

## *On the Transgressive Possibilities of Physical Pedagogic Practices*

Albeit with differing degrees and intensities within various Higher Education systems, ‘sport’ as an academic discipline—in a similar fashion to other disciplinary enterprises—has become enmeshed within the dictates of neoliberalism; namely the ‘logics’ of the market, and the privileging of centrally controlled, efficiency oriented, rationally predictable, empirically calculable modes of knowledge generation and, ultimately, epistemologically restricted ways of knowing (cf. Ritzer, 2004; Silk et. al, 2014). Such processes have further wed the ‘science of sport’, the University, and implicated subjects (students as well as Professors) to the logics of the capital. Almost out of necessity, the field thereby downplays pedagogic practices and scholarly foci that empathise with, for example, human needs, civic and moral responsibilities, public values and critique (Giroux, 2010a). Further, this knowledge market questions the very worth and perceived value of the ‘social’, and it follows, the social sciences of sport. This is an alarming state given non-rational and incalculable pedagogical outcomes are crucial foundations for democracy, political freedom and equality (Brown, 2006), yet they appear devalued in the ‘sciences of sport’ as in other formations of (higher) education. As such, the academic study of sport is, at present, a field stymied by what elsewhere has been described as its “inconvenient truth” (Andrews, 2008); namely, the intellectually and humanity limiting scientific doxa apparent, and embodied within, the constitution of ‘sport’ departments, curricular, journals, and indeed, the academy itself.

Within this paper, we critically reflect on the production and reproduction of knowledge(s) within the academic study of sport. Rather than an attack on science *qua* science, we aim to break down real or perceived hierarchies and boundaries (Giroux, 2001) within the critical, academic study of sport and thereby open the field to a broader constitution of interests and possibilities—especially with respect to the transgressive pedagogic practices that we discuss in the latter half of the paper. Thus, and within a climate of ‘privilege’ or ‘legitimacy’ afforded to certain types of sporting knowledge, and the dangers that can arise from narrowly conceived (yet often hegemonic) globally accepted structures, discourses and epistemes, we address the ways in which we have utilised certain paradigmatic, theoretical, methodological and technological

approaches within our pedagogic practices to aid in countering dominance and encouraging transformation. In so doing, through the paper, we address what we feel are transgressive practices as we engage our students in sport, leisure and physical cultures. We suggest throughout that any form of academic ‘othering’, any academic hierarchies or binaries, are unproductive in developing knowledge of sport, leisure and physical cultures. Rather, we ‘hold together’ the hard (fast) and soft (slow) sciences of sport (and perhaps whilst ostensibly perceived as ‘fast’ reveal the potential of technologies in our ‘slow’ approach) and tentatively reflect on pedagogical approaches that, we believe, can aid in *opening up* the critical potentialities of *the* field, promote democratic knowledge, and ensure the University is a space for vibrancy, innovation, critique, debate and equality.

### **Situating ‘Sport’: Transgressing a Bare Physical Pedagogy**

With Giroux (2010a/b), the dominant form of academic ‘sport’ programmes in higher education institutions embrace—to differing degrees—the economic and political rationalities of a neoliberal market. This ‘bare pedagogy’ “strips education of its public values, critical contents and civic responsibilities as part of its broader goal of creating new subjects wedded to the logic of privatization, efficiency, flexibility, the accumulation of capital and the destruction of the social state” (Giroux 2010a, p. 185). Moreover, compassion is deemed a weakness and moral responsibility is scorned given it places human needs over market considerations. Following Stephen Ball (2012), within the context of neoliberal ‘reformation,’ ‘sport’ educators are increasingly being required to make themselves *more calculable than memorable*. Ball (2012, p. 18) argues that within a new paradigm of education built on competitive advantage, professionals themselves have to be re-invented as units whose productivity can be audited, in short this accountability and preoccupation with reporting on what we do rather than doing it has bought about “a profound shift in our relationships to ourselves, our practice, and the possibilities of being an academic.” With Ball, this new academic performativity is built on the enterprising academic, who, drawing on Weber is a ‘specialist without spirit’ that makes it near on impossible for some Universities to do what they do best—enabling people to think. The very performance

then of pedagogic practice and scholarship has become subjectified—the very structures of domination have been sedimented on the bodies of ‘teachers’—with the realities of practice taking place within the “constraining normativities of an increasingly corporatized academy” (Brenner, 2006, p. 3; cf. Sonu, 2012). For Ball (2012, p. 20) this results in an “ontological insecurity” in which increasingly disconnected academics wander aimlessly—in a sort of thirdspace distant from both academic freedom, thinking space and the dictates of accountability and performativity—with a “loss of a sense of meaning in what we do and of what is important in what we do.”

The epistemic corroboration of a bare and performative academic normativity is a positivist objectivism that underpins *scientific method*, as conventionally understood. Both are constituents, and simultaneously constitutors, of a particular understanding of modernity, centered around linear evolutionary assumptions pertaining to the (assumed) inexorable progress of human civilization through the advancement of empirically grounded—often a euphemism for quantitatively driven and objectively reasoned—science. Hence, the scientific hegemony presently in place within the corporatised university speaks not to the veracity of the scientific method *per se*, but to the political economy of the university (e.g. Nandy, 1988; Rutherford, 2005). By reinforcing the primacy of “high-quality science” (Lather, 2006, p. 35), the meaning and purpose of higher education has become besieged by a phalanx of narrow economic and political interests (Giroux, 2010a, p. 188). Consequently, the corporate brand is more important than any mission to educate free moral agents (Giroux, 2012; see also Barnett and Griffin, 1997; Evans, 2004/5; Readings, 1996). Science then reductively becomes a ‘reason of state’ (Nandy, 1988), far from an epistemological accident: it is quintessentially reductionist and related to the needs of a particular form of economic organization based on exploitation, profit maximization and capital accumulation (Shiva, 1988). ‘Scientific knowledge’ in this sense is political through and through; a knowledge ground within our contemporary social and political conditions that authorize particular regimes of truth (Murray et. al., 2007). Such regimes do not do justice to the potential contributions of scientific knowledge to our, or other, disciplines. Of course, ‘scientific knowledge’ and ‘scientists’ in and of itself/themselves are far from homogenous, and there are an

