



Research Journal of the Month
SEPTEMBER 2004

Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy (a new journal).
European Journal of Physical Education (a terminated journal).

In some respects, research journals are like living organisms. They pass through various stages of life including birth, growth, a period of mature service, and then, ultimately, some kind of ending -- whether that occurs gradually through evolution into a new publication or by the sudden demise of simple termination. As an illustration of such life cycle patterns, in this opening issue of *UnlockResearch* for 2004-2005 we will welcome the arrival of a new journal for pedagogical research in physical education and sport. Before that natal celebration begins, however, readers must contemplate the closing of a well-established and familiar resource for retrieving reports of research in our field.

The Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom (PEAUK) is the sponsor and copyright holder for both publications. Because the now- discontinued European Journal of Physical Education (EJPE) was terminated at the end of Volume 8 (in 2003), the newly issued Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy (PESP) was designated (puzzlingly) as Volume 9. The intention in doing so appears to have been to honor all those who invested their time and abilities in the prior publication. You can judge for yourself, but my own sense is that given the number of significant changes in form and substance, the new PESP could easily have been launched as Volume 1 – marking it as a replacement rather than a continuation.

To reduce another potential source of confusion at the outset, here is a note of clarification for readers who are not familiar with the physical education journals published in the UK. Neither of the two reviewed this month (EJPE and PESP) should be confused with PEAUK's other vehicle for material related to professional practice in sport and physical education, the British Journal of Teaching Physical Education. The latter serves as an analogue for our practitioner-oriented Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, and not, as the title might suggest, for our research-oriented Journal of Teaching in Physical Education.

EJPE had a lengthy and convoluted ancestry within PEAUK. In its most recent incarnation as an aspiring international journal, however, its publication run began in 1996 and continued with biannual issues through the final printing of Volume 8 in 2003. A fully refereed research journal, EJPE never achieved its ambitious aspiration to become the leading international journal for the publication of research in physical education. Contributing authors remained predominantly from the UK; the volume of submissions never justified the proposed four issues per annum, and despite the strenuous efforts of the editors (notably Professors Neil Armstrong at the University of Exeter, and Susan Capel at Brunel University) and an editorial board seeded with distinguished international scholars, the investigations reported in EJPE continued to be relatively small scale, sometimes lacked any substantial theoretical basis, and often centered on matters that were primarily local rather than cosmopolitan.

Those limitations notwithstanding, EJPE published a number of research reports that would meet any reasonable test for quality, and the journal certainly contained many studies that would hold value for physical education scholars and practitioners – on either side of the Atlantic .

Many contributions came from North America and included investigators with such familiar names as: Pamela Allison, Terry Carlson, Charles Corbin, Matthew Curtner-Smith, Stephen Mitchell, Judith Oslin, Robert Pangrazi, Becky Pissanos, John Todorovich, and Adrian Turner.

It is my own judgment that anyone (particularly any graduate student) laboring to complete a thorough review of research on a topic in physical education should consider it mandatory to visit the EJPE archive. Topics as diverse as motives for participation in dance, teaching games for understanding, time commitments in junior sport, the use of computer technology to compare student teaching behaviors, asthma awareness and policy in physical education, multistage fitness tests for children, and the relationship between perceived competence and enjoyment in high school physical education suggest the potential value of some archaeological mining for useful leads.

Predictably, finding ways to access this archive will now become increasingly difficult. At the present, many institutions with physical education programs have hard copy collections, but librarians who are hard pressed for shelf space have a tendency to make terminated research journals disappear. The PEAUK Website at <http://www.pea.uk.com/journ.htm> still provides access to tables of contents and extended abstracts, but only from 1997 to 2001 (back issues appear to be available, but I have not confirmed that fact).

Other electronic database systems may continue to allow you to retrieve full text reports through your library (I have found full or partial collections of EJPE in SPORTDiscus, Physical Education Index, ingenta, and EBSCO). Some of the commercial retrieval systems that are available online do list EJPE (the ISSN number is 1362-7120), but reprint prices for individual reports can be quite steep when ordered through such sources.

At the least, I think that taking an hour to survey what still is available from the lately departed EJPE will be a prudent investment for any practitioner, researcher, or student of physical education. With journals, as with affairs of the heart, it too soon becomes "out of sight – out of mind!"

The new research publication from PEAUK first appeared in May, 2004, as Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy (PESP), to be issued twice yearly (May and November) as a refereed research journal. That single maiden issue does not provide a sufficient basis for a genuine review, but an introduction certainly is in order.

Some of the differences between EJPE and PESP will be apparent immediately. First, the new journal is produced by a commercial publisher, the Carfax imprint of the Taylor and Francis Group. The substantial inputs of technical and editorial resources at Carfax are seen in high quality format and production values for the print edition. Second, more than half of the Editorial Board has been drawn from outside the UK, including Linda Griffin (University of Massachusetts), Peter Hastie (Auburn University), and Inez Rovegno (University of Alabama) from the USA. The policy-making Advisory Board is similarly constituted, with Cathy Ennis (University of Maryland) representing the USA. My guess is that the cosmopolitan mix of editorial personnel will serve, at least initially, to attract a wider range of contributions from English-speaking countries (particularly from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA) than was characteristic of sources for reports appearing in EJPE.

A third distinction can be detected in this brief excerpt from the PESP statement of Aims and Scope.

The journal encourages the submission of data-based and advocacy papers on teaching and coaching, learning and curriculum and especially the interdependence of these dimensions of pedagogy. Papers must be informed by a theoretical perspective (emphasis mine). At the same time, papers should be written in such a way as to be accessible to the broad community of scholars and informed readers in

physical education and sport pedagogy.

Taken together, those statements represent no-modest level of ambition and, if brought to fruition, would win enthusiastic cheers from virtually everyone who reads research related to teaching and curriculum in physical education.

A fourth and final point of significance concerning PESP rests in the appointment of David Kirk (Loughborough University , UK) as Editor. Already well-known in North America (in part, because he crosses the pond each year to join us at one or more of our national conferences), David is an academic cosmopolitan, a veteran researcher, and an experienced editor (his association with both Sport, Education, and Society and the Journal of Curriculum Studies has been substantial— and influential). My expectation is that readers will detect his hand in reports and papers that have been given a sharper edge of critical thought than is characteristic of much that is published today as inquiry in physical education.

Some of the items in the first issue were drawn from manuscripts initially accepted by the former editor of EJPE. The topics covered range widely and should appeal to teacher educators, curriculum coordinators and school program directors, as well as practitioners. Included are continuing professional development for elementary school physical education teachers, problems associated with inclusion in secondary school physical education, the use of pupils' drawings as an evaluative tool in sport education, and the impact of evaluation on girls in a physical education dance class.

Individual subscriptions have been set at US\$66, which includes air-speeded delivery (there will be both print and online editions). Full details can be obtained at <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals>.

Now we can have the pleasure of observing how the new editorial team at PESP works to give a distinctive stamp to the new research journal, and Unlock can return for a full review once they have hit their stride. Until then, I hope you will contact your library to suggest a subscription. If you have a research report in hand, there is no better way to support the development of a strong new vehicle for scholarship in physical education than to consider a submission (notes for contributors will be found inside the back cover of the first issue).

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