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RECONSTRUCTING PHYSICAL EDUCATION
IN AN URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOL TO CREATE
A MORE DEMOCRATIC LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:
TEACHING AS PRAXIS.

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Nancy L. Knop, M.S., M.A.

*****

The Ohio State University
1998

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the interactive changes students in a high school personal fitness class and their instructor/researcher made throughout the process of creating a more democratic learning environment. The framework of the democratic curriculum was influenced by interpretations of works by Apple and Beane (1995), Darling-Hammond (1996), Dewey (1916, 1939), Friere (1970), and hooks (1994). Baechle (1995), Collingwood (1997), and the course text (Williams, Harageones, Johnson, & Smith, 1995) influenced fitness curriculum construction. This study employed a qualitative design guided by an interpretive/interventionist theoretical discourse (Green, 1993). Documentation of changes emerged from interpretations of students' actions and teacher reflections on her own actions. Investigation occurred over the duration of a 16-week semester in a midwestern urban high school. Methodology included (a) participant observation of daily classes, (b) document analysis of student work, weekly journals, and transcribed student focus group interviews, and (c) analysis of student social responsibility assessments.

Through analysis of the data, trends suggesting greater concentrations of student-teacher interaction were discovered. Initial interactions were primarily composed of resistive student responses and the teacher's subsequent attempts to alter pedagogy to motivate student involvement. To preserve the complex nature of the analysis, data were presented using an earthquake metaphor where greater accumulations of student response were termed earthquakes and the interactional nature of both student and teacher change was called relief efforts.

Three earthquakes emerged throughout the semester, in the first, fourth, and ninth week of the semester. The first earthquake revealed stress on the course expectations, the
second on the course accountability system, and the third on the learning outcomes. Intensity, damage, and duration increased with succeeding earthquakes. The democratic purpose of the course, guided by the four research questions, functioned to direct teacher response with positive changes. Two important issues emerged for eliciting student learning and fitness gains. The first revolved around pedagogical changes that supported student improvement and the second involved efforts the teacher made to support students' motivation to voluntarily buy-in to the course structures. In conclusion, this study supports curricula guided by tenets of participatory and community democracy in urban secondary physical education settings.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study has been the culmination of four challenging, exciting, and fun years spent learning about and investigating how to better understand and communicate an appreciation for sport and fitness. In the end, I have learned much about myself and what I can do to become a better teacher. I better understand how professional integrity, honesty, care, and excitement for learning and living can impact professional development, for this was the context I enjoyed in Pomerene Hall and among the PETE faculty and students.

My adviser Dr. Deborah Tannehill, ever a caring, enthusiastic, professional was pivotal in shaping my career at Ohio State. I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with her. I have especially appreciated the frequent opportunities to discuss and plan professional progress. Further, I have enjoyed and learned much from her insight, experience, intelligence, and wit.

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As influential as these three people were, probably the heart of the PETE program at Ohio State was the “family” created by the faculty and students. Faculty members, including Sandy Stroot, Sam Hodge, Camille O’Bryant and Shan Bumgarner provided intellectual support and encouragement for my work throughout my time there. The continued friendship and support of former graduate students Emyr Williams, Kathy La Master, David Kahan, Kim Gall, Gary Kinchin, and Mensah Kutame extended the Ohio
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For more than a decade physical education pedagogists have been researching, describing, decrying, and recommending changes in secondary physical education in the United States and abroad (Griffey, 1987; Locke, 1992; Siedentop, 1992; Siedentop & Locke, 1997; Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992). Attempts to identify problems and solutions have resulted in collaborative monographs detailing secondary school issues (JTPE, Graham, 1995; JTPE, O’Sullivan, 1994; Critical Crossroads, Rink, 1993; Quest, Siedentop & O’Sullivan, 1992). After reviewing literature documenting the state of secondary physical education, Locke (1992) concluded that the nature of the problems facing physical education are such that improving instruction or upgrading the present curriculum will not work. Instead he urged “replacing the dominant program model as the only course of action that can save a place for physical education in secondary schools” (p. 361).

O’Sullivan, Siedentop, and Tannehill (1994) concluded from their collaborative study of high school teachers that physical education reform needs to be “comprehensive and radical” and a “dramatic change from business as usual” (p. 427). More recently, Ennis (1996) concluded that problems still exist particularly in sport-based physical education. She stated that many students who engage in high school physical education experience discrimination and abuse. In response to these findings, she recommended researching emerging models of sport in physical education that create positive educational experiences for all students. Further, Siedentop and Locke (1997) argued that although good programs do exist, discipline-wide program improvement “continues to
elude us” (p. 25). Juxtaposed against the recent Surgeon Generals’ report (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996) extolling the benefits of daily physical exercise while describing the diminished physical activity trends of a majority of youth in the United States, the issue of how to enable all physical educators to create “good” physical education in secondary contexts becomes particularly pressing.

A related, but often separate, line of inquiry documented the culture adolescents live in today (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson; 1984; Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993; Roberts, 1996). This research suggested that today’s youth, and the contexts in which they live, are different enough from those that informed earlier educational research and practices to warrant new educational practices. A gap exists between what knowledge and experiences schools deem important and the importance placed on this knowledge and experience by the adolescent culture. This discrepancy elicited studentship from the learners trying to “get along” in the school culture while harboring resistance toward how and what they were to learn (Alpert, 1991; Csikszentmihalyi, & Larson, 1984). Resistance behaviors were also exemplified in many secondary physical education classes where teachers have great difficulty engaging students in class activities (Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992; Carlson, 1995). Scrutiny of these two lines of inquiry revealed a source of disparity between the needs of “postmodern youth” and the content and delivery of a majority of secondary physical education programs (Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992). It pointed to the need for revisioning the way we theorize, research, and practice physical education.

In discussing the value and future agenda of research on teaching physical education, Griffey (1991) concluded that because of the complexity of the school context, there will not be an easy solution to the problems teachers’ face. He suggested, however, that the focus should be on “how individuals learn and what teachers do to help them” (p. 381). Further, he predicted that “studying teachers’ methods for helping students learn while mediating students’ social and emotional anxieties in a range of physical education contexts will reveal the kind of knowledge that will have practical importance” (p. 383). More recently, in discussing implications of a collaborative investigation into what students feel and understand about physical education, Graham (1995) concluded that we
need to look at programs that have positive student outcomes. He suggested that we need to know why the impact was positive, what these programs look like, and how the teachers were able to create and sustain them in times when many physical education programs are being cut.

Further, it may be important to understand what teacher knowledge and beliefs underlie programs that yield positive student outcomes. Ennis (1994) stated that "teachers' knowledge and beliefs are instrumental in the curriculum decision-making process" (p. 146). As such, the philosophical and theoretical framework guiding a teacher will greatly impact the goals that are set for learners, the instructional strategies employed in working toward these goals, and the assessment methods used to document genuine student learning (Fosnot, 1996). Fosnot (1996) identified three paradigms, which undergird much of the educational curricular and instructional decision making - behaviorism, maturationism, and constructivism.

Rovengno and Bandhauer (1997) have recently adopted constructivist approaches on learning to guide their efforts to reform physical education curricula. Their interest in constructivism was derived from the "desire to base teaching on current understandings of how children learn and to affirm the goals of helping children think critically and creatively, apply knowledge, solve problems, negotiate meaning with peers, and acquire a deep, flexible understanding of subject matter" (p. 136). Fosnot (1996) suggested that constructivist theory may create an appropriate framework for viewing the problems present in secondary physical education settings while allowing educators to become more responsive to the learning content and context needs of students.

Constructivist theory views learning as an "interpretive, recursive, building process by active learners interacting with the physical and social world. It is a psychological theory of learning that describes how structures and deeper conceptual understandings come about" (Fosnot, 1996, p. 30). In this framework, students actively mediate what, when, and how they learn through negotiation and interpretation of teacher actions, eventually constructing personal understandings from the class processes. Constructivism is not a description of teaching practices (Fosnot, 1996). It is, instead, a theory from which educators must abstract teaching practices implied by the principles
guiding constructivist learning. For instance, that students learn best when actively engaged in a learning activity rather than passively receiving information is a principle derived from constructivism (Fosnot, 1996; Lambert, 1996). A teaching practice implied from this principle is that teaching goals and outcomes need to be dynamic and involve students in content through active engagement in learning activities (Lambert, 1996).

O’Laughlin (1995) argued that constructivist teaching aimed at progressive and student-centered learning and intended as an “antidote to traditional didactic processes” (p. 337) goes beyond Piagetian constructivism and is emancipatory in nature. The intent of emancipatory constructivism is to guide a “reflective and critical” construction of knowledge by educators interested in “enabling people to understand the socially constructed nature of reality so that they might begin constructing and acting on their own visions of a better world” (p. 337). The question that constructivism begs, however, is “constructivism toward what”? Toward what end learning goal are teachers who create constructivist curricula guiding their students?

Linda Darling-Hammond (1996) argued that we have two responsibilities as educators guiding our students’ knowledge construction. The first is to educate “for” democracy, which she described as teaching students to learn trades and good citizenship to serve the public interest. Dewey (1916) suggested that learning “for” democracy is the transmission and communication through which and by which people come to share things in common. It is what people “must have in common in order to form a community or society” and consists of “aims, beliefs, aspirations; knowledge - a common understanding - like-mindedness” (p. 5).

The second responsibility Darling-Hammond (1996) suggested teachers have is to educate “as” democracy. Education “as” democracy allows students access to social understandings developed by actually participating in a pluralistic community in school classrooms and gymnasiums. Dewey (1916) referred to the democratic role of education as a social function stating that “we never educate directly but indirectly by means of the environment” (p. 22). He suggested that “communication which insures participation in a common understanding is one which secures similar emotional and intellectual dispositions - like ways of responding to expectations and requirements” (p. 5).
talking and making decisions with one another and coming to understand multiple perspectives, students learn by truly engaging in the tenets on which a democracy depends (Darling-Hammond, 1996).

Apple and Beane (1996) suggested that these tenets are: (a) the open flow of ideas; (b) faith in the individual and collective capacity of people to create possibilities for solving problems; (c) the use of critical reflection and analysis to evaluate ideas, problems, and policies; concern for the welfare of others; (d) concern for the dignity and rights of individuals; (d) an understanding that democracy is not so much an “ideal” to be pursued as an “idealized” set of values that we must live; and finally, (e) that democracy depends on the organization of social institutions to “promote and extend the democratic way of life” (pp. 6-7). Education as democracy would, through engagement in these tenets, allow students to develop humanistic moral consciences in their interactions with others - teachers, peers, administrators, parents, and community members.

Several emerging curricular models potentially adaptable to emancipatory construction of learning and the tenets of democracy in an effort to better meet adolescent’s physical education needs are sport education (Siedentop, 1994b), social responsibility (Hellison, 1995), and fitness (Collingwood, 1997). Of these, a fitness curriculum guided the content framework of this study. Within the fitness framework, education “for” democracy was interpreted to imply that all students would learn skills and knowledge integral to gaining a common understanding of fitness as it would apply to their becoming participants in fitness activities for lifetime health and wellness. Education “as” democracy was interpreted to imply that all students would, through their daily participation, have the opportunity to participate as citizens with rights and responsibilities for creating a fair learning environment. This would include teaching students the skills of exercising their rights and responsibilities through their daily activities.

hooks (1994) suggested that engaging pedagogies guided by the tenets of democratic practices and based on the principles of constructivism emphasize teacher and student well-being. That means that “teachers must be actively committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own well being if they are to teach in a manner that
empowers students” (hooks, 1994, p.15). In this sense, democratic pedagogies are “two-way pedagogies” (Darling-Hammond, 1996) in that both the teacher and student are democratic partners in the learning process and both are changed as a result of the learning that takes place. These pedagogies are learner-centered, focused on challenging curriculum goals for all students, and, at the same time, student-centered focusing attention on the needs and interests of individual learners (Darling-Hammond, 1996). Within the fitness framework, a two-way pedagogy would imply that teachers have the responsibility to teach students skills and develop knowledge through learning activities and then allow opportunities for students to use these skills and apply knowledge to make informed fitness related decisions. The teacher also has the responsibility to learn from the students and adapt learning experiences to extend and challenge individual student knowledge consistent with decisions the students make. “Democratic practice maintains both sets of concerns, allowing neither to overwhelm the other. It sets up a dialectic that requires enormously thoughtful and flexible teaching grounded in deep knowledge of both subject and students” (Darling-Hammond, 1996, p 9).

Purpose of the Study

This investigation was a response to the apparent need to replace the dominant theory undergirding most secondary physical education pedagogies with one that is responsive, dialogic, and engaging for learners based on principles of democratic education. It was designed to describe and interpret the interactive changes learners and their instructor make toward becoming students “as” and “for” democratic ideals within the framework of fitness education. Personal fitness, the course providing the framework for the investigation, provided a unique opportunity for implementation of this type of curriculum. It is one of several specific courses structured under and aligned with a unique physical education based school-wide curricular focus called the ACE Academy (Adventure-Based Learning, Career Exploration and Personal Fitness, and Education). The ACE program was focused on hands-on, real life learning. It involved appropriate risk taking and trust development through teamwork and knowledge based decision making (Beechcroft H.S., 1997). This type of learning was supplemented by opportunities to explore career options in the health, wellness, fitness, and sports arenas.
It is supported by school structures that can enhance in-depth inquiry and student learning such as: block scheduling, time for small group supplemental tutoring or academic support, and an administration that supports cooperative and multicultural learning environments.

A cognitive mediational paradigm (Doyle, 1977) provided an appropriate lens to study the interactive ecology of secondary students and their teacher as they respond to the delivery of physical education curricula within school contexts. The task systems (management and instructional) identified by Doyle (1977) in general education and by Tousignant and Siedentop (1983) in physical education (management, instructional, and social task systems) created a structure adding depth and breadth to interpreting student and teacher interactions in class process engagement.

Interpretive/interventionism directed the collection and analysis of data. An interventionist/interpretive framework implies that both the interventionist and interpretivist framework inform and support each other. In this framework, the purpose of interpretive qualitative research was “to inform our deep understanding of educational institutions and processes through interpretation and narrative description” (Soltis, 1989, 125). The combination of these two methods allowed the teacher/researcher to document both the changes made by the instructor responding to the students and also the changes students make responding to the learning process. On the basis of this framework the following research questions were asked:

Research Questions

1. How does the personal fitness class engage students in learning “for” democracy?

1.1 How are the students moving toward high levels of understanding and proficient performance in personal fitness as described by students’ ability to demonstrate common understandings of fitness and of how to become good consumers of fitness?

1.2 How are the students being guided toward high levels of understanding and proficient performance in personal fitness indicated by teacher pedagogical decisions and students’ responses to the pedagogical choices?
2. How does the interactive class engage students in learning "as" democracy?

2.1. How are the students moving toward democratic engagement in personal fitness demonstrated by conduct suggesting a decrease in individuality and an increase in cooperative freedom and voluntary cooperation (Dewey, 1939)?

2.2. How am I doing at taking into account what students know and care about in the process of moving them toward democratic engagement in personal fitness indicated by pedagogical adjustments to guide, enable, and direct students toward democratic engagement (Dewey, 1939).

Significance of the Study

This research was significant because it represented the second stage of a long-term collaborative project to document the match between student needs and an attempt to deliver meaningful physical education in an urban secondary school context. It will contribute to the dearth of knowledge concerning how students respond to and negotiate secondary physical education. At the same time it will add to our collective understanding by describing student response to a fitness curriculum based on principles of democratic education rooted in constructivist theory. The methods used to document the two-way pedagogy between students and the instructor, one that learns from students and is responsive to student learning, created a layering of information which included, not only how the instructor interpreted student responses, but also how the students interpreted and negotiated tasks presented in the fitness course. Additionally, it documented the progress and change of the instructor as student response informed teaching. This is significant because it is an attempt to bridge the theory-practice gap creating ways of thinking about teaching adolescents in urban settings that is rooted in praxis.

Limitations / Delimitations

There were a number of boundaries placed on this study, some decided upon by the researcher (delimitations) and others that were out of the researcher's control (limitations). Delimitations included the following:
1. The study was limited to one section of Personal Fitness offered at Beechcroft High School, an elective course open only to 10th-12th grade students who had passed 9th grade physical education with a C or better.

2. Participants were self-selected by choosing to be part of the study and all students in one section of the personal fitness class were invited to be involved.

3. Instructional decisions were based on preliminary pilot work, my interpretation of how to create a democratic classroom based in constructivism, and the interactive negotiation between the students and the teacher/researcher throughout the semester.

Limitations included the following:

1. The study used methodologies incorporating teacher-researcher observations. It was not possible to completely determine the impact either role had on the other.

2. The study was limited to obtaining students' responses to the class. It was not possible to clearly determine the impact of outside events on their perspectives.

3. The study was limited by degree to which the students shared their feelings and opinions about the course. Efforts were made to encourage and value student response and question responses seemingly determined by efforts at studentship.

Definition of Terms

**Adventure-based learning** -- defined within the ACE program as hands-on, real life learning, involving both risk and trust, teamwork, and decision making. It would include activities incorporating the above features and also adventure initiative activities (Beechcroft High School, 1997).

**Career Exploration and Training** -- courses related to health and allied medical fields, including: aerobics, personal fitness, sports health training, sports management and sports psychology, sports education, and wellness (Beechcroft High School, 1997). These courses may be taken as electives or as part of the ACE special focus.

**Cognitive mediational paradigm** -- in this framework students are recognized as active controlling agents in their own learning. They interpret teacher's behaviors and actions and assign personal meaning to them (Doyle, 1977).

**Constructivism** -- a psychological theory of learning that describes how structures and deeper conceptual understandings come about (Fosnot, 1996, p. 30). Constructivist theory
views learning as an "interpretive, recursive, building process by active learners interacting with the physical and social world" (Fosnot, 1996, p. 30).

**Democracy** -- a form of political governance involving the consent of the governed and equality of opportunity. Subsumed in democracy are conditions on which a democracy depends. Among such conditions are the following: the open flow of ideas; faith in the individual and collective capacity of people to create possibilities for solving problems; the use of critical reflection and analysis to evaluate ideas, problems, and policies; concern for the welfare of others; concern for the dignity and rights of individuals; an understanding that democracy is not so much an "ideal" to be pursued as an "idealized" set of values that we must live; and, finally, that democracy depends on the organization of social institutions to promote and extend the democratic way of life (Apple & Beane, 1995, pp. 6-7).

**Democratic pedagogy** - based on the conditions of democracy and therefore emphasizes access to a wide range of information and the right of those of varied opinion to have their viewpoints heard; seeks to move beyond the "selective tradition" of knowledge and meanings endorsed by the dominant culture, toward a wider range of views and voices (Apple, 1990) as cited in Apple & Beane, 1995); includes not only what adults think is important, but also the questions and concerns that young people have about themselves and their world; invites learners to shed the passive role of knowledge consumers and assume the active role of "meaning makers"; it recognizes that people acquire knowledge by both studying external sources and engaging in complex activities that require them to construct their own knowledge; it is directed toward intelligent and reflective consideration of problems, events, and issues that arise in the course of our collective lives; it involves continuous opportunities to explore such issues, to imagine responses to problems, and to act upon those responses (Apple & Beane, 1996, pp. 13-16).

**Dialogic teaching** - a teaching strategy to make the teacher more like the student by redefining the teacher as learner of the student's reality and knowledge" (Ellsworth, 1994, p. 307). In dialogic teaching, the teacher is expected to "re-learn" an object of study through studying it through students' eyes to enable the teacher to devise more effective strategies for teaching students (Ellsworth, 1994).
Learning -- a “process that leads to an enduring change in an individual’s knowledge, skill, and /or behavior resulting from practice or experience” (Shuell, 1986 as cited in Lambert, 1996, p. 152).

Learning “as” democracy -- called learning “of” democracy this refers to education as social function (Dewey, 1916) where “we never educate directly but indirectly by means of the environment “ (p. 22). Education in schools “becomes itself a social life, a miniature community and one in close interaction with other modes of associated experience beyond school walls. ... It forms a character which not only does the particular deed socially necessary but one which is interested in the continuous readjustment which is essential to growth” (Dewey, 1916, p. 409). It is demonstrated by conduct suggesting and demonstrating “efficacy of plural, partial, and experimental methods in securing and maintaining an ever-increasing release of the powers of human nature, in service of a freedom which is cooperative and cooperation which is voluntary” (Dewey, 1939, p.176). Darling-Hammond (1996) refers to this concept as learning “as” democracy.

Learning “for” democracy -- is the transmission and communication through which and by which people come to share things in common (Dewey, 1916). It is what people “must have in common in order to form a community or society” and consists of “aims, beliefs, aspirations; knowledge - a common understanding (Dewey, 1916, p.5). Since a “complex civilization is too complex to be assimilated in toto (p. 23) it has to be broken up into pieces and: 1. simplified selecting features of the environment that are fairly fundamental and capable of being responded to by the young. It establishes a progressive order, using the factors first acquired as means of gaining insight into what is more complicated; 2. unworthy features eliminated in its responsibility “not to transmit and conserve the whole of its existing achievement, but only such as make for a better future society” (p.24); 3. balance the various elements in the social environment, and to see to it that each individual gets an opportunity to escape from the limitations of the social group in which [he] was born ... and come in contact with a broader environment” (Dewey, 1916, p. 24).

Praxis -- “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (Freire, 1970, p.36).

Stakeholders -- all the people with an interest in the results of the research.
Studentship -- learners trying to "get along" in the school culture while harboring resistance toward how and what they were to learn (Alpert, 1991; Csikszentmihalyi, & Larson, 1984).
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a literature-based argument for using democratic pedagogical practices embedded within a fitness curriculum in secondary physical education. The first section establishes the need for curricular change to create a more meaningful physical education for secondary students. Given the understanding that current physical education practices are not meeting the needs of all students (Locke, 1992), the second section will present a description of today’s youth and the process of negotiating adolescence. Further, it will present a theoretical basis for the inclusion of health and fitness learning for the healthy and positive cognitive, social, and physical development of all adolescents. The next section will review the current physical education curricular reforms that have emerged in response to better meeting the needs of all students. Further, it will attempt to address the sticky issues emerging from debates about what and how theories should guide our practices. A discussion of pedagogy based on the theoretical ideology of democracy embedded within the theory of emancipatory constructivist learning (O’Laughlin, 1995) will follow. The final section discusses the adaptation of a fitness education model with the potential to support democratic pedagogical practices (Collingwood, 1997).

The Crisis in Physical Education

A “crisis” existing in secondary physical education has been documented in the United States and abroad. In 1992, the National Association for Sport in Physical Education (NASPE) convened a conference in Florida involving physical education professionals from across the United States. The goal of the meeting was to discuss issues
specific to middle and secondary physical education. Conference proceedings (Rink, 1993) were appropriately titled “Critical Crossroads”, indicating the perceived severity of the “crisis. Describing the nature of the “crisis”, Locke (1992) suggested that the following symptoms of malaise exist in programs today: (a) many programs fail to achieve their goal; and (b) students associate required attendance with strong negative feelings about the class, physical activity, and themselves; while, (c) teachers report that workplace conditions don’t allow serious effort to provide instruction.

Physical educators recognizing and studying “crisis” issues in Australian secondary physical education convened a national conference on the crisis in physical education, developed a national collaborative curriculum for health and physical education, and elicited a report from the Senate Standing Committee on physical and sport education (Thorpe, 1994). The results of these three events revealed the following findings about the status of physical education in the secondary curriculum: (a) the number of students participating in physical education and sport has decreased throughout schools in Australia, especially among teenage girls (Thorpe, 1994); (b) many Australian adolescents believed school physical education was irrelevant or boring, yet, these same students see physical activity as significant to their lifestyles outside the school context (Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992); (c) the problem seems to be that physical education programs are "lackluster" and "cannot compete with the level of interest society offers youngsters" (Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992, p. 287); and (d) additional problems arise from physical education itself, which tends to be based on predictable rounds of sports lessons involving teacher talk, instruction, usually starting at novice level with repetitive drills and practice (Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992).

These findings suggest that many programs functioning currently in both countries are inadequate and that the dominant curricular model guiding physical education may require extensive overhaul or replacement (Locke, 1992). The dominant curricular model used in the United States and, until recently, in Australia and New Zealand, is the multi-activity model. The goals of this model include exposure to many different activities, including sports, fitness and recreational activities, and active participation in general. Hellison (1993) suggested that one of the reasons so many
physical educators eventually select the multi-activity sport-based model is because it seems to reduce student and teacher boredom due to the diversity and the novelty of a new unit every 2-3 weeks. Locke (1992) characterized the multi-activity model as including: (a) required attendance without choice of activity or instructor; (b) class assignment without the use of student needs or achievement; (c) short classes with time eroded by management rituals and low academic learning time; (d) short units with only brief introductory level instruction; (e) evaluation based on rule-compliance, participation, and demeanor; and, (f) program content based on instructor interest and convenience.

Bain (1990) further discussed problems plaguing the multi-activity model and its current physical education practices. She argued that physical education programs are often based on “meritocracy” (p. 25), which suggests that teachers evaluate and reward students based on similar criteria. These practices promote gender oppression and physical ability elitism since the criteria of performance are often based on a male or elite model (Bain, 1990). Dewar (1991) presented an additional criticism of current physical education practices stating that many sport pedagogy programs have become scientistic in their search for disciplinary status and prestige within physical education. One result of this “authorization through science” (p. 77) has been the creation and development of a number of physical education programs that select and reward a relatively small number of individuals who tend to be privileged by, among other things, their body type, gender, social class, race, and physical abilities. “These processes of selection and allocation of rewards present physical educators with social, moral, and political problems because they contradict claims that physical education can and will provide opportunities for health, fitness, and well being for all students (p.77)” In the final analysis physical educators face some hard choices concerning their future curricular philosophy and goals (Rink, 1993). Everybody agrees that curricular change must happen, but few agree on how to do it (Rink, 1993).

Results of investigations analyzing what secondary students’ value about physical education paint a messy and complex picture. Studies indicate that while students don’t actively dislike physical education (Rog, 1986), they certainly do not embrace it, as one
might expect given that it is a class created around the themes of play, movement, and sport. For instance, numerous studies suggest that, in general, students like physical education, choose to enroll in it, and consider it to be important curricular subject matter (Stewart, Green, & Huelskamp, 1991; Strand & Scantling, 1994; Tannehill & Zakrajsek, 1993). At the same time, Tannehill, Romar, O'Sullivan, England, and Rosenberg (1994) found that student attitudes toward physical education were not overwhelmingly supportive and, as a content area, physical education did not rank high in relation to other subjects. Adding to student indifference were the many students who reported that they often did not learn what they expected to learn in physical education.

More specifically, Strand and Scantling (1994) found that students disliked (a) the crowded conditions found in many classes (i.e., too many students involved with not enough equipment or opportunities to be involved, multiplied by limited facility space), (b) comparisons among students, often due to competitive environments and the frequent result of public embarrassment, and (c) the process of changing clothes and showering. Additionally, their study revealed that although students valued fitness they did not like to engage in fitness activities, a finding also supported by Tannehill & Zakrajsek, (1993).

Tannehill et al., (1994) suggested that students rank competition as the least important outcome of physical education experiences while indicating that teamwork and learning team sports are most important. Although competition was ranked low, students said they enjoyed positive experiences related directly to outcomes of competition. Further, Carlson (1995) suggested that students who chose not to take physical education, were critical of the emphasis on competition and were unsure of their ability to perform well. They felt physical education should provide opportunities to relieve stress and suggested that teachers need to examine interests, needs, and desires of students less interested in competitive and comparative versions of physical education.

In her investigation of students alienated from physical education, Carlson (1995) suggested three possible explanations for their alienation: (a) lack of personal meaning, where students see no purpose for the subject in their lives; (b) lack of control, where students feel they have no control over what happens in the gymnasium; and, (c) isolation, where students, either socially or emotionally, feel alone and withdraw from
their peers. Carlson (1995) argued that several factors underlying these feelings were instrumental in producing dislike of the subject. For instance, students’ perception that physical education lacked personal meaning was related to the quality of the work that they were asked to do in class. As a result, much of the classwork in physical education is perceived as boring, repetitious, and meaningless (Carlson, 1995; Griffey, 1987).

In addition, Carlson (1995) posited that the environment created in physical education classes was strongly related to student feelings of powerlessness. For instance, feelings of powerlessness were often generated in competitive environments, particularly among lower-skilled students, where the situation demanded a public demonstration of skills, (i.e., going to bat for team in softball). Students did suggest that having opportunities to choose the activities they would engage in did reduce negative feelings toward physical education. Additionally, activities that were not strongly based on comparative skills and competition were more enjoyable and less stressful.

Summarizing studies focused on describing the physical education experiences from the students’ perspectives, Graham (1995) stated that most student experiences appear to be unpleasant and contribute to alienation from physical education. Further, he highlighted the important finding that a majority of students don’t understand how physical education is supposed to fit into their lives. They don’t see a link between their present participation in physical education and their present and future physical, social, and cognitive developmental needs.

Beyond data suggesting that physical education is failing to meet the needs of many students, further evidence of the crisis was indicated by O’Sullivan, Sweeney, and Taggart’s (1989) investigation into middle and high school physical education programs. They found that little difference existed between physical education in middle school and high school, especially relative to the population being taught. At a time when students were going through the many changes of adolescence, the fact that they were subject to repetitive and potentially unchanging physical education experiences is especially worrying.

How can physical education meet the movement, health, fitness, and play needs of such a dynamically changing population when the existing curricular models do not
seem to be responsive to changing needs? Suggesting direction for this question, Strand and Scantling (1994) reported that curriculum content, teacher behavior, class atmosphere, student self-perception, and facilities can all influence student attitudes toward physical education. However teachers’ capacity for changing any of these may be limited by the contexts in which they work. For instance, Tousignant, Brunelle, and Morency (1986) have indicated that some teachers may compromise content for adherence to showing up, dressing, and participation to elicit student cooperation. Further, Schwager (1986) has provided evidence that not much is expected of physical education teachers in our schools.

Amidst the malaise creating a crisis in physical education is evidence of a “Catch 22". Students are not receiving a dynamic and challenging physical education, but if teachers/schools could create more powerful curricular programs, sensitive to student needs, students would probably respond favorably. At the same time, physical education teachers receive little incentive or support to make the kinds of changes necessary to create these powerful programs. In the end, youth are the big losers in this situation. Students may get good recreation, but they are not all getting good physical education focused on movement skills, mastery, and improved health/fitness (Griffin & Locke, 1986). Mediocrity becomes the standard outcome for both teacher and students (Griffin & Locke, 1986). Mediocrity in the health and fitness development of adolescents forebodes significant losses for the communities in which these students will live and be asked eventually to support.

As any Catch 22 metaphor assumes, the issues surrounding a problem are cyclic, each informing and potentially changing the other, creating a very difficult situation to “solve". In that light, Bain (1990) cautions that a focus solely on pedagogy (curricular change) creates a risk that the political nature of the current reality will be ignored, resulting in teachers being portrayed as the source of the problem. This review then turns to the issues surrounding today’s adolescents and the cultures and contexts in which they live.
The Process of Helping Youth Negotiate Adolescence

In researching student resistance to compliance in school settings, Alpert (1991) suggested that there is a gap between adolescent culture and the teaching approaches used. The impact of this perceived gap often leads to resistive actions by students who refuse to engage in class activities, exhibit interruptive behaviors, or, in general, choose somehow not to comply with policies guiding class or school activities. Alpert argued this resistance can be viewed as political resistance instead of simply as a case of students behaving badly. Erickson (1984) posited that through these often self-defeating attempts to fight back, the student resists being defined by the school as a person of less worth. Further, Alpert (1991) suggested that this identified gap may be evidence of a deeper rift between norms and values of a specific social class and school norms and values, indicating that school curricula may not be representative of all populations serviced by a school.