array of critical practitioners who understand the partisan and partial nature of knowledge and whom engage reflexively with new ideas. Furthermore, as Evans et. al. (2013) pointed out, it is nothing but unhelpful and unproductive to ‘other’ science/scientists or to create binaries and academic polarizations. This is not our intent or indeed our point. Instead, to advance a holistic understanding of the body/of active embodiment we need multiple knowledges, truths and understandings. As Dallas Rogers (2012) suggests, we are more concerned about the politics of (and technocratic right to) place boundaries around what can be counted as ‘truth’. We thus are attuned to the problematics of a “dangerously naïve commonsense view on truth” (Murray et al., 2008, p.273) that fails to recognize the political workings of power which silently operate behind the mask of objectivity, inscribe rigid norms and standards that ensure political dominance, and, set the agenda with regard to what questions about ‘truth’ can be asked and by whom. It is, quite simply, a mechanism of power that has co-opted and corporatized all aspects of learning (both the construction and understanding of learning) and re-interprets them as competition, privatization and profiteering (Canella, 2011). Based in the doctrines of logical positivism, and following Murray et al. (2008, p.273), “this view betrays an almost unshakeable faith in the human capacity for unbiased or objective observation and analysis.” In this formulation, ‘science’ becomes supplanted by ideology shaped by the neo-conservative cultural logics of neo-liberalism, even as it basks in the dubious glow of its spurious value-free objectivity (Lincoln & Canella, 2004; also Harvey, 2003; Lakoff, 2006; Stevenson, 2010).

The ‘pornography’ (Giroux & Giroux, 2012) of such a reductionist view of science (which perhaps impacts on the ‘free-hand’ of science as much as those positioned lower down the ‘sport’ pecking order, those in the ‘social sciences’) has materialized in the academic field of sport. Research, teaching and academic performativity and legitimacy have become infused with one of the most significant *irrationalities* of higher education *rationality*: namely, an epistemological empirical calculability that for the most part has embraced the doctrines and *standards* of logical positivism<sup>ii</sup> and its correlative, constrictive curricular efficiency (see especially Andrews, 2008; Bairner, 2012; Gill, 2007). As Ingham and Donnelly opined (1990, p. 59), humanistic knowledge has definitely suffered at the hands of “technocratic” scientific knowledge currently privileged

within an epistemological prestige hierarchy that frames the field. While departments may pay “lip service to the liberal education curriculum” within the “contested terrain” of sport, the “humanistic intellectual” is habitually forced to view the (scientific) “technical intelligentsia” as an overbearing and resource-hogging adversary, as opposed to equal ally. The “technological intelligentsia” however oftentimes consider “humanistic intellectualizing” to be superfluous, and thereby expendable, teachers (used derogatively) at best that have been left behind within the neoliberal institution. As a consequence, and despite differential engagements/negotiations with a corporatized neoliberal agenda, ‘sport’ departments tend either to be exclusively bio-science focused, or unapologetically bio-science centric (the social sciences and humanities being grudgingly tolerated, but habitually under-funded and under-supported, and needing to ‘prove’ their worth and often ‘conform’ to prescribed, nee ‘legitimate’, standards). Any ontological or epistemological positions that may run counter to such a position, that might enable students to develop critical and analytical skills that hold power accountable (‘speak the truth to power’ in Edward Said’s parlance), or that develop a sense of prophetic justice (Giroux, 2010a), are usually viewed with suspicion at best and outright hostility at worst. In short, the field is dominated (to its detriment) by self-destructive versions of reductionist science that (subconsciously) act as insidious components of the social and economic condition that privileges ‘state’ science (Murray et. al, 2007)—science that is embedded within, and looks to expand, neoliberal, militarized, economic modes of governance and efficiency.

Such reductionist orthodoxies are not just damaging; they fail to do justice to the potentialities of ‘the physical’ and the work of scholars from all disciplines interested in furthering inter-, trans- and multi-disciplinary understandings and overcoming social, political and health inequalities. Indeed, a *lean and mean* sport science (see Silk et. al., 2013) in which it is explicitly clear to see *whose knowledge counts* (Ingham & Donnelly, 1990) within the *prestige hierarchies* of the contemporary university, precludes the development of the field and ultimately destabilizes the possibilities for higher education as a site of intellectual advancement, social justice and critical and autonomous thinking. As such, forsaking such epistemological hierarchies in favour of more epistemologically balanced, empirically wholesome, and intellectually stimulating fare can

aid in providing the conditions for pedagogical practices that can do more than just reproduce the “contemporary landscape of political intelligibility and possibility” (Brown, 2006, p. 693).

### **Towards the ‘Physical’**

We use the term (the) ‘physical’ rather deliberately, for it marks our approach to displace and decentre dominant disciplinary approaches. Through democratising ‘sport’, by moving beyond an over-determined focus on elite professional sport, we can begin to have conversations with students about all manner of iterations of being physical (ranging from exercise, to movement, dance, physical activity and sport). Rather ironically, but also rather deliberately, this does move us closer to allied fields of health, health promotion and well-being (and thereby closer to science, and an even shinier gold treasure chest of research money). Our starting point then, is that the physical can never be substantial (possessing some fixed, immutable essence), rather, it is unavoidably relational, and always in process, yet its contemporaneous iteration provides a persuasive—if illusionary—semblance of fixity within what is, in actuality, an ever-changing world. Our argument in this paper is predicated on this very point: our physical pedagogic practices cannot be isolated from a broad range of important social issues. Rather, in the broadest sense, the omnifarious planes of physicality represent a “pressure point of complex modern societies” (Frow & Morris, 2000, p. 352). These planes are “sites” or “point(s) of intersection, and of negotiation of radically different kinds of determination and semiosis” (Frow & Morris, 2000, p. 352); a place where social forces, discourses, institutions, and processes congregate, congeal, and are contested in a manner which contributes to the shaping of human relations, subjectivities, and experiences in particular, contextually contingent ways. They are a carefully crafted assemblage of subjectivities and physicalities that articulate with a range of wider social phenomena and concerns ranging from access, privilege, spectacularisation, consumption, difference, diversity, understandings of and hierarchies of disability/impairment, militarisation, terrorism and neoliberalism, governmental benefits, and social acceptance. Such a representation comprises a litany of “events,” moments that crystalize “diverse temporal and social trajectories” through which individuals negotiate their own identities (Frow & Morris, p. 352). Following

Frow and Morris (2000), the physical is thus a complex multi-layered site replete with numerous types of events that can and do ‘happen’—the product and producer of numerous overlapping systems and discourses (economic, political, aesthetic, demographic, regulatory, spatial) that create a bewilderingly complex, and dynamic, coherent, social totality. As such, our pedagogic practices cannot be limited to an understanding of sport or problems specific to sport (if there are any)—this would not do justice to the potentialities of the field. A critical ‘sports studies’ is not just about the physically active/sporting body; it is, as Denzin (2012) argues, and as we attempt to represent in our curricula and pedagogic practices, about the articulations between physically (in)active bodies and spaces of violence, global terror, neoliberal regimes, identity, self, gender, queer bodies of colour, bilingual belongings, and public education in globalizing times—it is about postcolonial intellectuals decolonizing the academy, freedom, social justice, border crossings, the voices of oppression, and democracy.

