by Mr. Cole, excluding the school's updated lockers (installed in the late 1990s), the only major structural upgrades that had been made to the Springfield High campus in the last 20 years were all to the athletic facilities.

To make visible this point, I present Figure 5.6. On the day of my first observation at Springfield High, I took a picture of the gymnasium. In

the picture, natural light reflects off of the newly refinished gymnasium floor from an array of overhead skylights. The dark, maroon lines on the floor outline the central basketball court. Blue, green, and yellow lines also can be seen on the floor providing boundaries for two more peripheral basketball courts and one central, volleyball court that, according to Mr. Miles, is reserved for interscholastic competition only. The school colors are represented by the gym's color scheme with a white wall backdrop being offset by closed rows of updated, remotely controlled bleachers. Maroon banners circle the gymnasium in several rows identifying all of the athletic state and division championship Springfield has won since the early 1960s. In a nod to the school mascot, evenly spaced, maroon tiger paws fill in the space between the bleachers and championship banners. The space is quite clean and visibly, well maintained.

Many students elected to take photos of the spaces and objects that were frequently utilized during their physical education experience. However, because time constraints did not allow me to conduct a follow-up, photo elicitation interview with all

students many of the pictures were left open to interpretation. Following this acknowledgement, the observations used to describe the following two pictures are my own. Taken by

Sarah, Figure 5.7 depicts the outdoor, varsity athletic scoreboard. I also can see the school's newly finished tennis courts in the background. Maggie also took a landscape picture in Figure 5.8. Here, Maggie shares a field-level view of the school's varsity football field as seen from the outdoor track. To the right, just out of frame, lies the school's expansive baseball field the outfield of which is shared by an additional, multipurpose field that is used for junior varsity and freshman football, soccer, lacrosse, and field hockey games.

With so much attention being paid to the places where physical education class is held, one might concur that physical education was a highly valued

Figure 5.8 The Football Field

subject area within the larger, curricular framework. However, this was not the case. As witnessed throughout the study, on the long list of academic priorities, physical education appeared to be at or near the bottom. This mindset follows with previous research that suggests physical education is paid less attention than other academic subjects due to factors such as its absence from high-stakes testing and widespread misconceptions about the academic value of physical education in public schools (Ennis, 2000; Flintoff & Scranton, 2001).

The paradoxical relationship between the perceived importance of physical education as an academic subject and the superior level of upkeep and attention paid to physical education facilities proved to be somewhat enigmatic. After all, if physical education was considered to be an academic shell at SHS, why would the school dump a large amount of time, money, and human resources into maintaining the physical

education space? I would argue that this too could be traced back to the exalted status that SHS masculinity held in the school. Taking the viewpoint of white, male administrators, let us describe physical education as a place where students participated in co-educational, team sport. Under this description I would not expect to see an abundance of resources dedicated to physical education as sport-instruction appeared to be devalued within the school. However, if we were to describe SHS physical education as the place where late-stage adolescents learn the nuances of localized, hegemonic masculinity, a much clearer picture is presented supporting the maintenance of the physical education space. Under this definition, the autonomy granted to physical education can be used to indoctrinate late-stage adolescents (namely, athletic white males) into a highly structured system of hegemonic masculinity that has been shown to best serve the interests of privileged, white males (Connell, 2005; hooks, 2015).

The importance of rules and regulations.

When speaking to structure, adherence to athletic rules and regulations served as central components that kept the masculine machine running in SHS physical education. For example, while participating in activities that were hyper-competitive and heavily regulated students possessing the highest amount of masculine capital thrived. Conversely, students considered to have low amounts of masculine capital (i.e. Sam, Mae, Katrina, Isaac) appeared to favor autonomous, less competitive activities in class. This was most readily seen through the experiences of Andre, the student who possessed arguably the most masculine capital in the class.

First depicted in Mae's experience (Figure 4.1), Andre can be heard directing the kicking order as the video begins. Andre prods Mae, Sarah, and Katrina by stating,

“C’m on ladies, you’re up!” Sarah responds, *“Wait am I up next?”* To which Andre replies, *“If you guys want to play your up.”* Not only does Andre assume control of the kicking order during this exchange, but by including the statement, *“If you guys want to play...”* he reveals his assumption that the girls may not want to kick in which case, the boys on the team would kick in their stead.

In addition to assigning himself the overseer of the kicking order, Andre also made certain that the score for each activity played in class was known by all. During games, Andre would routinely serve as the score keeper and often loudly announced the score during games for others to hear. Besides announcing the score, Andre often matter-of-factly reiterated the parameters of competitive games. In other words, Andre was the self-proclaimed student-leader of all competitive games. This was particularly visible in situations such as the one depicted in Figure 5.9 where students made strategic errors within the game and/or varied from the game’s rules.

As depicted in the video, Andre’s hyper-awareness of the rules demonstrates a vested interest in the strict guidelines of SHS physical education. As the student in class with the most masculine capital, team sport-centric physical education provided a model of physical education where Andre could excel. By strictly adhering to the rules and making sure that his classmates did as well, Andre helps to perpetuate a system of domination and oppression in physical education that places the males with the most masculine capital on top. If the class was structured in a way that allowed for more student autonomy, Andre’s masculine

stranglehold could potentially be challenged by less masculine students ultimately resulting in Andre's loss – a concession that he is not willing to make. As the rules of class were situated, Andre's strict enforcement of the rules helped to maintain the status quo while allowing him the stage to demonstrate his physical prowess and mastery of the rules of Springfield Masculinity to other students in his class. Finally, in line with findings presented by Hunter (2004), Andre's willingness to serve as the de facto rule enforcer placed him in a favorable position with the classroom teacher, who was also an athletic, white male. Andre's apparent ability to satisfy each of these benchmarks (with relative ease) helps him to maintain his position as one of, if not the most powerful student(s) in the class.

The exalted positions of the student-athlete and coach.

Another characteristic that validated Andre's position as the masculine leader of this physical education class was his membership on several of the school's varsity interscholastic athletic teams. As demonstrated in the example below, Andre liked to frequently remind his physical education peers of his position on the SHS's lacrosse and football teams.

***Andre:** (speaking to Johnnie) Dude, I had to laugh... Yesterday, at (lacrosse) practice, Coach was like, "We need to expose the middle" and as Dan called it he was like "EXPOSE" (high-pitch, feminine voice)! Everyone was like, "What the hell?"*

(Andre GoPro® video 4-27)

Here Andre uses his position as a Varsity lacrosse player to engage in conversation with Johnnie. Andre begins the conversation with the phrase “*Yesterday, at practice...*” which is relevant considering that Johnnie does not participate on any of the school’s athletic teams. This subtle assumption indicates that Andre feels as though Johnnie should already know which sport he plays, helping to facilitate the conversation. After his introduction Andre continues to talk about some of the strategic nuances of competitive lacrosse (“*Coach was like, ‘We need to expose the middle’...*”). As Johnnie is less than familiar with lacrosse, Andre’s continued dive into more complex lacrosse-specific topics presumably limits the amount that Johnnie can reciprocally give back to the conversation. In many ways, Andre’s comments once again serve to position him as a knowledgeable, powerful figure in the class while limiting the agency of his classmates (i.e. if physical education is a place where sport is performed, Andre knows more sport-related information than Johnnie). Finally, Andre ends his (one-sided) conversation by poking fun at one of his classmates for yelling out the coach’s command in a high pitched, presumably feminine voice – a practice that sacrifices his teammates masculine capital.

While Andre’s position as an athlete provided him with additional benefits, he was not the only SHS athlete that was granted extra privileges in physical education. For example, in an earlier GoPro® video, I recorded an exchange between Isaac and Nate Stanford, a star basketball player at the school:

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>Isaac (4-5-17)</p> <p>Isaac's video felt very much like a "tag along" kind of situation. During his video Nate Machado, a talented basketball player in the school, is allowed by the teacher to shoot hoops on the far side of the gym. While many other students mill about and wait for class to begin Isaac goes over and rebounds for Nate (but does not take any shots himself). Isaac engages Nate in conversation about sports and sport politics within the school but Nate plays it cool and is never really enthused with anything Isaac has to say. Despite being ignored, Isaac continues to try and engage Nate in conversation. Johnnie also stays close to Isaac for the majority of class and these 2 feel as though they are somewhat on the same "social level" in class. Eventually Nate dribbles over to another basket, Isaac and Johnnie do not follow him.</p>	<p>I wonder why Nate is allowed to shoot baskets, unsupervised on the far side of the court while Mr. Lawrence continuously seems to be chasing other students out of the gym.</p>

(SHS Lost GoPro® Footage Observation Notes)

In the above observation, Isaac and Johnnie meander over and engage Nate, a well-known basketball player in the school, in conversation. Throughout the duration of their conversation, Isaac rebounds the basketball for Nate while Nate pays little mind to Isaac and Johnnie. Nate's positionality as a revered athlete (and the associated masculine capital he is afforded as a result) is put on display as Isaac willingly serves as Nate's glorified rebounder.

Despite the fact that Mr. Lawson was frequently observed kicking students out of the physical education class who were not on his roster, Nate apparently had been granted access to shoot baskets in the gym because of his status as a recognized athlete in the school. Mr. Lawson spoke to his criteria for kicking students out of class during out interview:

R: I noticed that there always seemed to be a lot of students trying to come into the gym... I noticed that you let some of the kids in but not all of them... So how do you mentally choose who gets let into the gym and who doesn't?

Mr. Lawson: *A lot of... it's funny... like most of the time kids will try and like... there will be students that don't show up to their own PE class... and even when they're there they don't do anything... but then they try and go into someone else's class and play.*

R: Why is that?

Mr. Lawson: *I dunno if it's their.... If they've got more friends in another class, or I dunno but... Students I would let in I would go off of you know past experiences like if they participate in their own class and they're not in trouble all of the time, then I'd let them come in... If it was somebody that I had previously threw out then... like Tyler Welchman... I kicked that kid out like 10 times this year... and he would never show up to his own class but when he would try to show up to another class I would be like "Get out... what are you doin? Come to your own class first and then I'll let you hang out in somebody else's."*

R: Yeah, I get that.

Mr. Lawson: *Some of the kids though, like that I know from sports... or that I know are good kids then I let in. Like Dom Mendez. Dom's dad teaches history here and I know he's like a good kid that wouldn't be skipping class. I don't have a problem if he wants to come in and shoot around or (weight)lift or whatever.*

(Mr. Lawson's Interview)

Mr. Lawson begins his response by expressing some disbelief that certain students would want to get into different physical education classes seeing as to how they don't try very hard to meet his measure of success in their own class (*"there will be students that don't show up to their own PE class... and even when they're there they don't do anything...."*). Following this comment, Mr. Lawson begins to justify the previously described importance of interpersonal relationships between students in physical

education (*"I dunno if it's their.... If they've got more friends in another class, or I dunno..."*). Both of these comments hint at students' rejection of the traditional, physical education script.

Next, Mr. Lawson provided his general criteria for allowing students to stay in the gym citing participation and behavior as two of the major components that guide his decision (*"Students I would let in I would go off of you know past experiences like if they participate in their own class and they're not in trouble all of the time, then I'd let them come in...."*). After referring to a specific student that he routinely kicks out, Mr. Lawson revisits the idea of who is allowed in the gym this time speaking to criteria such as athletic participation and relation to other teachers in the building. As such, Mr. Lawson appears to base who he allows in physical education class on (a) the student's willingness to participate in their own class and (b) their athletic standing within the school.

As described above, student-athletes were often granted privileges in and around physical education that their peers were not. The two most evident privileges that student-athletes received included increased opportunities to be in the gym and preferential treatment by physical education teachers. To this end, student-athletes were more likely to view the gymnasium as a non-threatening place where they could share in a sense of belonging with other student-athletes.

This sentiment also carried over to the school's paradoxical perceptions of physical education teachers and SHS athletic coaches. The physical education teachers were often generally described by the students in playful, less than academic ways. Although the students interviewed described liking the physical education teachers, they often followed up by discussing the physical education teachers' willingness to forgo

assessment, compromise expectations around class effort, and dedication to maintaining a class environment that promoted leisure over rigor. After having numerous informal conversations with teachers in the school, it was clear that teachers shared many of these same observations.

However, while students described the school's physical educators with playful, appreciative undertones, many of the teachers in the school spoke of the physical educators in a way that questioned their standing as academic professionals. These conversations often arose as I encountered various teachers around the building before and after observations. During these informal conversations with various teachers, questions about accountability, confusion regarding taught content, and personal discontent directed at the physical educators themselves were all cited as reasons why physical education was less important than other subjects offered at the school.

Despite their less than flattering opinions towards many of the physical educators, when many of the same teachers and students spoke about them in the role of "Athletic Coach" for the school, unprofessional academic undertones gave way to nods of respect and, at times, admiration. This shift was most evident when teachers and students would speak about the long-time athletic director/physical educator for the school, Mr. Miles. Andre spoke about Mr. Miles as his football coach in the excerpt below:

***Andre:** that's why me and Coach Mendez kinda get off on the wrong foot... cuz he yells at us.*

***Sarah** That's kinda like why I don't ... I feel like if I were to join practice and I had like a coach like that like I would come home from practice every day like that crying. And I feel like I would be miserable...I feel like I would dread going to that...*

Andre: Well you're the kinda Coach Miles person where he would like sit down and talk to you and like he'll show you... But I'm the kind like I need you in my face screaming so then I get pissed off and I like wanna go out there and I wanna do something...

(Focus Group Interview)

Andre notably uses the title “Coach” to address both Mr. Mendez and Mr. Miles. At Springfield, the title of “Coach” appeared to socially elevate teachers in the building earning them a level of respect that was not commonly granted to general subject matter teachers, physical education or otherwise. Building administrators adhered to the practice of addressing these individuals as “Coach” within the school as well. In passing, the school principal often referred to athletic coaches by the title “Coach” rather than their first name or “Mr./Ms.” Even the Assistant Principal, Mr. Mackey, who had coached several sports prior to his move into administration in the late 1990s, was still addressed by many teachers in the building and visiting community members as “Coach.” This practice of Coach over teacher was in direct opposition to the relationships described by Drewe (2012) in which classroom physical educators were presented as the power brokers while Coaches were relegated to more of a supportive role amongst the public school landscape. Although different, these alternative findings lend support to the notion that although my observations were readily observed in one high school, school culture and associated masculine privilege can vary widely from place to place.

Conclusion.

In sum, the delivery and associated importance of physical education at SHS appeared to serve as a false narrative. Although physical education was included as part of the regular, academic schedule, it was apparent that the gymnasium and athletic fields

were viewed by the SHS community as interscholastic sporting venues first and physical education classrooms second. Moreover, students who also participated in athletics were granted greater access to these spaces by the classroom teacher based largely on their sporting reputations. In addition to the venues themselves, the curricular framework of physical education at SHS frequently called upon students to demonstrate the same skills, strategies, and mentalities that are routinely promoted within competitive, team sport. As such, students who were familiar with various sporting discourses were able to easily navigate the class while their less experienced peers were left to figure it out for themselves. As a result, SHS physical education acted in many ways like a remedial sports class that was expressed as representative of an academic void in the building instead of a place where students could discover their personal identities as movers.

Theme 3: Teacher as a cog

The third, and final, theme uncovered as a result of this inquiry was Teacher as a cog. In the context of this theme, a cog can be defined as an integral, central component within a larger system that is required for the system to function. With this definition in mind, it was revealed that the SHS physical education teachers played a crucial role in the conception, perpetuation, and preservation of localized, hegemonic, masculine norms in and around the physical education classroom. The practice of physical education teachers upholding traditional beliefs about the place for masculinity and femininity in sport and physical activity has been previously reported at various academic levels (see Fagrell, Larson, & Redelius, 2012; Hickey, 2008; Hill, Hannon, & Knowles, 2008). However, while the physical education teachers fulfilled this role within the school, it appeared as though the observed teachers did not consciously recognize their positions as “Patriarchal

Protectors.” In fact, often times, the physical educators outwardly expressed the desire to create a more inclusive, accessible class despite the fact that many of their actions served to foster a culture of power and oppression.

Teacher in the position of protector.

Throughout this study, I routinely witnessed Mr. Lawson participate in physical education activities with the students during my observations. In many instances, shortly after he began playing, Mr. Lawson would gravitate towards the students with special needs and assist them inside of the game. Mr. Lawson described his reasons for doing this in his interview below:

R: So, I noticed that you jump into a lot of games and participate with the students. How do you decide when you are going to jump in and when you jump into the game what’s your purpose?

Mr. Lawson: *Um... pretty much when it got a little dull or when the students were starting to drag their feet a little bit... I’d jump in and try and spark things up again. Or if another team was getting dominated on... or if the score was out of hand I would try and jump in and help out the team that was getting scored on. I think for the most part like after I did that it picked up a little bit...*

R: What about the kids with special needs? Sometimes you would jump in and help like Jayson or someone like that...

