

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 The paper is based on published and unpublished primary materials, such as official documents of the Board of Education; the minutes of school board meetings; studies by Congressional oversight committees;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?

Susan G. Zieff

San Francisco State University

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

to an analysis of the American situation. The President's Council on Physical Fitness is the (less successful) counterpart to the National Fitness Program. Like the Chinese government's assertion of a direct relationship between Chinese socialism and the role of a healthy, fit populace in re-building the nation, the rhetoric used to support the President's Council on Physical Fitness when it was first instituted in the late 1950s had a similarly nationalistic tone.

The broader aim of this project is to expand upon the historical body of knowledge of physical activity in other cultural settings. In this case, studying sport and exercise programs in a developing nation within a different political, social, and educational system can help historians more fully understand the social construction of the values and practices we associate with physical activity.



Richard Cox & Roberta Park