Roberts (1996) and Hamburg (1997) have identified some of the conditions youth have to negotiate today that are different from those of the recent past. Both suggested that the adolescent life stage has been prolonged over the last two centuries which also prolongs adolescents' dependence on their families. At the same time, youth have difficulty foreseeing the years ahead because there is more ambiguity and complexity about what constitutes preparation for effective adulthood (Hamburg, 1997). As a result, their futures have become uncertain and the steps youth do take are risky and often lead to uncertain outcomes (Roberts, 1996). Hamburg (1997) reported that the erosion of adolescents' family and social support networks, evidenced in our current social milieu, creates more problems for youth. Responding to the lack of support, youth are more likely to feel personally responsible for their current circumstance (Roberts, 1996). Additionally, Roberts (1996) indicated that young peoples' tastes don't neatly fit onto either class, gender, or geographical divisions like they once did. Many new youth subcultures exist to meet individual interests and needs, allowing adolescents much choice in affiliation while acting as bases for protection and community building.

In considering what might be some fundamental requirements for a healthy and constructive adolescent development, Hamburg (1997) stated that:
Adolescents must (a) find a place in a valued group that provides a sense of belonging; (b) identify tasks that are generally recognized by the group as having adaptive value and that thereby earn respect when skill is acquired for coping with the task; (c) feel a sense of worth as a person; (d) establish reliable and predictable relationships with other people, especially a few relatively close relationships - or at least one; (e) find constructive expression for the curiosity and exploration that strongly characterize adolescence; (f) find a basis for making informed, deliberate decisions, particularly decisions that have lifelong consequences; (g) accept respectfully the enormous diversity of modern society, the individual differences among adolescents in size, shape, color, and rates of body and behavior change; and, (h) find ways of being useful to others (p. 7).

Numerous institutions play pivotal roles in the constructive development of adolescents - family, school, community-based organizations, including religious ones, the health care system, and the media (Hamburg, 1997). Of these, schools provide a particularly unique role because of opportunities to access youth on a regular and sustained basis (Hamburg, 1997).

Hamburg (1997), suggested in his report to the Preparing Adolescents for the Twenty-First Century conference (the fourth conference resulting from an eleven year collaborative effort among the Johann Jacobs Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, and World Health Organization - Geneva, held in Geneva in 1995) that several key concepts for inclusive adolescent education can be identified from what we know about adolescent development today. These educational issues include:

(a) developing appropriate education - meshing the content and process of learning with the interest and capacities of the child in each phase of development; (b) schools of small units, created on a human scale; (c) sustained individual attention in the context of a supportive group; (d) students learning to cooperate in class, with an eye on future work and decent human relations; (e) the stimulation of curiosity and thinking skills; and, (f) the linkage of education and health - each nourishing each other (p. 8).

Erickson (1987) would add that in the transformation of schools, student resistance should be informed by an explicit social analysis with the power to unmask practices that are oppressive. Further, after investigating the connection between adolescent social interactions and cognitive development, Galbo (1994) emphasized the role of adults in
youth learning. Pedagogy, he maintained, needs to reflect the importance of social interactions between adult teachers and adolescent students rather than the one way transmission mode of teaching. He recommended that teachers need to become more available, participate in various formal and informal activities with the adolescent students, and engage students in conversational and educational classroom dialogue.

Hurrelmann and Klocke (1997) emphasized the role of health promotion in supporting the growth, development, and cognitive and social maturation of adolescent youth. They suggested that health promotion in schools refers not only to the provision of knowledge and information on health-related topics but also to the following:

(a) supporting healthy lifestyles and presenting realistic possibilities and alternatives for leading a healthy life by providing children and adolescents with competencies that enable them to participate without restrictions in all social processes; (b) promoting the ability to shape and exploit physical, mental, and social potentials that help to stabilize the self-concept; (c) furnishing and developing abilities and social life skills such as the ability to make one's own decisions and stand by them, to cope with stress, and to deal with conflicting situations in a healthy way; and, (d) encouraging a sense of responsibility to individual, family, and community health (p. 92).

Physical Education Curricular Reforms

The preceding literature highlights the need to create curricula, pedagogical practices, and an overarching philosophy of physical education specifically addressing adolescent needs, interests, and developmental capabilities allowing healthy and positive cognitive, social, and physical development. The discussion now turns to secondary physical education reform issues. Four major categories of reform suggestions emerging from Stroot's (1994) review of secondary school physical education curricular issues will be used to organize this discussion.

Reform Through Alignment With NASPE Teaching Standards

The first category emerging from the review dealt with reforms creating alignment of physical education curricula with the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) teaching standards. Supporting this category, Ennis (1992) provided explication of how teachers could use NASPE outcomes appropriately to guide development of course learning goals. She suggested that teachers should select realistic
goals that can be achieved by 75% of the children in the school district based on realistic assessments of the time that is available. Further, the goals they choose should be consistent with their teaching philosophies. Rink (1993), summarizing the recommendations of the Critical Crossroads conference, supported Ennis' contention and recommended teachers using the NASPE objectives to guide program direction and to, more clearly, articulate program goals and expectations to students, the educational community, and parents.

Further, Rink (1993) argued that programs should have clear expectations for both the student and teacher. Expectations should be supported by accountability systems built into the program for both teachers and students and communicated to everyone. Program expectations should include psychomotor, cognitive, and affective program goals which would be evaluated and assessed comprehensively. The accountability and assessment of students, teacher, and program would then play a major role in supporting program design, redesign, and implementation. Relative to the content taught, more time should be spent on fewer units that are sequenced to make sense and flow from one unit to the next. Additionally, students should have some choice in the content, pace, sequencing, and timing of the course.

**Curricular Models Addressing Reform Issues**

A second category discussed the different curricular content models aimed at addressing physical education curricular problems and replacing the multi-activity model. Currently there are at least five emergent content-based curricular models forwarded as responsive, appropriate alternatives to the multi-activity model. For example, Vickers (1992) recommended a cross-disciplinary framework based on conceptual knowledge development. This program utilized a two-prong approach to physical education where one prong functions to provide opportunities for students to develop fitness lifestyles. The other prong, the career program, allowed students to investigate career opportunities in fitness and physical education. Both prongs are supported by a knowledge base embedded in the program.

Tinning, and Fitzclarence (1992) described a program with the goal of enhancing students’ ability to be critical consumers of activity programs. This program consisted of
several units designed to be relevant to contemporary students: physical activity and lifestyle analysis, analyzing physical activity, perspectives on fitness, and bio-social analysis. Active inquiry into issues relevant to students’ health, wellness, and fitness served as the vehicle to create more meaningful links between physical activity and the students’ lives. A similar unit was developed, implemented, and evaluated in the United States (O’Sullivan, Kinchin, Kellum, Dunaway, & Dixon, 1996). Here, students researched and reflected on their own physical activity biographies, investigated and critiqued the sport culture in their school, and addressed the role of sport in the larger society (Placek & O’Sullivan, 1997).

Sport education has been suggested and supported through theory and research (Grant, 1992; Hastie, 1996; Pope & Grant, 1995; Siedentop, 1994a; Tannehill, 1998) as a curricular model particularly suited for responding to “crisis” issues found in physical education today. Siedentop introduced the theoretical and practical implications of sport education at a 1982 conference in Australia (Jewett, Bain, & Ennis, 1995). Since then, sport education has become an integral part of many physical education programs in Australia and New Zealand. It was implemented as a national experiment in response to the crisis in secondary education (Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992). Implementation of the sport education model proved successful and is now used in 50% of the New Zealand high schools and has wide use in Australian secondary schools (Siedentop, 1994a).

Siedentop later presented a detailed description of the model with practical examples from physical education programs in the United States (Siedentop, 1994b; Siedentop, Mand, & Taggart, 1986). Over time sport education has evolved into a curriculum and instructional model. The goals, objectives, and structure of the model were created to allow sport to be taught well (Siedentop, 1994b). At the same time, sport education was a response to criticisms of the way sport was being taught in multi-activity program formats. Rather than skills being taught in isolation, sport education allowed students to construct skills and game understandings through participation in sequential and progressive game-like situations throughout their sport season (Siedentop, 1994b). Students engaged in seasonal team development consistent with the rituals, values, and traditions that are part of that sport (Siedentop, 1994b). In addition to playing the sport as
a team, members also take on other roles (e.g., captain, coach, referee, statistician) which serve as a means of creating personal growth and responsibility in the sport (Siedentop, 1994b).

Westcott (1992) recommended that a fitness knowledge base provides a sufficient and accessible model to be responsive to today’s students’ needs. His recommendation seemed particularly imperative considering the role physical education could play responding to the current poor status of youth and adolescent’s fitness and health documented in the recent Surgeon General’s Report (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996). It is further supported by Hurrelmann and Klocke’s (1997) argument that a student’s health and fitness greatly impacts his/her cognitive, social, and physical development.

The link between general physical fitness and health and adolescent’s overall development make developing fitness and health in physical education critical to their educative processes. Further, Collingwood (1997) recommended fitness programming as rich curricular content for students identified as ‘at-risk’. To this end, Collingwood (1997) forwarded a model designed to help at-risk youth through physical fitness training. The model was premised on both the disciplinary nature of physical fitness training and the relevance and meaning results gained through fitness training can have on engaged students. These premises and the link between fitness and total adolescence development created a convincing argument for using curricular fitness objectives to guide physical education for all adolescents.

Reform Through Feminist Pedagogy

A number of authors have suggested the need to address feminist issues in physical education (Scraton, 1992; Scraton & Flintoff, 1992; Vertinsky, 1992). These issues are more specific than those of critical pedagogy, since they relate to bias experienced by girls and women in sport and physical education. In addition, feminist pedagogy seeks to interpret bias through theory based on women’s development as human beings. This process often requires critiquing female stereotypes and roles socially and politically generated over time. For example, Bennett (1991) proposed a feminist pedagogy in the sport sciences. Its focus was to empower students, put a premium on
questioning, and look closely at the contexts from which facts are derived and the purposes to which they are put. Additionally, it involved breaking through the learned silences of marginalized people. Bennett's model would require putting aside the competitive structures prominent in physical education teaching and, instead, fostering cooperative learning among students. It demands a focus on value frameworks where what is taught and learned about physical movement is questioned and interpreted from multiple and different viewpoints. The empowerment issue here is to learn together to critically examine and make explicit the social frameworks and world views that inevitably influence the way each of us - student and teacher, male and female - approach the process and content of a class (Bennett, 1991).

Reform Through Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy has been recommended as a more holistic way of developing relevant physical education content, contexts, and instruction. Critical pedagogy, advanced by multiple authors (Bain, 1990, Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992; Fernandez-Balboa, 1997; Kirk, 1997b; 1992) endorsed methods that foster critical discourse in physical education classes (Bain, 1988). Encouraging critical reflection and self-awareness and thus empowering teachers and students to create a better and more just society is the goal of this kind of emancipatory education (Bain, 1990). The basic premise of emancipatory education is that teachers and students should examine social issues related to sport and physical education and question taken-for-granted assumptions and practice (Bain, 1990). The result of emancipatory education is political change. Critical pedagogy should enable those questioning biased practices to make those practices less biased through political action.

Bain (1990) recommended two currently existing physical education curricular models that have the potential to support emancipatory education. The first is Hellison's model for social responsibility (1978, 1985, 1995) which Bain (1990) suggested has the potential to be extended to reflect a critical stance. Hellison's model is intended to encourage student adjustment to the existing social system rather than promoting social change. Bain suggests (1990) that an advantage of using Hellison’s model for developing a critical pedagogy is that his work is field based and has high credibility with teachers.
A second recommendation for critical pedagogy in physical education is the collaborative, participatory process of action research (1990). Used in the physical education setting it could allow participants to attempt to improve a situation by informing their understanding of what is occurring through inquiry (Bain, 1988). To be used as a basis for critical pedagogy, participants in the research process must examine goals as well as the means for achieving them. Critical issues are those that question human actions for racial, gender, cultural, religious, or class bias.

The integrated sport studies model (O’Sullivan et al., 1996) discussed earlier may be an example of physical education curricula with the potential to support critical pedagogy. To be critical pedagogy the students would have to focus questioning on bias embedded in their sport cultures, personal sport biographies, or how sport is perceived in the larger society. Critical pedagogy functions to make change, so the outcome of student inquiry would have to result in a political action effecting change. The bottom line in the development of critical pedagogy may be as Griffin (1985b) suggested, “if there is to be real hope for change, it lies not in finding the right pedagogical stuff but in acting on the right political stuff” (p. 165). At the heart of critical pedagogy then, is the understanding that pedagogy is important, but there needs to be political action potential within the pedagogy.

Criticisms of Critical Pedagogy

A primary concern physical education professionals have had with critical pedagogy is related to how it is supported in the literature. For instance, O’Sullivan, Siedentop, & Locke (1992) suggested that little evidence has been presented to defend the assertions and arguments underpinning critical pedagogy. They suggest that critical pedagogy has been supported primarily through theoreticsm, where issues are settled by theoretical decree rather than evidential appeal. The inability of critical pedagogists to describe what critical pedagogy ‘looks like’ in secondary physical education contexts further questions the applicability of critical pedagogy in ‘real’ school settings.

Interestingly, there are at least two examples of recent research attempts to bridge the gap between the theoreticsm of critical pedagogy and physical education practice. Kirk’s (1997) two year qualitative inquiry into the construction and negotiation of
masculinity among adolescent boys in school physical education is one. Here, through research methods, he assessed the “possibilities for physical education to make a positive contribution to the maintenance of their emotional and physical health” (p. 1). A second example is the work of Curnow and Macdonald (1995) who used a case study to investigate the potential of sport education to provide a gender inclusive physical education environment. Although they were not able to support sport education as a more critically based pedagogy, their work represented attempts at linking the theory of critical thinking to potentially critical pedagogies.

The work of researchers attempting to link emerging content-based pedagogies more sensitive to the overall development of today’s adolescent with critically-based ideals is an important step in bridging the relevance gap between physical education content and adolescent cultures. Given the above discussion outlining emergent curricular reform issues and the earlier discussions describing the gap between what physical education is providing and what youth need, the review now turns to setting the context to rethink curricular reform.

Rethinking Curricular Reform

Critically-based ideals undergirding programming are crucial when trying to create meaningful experiences for students previously underserved in physical education across the United States. Research has identified populations of individuals who do not gain expected value and meaning from the physical education context due to any or all of the following factors: gender (Griffin, 1983, 1984, 1985a; Vertinsky, 1996), race (Griffin, 1985b), socioeconomic background (Martinek, 1997), or physical abilities (Martinek, 1983, 1997). The Quest monograph (Martinek, 1997) titled “Serving Underserved Youth Through Physical Activity”, in particular seems to move beyond focusing on a “crisis” in physical education programming. Instead, it further highlights the more global crisis in which many youth find themselves today. Moreover, it suggests that critically based physical education programming that is responsive to the needs of these students could play a larger and vital role supporting youth’s negotiation of adolescence.
Role of Schools in Supporting Youth in Crisis

Schools have the unique capability of becoming local or urban sanctuaries. These neighborhood-based organizations can offer safety, support, guidance, companionship, and opportunities for growth and engagement to youth and adolescents (McLaughlin & Irby, 1994) supporting their humane and holistic development. McLaughlin and Irby (1994) suggested that for schools to be sanctuaries is particularly important in urban environments where a majority of underserved youth reside.

In discussing urban and specifically the African-American student population Delpit (1988) suggested that issues of power are enacted in classrooms and that there are codes or rules for participating in power. Further, she believes that students must be taught the codes needed to participate fully in the mainstream of American life, “not by being forced to attend to hollow, inane, decontextualized subskills, but rather, within the context of meaningful communicative endeavors” (p. 296). Students “must be allowed the resource of the teachers expert knowledge, while being helped to acknowledge their own ‘expertness’ as well” (p. 296). Finally, Delpit (1988) argued that “even while students are assisted in learning the culture of power, they must also be helped to learn about the arbitrariness of those codes and about the power relationships they represent” (p. 296).

Role of Physical Education in Supporting Youth in Crisis

The need to create physical education programs that can bridge the gap between necessary critical ideals and actual practice in challenging contexts is paramount to providing meaningful physical education to all youth experiencing adolescence in today’s complex world. Perhaps, Delpit best characterized the challenge when she argued for an end to the skills/process debate. In this argument, she suggested that underserved youth need more than to be taught through methods that emphasize the process of learning. Instead, they would be better served by learning the skills necessary to create a better life for themselves and their families in the larger society. “Those who are most skillful at educating black and poor children do not allow themselves to be placed in ‘skills’ or ‘process’ boxes. They understand the need for both approaches, the need to help students
to establish their own voices, but to coach those voices to produce notes that will be heard clearly in the larger society (p. 296).

Relative to the role of critical pedagogy in physical education, Delpit seemed to be suggesting that it is very important to teach critical pedagogical practices that are first built on skills that allow students to think critically. These skills must be taught and students must be held accountable for learning them. Without these skills, the process of learning through critical thinking and reflection will fail to yield a critically educated student of physical fitness, particularly among the underserved youth population. Instead we will continue to create learning environments that are decontextualized and often meaningless to a large portion of the adolescent population.

Bridging The Gap Between Critical Issues And Meaningful Pedagogy

From the previous discussion of reviewed literature, conclusions regarding what physical education curricula should look like, when designed to allow the open flow of critical issues to inform and reform content-based pedagogical practices, can be drawn. What seems most important is that the philosophy generating the curricula and the curricula itself would be capable of dynamically sensing and responding to the needs of all students through recursive, dialogic mechanisms built into it. Further, it should have to be firmly based in practical application and specifically teach students the needed skills to negotiate the curricula within the social medium of classes located in schools. Finally, it would have to be flexible enough to allow students to pursue related interests that were particularly engaging and meaningful within the social and political context of schools.

Democratic Curricula Based on Emancipatory Constructivism

Curricula supported by the philosophical tenets of democracy is one possible solution for bridging the critical-practical skills gap. Democratic curricula, based on the works of Freire (1970), Giroux and McLaren (1986), and hooks (1994) among others, are learner centered focusing on challenging curriculum goals for all students and student centered, attentive to the needs of and interests of individual learners (Darling-Hammond, 1996). "Democratic practice maintains both sets of concerns, allowing neither to overwhelm the other. It sets up a dialectic that requires enormously thoughtful and
flexible teaching grounded in deep knowledge of both subjects and students” (Darling-Hammond, 1996, p. 9).

Lockwood (1997), describing what the concept of democracy means, suggested that democracy is not simply government by the people, it is also “a social arrangement in which the rights and obligations of individuals are significantly understood and respected” (p. 3). Apple and Beane (1995) suggest the following tenets guide democratic curricula:

(a) the open flow of ideas, regardless of their popularity, that enables people to be as fully informed as possible; (b) faith in the individual and collective capacity of people to create possibilities for resolving problems; (c) the use of critical reflection and analysis to evaluate ideas, problems, and policies; (d) concern for the welfare of others and “the uncommon good”; (e) concern for the dignity and rights of individuals and minorities; (f) an understanding that democracy is not so much an “ideal” to be pursued as an “idealized” set of values that we must live and that must guide our life as a people; (g) the organization of social institutions to promote and extend the democratic way of life (pp. 6-7).

Darling-Hammond (1996) suggests that most schools today are poor places in which to learn democracy because they often illustrate authoritarian and coercive forms of social control, as well as, social stratification both across schools and among tracks within schools. Further, these experiences too often fail to prepare students to participate fully as democratic citizens or to meet the requirements of contemporary economic life. The role of curricula based on democratic tenets then becomes two-fold. Teachers must first focus on education as democracy - where students learn the skills necessary to participate in a pluralistic community (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Lockwood, 1997). Teachers also must focus on education for democracy (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Lockwood, 1997), guiding students pedagogically to learn content-based practices that will enhance life and teach good citizenship.

Basing curricular development on the tenets of democratic education would create learning environments that are made up of the following pedagogical and content-based practices (Darling-Hammond, 1996).

1. Engaging tasks that give students meaningful work.
2. Allowing students choice and different entry points into their work.
3. Developing “two-way pedagogies” (p. 9).


5. Scaffolding.

6. Developing student confidence, motivation, and effort.

7. Allow students to “seek out diversity in people, perspectives, and ideas and construct educative means to learn from those multifaceted experiences and expertise” (p. 9-10).

8. Create smaller, more communicative, class structures.

These practices were used as guidelines to create and develop the democratic curriculum and interpret findings.

Democratic practices (Apple & Beane, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Lockwood, 1997) must manage the difficult dialectic between a set of high common expectations for learning and a constructivist learning process through which students take different pathways to achieve these understandings (Darling-Hammond, 1996). Implied within the constructivist framework upon which a democratic curricula is built are the pedagogical practices that allow teachers to link the ideology of democracy to learning experiences and teaching skills. Rovegno and Bandhauer (1997) suggested that constructivism assumes that learners actively make sense of new information by linking it to their prior knowledge and experiences rather than passively receiving it. With constructivist approaches, teachers must shift attention from what the teacher does to observing the sense the youth are making of the content and then reacting appropriately. Further, Nicaise and Barnes (1996) suggested that constructivist learning environments embrace social collaboration through important and authentic activities in which students have control and self-initiated direction. Here teachers have the responsibility for creating learning environments that contain multiple sources of information and multiple viewpoints. These rich resources become available for student exploration and integration into a personal construction of meaning. Teachers, then, create authentic tasks or problems and support student learning through coaching, prompting, and challenging.

Because this description of constructivist teaching relies on the teacher deciding what is important for student learning and not on input from the students, it is consistent with Piagetian constructivism, a more traditional view adopted by most constructivist
educators (Black & Ammon, 1992). The traditional Piagetian interpretation of constructivist learning is probably not an adequate base to support democratic curricula and pedagogy. O’Laughlin (1995) argued that traditional Piagetian constructivism narrowly defines learning to be cognitively based and makes little theoretical concessions to the social-interactional nature of learning. He recommended a form of constructivism sensitive to both cognitive learning and social-interactionism. This form, called emancipatory knowledge construction, depends on interaction between the subjectivity of learners created by the frames of reference with which students construct knowledge (i.e., their ethnic background, race, class, gender, language usage, religious, cultural, and political identities, as well as such characteristics as their sexual orientation and physical appearance) and the implicit and explicit power relations of the pedagogical situation. Finally he suggested that the potential for knowledge construction depends on how schools, and specifically teachers, react to students’ attempts to employ these diverse frameworks for meaning making. O’Laughlin (1995) suggests that “school (and society) can validate or marginalize any or all students’ ways of knowing” (p. 337).

Constructing Responsible Democratic Education in a Fitness Framework

Collingwood (1997) has developed and supported a curricular fitness model that he suggests will contribute to the overall educational development of ‘at-risk’ youth. Consistent with the work of Hurrelmann and Klocke (1997) who emphasized the role of health promotion in supporting the holistic development of adolescent youth, Collingwood (1997) suggested that physical fitness programming impacts all aspects of healthy maturation. Further, the physical process of fitness training relies on both cognitive and social learning. As changes occur in the physical domain, it impacts and ignites changes in the other two domains. The processes and outcomes of exercise make it a particularly unique domain for ‘at-risk’ youth to gain control over their own development and growth as they negotiate adolescence.

Although the thrust of this review is not exclusively on ‘at-risk’ students, the nature of the model presented by Collingwood has the potential to be adapted to support a democratically based curriculum for all adolescent youth. The characteristics of the fitness processes presented in the model suggest a content and practical knowledge that
would contribute greatly to both student education "for" democracy and "as" democracy. For instance, Collingwood (1997) suggested that the process of engaging in a fitness curriculum requires doing activities that are concrete and specific, demanding, goal-oriented, and active. These characteristics fit well with the democratic ideals because they introduce little ambiguity to students as they strive to learn the concepts of fitness. Further, fitness activities require both leaders and followers and have results that are honest and often delayed. These characteristics also fit well since it provides social opportunities for leadership and followership while decreasing occurrences of physical elitism through social comparison.

Although social comparison may be heightened by the honesty of daily workout volumes or intensities, when the focus is on demonstrating improvement, fitness activities provide opportunities to reinforce concepts of long and short term individual goal setting. In addition, fitness activities demand a high level of individual responsibility and discipline providing clear opportunities for student and teacher accountability. For example, it is not too difficult to determine if good decisions are being made that will add to student physical fitness and leadership development. At the same time, these processes are flexible enough to allow students to make choices, select goals, and enter the learning process at a level where they can continue building on their knowledge. For example, fitness gains happen in a fairly uniform pattern of steps, each building on preceding steps, allowing clear articulation, structure for development, and appropriate entry into the process.

On the other hand, the outcomes of participation in fitness programming include: development of a health-enhancing lifestyle; increased fitness; increased self-discipline; increased sense of personal responsibility; increased willingness to address developmental problems; and an increased ability to set goals and make systematic plans to reach goals (Collingwood, 1997). These, too, represent opportunities for teachers, through the process of achieving an outcome, to adapt Collingwood's fitness model to a democratic pedagogy. These practices might include creating activities that allow students to learn the skills of humane social interactions on the way to learning skills of cooperation, basic skills of leadership that can be developed and expanded over time, or
cognitive skills of problem solving.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study focused on the interactive change learners and their instructor made toward becoming students "of" and "for" democratic ideals within the framework of fitness education. A qualitative design based on the assumptions of interpretivist interventionism (Green, 1993; Soltis, 1989) provided the theoretical lens for this investigation. Methodology for this study included participant observation of daily classes, document analysis of student generated work, transcribed interviews, and student social responsibility assessments. This chapter establishes the qualitative framework for the study and provides details on development of the curriculum implemented during the study and the democratic ideals guiding it. Descriptions of and justifications for selecting subjects and settings, gaining access to the site, techniques of data collection, data analysis, and data trustworthiness and validity are included.

Qualitative Framework

If the goal of secondary physical education is to create meaningful opportunities for students to learn about themselves and their environment through physical movement (Strand & Scantling, 1994; Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992; Zakus & Malloy, 1995) and if most secondary school physical education courses - even courses that are appealing to students - are met with student resistance to fully engage in them (Tinning & Fitzclarence, 1992), then issues that determine student engagement must be investigated. Students must be asked to voice their expectations, experiences, and motivations for engaging in or not engaging in these activities. Additionally, what a teacher does to create
meaningful and engaging physical education experiences on a daily basis needs to be examined.

To investigate these issues, I initially envisioned this study as a critical, educative, empowering approach to postpositivist research much like "research as praxis ... that is explicitly committed to critiquing the status quo and building a more just society" (Lather, 1986a, p. 258). The researcher's role in this kind of inquiry would be to discover ways to "connect research methodology to theoretical concerns and commitments" (p. 258) and to "practice in their empirical endeavors what they preach in their theoretical formulations" (p. 258). Critical, educative, and empowering research would be based on knowledge that "emerges" (Lather, 1986a) from the "dialogic" nature of the interactions between the researcher and the stakeholders, where stakeholders are all the people with an interest in the results of the research.

In light of the many issues driving a wedge between teaching practices and student learning highlighted in the review of literature, this approach seemed warranted. Issues of marginalization impacting many physical education programs combined with the complex culture postmodern youth live in today suggested a critical paradigm was needed to support inquiry into the reform of curriculum and teaching practices. On the other hand, the nature of this investigation was not to question the history of perceived marginalization and resulting emancipatory action "involving the researcher's ability to expose the contradictions of the world ... accepted by the dominant culture as natural and inviolable" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 140). Instead, it was to inquire into the practical, interactive changes learners and their instructor make toward becoming students "of" and "for" democratic ideals within the framework of fitness education. Implicit in this inquiry was the possibility that the dialogic (or interactive) nature of the teaching and inquiry process would encounter critical issues. However, the ultimate goal of the project was to document the interactive changes that occurred as both the teacher and students learned to learn from each other in hopes of creating an engaging and meaningful education through the tenets of a democratic curriculum.

Although the assumptions of critical pedagogy and critical inquiry were never far from the researcher's perspective, assumptions of interpretive/interventionism (Green,
1989) provided the theoretical framework for this study. Methods prescribed by interventionism provide rich and wide "ranging assessments of the intervening educational processes, products, and projects" (Soltis, 1989, p. 125). Interventionist research, as it is interpreted here, has as its goal to "change and understand the effects of change on the human beings being changed" (Solits, 1989, p. 125). Change was understood through the process of qualitative interpretivism. Interpretivism has as its goal "the understanding of the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). The world the interpretivist is striving to understand is thought to be constructed by people, who in a given time and place, "fashion meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction involving history, language, and action" (p. 118). The interpretivists role is to "elucidate the process of meaning construction and clarify what and how meanings are embodied in the language and actions" (p. 118) of the people studied. Interpretive processes allowed the researcher to construct perceptions of the cycles of change that were occurring in the class from both the students and teachers point of view. The combination of these two methods allowed the teacher/researcher to document both the changes made by the instructor responding to the students and also the changes students make responding to the learning process.

**Why This Site?**

This study was conducted in a Midwest urban high school that had recently initiated school wide reform. These efforts came in response to the need to increase the marketability of the school during city wide open enrollment and were supported by a five year state-based Venture Capital Grant. What resulted was a unique school wide curriculum called the ACE program (described earlier in Chapter 1). The education portion of the ACE curriculum was supported by 83 minute class periods (block scheduling) and a 27 minute open time for academic assistance called Academic Assist (or AA).

Although the ACE curriculum was in place on paper it was not operating well within the high school, prompting the school staff and administration to seek help from a local university. Liaisons with several university programs supported the high school’s
reform efforts. One of the research groups, which eventually included two faculty members and two graduate students representing the university School of Physical Activity and Exercise Sciences (PAES), was invited to assist and support the high school as they attempted to deliver better physical education consistent with the ACE curricular focus. One area of concern to the school physical education staff was a new course called Personal Fitness.

In the second year of this long-term collaboration the PAES research team was invited to work directly with the high school physical education personnel to design and teach this class. Over the next two years I was involved in this part of the collaborative with the goal of supporting teacher and school change. I would use this opportunity as a forum to investigate urban student responses to my attempts at creating a more meaningful and engaging physical education class by studying concepts relevant to personal fitness. A chronology of the historical development of the university/high school collaborative effort is shown in Table 1.

**My Involvement**

As a member of the university based collaborative team, my role evolved into teacher/researcher investigating the student response to the personal fitness class. Throughout the duration of both the pilot and dissertation I was both the principal researcher and primary teacher of the classes being investigated. This role required both expertise as a teacher and researcher. Ennis (1994) described curricular expertise as depending on a “synthesis of knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning (p. 165)”. Knowledge is further described as declarative, “factual information regarding concepts and their interrelationships” (p. 166), procedural, knowledge about “how to perform or use (teach) the information” (p. 166) (also called pedagogical content knowledge), and conditional, knowledge of the conditions under which declarative and procedural knowledge should be used. Using Ennis’s description of teaching expertise to describe my teaching abilities prior to entering the class allows readers to better understand how I would “see” and interpret in and out of class experiences. I came to the class as a doctoral student with extensive content knowledge in fitness (M.S. in exercise physiology). A procedural and conditional knowledge of teaching fitness had been
developed through 12 years of teaching and coaching experience supplemented by post-
graduate training in teacher education (M.A. and ongoing work toward Ph.D. in physical
education teacher education).