Mr. Lawson: *Yeah because he likes to participate... he loves trying new things and he loves being active... but it’s.... me personally I wanted to make sure that he was... he didn’t get hurt really... getting in the way of anyone else that was really trying to participate... but I think that he really responded well to that.*

(Mr. Lawson Interview, 7-9)

In this excerpt Mr. Lawson reveals that his primary motivation for playing alongside his students in physical education is to ensure that the games remained lively and competitive (*“Um... pretty much when it got a little dull or when the students were starting to drag their feet a little bit... I’d jump in and try and spark things up again.”*). Mr. Lawson also expressed that he would join games in class, *“...if another team was getting dominated on...”*. Mr. Lawson’s choice of words (i.e. *“dominated on...”*) is important as he fleetingly acknowledges the culture of domination that is fueled by the hyper-competitive, team-sporting environment that he is perpetuating. However, when presented with my observation that he “sometimes” helped the students with special needs, Mr. Lawson divulged that he felt a personal responsibility to make sure that the students with special needs *“didn’t get hurt”* in class. Directly after making this comment, Mr. Lawson returned to promoting lively and competitive action suggesting that he also felt like he had to make sure the students with special needs *“did not get in the way of anyone else that was really trying to participate in the class.”* Mr. Lawson’s final comment appears to reveal a deficit mentality where students with special needs were apt to *“get in the way”* and interfered with people who were *“really trying”* in physical education. Mr. Lawson’s self-described interactions with students with special needs hint at his internal push and pull between a culture of inclusion and a culture of competition in his physical education class. The more Mr. Lawson appeared to favor a culture of competition over inclusion, the more well-defined his role became as a cog helping to further hegemonically masculine interests in the classroom.

On the surface, Mr. Lawson appeared to consciously assume the role of “Protector of Student(s).” Worried that Jayson was going to get hurt in the midst of the game, he

took it upon himself to personally ensure that Jayson did not get injured. However, after taking into account Mr. Lawson's final statement, along with the de facto tone with which it was stated, it appeared as though Mr. Lawson placed the continuity of the game along with maintaining the space of students without disabilities at something of a higher level. Throughout this study Mr. Lawson continuously moved back and forth along this continuum focusing on providing equal access to all students at one moment and reflexively limiting students' access in the next. Level of awareness aside, one thing was for sure, students were watching Mr. Lawson's every move, cognitively recognizing these situations as they continued to occur.

Teacher in the position of social role model.

As witnessed throughout the study, the classroom physical educators were held in high esteem by many of the students. Because of their role model status, students often appeared to mimic the teachers' behaviors, comments, attitudes, and opinions. This observation was particularly true amongst the white males in the class and occurred on both large and small scales. Take for example how Neil would copy Mr. Cole's habit of singing songs from the 1980s and early 1990s:

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>Mr. Cole is Back Throughout the class Mr. Cole loudly sings 80s songs while on the pitcher's mound (he has a horrible voice). He sings many of the songs across a variety of genres in high pitched voices including Guns' and Roses and 'Died in my arms tonight'. Often when he's singing, Neil models him and sings loudly to the same songs in a similar fashion. None of the students in the class ridicule Neil for doing this.</p>	<p>Interesting choice of songs, vocal tone... Mr. Cole is exempt from being made fun of for the high-pitched voice? Similar to the Pascoe comment about who is allowed to "bend the gender rules" and who is not</p>

(Observation 5-15)

The situation described in my observation notes above were quite common, particularly when Mr. Cole was in the role of classroom teacher. As Mr. Cole would circulate the class, he would sing loudly in a high pitched, mockingly feminine voice to “cult classic” types of songs. As documented above, male students would often loudly sing along with him for anyone that was unlucky enough to be in earshot. While other hyper-masculine students occasionally razzed the vocalists for “*singing the wrong words*” or “*having a voice like a dying animal*” the vast majority of students in class did not say anything about the ritual and allowed it to persist.

Students who did not possess large amounts of masculine capital were not observed singing or mimicking the teacher in this way. To me, this off-pitch singing echoed Pascoe’s (2003) suggestion that individuals who possess large amounts of masculine capital appear to be given more latitude to “bend the gender rules” in school. If less masculine students were to sing in a high-pitched, stereotypically feminine voice they almost certainly would have either (a) been told to stop or (b) been identified as a target for future hazing and harassment. However, because the people singing were viewed as possessing large amounts of masculinity, the singing continued.

The classroom teachers also appeared to relate best to the athletic males in the class. Often times, this sense of relatability led to the teacher making concessions, assumptions, and even excuses for students they most closely identified with. This follows with previous research that has demonstrated similar relatability between teachers and students with like characteristics (Chen & Curtner-Smith, 2013; Culp & Chepyator-Thompson, 2011). Other students in the class did not receive this same latitude. Take for

example Mr. Lawson's description of his second photo (Figure 5.10) during our interview:

R: Okay. And then what does their body language, facial expressions, those types of things suggest for someone that's not familiar with those students?

Mr. Lawson:

Um.. they look engaged. Just

um... you know the expressions on their face... they look happy to be there...

They're not looking off somewhere else... or there's no phones out in their hands... They look engaged.

R: Why did you take a picture of this?

Mr. Lawson: *I took a picture of this because I knew that they were probably 3 of maybe the handful of students that actually ran the lap... or you know... put in a good amount of effort.*

R: Okay... and then we'll skip over to what's the picture tell us about your life?

Mr. Lawson: *Um.. that this picture... there are certain people that make it a little bit easier to teach phys. ed. This is a group... those guys specifically didn't have to be told twice so I would be like 'Okay guys... lets go we have to go run...' or at least 'Pick up the pace a little bit...' You know they were very self-motivated... they did it on their own.*

(Mr. Lawson's Interview, 7/9)

In the excerpt presented above, Mr. Lawson described the three boys standing against the fence as “*engaged*” and “*happy to be there.*” From my perspective, I would argue that the boys appear to be relaxing, if not posing for the camera. As they relax against the fence it is difficult to tell whether or not they are engaged. Additionally, while Drew (right-most student) smiles, Neil (to the left), and Johnnie (seated in the middle) are not smiling. Mr. Lawson’s assertion that the students appear to be happy potentially indicates an assumption that because these students are “*good athletes*” they must be “*happy*” in physical education class. Furthermore, Mr. Lawson rates the picture a “4” out of 5 when considering how representative this picture is of physical education. Although there is no movement and/or physical activity happening in the picture Mr. Lawson still assigns a high score to the picture perhaps because he identifies the picture as being synonymous with his physical education experience. Finally, Mr. Lawson’s take-away that “*certain people make phys. ed. a little bit easier to teach*” serves as a direct nod to the shared, white, hegemonic male discourse that exists between these boys and Mr. Lawson. These students are easier to teach because they literally and figuratively speak the same discourse.

I personally can identify with Mr. Lawson’s position as presented in the example above. As a former secondary health and physical education teacher, I can retrospectively say that I often viewed the more athletic, white males in my classes in a different way than I viewed other students. Below I have included an excerpt from my researcher journal in which I document an instance where this practice appeared to be particularly well represented:

... It was towards the end of the school year and I had set up self-guided, fitness stations around the gymnasium. Stations included body weight exercises, suspension training, dumbbell exercises, and exercise ball routines. After slotting approximately 6 stations, I was at a loss for what to do with the seventh. With a few minutes left to go before class I decided to place plastic aerobics boxes randomly across a matted area. My thought was that students would jump from box to box to traverse the mats without touching the ground. While delivering the pre-class instructions I made it explicitly clear that students were not to stack the blocks for the purpose of high-jumping over them as this would greatly increase the risk of injury at the station. Shortly after class began one of the more athletic groups of students stacked the boxes and began jumping over them. I made my way over to the station and rather than reprimand the students for breaking the rules, I encouraged them to stack the boxes higher and increase the challenge. Several rotations later, a group of less athletic students mimicked the previous group and proceeded to stack and jump over the boxes in a similar fashion. I again made my way over to the group this time, in a fit of anger. I reminded the students that I had previously mentioned that this was against the rules and consequence the group by making them sit in the bleachers and observe for the remainder of the class...

(Excerpt from Jeff's Researcher Journal 5-12)

Similar to Mr. Lawrence, I clearly identified more closely with the first group of “more athletic” students in my class. While the practice of stacking and jumping the blocks was a safety concern in both groups, I only reprimanded the second group of students, the group I perceived as being less likely to be able to achieve the task. As such I unwittingly contributed to the hegemonic discourse of physical education by granting the first group (comprised of athletic, white males) a pass to break the station’s safety rules and prohibiting other groups in the class from doing the same. Although I did not recognize this apparent double standard in the moment, when I critically reflect upon my experience as a classroom physical educator, I can say with certainty that I subconsciously bought into stereotypical myths regarding gender, sport, and physical activity. As such, I can say with confidence that I subconsciously instructed my classes in a way that promoted an oppressive, patriarchal social order.

Teacher in the position of masculinity overseer.

In the excerpts above, Mr. Lawson and I again represent cogs in the hegemonic masculinity machine by promoting a power structure within physical education that rewards those with masculine capital and punishes those without. However, as demonstrated through Mr. Lawson’s classroom exchanges, white, male physical educators do not see eye to eye with their most masculine students in class all of the time. In fact, Mr. Lawson frequently was observed butting heads with the boys in the class who possessed the largest amounts of masculine capital. Take for example the interaction observed during a kickball game documented in my notes below:

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>Mr. Lawson's Role</p> <p>During the kickball game there were several instances where Neil would catch the ball (after it was kicked) in the field. When he would catch it he would run to the nearest basketball basket and try to dunk the squishy, Gatorball®. He never was close... but once he did touch the net. Upon seeing this Mr. Lawson yelled out sarcastically, "Everyone! Just in case you didn't notice Neil can touch the net!" Mr. Lawson announces this 2 more times with an extremely sarcastic (<i>and somewhat unnecessary tone</i>) to the class. Neil isn't smiling and looks right at Mr. Lawson in a somewhat challenging way... he doesn't appreciate being poked at here.</p>	<p>Mr. Lawson does this several times this class and has done it in past observations. It's also like a challenge to the athletic boys in class so they still know "who's the Top Dog." It feels very animalistic to me and for a split second, each time it happens I catch nasty looks and vibes from the targeted student back to Mr. L.</p>

(Observation 5-1)

Micro-aggressive, power struggles such as the one described above happened at least once per class period between the classroom teacher and masculine, male students. The physical educators often instigated these exchanges by making unprovoked, challenge-oriented comments in front of large, student audiences. Many times, after the comment was made, other students in the class who may have otherwise let the behaviors slide, joined in on the joke. Even if students did not join in on the razzing, the teachers' jokes often stuck with their targets and turned into recurring points of contention for weeks to come. Neil recalled one such joke directed at Drew below when referencing one of his photovoice pictures (Figure 5.11):

R: Okay... so you took a picture from below... It's Drew... right? *(Neil: Yup)*
He's kinda standing there half-smiling and then Kathryn's got her tongue out...
making like a tongue out face to you. First off, we're going to go through the
protocol again and see where it takes us. Okay... so describe the picture? I just

Figure 5.11 Drew's Pythons

described my
idea of it...
what's your
idea of it?
*Neil: Umm...
I think....
Kathryn... I
dunno... in
this moment I
probably
made fun of
Drew wearing
his shirts that
are too tight
for him. Cuz...*

*he has like the little (he flexes his biceps playfully)... he like turns on the
camera... and then Kathryn is just kinda like a funny nonchalant girl and she
doesn't like... you know what I mean?*

(Neil's Interview, 5-9)

Sam referenced the same tight shirt joke in his narrative when speaking to Drew
as one of the more masculine students in class:

*Drew isn't as loud as Neil or as big as Andre but he really gets into the games
too. He's always fixing his hair and stuff and Mr. Cole is always making fun of*

him for wearing “Sh-medium” t-shirts. I think Drew tries hard to impress the girls.

(Sam’s Narrative)

In Sam’s description, Drew is prescribed as having less masculine capital than Neil because he is “... *not as loud.*” Sam also mentioned that Drew is “... *not as big as Andre*” which also detracts from his masculine capital. Sam continues to knock Drew by observing that he “*is always fixing his hair and stuff...*”, a practice that could be perceived as feminine. Sam also references Mr. Cole’s position as the enforcer of masculinity in the class as he “*is always making fun of (Drew) for wearing ‘Sh-medium’ t-shirts.*” A “*Sh-medium*” shirt is locally described as being a cross between a small and a medium. This term is generally used in a context that is made to poke fun at the wearer in the sense that the shirt is too small for them to fit in. Neil also joined in on the joke by labeling his picture “*Drew’s Pythons*” as pythons is a slang term for a person’s large biceps. In other words, Neil is suggesting that Drew wears “*Sh-medium*: t-shirts to accentuate his arm muscles. Sam shares what he believes to be Drew’s motive for this practice in his final statement, “*I think Drew tries hard to impress the girls.*”

In the examples above, both Neil and Drew reference Drew’s “*Sh-medium*” t-shirts. The form of localized masculinity that existed in SHS would have required Drew to either verbally or physically stand-up for himself if it were not for the fact that the originator of this joke was actually one of the classroom teachers, Mr. Cole. As such, by making these comments, Mr. Cole could be seen as challenging Drew’s masculinity in front of the entire class. Trapped by his positionality as a student, Drew is somewhat

forced to accept the hazing, which in turn, diminishes his masculine capital ultimately establishing Mr. Cole, the adult, white, male physical educator as the most masculine being in the class.

Teacher in the position of torchbearer.

Drew's example displays one way that the actions of the classroom teacher perpetuated a hegemonic culture in the observed class. Sometimes power-plays made by the teacher to maintain the status quo were much more inculcated into the physical education class itself. Take for example the notion of structure in physical education. During his interview, Mr. Lawson frequently mentioned the structure and routine as important components of his classroom instruction. Mr. Lawson first mentioned these concepts during the photoelicitation portion of his interview as he described his first, selected picture (see Figure 5.12):

R: And then why did you take a picture of this?

Mr. Lawson: *I took a picture of this because I felt that it captured...you know... it showed the equipment even though I don't think we used that for that class... that activity... but it was set up. It showed the diversity of the class and... Jay (he's reluctant to name any students particularly the students with special needs)... the special education student. And then the um... the other students don't look like they changed or were interested in participating but we're still there...*

R: Okay, and what's the picture tell us about your life?

Mr. Lawson: *As an educator? Easy going... You know I expect something from the students but you know I don't... I'm not asking for the world. I would say that... easy going... structured.*

R: And why would you say that you go about it that way?

Mr. Lawson: *Um.. it's a routine that's been used in that building or been used... it's a routine that I'm familiar with, the students are familiar with, they're comfortable with it.*

(Mr. Lawson Interview, 7-9)

When asked “What’s this picture tell us about your life?” Mr. Lawson responds by describing his approach to instruction as “*easy going... structured.*” He then continues by insinuating that his way of doing physical education corresponds with “*a routine that’s been used in the building,*” one that both he and the students are familiar and “*comfortable*” with. I would argue that the “*structure*” and “*routine*” to which Mr. Lawson responds is the exact hegemonic framework that ensures the white, athletic males remain in positions of privilege in physical education while all others are relegated to the bottom of the pack. In other words, by continuing to teach physical education “*the way that it’s always been done,*” Mr. Lawson is serving as the ceremonial torchbearer of SHS masculinity.

At first glance, one might suggest that the classroom teachers were to blame for the perpetuation of localized, hegemonic norms in the physical education classroom. However, upon closer inspection I would argue that the classroom teachers predominantly served as working cogs through which larger, societal messages regarding power, oppression, and masculinity were delivered to students. Rather than the originators of oppressive practices within the classroom, teachers were simply delivering unquestioned content in a manner that was similar to how they had experienced physical education as a student in the past. In this way, Mr. Lawson’s comment about SHS physical education as “*the way that it’s always been done*” recounts his personal

experience as a former SHS student suggesting that the hegemonic messages that existed in his modern-day classroom have most likely existed in SHS for a long time. As a former SHS student, I would validate this claim considering how my physical education experience shared many outward similarities with those described by the hyper-competitive male students and teachers identified in this study.

This is not to say that the classroom teachers were exempt from malpractice. On the contrary, there were definitely times where teachers expressed a level of inclusive discomfort regarding the delivery of specific class activities. For example, on several occasions Mr. Lawson spoke to me about his lack of choice regarding the sequencing and delivery of activities such as dodgeball and kickball. According to Mr. Lawson, the regular classroom teachers (Mr. Miles, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Cole) collaboratively set the unit sequence for the year. As a stand-in sub, Mr. Lawson felt as though he had no choice but to do what the other teachers had requested. Mr. Lawson's insecurity about the activities being offered and related instruction demonstrated to me his sense of unease about the way physical education was being done in SHS. Despite this visible unease, Mr. Lawson continued to deliver the predetermined, traditional SHS physical education curriculum in the way prescribed to him by the more senior physical education teachers in the department.