These articulations focus on debunking the compelling mythology within ‘sport’ that the body is an exclusively biological organism. As Ingham (1997, p. 176) noted in a famed critique of the dominance of bio-science within sport, the “body is, at the same time, both physical and cultural ... the genetically endowed is socially constituted or socially constructed, as well as socially constituting and constructing”. Clearly, the ways of knowing/truths associated with the active body/human movement are not the exclusive domain of the positivistic adherence to the quantitative data-driven generation of models and predictions. It is as much a social, cultural, philosophical, and historical entity as it is a genetic, physiological, and psychological vessel. There are important, interpretive engagements that are needed to render possible otherwise inaccessible interpretations and understandings of the active body/human movement. Such social and cultural dimensions of corporeality simply cannot be imagined, let alone understood, using a logical positivist predilection for identifying and testing the existence of objective rationalities and interventions. Nonetheless, within some circles, the myth of the natural body persists, and is effectively reinforced through the institutional (overt and covert) promotion of the *natural* bio-scientific dimensions of kinesiology.

We thus tentatively sketch our thoughts and reflections on what a resuscitated physical

pedagogic approach might (not ought to) look like; a trans-/ inter-disciplinary field as both constitutor and constituent of a *critical curriculum of the corporeal* (see Francombe, 2013). It draws on a range of exciting and innovative methodologies/practices that provide the languages of, and possibilities for, a politically progressive, socially just and democratic citizenry. Ground within the philosophies of the ‘slow movement’ (see Hartman & Darab, 2012; Silk et. al., 2014) we discuss a range of approaches that transgress and transform ‘fast-sport-science’. We elaborate as to why students need time to read and think and that collectively we need time to step back and reflect on ‘sport’, in order to unpack our physical worlds/being. We do not intend to present the *right way* or the *only way* of being/thinking in sport/physical culture, but rather we offer a provocative and hopefully intellectually stimulating vision (fully ground in our own experiences). This paper thus aims to serve as a stimulus for debate, critique and consideration within, and for, our field. This is a field of contestation, yet perpetual self-reflexive contemplation means it is a healthy, flourishing field in which the quality, position and relevance of the social sciences of sport can be ‘legitimately’ discussed and contemplated. With Garbutt and Offord (2012), we point to the compelling and urgent need for scholarship/pedagogy that is activated by ethical imperatives and concerns; a form of pedagogy that can consider relations of freedom, authority, democratic knowledge and responsibility (2010) and which can do justice to the diverse narratives, issues, histories, experiences and contexts we are likely to encounter as part of the pedagogical process (Giroux, 2010a). The section below is one such—admittedly idealistic, embryonic and incomplete—attempt to demonstrate the quality, position and relevance of a space / pedagogic approach that can productively unpack the potentialities of politically motivated (critical) pedagogies of physicality. All this in the,

spirit of a critical democracy by providing [students and academics] ... with the knowledge, passion, civic capacity, public value, and social responsibility necessary to address the problems facing the nation and the globe ... [an approach that challenges] the existence of rigid disciplinary boundaries, the cult of expertise or highly specialized scholarship unrelated to public life, and anti-democratic ideologies that scoff at the exercise of academic freedom (Giroux, 2010a, p. 187).



## Qualitative Research and a Language of (Physical) Possibilities

Following Denzin (2012, p. 296) a “critical sports cultural studies” needs a new language and curriculum of possibility; a morally centred and critically informed dialogue focused on human rights, history and politics—and to realise this involves contributions from, and (un)comfortable discussions between, actors across the scientific spectrum. He continues, “an embodied sports studies project *that matters* must locate the body with a radically contextual politics. It must focus on the active, agentic flesh-and-blood human body” (Denzin 2012, p. 298), it must re-establish a relationship to the body that imagines embodiment as a site of pedagogic possibility—one that questions normalized cultural narrations of embodied existence (Titchkosky, 2012). Our approach then, with Denzin (2012), are physical pedagogic practices that co-construct a radical democratic present, a safe and sheltered place where the shackles of neoliberalism are cast aside and where consumer culture / (discursive) militarization is held in abeyance. This requires reading outwards from (our/students/other) (non-)sporting bodies and situating such stories within the historical present; a place where the inconvenient truths of a global sporting culture are exposed and then reconfigured within a radical democratic present. We have sought to develop in our pedagogic practices what we have elsewhere termed a critical curriculum of the corporeal (see Silk et. al., 2014). This curriculum requires a suite of critical, interpretive methodologies that can help us (students/staff) make sense of bodies/lives; critical methodologies/practices that “exhibit interpretive sufficiency; ... [are] free of racial, class, gender, or sexual stereotyping; rely on multiple voices; enhance moral discernment; and promote social transformation” (Denzin, 2012, p. 299). This is, if you like, the point of departure for an interdisciplinary and productive project of the physically active body that enacts an interventionist, dialogic and *slow* pedagogic agenda; one that is both engaging and invigorating for ‘teachers’ and students alike as it centralizes the performance of the physical and destabilizes taken for granted forms of knowledge/‘data’. Building on the work of Brophy and Hladki (2012) and Titchkosky (2012), such a corporeal curriculum can help in reshaping understandings of (ab)normalcy, wellness, inclusion/exclusion, the presence/absence of the body, its experiences