1993 ---------- Citywide open enrollment threatened and eventually happens.
1993 ---------- Beechcroft awarded a 5 year Venture Capital Grant to fund creation and support of
school-wide curricular reform (ACE program) including block scheduling, the
ACE special focus, and training of staff to initiate this curriculum.
1994 ---------- Beechcroft seeks help from University to support their curricular reform efforts.
They contact several different departments, one of which is the School of
Physical Activity and Educational Sciences (PAES).
1995 ---------- Over the 1995-96 school year, the faculty from PAES worked to find ways to
become involved in the School/University collaboration. At the end of the school
year, the university asked the school if they would like greater involvement with
the teaching of the physical education courses.
Spring 1995 - Decision made that 2 graduate students would enter the school to support curricular
and staff development by collaboratively planning and teaching with the school
staff. Two classes were targeted for university support. One was personal fitness.
Summer 1996 I started planning to teach and research the impact of the content and pedagogy on
the students.
Fall 1996 - - I started teaching and studying personal fitness. An instructor, whose class I was
teaching, sat in on the class in an observing and assisting role. The study lasted
11 weeks, ending before the semester ended due to commitments I had at the
university.
Spring 1996 - I evaluated my data from the pilot and, with the help of the university
collaborative, refocused the intent of my work. A proposal was created for the
following fall, which included basing the course pedagogy on tenets of
democracy.
Summer 1997-The collaborative group meets for a two-day retreat to plan for better curricular
alignment among ACE special focus classes. The collaborative group determined
personal fitness objectives, assessments, and a general plan of activities. I
proposed the second stage of the research project to include longer-term teaching
of the class and a redesigned curriculum based on the tenets of democracy.
Fall 1997 - - I started teaching one of three sections of the personal fitness class. The instructor
whose class I was teaching sat in on the class to observe, assist, and learn the
pedagogy. He used the materials and course structure I designed, mirroring my
classes, during his afternoon class. The study lasted 16 weeks, the duration of the
semester.
Winter 1998 - I supported the personal fitness teacher in making changes to the class based on
what we had learned the preceding fall.
Spring 1998 - The entire collaborative meets again for a two-day retreat to plan better alignment
and this time, infusion of common concepts taught across the ACE special focus.

Table 1. - Historical Development of the University/High School Collaborative Effort: a
Chronology
Historical overview of research project

This study was couched in the findings of a pilot study completed the preceding fall, investigating how students in this school responded to initial changes in the personal fitness class. This led to the adoption of pedagogical practices that would inspire democratic growth and development as a next step in developing a more meaningful and challenging course for these students. Further guiding the study were the curricular goals, assessments, and general class activities developed collaboratively with the participating school and university members during the summer of 1997.

Student responses to initial personal fitness changes (pilot)

A number of findings that emerged from the pilot guided development of the pedagogical practices used in this study. The pilot was conducted with the sole intention of describing how students responded to a personal fitness course redesigned to be consistent with the principles of the ACE special focus. This included using pedagogical concepts supporting Adventure-Based Education (i.e., problem solving, decision making), creating opportunities for Career Exploration into related fields, and effectively using the 5-day per week, 83-minute class periods afforded from block scheduling.

First it is important to note that all students in the initial 11 week pilot study conducted during the Fall of 1996, experienced some gain in fitness indicated by general gains in the FITCAT test (Eide, 1993), a fitness assessment designed to measure strength, strength endurance, cardiovascular endurance, power, and speed. On the other hand, despite the fitness improvement, a constant teaching concern impacting course pedagogy was the daily struggle to get all students appropriately engaged in the fitness regimen. Data from the pilot study suggested the following conclusions.

1. The academic portion of the course was not delivered in a way to motivate student involvement in content learning. This resulted from dissonance between student and teacher expectations of the course. In addition, students were only motivated to buy in to the part of the course that was consistent with their prior experiences and present goals. For instance, some students interested in enhancing sport performance were not interested in the long term health benefits of a fitness regimen, a primary focus of the class. Moreover, the course addressed theory and principles that were often applied in
direct opposition to what students were learning elsewhere (i.e., athletics). For instance, students who were athletes seemed to believe that to improve they had to lift heavy all of the time. It was very likely that these students would choose to lift near maximal lifts 3-5 days per week, particularly on benchmark lifts like the bench press. As a result, a lifting regimen that recommended a high, medium, and lower intensity workout day within each week was questioned and frequently rejected by these athletes.

2. Large numbers of students would choose to not be active and/or not record their activity. Although students suggested that they were interested in taking the course and the course seemed relevant to them, many did not seem to be motivated to engage willingly in these class activities.

3. Small groups, created to provide opportunities for positive decision making, problem solving, critical thinking, and cooperative activities, were dysfunctional or non-functional. Although the intent of the groups was to create environments where students felt safe and comfortable and, at the same time, were allowed choices in determining how they would negotiate the course, pilot data suggests that the (a) groups were too loosely organized and had no accountability for individual student roles within them; (b) methods used to create choice for students led to chaos and an unproductive and unstructured learning environment; (c) and, student accountability within the groups was only driven by very active supervision.

4. Another major issue that emerged was that of overall fatigue and boredom experienced by students. Toward the end of the eleven week study, in particular, students seemed to be running out of steam. This was particularly problematic since they still had six weeks left in the semester. Although students were still challenged by their personal fitness goals, there was no short term or course goal besides documenting improvement on the FITCAT. The FITCAT and personal improvement did not provide sufficient motivation to sustain student interest and enthusiasm.

5. Some students thrived evidenced by their excitement and willingness to buy in to the program. These students got involved in their personal lifting programs as soon as class started, responded well to instruction and feedback, and occasionally asked questions relating what we were doing in class to their personal needs. Interestingly,
these students were less frequently the interscholastic athletes of the class but instead, non-athlete females and males.

6. Although some students’ exercise habits were changing and their interest in the course seemed to be improving, little progress was made in improving students’ cognitive knowledge of fitness. The several students who came to the class with some understanding of fitness did not seem to enhance their understanding. In addition, most students referred to fitness gains throughout the semester as sport performance gains, indicating they could make little distinction between sport and fitness activities.

Recommendations for future study resulting from the pilot included creating a meaningful and challenging physical education curricula that was applied, important, and responsive to the needs of adolescent youth. The curriculum must focus on teaching students how to learn, including the process and skills of writing and remembering, the pride of doing tasks well, and skills supporting positive and reflective questioning. In addition, it would create a sense that students and the teacher were responsible for their own individual learning and have a responsibility to the class to both facilitate and negotiate learning. More specifically, future curricula should: (a) make known and understood the class expectations and responsibilities of both the students and teacher; (b) guide student development through the process of choosing, setting, and documenting progress toward goal achievement; (c) hold students and teacher accountable for achieving those goals; (d) set learning goals that included behavioral, cognitive learning, and fitness improvement accountability; (e) use pedagogical strategies that increase the dialogic nature of the class (i.e., journals, discussion, frequent demonstrations of understanding, small group activities, and focus group interviews); and, (f) build in structured opportunities for choice into groupwork and individual and group workouts.

It was primarily in response to figuring out how to accomplish these goals for the next stage of the study that I came to the concept of a democratically driven curriculum. After returning to the literature to read more about youth (i.e., Czichkmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Czichkmihalyi, Runthude, & Whalen, 1993; McQuilleran, 1997; Roberts, 1996), their developmental needs (i.e., Hamburg, 1997; Hurrelman & Klocke, 1997), their responses to traditional school settings (Alpert, 1991; McQuilleran, 1997), and their
response to physical education settings (Tinning & Fitz Clarence, 1992; Carlson, 1995), I
came to the conclusion that I needed to be looking for a pedagogical framework that
would recognize students' rights and responsibilities to engage in learning in positive and
meaningful ways. At the same time, teachers needed to have and be accountable for
similar responsibilities and rights. Continuing the process of reading extant literature
came across references to democratic learning environments. This led to further reading
(Darling-Hammond, 1996; Apple and Beane, 1995; and eventually Dewey, 1916, 1939)
trying to understand how the tenets of democracy might best guide the planning,
teaching, and dialogic nature of the curriculum that I had started to envision.

Summer Collaborative Planning

These ideas were further fine tuned at our summer (1997) collaborative planning
meeting. Here, the collaborative group, including three of the five high school teachers
and their assistant principal and the four members of the university collaborative,
including two faculty and two graduate students, met. Our goals were to discuss progress
of the university-high school collaborative and plan for changes in the curricular goals,
assessments, and general class activities of the courses within the ACE focus for the
upcoming school year. The intent of the group planning was to create alignment with the
ACE curricular focus across the classes offered under the focus. The result of these
efforts were to collaboratively determine course objectives, assessments, and a general
idea of activities and content to be covered. These would form the skeleton for the
personal fitness course the following year. The following four course objectives were
determined by the summer collaborative. Students should be able to: (a) appropriately
apply the multiple components of fitness to their lives; (b) appropriately apply methods
of assessing personal fitness and evaluating activities for fitness value; (c) apply correct
biomechanical, physiological, and safety principles to their fitness pursuits; and (d) work
effectively with a group toward common goals while conducting themselves
appropriately. Assessments and grade weighting for personal fitness determined by the
collaborative are listed in Table 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st 9 Weeks</th>
<th>2nd 9 Weeks</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>300pts</td>
<td>Evaluate fitness</td>
<td>Writing tasks</td>
<td>3 papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300pts</td>
<td>300pts</td>
<td>Show daily progress toward goals. Apply fitness components</td>
<td>Portfolio - documents fitness improvement and application (weekly journals/quizzes, class worksheets, daily recording)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300pts</td>
<td>300pts</td>
<td>Applying safety &amp; technical principles</td>
<td>Lift/Stretch knowledge demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300pts</td>
<td>300pts</td>
<td>Work well with group. Appropriate participation</td>
<td>Behavioral assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100pts quiz</td>
<td>100pts contract</td>
<td>Conduct expectations</td>
<td>Conduct quiz/contract</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The Course Assessments and Grade Weighting Determined by Summer (1997) Collaborative Meeting.

**Structuring a Democratic Curriculum in a Fitness Framework**

Darling-Hammond (1996) suggested several pedagogical and content-based practices based on the tenets of democratic education to create democratic learning environments. These were used as a rubric to create and guide the initial class syllabus and pedagogical practices. Each of Darling-Hammond’s eight suggestions are numbered below and followed by descriptive examples of how it was attended to in this class.

1. Engaging tasks that give students meaningful work.
2. Allowing students choice and different entry points into their work helps to motivate effort while allowing students to build on their strengths and interests.

These first two suggestions helped structure the nature of class tasks chosen for personal fitness. The intent was to guide students through the process of evaluating their present fitness and fitness lifestyle. This information would then be used to guide their daily workouts and long and short term goal setting. All tasks throughout the semester were guided by the student’s present state of fitness.
3. Developing “two-way pedagogies” (p. 9) to find out what students are thinking, puzzling over, feeling, and struggling with and would include pedagogies that depend on student presentations, skillful discussions, journals and learning logs, debriefings, interviews, and conferences.

Multiple activities, created to find out what the students were thinking, were built into the pedagogical methods. Students received credit for completing each of these activities, not based on content, but rather relative to the completeness and thoroughness of their response attempts. Weekly journals, daily class discussion where specific, open-ended questions guided discussion, a midterm and end-of-year focus group interview, and informal individual meetings all created avenues for students to voice their thoughts, frustrations, successes, and understandings about the class and their progress in it.

4. Constant assessment, where assessment is a measure of teaching as well as a measure of student learning, to identify student strengths and learning approaches as well as their needs and to examine the effects of different instructional efforts.

Each day students were assessed relative to their engagement in the class. This was done using daily behavioral assessments created to assess students’ leadership and followership skills and the degree to which they were involved in the class activities. Further during most weeks students were quizzed on their content understanding of material covered in class and in the text. The flow of new information from these assessments allowed constant feedback to the teacher about what students were understanding, enjoying, and choosing to engage.

5. Scaffolding - a process of successive conversations, steps, and learning experiences that take students from their very different starting points to a proficient performance which includes many opportunities for approximation and practice, debriefing, and conversing, sharing work in progress, and continual revision.

Building on the first two suggestions, each of the class activities was structured to rely on the previous activity. For example, each of three papers students would write throughout the semester relied both on the daily information
students gathered in class and on the material presented in the preceding paper.

The intent of this scaffolding scheme was to create a progression for learning how to gather information to set reasonable long term goals and then, how to document progress toward those goals through daily work and short term goals. Most of the class activities were created as “works-in-progress”. Students had opportunities to return to previously assigned assessments and modify them once they had feedback from their peers or the instructor. For example, when preparing for quizzes, students took practice quizzes with their group. Each student was responsible for working out the quiz answers first independently, then in their group. This allowed peer feedback and group discussion. Later they would take the “real” quiz independently. If they failed some portion of the quiz, they again had the opportunity to retake portions of it by writing why they had answered the way they did and why the correct answer was correct.

Similar scaffolding occurred in the strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular fitness portions of the class. Progression and sequencing of activities was instructor determined initially. Gradually these responsibilities were turned over to students to make reasonable adjustments. When students were absent, they backed up their work to repeat the week before they were absent. Again these decisions were intended to allow safe and progressive scaffolding of activities throughout the semester.

6. Developing student confidence, motivation, and effort and to making students feel connected and capable in school, “teaching from the heart as well as from the head” (p. 10) to support students in the “risky quest for knowledge” (p. 10).

7. Allows students to “seek out diversity in people, perspectives, and ideas and construct educative means to learn from those multifaceted experiences and expertise” (p. 9-10).

8. Create smaller, more communicative, class structures fostering cooperative modes of learning, less departmentalization and tracking, a more common curriculum for students, stronger relationships between teachers and students that
extend over multiple years, greater use of team teaching, and participation of parents, teachers and students in making decisions.

Partially, the sixth suggestion was present throughout the other suggestions. A primary goal of the class was to improve students' confidence in themselves and pride in their work. This became a repeated theme throughout all of our activities. It was addressed in numerous ways including: (a) working for self-improvement, rewarding the process of doing the work and not just the products of the work; (b) rewarding improvements with recognition; (c) supporting attempts to change work habits (i.e., making time and supporting students when they decided they wanted to do redo a quiz or paper; (d) being available when students needed help; and, (e) evaluating work quickly and returning it with both positive and critical feedback. Additionally, the course pedagogy relied on small group work. Students used these groups in the classroom and activity portions of the course. Small group activities were structured to support and motivate individual learning through a group learning process. Activities like the practice quiz in the classroom, creating a group plan for cardiovascular fitness for the day, and spotting and recording for teammates in the weight room are examples of the group activities created. Students were held accountable for their role in the group activity by the daily behavioral assessments which assessed the skills students demonstrated each day in both leadership and followership roles. The course syllabus, examples of the group activity forms (group weight and cardiovascular recording sheets), behavioral assessment forms, and an outline of the semester long course content are located in Appendix A.

**The Setting and Participants**

One of the three personal fitness classes offered fall semester provided the research setting. Personal fitness was an elective course in the ACE program open only to 10th-12th grade students who had passed 9th grade physical education with a C or better. The second block personal fitness class was selected for the study for two reasons. First it met at a time when I could be there and second, it had over 30 students registered for it. The first block only had seven students registered and eventually was dropped. The third block class met at a time when I had time conflicts with my University teaching responsibilities.
Research Setting

The course selected for this study met five days per week for 83 minutes from 9:03 AM to 10:26 AM over the 16-week semester. The primary class facility was the school weight room equipped with free weight stations, a Universal weight machine, and limited space for flexibility training and step-aerobics. The outdoor track, located about 100 meters from the building, was used for outdoor aerobic fitness sessions. Later in the semester, when the weather was less suitable to outdoor activity, the gymnasium was also used for class aerobic activities. The normal weekly schedule included strength training three days a week and cardiovascular fitness two days a week. The normal daily fitness plan is graphically presented in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muscular Strength wt. room</td>
<td>Muscular Endurance wt. room</td>
<td>Cardio-vascular outside</td>
<td>Muscular Strength wt. room</td>
<td>Cardio-vascular outside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 - Normal Daily Fitness Program

Relative to the school demographics, both males (who make up approximately 50% of the school population) and interscholastic athletes (who make up approximately 10% of the school population) were usually over-represented in personal fitness. Traditionally the class has included an average of 30 students, most of whom are male. A large proportion of the students who have taken this class in the past (frequently more than 50%) were interscholastic athletes. Racial diversity of students choosing to take the class has been representative of school demographics (which includes approximately 60% African American students and 40% Caucasian students).

For the first time in the short history of the personal fitness class, students initially met in a classroom where an academic portion of the class occurred. Following a 15-20 minute session of classwork (which included reading, discussion, groupwork, journaling,
taking quizzes, paper writing, or pertinent material presentation) the class would transition to either a venue for strength training or one for cardiovascular training.

**Course context at the beginning of the semester**

The lesson plans guiding the first four weeks of the semester are included in Table 4 to demonstrate the course context at the beginning of the semester. Only the first four weeks are included here because the democratic nature of the class allowed it to change drastically both in sequence and scope, soon after the semester started. The intent of plans were severalfold. First, it was important to interest students in the class and direct interested students toward the ACE special focus. Second, it was important to start to create links between student goals and class content and initiate student thought about what they would have to do to meet those goals. And finally, since this class was drastically different from the class these students may have taken previously, time was spent discussing why the change had happened. Based on results of the pilot, the academic expectations in this class were much higher than in the past with the requirement that each student write three papers over the course of the first nine weeks. Further they were responsible for applying what we were learning in class each week through a number of different assessments (journaling, quizzes, work sheets). Physically students were expected to complete the daily workout within the limits of the choices they made for type and intensity of activity. Behaviorally, students were held accountable for how they treated other people in the class, how well they adhered to their plan, and what kind of effort they put into their work.

The strength training schedule reflects anticipation of interscholastic athletes' resistance to lift on Friday's game days for many sports. As a result strength training occurred on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, with Tuesday becoming a muscular endurance day rather than a strength day. On these days students participated in weight circuits where the goal was not to increase total weight lifted but instead to increase the number of repetitions that could be performed. Cardiovascular fitness was done on Wednesdays and Fridays. It was thought that students involved in sporting competitions on Fridays would be more willing to participate in cardiovascular work than in strength training.
Week 1: (2 days) -- Introduction to the concepts of personal fitness
Wednesday - ACE, "ice breaker", students expectations of class
Thursday - Syllabus (negotiate meaning using group work/discussion
(I.e. asking students what would acceptable clothing
be for a class like this).

Week 2 (4 days) -- Introduction to the routine and expectations of the class
Tuesday - What is fitness/Lifting activity
Wednesday - Review for syllabus quiz/Cardiovascular fitness
Thursday - Fitness lifestyle questionnaire/Lifting
Friday - Syllabus quiz/Cardiovascular fitness

Week 3 (5 days) --
Monday - Fitness assessment (establish expert groups)/Lifting
Tuesday - Flexibility testing/Muscular endurance
Wednesday - Arm/leg circumference measuring/Cardiovascular fitness
Thursday - Strength measuring/Lifting
Friday - Skinfolds, journal/Cardiovascular fitness

Week 4 (5 days) --
Monday - Cardiovascular fitness assessment/lifting
Tuesday - Discuss project #1/ Muscular endurance
Wednesday - Discussion & classwork on paper/Cardiovascular fitness
Thursday - Classwork on project/lifting
Friday - Paper due, journal/Cardiovascular fitness

Table 4. - Broad Lesson Plans for the First Four Weeks of the Semester.

Participants
Twenty-two students completed the class and, of those, twenty chose to become part of the study. Each student choosing to participate in the study was provided with a formal parental consent form (see Appendix B). By signing the form parents granted permission for their children to participate. Study participants were predominantly male (18 students). Thirteen of the twenty participants were also interscholastic athletes representing as their primary interest, football (7 male students), basketball (2 male students), volleyball (1 female student), soccer (1 male student), and wrestling (2 male students). Fourteen of the participants characterized themselves as being African American while the remaining four characterized themselves as Caucasian. All were United States citizens. Two participants had been students in the personal fitness class I had taught the previous fall semester during the pilot study.
The Data Collection Process

The nature of this study was to use the research process to directly link the theories guiding democratic curricula to the actual practice of teaching personal fitness in an urban secondary school. As such, learner interactions with the content, class context, and the process of learning, as well as, teacher interactions with class content, context, and the process of facilitating learning were documented through multiple research methods. Each method was chosen for the specific type of information it might provide. The multiple methods created additional opportunities for students and their teacher to become more involved in describing their perceptions of what they were learning. The following methods were used throughout the study: participant observation, interviews, and analysis of products of student work and social responsibility assessments.

**Participant observation**

Daily observation data informed both the practice of delivering instruction and the emerging understanding of how the students responded to the personal fitness class in the ACE program. Adler and Adler (1994) stated that “one great strength of the participant observation method lies in the ease through which researchers can gain access to settings” (p. 382). Although physically gaining access was not an issue since the researcher was also the teacher, gaining acceptance and respect from the students was. The proximity to data that the teacher was afforded with the observation role created access to insight that only a teacher could know and feel.

The process started off like Adler and Adler (1994) suggested, with unfocused and general observations based on the broad questions guiding the study. After becoming more “familiar with the settings and the key social groups and processes in operation” (p. 381) the researcher identified emerging issues of specific interest to the guiding questions. From here participant observation shifted to “focused observations” with attention directed toward a “deeper, narrower, portion of the people, behaviors, times, spaces, feelings, structures, and/or processes” (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 381).

Observation data was gathered after the completion of each class and by recording observations on a microcassette audiotape recorder. These observations were later transcribed into typed transcripts. Transcription most often occurred at the end of each
day and attempts were made to complete all transcripts for the week by the following weekend. Being the teacher/researcher and primary source of participant observations provided a different kind of access that non-teaching observers would not have (Adler & Adler, 1994). At the same time, there was always the concern that observations might be biased toward the more significant events of the day or by those events that happened most recently.

To counter the biasing impact of significant or later-occurring events, I followed a sequence during each observation (Denzin, 1989). First, I spoke of the things that were freshest and most significant in my memory. Then I retraced the steps of the lesson plan, talking about each item on the plan, including outcomes, significant events, reasons why those things may have happened, and what might need to be changed in the future. Next, I talked about the lesson as a whole and how it fit into the larger scope of the class. I completed the observation with issues that needed to be dealt with, completed, planned for, or prepared for future lessons.

Focus Group Interviews

Interviews were used twice throughout the semester to get direct perceptions from students. The decision of when to use interviewing methods came after analyzing participant observation data and student journals from the earlier stages of data collection and then determining an appropriate time to do the interviews. Once emerging themes were documented from observation, debriefing, and student work data, further probing using interviews was used to confirm or probe deeper. The interviews took the place of student journaling for that week. The interviewing process allowed students the opportunity and responsibility to discuss perceptions of what they were seeing or experiencing in the class.

A focus-group format, described by Fontana and Frey (1994) was chosen to inform understandings of student engagement with the content and activities for several reasons: (a) the nature of the inquiry was exploratory and aimed at discovering what the students know about what we were doing; (b) the questions needed to be structured enough to guide students toward talking about emerging issues as a way of triangulating and supporting data; (c) the opportunity for all students to have a voice in building
teacher/researcher understanding of what value the class had for them; and, (d) the focus
groups might cause students to get involved in conversations where one person’s
understanding might inform another.

Two different focus group sessions were completed over the course of the
semester - one during the 8th week and the other during the 16th week of the class. Two
different focus group protocols were used. For both protocols multiple focus groups of 4-5
students were created so all students could be involved. The decision to create focus
groups that included novice investigators and all students involved rather than a smaller
subset of focus students as recommended by Fontana and Frey (1994) was intended to
increase students comfort in the inquiry environment while gaining access to their
thoughts. I was their teacher and an outsider and felt students might be more comfortable
with their peers. I also thought the groups might be fun for the students while allowing
them a forum to talk about the class.

For the first focus group protocol, each focus group had a leader chosen by me
based on my perception of his/her leadership abilities. These students were asked if they
would like to work in this role. Each focus group was created as students’ chose the
leader with whom they would be most comfortable. Interviews were conducted at round
tables in the cafeteria. Each table had a tape recorder and a person responsible for the
tape recording of the interviews. The interview process was guided by a booklet with
questions and time lines for the leaders to follow (see Focus Group Interview #1 in
Appendix C).

The second focus group protocol was much different from the first (see Focus
Group Interview #2 in Appendix D). This was the terminal interview and it was being
used to both triangulate previous data and add new data. Each focus group represented
people who were perceived to have responded similarly to the class. For instance, one
group represented students who seemed to have bought-into the class, who were leaders,
and who were doing well. They were all male and with the exception of one student, all
athletes. Two other groups represented students who had started out the semester as “non-
players” or “resisters” and later bought-in to the class. Of these two groups, one was
more representative of older students, juniors and seniors, while the other primarily
represented sophomores. Both groups were composed of equal mixes of athletes and non-athletes. The only female that was at class on this day was in the group representing the juniors and seniors. A final group was composed of students who had chosen, for whatever reasons, to not buy-in to the class. They represented all school class ranges but were all male and primarily interscholastic athletes.

**Products of Student Work**

Each class task in which students engaged to demonstrate proficiency, understanding, or improvement in applying class content was used as data. Throughout the semester students engaged in different kinds of tasks to demonstrate their knowledge. Each of these tasks were worth points toward a final grade (see Table 2 on page 44 for graphic representation of general timing, value, and type of student work done). The five parts of student assessment are identified below.

1. Writing tasks composed of three papers documenting understanding and application of fitness components specific to individual fitness goals (15% of the total points).
2. Maintain a fitness portfolio which documented all student work. This included the student fitness biography, progress toward long and short-term goals documented by workout recording sheets, and weekly guided journaling, worksheets, and quizzes (30% of the total points).
3. Student presentation on the application of technical and safety principles in fitness activities (15% of the total points).
4. Daily behavioral assessments (30% of the total points cumulatively).
5. Accountability for knowing and understanding the course expectations via a syllabus quiz. This was a one time quiz conducted at the beginning of the semester (10% of the total points).

**Social Responsibility Assessments**

An assessment used to guide and measure student progress in responsible social interactions was developed and used daily. The assessment was initially generated using rubrics similar to those Hellison (1995) developed to teach social responsibility (see Behavioral Rubric, Appendix E). The rubrics stressed levels of responsible social interactions consistent with a democratic learning environment in a fitness framework.
For instance, a goal of the class was to support cooperative group learning. Learning tasks were created that depended on supportive, cooperative problem solving. Initially, during and after these tasks students were reminded of and asked to assess their role in the cooperative process. Students self-assessed their role within their “team” by assigning a number that corresponded to the rubric which most closely described their engagement for the day. If students and teacher did not agree the assessment of their days’ work they met briefly to negotiated a score. These numbers were recorded and used to represent a student social responsibility assessment.

Later in the semester, the behavioral assessment was altered (see Behavioral Assessment, Appendix F). Students were not able to self-assess themselves appropriately using the rubric created so a different assessment was created. It was modified from one used in the 9th grade physical education class to include assessment of behaviors supporting social responsibility. The teacher conducted this assessment at the end of each class period. The assessment eventually resulted in a number which was recorded and used to represent each individual student’s level of social responsibility for that day. These values were summed at the end of each week. The daily and weekly values provided a responsive and relative measure of student’s changing engagement in the class. Daily assessments measured issues of student responsibility, like being to class on time, preparedness to work, and level of engagement in the day’s activity.

Analysis of Data

Each of the data generating methods (participant observation, interviews, student work, and social responsibility assessment) was designed to further develop, probe, or question the stakeholders’ understandings that were emerging from observation. Since the several methods generated different kinds of data, the analysis process used will be specific to the type of data gathered.

Document Analysis

Part of the data, transcribed field notes, interviews, and student generated work were treated as documents. To organize analysis of these documents, the theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches of structuralism were enlisted. Structuralism views “documents” as “texts” (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994, p. 467). “Texts,
previously considered self-writings for other’s reading, become real and decipherable through a set of institutionally generated codes or interpretive frames (p. 467).” As such, once the data was accumulated in written form, it was read through several times. With each reading a set of tentative themes was developed and refined. The emerging themes and issues arising from the readings created the codes or interpretive frames that guided and structured the analysis. Trends and commonalities informing researcher/teacher understandings of students’ perceptions of the personal fitness class guided the search.

Manning and Cullum-Swan (1994) suggested that “structures exist as the organizing centers of social action; persons are in every sense not only the creations of such structures, but manifestations of elements and rules created by social structures” (p. 467). Emerging trends were interpreted as indicators of a social structures created in the classroom, in the school, or somewhere in the students’ lives. Manning and Cullum-Swan (1994) suggested that “content and narrative analysis struggle continuously with the problem of context or the embeddedness of a text or story within personal or group experience. Emphasis shifts to codes, paradigms, and explanations for the ordered meaning of a text, rather than the character, biography, or intent of the subject of the writing” (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994, p. 474). In this way, data from different forms of student work, observation, peer debriefing, and interviews could be compared.

Although the content of the data may have been different, because each set of data was embedded in what was happening in the class at the time (the situatedness of the data) it could be understood based on how it fit into the course context at the time. Initially a data timeline was used to first situate data within the context of the class and then compare the different data types. Data was organized chronologically to see if trends emerged. Within the chronological patterns that emerged, data were further organized into similar themes and categories.

Rossman and Rallis (1998) suggested that once data has been coded into categories, themes, and patterns researchers have to “challenge the very pattern that seemed so apparent” (p. 181). Since the nature of this qualitative work was to build an argument or interpretation of what was learned in the field and since an argument is more compelling when built on logical relationships among assertions that are documented
with evidence, this “process is evaluating the plausibility of your interpretations and testing them through data” (p. 182). To do this, once themes had emerged within the chronology, negative cases or cases that did not fit the emerging trends were sought. When found these data served to challenge or add depth and breadth to the interpretation that was developing. Further, the trends across the chronology were compared to document how the context impacted the data. For instance, if some pedagogical decision was followed by trends in student response, this chronological trend was tracked across the chronology of the semester to see if similar trends existed.

**Issues of Credibility**

The credibility of data generated under qualitative research was determined by a network of methodological and analytical issues that focused on “establishing the match between the constructed realities of stakeholders and those realities as represented by the evaluator and attributed to various stakeholders” (Cuba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 237). Two methodological issues that added to the study credibility were the length of engagement and the persistence of observation. Prolonged engagement or the long term involvement in the site allowed the researcher to establish rapport and access decreasing chances of “misreading or misinterpreting” what was happening in the field (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Although length of time in a setting is not a sufficient indicator of the level of rapport established, when triangulated with other data methods, it added to the credibility of the data.

In trying to understand contextual issues in the school and check theoretical interpretations against school stakeholder interpretations, frequent member checks were used. These methods of testing tentative data constructions and interpretations with members of the stakeholding groups is considered the single most crucial technique for establishing credibility (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Member checks were built into data collection as triangulation methods. Student in-class activities and student and collaborating teacher interviews were used both as data and to check and recheck emerging themes.