Speaking further to this point, I return to the observation that the form of localized, hegemonic masculinity I witnessed in this classroom had been refined over the course of many years. As Mr. Lawson and myself both participated in SHS physical education, first as students, then later as teachers, I would assert that we have both actively participated in several different variations of the hegemonic practices that

students are currently being exposed to in the class. While the nuances of these hegemonic messages may vary slightly over the years, the general message of oppression and domination remains the same. In addition to experiencing the effects of hegemony in the classroom, I believe that both Mr. Lawson, and I, unwittingly helped to perpetuate this same system of patriarchal oppression by delivering what has been demonstrated to be an inequitable form of physical education as classroom teachers. Despite possessing the most power in the physical education classroom in the role of teacher, we both were critically unconscious to the larger system of oppression that our instruction was helping to perpetuate. As such, Mr. Lawson and I both served as patriarchal cogs that unknowingly used our positions of power to promote a hegemonically masculine discourse in our classrooms across time.

Conclusion.

When left unchallenged, the delivery of oppressive, hegemonic messages by classroom teachers occurs reflexively leading to the preservation of a system that benefits a select few students while alienating the vast majority. Notions of carefully structured curricula centering primarily around the delivery of sports skills also appear to help to maintain a culture where cut and dry, skill-related concepts are emphasized in lieu of higher-order, social inquiries that ask questions such as “Who decides the direction of physical education?” “Why is physical education done the way it is?” and “To what end does physical education seek to achieve?” That being said, I believe that until professional conversations around physical education instruction consider social justice issues more seriously, physical educators such as those mentioned in this study (myself

notwithstanding) will continue to serve as cogs in a much larger system of domination and oppression.

Addressing the Research Questions

This research study arose out of a curiosity to learn more about how localized notions of masculinity impact the delivery and reception of physical education instruction in a public high school. In seeking to maximize participant voice throughout this project, I chose to answer the research questions using data collected predominantly from visual methodologies and related photo elicitation interviews (for a summary of how each data collection method was utilized to answer my research questions see Appendix J). In the previous section I began by presenting nine overarching ideals that appeared to encapsulate what I have titled Springfield masculinity. From there, I discussed the three major themes that emerged as a result of this research. In the following sub-sections I will draw heavily from my three themes: Space as a multifarious commodity, Physical education as a void, and Teacher as a cog, along with my definition of masculinity at Springfield High School, to best answer each of my three research questions.

Research Question 1: How do localized notions of masculinity influence students' perceptions of themselves and others while participating in an eleventh grade physical education class?

Because adolescent masculinity has been previously described as a socially constructed concept that varies widely based on a variety of localized factors (Kimmel, 2003;2008; Lesko, 2000), I felt that it was important for me to step back and consider all of my collected data so that I might accurately assess what students understood to be masculine within this particular community. Data collected via students' use of visual

methods along with related interviews proved to be particularly helpful when answering this question as it provided direct access to students' developing understandings of self and others specifically as these understandings related to gender and identity.

Based on the nine tenets of Springfield masculinity described above, I feel confident arguing that the Springfield masculinity I witnessed throughout this study was a model that would fall well within the realm of Connell's (2005) Hegemonic Masculinity Theory. Students who were perceived by teachers and peers as possessing the most masculine capital were privy to a wide variety of benefits that their "less masculine" counterparts were not. These benefits included access to higher grades, prioritized choice of equipment, freedom to choose team(s) in class, access to larger amounts of space both in the gymnasium and outdoors, increased opportunities for success during class activities, and decreased likelihood of receiving behavioral consequences from teachers. Occasionally, less masculine male students (i.e. Sam, Isaac) would seek out these benefits by doing things such as increasing their level of effort in class or passively challenging "more masculine" people in the class. These attempts at procuring resources often proved effective but only for a short time (less than 10 minutes). When less masculine students were perceived as having their fill by more masculine class members, less masculine students would be publicly reminded of their place through use physically threats and/or verbal hazing.

Throughout the study, it was also quite evident that there was very little variability in participants' definitions of masculinity. This lack of disparity suggested to me that within the observed class, Springfield masculinity was a well-established social construct that borrowed heavily from commonly accessed influences such as adults

within the school, members of the surrounding community, and mass media messaging. In other words, despite using a variety of sources to define what it meant to be masculine, the students at SHS clearly understood who qualified as masculine and who did not. In addition to participants demonstrating an understanding of masculinity as a mechanism of dominance and oppression, at times, students' actions, words, and behaviors demonstrated a deeper, moral awareness. When present, this awareness appeared to stand in direct opposition of the masculine identity that many of the most masculine students sought to outwardly project. This was observed directly after outward projects of Springfield masculinity took place, when masculine students appeared to place added weight on the reactions of their peers and classroom teachers. Students would use the positive, negative, or lack of acknowledgement they received as a guide post that either validated or repudiated their actions. Depending on the type of reaction they would receive, students would either (a) continue to oppress and/or ridicule other students in the class, or (b) drastically reduce their level of harassment in the short term.

Previous research supports this observation arguing that adolescent identity development is a complex, socially constructed process that calls upon adolescents to make sense of themselves and their surrounding worlds (Nakkula & Toshalis, 2006). To better illustrate this point, I bring attention to the results collected from my preliminary survey.

During the first week of my research, I asked students in both eleventh grade, physical education classes to take a preliminary survey (see Appendix F) regarding their

general physical
education
activity
preferences. I
also asked
students to self-
rate their relative
daily
performance in
physical

education followed by an explanation for why they rated themselves the way that they did. 37 out of 45 students from the initial sample took the survey (82%). From that initial sample, 14 of 15 students used for the final sample recorded survey responses (93%). Survey question 6 asked students to rate their daily performance in physical education on a scale of 1-10 with 1 representing “awful” and 10 representing “awesome.” Student responses from question 6 have been depicted in Figure 5.13. While Andre rated his daily performance an “8” with the explanation of “*Some days I just don’t try,*” Sam rated himself a “6” stating, “*I put in effort when I can, but I’m not the best at playing the games.*” Mae and her friend Katrina rated themselves lowest of all responding students with matching ratings of “4.” Katrina justified her rating by responding, “*Because I*

don't change and I only try in the sports I like to play." Mae's response was similar, *"Because I don't really try that much."*

The data associated with this question clearly show that the boys in the sampled physical education classes rate themselves higher than the girls when considering their daily performance in class. Furthermore, the responses that students provided regarding why they scored their daily performance as they did provide deeper insight into what students interpret as being important in physical education. While Katrina makes mention of *"changing"* in her justification, Sam deducts points from his rating for *"not being the best at playing games."* All four referenced students make allusions to *"putting forth effort"* and/or *"trying"* in physical education. While each student's answer varies slightly, it is clear that students place heavy emphasis on giving their best effort in class. From these responses, we are given an introductory look at the criteria used by the sampled eleventh grade students to situate themselves amongst their peers in physical education.

Data collected throughout the remainder of the study continued to paint a more robust picture of how students viewed themselves and others as capable movers in physical education class. Take for example Mae, who alludes to her perceived place in physical education class several times throughout the study. Mae first speaks to her *"place"* in physical education in her narrative's opening paragraph:

"I don't consider myself to be really all that interesting, so when I was asked to talk about my experience in gym class I was pretty surprised. I guess I was also surprised because I'm not really what you would call a "sporty person." Some people like, my brother Tom, watch sports on TV or whatever but I've never been

*into them. Tom didn't play any sports when he was in school but he was **all into** gym. I'm not the gym-classy type (is that even a word? If not I'm making it one)*

(Excerpt taken from Mae's Narrative)

Mae begins by making a self-depreciating comment about not being “*all that interesting.*” This is followed by the statement that she’s “*not really what you would call a 'sporty person'*” and, as such, is “*... not the gym-classy type...*” In this excerpt, Mae appears to place herself outside of the physical education milieu because of what she identifies as a lack of personal experience and interest in organized sport. Mae makes these comments despite the fact that she in fact does have athletic experience as she later mentions when recalling her elementary physical education experience:

Back then I also played softball outside of school. I had like a pink bat that said 'Princess' or something like that on it and I called it my lucky bat. Thinking back, I don't remember hitting the ball all that much so I guess the bat wasn't all that lucky after all!

(Excerpt taken from Mae's Narrative)

Although Mae's self-assigned rating (4) and associated description actively place her on the periphery of her physical education class, I would argue that Mae demonstrates high levels of courage and perseverance when discussing how and when she chooses to insert herself into class activities. Take for example the excerpt from Mae's narrative below when she addresses being challenged by her classmates:

Like today, (Andre) was yelling at me to run faster in kickball. He kept doing it so I finally yelled back, "Why? For what?" I mean I was really proud of myself for kicking the ball and here he is taking it all seriously and yelling at me... so annoying.

*I don't have a problem standing-up to them when I have to. Sometimes, when the guys in class get all rough and stuff during the games, I'll step right in front of them even though they're much bigger than me. I don't care. I definitely get bruises and stuff but I also tell myself, "I can block the pain... this is what I **can** do! I can't run to the ball, but I can block the pain!" My foot still hurts from when Andre stepped on it during Scandenavian handball the other day... but I'll be alright*

(Excerpt taken from Mae's Narrative)

Here Mae verbally defends herself when another student prods her for not giving what he perceives to be a full effort. Mae then uses this instance to segue into how she is not physically scared of the larger boys in her class and willingly places her body in their way during games. Mae does this with full knowledge that she is opening herself up to the possibility of getting injured but continues to assert herself none-the-less.

After coming full circle by relating all of the collected data with these survey results collected on the first day of the study, students appear to be clearly measuring their individual performance in physical education on internalized, hegemonically-situated criteria. As a result of this process, students like Sam and Mae rated themselves

relatively low compared to their peers. Sam and Mae rate themselves this way because they do not actively situate their personal gender identities within a hegemonically masculine discourse. This is an issue because if left unchallenged, students like Mae and Sam are taught to be subordinate to a larger, social system of oppression. Additionally, if the related, hegemonic Discourse of white privilege remains unaddressed, then those with the most privilege in traditional, sport-centric physical education classes (i.e. hypercompetitive athletic males) will continue to assert their dominance over others both inside the gym and outside in society at large.

Research Question 2: How do physical education teachers perpetuate and/or disrupt localized notions of masculinity in an eleventh grade physical education class?

As mentioned in Research Question 1, Springfield masculinity was presented as the gold standard of gender expression in the SHS physical education classroom. Students who either laid claim to this type of gender identity or actively worked towards achieving this identity were perceived by the teachers as being “*good, self-motivated*” physical education students. Conversely, students who did not adhere to the strict guidelines of Springfield masculinity (namely the girls in the class and less athletic boys) were described at best, as disengaged in class and at worst, outright disruptive. Mr. Lawson specifically alluded to this idea when speaking about the boys represented in Figure 5.10. Students repeatedly expressed awareness of these teacher expectations during both formal and informal conversations throughout the study.

The reason why these guidelines were so real for students was because of the role that the classroom physical educators played in perpetuating localized notions of

masculinity in the SHS classroom. This process was achieved in several ways, particularly through the delivery of long-standing, masculine-slanted curricular options and the overt policing of hegemonic masculinity in the classroom. Speaking specifically to the policing of hegemonic norms, as observed in nearly every GoPro® video provided within this dissertation, the classroom teachers were often noticeably silent when students with large amounts of masculine capital imposed their will on other students in the classroom. This silence was deafening as it demonstrated an acceptance of these micro-aggressive behaviors. In the same way, as they were often perceived by students as some of the most masculine beings in the class, teachers also routinely worked to remind the most masculine boys in the class of their place on the masculine ladder. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the classroom physical educators would sometimes lash out at masculine boys in a challenging manner for all to see. Using their authority as the teacher, both Mr. Lawson and Mr. Cole would threaten students that challenged them with disciplinary consequence rendering students defenseless to these types of outbursts.

In many ways, the physical educators at SHS were observed by students less as academic experts and more as adult, social role models in the building. One way that this manifested in the classroom was through the omission of proper titles (i.e. “Mr.”) when addressing the physical educators. Students would almost always call the both Mr. Lawson and Mr. Cole by their last names only. When asked about this practice during our focus group interview students responded:

***Sarah:** We... we don't do that with Mr. Souza because he hates (**Katrina:** Oh my God...) when we do that. (**Andre:** You're not allowed to)...*

R: Why doesn't he like when you do that?

Katrina: *He wants to kick us out... (Sarah: it's a huge respect thing...) It's respect...*

Sarah: *Like I did that once with his name and he looked like he wanted to kill me and I felt... I didn't know that he didn't like that...*

Andre: *I feel like you do that when you're comfortable with someone (Sarah: Yeah...) Or like you don't like them you're like... it's like... it's like disrespect so like 'Ehhh.' like whatever ... Or like if you're close to someone you're like 'Hey' like ya know...*

Sara: *Or if you just like don't like the teacher sometimes...*

Mae: *Mr. Anderton is starting to hound on us for calling him Anderton (Katrina & Sarah: Yeah)*

Katrina: *But we like do it with kids too... Like we say Bell... we don't say Johnnie.*

(Excerpt from Focus Group)

While this practice of using last names only did not appear to outwardly bother Mr. Lawson or Mr. Cole, students clearly associated the use of titles with (a) respect and (b) relatability. Regarding respect, students identified that several of their other teachers refused to be called by just their last names as it was perceived as a sign of “disrespect.” In other conversations students balked at the idea of calling veteran teachers like Mr. Miles or Mr. Walsh by their last name considering the practice unimaginable. However, when referencing younger teachers that were perceived as being more socially relatable

(i.e. Mr. Anderton, Mr. Souza, Mr. Lawson), students would often address these teachers in a similar manner that they would use when addressing members of their peer group. In this way, the physical education teachers occupied what appeared to be a professional gray area for students. While they were not perceived as being worthy of the same amount of academic respect as other teachers in the building (as demonstrated by their lack of title), they were given large amounts of social respect the likes of which were often reserved for peers and close friends.

Further emphasizing this point, when asked to describe the physical education teachers, students often described them as a group of “*laid back*” and “*chill*” teachers that promoted “*fun*.” According to students, the physical educators were also willing to compromise regarding classroom expectations which was something else they found to be appealing. While students generally appeared to like the physical education teachers they often referred to them in a playful way, openly describing them in a manner that indicated the physical educators’ inferior position as teachers in the school. Speaking to this point, Neil addressed the playful disposition of Springfield’s physical educators during his interview.

R: ... So in comparison to other classes in school why is the gym a desirable place to be? Like why are people always trying to get in?

Neil: *I think it's just all of the gym teachers are just so laid back. And they're just like... You know what I mean? They're just like 'Have fun... You're here to have fun' and like... you don't have to... you don't have to take a test after this...*

(Neil's Interview, 5/9)

Neil attributes students wanting to get into the gym for extra physical education classes to the “*laid back*” attitudes of the teachers. A similar description of Springfield’s physical education teachers was given during the focus group interview.

Andre: Lawson is like a joking around kinda guy... I mean he’s laid back but he can be serious at some points. Cole... (**Katrina:** *He’s Cole!... haha*) Lawson (*everyone laughs as AB says this as if he’s avoiding talking about Mr. Cole...*) (**Sarah:** That’s just... that’s...) Lawson...

Katrina: *Cole is kinda on the same level as like Mr. Walsh only less like... I dunno... put together..*

(Focus Group Interview)

Here Andre references Mr. Lawson as a “*laid back*” and “*joking around kinda guy.*” When Andre begins to address Mr. Cole all of the students laugh as if they are unsure how to describe him. Playfully, Andre pretends to backpedal, acting as if he would like to skip over Mr. Cole and continue speaking about Mr. Lawson. Katrina then picks up where Andre left off and describes Mr. Cole as “*on the same level as Mr. Walsh only less put together.*” Katrina’s observation that Mr. Cole was “*less put together*” than Mr. Walsh could be interpreted in different ways however, in conjunction with my classroom observations, I would attribute this description to the fact that Mr. Cole often interacted with students on a conversational level that sometimes appeared to blur the boundary of student and teacher. Mr. Cole also had a different physical body type than Mr. Walsh as Mr. Walsh was an avid runner with a lean, muscular physique which could explain the comment as well.

This position of the physical educators as social role models within the school was an important one because they appeared to have a heavy influence on students' understanding of adult social systems. The hegemonically masculine messages that were perpetuated by the physical education teachers in this study were assigned added value by students as the natural order of things. As such, depending on their positionality within the class, students were observed taking a variety of stances on the pre-existing, social order including: taking mental notes on how to use the power of hegemonic masculinity to oppress others, accepting the system in its current form, or actively thinking about ways to rebel against the system in an attempt to establish a new way of being.

Research Question 3: How do the narratives of eleventh grade physical education students and their teachers help me to uncover meaning in my personal narrative as an athletic, able-bodied, heterosexual, white male researcher?

Perhaps the most free-flowing conversation between myself and participants in this process occurred when students and teachers were speaking about their teacher role models and adult mentors. Andre, spoke at length about “Mr. G” who “*is a nice guy and knows his stuff.*” Mae spoke about her chorus teacher, “Mr. Anderton” who “*holds us to a high standard, no matter what.*” These conversations led me to consider (a) the educators that influenced my adolescent experience in school and (b) how those individuals helped to shape the components of what is now my identity as an adult, white male. In my narrative (presented in Chapter 4), I recall the experience of having Mr. Landry for seventh grade English:

While I liked my middle school PE teachers for the most part, my seventh grade English teacher, Mr. Landry was my favorite. This guy just looked academic. He wore glasses, a shirt, and a tie every day. He was an athletic guy, very stern, and very knowledgeable. He would assign us books like *The Outsiders*, *The Eyes of the Dragon*, and *Hatchet* to read for class. His English class was one of the first times where I realized, “Oh wow, every book **doesn’t** suck!”