and representations. With Rose (2013), this is a curriculum that recognizes the realities of our fleshly nature and examines the possibilities and constraints that flow from it. Our pedagogic practices then unavoidably centre the tacit, sensory body (including our own), its fleshy sinews, its movement and its (in)activity. It is one that resounds with the messiness of reflexivity and empirical vulnerability as we place, or articulate, the body purposefully within our scholarly practices and forward inquiries that look to redefine the boundaries of knowledge production (Giardina & Newman, 2012). In this sense, and with Giardina and Newman (2012), through the study of body cultures and body politics (as opposed to one obsessed with, the fastest, highest, strongest) we envision a project across a range of differential institutions that takes seriously a wider cultural politics and contextualizes the physical within power relations of the past, the present, and the potentialities of the future. In this regard, our suggestive approach explicates the noticeable impact of corporeal movement, contact, proprioceptive politics that problematize the mythologies of scientific research paradigms and bring to the fore more creative and innovative approaches that seemingly elicit or allow for a *fuller exposition of the cultures of the body* that are being experienced. Centralising the body, in the sense that it is allowed to move, gesture, exercise, dance, present, perform, work and so on, inevitably means an entanglement of the embodied, emplaced (Pink, 2011), cognitive and epistemological. To destabilise the centre and thus transgress (or at least slow down) a regressive orthodoxy, we need pedagogies, curricula and methodologies that counter and co-exist alongside (however uncomfortably) positivistic scientific doxa. Our approach thus aims to be more democratic, anti-reductionist, centering as it does on an active, pedagogical, ethical and moral axiology—a *slow sports studies* (Silk et. al., 2014) if you like. The academic study of sport (read, the physical), can, and should, be contributing to a range of conversations about the neoliberal governance of the body, the pathologized or abject body, healthcare provision among ‘excluded’ or ‘marginalized’ populations, immigration, racisms, personal identity, citizenship, freedom, patriotism, justice, democracy, perpetual war, (gender-based) violence, terror, global social relations, political struggle, sporting bodies, class relations, bodies in (urban) spaces, (trans)gender bodily politics, and so on<sup>iii</sup>. A *slow sports studies* centred on democratic values, identities and practices, as Miller and Ahluwalia (2011) suggest, requires

recognizing that the social sciences and the humanities are vital amongst other disciplinary approaches, for they provide the space for us to be absolutely clear about the critical importance, distinctiveness and impact that education can have upon our societies, on inequalities and on injustices. In this formulation, and in direct contrast to the dictates of neoliberal institutions of higher education, we aim for our pedagogic approaches to the physical to be spaces for students to “embrace pedagogical encounters as spaces of dialogue and unmitigated questioning, to imagine different futures, to become border crossers establishing a range of new connections and global relations, and to embrace a language of critique and possibility that responds to the urgent need to reclaim democratic values, identities and practices” (Giroux, 2009, p. 692).

Grand and perhaps utopian aims indeed—especially within the context of an increasingly corporatized higher education. So, what have we done, and how have we fared? At this juncture, we turn to how we have attempted to embrace this project within our own institutional and pedagogic spaces; about how we have worked with colleagues in the hard sciences and University administrators. We have fought—sometimes with, and sometimes without, success—for the legitimacy and value of critical, interpretive, and reflexive forms of intellectualizing in sport. Consequently, the curricula we have established are predicated on being spaces and opportunities to de- and re-construct taken for granted bodily forms of knowledge. As the body becomes centralized, so we are required to move between and decentre discourses of privilege and the margins. This movement is predicated on a simultaneous shifting between research pedagogies, teaching pedagogies and the physical that makes salient the discursive currents of age, gender, society, education, race, class, ethnicity, religion, (dis)ability that converge and permeate upon cultural spaces/‘sites.’ In so doing we thrust body pedagogies (Rich, 2011) and body texts (Fusco, 2006) into the core of our curricula. We attempt to deliver units on our programmes that provide space for elastic conversations about the ways in which knowledge can be developed, about individuals contributing to a more democratic whole and about how as a field we can contribute to wider societal debates. This requires thematic units which do not rely on a single discipline or theoretical assumption. We draw on the fields of history, sociology, cultural studies, psychology, gender studies, urban studies, media studies, critical race theory,

politics, health, geography and so on, alongside other 'legitimated' forms of bodily knowledge. We thereby consider how these come to bear on a more rounded understanding of physical culture as it articulates with policy, management, pedagogies, the cultural economy, youth cultures, inequalities, corporeal physicality, power, and discourses of health and well-being. More specifically, this involves curricula that reflect on sport and physical culture in relation to a gamut of issues, not exclusively limited to: globalisation and (international) development; (un)healthy and physically (in)active bodies; mental health; abuses of power; the discursive constitution of the body; bio-pedagogies; an understanding of the ways in which the sporting body is imbued with power relations; issues of surveillance, security, and governance within our city spaces and popular sporting texts; militarisation and terrorism; the specificities of clinical populations; cultural technologies (such as the internet, social media, popular and promotional cultures); social inequalities and social justice; ethics; the economic and political rationalities of neoliberalism and neoconservatism; and, the discursive constitution of bodies, health and well-being. It involves the very careful use of theory as a resource to think and act, allowing us to situate sporting texts within historical and institutional contexts. In so doing, we can create the conditions for individual and collective struggles over resources and power and against material inequalities as they are manifest in our sporting worlds (Giroux, 2001).

Most importantly, it requires a range of innovative pedagogical and methodological practices and approaches that can help to break down taken for granted assumptions, the reification of power structures and entrenched inequalities, unpack deeply embedded sporting experiences, and bring alive the reflective, questioning and imaginations of our students to enable a language of critique and possibility that speaks to democratic values and morally just identities and practices. Within (and across) our pedagogic approaches, we aim to provide multiple opportunities, spaces and possibilities where the body is materially and discursively 'put to work', within what we hope are innovative, creative, and often individually designed *corporeal curricula*. Our varied practices have, for example included: presentations, performance art, narrative writing, integration of innovative digital creativity, exhibitions, developing online personas and platforms that consider alternative realities and more equitable public/bodily pedagogies. These

have seen us journey (not without critical reflection) closer towards technological forms and practices.