Peer debriefing was used weekly throughout the study to check theoretical understandings as well as to inform subsequent teacher/researcher actions (Guba &
Lincoln, 1989). My faculty advisor, also a member of the university research team, served as the weekly peer debriefer. After being briefed on the intent of the week’s progress and the day’s lesson, she would observe at least one class per week and meet with me after the class to compare what she had seen with what I had observed. The debriefer’s involvement was particularly important to check emerging theoretical understandings about how effective I was at teaching, what students seemed to be learning, and how the class structure was facilitating student progress toward democratic ideals in the fitness framework. In addition, the university portion of the collaborative met once per week. This group also served as peer debriefers, perhaps more from a theoretical viewpoint since they were not observing in the setting.

Another method incorporated to support data credibility was negative case analysis (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Data become more credible if they are not presented as a neat and tidy sum of results. The exceptions and anomalies make the telling of the story messy, but add to the credibility by suggesting to the reader that the whole story was worth telling, that the researcher respects the participants voice, and that a credible story would also have its own messiness. Similarly, data validity was supported by Lather’s (1986b) conception of catalytic validity. She suggests that a study created with the intention to foster a positive change in the research environment is only valid if it has led to a meaningful and appropriate change.

The transferability of understandings described through qualitative inquiry into other contexts is dependent on “thick description” (Huberman & Miles, 1994). Descriptions that include the voices of the participants rather than interpretations by the researcher allow readers to decide the value of the study to their situation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To create thick description in this study, multiple student voices were used to describe the range and types of learning experienced. Additionally, multiple sources of data describing the same or similar events were used to create a depth and range of perspectives on the kinds of changes that occurred. This process of triangulating data sources adds depth and breadth to the emerging data and were also a qualitative tactic for testing and confirming conclusions (Huberman & Miles, 1994).
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

A Story of Earthquakes, Aftershocks, and Relief Efforts

Consistent with the transformative nature of the work attempted in this study, the instructor and her students negotiated many changes over the course of the semester. To best analyze the changes, a timeline is used to situate data within the context of what was happening in the class. The completed chronology demonstrated a Richter scale-like tracing of student and teacher responses. To preserve the complex nature of the analysis, data were presented using an earthquake metaphor. During times of greater and more turbulent responses, the increased activity created patterns similar to recordings of increased seismic activity. Within the chronology, patterns emerged that traced a story of earthquakes and aftershocks. Earthquakes appear as sudden cataclysmic events significant enough to be felt by all students and often resulting in damage to the class infrastructure - the theoretical and practical assumptions driving the curriculum.

The Earthquake Metaphor

Earthquakes, necessary events allowing for shifting of the earth’s surface, create an appropriately descriptive metaphoric framework for analyzing the data in this study. The earth is interpreted to represent the congealing psyche of adolescent metamorphosis, particularly as it occurs during schooling. Like the plates composing the framework of the earth’s surface, adolescents seem to be living through constant shifting within their bodies and souls demonstrative of cognitive, emotional, and physical change. Also, like the earth’s plates floating in a “hot, nasty soup” (Martin, 1998, lecture notes, 1998) located within the earth, adolescents’ plates too are floating. Plate movement is a natural
response to a strain or deformation somewhere along the plate. It occurs to relieve pressure from plates under stress usually after a long, slow accumulation of strain. Plate movements that exceed the strength of the framework, break through causing the plate to shift quickly to a new place of tension. The rapid displacement causes all the adjoining plates to shift slightly resulting in the shaking of the earth’s surface. Converging or diverging faults (edges of the plates) are where the earthquake takes place, although the actual place of displacement is usually well below the surface. Similarly, convergent or divergent adolescent plate movement puts pressure on the framework’s structuring the contexts in which adolescents live and develop. If there is enough strain on the plates, they too will break through the framework resulting in an emotional “shaking” within the context that adolescents habituate.

Earthquake epicenters are places on the earth’s surface where plate displacement begins and are reflective of deeper plate collisions or separations. Among adolescent students, earthquake epicenters are interpreted to be the individual or collective behaviors or actions reflecting deeper plate resistance. More intense shaking occurs closest to the epicenter and correspondingly, less shaking occurs farther away. The degree of shaking that occurs is directly related to the magnitude of the plate displacement. This shaking, in ever diminishing intensities, will continue out and away from the epicenter effecting, to some degree, a large total area.

Earthquakes often result in reorganization of the exterior surface. For instance, mountain ranges are formed by the convergence and resulting protrusion of one or both plates up and away from the point of convergence. In the same way, the shape and texture of an adolescent’s soul and psyche are perhaps similarly demarcated. Though not reflective of directly observable physical changes, remnants of many of these collisions are certainly noticeable in how adolescents’ behave in different contexts and situations. Certainly each student’s response is unique to that person. Undoubtedly, the uniqueness of their response is, in some way, shaped by their past experiences, physical and emotional make-up, and contexts in which they live. Thus, like the uniquely different plates floating on the earth and responding to different internal and external pressures, the plates that compose the veneer of an adolescent’s psyche are constantly moving and
frequently under pressure, sometimes resulting in reorganizing of the veneer. This kind of reorganizing is not usually considered damaging, but instead, a natural consequence of growth and development.

As humans, we consider earthquake damage to be any impact the earthquake has that might disrupt our existence on the earth’s surface. Earthquakes themselves do not usually cause human damage, instead, it is the shaking that accompanies these events that causes damage. The primary and most devastating damage occurs when there is disruption of the infrastructures created to support human existence (i.e., bridges, homes, buildings, roads or electrical, water, and gas lines). In the school personal fitness classroom, infrastructure refers to the guiding theoretical and practical assumptions and associated pedagogical strategies and plans driving the curriculum. Short- and long-term relief efforts focused on negotiating the damage to humans and supporting infrastructures are the only fruitful responses humans can make to earthquake damage. Although we can’t accurately predict earthquake occurrence or location, we can learn from the past to minimize earthquake damage by creating more resilient infrastructures and better plans to negotiate relief efforts.

Using the earthquake metaphor to describe student response toward attempts to create a more democratic learning environment within a fitness framework allowed preservation of the interactional nature of the context in which the study occurred. The following assumptions imply the interactional nature of the earthquake metaphor.

1. It assumes that like geological plates, adolescent psyches and souls do not float in a void. There is great interaction between what is happening amid the “hot nasty soup” on which they float.
2. It assumes that youth learn individually and uniquely though in very close proximity to others and they are ultimately impacted by others and the contexts in which they live and learn.
3. It assumes that earthquakes are necessary and natural occurrences in the process of adolescent growth and that the process of planning short and long term relief efforts is most important for preservation of the learning environment.
4. It is consistent with practices that are structurally sound yet flexible enough to resist damage during an earthquake.

The earthquakes, then, are not random isolated events occurring when friction between the teacher or course content and the students is experienced. Instead, they functioned as necessary, though painful, "righting" mechanisms guiding and sometimes forcing pedagogical change in the name of student needs. The "righting" process included sensing problems, controlling damage to the learning environment, and negotiating the post-earthquake relief efforts to yield a structurally sound learning environment more resilient to future damage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Data Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q. 1.1 - Progress toward “for” democracy goals.</td>
<td>Signs of recovery as students negotiated the post-earthquake relief interpreted from emerging data that described progress students were making toward understanding and proficient performance of fitness concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 1.2 - Facilitation of “for” democracy progress</td>
<td>Signs of recovery as the teacher negotiated post-earthquake relief efforts attempting to facilitate an engaging democratic learning environment. Interpreted from pedagogical decisions and changes and evidence of associated students' responses to those changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 2.1 - Progress toward “as” democracy goals</td>
<td>Documenting the process of negotiating the post-earthquake relief with evidence of how students were moving toward democratic engagement with democratic goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 2.2 - Facilitation of “as” democracy progress.</td>
<td>Documenting the process of negotiating the post-earthquake relief with evidence of how the teacher was guiding, enabling, or directing students toward democratic engagement in the course.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 – Graphic Presentation of Research Questions to the Analysis Process.

Earthquake Analysis

Three major earthquakes emerge from data collected over the semester. Through analysis of each earthquake and related aftershocks, the four questions guiding this study
are investigated (see Table 5). The story of how students were moving toward higher levels of understanding and proficient performance in personal fitness (Question 1) is told by monitoring the signs of recovery as both teacher and students negotiate the post-earthquake relief. Attempts are made to differentiate between student (Question 1.1) and teacher (Question 1.2) contributions to these relief efforts and their interaction. The teachers’ contributions include pedagogical decisions and changes that are made to facilitate the creation of an engaging democratic learning environment. Students’ contributions include descriptions of progress students are making toward understanding and proficient performance of fitness concepts.

The process of negotiating the post-earthquake relief is interpreted to document the story of how students and their teacher are moving toward more democratic engagement in the social environment of the personal fitness class structure (Question 2). The students’ involvement in the process (Question 2.1) is interpreted as evidence of how students are moving toward democratic engagement with the people and concepts of the class. Teacher involvement (Question 2.2) is identified by describing outcomes of processes intended to guide, enable, or direct them toward democratic engagement in personal fitness.

The Cyclic Pattern of Individual Earthquakes

For each earthquake the fault line is first identified to situate the reader within the school, course, and specific learning environment. The earthquake epicenter(s) is described next, allowing the reader to identify the primary area of shaking with the potential to damage the infrastructure. Earthquake intensity and a damage estimate incurred from the quake follow allowing the reader to gain an historical understanding of the magnitude of damage. Next, relief efforts and signs of progress are documented allowing readers a picture of the interactive negotiation occurring with attempts to implement a democratic curriculum. Signs of progress are indications that the students were buying-in to the negotiated relief efforts. Occasionally, during the immediate post-earthquake relief efforts additional smaller earthquakes or aftershocks occur. Aftershocks happen along the same fault line and usually close to the original epicenter of the primary earthquake.
Fault Lines

Earthquakes occur along fault lines and, at any one time, multiple fault lines are potentially active. Each fault line is interpreted to represent the convergence/divergence of teacher and student expectations of the course. Fault lines are determined by analyzing the class structure, context, and student and teacher expectations that describe the pressures leading to the subsequent earthquake.

Earthquake Epicenter

Each earthquake is also defined by its epicenter(s). Epicenters are interpreted to be the individual or collective behaviors or actions that erupt within the class setting. The resistive student behaviors characteristic of an epicenter reflect the pressures of the deeper plate resistance.

Assessing Earthquake Intensity and Damage

The classroom earthquakes are measured by assessing the "damage" incurred to the class infrastructure. A modified Mercali Scale (Foley, McKenzie, & Utgard, 1993) is adapted to assess the historical impact of earthquakes on the class. The modified Mercali Scale is a qualitative earthquake intensity scale demarking the continuum of impacts that an earthquake has on humans. It was developed to provide a historical perspective on earthquake intensity similar to the quantitative based Richter Scale. Both allow comparisons between earthquake occurrences. For this study a Rumblings Scale (see table 6) was developed to assess the class wide impact of earthquakes and to allow comparisons between earthquakes.

Earthquake intensity, evidenced by varying levels of teacher and student frustration, was interpreted to indicate that the class was not meeting the needs of the students. These occurrences were exemplified by a rise in student resistance to the class pedagogy, student disengagement, and by growing student and teacher frustration with the class. Alpert (1991) suggested that student resistance could be viewed as a political response expressing powerlessness and frustration with the process of negotiating adolescence rather than as an innate disability in the students to learn or want to learn. Interpreted in this way, student response, positive or negative, is viewed as one way students’ voice could be heard.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Effects</th>
<th>The Rumbling's Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some Rumblings Recorded</td>
<td>-I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumblings Felt By Some People (Students Or Teacher)</td>
<td>-II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumblings Felt By Many People (Students Or Teacher)</td>
<td>-III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumblings Felt By Everyone (Students And Teacher)</td>
<td>-IV – V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-infrastructures tremble, windows crack</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Infrastructure Damage</td>
<td>-VI – VII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-poorly constructed infrastructures damaged, only minor damage to well constructed infrastructures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much Infrastructure Damage</td>
<td>-VIII – IX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-some damage to infrastructure created to withstand earthquakes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Infrastructure Damage</td>
<td>-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ground on which infrastructures built is disturbed severely damaging structures constructed on it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Infrastructure Damage and some Collapse</td>
<td>-XI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Collapse</td>
<td>-XII</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. The Rumbling's Scale for Assessing Earthquake Intensity (adapted from modified Mercali Scale (Foley, McKenzie, & Utgard, 1993).

Relief Efforts, Signs of Progress, and Aftershocks

Relief efforts are indicated by the negotiation between teacher implemented pedagogical choices driving the democratic personal fitness curriculum and student responses to those choices. To be successful, students would eventually show signs of progress, indicated by enhanced learning and choosing to buy-in to the learning process. Another sign of progress was revealed by the course infrastructural changes that might indicate that we were learning from past mistakes to create a structurally sturdy but more flexible learning environment. Aftershocks were evidence that the pressures causing the primary earthquake were not completely alleviated by the plate movement. They emerged as mini-earthquakes, smaller in scale, though still potentially damaging to both humans and the contextual infrastructure. Both were already weakened by the primary earthquake and not yet fully supported by relief efforts and thus were particularly susceptible to extensive damage by the lower intensity aftershocks.
Earthquake #1

The first earthquake occurred almost immediately after the beginning of the semester. Symptoms of the earthquake became obvious in the first few days when the teacher and students were trying to negotiate the course goals, direction, structure, expectations, and rules. The earthquake was manifested as students resisted the expectations and class regimen explained to them on the first day of class. Due to post-earthquake recovery efforts, the class was stabilized after only a few days though long term recovery efforts would continue for three weeks.

**Estimate of Earthquake Intensity and Damage**

Damage as assessed by the Grumblings Scale reflected a level VI earthquake indicated by the resulting damage to some students’ psyches and course structures that were less resilient to the shaking. This was reflected by a rapid displacement of about one third of the students out of the class. The class originally had 36 students on the roster while 35-40 students were in the class on the first day. After the first two days, class size had decreased to 24 students. One student summarized initial class sentiment saying “at first it was packed in there, then a lot of people dropped the class because of the writing assignments. It made it seem like it was a bad class” (C, focus group interview 2). Another student elaborates saying “at the beginning it was kind of boring because she was making us write or do class work when we came to class thinking that we were going to lift” (P, focus group interview 2). These comments suggest that the class framework (described in the syllabus) and probably the way this material was presented during those first few days, created great pressure on the students.

Many of the students who remained in the class found other ways to register their unhappiness with the course structure using any strategy they could. Talking-out, making distracting noises, singing, not taking in-class tasks seriously, and reading newspapers during class were some of their resisting strategies. Not all of the students took part in these strategies, however. They seemed restricted to about one fourth to one third of the students. A majority of those not resisting laughed at these students and thus paid attention to them, abetting the resistance. A very few students chose to take no part in either resistance or abetting it. Instead, they tried to ignore the student spectacle.
Fault Lines

Students’ expectations of course content, structure, and demands set the stage for understanding where the active fault lines were and correspondingly, their responses to the initial course pedagogy and content. Students came to the class with a variety of past experiences in both fitness and physical education classes. Their histories would impact how they individually and collectively responded to the personal fitness course.

Students’ expectations of course content

Students came to the class with a number of expectations about what they thought they would get from the personal fitness course. They suggested in their biographies that they wanted to take personal fitness to improve their fitness, physical size, or sport performance capability, or to enhance their knowledge about fitness. From participant observations (Week 1), it appeared that most of their motives were linked to either the role fitness activities played in altering body shape, physical performance capabilities, or both. For instance, most male students suggested that their motives for participating in fitness activities were to get “deez”, which referred to the size and shape of the biceps muscles. “Deez” are similar to the Popeye caricature where the biceps muscle looks like a capitol “D” laying on its side. Upper body size, the arms and chest in particular, was the comparative feature among these students. As a result, the quantity of weight a person could bench press, since it directly related to chest and arm strength, was often used as a watermark of fitness to these male students. Conversely, neither of the two females were as interested in gaining “deez” as they were in toning. A lean, thin look was the accepted norm for a female student’s fitness in this class. For both males and females, looking fit was as important as being fit, again reflecting the expectation that getting more fit was important for the impact it might have on changing a person’s body shape.

At the same time, almost all students’ were interested in the more functional aspects of fitness. About one quarter of the students suggested that they were interested in improving their functional fitness for either health or supplementary to career pursuits (from fitness biography). For example, one student suggested that he “just wanted to get in better shape and be active because it is good for my health” (N). Two other students stated that their career goals (Air Force and Police Academy) required high levels of
performance related fitness. More than half of the class, all of whom were male, suggested they needed to improve their functional fitness to enhance their current and future athletic pursuits. Exemplifying this goal, one student said he wanted “someday to make something out of my sport” (A) and needed to get bigger and stronger to do that. Five other students suggested that improved sport performance fitness would enhance their ability to have the opportunity to compete in their sport in college and maybe earn a scholarship. Six students suggested they were most concerned about enhancing their sport performance fitness so they might perform better in their current interscholastic sports.

Student expectations of course structure and demands

Given these motives for choosing to enroll in personal fitness, students held a number of expectations about what the class would be like. These expectations were tempered by their understandings of what the class had been in the past and what they believed they should get from the class. Although the course had only been in existence for two years prior to this study, students expected the class to be like it had been during that time. This common understanding was exemplified by one student who said “I expected it to be like last year where you lift and do your workout on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and play basketball on Tuesday or Thursday” (CH, focus group interview 2).

Underlying this comment was the expectation that the class would be loosely structured around lifting and basketball. In the past, students reported to the gym twice a week. Their time there was unstructured but most of the students chose to play pick-up basketball. Those that chose not to play basketball sat in the bleachers. The other three days students reported to the weight room where, although they had a weight sheet developed for them, they often spent their time as they wanted. The expectation that students could determine how they spent their time in personal fitness was voiced by this student who said, “I thought that when I came in here you could just lift if you felt like it” (N, focus group interview 2).

A large number of students enrolled in personal fitness were also currently interscholastic athletes. Their experience participating in interscholastic sport created preconceptions about what personal fitness should be. They suggested that because they
were experienced lifters and had been put on programs by their coaches or club personal trainers, they should be allowed to work on their own program during class time (participant observation, week 1). Supporting this point one student stated, “this is not a bunch of rookies since most of the class consisted of people who had lifted before” (L, focus group interview 2). Many of these students believed they knew enough about fitness (primarily lifting) to create their own programs and had confidence in how well it would work. Further, they suggested that they did not want anyone changing their programs. This attitude was exemplified by another student who, after admitting that he really did not know if the program he was on was the most appropriate, said “if I am doing something wrong and it might hurt me, then tell me, but don’t try to change my whole program” (LO, focus group interview 2).

The underlying message coming from the students involved in sport was that their sport training experiences qualified them as knowledgeable and capable of creating a fitness program, particularly in the weight room. Further, they were not interested in questioning the soundness of their knowledge and preconceptions about program development. Since there was such a large number of athletes in the class, this opinion spread rapidly to the rest of the class, whether they were experienced or not. As a result, before the class started, students anticipated that whoever was teaching the class was merely facilitating workouts (like a fitness club attendant). Additionally, there was the expectation that the class would be structured like a free period where students could work out on their own, rather than as a class with rules and responsibilities.

**Epicenters**

Student resistance to the initial days of personal fitness was directly observable by the teacher/researcher. The epicenter of student resistance occurred with their vocal opposition to the changing structure of the course. They presented two primary arguments. One was based on the students’ perceptions that they were already experienced with personal fitness and were not interested in the academic portion of this course. Part of this argument seemed to be that students felt as if their expertise in fitness, often gained from sport, was being questioned. Another argument forwarded by the students suggested that the class was geared toward college and not toward high school
students. They argued that the class should not have so much classwork and should mostly offer students the opportunity to work out during the school day. Interestingly, a majority of the students who were most vocal resisting class change were upper-class students and athletes. These students probably had the strongest preconceptions about what the class would be. Their preconceptions were created from experiences in the class from prior semesters and from their perceptions of what fitness means generated during their interscholastic athletic experiences. As a result they were probably most threatened by the changed course structure and content since it manifested itself as a direct criticism to the way these students were experiencing sport and fitness training.

A secondary epicenter erupted from student resistance to a new teacher by testing her limits. Several students, reflecting back on the beginning of the year (focus group interview 2) suggested that part of the negative student response had to do with the teacher being a newcomer. Similarly, it is quite likely that many students, particularly the male athletes, doubted the teacher from the beginning. She was small framed and a female, hardly the kind of person that larger male athletes will immediately respect, especially in the weight room. This was infrequently addressed directly by students, but was sensed (participant observation, week 1) as a possible reason for student resistance to the course those first few days.

**Teacher Initiated Relief Efforts**

Within the immediate context of the class, it was obvious that few students would be willing to engage in the course if it did not change. Responding to the student outrage and consistent with my interpretation of a democratic curricular agenda, course structure, content, and tasks had to be changed to create an environment more responsive to the students. In making these changes, it was most important to make careful decisions. Having high individual expectations of students and working through a challenging curriculum could not be sacrificed completely in exchange for increased student buy-in. Instead, the class needed to be structured so that students would be motivated to voluntarily engage in class activities. As a result, the following changes were made after the first two days of the class. They were implemented during the second and third week of the semester.
1. Time spent in the classroom was decreased. It was the intent of the course to have 15-20 minutes spent in the classroom daily, but the first two days were held entirely in the classroom. To spend less time in the classroom then was not a major change but a forwarding of the agenda. It was done at the loss of some content not being covered. At that point however, an anticipated increase in student willingness to buy-in to the class as a result of such a change far outweighed the loss.

2. Similarly, decreasing time spent in the class allowed classroom routines to be established. The routine included 15-20 minutes of classroom time followed by a weekly routine of lifting, stretching, and cardiovascular activity. It was a mistake to not start these routines the first day of class. Starting the course in the classroom negotiating the syllabus and doing team-building activities was intended to make clear the differences between past classes and the current one while allowing students’ input. It further was intended to make clear the rules that would govern behavior in the class before the “experienced majority” of students set the tone. On the other hand, students did not want to come to a fitness class and be forced to sit listening and participating in talk about fitness. They wanted to be active in the routine and structure of the class immediately.

3. Considering this, the decision was made to compromise the way lifts would be taught once we were in the weight room. Since so many students had some expertise it was decided to use the more experienced students as demonstrators. This was done using small groups led by students who knew the lifts. Students were asked to match the lift names with the station where that exercise was performed. Students who knew the lift then completed a set and were followed by students who were not familiar with the lift. This process was followed for a short list of exercises organized in a prescribed pattern. At the end of the list groups were directed to choose one or two extra lifts at the few remaining stations. The decision to create some choice within the course structure again resulted from most of the students having some expertise, their desire to be active, and their resistance to listen to instruction. Changes were intended to create class structure while allowing students some flexibility and choice in the lifting schedule. The lifting pattern was designed as a way to ease congestion.
4. It was important in the next several days of class to talk about the issues raised by students and to show them in good faith that the course was sensitive and responsive to the issues they raised. In so doing, I was held accountable for providing meaningful class guidance allowing them to make progress toward their fitness knowledge and performance goals. Students, on the other hand, were responsible and held accountable for their learning and progress toward these goals.

**Negotiated student relief efforts**

Responding to the students' discontent with the course changes through open class discussions seemed to be effective in easing student resistance and increasing their willingness to buy-in to at least a small part of the course (observation, week 2). One student reflecting back on the changes of the first few weeks stated “we had to readjust, start working to get through the class” (A, focus group interview 2). Although, as one student suggested, the class was more motivating to students once they started lifting (N, journal 2).

**Taking responsibility for learning.** Students demonstrated they would take some responsibility for their own learning during the second week of class. This was evidenced in two ways. First students took a quiz over the syllabus, intended to encourage them to understand the course structure and their rights and responsibilities in it. Initially only half of the students passed the quiz despite the motivation to do well on a graded task that was heavily weighted in their course grade. Many of those students who failed did so because they were trying to memorize the syllabus content rather than understanding and learning it (observation week 2). All students had the opportunity to retake the quiz and in the end, all students who had failed the quiz took it again. Of the students retaking the quiz, all passed with either an A, B, or C. This accountability forced the students to better understand what the course was about, how they would be assessed, and what responsibilities they had to the course and their classmates in order to negotiate it successfully.

Second, students seemed to be buying-in to the class routine during the weeks that followed the earthquake. After getting through some initial self-consciousness about our warm-up activities and the lifting and cardiovascular fitness activities, they appeared to
be excited and interested in being involved in these activities. The observer/debriefer noted in her first observation (8th day of class) that although students would “grumble and gripe” initially at the start of an activity, they usually became active and engaged in it fairly quickly. Students also recognized their responsibility as learners indicated by one student who said “she expected you to put some work in, put some effort into it and not sit around in the back of the room and joke around. She would expect you to show some improvement” (L, focus group interview 2). Another student confirms this thought saying, “she won’t let you sit around and do nothing. She will be on your back, like she always wants you to stick by the rules” (K, focus group interview 2).

A set of journal questions (journal 1, week 3) was used to further probe student understanding of their role in the class. Journal questions were intended to create a link between their daily class behavior and their responsibility to themselves and the others in the class. Students were asked to describe what about their daily behavior exemplified their willingness to be a team player and respectful classmate (Journal #1). They suggested that they had responsibilities to “cooperate with the new rules” (CH), “communicate with their groups” (Q), and to “participate and be helpful to others” (TR).

Not all responses suggested that students were buying in to the class democratic agenda. One student, struggling with the democratic concept, suggested that a person could only be a team player to a point. At some point “you have to take things into your own hands. For example in soccer, I need to take the ball myself more because the others are not as good as me, but I know that they want the ball as much as me” (JA). Yet another student answered the journal question in this way: “I believe in actual hard work not talking about it. Talking has never got me anywhere” (LO). From this comment he seems to be saying that the journaling is not a meaningful task and reiterating his dissatisfaction with the amount of time we spend in the classroom.

Students demonstrated that they had an understanding of what they needed to do to improve both as responsible members of the class and for their individual learning and self-improvement. Again in response to the set of journal questions (journal #1) probing what they could improve on in class to become better classmates and learners, students responded:
I could learn the things we do in the weight room good so that I could demonstrate for my group or class and that will make the class do better (C).

Lead exercises more and work harder (CH).

I could be a little more quiet in class, stay more focused on the purpose of the class and my goals (W).

To listen more to everyone's ideas and strip my weights before leaving (Q).

Something that I can and am working on to be a good leader and a good follower is to pay more attention and to not mess around as much as I was. That wastes a lot of class time and a lot of other people's time (JC).

The things I could work on are being more involved in the class. A lot of the time I don't do what I should (P).

I first of all do what I am told to do and try to do it well. I am not a take charge guy especially in an environment such as this. I'm obviously the biggest guy in the class and that is the reason for me not being a person in the spotlight. ... I think being physically fit helps with your energy, attitude and how you do things. Am I a leader or follower? I'll follow for now but some day I hope I can lead. (J).

Several students chose not to respond to any or all of the journal questions. As incentive to respond, students received full credit for doing the task if they appropriately completed the journal. There were no right or wrong answers but, instead, complete or incomplete attempts to write the journal. Students who chose not to respond to the journal questions often did so because "they did not want to", "they could think of nothing to write", or in some cases, because they thought the task "was stupid". For whatever reasons, the task was not meaningful to them and/or the incentives that existed were not great enough to motivate them to write. This suggests that although some students were responding to these relief efforts, they were not adequate to support learning for all the students. Alternatively, it is also possible that students were learning their roles in class through studentship and had not actually bought-in to the class and students who refused to respond were refusing to practice studentship rather than refusing to buy-in to class activities.

Indication of progress. By the third week of the class it seemed that many of the relief efforts were showing progress. Students were starting to show signs of
understanding some of the components of fitness and applying them to their lives. Students were asked in their weekly journal (journal #2) to determine what kind of physical activities they did regularly in the course of a day, week, and month. Students were able to write what activities they were doing that would enhance the four components of healthy fitness (cardiovascular endurance, strength endurance, flexibility, and body composition). For example, one student said, “at football practice I use all four components. I run, stretch, do push-ups, and run drills” (P). While another said “I do a lot of running and use my legs a lot. I don’t use my upper body much at all, and I am not strong in my upper body. I play soccer, basketball, and kick for football” (JO). A male student preparing for his upcoming basketball and track season said “I run, that uses flexibility, body composition, strength endurance, and cardiovascular. I am active every day” (T). Other students could link fitness with the activities they did in after school jobs, for instance “everyday at work I mostly stress strength endurance, because I have to lift lot of heavy things” (D).

Some students were able to identify weaknesses in their fitness lifestyle. A 10th grade student exemplified this by saying, “my fitness lifestyle has decreased in the past year. I used to play football or basketball every day. Now I walk a couple times a week and play an occasional football game” (N). Other students were able to identify how their fitness activities had changed over the past year. A female student assessed her fitness lifestyle saying “I am not physically active” (A). One male student admitted that he would not “try on some things that I’m not good at, like flexibility” (K).

By the third week of the semester, students also seemed to know where they stood in the course relative to their quality of effort and work. On the other hand, they were not accepting responsibility as class members to work into leadership roles and help others. Instead they had a more narcissistic view of the course and their involvement in it. They were more interested in what they had to do to satisfy the minimal course requirements. Most students thought their work was either A or B work and rarely C work. Most students said little about why they thought they should receive that grade. However students who did speak (journal #3) suggested various reasons like:

I think I am doing A or B level work. With all the writing I do and I always participate in the activity (N).
I’ve been improving especially in the past week. However I could do more recording of my work (LO).

I’m doing great now, I had a little problem at the beginning, but now I am focused and on task (D).

I think that I am doing good in this class because I do everything that we are supposed to do and I work harder than most of the other people (JC).

I think I am doing OK, but I should be doing 10 times better than I am because I know I can (C).

About a B- because I participate in everything and do it well. But the only thing I mess up on is writing my stuff down on the paper because I get so wrapped up in lifting (K).

Another indication of the kind of impact the pedagogy was having on students was indicated by their responses to a journal question probing what would make the class better for them. Students suggested (journal #3) that the class, for the most part, was going well for them. Several (4 students) stated they were learning within the class structure since “we do a lot of different things and move around a lot”. About one fifth of the class (5 students), felt that they were getting something, from the cardiovascular and strength fitness component. More specifically, one student said he liked “the full body workouts and rest times”, again hinting at the way the class was structured encouraging students to lift a series of lifts in a planned and sequenced manner.

At the same time, about one third of the students suggested that the class was “fun most of the time” and students were enjoying “working together”. In addition several students suggested that they enjoyed the fact that the “class was kept in order as far as attitudes go”. This was perhaps clarified by a senior student who said “what is going well is the teaching and the way the teacher works with the students”. While another student, a sophomore, male, non-athlete said, “one thing that is going real well is making everyone participate. This will make us healthier”. Perhaps summing up some of the resistance to working in the class, a sophomore student said “everything we do is good, I just don’t want to do it half the time”. This comment suggests that although students may understand the value and importance of pursuing a physically active lifestyle and
understanding fitness concepts, they are not necessarily motivated to be active. The motivation comes from more than understanding and valuing physical activity, though that is important. It also seems that adolescents need the pursuit of an active lifestyle to include appropriate mixes of social engagement, fun, free choice, and maybe even “down time”. How to construct such mixes while preserving a class structure that can facilitate learning for all students seems an evasive formula that can change daily.