(Excerpt taken from Jeff’s Narrative)

Retrospectively, my experience in Mr. Landry’s classroom was one of the first times where I was able to see an adult, white male, who I perceived as being both academic and athletic. Up until this point in my career as a student, I saw being athletic as a hindrance to being academic and vice versa. Mr. Landry quit literally demonstrated that this was not the case. Additionally, Mr. Landry’s willingness to go above and beyond for his students was something that I realized had a major impact on me as demonstrated by my recollection of his Fantasy Football after-school club:

Mr. Landry also hosted a school club called Fantasy Football that I really looked forward to. Now-a-days, fantasy football is all on computers, but back then he would actually take the newspapers out and look through the stats and make photocopies for us. Looking back, that must it must have taken him **hours** to get the statistics for each kid! Funny coincidence, when I was hired to my first teaching job back in Springfield I worked down the hall from Mr. Landry who was still there.

(Excerpt from Jeff's Narrative)

Here I speak to Mr. Landry's dedication to photocopy athletic statistics. This was significant for me because not only was this time-consuming, but Mr. Landry was going to this length for a small, after-school club. Mr. Landry's willingness to go above and beyond for his students was something that I have always remembered but, until this study, I would be lying if I said that I truly understood how much of a mark he left on me.

In addition to thinking more deeply about what makes a good classroom teacher, this study has led me to think more deeply about the people in my life who have contributed to my love for physical education and sport. Prior to conducting this research, if I was asked to name the individuals most responsible for my interest in sport and physical activity, I would have immediately spouted off a list of white, middle-aged, heterosexual male physical education teachers and athletic coaches. While I can confidently say that Mr. Miles, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Austin, and Mr. Riley all had an impact on my adolescent development, this inquiry helped me to realize that my mother and my Aunt Amy were my most influential role models growing-up. For me, this was a particularly eye-opening revelation because it has helped me to answer the question: "Why am I interested in this research in the first place?"

Throughout the preparation and implementation phases of this study I struggled to articulate why I wanted to take a feminist approach aimed at exploring alternative ways to do physical education in public schools. After all, as a white athletic male, I feel like I had a wonderful K-12 experience in physical education. However, when asked to critically think about the implicit messages of male patriarchy and inequality that were

often lurking just below the surface of my physical education experiences, I immediately felt somewhat embarrassed and naïve. As I think back, I never was 100% comfortable with many of the locker room conversations and subtle digs that were directed at women athletes. Now, as an adult, I can articulate what I could not as an adolescent: these male-chauvinist types of conversation were deeply offensive to me as I felt like my team/classmates were directly insulting the most important women in my life.

If I was to speak to this culture of silence as addressed by Connell (2005), I would be categorized as “subordinately masculine” (p. 78) in these instances as I did nothing to stop my friends and peers from promoting an oppressive culture where white men win and everyone else loses. However, in this instance I would more closely identify with Bartholomeus’s (2011) critique suggesting that Hegemonic Masculinity Theory does not always fit nicely when describing the experiences of adolescents and children. In thinking about these adolescent, anti-feminist conversations, I don’t feel like I had the necessary level of social experience to pinpoint why these (common) conversations were particularly difficult for me. Perhaps if my classmates and I were to have had more controlled experiences where we could safely unpack our subjectivities surrounding gender and sport these conversations would have been easier for me to navigate.

In closing, former United States National Security Advisor Colin Powell has 13 Rules of Leadership that he claims to live by. My personal favorite, “Rule 3: Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it.” I feel like for me, in the context of this study, the word “ego” could be substituted with the word “identity.” Throughout my K-12 years, I always constructed my identity around a core of competitive athletics. I envisioned myself as a basketball player,

as a football player, as a baseball player, rather than as a capable person. I continued to hold on to this identity in my postgraduate career until eventually, there were no more organized, interscholastic/intercollegiate sports to be played. For me, I can remember being confused when this dirt road of athletic experiences finally came to its end. Who was I as a person if not an athlete?

On the deepest level, this study has helped me to reflect on what has been most important to me in my life thus far. During my personal interview, I was posited the question: “Name a time for me when you ‘won.’” After fumbling around for a minute, my response was as follows:

“I feel like I won when I graduated college... that was one of the first times where I feel like I won. Or even with the PhD program, I feel like I won when I got into the PhD program because I really didn’t expect to... I went in with very low expectations... like ‘Oh that’s not going to happen... I’m too young... I don’t have a background like that...’ umm... so getting into the program... if I finish this sometime in my lifetime I’ll feel like I won then... yeah that will be a big win for me... it really will... Um... I feel like I won when my wife got pregnant... because it looked for a short time like that wasn’t going to happen... and you know that was really concerning for me... so I feel like I won... I was blessed when that happened... and everything went well... thank God. So those were my big wins... I would say.”

(Excerpt from Jeff’s Interview)

This study has helped me to better define my personal identity outside of sport and physical activity. After genuinely answering the question above, it was eye opening for me to see that none of my biggest “wins” were sports related. Rather, my wins have been situated around academic and personal success. Since its creation, this study has been a roller coaster ride of ups and downs that have often led me to contemplate some of the most difficult personal questions that I have ever faced. As this study concludes, I can say with full confidence that I leave this research with a better understanding of who I am as a person and what my message of praxis will be moving forward: To work every day towards creating a more equitable, socially just, educational environment for adolescents in public schools.

Conclusion

In this section I began by delivering the 9 tenets of what I labeled Springfield masculinity. Following this description, I provided an in-depth discussion of the three, major themes uncovered as a result of this research (Space as a multifarious commodity, Physical education as a void, Teacher as cog). Finally, I concluded the chapter by answering my three, overarching research questions using data collected throughout the course of this research. In the sixth and final chapter, I will move to summarize the findings of this study and discuss future implications as related to the pedagogy and practice of movement professionals and policy makers.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Introduction

The primary purpose of this qualitative, narrative inquiry-based study was to explore what happens when visual methods are used to explore institutionalized beliefs surrounding localized masculinity in a high school physical education class. Additionally, this study looked to achieve the secondary purpose of utilizing student narratives in physical education to better understand my beliefs, practices, and personal subjectivities as a physical education professional. In line with aforementioned purposes, this final chapter will aim to achieve several goals. First, I will begin by presenting a summary of the major findings that were revealed as a result of this inquiry. Next, I will speak to the trustworthiness of this project particularly as it relates to the interconnected use of various methodologies. After that, I will address how I dealt with issues surrounding anonymity within the study along with a brief acknowledgement of limitations associated with study. This will be followed by associated implications for this research pertaining to policy makers, teacher educators, physical education teachers, and researchers. Finally, recommendations will be made for future research prior to concluding comments.

Summarizing the Main Findings of the Study

Through the combined use of narrative inquiry and visual methods, this study provided a deeper look at how messages pertaining to localized masculinity can influence the physical education experiences of late-stage adolescent students and their teachers. Additionally, this study attempted to examine the physical education experiences of students and adults across space, place, and time. By using researcher constructed narratives, my experiences along with the experiences of participating students and

teachers were able to be examined in a way that allowed for comparisons and contrasts to be made. The ultimate goal of making these comparisons and contrasts was to help develop a better understanding of the variety of individual perspectives that existed within this physical education class with the hopes of considering an alternative physical education curriculum that better meets the needs of all learners.

The following three themes were uncovered as a result of this research: Space as a multifarious commodity, Physical education as a void, and Teacher as a cog. Space as a multifarious commodity examined the ways that students possessing different amounts of masculine capital occupied the physical and social spaces of physical education. In sum, it was found that students with greater amounts of masculine capital were provided access to more space than their less masculine counterparts. As such, these students were also granted a greater level of autonomy by their teachers and peers to use this space for the reasons they chose. Physical education as a void spoke to the lack of institutional respect that both the physical education classroom and physical education teachers received from students, teachers, and administrators within the building. Moreover, this theme discussed the idea that within this school physical education was something of an academic void that had been assigned the alternative objective of indoctrinating able-bodied, athletic, white males into the cult of hegemonic masculinity. Finally, Teacher as a cog spoke to the central role that teachers unwittingly play in the perpetuation of localized, masculine norms in the classroom. This theme also addressed the antiquated notion that physical education is best served as a place where students are taught transferable, team sport skills. Instead, physical educators were challenged to step outside of their own perspectives and consider how the common structures and routines

associated with traditional physical education could be reimagined so that they might serve a greater, social purpose.

The first research question addressed student understandings of place within their physical education class. Here, it was found that although students generally denied the existence of a social hierarchy in physical education, there was a clear understanding of individual students' position on the social ladder. Through a variety of macroaggressions and related oppressive practices dealt out by the students with the most masculine capital, less masculine students were often involuntarily forced into subordinate roles within the class. The second research question revealed how physical education teachers perpetuated a patriarchal order from their positions as social role models. Instead of being perceived by students as academic experts, the physical education teachers within SHS acted more as older siblings to the students often engaging in playful, yet purposeful banter that helped to reinforce localized, masculine norms within the class. The third, and final, research question challenged me to deeply consider my personal experiences in and around physical education as related to the narratives of current SHS students and teachers. This process led me to reconsider what I have always considered to be my sport-centric, personal identity in favor of a more holistic, emotionally connected way of being. Lastly, after experiencing the lens of feminist inquiry, I can confidently say that I have a clearer picture of how my personal and professional ideologies align on the path towards promoting the most socially just society possible for all individuals regardless of age, race-ethnicity, sexuality, sexual preference, or gender identity.

Establishing Trustworthiness

In the world of quantitative research, it is suggested that there is a direct relationship between validity/reliability and generalizability (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002). Put another way, if a study is able to represent a high level of validity and reliability then the results extrapolated from a specified sample can be generalized to a larger population. Conversely, qualitative research rejects the notion that objective inquiry can be achieved. Instead, the qualitative researcher asserts that decisions, observations, and interpretations are inextricably linked to personal subjectivities. As a result, purely objective inquiry becomes theoretically impossible (Gaukroger, 2012). To achieve this depth as opposed to breadth the qualitative paradigm often calls upon verbal, written, and photographic data as opposed to the numerical and statistical data championed by quantitative research. Formal and informal interviewing, observation, open-ended response documents, and visual representations are all commonly collected as valuable artifacts in the qualitative process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009; Patton, 2002).

In line with the belief that the researcher is central to the qualitative process, qualitative research receives an academic stamp of approval by establishing trustworthiness in its findings (Mishler, 2010; Patton, 2002). One way that trustworthiness is established in qualitative research is through triangulation. Triangulation is a concept that suggests the researcher draw from three or more individual items prior to making any scholarly leaps (Patton, 2002, p. 555). Researchers might triangulate in a variety of ways including methods triangulation (e.g. using a variety of methods to collect data), analyst triangulation (e.g. using multiple analytical methods to interpret data), and source triangulation (e.g. checking out the consistency of

different sources within one method) (Patton, 2002, p. 556). To give one example, methods triangulation might suggest that a researcher collect interview and observation data along with keeping a personal, reflective journal on the research process during a study. Field notes from observations, interview transcriptions, and analysis of personal reflective writing would meet the requirements necessary to establish trustworthiness in the study via methods triangulation.

Merriam and Tisdell (2009) go a step further by dividing trustworthiness into four components: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Credibility is described as overall confidence in the research findings. Transferability expresses the notion that the specified findings have applicability in other contexts. Dependability asserts that the findings are consistent and the methods replicable. Conformability suggests that there is a degree of neutrality to the findings that are not biased by the researcher's motivations and/or interests.

Whereas I do acknowledge the importance of trustworthiness in a qualitative study specifically as it pertains to transferability, I disagree with the notion of conformability as described by Merriam and Tisdell (2009). In my understanding of the researcher as instrument, a primary strength of qualitative research, I think the introduction of neutrality into a qualitative study would *decrease* rather than *increase* the level of trustworthiness assigned to a particular study. By explicitly owning one's individual privileges and struggles in the context of a qualitative research study, I feel as though the research gains a depth and clarity that otherwise would be left up to the interpretation of the audience. In addition, I would suggest it is naïve and extremely unrealistic to claim that a researcher's motivations and/or interests are not relevant to or

influential in relation to a research study. In all fairness, if the researcher was uninterested in a particular problem she/he most likely would not have begun the rigorous journey of scholarly research in the first place!

None-the-less, in the spirit of maximizing the trustworthiness of this research, I have chosen to enlist Denzin & Lincoln's (1994) concepts of data triangulation and methodological triangulation to further establish research credibility. Data triangulation was achieved by the means of accessing similar themes through data collected via various individuals involved with the study. Information relating to the previously discussed themes of: Space as a multifarious commodity, Physical education as a void, and Teacher as a cog (see Chapter 5) was gathered through conversation, observation, and reflection with and by the participating students, teachers, and myself, respectively. This process strengthens my findings in that the experiences of different people yielded findings that could easily be related through appropriately framed analyses. Additionally, because this data included the retrospective experiences of myself and the adult physical education teachers, as well as the current SHS eleventh grade students, the argument could be made that the data associated with each of these themes were situated across a notable expanse of time further solidifying my observations and related assertions.

Regarding methodological triangulation, a wide variety of data collection methods were used to better answer the overarching research questions. A researcher journal, photovoice, GoPro® video recording, individual and focus group interviews, preliminary surveys, researcher observations, and informal conversations were all used as methods of data collection (to see an in-depth explanation of how each of these methods was used see Chapter 3). Similar to data triangulation, the justification for using this number of

data collection methods was to ensure that established themes were established based on the convergence of data achieved via the use of three or more different methods (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). For a matrix that lists how each of these methods was used in relation to each of the presented research questions, see Appendix J.

Issues of Anonymity

One of the most difficult ethical issues that I had to address within the framework of this research project was that of anonymity. In considering anonymity three protections were considered: 1) anonymity of the research site 2) anonymity of the study participants and 3) anonymity of historical figures mentioned in my reflections.

Anonymity of the research site was something that I attempted to achieve throughout this research in both visual representation and print. In terms of videos and photos, while the general structure of the building, set-up of the athletic fields, and school colors could not be obscured, I did apply a Gaussian blur effect to blur the school's name when visible. Additionally, I was sure to edit participant speech and/or relevant transcriptions when participants were found to mention the actual name of the school and/or surrounding schools and communities. To help preserve the anonymity of the research site in print I chose to first, broadly describe the location of the town and host school by region alone (i.e. the northeast United States). The town of Springfield represents a deliberately chosen pseudonym as, after completing a general online search, it was revealed that the most commonly used town name in the United States is Springfield. This search, along with my affinity for the television series *The Simpsons*, led me to borrow the names of the surrounding towns that I felt loosely resembled towns represented on the animated series (i.e. Shelbyville, Cypress Creek).

Although I made every possible attempt to obscure the identity of the host community, it should be acknowledged that because of my close professional and personal affiliations to the town complete anonymity would be near impossible to achieve. Both the study participants and the school principal were notified about the inability for complete anonymity prior to start of the study. At no point prior to or during the project did anyone express discomfort with the idea that their school would be identified with being associated with this research. In fact, at various points throughout the study, faculty members, administrators, and students all verbally expressed their excitement about the project as well as their eagerness to discuss my eventual findings.

Anonymity of participants was something that I also considered in conducting this research project. To help preserve participant anonymity I first required all participants (whether they were included in my initial sample or added on throughout) to sign consent forms outlining amongst other things, ethical considerations for the project. Participants that were under 18 years of age were also required to obtain parental consent via a separate document prior to the use of their likeness and data in my analyses and sharing. Because the use of visual methods in a single classroom all but ensures that participants' faces will be captured on camera at one point or another, participants were offered the option of a Gaussian blur effect to be edited onto the videos post-download. As this option was geared predominantly towards participating students (there was only one teacher in the class studied per period so obscuring their identity would not have achieved the desired result) this effect would hide a student's face making them more difficult to identify. While this effect does obscure the face of a participant from viewers, participants were not given the option to blur the entire body as I determined that this

would cross a boundary into a realm of purposeful “othering” of the adolescent students that I was not comfortable with (Karlsson, 2007). As such, viewers that are familiar with the particular class that was studied and/or body types and clothing preferences may have been able to determine which participants’ images were blurred. Members of the participating class who completely refused participation in the study were not included in the final analyses as all images depicting their likeness and/or observation transcriptions that outlined their experience were removed from the data set and destroyed as necessary.

When referring to the written component of this project, I assigned each participating student and teacher a pseudonym using an online name generator. Other professionals in the building (such as non-participant teachers, administrators, teacher’s aids, and participant references to non-participating students) were also assigned pseudonyms as needed. These pseudonyms were then used whenever reference was made to that participant throughout the write-up. As this project also included a self-reflective component (specifically regarding data related to research question 3) I have included some personal information and reflection that highlight a variety of people from my retrospective experiences. While neither I nor my family members could be assigned anonymity in the context of this project, other persons who I have had experiences with throughout the years have also been assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities. Similar to the issue I encountered with participants and the Gaussian blur effect mentioned above, my fellow classmates and acquaintances may be able to identify some of the people I have chosen to include should they read this research but for most readers it can be considered safe to say that the assignment of random pseudonyms along with

the passage of time should help to obfuscate the identity of those people mentioned in my reflections.