### **Transgressive Physical Pedagogic Practices**

Our approach towards what we can term ‘slow’ pedagogic physical pedagogies has, in part, oriented students towards the critical potentialities of public pedagogy through which to begin to break down ‘accepted’ sporting structures, discourses and epistemes. We have tried to create outlets for self-expression, ensure the needs of different types of learners are met, engage with different social practices and endeavoured to open up the critical potentialities of the university as a space for vibrancy, debate and innovation so as to provide safe spaces within which students can disrupt and imagine physical culture differently. It is useful here, via Biesta (2012), to further delineate how we have approached such a task. Biesta (2012) offers an important distinction between three forms of public pedagogy; a nuanced account that attunes us to the differences between a pedagogy of the public, a pedagogy for the public and a notion of public pedagogy which enacts a concern for publicness. If we were to approach our programmes simply as a pedagogy *of* the public, this might mean, to draw on Giroux (2001, p. 588) educating students “how historical and contemporary meanings” produced through dominant discourses “align, reproduce and interrupt broader sets of ideas, discourses and social configurations at work in the larger society”. Certainly we do this through some of our lecture content and pedagogic practice. But this alone would not be a sufficient practice to enliven the ‘slow’ physical pedagogies we describe above. Therefore, we have also undertaken a range of activities specifically geared towards enhancement through exploration of public values, critical content and efforts to develop critical and autonomous thinking. We attempt to develop slow pedagogies and curricula activities that align with Biesta’s (2012, p. 684) conceptualization of a public pedagogy that enacts a concern for ‘publicness’ as “connected to the political and educational and [which] locates both firmly in the public domain” (Biesta, 2012, p. 684).

So just how have we moved into this public domain? Our efforts have been to develop pedagogic practices that encourage *reflexivity* through which to develop new insights both of the

self and of wider permeations of physical culture and everyday practices. Here there is something of an irony, for as we move *slowly* towards a *slow* pedagogy, we have actually embraced fastness, in the form of technologies to enable this reflexivity. Indeed, across a number of our pedagogic initiatives, we have deployed what could be called ‘technoslowness’ to aid in enhancing reflexive critical thinking. We have, for example, ‘flipped the classroom’ whereby students engage with taught content through online materials and the class-time is thereby refocused on more interactive, learner-centred tasks and workshops. This has involved students engaging with ‘flipped’ content in the form of a suite of online videos/lectures from an international cast of world leading professors. Following their viewing of online videos, students are encouraged to post questions/comments about the content of the talk using social media, bringing them in contact with ‘experts’ (as per the neoliberal rhetoric) in their field. We have found that this approach not only provides students access to a relevant network of scholars (and thereby knowledges) beyond the home institution but has enabled online learning to address diverse learners needs.

Furthermore, we aim to formulate the focus of class-based seminar discussions/debates related to sport, health and social issues through participatory co-generated discussion. We have found this to be engaging for both students and teachers alike, providing a space for narrative, experience, compassion and insight. Additionally, and instead of asking students to submit an assignment in the form of a traditional essay, we have invited the submission of a *reflexive* journal based on seminar participation. In so doing, we were mindful of bringing participatory opportunities under “regimes of learning—a particular concept of political agency in which (political) action follows from (political) understanding” (Biesta, 2012 p. 692); or to assume a simple ‘transfer’ or ‘transmission’ of critical skills by then assessing students on the content of critical theory. In this sense, we aim to avoid the limitations of a focus on “rational cognitive dimensions of the critical learning process, and imply more modernist notions of selfhood” (Sandlin, Wright & Clark, 2013, p. 14).

Beside this, within our pedagogic practices, we position theory as a resource through which not only to think, but to act and *intervene*—enabling what Burdick et al (2013) refer to as

the ‘enactment’ of public pedagogy. This entails that we focus on exploring the possibilities produced through the ‘publicness’ of the students’ engagement with others across wider permeations than just formal institutions/educational spaces. In this sense, they are encouraged to engage with a public pedagogy approach to sport, leisure and physical cultures, to not only deconstruct and critique; but to (re)imagine alternative ways through which to intervene. In this regard our slow pedagogy demonstrates a commitment to “provide citizens with those critical capacities, modes of literacies, knowledge and skills that enable them to both read the world critically and participate in shaping and governing it” (Giroux, 2005, np.). We aim therefore to provide students with the space to make connections between theory and its potential impact on our societies through debates, knowledge and practice that contribute to wider societal concerns. To aid in achieving such aims, we actively encourage students to work in groups to identify a key socio-cultural problem or concern in sport/physical activity. Following the tradition of alternative and resistant pedagogy, students suggest how they might utilise public spaces of learning to create knowledge that challenges the identified problem. In these groups they draw upon knowledge, skills and interests to suggest ways to publicly contextualize knowledge into shared community learning experiences. This can range from public talks, interactive exhibitions, videos, free schools, workshops, photography, zines and other forms of knowledge distribution. This enables a reflective process of learning that sits at the intersection between “culture, media, informal sites of learning, democratic education, and social activism” (Sandlin et al, 2011, p. 339) and which is focused on ‘publicness’. As Ellsworth (2005, p. 76) argues, within our curricula approaches towards (active) physicalities, we see the pedagogical force as one that does not dictate “the final correct answer” but as a relational space in which our students can “create their own meanings and/or make new discoveries” (p. 81).

We also aim to go further than (re)imagining or describing *intervention*: through public facing pedagogic practices students are encouraged to actively engage with related publics. Whilst academics are encouraged to undertake public engagement, it is rare for undergraduate students to find opportunities to do this. In support of these pedagogies, we have established *The Connected Learning Lab*<sup>v</sup>, an initiative to foster creative learning environments through digital technologies.

The 'lab' comprises a collection of digital technologies (e.g. digital cameras, IPADS, mobile technologies etc) to support innovations in the design, delivery and pedagogic practice. In part, this has enabled us to provide opportunities for learners' active and outward engagement beyond the HE classroom and allowed us to embrace the aforementioned 'technoslowness' as means through which to facilitate this. Utilising a range of digital technologies and platforms, we have encouraged our students to undertake digital public sociology by writing blogs, creating wikis and actively engaging with social media. We also engage our students with relevant public bodies and publics (given our focus on 'sport', this includes, for example, representatives from the British Olympic Association, sport scholars from other institutions, Governing Bodies, Committees, politicians and policy makers, local authorities, health professionals, teachers and so on). In addition to face-to-face discussion at public facing events where we enable students to talk through their own undergraduate research projects with such publics, we have also utilised the social media platform twitter to enhance public engagement with students and their research. Specifically, we have provided the space for each student to display their undergraduate research to the public with a twitter username on their research poster at undergraduate research exhibitions; guests are encouraged to tweet and connect students with relevant professional networks, often leading to wider permeations of research impact. Such practices have built the confidence and capability of students to learn from, and connect with, the various stakeholders in their field and to be active in shaping, influencing, critiquing the cultures that come to shape the 'physical'; to assume a role as border crossers, as public pedagogues whereby the "the intention is to push against the given" (Gaztambide-Fernandez & Arraiz-Matute, 2013, p. 57). Students have continued using these platforms beyond the classroom and exhibition sites, engaging with aspects of participatory democracy, sharing links and critiquing/commenting on various facets of the physical cultures related to their degree programmes. This meaning-making resides at the intersection of technology, slowness, pedagogy and publicness and provided a space for interruption "not to teach actors what they should be, nor demand a particular kind[s] of learning, but to keep open the opportunities for becoming public" (Biesta, 2006, p. 693).