On the other hand, nine students suggested that the class would be better if they had the opportunity to be in “in the weight room/gym more and spend less time in the classroom” and if “we did less writing”. This would become a recurring message from the class prompting an issue that also arose from the pilot work of how best to use the 84-minute block. During the pilot, the block was too long a time for most students to continue working out. Considering these students' age, physical maturity, and levels of experience it seemed that a 40-50 minute block for lifting would be a better fit. However, this block structure allowed us 15-20 minutes in the classroom, transition time, and warm-up and cool-down time.

When students who suggested that they would rather spend more time in the weight room were asked how they would use that time, most did not know and one student said he would have time to be more intense with his exercise. In the end it seemed as though students did not necessarily want to spend more time being active at the level the class demanded. Instead, they just didn’t want to have to do the academic portion of the course work. Several students suggested reasons why these expectations were resisted. One possible reason was that ‘some students thought it is just going to be an easy grade’ because physical education is an easy class. For example, ‘they just think that it is an easy A but they end up getting a C because they don’t do anything’ (J). So it is possible that their impression of the significance of physical education and of personal fitness impacted their expectations.

Students also thought the class would be better if it was composed of “more exciting” activities. After further probing (focus group interview #1), I discovered that students had varied ideas about what would be “more exciting”, including: (a) having the opportunity to take field trips; (b) earning free days or video days occasionally as rewards
for doing their work; (c) doing their cardiovascular work off the track (i.e., running/walking to the Dairy Queen for a treat); or (d) having more competitions in class. Many of these activities were things done in past classes as incentives for student compliance to rules.

Earthquake #2

The second earthquake was slightly more intense and lasted longer than the first, occurring throughout the fourth week of the semester. The earthquake was manifested as impending accountability issues caused student frustration and resistance to the class tasks for which they were being held accountable. The post-earthquake clean-up process was longer and more complex than for the first earthquake. Class stabilization took several weeks and was exacerbated by aftershocks. Functional recovery occurred by the seventh week of the semester when most students could demonstrate proficiency with class content and behavioral expectations.

Earthquake Intensity and Damage

The second earthquake registered at the VII level, slightly more devastating than the first earthquake. Again both the students and teacher were impacted by the quake as were many of the less resilient infrastructures guiding the class. Students were impacted as they were experiencing failure and frustration trying to complete the first writing project. As their instructor, I was experiencing similar frustration finding myself failing to guide the students successfully through this project. The several course infrastructures that sustained the most damage were the pedagogical frameworks supporting the writing project, how in-class time was spent, and individual student accountability structures. More specifically damage was documented in the classroom portion of the class to include failure of the first writing project which has been accentuated by students rejecting help and resisting in-class activities. These failures culminated in the students' inability to demonstrate knowledge gains. In the fitness activity portion of the class, damage was sustained by pedagogical structures supporting individual and group responsibilities to the class. Relative to the behavioral expectation of the class, the entire framework supporting behavioral responsibility was completely destroyed.
Damage in the classroom. Several structures guiding the classroom portion of the course suffered severe damage. These included the first writing project, rejecting assistance, the pedagogical structure of in-class time, and individual student accountability structures.

1. Writing project - Damage to this structure was evident when only six of the twenty study participants completed their first project on time. In addition, the papers handed in were of poor quality. Students did not or could not demonstrate creativity or pride in their work, indicated by the similarity of responses across the papers and the scribbled, arbitrary nature of how their work was presented. The papers appeared to be aimed at meeting minimal requirements of the course. Guidelines created to direct student work for each part of the project were viewed as questions that should be answered to complete the task not as suggestions to focus their thinking. For example, students were to describe their overall fitness using the results of the fitness assessment as evidence. Guidelines created to support the project directed a similar process: describe each fitness assessment and why it was used, discuss what was measured and how it felt, report individual performance and discuss how that performance matched up with age and gender based norms, and suggest what would be the next step in enhancing this portion of your fitness. To this set of guidelines students responded with single sentences and one-word answers. They were responding to the task in the most minimal way despite the task asking them to use complete sentences and to be creative in their responses. Eventually most students turned their papers in and of those, only three students in the class demonstrated A level work, two did B work, and a great majority (12) did C level work. The remaining students did D level work (2), and three students never completed the project.

2. Rejecting assistance - The guidance given to direct students through the task was met with great resistance. An excerpted example from field notes:

Today we wrote the paragraph on the strength measures we had done yesterday. This task was met with a lot of resistance. Part of the confusion may have been about what to write (although that was listed on the board). But it may also be that students are struggling with the intent of the physical assessment and an understanding of the big picture behind what information we can get from the tests. Because we are forcing them to reflect, we are forcing them to understand
and apply the class content. Without this task I am not sure if many students would make any connections. This is a hard process - teaching them there is a reason to listen, getting them to apply concepts that I am talking about in class...... It will take lots of time and students are not wild about doing it - many will just sit there and, if asked, say they have no idea what they are supposed to be doing. I really don’t think any of these students are incapable of the work, but it is amazing how much I have to teach them.

I also think there are some students in the class who don’t have good writing or reading skills and, for them, this assignment, particularly since it involves physical abilities and training in an area where they have excelled in the past, provided a particular frustration. I have talked to many of the students supporting, cheerleading, and pleading with them to give it their best effort, telling them that we could arrange for help on a rewrite if they needed it. I think these students appreciated the personal offer of help, but I know there are some bigger issues surrounding the writing and reading in the course (participant observation, week 4).

3. In class time.- Most students continued to resist the time spent in the classroom. The study debriefer/observer notes suggested that “students were slow to start tasks and usually grumbled a lot. They wanted to be active and have control over what they did”. In addition she noted that “if the teacher helped them they did the work, otherwise they sat doing nothing until the teacher got there to help them”. In the instances of teacher led help students “responded well to prompting, explaining, clarifying, and questioning” (peer debriefer, week 4).

4. Student knowledge. During the fourth week it became evident that student understanding of fitness concepts was only superficial. For instance, a journal was used as a worksheet to determine what students knew and understood about resting and work heart rates. Most students were not able to do this task without instruction and guidance even though in class we had read a chapter about it, answered questions at the end of the chapter, and discussed it. With teacher guidance and the use of peer assistance, almost everyone in the class successfully completed the worksheet.

**Damage to the fitness activity framework**

Although, many students complied with the changing nature of the fitness activities, it became obvious during the 4th week of the semester that the program was not sensitive to the needs of all students in the class. For instance, one student’s journal entry about what he could do to improve read “if given the chance to actually sweat and
work hard, I could improve tremendously" (LO). His comment was probably intended to clarify his unhappiness with the course activity structure. On several occasions when talking with me or through his actions, he suggested that the exercise structure was not rigorous enough for him. Further, he resisted doing the activities that we were doing in class. For example, if we were lifting a certain number of sets and reps at 6-8 different stations he would stay at the bench press for most of the class. If the cardiovascular activity were to walk on the track for 15-20 minutes with their heart rates in their target zone, he would walk very slow or occasionally do sprints on the infield.

Viewed as a “sport hero” and inspirational leader in the school, many students, particularly male athletes would follow his lead. They would see that he could get away with it. This situation resulted in what I term an issue of choosing battles. If LO was not bothering anyone and it would make a bigger scene to get him on track with everyone else, what do you do? This brought up an interesting point. The course was intended to be responsive to student goals, but because of the varied levels of student abilities and desires and the number of students in the class, it was hard to manage the individual goal attainment of each student.

Further, there was some resistance caused by forces external to the class, in this case interscholastic sport, and it complicated students’ willingness to comply. Students who were interscholastic football players, for instance, would infrequently participate fully on game days. I had attempted to account for such detraction from fitness activities when structuring the course by making Friday’s (game days) a cardiovascular day where our primary activity would be walking within the target heart rate range. Even this task was met with resistance from the football players with most opting to do the “mall shuffle”, a very slow walk well below their target range.

More specifically, student resistance to record workouts and rejection of group and leadership responsibilities indicated damage incurred on the fitness framework. Each are discussed below.

1. Recording. Most students resisted recording cardiovascular or strength training work, an observation noted by the debriefer/observer, participant observation, and student recording sheets. Recording was meant to reinforce students’ understanding of the fitness
concepts. The workout portions of class were intended to act as both an activity and as a living lab. For instance, students could learn about how the heart can be trained and how stress impacts the heart by keeping track of heart rate at various times in the day and during different kinds of training conditions. At the same time, from field observations, I had noted that “there was something about the work of recording that did not make sense to the students. They don’t seem to see the relevance of recording. There are few incentives that motivate students to occasionally look back on their recorded work and reflect on what it means relative to fitness training”.

2. **Group work.** Groups, intended to promote shared and collaborative learning were not working in any of the course settings. During classroom work, groups were used to facilitate learning of fitness concepts. An excerpted observation of how this process actually worked in class follows:

Students would be assigned to each of the areas by their expertise groups used for fitness testing. These were groups where students were taught and then responsible for teaching the rest of the class one of the fitness assessments. After going over the procedure in the classroom by having one of the students demonstrate and then clarify his/her demonstration, I met with the other experts in the group (note: they were not very expert). I went through the procedure again with them discussing how and where to record the assessment. Then we all went to the gym. I put one or two experts at each station. They started measuring. Many students did their measurements and had the chance to both be measured and to measure someone else although they seemed bored at this and certainly few worked at helping each other or getting along in these groups. They had to be prompted heavily to get this to happen. The groups were not well formed either. There seem to be many hierarchies previously established (through football or school life, maybe even along racial or gender lines) that made this work less productive. It seemed to work best when one person measured everyone else (at least it went quicker though that was not the intent at all). In class I wanted to foster leadership skills, cooperation, and helping but all needed to be enforced to happen at most stations. One of the all guy stations where the collaborating teacher was did seem to go pretty well and the guys seemed interested in interpreting the results rather than just having them (participant observation, week 3).

Despite the less than desirable results of the early group work, students reflecting back on class experiences (focus group interview #1) suggested that they enjoyed collaborative group activities. Many said they learned best in this type of environment. From the early attempts at promoting student responsibility and ownership of learning
through tasks requiring collaboration among the members to resolve problems, it could only be concluded that although students said they liked working in group activities, it is doubtful that task learning objectives were being well met by students.

Conversely, one student voiced his discomfort at being forced to “be in groups unless we want to”. What sticks out from his comment is the possible comparative nature of fitness work. This student was a 10th grade male, a non-athlete, and not well developed physically. The groups forced him to do his work more publicly with his group and did not allow him to separate from the group to work out of the public eye. At this point he must not have felt support from his group nor did he trust them. From class observations, he would frequently try to break from his group and did most of his work on the Universal machine rather than the free weights. The Universal was located in the back corner of the weight room. He could, with little movement around the room, complete most of his work with few people around him.

3. Leadership development. The leading of the warm-up and warm-down was improving. Students knew it was going to happen and expected it. This is another routine that was getting better, although the leadership part was still fraught with “goofing around”- perhaps because of student discomfort with the leadership role they had been asked to assume and the verbal barrage they took from their peers when they were the leader. “It is hard to stop the verbal and sometimes physical acting out that happens. There seems to be some posturing for attention, or maybe we are having kids not usually in leadership roles within the social order of the school/sports leading. Maybe the people who are usually leaders feel threatened somehow” (observation notes, week 4). However when LO, a known leader in sport settings in the school leads warm-up or cool down “it is by far the most organized and structured stretch we have had. He commands the rest and they comply” (observation notes, week 4).

**Damage to behavioral expectations**

By the fourth week in the semester, most students no longer attempted to do their behavioral self-assessments. Students were to assess both their leadership and following skills demonstrated each day. Unless heavily prompted, they were very reluctant to do this task. Further, the students who did the task did not really seem to understand what
they were doing. The majority of students who chose not to do the task suggested it was because it was "stupid" or as one student said, everyone "just lies anyway". The result was that the task was not meaningful for the students and there were few incentives for them to do it accurately and honestly. A more relevant and simple behavioral assessment was needed to guide students to reflect on their responsibilities as classmates by determining how they have impacted others during class. This was a problem that needed to be amended quickly before the students lost all sense of how this task fit into our daily routine.

Fault Lines

By the fourth week of the semester students were facing accountability issues relative to their ability to demonstrate knowledge and fitness gains and work cooperatively and positively in a group. Increasing demands on students and student resistance or inability to meet those demands created the multiple fault lines of the second earthquake.

Knowledge accountability

Students had completed their fitness assessments and were starting to figure out how to complete their first project - a written profile of their current fitness level (each project is described in the course syllabus in Appendix A). This task included linking health related fitness assessments to a norm-referenced description of their current fitness level. The intent of this project was to demonstrate specific knowledge of fitness components as they related to each student. The completed project was weighted at about one third of their 9-week grade and was due at the end of the fourth week.

Fitness accountability

At this point in the semester, students were just starting to see changes in the intensity and volume of work required of them. These included gradual progressions in volume and intensity in each of their workout areas. The progressions were intended to challenge and support physical changes in both the strength and cardiovascular areas. Relative to the strength component, students found their 7-10 repetition maximums for bench press, pull downs, and leg press or squat on Thursday of the fourth week of class. Using the prediction tables (Baechle, 1995) students figured out their predicted 1
repetition maximum and used that value to determine a 70% workload. Workout volume
was also prescribed. Initially, three sets of eight repetitions were used to create a base for
strength (Baechle, 1995). This process meant a change in the lifting program of most
students. Students who were “going through the motions” of lifting would be held
accountable for lifting a greater percentage of their maximal ability and were expected to
improve over time. Students, who were lifting at near maximal levels every day, were
forced to alter this program to develop a base for future improvement. In this way all
students would be held accountable for the quality of the work they were doing in the
weight room while practicing the discipline of fitness training guided by theoretical
concepts.

This was different than the fitness work students had traditionally done in
personal fitness, where they tended to lift in an arbitrary fashion often minimizing
physical fitness gains. For instance, male students involved in sport were notorious for
lifting at near maximal levels in the bench press almost every day. This training caused
such high stress and fatigue in muscle structures that the net result was muscle
breakdown and loss of strength. Alternatively some students lifted heavy one day and
were so sore the subsequent day that they either would not lift or would lift very light.
Muscular adaptation to this pattern of stress often precludes strength gains since the stress
is not appropriate to create a gradual adaptation by affected muscles. Participating in
strength testing and theoretically sound lifting schedules addressed the initial stages of
creating a lifting program. It allowed students to learn by experiencing how to determine
where to start and how to set reasonable and appropriate goals for each lifting session.

Similar progressions were occurring in the cardiovascular portion of each
student’s workout program. The class demands had progressed from completing 3 laps on
the 400-meter track to completing 6 laps and working in their target heart range. In effect
they were being asked to work a little harder each week. The routine of the class stayed
the same but the intensity or duration of the work was gradually increasing.

Behavioral accountability

Prior to this point in the semester, students were asked to evaluate themselves on
a daily basis for their contribution to the class as leaders and followers (journal #1).
Students were able to talk about what kinds of behaviors they respected in a leader and in a teammate (follower). They also knew the behavioral boundaries of good leaders and followers. To assess their ability to live up to these behaviors in class, students were to use a behavioral rubric to rank how well they performed leadership and followership tasks when the opportunity arose in class. Interesting that while they could talk about good leader and follower behaviors, they did not or could not assess their own skills in this area without large amounts of supervision and individual negotiation.

**Epicenters**

Course structure was putting pressure on students in multiple sites evidenced by the active fault lines discussed above. There is little doubt, however, that the impending due date for the first project and the subsequent in-class focus of working toward completing the project was the site for the second earthquake. These issues, which students were reminded of daily, seemed to create two kinds of responses. One type of response was typified by the frustration, confusion, and change students were dealing with as they struggled to do the work. These feelings were indicated by student complaining, questioning, and, at times, anger at not clearly knowing what was expected of them. Although the project was described and broken down into subparts with specific guidelines, the fact that these were new experiences and expectations for students taking a physical education course may have created some of the confusion and anger. Also, a number of students took the class because they thought it would be an easy A (focus group #2). These students were perhaps trying to avoid classes with academic expectation for any number of reasons (i.e., if they had trouble reading, writing, or comprehending). In analyzing student responses at this epicenter, trends were identified by the particular damage caused to the infrastructures of the classroom, fitness activity framework, and behavioral expectations.

**Initial Teacher Efforts to Negotiate Relief**

From my interpretations of student actions (participant observation, debriefer observation) and work (journals, daily logs of fitness activity, and work sheets) in relation to the pedagogical intentions and democratic agenda of the class, several areas of
the class needed to be changed. These changes and pedagogical relief efforts planned follow.

**Meaningful class tasks**

All class tasks needed to be clearly linked with things students found meaningful. Students resisted recording their fitness work and I realized that we were making no use of the information they did record except to double check their involvement in the day’s activity. In the classroom I was talking about the value of recording for documenting progress and seeing improvement, but the actual use of it was left up to students. For students to value the recording process, it had to be valued, used, and relied on more in class. In addition, the actual activities we did in all course settings (activity and classwork) needed to be done in a way where students had fun learning which meant for these students that it needed to be challenging yet do-able for all students. At the same time, the activities needed to have a social component to them, allowing students to work together toward a “team” outcome.

**Meaningfulness of work.** In an attempt to make the written classwork and fitness activity recording more meaningful, journals and quizzes were created that guided reflection over past work (lifting logs, practice quizzes, worksheet results). Since all student work throughout the semester was stored in the student portfolios, students had easy access to their past work. These tasks would guide students to use their past work to trace the alignment of their actual work with their goals. It was hoped that if students saw better alignment between their daily work and how they felt or what they were learning, they would be more motivated and responsible for recording and linking recording with improvement.

**Challenging and fun work.** Once teams were established and in response to students’ interest for more challenging and competitive activities, the lifting program was altered to have occasional self-comparative events in the weight room. From an in-class journal (Journal #4), students suggested that they would be more likely to stick to a program when they got results (felt stronger, looked stronger or bigger, could lift more), it was fun, when they were motivated by classmates, and when they had some choice in
the program and lifts they did. The new group structure, planned repetition maximum challenges, and program options were intended to meet these student needs.

Realigned group work. In order for group work to positively impact student learning it needed to be realigned within the social and ability structure of the class. The realignment structure needed to support incentives for the group to work together and, at the same time, group work needed to make sense (i.e., it had to be something that the students could not do as well by themselves). Group expectations had to be valued more by the behavioral assessment and the students held accountable for group and individual behaviors within groups.

Group structure. It was felt that students needed to have some choice in selecting their groups. Further, it was also important that each group have a strong capable leader. Six students were selected by the teacher as leaders to represent the class and to choose small workout groups of 4 or 5. Their decisions were based on a measure of strength and student determination of who could best work together.

Promoting group work. Group clipboards replaced the bulky individual portfolio notebooks. Each clipboard had room to record the individual work of each group member. This was done to encourage a need for greater group collaboration and increased honesty in recording. In addition, workout sheets were simplified for easier reading and recording and all group members’ recording sheets were left on the clipboard all of the time. Leaders were responsible for making sure everyone recorded and did prescribed lifts. They also transported the clipboard from one station to another and were responsible for encouraging everyone to do their lifts in order. Fewer choices were available on the new sheets in an attempt to promote group decision making. This created a cleaner, more efficient sheet. Individual choices occurred at the end of the list where students could choose two additional lifts.

Behavioral assessment. The behavioral assessment (Appendix C) was completely changed to better reflect behaviors expected in class settings. It also was altered to better reflect group and individual behaviors expected of students. Instead of trying to teach students to document behavior with the new assessment, I chose to do it myself. Since students already thought the assessments were a “joke” (participant observation, week 4),
I did not want to go through the potentially frustrating process of reintroducing a new assessment. Prior to using the new assessments, class rules and expectations were reviewed and discussed.

**Forced choice for lifting/cardiovascular work.** Students had the opportunity to choose their strength-training program from several schedules (strength, toning, or in competition). The intent of forced choice was to allow choice and to try to account for the diversity among students while still providing structure within the class. Each of the schedules used the same lifting list to ensure group structure while students exercised some choice over the intent of their fitness activity.

**Better support and guidance for classroom projects**

Students needed more support and guidance in the classroom to accomplish projects. They also needed the opportunity to rework or finish projects with help during Academic Assist (AA) or class time to gain enough self-confidence to do future projects.

**Writing projects.** Due to the painful process of supporting students through the first writing project I realized that many students needed more guidance throughout future writing projects. Many students could not or would not complete work out-of-class. To support all students equally I decided that the remainder of the projects would be done in-class where they could receive guidance and support when they need it.

**Remediation.** Remediation opportunities were provided for quizzes, journals, and in class work. All students had the opportunity to re-do anything that we had done in class.

**Student initiated relief efforts**

From my interpretations of student actions (participant observation, debriefer observation) and work (journals, daily logs of fitness activity, and work sheets) students were able to better negotiate the damage incurred by the second earthquake with the support of the initiated pedagogical changes. The following relief efforts were noted.

**In class writing projects**

Students performed better on the second writing project than they did on the first one. The second project, an extension of the first which culminated in a discussion of students’ present fitness lifestyles and future goals, was introduced and supported as an
in-class task rather than an out-of-class task. This change, supported by class discussions to focus their thinking about what was important to write, guidelines to direct their writing, and time to complete writing in class with peer and teacher support, allowed all students to complete the project. Interestingly, many students would not write until I had talked with them and confirmed that they were on the right track. It is amazing to me how patient (in a way) many of these students are. They will sit there all hour not doing something waiting for me to notice they are not doing it and help them (participant observation, week 5). Despite better adherence to the task, the guidelines created too easy a task for some students, promoting studentship and less creativity.

Feedback. Part of the reason for guiding the subparts of the second project was to provide the opportunity for students to get feedback after each subsection of the paper before turning it in for a grade. Initially, after understanding the nature of creating the paper subsection by subsection in class with guidance, students asked many questions about whether or not I would read the papers and return them. In this sense they were “eager for feedback” (peer debriefer, week 5).

Aftershocks. Aftershocks occurred as students realized the feedback created more work for them. After receiving their returned work with feedback students were upset. Despite being eager for feedback, they were mad that I had written on their papers and that they would have to recopy it. This was an interesting development, especially when the feedback was intended to allow students to create a better paper and earn more points than they would have had they not turned it in for feedback. In addition, several students chose not to turn in anything, instead they chose to take home their work and do it there. These students resisted the classroom time set aside for working on the project by being loud, interuptive, and negative about the project. Yet they took their papers home, wrote them, and turned them in the next day.

Creating groups

In an attempt to create meaningful group structures within the class a strategy was chosen that would allow students to select their groups. I chose six students as leaders. The students chosen had performed well on the quiz, were seemingly leaders in the class, and regularly did their work. These six students would collectively work to determine
groups for the class. Once groups were established, they would determine which student among them was the best leader for each group.

The group of leaders worked well together trying to create teams that could function together. Student leaders understood the nature of their work with one leader stating "we created groups based on who we thought we could work with" (J). Once groups were created, leaders were reminded that they needed to stay with their groups, help their group members record, encourage students to keep the weight room clean and safe, help their peers load and strip weight, and keep their group moving from station to station.

**Supporting group work.**

Several incentives created to encourage students to work together in their groups seemed to be working. The clipboards forced many groups to work together. It provided only one place to record individual work. Immediately I saw more recording done and more accountability by one member of each group (usually the leader) to record the groups’ work. Group leaders were influential in encouraging student work, although they couldn't control everyone's work. Two groups worked extremely well together and completely recorded their work (participant observation, week 6). One group did not work well together, though the students did stay on task completing their individual work. Two other groups exhibited dysfunctional leadership and group dynamics. They would attempt to do the group tasks but would usually fall apart halfway through the workout. However, they would respond to heavy prompting.

Another incentive to promote positive group work included starting groups at a station and scripting where they would go next. This provided more structure for groups. It was harder for them to get off-task because it was more obvious to the teacher and class that they were off-task. Despite the increased structure, students still were able to deviate from the structure. Most deviance tended to be disruptive. On the other hand, the groups did stay together better than they had in the past. That the groups were composed of people of similar strength seemed to support the group work in the weight room. They perhaps felt more comfortable within the groups, had to change the weights less, and didn't compare themselves as much.
Challenging physical activity

Submaximal repetition lifting was used as a challenging, self-comparative activity. These were used primarily so students could compare their present strength with past work and see progress toward their goals. It was not intended to create comparisons between individuals. The intent of the repetition maximum was to determine at what weight each student could complete only 7-10 repetitions of the bench press, pull downs, and squat/leg press. Once the repetition maximum was determined students could approximate their present one repetition maximum using Repetition Maximum Prediction Tables (Baechle, 1995). Students seemed to enjoy this task. It was challenging and exciting to have a way of predicting “where they were” without actually maxing-out.

Aftershocks. Aftershocks occurred as some students rejected this pedagogy. Several students never really understood or chose not to understand that the submaximal lifting they did would allow them to predict their one repetition maximum. Instead, they were simply lifting 10 times their normal weight and thinking this was a 10 repetition maximum. Asked if they could lift more they often said yes. Asked why they did not keep going to find the repetition maximum, they had no response. Part of the misunderstanding was probably not comprehending and/or not listening. Part of it also could be attributed to not buying-in to the intent and focus of the lesson.

What was interesting though, was that the students who did do the task and were able to predict their one repetition maximum were very excited about what they had learned. They exhibited their excitement through talking to their peers in the class, comparing performances in a way that exuded excitement for each student’s potential to lift more, and, in general, were very excited about what the prediction held for their future. Without having to actually take the risk to prove their strength, students had a way of documenting their progress and aiming at future goals that were based on the work that they were currently doing in class. This was a positive experience for approximately half the class - those who had bought in to the nature of the task.

Forced choice.

When given the opportunity to choose almost everyone chose the strength schedule. Although most students chose the schedule that I would have chosen for them,
they had the opportunity and responsibility to choose by evaluating their options, determining what their needs were, and selecting the option that would fit them best.

**Aftershocks.** Aftershocks occurred after introduction of the new strength lifting schedules. Several students didn’t like the idea of a heavy, moderate, and easy day. One student, for example, thought that the weight on all days was too light. He increased the weight over the amount that the program called for based on his predicted repetition maximum. After increasing the weight he found that he could not complete all the repetitions and sets he was supposed to do. He had a difficult time understanding concepts related to progression (gradually building volume then intensity) and sequencing (allowing the body recovery by alternating harder and easier days) though we had talked about it, they had read about it, and they had done worksheets on it. Perhaps the complexity of the concepts, the way I presented and applied them, and student preconceptions about what is effective lifting extenuated this problem

**Redoing work**

Students were given the opportunity to correct whatever was wrong on their quizzes. To correct a quiz item students had to give a rationale about why the new answer was right. About 2/3 of the students tried to improve their scores. Several chose not to even though they could have used the extra points. It seemed that more students would take advantage of it if I reminded them and gave them time in class. A few students (2-3) asked for the chance to redo work. They were more willing to do this the closer we came to mid term and semester grade reports.

**Aftershocks.** Aftershocks occurred as many students resisted redoing work. They did not want to redo work or even do something for the first time with a lot of help. For example, one student started his paper make-up work but walked away from it leaving it sitting on a bench when he had the chance. Another student acted like I was making him do something terrible when I asked him to rewrite his paper in class. He slammed his work down on a table and said things like “why do I have to do it, I don’t want to”. When asked if he wanted the poor grade he had earned without doing it, he had no response. Something similar happened with AN who said he did not want to make corrections and would accept the 39/100 that he had earned. Then, on Wednesday after I asked him again
and explained again the consequences, he said he would do it, but I had to almost plead with him to do so. It did help that he and his parents showed up for parents night Wednesday and we talked about what he had not done and what he and I had talked about that he was going to do it. On Friday he turned his work in to me. It was not great but it was much better and he had done all the work out of class” (observation notes, week 6).

On another occasion I kept a number of the students after class to work on their papers. “I was surprised at how little they understood about what we are trying to do. Sometimes they did not even think about it. They wanted me to tell them what to write. I tried never to do that but sometimes they wrote what I’d say anyway. These people are in the minority but it was still frustrating. Their goal seemed simply to finish the assignment (observation notes, week 6). Peer tutoring was employed as an immediate relief strategy. Students who had done good work on their papers were used to help students who were not done. In most cases, the peer tutoring worked better than teacher help to support the progress of the remaining students needing to finish their papers. All but four students were able to complete their papers (the culminating work of Project 2) after the peer tutoring sessions. Further the process seemed to be valuable for the peer tutor who eventually emerged as class leaders (observation note, week 6). Although, at the time it was done out of frustration, peer tutoring became a powerful tool supporting in-class work.

Signs of progress.

Despite the aftershocks students seemed to be progressing in their knowledge of fitness concepts and their level of buying-in to the class. The debriefer/observer (peer debriefer, week 5) noted that, in general, students show very good technique in the weight room, indicative of their knowledge of how to perform the exercises safely and effectively. Most stayed with the program for the duration of the class, and were doing their work at high levels of intensity indicating that students were buying in to the program. Similar findings were reported for the cardiovascular portion of the class. Students were making the transition to the track better, getting active sooner, and completing their work at higher levels of intensity. In fact on many days we were getting
full participation (peer debriefer, week 7) again indicating that students were buying in to the class.

In the classroom more students were prepared sooner and seemed interested in listening at the beginning of class and getting started with classwork. For whatever reasons, students seemed to be more meaningfully engaged in the classroom activities. Further, the rapport between the teacher and students has developed tremendously since the beginning of the semester (peer debriefer, week 7). In addition, students were more willing to help each other in the class, though some more than others. A few of the groups were functioning very well, giving and taking peer assistance.

Relative to student knowledge gains, it became evident from journals and class discussion that students understood the complexity of generating a lifting program but had little understanding about the more complex “rules” for creating a program based on the assessments we had done earlier. Many students did understand the principles of frequency, intensity, and time (FIT) as it applied to a lifting regimen. This was evidenced by their ability to select these variables from their own program and discuss which variable was changing each week. At the same time, students seemed to be noticing that they were improving and most could tell by how they felt or how much they could lift on a daily basis (Journal #6).

Earthquake #3

The third earthquake was of slightly greater intensity than the second earthquake. It manifested itself as student rebellion against the outside cardiovascular portion of the class and teacher realization that several course structures were not facilitating the intended learning outcomes. It lasted longer than both of the other two earthquakes, occurring throughout weeks 9-11 of the semester. Beyond duration and intensity, this earthquake was different from the other two in that it impacted me more than the others had. The post-earthquake clean-up process was longer and more complex than that of the first two earthquakes. Class stabilization took several weeks and again was exacerbated by aftershocks. A full functional recovery was never realized as the end of semester activities and holiday events (Thanksgiving and Christmas) altered much of class structure for the last several weeks.
Earthquake Intensity and Damage

The third earthquake registered a VIII on the Rumblings Scale. This was indicative of much damage to poorly built infrastructures (like the physical activity structures not constructed to flexibly handle changing weather conditions) and some damage to structures not built to be earthquake-resilient (like the syllabus guiding the second half of the semester). Beyond duration and intensity, this earthquake was different from the other two in several significant ways. First, it was related to my discomfort with realizing that the content planned for the remainder of the semester was inappropriate for these students. This differed from the first two earthquakes which both assumed that the content was appropriate and resulted in efforts to create a pedagogy to allow students more meaningful contact with the content. Relief efforts during the first two earthquakes called mostly for amending structures and not completely rebuilding them. Conversely, relief efforts for the third earthquake demonstrated the need to completely rebuild some course structures. In particular, the cardiovascular fitness activities required complete overhaul and the content originally planned for the second nine weeks required reconstruction.