Limitations of the Study

As is true with any research methodology this study does have some notable limitations. First, in using a qualitative research design I must be careful to remember that although my results can be described as transferable in similar contexts, it is inappropriate to describe my findings as generalizable to larger populations. In addition, speaking specifically to my use of visual methodologies as a form of data collection, Wang and Redwood-Jones (2001) are quick to identify the need for careful consideration of ethical concern regarding the use of visual methodologies particularly with youth. Because student assent as well as parental consent potentially might not be obtained from all students, photo/video editing software may have to be utilized to blur students faces or remove them from frames altogether. Gubrium and Harper (2013) suggest that by altering the photos/videos produced by research participants, the researcher unavoidably is asked to establish themselves in a position above the exact participants she/he is seeking to empower within a critically-minded study. This is a decision of blurring faces is one that I did enlist as part of my study and in so doing, took back some of the agency I sought to provide my study participants.

Additionally, while it has been argued that in order for educational reform to truly take hold, student voices must be shared (see Cook-Sather, 2002; 2006), educational researchers must be careful not to overshadow the voices of their participants particularly when calling upon participatory methodologies such as those used within this study. While this tension is not necessarily a bad thing as it may encourage a higher level of

fidelity in the reporting of study findings (Clandinin et al., 2010), the fact that I, the researcher, constructed participant narratives rather than participant's writing autobiographical narratives is perhaps one of the most glaring limitations to this study. In the future, having students construct written narratives regarding their physical education experience may be a more accurate way of having students transmit their experiences.

Take for example the fact that four of the participating students, Lila Sharp, Maggie Perry, Ben Wright, and David Floyd refused to wear the GoPro® during the project. Maggie, Ben, and David all expressed at the beginning of the project that while they wanted to participate, they did not want to wear the GoPro® cameras in class. While Lila did not initially refuse to use the GoPro®, it should be noted that Lila has significant physical and cognitive special needs that require her to participate with the help of a personal aid. While I asked Lila several times if she would like a chance to use the camera in class she always refused. As such, these four student participants did not wear the GoPro® video cameras during the project.

Originally, I had also planned for the classroom teachers to wear a GoPro® for one class period. Unfortunately, two days before Mr. Lawson was scheduled to wear the camera he had an unfortunate accident that required medical care to the top of his head. Because of this injury, Mr. Lawson was unable to wear the head harness and could not record using the GoPro®. When Mr. Cole returned to class later in the semester he initially agreed to wear the GoPro®. However, as time went by Mr. Cole expressed that he no longer wanted to wear the GoPro® in class without providing any reason for his change of heart.

Finally, my positionality as an adult, white, middle-class male (McIntosh, 2001) conducting a study through the lenses of poststructuralist feminism (L. Azzarito et al., 2006; Weedon, 1997) and, more specifically, hegemonic masculinity theory (Connell, 2005b), is both a unique strength and a limitation since I am exploring masculinity construction as it pertains to eleventh grade students. The strength of my positionality is that, as a heterosexual, middle class, white male, I have a level of privilege and power that grants me an audience capable of making meaningful change. The limitation aspect of this assertion comes in the form that as a white, middle-class male I am considered through many branches and definitions of feminism to fit the exact demographic of the oppressor. While I have operationalized my overarching definition of feminism as “1) a belief that women universally face some form of oppression or exploitation; 2) a commitment to uncover and understand what causes and sustains oppression, in all its forms and 3) a commitment to work individually and collectively in everyday life to end all forms of oppression” (Maguire, 1987), my positionality remains unchanged and is thus an important component of this research. Furthermore, while checking my own subjectivities and remaining reflexive throughout this research process presumably helped (but not eliminate) my inherent place as a privileged, white adult male attempting to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of students and teachers involved in this study.

Implications

The implications for the findings of this study as related to the fields of masculinity construction, physical education, feminist inquiry, and the use visual methods within a qualitative design are far reaching. Although this research was not designed to be

generalizable, I would assert that the methods and associated thematic discoveries are largely transferable within the given context of high school physical education. That being said I would be remiss if I did not applaud the bravery, dedication, and intuition displayed by participants. In many instances, the courage and transparency demonstrated by the individuals who took part in this study was nothing short of amazing. As a self-proclaimed introvert, I was routinely surprised to see how many students and teachers readily engaged in discourses surrounding topics such as sexual preference, homophobia, and gender fluidity. Often these conversations arose organically in instances where participants appeared to share a genuine interest in developing a better understanding of gender and sexuality. Perhaps one of the most incredible moments for me in this entire inquiry occurred during our focus group when Mae was brave enough to share a short story regarding her grandmother's struggle with Mae's bisexuality:

Mae: *But it makes more sense that she was an older lady that wouldn't do that because like... when... back in her time that (Katrina: Different generations... like (Sarah: They just don't understand) Like now-a-days...)... It's kinda like when I told... when my grandmother found out that I... liked... girls... Which... like... I'm not... necessarily a lesbian... like I like girls... I like guys... whatever. When she found out about it... cuz we kept it from my grandmother for a while cuz she's really (hands up like claws) 'Meh.' She flipped out and threw things at me... and then yelled at me (Katrina: Almost kicked her out of the house...) and then left a note... and then yelled at my dad about it and was like (angry, deep voice) 'Did you know about it?!' and he was just like 'Yeah I did.' And she was like (angry, deep voice) 'Why didn't you tell me?!' It was just... it was bad...*

R: That's horrible... I'm sorry to hear that (**Katrina:** Yeah...)(**Andre:** Yeah...)

Mae: I mean my dad stuck up for me and like she... she always... she's sort of okay with it now... its just I think... (**Katrina:** She just definitely grew up in a different generation... like when we were younger... (**Sarah:** Yeah she did...) she would be like... we could never play. She would always make us come and like do stuff for her. Like 'Come pick the garden with me' 'Come do this with me...' 'Come take out the trash with me'... that's just the kind of personality she has.¹

(Focus Group Interview, 5-1)

Here Mae takes the opportunity during a discussion about “*acceptance and differing generations*” to reveal her developing, bisexual identity. While Katrina is the only student in the focus group that appears to be aware of Mae’s struggle with her grandmother, Sarah and Andre are both unfazed by Mae’s revelation. In fact, almost any time throughout the interview when conversation focused on sexuality, Andre was visibly aware of Mae’s responses to his comments. I noted this prior to Mae’s revelation since Andre would repeatedly turn towards Mae while sharing his opinions. It was almost as if Andre was directing his comments exclusively towards Mae during these exchanges, measuring his words carefully as he attempted to avoid saying the “wrong thing.”

This practice of measuring speech was something that followed suit with many of Andre’s comments regarding homosexuality and gender. While Andre would initially make comments that demonstrated an internal struggle with the topic, he would often follow-up with measured support for individuals with different preferences than himself. Take for example the following excerpt from our focus group conversation:

¹ This information was shared after individually readdressing the permissions documents signed at the outset of this inquiry.

***Andre:** I have my own opinions but I'm afraid to voice them because people will put a label on me. (**Sarah:** Yeah (affirmation)) As in a sexist, a racist so I keep my mouth shut on the situation So, that's where I leave it... Because... Mae knows, because like I've stuck through her (**Mae** Yeah...) and she's been in and kind of... and I don't care as long as you don't shove it in my face.*

(Focus Group Interview, 5-1)

Above Andre begins to take a hard line in opposition to homosexuality. However, in making what appeared to be an honest admission, Andre knowingly avoids these types of conversations in fear of otherwise being labeled as a “sexist” or a “racist.” Andre then appears to try and garner support from Mae, who gives him a token, “yeah...” before reaffirming his don't ask don't tell mentality. Sam shared beliefs similar to Andre and, in similar fashion, appeared to be open to engaging safe conversation around related topics:

R: So... one of the things that I'm interested in is the difference between sex and gender. So sex being like male/female and basically your reproductive parts and gender being everything else. So people's like hair length... people... the way people act... you know... the emotions...

***Sam:** (nervous voice) I'm not the best person to ask about this...*

R: Okay... Why... Why do you say that though?

***Sam:** I'm more of a person who's like... I really don't see any need for just the 2 genders...*

R: Okay... Why?

***Sam:** Well for me... personally... a little ignorant but I really don't see like why someone would identify as the opposite umm... sex or gender but...*

R: Okay. No it's not ignorant... it's your opinion.

Sam: *I just don't understand it...*

(Sam's Interview, Rd 1, 5-17)

During this exchange, Sam's cautious intrigue was almost palpable. For me, Sam's initial nervous laughter was laced with a hint of discomfort so I was somewhat shocked when he openly expressed his skepticism towards people who identify with an opposing gender identity. The fact that in the same breath, Sam had the wherewithal to acknowledge that his current perspective on the issue might be "*a little ignorant*" and that he "*just (didn't) understand it...*" demonstrated a level of maturity and self-awareness that I found to be remarkable. While Sam clearly has his beliefs about gender and gender identities, here he reveals a willingness to engage in conversation that might open his mind to different possibilities that he may not have previously considered.

My take-away from the excerpts shared above is that students appear to have a genuine interest in meaningful conversations around taboo topics such as homophobia, gender identities, sexuality, and related use of language. I believe that if schools would creatively consider how to provide students with a safe space where they might openly speak about their current grasp of such "taboo" topics without fear of being labeled or outcast, social progress surrounding such topics turns from impossible to inevitable (Vaccaro, August, & Kennedy, 2011). Further, I would suggest that by meeting students and teachers where they are (Fuehrer, 2011), we model a sense of compassion and understanding that lends itself to the type of an open dialogue needed to enact change under the current system of mixed messages and piece-meal solutions.

Implications for policy makers.

If the goal of shifting the physical education landscape towards providing a more socially just experience for all participants is a priority, one thing is for sure: federal, state, and local institutions **must** begin by providing public, physical education programs with appropriate funding. Considering the current educational climate, where physical education programs are 1) being cut in favor of increased “core” instructional time or (Ravitch, 2010) and 2) drastically underfunded in order to reallocate dollars towards “more important” educational resources, all but the most creative physical educators are left with few instructional options outside of traditional team sport (Heath, 2017). Many public school, physical education programs are critically limited in the amount of sustainable equipment to which they have access leading to low cost, low arousal activities that are suggested to provide “maximal” opportunities for student participation. From my personal teaching experience, along with what I have witnessed over my years as a student and teacher-educator, one football and 10 students rarely leads to an educational opportunity where all 10 students walk away stimulated and wanting more.

By providing physical education programs with more resources, teachers will have more options relating to not only which activities they might offer, but how existing activities can be modified to accommodate the social, emotional, and physical needs of all learners. While items such as low ropes courses and indoor rock walls are currently considered to be a novelty for physical education programs, with increased funding every gymnasium and/or school campus could be housed with similar apparatuses. This is important as such amenities have been shown to increase cooperation, collaboration, student buy-in, and overall satisfaction with physical education as a relevant subject in K-

12 schools (Dyson, 1995; Gibbons & Ebbeck, 2011; Warren, 2005). Rather than consider how to purchase “more of the same” items, as Mr. Lawson alludes to in his narrative, I would instead encourage physical education programs their associated funding mechanisms to secure more funding and use such funds to buy different items. If physical education truly assigns equal weight to affective objectives, it will be important for professionals to creatively consider how funds can be used to obtain more sustainable, transferable items that have the ability to be used for more than just traditional team sport.

Implications for teacher educators.

Additionally, teacher preparation programs with a specialization in developing physical educators, need to place a far greater emphasis on instruction geared towards the affective domain. One way that this may be achieved is through the introduction of pedagogies into the collegiate classroom that foster safe conversation around larger social issues of power and oppression particularly as they relate to topics such as sexism, homophobia, and racism. In addition to having these organized discussions, teacher educators should draw attention to the nuances of facilitating these difficult conversations from the position of a classroom educator. In this way, teacher educators can encourage pre-service physical education teachers to look past commonly referenced affective topics such as sportspersonship and humility with the goal of using physical activity as a vehicle to eradicate global social inequities. For example, when training pre-service teachers on the delivery of a basketball unit, teacher educators might include a sociological component within their instruction that requires future professionals to consider how one might use the sport of basketball to explore the intersectionality of race-ethnicity and

sport. Future physical educators (and later, their students) might be asked to observe a community basketball game with the goal of taking observational notes on power relations as they occur throughout the game (i.e. coach to referee, player to coach, fans to players) with the aim of discussing how these patterns compare to other team sports as well as society as a whole. In this way, pre-service teachers are learning to move past the concrete objective of delivering sport skills and venture into the realm of using sport as a vehicle to explore complex, social issues.

Teacher educators should also consider introducing pre-service physical education teachers to a broad spectrum of curricular models that look to achieve more than the delivery of psychomotor, sport-specific skills. Rather than starting with competitive, team sport instruction and branching out from there, pre-service physical educators should be first exposed to more cooperative, collaborative methods of instruction including adventure education and outdoor education as a means to promote physical activity and overall health and wellness. A lesson that is centered around this style of instruction might require students to travel across a small, outdoor area (25 yards) without touching the ground. To facilitate this process students might be given a pile of seemingly useless items (i.e. poly spots, an old bike, a baseball bat, a jump rope, etc.) that are impervious to the ground's 'deadly' effects. Students could then collaboratively decide how they would like to traverse the obstacle. Rather than promote a competitive culture where students are required to best their classmates, this style of physical education instruction asks students to work together in order to solve a common task.

Moreover, within any curricular model, pre-service teachers should be challenged to consider how taught content can be delivered in a way that presents students with a

broader social context of the world in which we live. Pre-service teachers might be asked to explore the different rules and regulations attributed to team sports that are played by both men and women. Take for example lacrosse, pre-service teachers might be asked to learn both the “boys’ rules” AND the “girls’ rules” with the aim of delivering both sets of rules to their future students. Students may then be asked to write a persuasive essay that either supports or refutes the need for different, sex-based rules in the sport of lacrosse. When approached from this perspective, physical education can begin to shed the moniker of academic void and reestablish itself as an integral part of a robust, formal education.

Implications for physical education teachers.

As expressed by Alfrey et al. (2016), “If anything is going to systemically change, physical education teachers will need to be included in the conversation” (p. 13). In order for the current landscape of physical education to shift, physical educators must be open to doing the difficult work of taking a closer look at their personal biases and subjectivities regarding physical activity and sport. Such biases may include ideas about who is allowed to access which sports at specific times, what activities can be defined as meaningful physical activity, the criteria referenced when assessing physical efficiency in movement settings, and how one’s own physical education/activity experience has shaped their professional philosophy. Once these subjectivities have been made visible, physical educators must fully invest themselves in the process of deconstructing harmful, gender-based stereotypes that work to limit the opportunities for student success. Along this same thread, physical educators must truly buy-in to the notion that physical education has the ability to transform the educational landscape in a way that champions

social justice and values the experiences of all learners. Long gone are the days where physical education teachers roll out the ball and watch the intricacies of power and oppression play out before their very eyes. Physical educators must actively seek to recognize social inequity as it exists within both their local and global community with the goal of relaying messages of hope and possibility back to their classrooms.

In addition to recognizing these messages, physical educators must acknowledge their position as cogs within the system of patriarchy and oppression. Rather than rest on the laurels of their experiences as physical education students, physical educators should be encouraged to step outside of themselves and consider the multitude of perspectives that exist within one physical education class. While team sport might have been ideal for their physical education experience, it is important to acknowledge that it is not the ideal for the vast majority of students. By avoiding conversations told by multiple perspectives and rooted in social cause, teachers silently perpetuate the status quo ensuring that only the most masculine, hyper-aggressive students within their classrooms have a rewarding educational experience. Put another way, physical educators need to be empowered and understand that there is no such thing as “neutral” (Freire, 1970).

One way that social justice messages could be infused into professional practice is through the modeling of safe conversation at professional conferences. SHAPE America, the leading professional organization in American physical education, sponsors numerous state, regional, and national conventions each year. From my personal experiences attending these conferences, I can safely say that the vast majority of presentations focus on instructional activities that physical educators can immediately use in their classrooms. Comparatively speaking, very few sessions are dedicated to research findings

in the field of physical education. I have never heard of a session that was dedicated to the exploration of personal biases and the impact they have on instruction. Sessions that require working professionals to consider their underlying subjectivities might help to encourage an open dialogue within which professionals can work together to overcome some of their most restrictive, subconscious instructional obstacles.

Researcher recommendations.