In addition to undergraduate research exhibitions, a further example of 'technoslowness'



is our use of ‘social media seminars’ to connect students with leading experts in their field and provide for different learners needs. We have, for example, provided the opportunity for participation in live ‘in-class’ twitter seminars (e.g. on human enhancement/sport). Here, students log into twitter and tweet comments and questions live ‘in-class’ to invited guests on relevant subjects. Of course, as alluded to above, we are aware of the potential irony in our ‘technoslow’ approach to a critical curriculum of the corporeal. Yet, the role of education and more recently digitality in terms of actions and politics is not new, nor original, and needs to be embraced with eyes wide open—we need to deploy whatever technologies are necessary to enable progressive, civic and democratic conversations to thrive or even exist within neoliberal institutions (our colleagues in science will, most certainly, use any such resources to enable their own goals). With Buchanan (2011, p. 67) then, we argue that within the parameters of slow pedagogy, such technologies are needed to open up an educative space to engage with ‘public pedagogy’ (Giroux, 2004)—this means “allowing students to author their own digital identities, rather than imposing upon them the ‘digital native’ identity found in some educational discourse”. We are careful here not simply to ‘use’ technology as a form of participating in the information economy (see Collin & Apple, 2010) wherein the classroom serves as a site through which to prepare the future (mediated) workforce through the development of technical skills: “the dominant belief in globalisation as the path to the knowledge economy has resulted in developed nations seeing technology dependent education as the means to ‘outsmart’ others in the race for scientific knowledge and technological innovation” (Buchanan, 2011, p. 68). Indeed, we are mindful that the uptake of technology may come to be symbolic of this very competitive, economic imperative that might move us more to ‘fast’ pedagogies. Moreover, it risks reducing the learner to an identity of digital native that “imposes a particular identity upon the current generation of learners” (Buchanan, 2011, p. 72). In fact, the idea that all of our students are cyberkids or digital natives (Prensky, 2001) does not resonate with our own experiences of the classroom where there is heterogeneity in use, digital literacy, access and desire to use technology. Indeed, in our experiences, whilst many students have access to digital technologies, they might not necessarily be using this—nor want to use this—for ‘educational’ purposes.

There are, invariably, tensions between our pedagogic imperatives and the potential for students finding themselves out of their comfort zone; moving beyond familiar narratives and discourses and the multiple subjectivities that they have invested in. Our approaches ask of our students to pay close attention to those investments, partly to reflect on the relationship between physically active body and its wider social, historical, political context and also so that inconvenient truths are exposed and potentially reconfigured. It involves a process of moving between and decentring discourses of self and other, privilege and margins. In this sense, we find solace in Burdick and Sandlin's (2009, p. 187)—drawing on Wanda Pillow's (2003)—notions of “reflexivities of discomfort” – and *methodology of discomfort* that “pushes toward an unfamiliar, towards the uncomfortable” (Pillow, 2003: 192). Burdick and Sandlin (2009, p. 120) argue that by inhabiting these uncomfortable spaces through public pedagogy one may transgress dominant narratives and “practice a form of inquiry as circumscription, drawing the uncertain contours of what we *do not* know without filling in those spaces with the litany of things we *do*”. These pedagogic processes can feel uncomfortable for students, whether through digital connections, public exhibitions, the production of film or by simply asking questions, crossing borders, making connections and imagining new possibilities. It should however entail reflection on both their own experiences and their investment in epistemic lineage.

We aim to encourage such reflection through acknowledging the primacy of culture (again, increasingly ‘technologised’ culture) as an educational site “where identities are being continually transformed, power is enacted, and learning assumes a political dynamic as it becomes not only the condition for the acquisition of agency but also the sphere for imagining oppositional social change” (Giroux, 2004, p. 60). Specifically, within our curricula, we aim to provide a space for stripping back our understandings of how physical cultures and societies develop and operate, back to the level of ‘raw’ human experience; increasingly the domain of sociologists within the prestige hierarchies of both our discipline and indeed the corporatized University. Explorations that draw on phenomenological (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2011; Merchant, 2011), Deleuzian (affectual) (Pavlidis & Fullagar, 2012), more-than-human (interrelational/cyborgian), non-representational (Thorpe & Rinehart, 2010), Bourdieuan

(Spencer, 2009) based literature are often pioneering in scope, yet are either limited or under-explored in practice. It is commonly remarked upon that our methodological tools for social inquiry have failed to keep up with the plethora of ways in which we conceptualize the world and classify our perceptions of it (Latham, 2003; Lorimer, 2005). Indeed, as Gordon (1997, p.21) has argued, “our methods have thus far been less than satisfactory for addressing the very nature of the things and problems it is our responsibility to address”. However, there are signs that reactionary progress to such comments is being made, and as we continually innovate and grapple with new technologies (technoslowness) and means of collecting and representing research data, it follows that we should, *and we do*, expose our students to the politics of research praxis, development and representation in and of itself.

As we ask our students to be creative across our curricula, to challenge conventional ‘ways of doing research’ (and ‘research’ is an integral part of our undergraduate curricula) and to delve deeper into theoretical literature than ever before, we offer tools, technologies and specialist support to follow their lines of inquiry through. In line with this, a significant dimension to our approach (and indeed our assessment) encourages students to make use of a suite of video cameras appropriate for both the documentation and analysis of sporting contexts and bodies through first person, underwater, extreme and more conventional filmic techniques. With generic and tailored support, we aim to give students the opportunity to think more progressively than the “established academic habit of striving to uncover meanings and values” that supposedly await our/their discovery (Lorimer, 2005, p. 84). With specific reference to videography and videographic techniques this is done through two main pathways. Firstly, students are exposed to the scope and benefits of integrating filmic practices into their undergraduate dissertation methodologies, for example through video diaries, visual (auto)ethnographies, recorded participant observation exercises or participant/researcher based video elicitation. Secondly, the use of cameras has been embedded into our curricula as we ask students to make a critically reflexive film ‘short’ on any topic that they have studied during their time at university.