My earthquake

The direction the second half of the course was supposed to take, as guided by the syllabus, was inappropriate to support continued student learning. Students were not prepared to take on leadership roles with the goal of communicating their understanding of fitness concepts to others when they were still struggling with understanding the concepts themselves. Students were still coming to terms with the responsibilities of both leadership and following skills in personal fitness. The curricular content and delivery needed to be changed to better meet the needs of the students to communicate what they were understanding and discuss what was important to them.

Second, although most students were becoming more involved in the course, indicated by students increased willingness to engage in the writing projects, class discussions, journals, and quizzes, the structure and pedagogy was not strong enough to engage students in activities beyond studentship. Much of their compliance seemed to be driven by the external motivation of a strong accountability system and grades. This
again made the third earthquake different from the first two. In the first two, pedagogical changes occurred in the name of increased accountability. Conversely, the third earthquake seemed to be a call for reviewing the soundness of both the pedagogy and content, specifically to create content in which students were more internally motivated to engage.

The impact of this realization was partially reflected by the high level of teacher frustration obvious to the teacher herself, the students, and the peer debriefer. Part of the frustration arose from the realization that the content for the second nine weeks was not appropriate. This was complicated by not knowing exactly how to modify the course to make the content more valuable to students. This peer debriefer excerpt documented the evidence of frustration: “the growth and development (behavior, skill, compliance, etc.) that the students have made (and they have) is not enough. In other words you seem to judge how you are doing with their continued and consistent movement. Is that fair? My observations suggest that your students hit plateaus and then do progress again. They work, they ask good questions, they are more motivated, and they tend to make better choices. Your pedagogy is having an impact” (week 9).

The frustration I was feeling with the course and student response to the course was impacting the students. The debriefer again noted that I had not smiled or talked with the students, besides correcting them or desisting behaviors, for several days and asked: “What impact is that having on the students” (peer debriefer, week 9)? Students picked up on this frustration. This was exemplified by one student who, while reflecting back on this time frame, said: “like if somebody messes up, she gets on their case and she gets mad and then she’s mad at the whole class and it makes it hard on us” (A, focus group #2).

The student’s earthquake

Cardiovascular fitness context. The 10th week of the semester occurred during the last full week of October. The regional weather, having turned cooler and wetter, created the initial contextual problem. Although it was addressed in the syllabus and students were reminded that we would go outside for the first half of the semester (through the 10th week), most refused to do it toward the end. The students rebelled successfully
against going outside when the weather was in the low 50's or raining. The rebellion included: more than 6 students asking to go to in-school detention rather than go outside; a number of students (4-6) disappearing during the transition from the classroom to the outdoor track; 3-4 students creating more than the usual disruptions during the cardiovascular task; and only 3 students completing the task. The weather battle was one I was not prepared to tackle. The physical education classes had a history of not going outside on cool, wet days and more than a few parents blamed our outdoor activity for any subsequent illnesses their children incurred. I decided to alter the outside cardiovascular days and, instead, fight the facility battle inside.

The personal fitness class was assigned a classroom and the weight room. The weight room was inadequate to handle cardiovascular work. There was not enough room for jump rope clearance, not enough equipment for stair stepping, and multiple class management problems precluding splitting the class into smaller, more manageable workout groups. At the same time, students could not lift 5 days per week even if the program focused on cardiovascular fitness and the personal fitness classroom (located on the opposite end of the building) was too small to hold anything except the chairs in it. We were left with one alternative - to negotiate with the 9th grade physical education teacher to share the gym while continuing efforts to deliver good physical education to the students of both classes.

Another issue arising from student response had to do with the class structure versus class freedom allowed in most of the physical activity settings (gym, classroom, and weight room). The environment found in the three class settings allowed students some choice in determining how they would complete their daily work. Because students had choices and chose differently from each other chaotic learning environments were created, perhaps even destroying chances for students to learn. Chaos seemed to result when student freedom to choose caused a loss in class structure. In that way one student’s choice was often disruptive to another student’s learning. Students’ freedom of choice was often intentionally, but sometimes unintentionally disruptive. This situation was noted during the 9th week of class in the following excerpt: “it is not that we are having to revert to management issues, but that we cannot motivate the learning task system. It
seems that some students who may want to learn are disrupted by a very few students who were freed by the choice system” (participant observation, week 10).

Similarly, during the focus group interviews conducted during the 10th week of the semester, several students suggested that they did not like working in groups. They said that they could get more done working on their own and did not want to be held back having to wait for their group or because the rest of their group was “messing around” (L, TR). This sentiment was voiced almost exclusively by 4 or 5 of the more diligent, hard-working students. From their description of course learning contexts, disruptions occurring within groups seemed to happen in all three of the class settings, but mostly in the academic environment.

**Strength fitness context.** After students selected and started work on their new strength program it became obvious that:

not all students understood or bought into the new program. There were too many choices for some students to select from and I did not do a good job informing them of their choices or the implication of those choices. I relied on the students reading what I had written and selecting from the choices iterated in writing. It turned out that very few students did the reading and working through the weight worksheet (participant observation, week 10).

In addition, the fitness program was not responsive to injured students; another problem highlighted by student response. This was indicated by the following participant observation:

Two students came in hurt today. I needed to come up with something for those two to do that would give them the opportunity to learn something and keep them out of trouble. They were supposed to record for their group and help with spotting but instead they strayed from their teams and managed to avoid me as I supervised the group” (week 10).

**Behavioral structures.** Emerging during the 9th week of the semester was the finding that even with the instructor’s assessments of behavior, students were not taking responsibility for their behaviors. Perhaps because they had not received evaluative feedback about their behavior students were making little connection between how they acted and treated other people and the course expectation of responsible behavior. Since their involvement in taking responsibility for their behavioral assessments was limited by
the teacher taking over assessments, most students were unaware of the impact their daily behavior (in the classroom, gym, or weight room) had on their course performance. Their behavioral assessments were a function of the positive leadership and following behaviors they exhibited daily, the extent of their recording, their remaining on task during academic or activity work, and their appropriate completion of course academic work.

Another issue emerging within the behavioral structures was that most of the six leaders were ineffective at managing the tasks expected of them after the second earthquake. For example, in the weight room, leaders were responsible for keeping their groups together as they moved through the prescribed pattern of lifting stations. This was not happening. Although initially it seemed to be happening and leaders tried to do these tasks, it was not supported well enough by course structures. As a result, the leaders were not effective directing their group members and, although team members might have liked their leader, they did not respect their authority. At the same time, few leaders tried to exert their authority. Similar situations were found in the classroom and cardiovascular fitness setting. In the classroom, leaders were expected to direct group tasks after I had explained them. Again the groups continued to be dysfunctional. Students tended not to work together, even on tasks that were designed to divide work among the group to create finished products that required the input of all students. Students, in this case, would ignore the group nature of the task and either do all the work themselves or not do any of the work at all. The structure supporting and accountability built into the tasks to encourage group effort was not potent enough to bolster group and leader effectiveness. Leader and teammate roles needed to be more clearly defined and accountability needed to be better built into the tasks.

**Fault Lines**

The active fault lines leading to the third earthquake again followed similar trends to the earlier earthquakes. All three course structures (lifting and cardiovascular fitness, the classroom, and behavioral assessments) and their related expectations were under pressure.


Course pedagogical structures

During the 9th week of the semester the course was well behind the sequenced content experiences previously planned. We had not started the third project and its culminating paper and data was emerging to suggest that the content, structure, and paper format did not stimulate meaningful learning about fitness concepts for all students (participant observation, week 8; student in-class work). The quality of the second paper was better than the first but indicated only minimal application of fitness concepts to students' personal lives. The writing tasks were not structured well enough to guide better demonstrations of student knowledge. A participant observation entry suggesting that "we needed to get students to reiterate a course goal or long term plan to help them refocus evidenced this. A semester is a long time. The papers helped but we have had problems with this second paper - getting finished and having it make sense relative to the rest of their work" (participant observation, week 10).

Relative to the course content, the first half of the semester focused on students' application of fitness concepts to themselves through the three projects and culminating papers (a fitness profile, a fitness lifestyle assessment, and a fitness goal assessment). The second half of the course, as it was designed by the collaborative University-School physical education group the previous summer, was intended to focus on applied demonstrations of how to do fitness activities safely with students in greater leadership positions. This would include things like communicating an understanding of joint motion, knowledge of what muscles cause those joint motions, knowledge of how muscles become more fit, and an understanding of some theory behind programs that improve fitness.

Although goal setting was appropriate content for the third project and culminating paper, it seemed that students might benefit more from a different mode of knowledge demonstration. Although the quality of student work in the papers had improved, I was not sure that any real understanding was happening. Instead, I think students were practicing better studentship skills. Additionally, it seemed that more time should be spent learning how to set good goals that were closely linked with student needs and interests. This was prompted by continued attempts to link the work done in
activity settings with fitness concepts that students could apply independently. Students, given the opportunity to apply fitness concepts through class worksheets, frequently resorted to using knowledge gained in other settings (i.e., sports, hearsay, TV) rather than the concepts that we were practicing and talking about on a daily basis (participant observation, week 9; worksheet week 9).

**Fitness structures**

Students were responding better to the strength activities than they were to the cardiovascular activities. This had much to do with the context in which the cardiovascular activities were taking place.

**Cardiovascular fitness context.** The cardiovascular fitness context was under severe pressure by the 9th week of the semester. Prior to this time all cardiovascular work had happened outside on the outdoor track. During the ninth week of the semester, which corresponded to the third week of October, the daily weather was getting cooler and rainy more frequently. Students had been progressively complaining about being uncomfortable during workouts on the cooler days of the 7th and 8th weeks of the course.

**Strength fitness structures.** Students were improving in their willingness and ability to do their programs, record their work, and support their classmates in the weight room (participant observation, recording sheets). The peer debriefer suggested that “when figuring their new weights for the week using the worksheets, most students seemed focused yet a few needed prompts. Those who were not interested are at least relatively quiet” (peer debriefer, week 10). She also observed that students seemed to be noticing changes in their bodies noting the increased number of students wearing sleeveless shirts in the weight room even though the room was usually cold. On the other hand, the weight sheets developed after the second earthquake created a problem with student accountability. “It was harder to see if students were doing their work and harder for them to decipher what they had done” (participant observation, week 10)

**Behavioral structures**

The new behavioral assessments (created after the second earthquake) had improved the reliability and frequency of assessing student accountability for their behavior in the multiple learning environments of personal fitness. Accountability
increased because students knew they were being assessed daily and the daily assessments accounted for 40% of the daily grade. At the same time, this assessment was functioning only as an indicator of attendance and extent of participation. This was not the intended use of the assessment. Instead, it should have provided feedback and incentive for students to engage in positive and cooperative classroom behaviors. Similarly, another purpose of the behavioral assessment was to promote behaviors indicative of leadership skill development. These were included on the assessment form. Because students were not getting frequent feedback about their behavioral progress, this too was under pressure.

**Epicenters**

The third earthquake revealed epicenters reflecting both student and teacher dissatisfaction with the course. At this point in the semester the 2nd project and culminating paper was being finished and prepared for submission. This put great pressure on the already active course pedagogical structures fault line. In addition, the half-term grades from the previous 9-weeks were being prepared for release during the 11th week. This put pressure on all three fault lines since student accountability assessments related to each fault line contributed to the student’s total grade. All three fault lines were additionally pressured by the changing course content. This time the fault lines were probably occurring inside of me rather than inside of the students. I was making decisions that would change the entire focus for the remainder of the semester. I had become increasingly aware that the course structures guiding the second half of the class were inappropriately planned. In the end, this earthquake was discerned to be two different and distinct earthquakes. One, occurring inside the students, emerged at two epicenters and was created by pressure on three fault lines. The other was occurring inside of me. It emerged at a single epicenter that reflected pressure at all three fault lines.

**Teacher Initiated Relief Efforts**

From interpretations of student actions relative to the pedagogical intentions and democratic agenda several changes in the way the course was being delivered needed to be changed.
Process versus product approach to goal setting.

The content for the second nine weeks was changed to focus on goal setting. Pedagogy was created to direct student goal setting and create strategies and incentives to support their goal attainment. Instead of using a structured third project and culminating paper to drive and demonstrate student understanding of goal setting, an in-class project consisting of a series of tasks and activities would advance the curriculum the second nine weeks.

The first stage of the project consisted of students documenting data representing their current fitness (cited in the culminating paper of first project). Then they used a general plan for fitness improvement that I provided them to determine what variables were changing each week (e.g., frequency, intensity, or time spent). Using this plan, students, at the beginning of each week, amended their previous week individual lifting schedule to reflect the sequential and progressive changes described in the general program. For example, each week the strength program called for an increase in intensity (weight lifted) or duration of lift (repetitions or sets). Intensity changes were usually indicated by “percent of maximum” changes. Students had to use these percentages and their predicted maximum’s for each lift (measured earlier in semester). Accountability for understanding the process and what it meant was accomplished through students completing their lifting workout sheets, journals, worksheets, and quizzes. A similar, although less extensive, process was used to document understanding of cardiovascular and flexibility fitness.

Support student internal motivation

Changes in course pedagogy had to happen in order for the content to make more sense to students, especially for those who had a difficult time looking into their future and seeing a place for fitness in their lives. The focus needed to be on finding ways to get students involved and interested in buying into the course focus.

Goal sheets. A goal sheet was created to more frequently document gains in strength using different repetition maximums. For instance, in the 11th week students would do a 5-7-repetition maximum, in the 13th week they would do a 2-3-repetition maximum, and during the 15th week they would do a 1-2-repetition maximum. Each of
these repetition maximums were used to document improvement and to provide a challenging and fun task that allowed students to focus on their short term goals. The results of these challenges were documented on individual goal sheets and guided students on predicting their present one repetition maximum and discussing why they thought they had or had not improved.

Similar documentation was created for both flexibility and cardiovascular fitness. Because neither of these fitness components could change as rapidly or as dramatically as strength fitness, assessments did not occur as frequently. Instead short-term goals were created prior to students engaging in each activity (i.e., stretching exercises) and students were then asked to identify how they would work that component on that day (i.e., how long, at what intensity, what exercises). Students would then document not just improvement but also what they were doing to create improvement.

Journals that link improvement with student work. In the classroom, weekly journals asked students to link changes in strength, flexibility, or cardiovascular fitness with how they felt physically so that students would start to link improvement with their physical activity regimen. Feelings were described both physically (i.e., I feel stronger, I feel like I look better, I have lost/gained weight) and emotionally (i.e., I feel good, I feel more confident, I feel tired all the time, I feel energized because of my exercise).

Assessment based on improvement. The course assessment schedule was changed to include an improvement component for the second nine weeks. To get the full 25% allotted for improvement students had to improve in at least two of the three fitness areas (strength, cardiovascular, or flexibility fitness). More specifically, for strength fitness students had to improve in at least 3 of the 4 assessed strength movements that were safe for assessing - one or two upper and one or two lower body lifts of choice that involved at least 2 joints. For flexibility fitness improvement, both the upper and lower body flexibility measures were added together. To improve, students had to better their total score by at least one inch.

For the cardiovascular fitness test, the Loughborough Multi-Stage Fitness Test, what the class and I referred to as the beep test, was used. This was an audiotaped fitness performance test that used a series of beeps timed to represent gradually increasing levels
of fitness. Levels lasted for increments of one minute, so each minute the timing of the beeps changed slightly, with gradual decreases in the number of seconds between each beep. This test could be safely set up in the space of a gym since it required only 20 meters of running room to complete. To demonstrate improvement students had to improve their cardiovascular fitness by at least 3 beeps over the course of the nine weeks.

**Alternative cardiovascular fitness activities.**

Because of weather and facility issues, different cardiovascular workout alternatives were introduced. A six-station circuit focusing on muscular endurance and muscular power was set up in the gym. It included hopscotch, medicine ball throws, vertical jumps, the dot drill (a five dot agility, power, and speed drill often used in basketball training), an arm circle task (walking on hands in push up position with feet stationary at a pivot point for 1 or 2 complete revolutions), and sit-ups. To assess cardiovascular fitness the “beep test” was used.

To supplement the cardiovascular days on Tuesday and Thursday and to accommodate the ninth grade physical education class, leagues were created to involve both groups during the last 45 minutes of the block. Two options existed for league play - 3 v. 3-basketball and doubles badminton. Students from both classes created teams and signed up for the sport that they wanted to play. Competitions were then formed with games lasting a certain time frame. Shorter games were used earlier in the semester and longer games later to increase the cardiovascular demands of the games. At the completion of each game scores were recorded, teams were rotated, and new games begun. Eight courts were created for badminton and 3 courts were used for basketball to involve 48 students at one time. Basketball was set up to have a team waiting to play. Badminton functioned with everyone who wanted to play, playing.

**Individual feedback meetings**

Students had to be held accountable for any work that was expected from their participation in the course. In return, they needed to know how they were progressing at achieving the course expectations on a regular basis. To do this, students would receive credit every three weeks if they met briefly with me, looked at their current grade, and signed off that they had seen it after agreeing or negotiating the value.
Sustaining academic freedom while increasing course structure

The course structure had to change to address issues that had emerged from the third earthquake and to increase individual student accountability while still allowing some student choice. These changes were supported and supplemented by course structural change, including amending the weekly workout pattern, how the weight room time was structured, and the type of cardiovascular activities used. In addition, physical work completed in class was more closely linked to how students felt as they were doing the work and how the work was causing them to improve. Academic work was matched to students’ goals, documentation of their goal pursuit, and their ability to discern between fitness options and make appropriate decisions.

Increasing weight room structure. Simplifying the weight room workout to include only six stations, one for each group, and prescribing a timed pattern that groups moved through the stations increased the structure of weight room work. Each group had six minutes to get their group through the lifts at each station. At the completion of the six minutes, leaders were prompted to make sure they had recorded their group’s work, then they rotated in a clockwise pattern. Two stations were composed of two quicker exercises while the other stations included only one lift at each. This was done in an attempt to create workout sites demanding nearly equal time.

In addition, the weekly workout structure changed from lifting Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday to Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. This change was initiated for two reasons. First it would put personal fitness more in-line with the weekly routine of the ninth grade class whose gym space we would share. Second, it would create a better workout week for the personal fitness students without conflicting with those who were finishing football, since football was ending, allowing more rest between lifting days.

Student Relief Efforts and Signs of Progress

The changed content focus was intended to guide and support activities that taught students how to appropriately set short-term goals and create strategies and incentives to make sure those goals were met through class discussions, quizzes, worksheets, and journals.
Greater confidence in the fitness structures

Students were gaining greater confidence in the fitness structures indicated by each of the following:

Understanding strength training and improving strength. Improvement was very important to students and when their attitudes toward the class improved the class seemed to change. Perhaps this was most dramatically demonstrated after the second submaximal repetition performed during the thirteenth week of the semester. Again, each of the repetition maximums was intended to be used by students to document improvement. They were also intended to provide a challenging and fun task that allowed students to focus on their short-term improvement goals. By the 11th week of the semester all but two students demonstrated increases in at least three of the four upper and lower body lifting exercises. On the submaximal day, as students were performing their 2-3-repetition maximums, a noticeable change was happening. “All the students in the class took the task very seriously. They worked well in their groups supporting, recording, spotting, and changing weights for their teammates. When students discovered that they had improved dramatically in one of their lifts they not only told their group but they made sure to tell me. They were excited. The class was electric” (observation, week 13). Students said things like:

I can lift about 20 pounds more since I came to this class” (N, referring to both the leg and bench press).

“I started off at 165 on bench and now I am at 210” (K). When asked how he felt about these changes K said “great, fantastic, I mean I go to school happy now, I can’t wait till second block” (Focus group #2).

Aftershocks. Although it was obvious that most students were improving in strength, it was not as obvious if they were also improving in their understanding of concepts related to strength training. Many students still resisted the lifting program because we were not lifting at maximal levels of intensity on a daily basis. To probe their understanding and create discussion about strength training principles, a journal in the form of a scenario was used (journal 3b). It asked students to determine if a program of lifting every day at near 1 repetition maximum would increase strength. More than half
the class thought that such a scenario was not appropriate because it either allowed no time for rest or it created the potential for injury. A smaller proportion thought that lifting that heavy was "OK, but need more reps", "time efficient", or the best way to increase strength.

These results were not surprising given the resistance encountered on the lighter lifting days to get students to take seriously recovery lifting. The discussion that followed in class seemed to indicate the primary reason for their resistance was because students had prior, successful experiences lifting heavy all the time. Due to their experiences, the personal fitness program, was too easy, not proven, and different from what they were used to (participant observation, week 14). The fact that so many students had improved using a program based on solid strength training concepts did not sway these students.

**Increased buying in.** The following weeks after students saw such improvements were marked by greater "buying in" by most of the students and particularly by some students who were previously outliers to the group. "It was interesting to me over the 16 weeks because I could see the difference in how much people were lifting, and could also see the difference in their muscle tone. It was interesting because in some cases you could tell that they saw it too from the way they worked" (participant observation, week 16).

An example of this is C., a heavy-set sophomore who earlier had worked hard most of the semester to avoid having to do physical work in the class. He had earlier admitted that although he "thought the work was good to do" he just "didn't want to do it half the time". Late in the semester he and one of his teammates, both non-athletes and previous activity avoiders, had became regular participants.

Also supporting the greater student buy-in to the personal fitness program was their understanding that personal improvement and making progress toward their goals were what was important in the class. Students explaining how their class involvement was assessed during the second focus group interview, said: "it does not matter how much weight you can lift as long as you are trying to improve" (A). "You gotta go up in weight because when you first came in here and found out what your max was you have to go up" (P). "Improvement shows that you have been lifting. If you have not been
lifting you won't improve, but if you have been lifting you will probably show some improvement" (N).

**Aftershocks.** The two students who could not document improvement over the course of the semester could not do so because they chose not to do the submaximal assessments. Both of these students were football players and both were seniors. Neither had bought in to the program from the beginning. In the end they suggested that the reason that they had not was because they were at a different level than the rest of the students and needed to be able to do their own program (focus group #2). I had given both students the opportunity to create their own programs and then fit those programs into our class structure. One student went to the athletic club where he works and had a computer generated program created for him. He brought that to class and both he and his teammate were to lift that program and document their progress. They were never willing to document their progress even though they were involved in lifting activities within our class structure.

**Improving cardiovascular fitness.** All students were also able to demonstrate improvement in their cardiovascular fitness using the “beep run”. The “beep run” itself was interesting to the students. When it was first described to the class they were “absolutely silent while I was talking” perhaps due to the “challenge” of the task (peer debriefer, week 11). During the performance of the test, many students, at first, thought it was too easy. They would talk, leave before the beep, skip, and dance their way through the first several minutes. As the beeps came closer and closer, students became less and less comfortable. A number of students dropped out early due to feelings of discomfort. This seemed also to be a function of them not wanting to be seen in a very uncomfortable state. This conclusion was made because of how often these students looked around at other students to see how everyone else was doing. As soon as one person dropped out, 4-5 others followed quickly. As soon as they dropped out, I had them walk the perimeter until everyone was done so they would not be rewarded for quitting and at the same time they would not feel like they had failed. I wanted everyone to still get an appropriate workout.
A number of students stayed with the test as it was intended and their performance was probably indicative of their maximum effort. These students did not drop out with discomfort. Instead they stayed with the test until they could no longer make the 20-meter run before the next beep happened. Interestingly, the class rallied behind the remaining 3–4 students who were still running. As individual students were unable to make the pace, students who were walking supported and congratulated their efforts. They cheered on the one’s still running, encouraging their efforts. This kind of response was different for this group of students and had not previously been seen in the class. On the whole, the group seemed to like doing the “beep run” to evaluate cardiovascular fitness. One student summarized the group response to it saying that the “beep thing is not too bad, plus when you can’t do it anymore you can walk” (P, focus group interview 2). Everyone in the class was able to show improvement although it probably indicated improvement in knowing how to do the task. It would have taken several more weeks of progressive activity to get real changes in the beep test indicative of cardiovascular fitness and muscular endurance improvement.

Understanding flexibility training and improving flexibility. Most students were also able to demonstrate improvements in flexibility as measured by the sit and reach and a shoulder flexibility test. More importantly, almost all were able to link their improved flexibility to both the time spent stretching in class and to the extra time they spent stretching at home (Journal 3b). Those who did not improve either chose to not answer the question or said that they did not like to stretch, they were inflexible, and it was uncomfortable to stretch. One student attributed his maintenance of flexibility but not improvement to his increased strength gains. He suggested that because we stretch regularly in class he was able to maintain and not lose flexibility as he increased strength (Journal 3b).

Making improvement personal. Journals each week of the second half of the semester asked students to link improving strength, flexibility, or cardiovascular fitness to how they were feeling. The intent of these journals was to help students relate what we were doing in class to the fitness concepts guiding the activities. Further, the journals were intended to press individual accountability and responsibility for student
improvement. From the journals, I found that most students could make connections between how well they worked in class and the extent to which their fitness was improving (if it was). Most could notice that they were improving by how they felt. In fact most could predict improvement before the assessments because they felt stronger, more fit aerobically, or not too tight.

At the same time students also linked their future improvement on their daily work. A majority of students said they would improve the fitness component because they had been doing the activities that would cause improvement. For instance, 13 students predicted they would improve their strength on the first submaximal test because they knew they were consistently lifting more each week and therefore were getting stronger. Four students said they had not improved and did not expect to improve on the test. Asked why they had not improved they said because they had not been lifting the program and did not want to lift so hard. This was interesting because these were football athletes who stated frequently that their goals were to get stronger and more powerful, yet they chose not to lift the program and knew that because they were not lifting the regular program that they would not improve.

At the end of the semester when students were asked to describe what kinds of things had changed in the course across the semester students were quick to talk about how more people had “bought in” (focus group interview 2). Students suggested that this happened because: “more people wanted to do the work” (T) or because “they found out that they had to do it” (JE). Most students reported that seeing improvement motivated students to do work. And one student suggested that not only was it important that “they would see improvement” but that “they started to see that they could do it” (J). This observation would indicate that students were starting to see that the discipline and regimen of a sound training program led to improvement. Additionally, they were also realizing that the process of goal setting and subsequent sequential, progressive, and planned work supplemented improvement.

Students motivated to journal. In an attempt to more closely link student goals with class content and provide methods of increasing student responsibility and personal accountability for their choices, weekly journals were used. They were further used as a
method of providing ways for students to inform me about how the class was going for them. It was also an opportunity for me to communicate back to the students. Students had complained about having to write too much from the beginning of the course. Students would always complain a little when it was time to do a journal, but especially during the 2nd nine weeks they usually got on task quickly, talked less when they wrote, and most students filled them out completely. During the focus group interviews only a few students said they did not like to write at all and therefore did not like the journals. More students suggested that though they did not like writing the papers, they didn’t mind writing the journals and in fact, several students suggested that they enjoyed writing the journals. (C., A., K., N. from focus group interview #2)

Grades. Grades were important to the students but not their primary motivator

Students responded to the new course structure and expectations well. “The new structure and station expectations in the weight room seemed to keep students directed” stated the peer debriefer after observing class. Further, she asked: “What does this say about choices? Do all students have enough knowledge of workout design to make good choices on their own” (peer debriefer, week 12). In addition, she notes that students seem to be responding to and seeking feedback and advisement more with the increased structure. “They asked many good questions relative to technique and most students recorded their workout suggesting a desire to improve” (peer debriefer, week 12). Some of the groups that traditionally worked to avoid class tasks were more involved and structured and could disrupt other groups less (participant observation, week 12).

Structure did not help everyone. The increased structure in the weight room did not motivate all students to engage fully in the activity. For example, on one day three students chose to become only peripherally involved with their group’s activity. On the
other hand several students were observed being consistently more on task than in the past. Teamwork increased with the new structure. Teams seemed to monitor each other’s work, rotation, and recording. Most groups tore down their stations before rotating and without prompting (peer debriefer, week 12). Further, “I had noticed that students stripped their weights if they saw me doing it. Very often they will help me strip when they see me doing it. If I ask someone to help me strip they always do” (participant observation, week 12).

**More relevant groups tasks.** Students suggested that the groups could function better within the new weight room structure. “Groups made it easier to move in weight room and you know you will get to each piece of equipment” (J, Journal 2b). The groups seemed to work for a number of reasons. For example, some students were able “get into competitions about who can do the most weight” (K, focus group interview 2) within their group and that motivated them. Asked if it had to be a competition another group member said “no, but I can make it a competition but it does not have to be. I can also learn from other people in my group” (P, focus group interview 2). Similarly, one student noticed that his group “made everyone do what they are supposed to do” suggesting that the peer group enhanced student accountability. Reflecting back on the group experience, one student said “I learned how to work with people better. Because you always have to be in groups, you always got to work with somebody and you can learn how and they can help you learn how to work better with people” (K., Focus group interview 2).

Students suggested that working in groups was beneficial particularly in the weight room because then “you always had a spotter” and “could get rest between your sets” (Journal 2b). In addition, they suggested that working with your group could be more fun and motivating. Group members could also support learning in groups for example “if there was something that you didn’t know that maybe they did” (Journal 2b). At the same time, students’ felt that working in groups could also have drawbacks to learning and performance. The most common drawback cited was that lifting takes more time because “you have to wait for everyone to get done” before moving to the next station. and “you can’t move at your own pace” (Journal 2b). A number of students suggested that group members could be disruptive of their group’s lifting agenda. For
example, when “people in your group don’t want to lift and instead mess around”, “when they are not as motivated”, “when they act lazy”, or “when some choose not to lift” (Journal, 2b). Some students resented the accountability present with the group structure suggesting that “it was harder not to lift when you had a lifting partner” and “it was harder to do different exercises” than the ones previously selected. Finally, two students suggested that sometimes they just wanted to be by themselves.

Students had expectations of what their teammates should be doing while the group was lifting at a station. Most frequently students thought their teammates should be lifting if they were not spotting. Some students did think their teammate’s job was to support the group lifting by counting, recording, encouraging, watching to make sure the lift was done right, or getting ready to lift. At the same time students’ thought everyone in the weight room had certain responsibilities that should be done out of respect for the others using the room. The two primary responsibilities that most students agreed with were clearing off the bar after use and putting weights away. A smaller percentage (about 30%) of students felt that people also had the responsibility to respect other’s space (i.e., no horseplay, not monopolize equipment and work in with others) and to demonstrate discipline in every exercise (Journal 2b).

Alternative cardiovascular fitness

Initially the students were interested in the circuits. They were interested in seeing the demonstrations for each station and were especially excited to try each station. They also seemed excited to try something new, an alternative to the outdoor track activities. After seeing each station and trying it briefly, the groups were sent to a station to start the circuit. Students were to review the task sheets at each station and try the task for 20 seconds before rotating to the next station. This is where the circuits fell apart (participant observation, week 10).

Aftershocks. Most students would attempt the stations but because the stations were physically hard to do, many students quit the task or altered it. For instance at the vertical jump station, located on a wall covered by a mat, a few students would leap up and grab onto the top of the mats and crawl higher to touch a higher point than they could jump. The goal of the jump was to get as many repetitions jumping as high as possible in
20 seconds. Students were more inclined to jump less but get a higher leap. The task of recording the least jump distance that could be repeated consistently for the 20 seconds was hard to do and required a discriminating observer to do the counting. Students were not prepared to shoulder this responsibility nor were they prepared for the physical discomfort of muscular fatigue caused by the activity.