In the way of providing research recommendations, I have to admit that this was a challenging study to conduct. One of my most pertinent takeaways from this process was that, although a research might plan for every perceived misstep that might arise throughout the course of a study, there is no possible way to foresee all of the issues that might occur. In other words, it is absolutely crucial that a researcher demonstrate flexibility when implementing their design. Take for example the recording of GoPro® videos. When the study began, I planned on having students record 20 GoPro® videos between April and June of the 2017 school year. Unfortunately, I was unable to achieve this number because of several difficulties that arose throughout the course of the project. First, as I previously mentioned, I lost 7 GoPro® videos early in the project due to a failed hard drive. While every effort was made to re-record these students' experiences, several students did not use the GoPro® again throughout the course of the project. This was because (a) they were consistently absent from class or (b) they refused to wear the GoPro® when asked. In addition, the last two visual capture classes had to be cut-short at the close of the school year because of senior graduation set-up in the gymnasium. During this time, all physical education students were sent to the school cafeteria instead

of participating in class. All said and done I finished my project with 16 GoPro® videos representing 11 different student experiences.

Speaking further to the use of GoPro® video, one major drawback that I experienced was their exorbitant file sizes. On average, students' videos documented 40 minutes of class time (classes routinely covered a period of 60 minutes but students were not allowed to take their GoPros® into the locker rooms before or after class activity). I quickly found that the associated file sizes for GoPro® videos of this length were routinely between 10-12 Gbs. To put this in perspective, a free, cloud-based Google Drive storage account allows users 15 Gb of data before requesting payment for extra space. That's enough room to store 1 GoPro® video.

While a laptop computer offered more storage space, problems still arose considering the ambitious number of student experiences I sought to record (initially 20 video recordings in all). The primary computer used during this study was a factory model, 2016 MacBook Air with 121 Gb of internal storage space. In other words, if this laptop was devoid of any other programs, it would only have the capability of storing 10-12 GoPro® videos... 8 videos short of my expected requirement. To rectify this issue, I eventually purchased 1Tb (1,000 Gbs) of cloud-based storage space via the Google Drive application. In the interest of backing up my data, I also used 3 separate 64Gb USB drives to store student-researchers' videos.

Uploading and editing GoPro® video files also proved to be an arduous process. As a default function of GoPro® recording, videos are broken into 15-16 minute segments. When considering that the length of the average video lasted 40 minutes, that meant that each video recording was divided into a minimum of 2 smaller segments. At

the conclusion of the study, the final project consisted of 16 videos comprised of more than 45 video segments. Each individual video segment took anywhere from 4-16 hours to upload to Google Drive using a wireless internet connection. In comparison, I did find that videos uploaded much more quickly to the 64 Gb USB drives taking only a few, short minutes. However, I was less keen on using these drives as my primary storage method as they are (a) easy to lose and (b) relatively easy to damage. Ultimately, I was able to upload and analyze all videos but the process proved to be extremely time consuming. Moving forward, I would be certain to do a trial run recording, uploading, and transcribing one GoPro® video prior to undertaking such a huge task.

In addition to issues with technology, I also found myself routinely reliving my personal biases by continuously reverting back to dichotomous terminology when providing describing the participants of my study. Below I have included an excerpt from my personal journal outlining this on-going struggle:

“... I realize in the moment that I’m consciously going to this “crutch” of repeatedly framing concepts in terms of existing binaries. I’ve been trying to determine whether or not this is a conscious choice I make to help students by accessing a common language (i.e. similar to how I use the term “gym class” to describe “physical education”... the former being considered as sacrilegious in professional, physical education discourse) or if this is a mental obstacle that I myself am personally trying to work through. Perhaps there is some insight to this confusion in the sense that I am also feeling this conundrum when I am constructing interview questions, writing personal journal entries, and generally thinking about my research during my spare time. I feel as though this either-or

way of describing the associated concepts/constructions takes away from the open-minded approach that I am trying to promote via this research and directly opposes my theoretical frame of post-structuralist feminism as a key component to post-structuralist inquiry is the rejection of concrete binaries.”

(Excerpt from Jeff’s Researcher Journal)

The ongoing process of member checking my own subjectivities was an arduous, but worth-while process. To better facilitate this transformative experience, I would have liked to have set aside more time to record more researcher journal entries as the study progressed. While I made every attempt to continue jotting my thoughts throughout the course of the research, the frequency with which I found myself writing journal entries paled in comparison to the amount of time I spent transcribing and writing preliminary drafts of this manuscript.

Suggestions for future research.

This study sought to reveal what happens when visual methods are used to explore localized notions of masculinity amongst teachers and students in an eleventh grade physical education class. In seeking to achieve this goal, the focus of this inquiry was phenomenological in the sense that the experiences of a single, eleventh grade physical education class in one, suburban, northeastern town was the focus of all data collection. While the research results suggest that the physical education program at SHS clearly demonstrates the perpetuation of localized, hegemonic masculine norms by teachers and students, these results may or may not be true of physical education classes situated within different demographics. As such, future research should seek to explore

the perpetuation (or disruption) of hegemonic masculinity in different locales particularly as it is transmitted through long-standing, public institutions (i.e. public schools).

Further, the presented research does little to consider alternative curricular options that may better facilitate discussions around gender equity in sport and physical education. Future research should continue to consider more equitable ways that public schools can deliver physical education instruction so that all students, regardless of gender identity, might participate in a personally meaningful physical education experience.

Methodologically speaking, I would assert that one of the unique strengths of this research could be found in the extensive use of visual methodologies (GoPro® videography and photovoice) and associated photo-elicitation interviews to explore student experiences in public school physical education. Moving forward, the use of visual methodologies in tandem with embedded Q-R codes to deliver video content could be used in a variety of applications to more accurately share the (near) first-person experiences of research participants involved in movement-related inquiries. I suggest that future researchers attempt to improve upon the methods presented in this study by experimenting with similar “partnered methodologies.”

Finally, as the study unfolded, a secondary purpose of using student narratives in physical education to better understand my beliefs, practices, and personal subjectivities as a physical education professional arose. In consideration of this emergent question, I decided to explore my personal narrative as a movement specialist in relation to the constructed narratives of participating students and teachers. Considering the amount of personal subjectivity that is inextricably linked to this process, future research may seek

to construct participant narratives using data points other than individual interviews and/or non-participant observation.

As I continue on this thread of inquiry, I would like to collaborate with other movement professionals interested in rethinking the way that physical education is delivered in schools across the United States. While this research sought to explore notions of masculinity in an individual, physical education classroom, I would like to use these findings to inform the design of an alternative, physical education curriculum that challenges pervasive, affectively situated messages that permeate sport, physical activity, and American society as a whole.

Considering my current position as a high school, building administrator, I would also like to use similar visual and narrative methodologies in order to explore masculinity within other classrooms (i.e. mathematics, social studies, science). The tangential objective of this research would be to gain a better understanding of how public institutions (i.e. schools) have the power to perpetuate and/or disrupt wide-spread, normalized stereotypes related to gender, power, and oppression. Similar to my work in the physical education classroom, this work would be praxis-oriented with the objective of deliberately changing the spoken and unspoken social messages transmitted through the medium of formal education.

Concluding Comments

By drawing attention to masculine hegemonic practices in public school physical education it is my hope that teachers and administrators will be encouraged to take a closer look at the long-standing gender biases that continue to be the driving force for federally funded physical education programs. As repeatedly stated throughout this

manuscript, team sport-centric physical education curriculum has been shown to marginalize large contingents of students while often promoting hyper-aggressive, overly competitive situations that encourage hierarchical social classifications and adversarial relationships amongst students (Azzarito & Ennis, 2003; Bernstein, Phillips, & Silverman, 2011; Calzo, Roberts, Corliss, Blood, Kroshus, & Austin, 2013). Additionally, this study sought to better understand how localized notions of masculinity intertwine with these hierarchical social classifications so that physical educators and various other stakeholders can begin to consider a new physical education that values all participants.

This study also provides a significant addition to the current body of research in the sense that using visual methodologies with high school students as a way to present their perspective of school has been scarcely considered (Moss, 2008; Noyes, 2008; Prosser, 2007; Robinson-Keilig et. al, 2014). Second, while narrative inquiry and visual methodologies have been partnered before (see Ketelle, 2010), in past research the primary researcher's interpretation of participant narratives has served as the focal point for discussion when analyzing results. This inquiry sought to place the voices of students and teachers at the forefront taking extreme care to member check and transmit the stories of participants as organically as possible. In bridging the gap between student voice and adult perceptions of student voice, this research provided students with the platform to report out their own lived experiences and as a result, resist structures of institutional oppression as substantiated through the politics of formal education.

Finally, with the exception of this research, studies that have used visual methodologies coupled with participant narratives to examine aspects of gender identity

in physical education are to my knowledge, non-existent. While visual methods have been used for a variety of purposes such as exploring notions of ‘being bad’ in school (Clark-Ibanez, 2014), examining health care access for Chinese women (Wang, 1997), and investigating European children’s spaces and places of play (Burke, 2005), using photography and videography as a vehicle to discuss social constructions of masculinity with high school students is a new concept. Moving forward, it is my hope that this research provides others with a practically applicable framework that can be used when considering research that benefits from the use of visual methods in a public high school setting.

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Appendix A: Additional Operationalized Definitions

In addition to the phrases mentioned in Chapter 1, the following terms and their associated definitions played a major role in this research:

- **Athletic:** a term used to describe a person who physically excels when called upon to demonstrate the most commonly utilized skills (i.e. running, jumping, sliding, striking, throwing) and behaviors (i.e. competitive drive, perseverance, dependability, aggression) associated with success across a variety of team and individual sports. Often this term is also associated with an able-bodied, lean, muscular physique.
- **Complicit Masculinity:** “masculinities constructed in ways that realize the patriarchal dividend, without the tensions or risks of being the frontline troops of patriarchy” (Connell, 2005, p. 79)
- **Feminism:** “(a) a belief that women universally face some form of oppression or exploitation; (b) a commitment to uncover and understand what causes and sustains oppression, in all forms and (c) a commitment to work individually and collectively in everyday life to end all forms of oppression” (Maguire, 1987, p. 79)
- **Feminist Pedagogy:** “a theory about the teaching/learning process that guides our choice of classroom practices by providing criteria to evaluate specific educational strategies and techniques in terms of the desired goals or outcomes. These evaluative criteria include the extent to which a community of learners is empowered to act responsibly towards one another and the

subject matter and to apply that learning to social action” (Shrewsbury, 1987, p. 6)

- **Hegemonic Masculinity:** “The configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell, 2005, p. 77)
- **Marginalized Masculinity:** “specifically refers to masculinities adopted by non-majority populations, particularly Black males, in relation to ideals of hegemonic masculinities represented in the dominant (white) American population” (Connell, 2005, p. 80)
- **Patriarchy:** “a political social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence” (hooks, 2004, p. 18)
- **Poststructuralist Feminism:** “a branch of feminist theory that asserts itself as a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change” (Weedon, 1997, p. 40)
- **Sex role stereotyping:** the process by which specific sociological traits and predispositions are expected based solely on one’s biological sex

- **Subordinated Masculinity:** “masculinities that reside at the bottom of the gender hierarchy opposite hegemonic masculinity and are often stigmatized as a result; most commonly associated with homosexuality in modern American culture” (Connell, 2005, p. 78)

Appendix B: Consent Forms

Rhode Island College Institutional Review Board
Approval #: 1617-1435
Expiration date: 3/2/18

Participant's Initials: _____
Document version: 2016-01
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Child Assent Form Rhode Island College

Developing a New Perspective: Using Visual Methods to Explore Hegemonic Masculinity in Physical Education

Hello! My name is Jeffrey Heath, and I am a doctoral student in the joint Rhode Island College and University of Rhode Island PhD program. I am conducting this study along with my major professor and primary researcher, Julie Horwitz. I'm currently doing a study that explores how the things that we do in physical education resist or support adolescent ideas about masculinity.

What You Will Have to Do

If you choose to be in the study, you will be asked to:

- Complete a brief survey on your experience as a student in physical education.
- Take photographs of masculinity and how it is displayed in your physical education class.
- On two separate occasions you will be asked to use a GoPro video camera document your physical education class in real-time
- Make recommendations about how physical education class can be improved in the future for Tiverton High School students.
- While you might not have a camera/GoPro during class, you may be photographed or videotaped by other students in the class
- Participate in a public, visual display of your work in the Tiverton High School gymnasium. With your permission, your photos, videos, and comments will be part of this display. During the event you will be asked to talk about your artifacts to small groups of people.

Additionally, you *may be* asked to:

- Participate in 2-3 recorded interviews in which you speak about your photos/videos with me. These interviews will last about 30-60 minutes and will be done right after school at a time/date agreed upon by you/your parents and myself.
- Discuss your photographs, videos, and related thoughts with me and other participating students

We already have informed your parents about the study and they said that you could participate if you want to. If you don't want to be in the study, you can say "No" and nobody will be upset/nothing bad will happen. Whether you participate or don't keep in mind that your physical education grade will not be effected and you will receive the same amount of physical education no matter what your decision is. Also, if you do decide to participate and later change your mind, no one will be upset and nothing bad will happen.

If at any time throughout the study you think that you were treated badly or have any problems with this study you should tell your parents and/or guidance counselor and they will know what to do.

Benefits of Being in the Study

There are no direct benefits to you if you decide to participate in this study.

Incentives for Being in the Study:

You will receive a 1.0GB thumb drive with the individual pictures you have taken throughout the course of the study at the conclusion of the project.

Deciding Whether to Be in the Study

Being in the study is your choice to make. Nobody can force you to be in the study. You can choose not to be in the study, and nobody will hold it against you. You can change your mind and quit the study at any time, and you do not have to give a reason. If you decide to quit later, nobody will hold it against you. It should also be noted that electing to not participate in the study will not affect your physical education grade in any way. Additionally, if you choose not to participate you will still receive the same amount of physical education instruction that you would receive if you do participate.

How Your Information will be Protected

You should know that this study will require you to take pictures and videos of your daily experiences/interactions in your physical education class. As the researcher I do reserve the right to delete any pictures deemed as being inappropriate. Once you have taken your photos and recorded your videos using a GoPro camera you will be asked to participate in 2-3 individual interviews with me relating to your pictures as well as 1-2 larger, group interviews with several of your peers.

While you will be responsible for taking these pictures and videos for this project, participating in this project will require you to grant me what is called "dual property rights" over your pictures and videos. What this means is that the pictures are owned by both you and I at the same time. This right allows both of us to use the pictures as we choose after the study has ended. I will be giving you a 1.0GB jump drive at the end of the project on which you will have all of your pictures to keep. I will be keeping my copy of your photos/video for future presentations and writing that I will be doing as a researcher.

If you would like to participate in the study but do not want to be seen in photos and/or videos, you have the option of having your face hidden using computer software. If you choose this option, I will add a "blur" effect to your face in pictures/videos hiding your identity from other people.

It should also be noted that digital cameras and videos will still be utilized in your physical education class *even if you decide not to participate*. If by chance you are accidentally photographed or recorded and you didn't want to participate you will be completely removed from the images using computer software. In the event that I can't "edit you out" of the image, the image/video clip will not be used and will be thrown away.

Your real name will not be used in any reports or presentations. Instead of using your name, you will be given a false name. Also any of your responses shared during interviews (group or individual) or on surveys will not be shared with any of your teachers and/or administrators. It should be noted that your pictures will not be shown to your teachers/administrators however your GoPro videos may be used during interviews that I have with your physical education teacher.

There is only one thing that I would have to share with someone else, and that is if I think you are in danger for any reason or if I see you hurt yourself or someone else on purpose. In the event that this happens I will talk to you first before I talk to anyone else so that we can talk about what I thought happened and who I need to share the information with. I wanted to let you know that this might happen if you tell me that kind of information or are involved in this type of activity. Do you understand that?

Do you have any questions about the study?

So what do you think? Would you like to participate?

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Please see the back of this form for the signature portion of the document.

Statement of Consent

I have read and understand the information above. I am choosing to be in the study Developing a New Perspective: Using Visual Methods to Explore Hegemonic Masculinity in Physical Education.

I fully recognize that I can change my mind and quit at any time, and I don't have to give a reason.

Please **CIRCLE THE OPTIONS** that apply to you in the boxes provided.

A. Photo Release

I agree to be **photographed** for this study.

I agree to be **photographed** for this study with use of a "blurred face effect" to hide my identity.

I do not agree to be **photographed** for this study.

B. Video Release

I agree to be **video recorded** for this study.

I agree to be **video recorded** for this study with use of a "blurred face effect" to hide my identity.

I do not agree to be **video recorded** for this study.

C. Audio Release

I agree to be **audio recorded** for this study.

I do not agree to be **audio recorded** for this study.

D. Photo Flash Drive Release

I do agree to receive a flash drive containing digital copies of the photos I have taken.

I do not agree to receive a flash drive containing digital copies of the photos I have taken.

D. Signatures

Date: _____

Print Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT DOCUMENT

Rhode Island College

Developing a New Perspective: Using Visual Methods to Explore Hegemonic Masculinity in Physical Education

Hello! My name is Jeffrey Heath, and I am a doctoral student in the joint Rhode Island College and University of Rhode Island PhD program. I am conducting this study in conjunction with my major professor and primary researcher, Julie Horwitz. You are being delivered this document of consent because your child has been asked to participate in a research study that examines the role physical education plays in establishing gender-related practices amongst high school students. Your child is being asked because of their position as a public school student enrolled in the Tiverton High School physical education program. Please read this form and ask any questions that you have before choosing whether to be in the study.