Engaging with videographic practices for both undergraduate research and representation purposes fosters a deeper understanding of the micro-scale elements of experience that generate worldly understandings, but in two distinctly different ways. On the one hand, in terms of studying video footage as ‘data’, this becomes evident through time consuming (slow) and repetitive analysis of shot after shot, of movement, of atmosphere, of interrelation interaction, of body language, facial expression, use of space, dripping sweat, trembling limbs and heaving lungs. These elements of experience are ripe for analysis and interpretation in themselves (Thrift, 1996). However, when considered alongside questions such as ‘why is this happening?’, ‘what does this lead to?’, ‘how can we change this?’, ‘what does this feel like?’, we see a layering in of emotional, affective and social responses/linkages that take seriously the role of embodiment, performativity and interrelationality in the development of physical cultures.

On the other hand, teaching students video and cinematographic techniques and asking them to produce a film ‘short’ exposes them to the range of codifying and representational norms that entrench popular cultural visual media outputs (both fictional and non-fictional). What, when and how, do the students choose to shoot film? What do they edit out and whose voices do they chose to privilege? Do they adhere to or resist the representational and stylistic norms of the film genre they select (or do they eschew any attempt to work within a filmic tradition)? These are all questions that we ask our students to negotiate and reflect upon as they choose to reject or reinforce normalized power relations and situated knowledges. Whilst the former use of video enables students to discover and *construct* knowledge from visual imagery, the latter encourages them to identify and *deconstruct* established systems of meaning (ironically sometimes they then go on to adopt these often less than neutral systems of representation themselves, in a bid to demonstrate their understanding of them). What is common here though, is the role of video in highlighting many aspects of sport, physicality and embodiment more generally that often (although increasingly less so) go unnoticed (or are marginalised in narrow bio-scientific agendas) by both academics and students: the sensory, the invisible rendered visible, the frictions and tensions, the pre-reflective and pre-objective, the fleeting and immanent, and the oftentimes absent rendered present by its very absence.

Despite the fact that such micro-scale and laborious discoveries seem to have more in common with the measurement and analysis of scientific (and quantitative) bodily processes and movements (episodes, events, actions can be counted/measured, data can be captured through the 'objective' lens of the camera and subsequently shared or analysed through ['objective'] software and data analysis packages), their lack of replicability and their highly situated (in time and space) nature, leads many to remain wary of taking them seriously. Instead, rigor and trust are still predominantly aligned with more traditional methodological and pedagogical techniques. This has not been helped by the fact that experimental methodologies and the theoretical stances that have inspired and fostered their development have rarely led to *impact* heavy results (generally and begrudgingly being forced to adhere to a 'knowledge creation, for the sake of knowledge creation' mantra). However, as we increasingly reward students for the justification and ownership of their ideas/opinions, rather than their ideas/opinions per se, then the activities and methods for learning/constructing knowledge we share with them need to facilitate a journey through which they can generate opinion, challenge traditions and derive their own perspectives. Slowing down pedagogy and methodology (and incorporating technology) in order to pay attention to these elements of 'sport' (and spaces of sport) give academics and students a greater foundation for thinking about the birth and performance of perceptions, attitudes, reactions and stigmas both generically and specifically. It also fosters a community of students who appreciate the development of reflexive and highly subjective knowledge creation, with video and video analysis well positioned to assist in such a turn.

## **Coda**

We need to reiterate that we do not hold up our corporeal and technoslow approaches to the curriculum / pedagogy as the only way *to be* in academe (a potentially dangerous proposition lest we be accused of declaring a state of affairs that is not in the spirit of a democratic turn). Rather, following Sparkes (2013), ours is an effort to initiate dialogue that responds to the perils of our field in a climate of neoliberal audit culture and public management. Our work has been, and continues to be motivated by a commitment to a progressive and

democratic social science of sport, leisure and physical cultures; one underscored by an unequivocal commitment to progressive social change (Evans, 2012; Miller, 2001). The development of curricula, incorporation of qualitative methodologies—as a transgressive paradigm that can encourage transformation and the political potentialities of the physical, and our somewhat ironic technoslow approach—has involved having very difficult conversations among ourselves, with senior administrators and with other academics related to the production of work *for* policy, about where we should focus our efforts (and what that may mean for our ‘careers’), and, our ability to *speak truth to power*. Our approach has *necessitated* working with our colleagues in more established sport and exercise science disciplines (rather than cowering in the comfort of our silos), to ensure that we provide students with a variety of ways of be(long)ing. Our curricula aim to provide the student with choice and flexibility and allow them to garner insights and input from as many different theoretical perspectives as possible, all the while allowing for a developing focus that will position the student as a critical and ‘better’ graduate/employee/citizen. We can, for sure, do far better than we have done as we grapple with these tensions; at this juncture, there exist ‘metrics’ of success (such as in employability and student ‘rankings’ of satisfaction) but this curriculum warrants more malleable metrics reflective of the ‘type’ of learning we hope to foster—clearly there is still work to be done: How do we / should we ‘measure’ the citizens we hope we are producing? Would this not be the metric of all metrics, ‘evidence’ of transgressive pedagogic practice?