Similar results were found with the other stations. At the medicine ball throwing station, students were supposed to throw the ball back and forth from a 15 foot distance as many times as they could. Instead, students would try to throw hard enough to “bowl over” their partner rather than work together to get as many passes as possible. Some students chose to shoot the medicine balls at the basketball hoop rather than do the task. The dot drill station, five dots arranged as four corners of a rectangle and one dot in the middle of the box, provided both a learning and physical challenge to students. Few students could do the task successfully the first time. Once they learned how to do the task, most students found it to be particularly hard and uncomfortable and many chose to avoid it.

In the end the attempts to use the circuits to engage in cardiovascular fitness in the gym failed miserably. After the circuits were introduced and tried by students, several changes were made. They were modified to increase student accountability by creating recording posters at each station. The recording posters were intended to document improvement. Instead, because students couldn’t or didn’t record appropriately, the recording posters documented student misunderstanding in how to count the task and record it or resistance to doing the task correctly.

Attempts were also made to simplify the tasks, but because the simplification caused the tasks to change each session (i.e., how to do the task, count it, record it all could change as a method of simplifying the task) students became frustrated with the circuits. When asked about the value of the circuits in class discussion students said they were “stupid” and “not fun”. Students, although they were physically capable of performing the tasks, were not prepared to engage in tasks that varied so much from the other cardiovascular tasks we had been doing. They also were not prepared for the physical demands of the tasks. Since these tasks were more power oriented and because
they stressed all major parts of the body, students who completed the stations were often very tired and sore.

**Leagues.** To supplement the cardiovascular days on Tuesday and Thursday and to accommodate the 9th grade physical education class, leagues were created to involve both groups during the last 45 minutes of the block. Students throughout the semester had asked repeatedly to play more games, do more fun things like competitive games in class. One student suggested that he “liked the basketball league a lot because the cardiovascular workouts seemed more fun” and it was easier to “find a way to get motivated when I am not” (JO, Journal 3b).

Leagues were OK but not great. The good thing is that there are 40+ students active at one time and everyone looks like they know what they are doing. Students are active for 30-40 minutes after participating in the warm-up and cardiovascular portion of the class. The not as great part is that some of the leagues have fallen apart mostly due to absences. The games still happen but very often with a different team than who the team was scheduled to play. Students still play, but some of the fun created by playing complete games, reporting points scored, and moving to meet a new team is lost. I am afraid the leagues soon will have little to no meaning for most of the students. I also am afraid that the games will turn into more of a social time. Without the teams, score reporting, and moving to new games much of the accountability is gone (participant observation, week 13).

**Continued Relief Efforts**

A few pedagogical changes were made to support the last three weeks of the class. Following the increased “buying in” to the personal fitness course, students were given more responsibility for planning their cardiovascular and strength work. At the same time and in response to the failed circuit activity, alternate cardiovascular activities were developed. The primary intent was to create something that the students would think was more fun, something for which they would take more responsibility and therefore, that would provide higher accountability.

The alternate cardiovascular fitness activities involved using heart rate monitors, a recent acquisition, and group planning to structure the task. For each cardiovascular day, teams decided on and wrote a plan for what activity they would do in the gym. They had to plan in 5-minute segments on a 3 x 5 card. Their goal was for each group member to work in their target heart rate range doing some activity of choice (limited by the gym
space and without equipment). One person in each of the groups got to wear a Heart Rate monitor. All the group members recorded their heart rates at the end of each five-minute period.

Though most students chose to run or walk around the cones set up in the four corners of the gym, a tag game ended up happening the first time this activity was done. After that some groups planned to play tag on one of their 5-minute segments. Other groups of students chose to do alternate drills (i.e., high knees, skipping, sliding) combined with running or walking. Students seemed to enjoy that opportunity to plan and also to be more involved in the activity. During the planning, students “asked many questions about what their options were” (peer debriefer, week 12). At the beginning of each session usually the “students with heart rate monitors were most interested” while the others were “slow to start”, although they all did “better warm-ups than they did in other settings” (peer debriefer, week 12). “Only a couple of groups stayed active and together” indicating that the entire group was following the group plan, but in general, more people were appropriately active (peer debriefer, week 12).

To probe student understanding of fitness concepts a scenario journal was created. The journal asked students to create a cardiovascular training program for themselves that would build on their present fitness, was doable, and that they would enjoy. Many students understood what component needed to be changed and selected good activities to make that change, but most selected unreasonable goals (i.e., too much too soon). For example, one student said he would increase his running from no time/week to 8 hours/week. While another increased the amount of time he would play basketball from 45 minutes 3 days/week to 2 hours 4 days per week (Journal #4). On the other hand students were able to link fitness habits learned from class to what they might do to maintain their fitness over the holidays (Christmas). In this situation, all students were able to discuss what they would have access to over the holiday, make reasonable plans and identify what fitness component the plan was addressing, and discuss what might limit their plans or serve to motivate them to achieve the goals set.
This chapter includes a discussion of what was learned through the interactive implementation of a democratically based fitness curriculum. The first section considers the progress and changes made by both the personal fitness teacher and students in attempting to bridge the theory-practice gap and deliver a responsive, meaningful, and engaging physical education curriculum. In addition, conclusions and implications for creating pedagogy rooted in praxis are discussed relative to the impact each might have for creating good physical education for urban adolescent students. Although not a focus of the study, conclusions with specific implications for both teacher preparation and practicing teacher professional development emerged from the data are also addressed in this section.

Also included in this chapter is a discussion of practical implications for creating democratic learning environments in urban schools. This section is guided by the work of Darling-Hammond (1996) and informed by Glickman (1998). The third section considers the appropriateness of democratic curricula in school settings, acknowledging the historical, social, and cultural ‘baggage’ the word democratic carries. Tensions created by democratically based ideals in a culture that purports and practices seemingly different forms of democracy is discussed. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research in urban secondary school settings in an attempt to create responsive, dialogic, meaningful, and engaging pedagogy through physical education programming.
What Can Be Learned From the Earthquakes?

The three earthquakes that occurred in the personal fitness class guide the following discussion. Each earthquake was different: (a) having different fault lines and epicenters interpreted from the classroom context and student response to the curricular changes; (b) lasting variable lengths of time while causing unpredictable levels of damage interpreted from the intensity of student response and resulting need for course structural change to motivate student involvement in learning; and, (c) resulting in different kinds of relief efforts, recovery, and future damage prevention interpreted from the interactive changes in which both the teacher and students engaged while attempting to negotiate learning in the course.

Fault lines, Epicenters, and Damage Sustained

Discussion of differences between earthquake fault lines, epicenters, and damage suggest implications for the classroom contexts. Examination of the changing earthquake fault lines and epicenters over the course of the semester reveals a trend in course context that resulted in stressed learning environments. Consistent with Siedentop’s (1991) review and discussion of teacher effectiveness research and the ecology of physical education classes, the three task systems operating in the classroom ecology were put under stress. First, both students and teacher had to negotiate disparate class expectations. Student expectations were fueled by past experiences with both the class and content. They were further intensified by student perceptions of the overwhelming magnitude of the syllabus which is similar to recent findings in McQuilleran’s (1997) ethnography of an urban high school history class. In the current study, teacher expectations evolved from efforts to create an accountability system to support student attainment of the course objectives. Included were expectations and accountability in each of the three course objective domains - cognitive, physical, and social-behavioral development toward democratic engagement in the course - and were iterated verbally and in the syllabus. During the first earthquake, students negotiated to decrease the risk involved in the daunting five-page syllabus, which described in-class and fitness task structures, behavioral accountability, and a daily course format, all of which were new to the course and these students. The social structure of the class was also under pressure as students
perceived that the amount of freedom they had to “do what they wanted” was seemingly decreased by the behavioral accountability relative to their past experience in physical education settings.

Four weeks into the semester, as assignments were coming due and assessments were mounting, the stress created by disparate expectations evolved into pressure on the accountability system and the impact the accountability system had on student responsibility. This phenomenon was also described by Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen’s (1993) work depicting why not all teenagers live up to their talent and also in McQuilleran’s (1997) urban secondary school ethnography. In the current study, the alignment between that which students were held accountable and what they should have been held accountable in support of a challenging and meaningful curriculum was under pressure. Students questioned whether what they were held accountable was relevant and necessary. Their questioning forced the teacher to reflect upon and determine which parts of the accountability system were necessary and could promote democratic engagement in the course.

Nine weeks into the semester stress on the learning environment evolved into pressure on learning outcomes. Students were complying with the accountability system directing the class, for the most part, but often compliance elicited studentship or resistance to buying-in completely to the task structures. This behavior resulted in work slow-downs as students used in-class time to negotiate most class tasks (also documented in McQuilleran, 1997) and minimal learning occurred as students did as little as possible to get by. It further resulted in teacher negotiation of class tasks, sometimes to garner student cooperation and at other times to motivate student involvement. These pressures on both the students and teacher effectively altered the learning outcomes experienced by students in the class. The disparity between planning and scaffolding attempts to promote student learning and the way the students were or were not learning put greater pressures on the teacher. It highlighted the need to amend the task structures enough to create student involvement that was not driven by the external motivation of the accountability system alone. Consistent with Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen’s (1993) concept
of flow, task systems that motivate and support student enjoyment of the process of doing a task and further support internal motivation to continue doing the task were needed.

The frequency, intensity, and damage incurred by each earthquake were a function of the class context. The pressure, created by disparate understandings of expectations, tensions created between student responsibility and accountability for democratic engagement in the class, and, ultimately, what was being learned fueled the intensity of each earthquake. In the end, the flexibility of class infrastructures (for instance the appropriateness of the accountability and task systems to motivate democratic engagement in the class) determined how much damage was sustained due to resistive student responses to class pedagogy. Earthquakes seemed to occur more frequently in the first half of the course and successive earthquakes seemed to pack more power. Additionally, successive earthquake relief efforts were impeded more frequently by aftershocks, prolonging the impact of later earthquakes on course pedagogy.

That earthquakes increased in intensity and impact compared to earlier earthquakes seemed to indicate that successive earthquakes were coming from deeper and deeper inside the students and myself. This perhaps occurred because, as time went on, all class stakeholders were increasing their investment in the course. More students were getting closer to buying-in to the course structures and taking more responsibility for their own learning. At the same time, I was learning more and more about the students and working to make better and clearer pedagogical connections with them through the task systems operating in the class. At the time of the last earthquake, the class seemed to have negotiated and resolved initial resistance to change and worries about the higher risk of class expectations and responsibilities. Although remnants of these friction points still existed, the primary pressure point of the last earthquake was focused on whether the tasks were appropriate given the democratic focus of course goals.

This phenomenon itself was remarkable because, in effect, it suggested that 9-11 weeks of daily interaction and negotiation were required for this class to get to the point where what was being taught and how it was taught was the important issue. Earlier in the semester guiding the class with appropriate tasks was equally important but then symptoms of irrelevant content and pedagogy were masked because students seemed to
consider everything irrelevant. Accordingly, they responded to most tasks with skepticism performing either thinly guised versions of studentship or blatant resistance. That we had finally come to the point where task appropriateness could be discerned suggested that students and teacher had come to an understanding about the task systems directing the class. It seemed that students, over time, had gained trust in and respect for me and for the class structures. At the same time, I knew the students better and could more easily distinguish between what could and could not be negotiated to support engagement in a democratic curriculum while engaging student interest.

Teacher and Student Initiated Relief Efforts

Discussion of differences between earthquake relief efforts, recovery, and future planning allows discussion of the research questions guiding this study (Table 5). The first question, asking how the personal fitness class engages students in learning “for” democracy, is discussed using the signs of recovery and progress both students and teacher were making across the semester toward understanding and engaging in the democratic learning environment. The second question, asking how the interactive class engages students in learning “as” democracy, is discussed using the changes occurring as both teacher and students negotiate the process of post-earthquake relief. This included evidence of how students and teacher were moving toward democratic engagement in the class structures. Examination of the interaction between teacher initiated relief efforts and corresponding student efforts suggest how the interactive class engaged students in learning “as” democracy, the second research question guiding the study. In attempting to uncover the interactive nature of the pedagogy, two subquestions further guided the investigation. The first was intended to identify if and how students were buying-in to the pedagogy and moving toward democratic engagement in personal fitness demonstrated by conduct suggesting a decrease in individuality and an increase in cooperative freedom and voluntary cooperation (Dewey, 1939). The second was intended to identify if and how their teacher was taking into account what students knew and cared about in the process of moving them toward democratic engagement in personal fitness and was indicated by pedagogical adjustments made to guide, enable, and direct students toward democratic engagement (Dewey, 1939).
Examination of the teacher and student relief efforts revealed pedagogical change and student response trends that paralleled the fluid classroom context. The first earthquake exposed needed changes in both what and how expectations were communicated to students through beginning of the year activities. It required adopting pedagogical strategies that minimized talk and maximized the activity routines that would direct the class for the remainder of the semester. It also required engaging in student-teacher negotiation but not at the expense of the task and accountability systems in place. Accountability strategies had to be up and running as soon as the bell rang for the first class, and although specific strategies were questioned and some changed the substance and intent had to remain in place. The accountability system provided necessary structure to the class in support of a more equitable and safe learning environment. Relative to the democratic curricula it helped define for the students' responsible and irresponsible behaviors for all class interactions.

In addition, initial student response to the class suggested we needed to engage in physical activities sooner. Activities, like ice-breakers or team building activities, needed to be embedded in related content, skills, and within the course routine (which included a 15-20 minute classroom content portion followed by transition to activity) otherwise they were perceived by students as meaningless and were questioned and resisted. Beyond these changes negotiated over the first few days, students needed to be doing activities that were interesting while closely related to course content.

Students in the class struggled with the disparity between their own expectations and course expectations. The accountability system immediately created external incentives for students to cooperate to some extent with class activities and encouraged students to take some responsibility for their own progress in class. This, coupled with frequent and positive encouragement from the teacher for the smallest of steps toward positive engagement in the class, supported initial student engagement with class content.

Probably the most meaningful change for students rested with establishing the routines, particularly the activity portion of the class. Students wanted to be active at a level that they perceived was appropriate for their ability and experience. As their teacher, this was particularly perplexing. I was concerned about how to create fitness
activities that would progressively and sequentially build across the semester for each of
the students within the block timeframe. While I knew students wanted to get active
quickly, I did not want to create an environment that would allow over-activity and
corresponding fatigue, soreness, or possible injuries. This is a complex part of creating
programming for physical activity within the fixed timeline of schools. Since we were on
83-minute block scheduling, I could not use the entire time for activity without boring or
physically overwhelming students. Instead, I needed to plan for classroom content,
transition to the activity facility, warm-up, activity, warm-down and stretching, and
transition back to the locker room. At the same time, I had to plan for the needs and
physical limits of a diverse population of students and create programming that would
allow all students to be suitably active and collectively prepared to transition at the same
time. Each phase of the class and the corresponding routines supporting it required
specific pedagogical alterations to ensure that students were appropriately engaged with
the content and tasks.

The second earthquake exposed needed changes that were extensions of those
made following the first earthquake. Students were cooperating with the class structures
but were doing so primarily through studentship accompanied by high levels of
resistance. To truly engage in a democratic process of teaching and learning, it was
essential that both students and teacher become more engaged and invested in the class
processes. For teacher initiated pedagogical changes, this meant creating greater support
for the individual learning process in which students were expected to perform (Delpit,
1995), designing and sustaining more structured small group learning and leadership
development (Cohen, 1994), and structuring task involvement to support internal rather
than external motives (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen’s, 1993). Additionally, it
required the teacher to better understand the immediate class ecology and devise more
specific methods of determining the interaction between the three task systems (in this
case using journals, worksheets, discussions, and revision of the behavioral assessment).
Similarly, it required revision of class tasks and expectations to allow students to more
closely link tasks with the processes of learning (i.e., using the documentation of daily

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weight room recording to support responses about fitness components and practices in a journal or worksheet).

In a sense, teacher relief evolved into efforts to plan for learning from students. Planning to learn from students assumes that teaching requires a "two-way pedagogy" (Darling-Hammond, 1996) where teachers have to plan to learn from students what will best support their continued learning. More frequently teachers seem to plan content and strategies for student learning. Planning for student learning implies a one-way pedagogy, where teachers are assumed to know what content and pedagogy is best to promote optimal student learning.

Pedagogical changes resulted in greater student investment in the class structures. Although some resistance to the changes slowed student progress, for the most part students increased their engagement in the strength and cardiovascular portions of the class. They seemed to gain confidence in their ability to do the work and in their enjoyment of the routines and the process of doing the work. Particularly in the fitness area, students were taking greater responsibility for their own activity and accepting a greater role in the group activity. Similarly in the classroom, more students engaged in the tasks and completed them, though most seemed to rely on studentship skills rather than a deeper desire to understand and learn from the process. Resistance that occurred was more frequently coming from the same small group of individuals, who continued to resist buying-in to the course, even when direct overtures to elicit their investment were made.

The third earthquake, reflecting pressure on the learning outcomes, suggested the need for several large-scale pedagogical changes. Promoting and guiding democratic engagement in personal fitness demanded that the day to day activities be designed to support relevant steps in content learning. Supporting this conclusion Kight and Mickelson (1995) suggest that problem-centered versus subject learning leads to greater understanding of the processes and facts necessary to solve problems. In personal fitness this meant directing and guiding students to engage in, not only the process of fitness activities, but the gathering of information that would allow them to set future goals and amend programs to meet those goals. Direction and guidance was provided through
revised recording, planning, and evaluating of daily and weekly plans. It was supported by the continual use of past work as a reference for planning future work.

A second pedagogical change necessary in responding to pressure on course learning outcomes was reorganization of class management. Although most evident in the weight room, class structures in both settings designed to promote student decision making by allowing freedom to make choices was, instead, allowing students social freedom. As discussed by Soar and Soar (1979), freedom of thinking is positively related to learning gains while freedom of behavior is negatively related to learning gain. This phenomenon was manifested in the personal fitness class. Most students’ academic freedom was severely maligned by interruptions created by students roaming or disrupting the class under the guise of fulfilling their academic activities. In response, managerial structure was increased in multiple ways. First, leadership development was enhanced. Effective leaders could support management system issues like weight room group flow patterns and in-class group work activities. Second, student movement and seating patterns in all settings were developed to direct specific and timed group movement patterns. Third, group activities were further altered to support meaningful and valued individual contributions by all members. The intent of this change was to motivate greater group involvement with incentives stronger than those supporting students’ disassociation from groups.

Two primary student responses to pedagogical changes suggested that students were choosing to buy-in to the class. First students developed increasing confidence in the fitness structures. Both the changed management system and student awareness and excitement about their individual improvement probably caused this. Within the management system, students engaged in class activities with less accompanying verbal or physical interference by classmates. Additionally, many of the students demonstrated greater dependence on and adherence to their group’s work. The process of documenting and tracking improvement led to students learning to associate improvement with their efforts. It also allowed students to associate their involvement in planned, sequenced, and progressive fitness regimens to subsequent improvement and feelings of achievement. Soon after many students showed large fitness improvements, their willingness to figure
out the next step in changing their program and follow it more closely than before was magnified. In this sense they were engaging in the processes of learning and taking responsibility for their individual (and in some cases group) learning.

**Signs of Progress**

Examination of students' and teacher's progress toward understanding personal fitness content suggests how students were engaging in learning "for" democracy, the first research question. In an attempt to uncover the complex dialectic between student learning and pedagogical strategies that guide the learning process, two subquestions further directed the study. The first was intended to identify if and how students were moving toward high levels of understanding and proficient performance in personal fitness and was described by students' ability to demonstrate common understandings of fitness and of how to become good consumers of fitness. The second was intended to identify if and how they were being guided toward high levels of understanding and proficient performance in personal fitness and was indicated by teacher pedagogical decisions and students' responses to the pedagogical choices.

Although it is difficult to separate learning "for" democracy from learning "as" democracy in the results, a significant conclusion is that, in this class, issues surrounding learning "as" democracy preceded learning "for" democracy. In addition, almost all learning "as" democracy encompassed learning "for" democracy. Relative to what was learned from earthquakes, most negotiated relief efforts yielded improvement in both how invested students became in the class and, with the increased investment, a greater willingness to understand and apply the concepts guiding personal fitness. Concerning how pedagogical practices were guiding students toward greater learning, it appears that the pedagogical changes that students did buy in to were based on what I was learning about the students relative to what was important for them to learn next.

Another issue surrounding documentation of student learning relates to their attained level of proficiency. After the third earthquake, students had come to a greater understanding of the regimen needed to gain or maintain fitness. They were more invested in the process of continuing to do fitness activities, partially because they started to see changes in their bodies that they liked, but also because they enjoyed the process
and camaraderie of working out. In addition, they had a greater understanding for the components of overall body fitness although many students still considered fitness activities only for their value in enhancing sport performance.

On the other hand, few grasped the content like I had hoped they would. Although they understood some general concepts, they did not seem to comprehend the theory supporting these concepts - material we had spent time on in class. Moreover, that the sequence of planned content had to be altered in the middle of the semester suggested that there were problems with either what was being taught, how it was taught, or how it related to what students were learning through their experiences in the class or other contexts. In fact, it was probably a combination of the three. There was a problem with the content delivered in that it did not appear useful to students. Although they expressed interest in fitness activities and principles, they could not apply what was taught. To be useful, the content needed to be delivered in a more meaningful way - one where the students had to learn something in order to solve a problem that was important to them. In this way, what was being taught would also determine to a large extent how it was taught and how it related to their lives. Ultimately, though students did learn about fitness, experienced fitness gains, and gained confidence in their ability to set goals and improve, although course structures seems to have fallen short in supporting cognitive understandings for fitness content application.

Implications for Students

Discussion of what we learned from earthquakes suggests several considerations for responsive, dialogic, and engaging physical education for urban adolescents:

1. As stated again and again in teacher effectiveness research and teaching texts (Siedentop, 1991), expectations and an accountability system must be clearly stated and carefully aligned with relevant and meaningful course objectives. Although a better alignment occurred after the pilot was completed and the class structure reworked, it appears as though planning and replanning is not enough. Instead, it seems students need avenues to negotiate the task systems and teachers need to listen and respond in the negotiations. Negotiation, as defined by Siedentop (1991) is “any attempt by students to change tasks, to change the conditions under which tasks are performed, or to change the
performance standards task completion is judged by" (p. 72). This implies that
negotiation is also a mechanism for students to voice their fears, feelings, attitudes, and
values about the course, its pedagogy, or the teacher. All students have the right to be
heard and receive a response in a democratic pedagogy. I am not suggesting, consistent
with Glickman (1998), that democratic pedagogy should be “students deciding for
themselves if, what or how they will learn” (p. 50). But I do think students need to have
opportunities to voice their concerns that go beyond responding to the teacher asking
“does anyone have any questions?” and that methods that allow negotiation of content or
processes of learning need to be built into pedagogical practices. At the same time
teachers need to be guided by a clear understanding of learning objectives and supported
by appropriate accountability otherwise they will not be prepared to enter into the
negotiation process.

2. Students need time and reasons to build trust in and respect for teachers and
classmates. For this to occur the teacher must expect, plan for and, at the same time,
choose pedagogy that will hold both students and their teacher responsible for continued
progress toward these goals. Trust and respect can be earned in a number of ways but
from the students’ viewpoints, genuine care and concern for the students and the content
must accompany all course expectations. It also must involve learning from and about the
students from multiple and frequent interactions with them. Also, as was evident from the
longer-term nature of this project and the preceding pilot, it takes more than a semester or
two to build trust and respect. Although changes were evident in this class, it was obvious
that greater time investments were critical to building the kind of trust afforded respected
veteran teachers.

Implications for Teachers

Although not a focus of the study, considerations that emerged from what was
learned about earthquakes signify implications for teachers working in urban secondary
schools.

1. Teachers have the responsibility for creating pedagogies that facilitate rapport
between themselves and their students and among the students. Supporting these
pedagogies must be a fair and reliable accountability system that helps define and
structure the rapport developed. I found that the type of rapport that developed in my
class when not guided by a strong accountability system was often based on elitism and
marginalization of various forms. Students would ignore other students or “put them in
their place” in ways that were demeaning to the student implicated but funny to others.
Students called this “having fun” or “keeping order” in the class. The social environment
of secondary schools is a rough place. Put downs, swearing at, or baiting students, often
in the name of a warped sense of fun or demonstrating hierarchical power structures,
frequently escalate into violence but always end in hurt to the student targeted. Laissez-
faire practices or a weak accountability system directing student social behavior are not
sufficient to overcome the stronger influences of the school and culture that these
adolescents seem to live in.

2. Along the same line of reasoning, teachers need to develop pedagogical
methods capable of sensing the undercurrents of emotions and feelings within the class
structure. These two-way pedagogies (Darling-Hammond, 1996) are methods used to
determine how the task structures are functioning in the class from the students point of
view. They allow students more opportunity to wittingly or unwittingly direct the class
toward their own needs. Further they allow the teacher valuable information that can
inform planning for individual remediation or relevant activities that will enable
scaffolding of learning.

3. Teachers must be responsible for modeling and demanding investment in the
process of learning. Teachers must understand the content they are teaching in terms of
what a person needs to know to learn and apply the content. Although this does not
require that all teachers know everything about everything, it does expect them to learn
more about the content and pedagogies that are exciting and stimulating to students from
each teaching experience they have.

Expectations for student learning and the accompanying task systems must be
created to rely increasing on student investment in the process of learning. This, of
course, means decreasing their reliance on externally motivating forces like grades,
punishment, or rewards and treats. There is little doubt that creating student appreciation
for ‘the doing of the task’ or involvement in the flow of the experience
(Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen's, 1993) is difficult, especially when teachers often gain students' cooperation through the accountability systems directing the class.

Implications for Teacher Educators

Although not a focus of this study, implications for teacher educators working to prepare teachers for urban secondary school teaching also emerged from what we learned from the earthquakes.

1. Teacher educators need to model and support teacher development in all aspects of the learning ecology. Moreover, after skills specific to each system are learned and practiced (task, management, and social-behavioral systems), preservice teachers should be motivated to consider interactions a pedagogical decision might have on all three. In effect, we must support teachers to learn how to become "curious teachers" or teachers who are very interested in the impact of what they say and do on the learning environment. Additionally, findings from this study would suggest that teachers should strive to create safe and structured learning environments to support learning for all students. This may be particularly true in secondary settings where adolescent cultures are developing. The complexity and difficulty of this task is huge and extends beyond preservice preparation into practicing teacher professional development. It seems clear, however, that both practicing and preservice teachers need to be driven by their curiosity and problem solving abilities to support student learning in the complex environments of secondary school culture.

2. In addition, teacher educators need to model and support the responsibility teachers have for being actively involved in learning about how their students are learning. This would involve planning to learn from students and includes determining how students understand what is being taught. Planning to learn from students goes beyond traditional teacher planning where tasks are broken down, aligned with course objectives, and structured to create gradual steps across time. It assumes a more interactive nature to the teaching process where teachers are responsible to learn from their students as much as the students are there to learn from them. In this scheme each step of the planning process is informed by ongoing knowledge of current student learning elicited through the natural pedagogy of the class. For instance, in this class the
weekly journals, worksheets, and class discussions informed the teacher of the progress students were making. This knowledge guided future pedagogical decisions allowing student response to class practices to influence future teacher decisions.

3. Teacher educators must also model and promote the process of learning more than the products. This does not mean that products of teaching (e.g., specific skills of teaching, teaching performance as measured by a teacher educator) need not be mastered. Conversely, it suggests that specific skills are critical but the process of using those skills is more important. Pedagogical decisions usually impact more than one task system guiding the class. Teachers need to learn how to understand the various impacts their decisions may have. To do this, teachers need to develop inquiry skills as they are learning to teach.

Practical Implications For Creating Democratic Learning Environments In Urban Schools

This study has relied primarily on the work of Dewey (1939), Darling-Hammond (1996), and Apple and Beane (1995) to create and support the democratic pedagogy implemented in the personal fitness class. Thinking about what best supported these efforts and guided by a list created by Darling-Hammond (1996) intended to describe what a democratic curriculum looks like, implications for creating democratic secondary physical education curricula in urban school environments will be discussed. Using Darling-Hammond’s list (1996) as a starting point, principles that were helpful in trying to establish a democratic curriculum will be discussed in relation to the process and findings of this study.

1. Engaging tasks that give students meaningful work.

As simple as this sounds, it was particularly difficult to determine what the students in this class found meaningful. It was obvious that finding engaging tasks was critical to supporting internal motivation for students to participate in fitness activities in the class and in the future. The problem for teachers is determining what is meaningful work for a class of diverse learners and then, creating tasks for the class that are equally meaningful to all students. Findings from this study suggest that planning for engaging work means planning to learn from the students about what is meaningful to them. It further means guiding and directing students to determine for themselves what relevant
work is and planning tasks that allow them to reach, document, and track their work goal (also supported by Glickman, 1998). This is no easy task.

It took 9-11 weeks of pedagogical successes and failures to arrive at the strategies used in this study that seemed to engage students in what, to them, was more meaningful work. In general terms, successes came when students were involved in solving relevant problems. Additionally, when the solutions to those problems were valued for the decision-making needed to solve them and resulting action rather than for the solution itself, students were more likely to engage in them. The difficulty was determining what was a relevant content-based problem and how to help them value the process, versus exclusively the product, of student work. The strength program changes made after the third earthquake are an example of how content was altered to become problem based. In this situation, described in Chapter 4, students were held accountable for using the materials given to them to prepare their weekly lifting workouts. They had to base their workouts not only on the program description, but also on what they lifted the week before and their current submaximal capability on each lift.

Enhancing problem complexity were submaximal “tests” built into the program that allowed students to predict, document, and track improvement. These tests enhanced student involvement and learning because they gave relevant and personal feedback to the student about their progress and an indication of how their program was supporting change. Additionally, the “tests” were fun, self-comparative, and personally challenging though the cohort groups frequently celebrated improvements. These findings further suggest that part of what makes a task meaningful is the challenge of planning for and making progress toward a relevant goal.

2. Allowing students choice and different entry points into their work helps to motivate effort while allowing students to build on their strengths and interests.

Findings from this study would first suggest that a fitness framework could be well suited for delivering democratic curricula. It can allow students to choose which fitness goals will direct their work and guide them to evaluate their current fitness and plan for fitness gains. Second, and related to the first principle, eliciting student involvement in determining their individual strengths and weaknesses and,
correspondingly, where to begin is an important first step to eliciting student investment in the course.

On the other hand, findings suggest that the different entry points create a complex pedagogical environment for the teacher. How does the teacher allow choice and different entry points within a structured and safe environment? This was a particular problem in this study. Allowing choice of mode, intensity, or duration of activity opened the door for students to substitute social freedom for academic freedom of choice. When the academic freedom did not fully motivate student investment in an activity, social freedom often was the result. Although not the outcome of all acts of social freedom, most resulted in disruptions to students who were on task and engaged in class activities.

As a result, I would support the importance of Darling-Hammond’s (1996) concept of choice in democratic curricula but would caution that escalating degrees of choice must be accompanied by parameters provided by the teacher (Glickman, 1998). In this study, the parameters guiding student choice were eventually built into the management system (supporting academic freedom but limiting behavioral freedom), the accountability system (identifying student class responsibilities), and the pedagogical structures promoting group and leadership development. This is not intended to support the “don’t smile until Christmas” advice given to teachers starting the school year but is intended to focus attention on the difficult work involved in allowing academic freedom while limiting social freedom.