Why this Study is Being Done (Purpose)

This study is being conducted for two purposes. First, this study is designed to explore how students in Tiverton High School define masculinity while participating in regularly scheduled physical education class. Participants will also be asked to examine the relationship between masculinity and physical activity with the goal of making recommendations geared towards improving the physical education experiences of all Tiverton High School students.

What Your Child Will Have to Do (Procedures)

If you choose to allow your child to be in the study, they will be asked to:

- Complete a brief survey on their personal experience in physical education.
- Take photographs of masculinity and how it is displayed in their physical education class. I will be providing the cameras for participants to use.
- Twice during the allotted research time period, use a GoPro video camera document their physical education class in real-time. I will be providing the GoPro video cameras for participants to use
- Make recommendations about how physical education class can be improved for Tiverton High School students.
- Participate in a public, visual display of their work in the Tiverton High School gymnasium. With permission from you and your child, photos, videos, and comments will be part of this display. During the event your child will be asked to talk about their pictures to interested attendees.
- It should be noted that some participants will not be taking photographs but could be the subject of another student's photograph(s). All children may be photographed by other children in the class
- All students will receive a flash drive of pictures that they have taken

Additionally, they *may be* asked to:

- Participate in 2-3 recorded interviews in which they speak about the photos/videos they've taken with the researcher. These interviews will last approximately 30-60 minutes and will be administered after school at a time agreed upon by the researcher and participant(s). These interviews will be conducted at Tiverton High school and may be administered in either a focus group or individual format. To decide which students will participate in these interviews, names will be placed into a hat and selected at random by your student's physical educator. Approximately 4 students will be selected for individual interviews and approximately 8 students will be selected for focus group interviews.
- Discuss photographs, videos, and related thoughts with the researcher and the other participants.

Risks or Discomforts

The risks of this study are minimal, meaning that they are about the same as what you would expect your child to experience during everyday activities. Your child may find that answering some questions may be uncomfortable and/or upsetting. We think it would be similar to the kinds of things they would talk about with family and friends. Your child can skip any questions you don't want to answer, and they can quit the study at any time. If your child wants to talk to someone about their feelings or about problems that they're having, they can talk to any guidance counselor, principal, or physical education teacher at any point throughout the study as they are all aware of the project. I do reserve the right to review and eliminate any pictures that may not be considered appropriate for sharing.

Benefits of Being in the Study

There are no direct benefits to you or your child for participating in this study.

Incentives for Being in the Study:

Your child will receive a 1.0GB thumb drive with the individual pictures they have taken throughout the course of the study at the conclusion of the project.

Deciding Whether to Be in the Study

Being in the study is a choice for you and your child to make. Nobody can force you/them to be in the study. You can choose not allow your child to be in the study, and nobody will hold it against them. Your child can change their mind and quit the study at any time, and you/they do not have to give a reason. If you/they decide to quit later, nobody will hold it against you. It should also be noted that electing to not participate in the study will not affect your child's physical education grade in any way. Additionally, if you choose to not allow your child to participate they will still receive the same amount of physical education instruction that they would receive if they do participate.

How Your Child's Information will be Protected

Because this is a research study, results will be shared in reports that we publish and presentations that we give. Also, while your child will be responsible for generating pictures and videos for this project participating in this study will require you and your child to grant the researchers dual property rights over any pictures and videos taken by your child. By granting the researchers dual property rights you and your child are giving the researchers permission to reuse the photos and video generated throughout this research process in future publications and/or presentations.

If you would like your child to participate in the study but do not want them to be seen in photo and video artifacts, you have the option of having their identity obscured using digital editing software. If you choose this option, the researcher will utilize computer software to add a “blur” effect to your child’s face obscuring their identity from an outside audience.

Because the use of digital imagery is essential to the framework of this study it should be noted that digital cameras and videos will still be utilized in your child’s regularly scheduled physical education class. If by chance a non-participating student is accidentally photographed or recorded they will be completely removed using Photoshop visual editing software. In the event that the non-participant is unable to be “edited out” of the image, the image/video clip will be promptly deleted.

Your child’s name will not be used in any reports or presentations. Instead of using your child’s name, they will be given a false name. Written information will be kept in a locked office file, and seen only by myself and other researchers who work with me. In a similar fashion, visual artifacts will be stored on a password protected, external hard drive and locked in an office filing cabinet. Visual artifacts will only be seen by myself and other cooperating researchers as well.

The only time I would have to share information from the study is if your child is suspected of harming themselves or others, then I would have to report it to the appropriate authorities. Also, if there are problems with the study, the records may be viewed by the Rhode Island College review board responsible for protecting the rights and safety of people who participate in research. The information will be kept for a maximum of three years after the study is over, after which it will be destroyed.

Who to Contact

You can ask any questions you have now. If you have any questions later, you can contact Jeff Heath at jheath@ric.edu or 401-456-8862 or Julie Horwitz at jhorwitz@ric.edu or 401-456-8170.

If you think you were treated badly in this study, have complaints, or would like to talk to someone other than the researcher about your rights or safety as a research participant, please contact Dr. Cynthia Padula at IRB@ric.edu, by phone at 401-456-9720.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Please see the back of this form for the signature portion of the document.

Statement of Consent

I have read and understand the information above. I am choosing to allow my child to be in the study Developing a New Perspective: Using Visual Methods to Explore Hegemonic Masculinity in Physical Education. I fully recognize that I can change my mind and quit at any time, and I don't have to give a reason. My child also has the option of changing their mind and quitting at any time without reason. I have been given answers to the questions I have asked, or I will contact the researcher with any questions that come up later. I am at least 18 years of age.

Please CIRCLE THE OPTIONS that apply to you in the boxes provided.

A. Photo Release

I will allow my child to be
photographed for this study.

I will allow my child be
photographed for this study with
use of a "blurred face effect" to
obscure my identity.

I will not allow my child
photographed for this study.

B. Video Release

I will allow my child to be
video recorded for this study.

I will allow my child to be **video**
recorded for this study with use of
a "blurred face effect" to obscure
my identity.

I will not allow my child to be
video recorded for this study.

C. Audio Release

I will allow my child to be
audio recorded for this study.

I will not allow my child to be
audio recorded for this study.

D. Photo Flash Drive Release

I will allow my child to receive a
flash drive containing digital copies
of the photos they have taken.

I will not allow my child to receive a
flash drive containing digital copies
of the photos they have taken.

E. Signatures

Date: _____

Print Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent: _____

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Rhode Island College

Developing a New Perspective: Using Visual Methods to Explore Hegemonic Masculinity in Physical Education

Hello! My name is Jeffrey Heath, and I am a doctoral student in the joint Rhode Island College and University of Rhode Island PhD program. I am conducting this study in conjunction with my major professor and primary researcher, Julie Horwitz. You are being delivered this document of consent because you been asked to participate in a research study that examines the role physical education plays in establishing gender-related practices amongst high school students. You are being asked to participate because of your position as a physical education teacher employed by Tiverton High School. Please read this form and ask any questions that you have before choosing whether to be in the study.

Why this Study is Being Done (Purpose)

This study is being conducted for two purposes. First, this study is designed to explore how students in Tiverton High School define masculinity while participating in regularly scheduled physical education class. Participants will also be asked to examine the relationship between masculinity and physical activity with the goal of making recommendations geared towards improving the physical education experiences of all Tiverton High School students.

What Your Will Have to Do (Procedures)

If you choose to be in the study, you will be asked to:

- Complete a brief survey on your personal experience in physical education.
- Make recommendations about how physical education class can be improved for Tiverton High School students.
- Participate in 2-3 recorded interviews centered around your beliefs relating to gender and physical activity. These interviews will last approximately 30-60 minutes and will be administered after school at a time agreed upon by you and the researcher.

Risks or Discomforts

You may find that answering some questions may be confusing and/or upsetting. We think it would be similar to the kinds of things you would talk about with colleagues and friends. The risks of this study are minimal, meaning that they are about the same as what you would expect to experience during everyday activities. You can skip any questions you don't want to answer, and you can quit the study at any time. If you want to talk to someone about your feelings or about problems that you're having, you can talk to the principal at any point throughout the study as he is abreast of the project.

Benefits of Being in the Study

Benefits of being in this study include:

- There are no direct benefits to your participating in this study

Incentives for Being in the Study:

Participants will receive a 1.0GB thumb drive with the individual pictures they have taken throughout the course of the study at the conclusion of the project.

Deciding Whether to Be in the Study

Being in the study is a choice for you to make. Nobody can force you to be in the study. You can choose not to be in the study, and nobody will hold it against you. You can change their mind and quit the study at any time, and you do not have to give a reason. If you decide to quit later, nobody will hold it against you. It should also be noted that electing to not participate in the study will not affect your employment in any way. Whether you choose to participate in this study or not, you will continue to teach as you typically would in the classes selected for this research study.

How Your Information will be Protected

Because this is a research study, results will be shared in reports that we publish and presentations that we give. Also, while your students will be responsible for generating pictures and videos for this project participating in this study will require your students to grant the researchers dual property rights over any pictures and videos taken. By granting the researchers dual property rights your students are giving the researchers permission to reuse the photos and video generated throughout this research process in future publications and/or presentations.

If you would like to participate in the study but do not want to be seen in photo and video artifacts, you have the option of having your identity obscured using digital editing software. If you choose this option, the researcher will utilize computer software to add a “blur” effect to your face obscuring your identity from an outside audience.

Because the use of digital imagery is essential to the framework of this study it should be noted that digital cameras and videos will still be utilized in your regularly scheduled physical education class. If by chance a non-participating student or teacher is accidentally photographed or recorded they will be completely removed using Photoshop visual editing software. In the event that the non-participant is unable to be “edited out” of the image, the image/video clip will be promptly deleted.

Your name will not be used in any reports or presentations. Instead of using your name, you will be given a false name. Written information will be kept in a locked office file, and seen only by myself and other researchers who work with me. In a similar fashion, visual artifacts will be stored on a password protected, external hard drive and locked in an office filing cabinet. Visual artifacts will only be seen by myself and other cooperating researchers as well.

The only time I would have to share information from the study is if you or your students are suspected of harming themselves or others, then I would have to report it to the appropriate authorities. Also, if there are problems with the study, the records may be viewed by the Rhode Island College review board responsible for protecting the rights and safety of people who participate in research. The

information will be kept for a maximum of three years after the study is over, after which it will be destroyed.

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If you think you were treated badly in this study, have complaints, or would like to talk to someone other than the researcher about your rights or safety as a research participant, please contact Dr. Cynthia Padula at IRB@ric.edu by phone at 401-456-9720.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Please see the back of this form for the signature portion of the document.

Statement of Consent

I have read and understand the information above. I am choosing to be in the study Developing a New Perspective: Using Visual Methods to Explore Hegemonic Masculinity in Physical Education. I fully recognize that I can change my mind and quit at any time, and I don't have to give a reason. I have been given answers to the questions I have asked, or I will contact the researcher with any questions that come up later. I am at least 18 years of age.

Please **CIRCLE THE OPTIONS** that apply to you in the boxes provided.

A. Photo Release

I agree to be **photographed** for this study.

I agree to be **photographed** for this study with use of a "blurred face effect" to obscure my identity.

I do not agree to **photographed** for this study.

B. Video Release

I agree to be **video recorded** for this study.

I agree to be **video recorded** for this study with use of a "blurred face effect" to obscure my identity.

I do not agree to be **video recorded** for this study.

C. Audio Release

I agree to be **audio recorded** for this study.

I do not agree to be **audio recorded** for this study.

D. Signatures

Date: _____

Print Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent: _____

Appendix C: Subsample Randomized Selection Protocol

The following randomization procedure was used for the purposes of: **(a)** evenly administering the 11 digital cameras and 2 GoPro® cameras to student-participants and **(b)** choosing students to participate in the focus group interview and **(c)** ensuring that student-participants were randomly selected when considering who to include in the narrative subsample:

- 1) Each student within the larger sample was assigned a number (1-15).
 - 2) I then traveled to the website <https://www.google.com> and searched the term “random number generator.”
 - 3) This search led me to the following sub-site:
https://www.google.com/search?source=hp&ei=UuqQWr3mIsqwjwPGioKADw&q=random+number+generator&oq=random+num&gs_l=psy-ab.3.0.0l2j0i131k1j0l6j0i20i264k1.665.2483.0.3401.11.9.0.0.0.345.1091.0j1j1j2.4.0....0...1.1.64.psy-ab..7.4.1091.0..35i39k1j0i131https://www.goo
 - 4) After specifying my “min-max” (1-15), I then clicked the blue “Generate” button and received a randomized number.
 - 5) For the purpose of assigning cameras, this process was repeated 13 times with the first 11 numbers being associated with digital cameras and the final 2 numbers being associated with GoPro® assignment.
- Note:** if a student-participant refused to use the camera or GoPro® during an assigned class period that camera was offered to another student without a camera. On some occasions no student elected to use the extra camera in which case it was placed to the side for the class period.
- 6) In the case of the focus groups and the participant narratives, the student-participant that was associated with the provided number was then asked to participate in the associated subsample.

Note: if a student-participant elected to not participate in the subsample, the same process was used to determine an alternative participant.

Appendix D: Camera Information Sheet

Developing a New Perspective: Information Sheet

Guiding Question:

WHAT DOES YOUR EXPERIENCE IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION LOOK LIKE IF YOU WERE TO SHARE IT WITH SOMEONE NOT IN YOUR CLASS?

Important Words & Definitions:

- **Biological Sex**- the concept of male or female based primarily on a person's reproductive system and hormones
- **Gender**- the characteristics of masculine and feminine based on a person's behavior, dress, actions, and speech
- **Gender roles**- the idea that boys are generally encouraged to display masculine traits and girls are generally encouraged to display feminine traits; **Examples?**

How will this work?

To answer the guiding question, you will be assigned either a digital camera or a GoPro to use in physical education at several points throughout the school year. You will not be asked to use these tools every day but all of you will have at least one opportunity to use each the devices.

Rules for Using Technology:

- 1) Devices are to be picked up from Mr. Cleary at the beginning of each class. Please only use your assigned camera to take pictures.
- 2) Devices must be returned to Mr. Cleary *prior to entering the locker rooms or Commons area at the close of class.*
- 3) Only pictures of other people, items, and spaces in your physical education class (i.e. students, teachers) are allowed.
- 4) If you feel the camera is in your way during class you can place it off to the side until you can safely use it again. Please respect the equipment and don't drop the cameras!!
- 5) You **MUST** take a minimum of 3 pictures per class when using the cameras.
- 6) GoPros must be worn using the provided head harness.
- 7) In the event that any of the equipment gets damaged let me or your teacher know as soon as possible.
- 8) Listen to your classmates. If someone does not want their picture taken at a specific time don't take the picture.
- 9) Pictures should seek to answer the guiding question only.

GoPro Video Camera Instructions:

- 1) Check with Mr. Cleary to see if it's "your day" to use a GoPro.
- 2) Turn on the GoPro using the On/Off button located on the front of the camera (if done correctly the LED display will turn on).
- 3) Push the "Record" button located on the top of the GoPro to begin your recording. If you do this correctly the red light on the front of the GoPro will blink continuously.
- 4) When class is finished, push the "Record" button again to stop your recording.
- 5) Return the GoPro to Mr. Cleary before entering the locker rooms or leaving class.

Digital Camera Instructions:

- 1) Check with Mr. Cleary to see if it's "your day" to use a camera.
- 2) Turn on the camera using the On/Off button located on the top.
- 3) Take pictures by pressing the large button on top of the camera. You may take as many pics or the people, places, items, spaces, and activities as you would like in regular PE class.
- 4) You may zoom in or out by lightly pressing the lever around this button left or right.
- 5) At the end of class, turn off your camera using the On/Off button used previously.
- 6) Give the camera back to Mr. Cleary.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What should I take pictures of?

A: Your pictures can be of people, places, things, or situations that are part of your physical education class. Keep in mind that your pictures should seek to answer the guiding question listed at the top of the front page.

Q: How many pictures do I take?

A: You are required to take a minimum of 3 pictures however you can take as many pictures as you would like during regular class time.

Q: What happens to my pictures?

A: I'll download your pictures to my computer. Then, I will do follow-up interviews based on the pictures that you take with some of you. In these interviews you will be able to select the pictures you would like to speak about.

Contact Information: If at any time throughout the course of the study you have a problem or would like to stop participating please speak to your teacher. Also, you may have your parents contact me or Rhode Island College at any time with questions or concerns.