While playful, we may not want to / be able to answer this question. For now then, our goal, following Rose (2013, p. 24) is for us to do our best within the current context to enable a pedagogic space that can “accept that the social and human sciences are also sciences of the living, of living bodies, of living matter, of matter that has been made to live;” a recognition that we hope can aid our discipline to help remake our human world for the better. As practitioners, this has involved us having to delve deeply into our souls, our consciousness as researchers and pedagogues, debating whether we should follow the next pot of money, or if we should attempt to remain true to the ontological and epistemological core of the approach we have sketched above (which then opens us to even more soul searching with regard to who we think we are in

*setting* an agenda and delineating which projects are in any sense worthy, and to whom!). It has been a time dominated by us, as self-reflexive academics, engaging in a form of embodied academic performativity that, at one and the same time, is grounded within the context of our institutions and of higher education, yet which enables us to hold on to the principles of democratic knowledge production. It has been, and continues to be, a space in which we need to *negotiate* principles *and* pragmatism, an institutionalised market ethos *and* our anti-/post-capitalist sensibilities. A space of anomie *and* compromise, politics *and* Politics, tolerance *and* alienation, conformity *and* creativity, deference *and* the strategic decentring of academic prestige hierarchies. None of these conversations, moralising or self-reflexive ruminations have been easy (or continue to be); all take place within the confines of a neoliberal higher education episteme in which evidence matters and metrics, technocratic performance indicators, accountability and league table positioning dominate academic performance / performativity. Yet, within that climate, and in part because of this climate, we continue to try and create both the space, and the resource, to develop our curricula. This has enabled us to begin to demonstrate the importance, relevance, position and *impact* of an interdisciplinary approach to the academic/social study of sport. Within that context, we have found a small space in which to *mobilize the body* and begin what we hope is a just, moral, democratic and pedagogic project that encourages the production of critical, reflexive, creative and innovative sporting knowledges / students.

### **Future Directions**

As we further refine our practices, reflect on our positions/positionalities, our academic performativities, and the knowledges / subjects we are contributing towards producing, we seem to be poised between potentially inherent contradictions that at one and the same time provide loose points of attachment to slow pedagogic practices and to the fastness of a highly mediated, digitized and commodified (sporting/physical) conjuncture. Our future directions appear influenced by the work of scholars such as Lisa Blackman (2012, p. 45) who hold together the body, affect and mediation—our future practices will likely need to challenge "separations

between nature and culture, the mind and the body, the corporeal and the textual, and the higher and the lower, which are naturalized within the concept of social influence." That is, with Blackman (2012), and as we attempt to further develop an embodied, corporeal curriculum predicated in/on relational ontologies, we might need to make a turn toward the affective, the feeling body and the "self that is" and the "self to be". In so doing, and to advance understandings that are currently emerging across our teaching—around governance, neoliberalism, Foucauldian analysis, technicity, consumer culture—we need to hold together in our pedagogic practices these contradictory temporalities with the embodied affectivity of these 'circuits of consumer culture.' That is, again, with Blackman (2012), we need to further unpack understandings of the articulations between the 'self that is' and the 'self to be' in order to better address the ways in which the (physical/sporting) self is marked and its future possibilities. For us, for our future practices, this is perhaps where the future lies; underpinned by such theorizing we can look to further develop pedagogies through which students not only read the assemblage of power (re)presented and articulated across media and consumer culture, but also develop cartographies of affective regimes related to moments of affect, perceptions, sensations, impulses that emerge in a highly digitized and mediated conjuncture. Perhaps ironically, this is where we might need to further embrace what we termed earlier as a technoslow approach. For, within the neoliberal / corporatized university context we are increasingly expected to be innovative teachers who increasingly 'service' an educational 'market'. Yet, our pedagogic practices are highly governed by timetabling, class sizes, teaching spaces and rather static digital platforms (moodle/blackboard/webCT) that have not kept pace with broader digital cultures and technologies that many students are used to (social media forms). We thus often have to work around the existing systems to identify compelling ways to engage students. One such practice that has garnered recent attention is the 'flipped classroom'—a new pedagogical method that employs asynchronous video lectures and practice problems as 'homework', and active, group-based problem solving activities in the classroom (see Bishop & Verleger, 2013). It is a learning culture that can involve immersive experiences (reading/writing/reflecting/sharing ideas and insights), challenge (stretching thinking, embodying risk to voice ideas, listening to different



perspectives), and different modes of learning across different time-space configurations (face to face, digitally mediated, embodied fieldwork - sensing, writing/speaking). For us, this sits at the heart of technoslowness, and potentially offers an important space for questioning normalized modes of teaching and student passivity and an embodied affective, creative and critical teaching practice that delivers more of the 'goose bump' moments (Probyn, 2004) that 'move' students and thus ourselves to know in different ways. These new influential directions could thereby push us to understand the teaching-learning (and indeed the assessment of understanding) relation as embodied, the renegotiation of teaching subject positions that exist beyond the hierarchical form of the lecture and assessment beyond the linearity of question setting and answering (within the dynamics of the consumer oriented education market), and the tensions inherent within how we understand the inter-subjective experience of becoming different students-teachers. Whether flipped practices and creative, student led, forms of assessment are emblematic of what we are alluding to as a technoslow pedagogic approach, will aid students engage with democratic, civic and progressive ideas and issues in a reflexive manner beyond the production of descriptive and atheoretical 'selfie narratives' is yet to be determined; a challenge that we aim to pursue through our own pedagogic practices, subjectivities and future reflections.

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<sup>i</sup> There are various monikers applied to the loose conglomeration of disciplines that make up the field of the ‘sports sciences’. In the UK it is more common to use the term Sports Studies or somewhat more tellingly, Sport & Exercise Sciences, while in Australia, Human Movement Studies is the preferred terminology, in the US Kinesiology has been instantiated as the name for this discipline. While there are variations in aim and scope—the field is realized in different places and locations as a multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and very rarely, transdisciplinary project—it is an academic discipline, with varying intensities and emphases, that draws from biology, psychology, sociology, philosophy and includes multiple sub-disciplinary areas (e.g., biomechanics, sport history, exercise physiology, sport pedagogy) (see Gill, 2007). However, this is a far from integrated field. Indeed, in its current iteration, it is a field fraught with hyperfragmentation and hyperspecialization in which there is instantiated an epistemological hierarchy that privileges positivist over postpositivist, quantitative over qualitative, and predictive over interpretive ways of knowing (see Andrews, 2008).

<sup>ii</sup> We do not suggest discarding such advances, yet we do oppose parochialism and domination and the ways in which the conventions of this particular approach become accepted as *the* natural way of producing knowledge and viewing a particular aspect of the world. As such, our intent is to raise questions and provide an opportunity for thoughtful reflexivity on our research and teaching practices.

<sup>iii</sup> This list is, of course, necessarily abbreviated.

<sup>iv</sup> The Connected Learning Lab was established in 2012 by Dr Emma Rich. The CLL aims to develop innovations in curriculum design, content and delivery through digital technologies and comprises a suite of digital equipment (e.g. digital cameras, IPADs, mobile phones, mobile health technologies) to realize this. CLL aims to open up new spaces for teaching, learning and creativity, ranging from the production of short films by students through to the use of social media in the classroom.