It also suggests that within a democratic curriculum the teacher must play an important role in directing the task systems present, much like the benevolent dictator role discussed earlier. Just as a non-democratic country could not be “given freedom” and immediately and completely create a democratic government, students in a class can’t be forced into situations where they suddenly become completely responsible for their own learning without appropriate guidance. People have to learn how to function within a democratic environment in stages, so they can learn what behaviors are appropriate and what are not. The intent of a democracy is to value the work and thoughts of all individuals equally. Since that is not normative thinking among most students we must
progressively and sequentially teach them the responsibilities and rights of democratic living.

3. Developing “two-way pedagogies” (p.9) to find out what students are thinking, puzzling over, feeling, and struggling with and would include pedagogies that depend on student presentations, skillful discussions, journals and learning logs, debriefings, interviews, and conferences.

This aspect of a democratic pedagogy was essential though not sufficient for a successful curriculum. Findings from this study would suggest that students need to know that what they write, say, and do is valued and necessary to the success of the class. Student response to the pedagogy was publicly and privately valued through extensive feedback on classwork, public comments during discussion, private conversations, and acknowledgment of changes that would or would not be made in the class pedagogies. Students knew that what they did and said was seen and heard. Findings from this study would further suggest that opening doors for student-teacher communication allowed many of the teacher initiated pedagogical practices to become negotiated items. Although this was traumatic to me, as their teacher because it questioned my pedagogical decisions, in the end it allowed the course to change to better support relevant experiential learning.

4. Constant assessment, where assessment is a measure of teaching as well as a measure of student learning, to identify student strengths and learning approaches as well as their needs and to examine the effects of different instructional efforts.

This point is related to #3, since modes of assessment can also be used to inform teachers of student needs. At the same time, these assessments create a forum for interaction with students through appropriate feedback mechanisms. In this class, all interactions informed me about my teaching and of student understanding of my teaching. In that sense, assessment means more than evaluating the degree of student learning. On the other hand, it was particularly pressing in this class that assessment was only based on self-comparison and improvement on a daily basis and not on final class performances. Glickman (1998) would add that part of the assessment system should include an accountability system supporting student responsibility to their “peers,
teachers, parents and school community that educational time is being used purposefully and productively” (p. 50).

5. Scaffolding - a process of successive conversations, steps, and learning experiences that take students from their very different starting points to a proficient performance which includes many opportunities for approximation and practice, debriefing, and conversing, sharing work in progress, and continual revision.

Findings from this study would suggest that while scaffolding is important for learning, students first need to have an interest in learning the content and second feel confident that they can do the work or understand the concepts. Given these findings, perhaps an important aspect of scaffolding that emerged in this study was the opportunity students had to revise or re-do past work. This seemed to add both to their confidence once they had completed the task and to their willingness to tackle similar work in the future. Students also seemed to enjoy sharing work within small group structures and receiving peer feedback. Teacher generated feedback, on the other hand, was not readily acceptable to students. It frequently meant more work for them and that they were not yet done with work they thought they had completed.

In the end, these scaffolding processes, supported by continual assessment of student progress, allowed more students to have success in the class. Students less experienced with fitness concepts or training were hesitant to engage in class activities. Yet, once they found that they were capable of engaging in all aspects of the class and that the course could support their continued learning, they were more interested and willing to participate.

6. Developing student confidence, motivation, and effort and to making students feel connected and capable in school which was as Darling-Hammond (1996) “teaching from the heart as well as from the head” to support students in the “risky quest for knowledge” (p. 10).

This issue was particularly important in the personal fitness class where so many of the students came to the class with sport performance skills and comparative, competitive mentalities. To create an environment safe from demeaning or derogatory interactions documented frequently in physical education literature (Carlson, 1995;
Griffin, 1983, 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1991; Quest [Monograph], Martinek, 1997; Scraton, 1992, to name a few) management and task structures need to be in place to first neutralize the environment from the prevailing attitudes of the majority. Neutralization occurred through the accountability system designed to promote social as well as task responsibility. Once this system was in place, tasks were developed specifically to support skill proficiency development. Remediation, feedback, small group collaboration, group discussion, and individual conversations with the teacher all supported student confidence development. Most important in this class though was seeing and documenting improvement.

Glickman (1998) would add that for a learning environment to be democratic students need to demonstrate “what they know and can do in public settings and receive public feedback” (p. 50). While that may be necessary, findings from this study suggest that, for many students, the public demonstrations of knowledge needed to be preceded by safer and more private demonstrations of knowledge. It was important for students to build confidence before subjecting them to the comments and criticisms of their peers. At the same time it was important to establish guidelines and actively monitor public discussions to hold students accountable for responsible listening and criticism.

7. Allows students to “seek out diversity in people, perspectives, and ideas and construct educative means to learn from those multifaceted experiences and expertise” (p. 10).

Findings from this study suggest that this happened in some aspects of the class, but that it appeared inappropriate for others. Decisions were made to create groups that were homogenous rather than heterogeneous. Homogenous groups created more appropriate groupings for leadership development and group management. This was especially true due to the diversity present in the class relative to size, experience, and how students valued fitness present in the class. As a result, although this issue was important, pedagogical decisions minimized the diversity present in the class. Sustaining leadership development and increased class structure was a greater priority and I felt that creating more diverse learning environments could adversely effect these goals.
8. Create smaller, more communicative, class structures fostering cooperative modes of learning, less departmentalization and tracking, a more common curriculum for students, stronger relationships between teachers and students that extend over multiple years, greater use of team teaching, and participation of parents, teachers and students in making decisions.

Creating groups to foster relevant cooperative work was a priority of this course. From the pilot study, it was determined that developing groups too early in the semester when students did not know each other or the course context resulted in less functional groups. As a result, students were involved with creating groups later in the semester after they were acclimated to the course. A strong leader was necessary to support the groups. In this study, groups with stronger and more involved leaders were closer and relied on each other more in all aspects of the class.

Strategies that arose from our use of groups included: (a) devising ways to support group structure and leadership development, (b) amending the common curriculum to support group work and individual improvement, (c) amending the work groups did in each setting (activity or classroom) and the roles students played in the groups. This last point was particularly important because group members were organized by physical size and strength to ease the management problems in the weight room. The same group that functioned well in the weight room often had problems working well together during cardiovascular fitness or in-class activities. The goals of group problem solving and the roles individual students played in the groups had to be amended for each learning environment so their work would still be relevant and valued.

Is Democracy the Correct Ideal?

An issue that continually emerged as I reflected on my teaching over the semester was “Is what I am doing democracy? and if it is, “Is it the right ideal to be striving toward?”, particularly in an urban secondary setting. I questioned whether it was democracy because what I was trying to do differed so much from how we (students and teachers collectively) see democracy practiced in schools and communities on a daily basis. Moreover, through my pedagogical manipulations I was constantly trying to neutralize the impact of students usurping their physical power or bravado to create
hierarchies that I was trying to eliminate. I further attempted to promote student responsibility, not only to themselves but also to their peers, as citizens in the class and created an accountability system to support their understanding. Frequently, as I was creating and implementing these in class I questioned toward whose standards I was trying to direct their behaviors? I believed I was working to create fair learning environments for all students, where each student had the opportunity to learn and engage socially with the class. In this way sometimes I saw my role more clearly as a benevolent dictator. A person who was coercing class environmental structure on the students in the name of creating a good learning environment and calling it democracy. But is it truly democracy when coercion is involved?

Glickman (1998), in discussing what democracy is suggests that three versions of democracy are operating in the US: (a) liberal democracy which is the belief in elected officials and majority rule as the “key to sustaining society and ensuring the rights and responsibilities of individuals”. It seems to be “embraced most by those who benefited most from the existing structures” (p. 48); (b) participatory democracy which is the belief in active participation of citizens where citizens are believed capable of deliberating and shaping the choices and consequences of decisions. It “appeals most to those outside the liberal system but who have found optimism in strategies of protest and resistance forcing changes in power structure decisions” (p. 48), and; (c) community democracy which is the belief that “society is largely improved by how citizens live in everyday, personal interactions. The concern is not with particular forms of official government or legalistic structures, but instead how people listen, learn, and mobilize together to change their associative conditions for the better” (p. 48). Community democracy resonates mostly with those who view government as uncontrollable and find value in the personal ways that people can help each other” (p. 48). Glickman (1998) would further posit, and I agree, that “equality, freedom, and liberty for all citizens has never been fully achieved in the US” and in practice the political system is more a “designed liberal system of elected persons influenced most by powerful individuals, interest and businesses than a participatory democracy” (p. 49).
This discussion leads to the conclusion that “the essence of a community and participatory democracy is an educative belief about how citizens best learn” (p. 49). It was these concepts of community and participatory democracy that guided the democratic framework, implementation, and subsequent study of the personal fitness class. Glickman supports these decisions stating that “when community and participatory democracy is used as a guide for educational leadership and school reform, there is significant personal, empirical and cultural evidence of educating students extraordinarily well” (p. 49).

But several caveats arose from the study. First, the issue of whether pedagogical practices that appear coercive or dictatorial can be democratic. Dewey (1939), Friere (1970), and both Darling-Hammond (1996) and Glickman (1998) through their descriptions of democratic curricula state that implicit within the democratic curriculum are the assumptions and responsibilities that support humanistic communal living. That is, along with the rights at citizens in our communities, we have the responsibility to support positive and healthy community living through our interactions. Our rights and responsibilities are supported and protected by common understandings of rules that guide these interactions. Rules, frequently created by majority populations who have garnered the more powerful decision making positions, are intended to represent the best interest of all individuals.

It is here, with the rule making and implementation that questions arose in my study. Schuerich (1998) proposed that the hegemony of democratic structures compromise the rights of marginalized populations while strengthening those of majority populations, similar to Glickman’s (1998) description of a liberal democracy. Given this, Schuerich (1998) states that

It is crucial that we critically understand the reality politics of the dominant group in terms of democracy. In terms of analyzing and understanding these reality politics, it is naïve to invoke a key social concept, like democracy, without considering how it discursively functions and circulates within the reality politics of contemporary US society. Invocations of democracy, in the terms of the contemporary and historical experiences of racial minorities, easily sound like invocations of white supremacy (p. 58).
Reflections on this study’s findings indicate that within educational settings, hierarchies exist. These hierarchies, based on knowledge and experience, are central to the process of education and imply that adults, in efforts to socialize youth into communal living, must pass on crucial skills and understandings necessary to support and maintain these environments.

While teachers are responsible for creating the rules and social learning environments that occur within schools, they are equally responsible for selecting rules and creating learning environments that support all youth. In some cases this may mean deselecting behaviors allowed or unchecked in the greater community culture. Despite Schuerich’s (1998) primary concerns, this study would support the use of democratic curricula when further supported by the tenets of participatory and community based democracy. In so far as a teacher diligently works to support a democratic curriculum throughout its implementation with questions, such as the four research questions guiding this study, community and participatory democracy can be facilitated. These serve to place responsibility both on the teacher and students to support mutual and continued growth and development in the learning environment.

A second caveat arising both from this study and from Glickman’s work was the difficulty of basing curricula on participatory and community democracy when democratic structures of schools and communities reflect tenets of liberal democracy. Glickman (1998) suggests that “before public schools can improve the education for all students leadership must practice the rhetoric of a community and participatory democracy in all aspects of school life, including whole school renewal and curriculum with culturally responsive and participatory pedagogy and assessment” (p. 49).

Future Research

In considering future research, first the theoretical assumptions guiding this effort need to be evaluated. In retrospect, the scope of this study probably went beyond the bounds of interactive / interpretivism since the intent was less about seeing how pedagogical strategies impacted students and more about learning from the students to create better pedagogical strategies. The assumptions of service-bonded inquiry (Martinek & Hellison, 1997) would perhaps more accurately provide a lens to view this
project. Service bonded inquiry, a recent attempt at extending and expanding disciplinary understanding of research practices, was forwarded by Martinek and Hellison (1997) as a “means for the collective inventiveness needed to improve the educational environment” (p. 111). It is a way of reconstructing research practices to be more relevant to both practitioners and professional educators by working actively in “real” contexts to breach theory-practice gaps (Martinek & Hellison, 1997). The goal was for researchers to “actively participate and make a contribution to the betterment of physical activity programs for kids” (p. 112) a particularly crucial role played by the researcher in this study. Service-bonded inquiry differs from most current research in that it is action-based and goes beyond rich interpretive descriptions, which are only considered valuable if they lead to proactive practice or policy change (Martinek & Hellison, 1997).

Service-bonded inquiry focuses on a “specific community program or setting” (p. 113) and also “requires intervention in the setting or program either as an attempt to solve a specific problem or to implement a program innovation” (p. 113). The nature of the intervention is determined by the needs of the program, related extant theories found in the literature, and theory developed from working in the setting. The intervention is implemented, not as a manifestation of theory, but with a ready-fire-aim process (Siedentop & Hellison, 1995) which “refers to the need to implement without attempting to work through all the nuances” (p. 115). This process is “followed by reflections to fine-tune or significantly modify the original plan” (p. 115). It is a particularly worthwhile method when change needs to happen but the environment is too complex to identify the exact problem that needs to be “fired” upon (Martinek & Hellison, 1997). These criteria are especially suited to investigate the complex environments of school classrooms. The lens of service-bonded inquiry can be shifted toward sensitivity within, among, and between the task systems that operate in the ecology of an urban secondary physical education class.

That is not to say that service-bonded inquiry should be the only method of researching school environments. From the limited involvement of this study investigating the findings of teacher effectiveness research, there seems to be a need to amend and revise research documenting skills, strategies, and learning environments that
support good student learning. In the research, these skills and strategies of effective teaching have stood untested and untouched by researchers for years, yet they are the backbone of most teacher preparation programs. In a time when we know that adolescents in particular live greatly different lives than their generational predecessors, it is essential that research efforts continue to search for practices and theory that will support future teachers better.

Relative to future research that would build on this study, little effort was made to document the extent that students improved fitness or cognitive understandings. This would be a next step in investigating the viability and potency of a democratic curriculum in physical education programming. Additionally, it would be interesting to develop a democratic curriculum for physical education content areas other than fitness. Alternatively, it would be equally interesting to combine democratic curricula with other models of physical education (i.e., sport education or a sport culture model).

Conclusions

In the final analysis, I think a democratic curriculum, particularly one guided by the questions like those directing this study could contribute to better teaching in urban secondary physical education settings. Despite the hegemonic baggage accompanying democratic ideals, the accountability required of participatory and community democracy place responsibility on the part of the teachers and students for learning. Teachers must take responsibility for creating the best possible learning environment by constantly learning from students’ responses to their teaching activities. They must let students hold them accountable for “good” teaching and be willing and able to change what they are doing to elicit voluntary involvement of the students in the name of appropriate learning. At the same time, students must take responsibility for their learning and social behaviors in classes. They must be held accountable for “good” learning and willing to buy-in to class structures that promote “good” learning for all. None of this is easy to do nor will it ever be completed. As such there really is no such thing as a democratic curriculum, because it could never exist. Instead what seems more appropriate is the ongoing effort to create learning environments that strive for the tenants of participatory and community
democracy through the complex and messy interworkings of daily class activities and negotiation.
Syllabus for Personal Fitness

Course Objectives

1. Students should be able to appropriately apply the multiple components of fitness to their lives.
2. Students should be able to appropriately apply methods of assessing personal fitness and evaluating activities for fitness value.
3. Students should be able to apply correct biomechanical, physiological, and safety principles to their fitness pursuits.
4. Students should work effectively with a group toward common goals while conducting themselves appropriately.

Course Expectations

- Be a good team/class contributor.
- Actively participate in class activities.
- Willing to follow team/class decisions.
- Work on team/class/individual tasks for the entire period.
- Be punctual and dressed appropriately for the activity we are doing.
- Display consideration for others.
- Show respect for your classmates' actions and thoughts.
- Show prompt attention to teacher/leader instructions.
- Allow other classmates to complete their tasks without interruptions.
- Take care of distributed learning materials.

Detractors from a good class experience

- Food or drink
- Hats or electronic devices (radios, CD players, Walkmans, beepers, phones)
- Negative attitudes

Appropriate Clothing for Personal Fitness Class

For most classes, comfortable loose (but not baggy) clothing like sweatpants, shorts, T-shirts are appropriate. Shoes should be appropriate for activity (i.e. heeled shoes/hard soles are usually not appropriate). Dress for weather conditions that might be warm, cold, wet, windy for outside act.

Locker room expectations: Always lock up your valuables. Get in and out of the locker room quickly.
Questioning of policies, decisions, rules is allowed BUT all questioning must follow the following guidelines:

1. Get person’s attention without interrupting the flow of the class (i.e., raise your hand, approach person who you are questioning if appropriate, approach teacher after class)
2. After gaining attention, name the issue you are questioning and support your reasoning for making the argument. Be prepared to support your case with a logical, well-thought out and reasoned argument.
3. After naming and supporting your issue, be prepared to listen to and consider counter-arguments.
4. At the end of the questioning process, be prepared to live with the decision negotiated.

Personal Fitness Grade Weighting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st 9 weeks</td>
<td>2nd 9 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300pts Evaluate fitness</td>
<td>visual product (paper, poster, video)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300pts Show daily progress</td>
<td>Portfolio including all steps toward relating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300pts Apply fitness</td>
<td>fitness to your life (general goals, biography, weekly journals and quiz)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>300pts Applying Safety &amp;</td>
<td>Lift/Stretch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300pts Technical Principles</td>
<td>knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300pts Work well with group.</td>
<td>Conduct self-assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100pts Conduct</td>
<td>quiz/contract</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Normal Daily Fitness Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muscular/Strength/Endurance</td>
<td>Muscular/E</td>
<td>Cardio-vascular</td>
<td>Muscular</td>
<td>C-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wt. room</td>
<td>wt. room</td>
<td>outside</td>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>fitness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wt. room</td>
<td></td>
<td>outside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- All days will have some portion of the class set aside where you are working on in-class learning activities. Many of these activities will be in small groups. Usually this will be the first thing we do in class.
- All days will also have a portion of the class set aside for your fitness program
• Each day of fitness programming will include:
  + Warm-up
  + Loosen up
  + Learn a new lift or stretch
  + Practice the new lift or stretch and go through lifting/cardiovascular program for the day.
  + Cool down and stretch
  + Record your workout and conduct self-assessment (and discuss it with me)

Assessments
All work must be readable. Non-readable work will be returned to you to rewrite. All work must be on time. Work will be graded using the descriptions below as guidelines. Work that:
• satisfies the descriptions below demonstrating effort and thought will receive A’s.
• is missing any one part will lose a letter grade for each part missing.
• demonstrates effort but is not completely thought out, displayed, or discussed will receive B’s
• represents minimal effort in all areas will receive C’s
• only represent minimal effort in some areas and little work in others will receive D’s
• demonstrates none of the above criteria will receive F’s

**Everyone will have the chance to check their progress with me during specified times in class or during AA.

Task #1: To demonstrate knowledge of fitness components (worth 300pts):
  Stage 1: Create a profile of your current level of fitness. This will include your performance on all components of health related fitness and appropriate components pictures, or words. Explain how fit you are using the data we gathered and the norm referenced and criteria referenced charts in reading materials.
  DUE: Fri. Sept. 19th worth 80pts + 20pts for appearance (neatness, care, creativity)

  Stage 2: Using an approved method, evaluate your present fitness habits for each of the health related fitness components and your family health history OR specifically evaluate your skill fitness needs (which may include health fitness components).
  DUE: Mon. Oct. 6th worth 80pts + 20pts for appearance (neatness, care, creativity)

  Stage 3: Discuss what might be reasonable goals toward your improvement in each area. For instance, where are you now and where do you want to be in 9 weeks and in 18 weeks.
  DUE: Mon Oct 27th worth 80pts + 20pts for appearance (neatness, care, creativity)
Task #2. - Worth 300pts for entire semester, 150pts for the 1st 9 weeks and 150pts for the 2nd 9 weeks

Individual Fitness Portfolio

- Daily log of activities- 80pts (20pts for appearance that demonstrates care and pride)
- Weekly journaling- 80pts (20pts for appearance that demonstrates care and pride)
- Content 30pts to include all past assignments, handouts, related materials)
- Pop quizzes - 70pts (5-9 per 9 weeks over material presented during the week)

Task #3 - second 9 weeks

Demonstration of ability to apply safety and technical principles

During the 14th-17th week of the semester, twice everyone will have the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge about a specific lift and a specific stretching procedure. You can choose when you are ready to test out, but everyone must have passed at least one demonstration by the 15th week. The exercise you will perform, describe, list safety considerations and proper form will come from a list of exercises that you can demonstrate are important to your personal fitness development. Once you have passed both your lifting and stretching demonstrations, you will then be eligible to take an optional test that will partially qualify you to as a weight room assistant.

Value: each demonstration worth 100pts for total of 200pts, two practice spot checks worth 50pts each.
Appendix B
Consent form

To the students and parents of students enrolled in Personal Fitness at Beechcroft High School.

Consistent with the goals of the ACE Academy focus of Beechcroft High School, students will be involved in a new physical education experience this year. It is a course called Personal Fitness and is very much changed from the same class offered before this semester. As the title implies, Personal Fitness will be a “personal” course. The reworked class will present a wide array of topics related to health, physical fitness and how to establish a high quality lifestyle. Students will learn how to assess their own health and fitness levels, and based on that knowledge, they will learn how to set achievable fitness goals and create their own personal fitness programs. They will also learn how to maintain a desired level of fitness once they have reached an appropriate level.

Students will be involved in a wide range of fitness activities. The weekly schedule is designed to include daily classroom sessions covering personal fitness concepts and regular daily activity. Students will be expected to perform only at their own level. Every effort will be made to help each student recognize significant gains in his or her level of fitness. The body is a vitally important component of an early adolescent’s total self-esteem. We are very optimistic that Personal Fitness will help students feel better about themselves, thereby, increasing their self-concepts.

The redesigned class is a result of collaborative work between the Beechcroft High School physical education staff and its school administration and Ohio State University’s department of Physical Activity and Education Services. The goal of the collaborative is to create better and better programming designed to meet the needs of the students and communities that Beechcroft services. Because of this goal, it is important to evaluate the successes and failures of the redesigned course through the evaluation of student response to the class through their improvement, willingness to be full participants in the class activities, and willingness to develop their level of social
responsibility by improving their leadership and cooperative teamwork skills. All information for the study would be generated in class through regular class assignments. All information would be used anonymously.

Thank you to both students and parents for taking time to read and respond to this letter. Parents if you would like to have further information about this course or the research study, please write, call, or come by and see what is happening.

Sincerely,

Nancy Knop, Doctoral Student, Ohio State University, Dept. of PAES, 365-5364

I consent to releasing my Personal Fitness class information to be used for further study of the Personal Fitness class at Beechcroft High School.

Signed (student)_________________________________________ Date__________

Parent signature_________________________________________ Date__________
APPENDIX C
Focus Group Interview #1

Questions

1. Personal fitness class so far has attempted to focus your attention on the four components of healthful fitness – cardiovascular, strength, flexibility, and body composition. The intention is that you can successfully apply what you learn in class to your life.
   a. Is that happening? Have you been able to apply your understanding of fitness to make better choices about your current and future health? What is an example?
   b. How has your understanding of fitness changed over the course of the first 9 weeks?
   c. How much do you think about your fitness when you leave this class?

2. As a small group, determine how you might assess your fitness level? What steps would you take? Should the steps be in a specific order? What would you expect the results of the assessment would tell you? What would be the next step in improving your fitness after completing a fitness assessment? What is an example of how first assessing fitness is important to creating a fitness program? What is an example of when not first assessing fitness could be a problem?

3. As a small group, how would you describe how well the class works together?

   No teamwork    some teamwork    good teamwork    great teamwork

   (a) If you are working together as a team, what do you get from it?
   (b) If you are not working together as a group why not?
   (c) Individually do you prefer working with a group of people or would you rather work by yourself? Why do you think this is true for you?
   (d) What would make you want to be part of a team in class?
4. As a small group, how would you describe how hard the class works in the classroom? In the gym/outside for cardiovascular fitness? In the weight room during strength training?
   (a) Individually how would you describe how hard you work on a daily basis?
   (b) What is your motivation for working at this level?

5. How motivated are you to improve your personal health?
   (a) How important is it for you to improve in each of the components of fitness by the end of the semester?
   (b) Is there something more important than learning how to maintain or improve your personal fitness that you feel motivates your performance and behaviors in class?
Focus Group Interview #2 – Questions

Pedagogy

1. In other classes where you have learned a lot, what does the teacher do that motivates you to learn?
2. How has Ms. Knop motivated you to improve and succeed in personal fitness?
3. Is it more important for you to work in class because of grades or because you can see that your hard work leads to improvement?
4. Has your opinion about what motivates you changed over the course of the semester?
5. In what kind of classes do you learn best? Classes that are primarily lecture, group work, lots of homework, class worksheets or activities, or some other kind of class?
6. In personal fitness, we did a lot of group work. In fact, the class stressed that you work with your classmates and teacher in a supportive and respectful way.
   +Did this happen?
   +Did you find that you could learn from your classmates?
   +Did you enjoy working with your classmates? What did you gain?
7. What motivates you to respect and support your classmates in personal fitness?
8. In personal fitness, what are better things the teacher could have done to help you learn about and experience the aspects of fitness?
9. Why do you think Ms. Knop was here teaching this class?

Expectations

1. What do you think ms. Knop expected of you in the personal fitness class?
   +With respect to how you treat each other?
   +With respect to how you performed in the class on a daily basis?
   +With respect to what you learned?
2. Do you think she expected too much/ too little? Why?
3. What do you think your grade is based on in personal fitness?
   +What do you think it should be based on?
   +What grade do you think you will get? Why?
4. What did you expect personal fitness to be about when you first entered the class?
5. Was what you got better / worse than what you expected?
6. What did you learn?

Meaningfulness of class
1. If this class continued on until June, what changes would you like to see in the class?
2. Would you want to keep going with the class? Why or why not?
3. Do you view exercise, health, and good fitness in the same way as when you entered this class?
4. Have you ever been able to use something you learned in personal fitness outside of class? Like at home, or in talking with friends?
5. What will you do to continue pursuing a healthy and fit lifestyle after this class is over?
   + What do you have access to?
   + What kinds of things will limit your ability to continue pursuing a more fit and healthy lifestyle?

Opportunity to engage in class
1. Was the class fair?
2. Did everyone in class have the opportunity to achieve, learn, and succeed?
   Examples?
3. Has everyone taken advantage of the opportunities available to learn?
4. What prevents people from learning in this class?
5. Is it harder to learn on some days than others? Why?
6. Did Ms. Knop make any changes over the semester that made the class better for you?
7. What do you think was the hardest thing facing Ms. Knop as she tried to change the personal fitness class?

Value of class
1. Is this class challenging? Physically? Mentally?
2. Have you noticed any changes among your classmates throughout the semester?
   Physically? Relative to their confidence? How they work in class?
3. Who in the class would you think of as class leaders and why?
4. Was this a good class for developing skills of leadership? Explain
5. Do you think the class is valuable to students at Beechcroft?
6. Who should take personal fitness? Is who the class is for different from who takes the class? Why?
7. Why are there so few females in this class?
8. If you are an athlete, would you recommend other student-athletes taking this class bring their season or during their off season? Why?
Personal Fitness Student Profile

Explanation: Throughout the semester you will be involved in a daily assessment. The collection of these assessments will be used to determine 300 points of your total 9 week grade. The descriptions below reflect expectations of someone who is highly motivated to improve his/her personal fitness. Additionally they reflect responsibilities that come with creating a healthy, productive workout environment for everyone. These everyone must shoulder.

Good Teamworker - supports classmates (e.g., spotting, recording, and station clean up in the weight room and counting, timing, recording during endurance days) in an appropriately positive, safe, and supportive way.

____ 4 - Budding leader - self-directed, respectful participant motivated to extend their sense of responsibility into leadership roles.
____ 3 - Self-directed - show respect and participate, able to work without direct supervision. Can identify needs and plan and carry out plans.
____ 2 - Participant - show minimal respect for others, but willing to participate, accept challenges, and train under leader’s supervision.
____ 1 - Respect - frequent non-participator, but can control behavior to not interfere with class
____ 0 - There - non-participator, makes excuses, blames others, denies personal responsibility

Leadership/Followership - treats fellow classmates and “team” with respect. Handles conflict in direct, positive way with minimal disruption to rest of class. Takes on responsibilities of team working in each role necessary.

____ 4 - Budding leader - self-directed, respectful participant motivated to extend their sense of responsibility into leadership roles.
____ 3 - Self-directed - show respect and participate, able to work without direct supervision. Can identify needs and plan and carry out plans.
____ 2 - Participant - show minimal respect for others, but willing to participate, accept challenges, and train under leader’s supervision.
____ 1 - Respect - frequent non-participator, but can control behavior to not interfere with class
____ 0 - There - non-participator, makes excuses, blames others, denies personal responsibility
Each day you will self-assess your conduct for both categories on your daily workout sheet. I will also assess your conduct. Assessments will include the number for the category you feel you are in (e.g., 3 if you feel you satisfy the description of 3). You may use a (+) or (-) to indicate the strength of your conduct within that category. If there is a difference between your assessment and my assessment, we will need to meet to discuss why our points of view are different at the end of class. If we can agree within a (+) or (-) for one full week (5 days starting on Monday) and if you are making progress toward improving your teamwork and leadership/followership skills we will only have to meet once a week to discuss your development and to reevaluate goals. (If we start disagreeing again we will start meeting more regularly).

Grade Reducers
A. Food or drink brought in to the classroom, weight room, or gym (other than a clear water bottle).
B. Hats or electronic devices brought into the classroom, weight room, or gym (e.g., radio, cd players, walkmans, beepers, phones.
C. Late to class
D. Failure to dress appropriately

The above behaviors would demonstrate unsafe and disrespectful behaviors to the entire class. If they occur, you will have sacrificed the opportunity to conduct yourself in any category but “there”. You will be able to add to the other 700 points of your grade that comes from the ongoing fitness knowledge assessment.
APPENDIX F
**Beechcroft High School**  
**Physical Education Daily Student Profile Report**

**Explanation:** During the season you will be assessed on a daily basis. The collection of behavioral and workout grades will be used to determine 50% of your total nine week grade. The other 50% come from quizzes, weekly journals, and in class work. Statements below outline our expectations of you.

**Grade Enhancers:**   
1. Be a good team worker  
2. Actively co-operate in class activities  
3. Works on set tasks for the entire period  
4. On-time and dressed for active participation  
5. Displays consideration for others  
6. Demonstrates respect of others  
7. Shows prompt attention to teacher instruction  
8. Allows classmates to complete tasks without interruption.

To receive an A grade you will need to demonstrate all of the above: A = 4 pts.  B = 3 pts.  C = 2 pts.  D = 1 pt. Everyone starts off with an A grade. Daily points are lost when you do not live up to the class expectations. Any two incidents of failure to live up to expectations will result in a drop in grade.

**Automatic grade reducers** result from the following:  
AA. Bringing food or drink to class  
AD. Failure to stay with workout group  
AB. Hats or radios in class  
AE. Talking out of turn  
AC. Tardy to class  
AF. Failure to dress appropriately

Each of you will also earn a daily workout grade worth:  
4 pts. when workout completed and accurately recorded. 2 pts. when at least 1/2 is competed/recorded 0 pts. when less than 1/2 completed and recorded or when you have unexcused misses.

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