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Separate and Unequal: Physical Education and Sports for Boys and Girls in the Racially-Segregated Public Schools of Washington, D.C., 1889-1954

In recent years, the plight of physical education in the public schools of the United States has attracted considerable attention. National studies, professional organizations, and popular media have identified an apparent crisis in the physical activity programs of elementary and secondary schools and, more generally, a decline in health and fitness among America's youth. Critics bemoan the inadequate time and resources allotted to "gym class" and the failure of contemporary physical education to provide most youngsters with the tools and motivation for healthy activity. These developments will sound familiar to historians of physical education and sports. On several occasions during the past century, American physical education faced similar questions about its mission and effectiveness, and fundamental reforms ensued. Current debates may also transform the field – as well as rekindle scholarly interest in the "ordinary" world of physical activity in public schools.

The extant secondary literature about physical education offers a useful starting point for the next phase of historical research. Numerous theses and dissertations (from the 1930s through the 1960s) profiled the programs of specific cities and states around the country. More recently, some historians and sociologists have analyzed the "hidden curriculum" of physical education and athletics – that is, the values and behaviors (especially gender norms) that school programs were designed to inculcate in boys and girls. Overall, available studies address the content and objectives, the means and ends of physical education and sports in public schools.

We know very little, however, about process – about the long road between ends and means. How did public schools frame their goals for physical activity, and how did they translate agendas into policies and curricula? How did specific programs in physical education and sports come about in particular locales and periods? The answers are likely to be complicated, because public schools in the United States have always been complex institutions. They

handle diverse student populations (in terms of age, sex, race, ethnicity, and ability). They involve multiple power blocs, including lay directors, professional administrators, teachers, and parents. To begin understanding such complexity, this paper develops a historical case study. It examines the evolution of physical education and sports in the public schools of Washington, D.C.. from the 1880s to the 1950s. It traces programs in exercise and athletics (intramural and interscholastic) for boys and girls in both the white and black divisions of the city's segregated schools from the introduction of formal physical training (1889) through racial integration (1954). The paper is based on published and unpublished primary materials, such as official documents of the Board of Education; the minutes of school board meetings; studies by Congressional oversight committees; reports and articles by various administrators, teachers, and coaches; and the archival papers of several individuals, including Edwin B. Henderson, the distinguished black physical educator who served in the city's schools for 50 years. The paper focuses on the relationship between ends and means in programs of physical education and athletics. Specifically, what ideas about gender and race did school officials construct and implement via physical activities?

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China Leaps Forward: Ideology and Authority in the Promotion of Mass Physical Culture

This paper examines government rationales supporting the promotion of mass physical culture in the People's Republic of China from its founding in 1949 to the 1995 establishment of the National Fitness Program. The paper examines the relationship between ideologies of socialist reform and the provision of physical culture opportunities for the common people in China. Special attention is directed toward the National Fitness Program (NFP) as one of the most recent examples of government involvement in physical activity. Instituted well after the establishment of PRC success in international competition, the government has now turned its attention to the health and fitness of the rest of the population.

To understanding the China context, an exploration of the government role in promoting mass physical culture has relevance