Primary Researcher

Jeffrey Heath
Email: jheath@ric.edu
Phone: (401) 456-8862

Supervising Researcher

Dr. Julie Horwitz
Email: jhorwitz@ric.edu
Phone: (401) 456-8170

RIC Review Board

Cindy Padula
Email: IRB@ric.edu
Phone: (401) 456-9720

Appendix E: Research Camera Schedule

Digital Camera Schedule																
			Round 1							Round 1b (GoPro Recovery)					Round 2	
			3-Apr	5-Apr	7-Apr	11-Apr	13-Apr	27-Apr	1-May	3-May	5-May	15-May	17-May	30-May		
#	Name	Sex														
1	Bell, Johnnie	M	X4		X10	G1	X2					GP1	X9	X6		
2	Carr, Isaac	M	X3	GP2	X9	X8	X8			GP2			X4	X2	X10	
3	Cole, Sean	M													X6	
4	Collier, Sarah	F	X9	X9	GP2	X9	X6				GP2			X7	X3	
5	Crawford, Jayson	M		GP1	X6	X7	X11						X6	X11	X9	
6	Dixon, Mae	F	X10	X10	GP1	X10	X12			GP1			X2	X10		
7	Floyd, David	M	X2		X2	X2							X5		X11	
8	Frazier, Drew	M	GP1	X3	X3	X11	X5			GP1			G2		X7	
9	Lawson, Marc	M									X7					
10	McCoy, Peter	M	X11	X11	X11	X3	G2						X10	X8	X12	
11	McDaniel, Andre	M	X5	X5	X5	X6	G1						G1	X9	X4	
12	McKinney, Olivia	F	GP2	X4	X4	X4	X10						7			
13	Perry, Maggie	F	X7	X7	X7	X5	X9						X3		X8	
14	Ross, Katrina	F	X12	X12	X12	G2	X4					G2	X8	X3	X5	
15	Sharp, Lila	F														
16	Spenceer, Neil	M	X6	X6		X12	X7				GP1		X12		X2	
17	Wright, Ben	M	X8	X8									X11	X12		

Appendix F: Preliminary Student Survey

PHYSICAL EDUCATION SURVEY

Directions: Hi and thanks for taking some time to fill out this survey! The survey is designed to help improve physical education for all students. Please answer each of the following questions as honestly as possible in the spaces provided. If you feel uncomfortable or are unsure about any of the questions you can leave that question blank. Feel free to ask me for clarification on anything that's unclear while taking the survey. I will be the only person to read your answers. **Note** that this survey will have absolutely nothing to do with your physical education grade... rather it is designed to help make physical education class better for all students.

Part I. Getting to Know You

Name: (First and Last) _____

Sex: (Please Circle One) Female Male Other

Age: (Years) _____

Race-Ethnicity: (Please Check all that apply)

Black _____ Native American _____ Hispanic _____

White _____ Pacific Islander _____ Not Hispanic _____

Asian _____ Other: (Not Listed) _____

Part II. Questions

1) What is the *best* part about physical education in school?

Part II. Questions (continued...)

2) What is the *worst* part about physical education in school?

3) In your own words, what does it mean to be “good” at physical education class?

4) A *clique* is another name for a social group that people hang out in. For example, students that play in the school band or on a sports team might routinely hang out together forming a *clique*. Are there any *cliques* that exist in your gym class? If so, describe what qualities a person must have to fit in with this/these groups.

5) Envision the “ideal” physical education student. Then, answer the following questions.

a) What does this person *look* like?

Part III. Questions (continued...)

b) What does this person *act* like?

c) Which types of physical activity would this person be good at?

6) On a scale of 1-10 (1=awful and 10=awesome) how would you rate your average daily performance in physical education?

(Make a mark on the line in the appropriate spot)

7) Why did you rate yourself like you did in the previous question?

8) What is your favorite activity in physical education class?

9) What do you like about this activity?

10) What is your least favorite activity in physical education class?

11) Why is this your least favorite activity?

12) Is there anything else that you would like to say about physical education class that was not covered in this survey?

Appendix G: Sample Observation Transcription

Observations	Additional Thoughts
<p>Logistics/Class Management</p> <p>To begin class several students (all boys) try to enter the gym and inconspicuously join class. Marc turns them away saying, “I can’t... not today... I can’t” Shortly after Kathryn (girl) comes to the door and asks if he can write her a pass to go to the library (this despite the fact that she’s not even in this class). Marc thinks about it for a second then sends her away. Shortly after Dominick Mendez enters the gym through the same door (school sports star) he’s heading across the gym to presumably weightlift. As he enters students hoot and holler and try to get his attention. Marc engages in this as well... his presence in the gym (or where he came from for that matter) are not questioned... he just keeps walking with a smile acknowledging the praise.</p> <p>Class began today with students that were absent during the initial administration of surveys catching up by filling out their surveys for my study. I noticed Olivia helping Lila with hers but once I looked over the surveys I noticed that Lila had very few answers filled in.</p> <p>Similar to other classes the group began by stretching in the middle of the gym. Today the gym was completely partitioned off with the only way of crossing back and forth to be going through 2 small doors in the partition itself.</p> <p>The group does 3 laps around the half court of the gym (as the divider is currently close). It’s raining outside today so Marc indicates that he was planning on going outside for activities... but the weather forced him to change his plans. Katrina and Mae walk together as do Lila and Olivia... Neil, Isaac, and David jog... Sam, Ben, Sarah, and Maggie power walk...</p> <p>Ben, Johnnie, Lila, Olivia, and Neil choose basketball. I can’t see them on the other side of the gym as the divider is closed. Lila’s aid goes with them but Marc is unable to see the students on the other side of the wall. His focus is on the handball game.</p> <p>There are only 8 people on this side of the court playing handball (Katrina, Maggie, Sarah, Mae, Andre, Isaac, David, Sam). The teams are Katrina, Sarah, Mae, and Isaac v. Andre, David, Sam, and Maggie.</p> <p>Mr. Lawson’s Role</p> <p>To begin class Marc spoke to me about how May 9 will be his final day filling in as teacher for this class. In a surprising move (according to him) Walsh is coming back into the gym and people are getting shuffled back to their regular positions. When I</p>	<p>The “not today...” portion of the comment intrigues me... is he not letting extra students participate b/c I’m there?</p> <p>Also it’s interesting to see how Stephen is allowed into the gym without being questioned... Marc <i>thinks about</i> helping Kathryn... maybe b/c she’s thought of as an attractive girl? But he thinks better of it... he shuts down the boys right away...</p> <p>Does Olivia really want to help Lila for the “sake of helping Lila” or as previously discussed is Lila her “ticket” to doing whatever she wants in PE?</p> <p>Again, I feel like Marc is validating the repetition of “games” being played as opposed to delivering fitness-based (or some other type) or instruction. It’s almost like he feels like they should be doing more but he never does more...</p> <p>On his way across to this side of the gym Neil says something about his injury/surgery being the reason for this choice</p> <p>Team split is again unfair. Maggie is “accepted” to the more athletic side of teams. I wonder if it’s because the most athletic boys pay her attention?</p> <p>This was a surprise to even me that the district would make such a drastic shift this late in the school year. Marc was bummed when he was telling me this. I know from prior conversations</p>

<p>asked him what the reason for this is so late in the year, he really didn't have any explanation. He did mention that "A position at (a Ogdenville elementary school) is supposed to be coming open for a long-term sub... so I think I'll get that."</p> <p>Marc also shared how students are not allowed to drive to prom anymore. Rather, the school gets Coach busses to take them to and from. Teachers and administrators are asked to chaperone the busses and then the prom event. Marc described one of the "perks" of not being at the high school for the remainder of the year is that he could get out of that. When I asked why he was doing it in the first place he said, "Walsh asked me... and I kinda already owe him one so I was like... mehh I guess."</p> <p>Marc barely played today... this is the first time I've seen this happen.</p> <p>Marc is speaking to the group when Kevin says "I only play gold because of Mr. Tilly... I like that guy." Marc responds (surprised) "You have the grades?" David responds by saying, "Nah... but (Mr. Tilly)'s got me." Marc continues on saying (with a hint of sarcasm), "You didn't have them freshman year when you lasted a whole 2 weeks playing baseball." David defensively says, "Well.. I did... for most of it..." Marc cuts him off and says, "No you didn't... I remember that year... I was practically out in the parking lot of the China Sea (restaurant) trying to recruit kids to field a team! I kept uniforms in my trunk!" Students all laugh at the comment. David doesn't respond but doesn't seem overly upset... he's smiling at the comment.</p> <p>During the stretch Marc socialized with students about sports, school, their families, and really anything that they wanted to talk about. He has done this every time I've observed now and it appears as though the students really appreciate the effort to get to know them.</p> <p>During a game break several students go through the divider doors to see what's happening on the basketball side of the gym. Several of the boys start trying to throw the handball over the divider through a small space between the divider and the gym ceiling. When Marc realizes what's going on he goes over to the partition (standing between each court in the open doorway) and says, "Hey if (the ball) gets stuck I'm gonna throw you over (the wall)."</p> <p>Isaac scores a shot from a distance away with a really hard throw. Many of the students appear to be impressed with the shot. Marc yells out, "Kid's a pitcher! That's why!"</p> <p>Marc continually encourages Katrina to shoot when she gets the ball. Eventually she does but is blocked by the backboard. Later she makes a nice pass behind the back and Marc makes a huge deal out of it.</p>	<p>that he has moved from long term sub job to long term sub job for quite some time in PE/Health... specifically in Springfield. I was interested to see how quickly he was able to put his disappointment aside though to engage the students enthusiastically during stretch.</p> <p>Wow... pretty cool policy here I thought... very forward thinking.. I wonder why he owes Walsh? In speaking with him it didn't feel like it was professionally-based.</p> <p>Hmm... maybe because there were no students with special needs in the game? Even teams 4 v 4? In the dumps about learning he's going to have to vacate his position?</p> <p>This was an interesting exchange. David tries to play it cool more often than not in class... so to see him engage with the teacher was surprising. Especially considering how the teacher decided to bring up some potentially embarrassing info about his grades and/or lack of participation in freshman baseball. David wore the comments like a badge of honor... like an expectation rather than something that upset him...</p> <p>Hegemonic masculinity here... FTW</p> <p>Marc's sports-related examples and praise often come back to baseball analogies... a sport he coaches and outwardly loves</p> <p>Marc makes a big deal any time the girls in class get involved or do something remotely above the "cadaver" level. Sometimes it feels genuine... most times it feels forced... I bet the girls feel this too... although I'm finding it difficult to read their laughs and smiles...</p>
--	---

Appendix H: Focus Group Questions

Focus Group Protocol (5-1)

- Have Students sign in on a blank sheet for later analyses
- Thank everyone for coming...

OPENING QUESTIONS/ICE-BREAKERS

- (a) How is everyone?
- (b) I haven't seen you all in a while... what do you think of the high school?
- (c) How's the school year been so far?

TOPIC DOMAIN 1: GENERAL SCHOOL QUESTIONS

LEADOFF QUESTION: So if you had to pick a favorite teacher who would you pick and why?

Possible Follow-up Questions:

- Why do y'all call some teachers by just their last name and others get a title like "Mr. (blank) or Mrs. (blank)?"
- Do you think all students get treated equally here? What about boys and girls... is there any difference in the way they're treated?
- I've noticed that pretty much every time I've been in your class people that aren't in your class try to get into the gym. Why do you think that is?

TOPIC DOMAIN 2: INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES IN PE

LEADOFF QUESTION: So in looking at the surveys I gave everyone... people said that (1) changing (2) effort and (3) participation really matter in gym. If you're telling me that these things are super important why doesn't everyone do them all the time?

Possible Follow-up Questions:

- What do you learn in gym that you might not learn anywhere else in school or vice versa?
- In your own words, what's a "Try Hard?" Is it a good/bad thing to be called a "try-hard?"
- What are your thoughts on having the adapted PE students included in your class?
- When is gym "really good?" When is it "really crappy?"

TOPIC DOMAIN 3: GROUPINGS IN PE

LEADOFF QUESTION: We're going to do a word association. You're only allowed to say "boy" or "girl." (The more you think about it before you speak the more messed up the result). I say Football, Yoga, Soccer, Science, English Class, Gym Class. Why did you say the sex that you did?

Possible Follow-up Questions:

- Why do you think some students "group-up" in your gym class?
- If you had to pick one person to call the "leader" of your PE class who would that be? Why did you pick them?
- Place yourself in the shoes of the opposite sex, how do you think they perceive your experience in PE? (Same for other sex). Now, is this accurate? Why or why not?

TOPIC DOMAIN 4: ROLE OF THE TEACHER

LEADOFF QUESTION: How do you think the gym teacher plays a role in what goes on in class? Talk to me about your gym teachers and what they're like.

Possible Follow-up Questions:

- I notice that the PE teachers participate a lot in class... what are your thoughts on that?
- What do you wish your PE teachers did or said that right now, they don't do or say?

- So PE is obviously offered as a class in school... What's the most important thing students are supposed to take-away from being in PE class for K-12 school?
- How do your PE teachers compare to your other teachers in the school? Similarities? Differences?

CLOSING QUESTIONS

(a) Is there anything else that I missed and you're dying to say or tell me? Now's your chance!

Appendix I: Excerpt from Researcher Journal

(Excerpt taken from 6-9 Journal Entry; Binaries & Phraseology)

... In addition to the phraseology issues I described above, I am also finding myself reverting back to dichotomous terminology when providing further description to students in my study. I realize in the moment that I'm consciously going to this "crutch" and I've been trying to determine whether or not this is a conscious choice I make to help students understand my point using a common language (i.e. similar to how I use the term "gym class" to describe "physical education" the former being considered as sacrilegious in professional, physical education discourse) or if this is a mental obstacle that I myself am personally trying to work through. Perhaps there is some insight to this confusion in the sense that I am also feeling this conundrum when I am constructing interview questions, writing personal journal entries, and generally thinking about my research during my spare time. I feel as though this either-or way of describing the associated concepts/constructions (a) takes away from the open-minded approach that I am trying to promote via this research and (b) directly opposes my theoretical frame of poststructuralist feminism as a key component to poststructuralist inquiry is the rejection of concrete binaries. The dichotomies that I find myself having the most difficulty overcoming are listed below:

- **Athletic/Unathletic-** A classmate called me out on this the other night and I'm glad he did... because it's a thought that has crossed my mind several times but I had never really recorded my issue. I also feel that this binary brings me back to a place where I am marginalizing students as a white, privileged, *athletic*, second year PE teacher... a place that I perceive

myself as leaving behind. That being said students will use this description in survey responses and interviews and I find myself falling right back into the trap of using the terms myself. It's an easy way for me to talk about who appears to excel in PE and who does not... but in taking this easy road I know that I am marginalizing those students that I assign the "un-" prefix. I find it difficult to use an alternative phrase such as "students who enjoy PE" because (a) just because they're performing up to the teacher (or my) expectation doesn't mean they enjoy what they're doing (b) Athleticism and happiness are not necessarily synonymous terms. As I write and think about this further perhaps it's not possible and/or appropriate to describe students in this setting using a "one word descriptor" such as athletic/unathletic. Perhaps my descriptions, albeit slightly more wordy, need to include more nuance.

- **Masculine/Feminine (binary)**- This binary is difficult for me because I am specifically studying masculinity in its various forms so I find myself using the term (and associated construct of hegemonic masculinity) often. When using the term masculinity, I find it difficult to not automatically interpret the absolute opposite of masculinity as femininity. With this binary, I feel an "either-or" pull... rather than acknowledging these constructs on a continuum. Further complicating this issue is the culminating notion (which I believe) that ideas of gender should be scrapped altogether freeing people to be who they would most like to be... To be clear, one of the most important reasons that I believe it's necessary

to study conceptions of gender (particularly masculinity) is so that we as global citizens can begin to deconstruct these ideas in the hope that future generations will not feel shackled by the naming and associated expectations of gender.

- **Masculine Hierarchical Thinking (Most masculine, Second-most masculine...)**- Here I struggle with naming students as the “most masculine in class” or the “second most masculine” in class... my conversation with my major professor the other day helped to clear this up for me somewhat.... I think adding the addendum “per the research...” or “per student responses...” will help provide appropriate context that I didn’t have before for these types of statements
- **Male/Female (binary)**- I’m having issues here for similar reasons listed under the masculine/feminine binary above. Also, when thinking of how to rephrase this one... I don’t know if “other” is an appropriate 3rd option to list when providing a choice for people to self-report.
- **Able bodied/Disabled**- discussed in the previous section on phraseology

Appendix J: Data Collection Matrix

Research Questions	Data Source #1	Data Source #2	Data Source #3	Data Source #4	Data Source #5
(a) How do localized notions of masculinity influence students' perceptions of themselves and others while participating in an eleventh grade physical education class?	Personal Narratives	Semi-structured, photo elicitation interviews	GoPro® Video Recordings and Student-generated photos	Researcher Observations and Journal	Student survey responses (Pre-study survey)
(b) How do physical education teachers perpetuate and/or disrupt localized notions of masculinity in an eleventh grade physical education class?	Researcher Observations and Journal	Semi-structured, photo elicitation interviews	Personal Narrative(s)	GoPro® Video Recordings	Teacher-generated photos
(c) How do the narratives of eleventh grade physical education students and their teachers help me to uncover meaning in my personal narrative as an athletic, able-bodied, heterosexual, white male researcher?	Researcher Observations and Journal	Semi-structured interview	Personal Narrative(s)	GoPro® Video Recordings	Student and Teacher-generated photos

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