

Research Group for Studies in Physical Culture, Sport, and Education

Director: Susan G. Zieff, Ph.D.

Mission Statement

The Research Group for Studies in Physical Culture, Sport, and Education is concerned with raising awareness of and conducting interdisciplinary research on socio-cultural issues across the spectrum of physical activity. Housed in the Laboratory for Socio-cultural Studies of Physical Activity in the Department of Kinesiology at San Francisco State University, the Research Group has as its guiding mission a commitment to promote widespread understanding of sociological, historical, pedagogical, political, and cultural processes as they operate within the various forms of physical culture.

The Research Group draws from progressive social methods and theories in its work and research – feminist theories, critical race theory, multiculturalism, postcolonial theory, queer theory – in hopes of bringing qualitative, postmodern approaches more squarely into the domain of pedagogy and sport studies, and using these theories to address the experiences of individuals and groups in sport and other realms of physical culture.

The Research Group is concerned with social identity (i.e. race, gender, sexuality) and physical culture; critical pedagogy and physical education; forms of social inequality in physical activity; curriculum development in Kinesiology; cultural representation in sport; issues related to urban public space, youth culture, and physical activity; legislation affecting physical activity opportunities (i.e. Title IX, Americans with Disabilities Act); political processes in sport; commodification and cultural consumption of recreational/fitness industry offerings; coaching and youth sport; and the intersection of physical activity and popular culture.

We are interested in developing new approaches to the study of physical culture to address community-wide concerns and build working relationships with individuals and groups engaged in various facets of physical culture at the local, regional, national, and international levels. We welcome collaboration with other faculty and university members, and with external writers, educators, policymakers, groups, and institutions.

Objectives

- ❑ Serve as a forum to bring together experts on teaching and research in order to share collective knowledge and generate new knowledge on physical culture including physical education, sport, exercise, and other activity domains.
- ❑ Enhance teaching activities at the university, scholastic, and community levels, including liaising with physical education teachers on socio-cultural and pedagogical issues
- ❑ Involve undergraduate and graduate students in research and/or community service projects
- ❑ Assist in the development of policies for the governance of sport and physical activity in schools and local and regional agencies

Monitor the contemporary cultural and political climate for signs of discrimination (i.e. sexism, racism, heterosexism, classism) in the realm of sport and physical activity

- Current, Recent, and Ongoing Projects are on the following pages.

<p>Current, Recent, and Ongoing Projects: Research Group for Studies in Physical Culture, Sport, and Education</p>
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Current Projects:

*San Francisco Move: A Cross-disciplinary Investigation of an
Outdoor Activity Intervention Program*
Dr. Claudia M. Guedes
Dr. Susan G. Zieff

The purpose of this pilot research project is to evaluate the impact of an educational physical activity intervention program using Adventure Based Counseling (ABC-defined below) and California State Department of Education physical fitness measures in an elementary school population in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD).

*Health Knowledge about Physical Activity in a Population of
Older Individuals in Sao Paulo, Brazil*
Dr. Susan G. Zieff
Dr. Claudia M. Guedes

This project investigates the ways in which older adults understand and articulate the health messages of a community health, physical activity intervention. The participants are engaged in the “Agita Melhoridade” public health project based in Sao Paulo, Brazil, established almost ten years ago by the Sao Paulo State Secretary of Health. A qualitative survey was used to explore how older adults define physical activity, their perspective on the role of physical activity in their lives, and the health benefits they expect to derive from participation in physical activity.

Recently Completed (abstracts):

Youth Knowledge of Physical Activity Health Benefits:
A Brazilian Case Study
Dr. Susan G. Zieff
Dr. Claudia M. Guedes

This study presents the outcomes of a questionnaire concerning knowledge of the relationship of physical activity to health delivered to adolescent participants of an annual, community-based physical activity intervention mega-event (“Agita Galera”), held in 2004 in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Agita Galera provides information and programming to school-aged youth regarding the role of physical activity in a healthy lifestyle. A growing body of evidence suggests that, among adults, gaining knowledge about physical activity in relation to health positively influences lifestyle changes (Avis, et al, 1990; Frank, 1993). However, the extent

to which health information delivered in a PA intervention setting becomes understood among adolescent participants is less clear. The purpose of this research was two-fold: 1.) to determine how youth participants in Agita Galera understand the importance of PA and its relationship to health; and 2.) to determine if these participants can identify and describe the program's educational message recommending 30 minutes of PA on most days. **Methods:** Both quantitative and qualitative methods were applied to examine the participants' ability to communicate about the educational feature of this intervention. Male and female Agita Galera participants (n=231, ages 14-18), answered 22 closed- and open-ended questions. Responses to two of the open-ended questions are reported here: 1.) Is physical activity important for health, why? and, 2.) What are the objectives of Agita Galera? Qualitative (inductive content analysis) and quantitative (frequency distributions) were used to analyze the data. **Results:** More than 75% of all participants stated that health benefits are attained through participation in physical activity. In addition, almost 50% of participants reported that the goal of the intervention was to educate people about the importance of physical activity. Sixty percent of the participants were returning for their 2nd or more involvement in the event and more than 60% of the participants reported engaging in PA three or more times per week. **Conclusions:** Adolescents understand the relationship of physical activity to health as reflected in their knowledge assessments; their lifestyle choices support these beliefs. These findings offer encouragement for the development and implementation of educationally-oriented interventions aimed at providing positive lifestyle information.

*The American "Alliance" of Health and Physical Education:
Scholastic Programs and Professional Organizations, 1920-1950*
Dr. Susan G. Zieff

From the 1920s through the early 1940s, school-based programs in both health and physical education—mandated by government legislation and hailed by the public—increased in scope and complexity. By 1937, the assumption of the interconnectedness of the two fields was institutionalized in the merger of the American Physical Education Association with the Department of School Health and Physical Education of the National Education Association to form the American Association for Health and Physical Education. This paper focuses on the role of health education, physical education, and public health professionals in the emergence and critique of scholastic health and physical education programs in the first half of the 20th century.

*Etched Impressions: Student Writing as Engaged Pedagogy in the Graduate
Sport Management Classroom*
Dr. Maria J. Veri
Graduate Student Contributors

The purpose of this article is to illustrate the pedagogical value of employing student narrative writing assignments in the graduate sport management classroom and to advocate for cultural studies and critical pedagogy approaches to teaching in sport management contexts. The article situates students' autobiographical narratives in a theoretical framework of cultural studies, critical pedagogy, and critical sport studies by drawing on perspectives articulated by DeSensi (1994), Fernandez-Balboa (1997), Giroux (1997; 2000), hooks (2003; 1994), and Wright (2001/2002). It was hoped that the writing exercise would provide students with an additional forum through which to express their individual voices and to link their personal experiences to course content as they prepared to enter a 21st century sport industry characterized by increasing diversity and globalization.