

# ULRR

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## Editorial

The papers that are presented in this special issue are those that emerged from Keynote presentations delivered at the International Association for Physical Education in Higher Education / Association Internationale des Ecoles Superieures d'Education Physique (AIESEP) 2011 International Conference at the University of Limerick, Ireland on 22-25 June, 2011. The conference attracted over 340 international delegates from over 35 countries and five continents. The related AIESEP Book of Proceedings is a result of an open call for submitted papers related to the work delegates presented at the conference and can be accessed on the Physical Education Physical Activity and Youth Sport (PEPAYs) Research Centre web page at [www.ul.ie/pepays](http://www.ul.ie/pepays). The journal *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy* will publish a special edition of peer-reviewed papers from the conference in 2012.

The main theme of the conference *Moving People, People Moving* focused on sharing contemporary theory and discussing cutting edge research, national and international policies and best practices around motivating people to engage in school physical education and in healthy lifestyles beyond school and into adulthood and understanding how to sustain engagement over time. Five sub-themes contributed to the main theme and ran throughout the conference programme, (i) Educating Professionals who Promote Physical Education, Sport and Physical Activity, (ii) Impact of Physical Education, Sport & Physical Activity on the Individual and Society, (iii) Engaging Diverse Populations in Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport, (iv) Physical Activity & Health Policies: Implementation and Implications within and beyond School and (v) Technologies in support of Physical Education, Sport and Physical Activity. The keynote lectures presented in this special issue were attached to a sub-theme of the conference.

Dr. Scott Kretchmar presented his keynote 'Play Disabilities: A Reason for Physical Educators to Rethink the Boundaries of Special Education' under the sub-theme 'Engaging Diverse Populations in Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport'. Kretchmar's paper reflects on the consequences of a more holistic understanding of both handicaps and special education suggesting that such an approach reveals what he terms a 'play disability'. In doing so, Kretchmar reviews the nature of play before discussing the symptoms of 'play disability' and provoking us to consider the opportunities and obligations provided by physical education to address play deficit disorders. Kretchmar offers some thoughts on what a special education program for the play handicapped would look like.

Drs. Judy Oslin and Dr. Connie Collier provide a response, 'Rethinking the Boundaries', to Kretchmar's keynote, acknowledging that Kretchmar's work continues to encourage us to 'rethink' the relationship between our practice and the students we serve. Oslin and Collier open their response stating that they believe play is a necessary part of being, and valuing play is essential to becoming physically educated and living a fulfilling life. They share their concern

that limiting play diagnosis and prescribed interventions to young people in our physical education classes suggests that the disability rests with the individual, i.e., the portrayal that it is the individual who is at fault for their lack of skill or their failure to play. Oslin and Collier contend that an individual's inability or unwillingness to play is a function of a culture that trivializes play and its inherent value before considering the ways in which physical educators, school physical education and social forces in general have been complicit in promoting such a culture. A particularly interesting observation is the notion that perhaps the most play-challenged population are physical educators. They conclude by offering a number of propositions that support a multi-faceted intervention that emphasizes creating space for play and creating space to play.

Dr. Pope's keynote 'Society gets the individual it deserves: Engaging learners for the flat world' addressed the conference theme 'Impact of Physical Education, Sport, and Physical Activity on the Individual and Society'. Pope advocates for the centrality of meaningful student engagement if learning is to occur but cautions that teachers and coaches pay scant attention to student engagement at a philosophical level. Pope calls on educators to introduce new generations of learners to expanded and challenging forms of thinking and learning and to help students derive genuine meanings from sport. His creative use of video clips, as inserted in this article, reflects his innovative use of technology to engaging the reader around learning.

Dr. Tony Hall's keynote, 'Emplotment, embodiment, engagement: narrative technology in support of physical education, sport and physical activity' showcased the sub-theme 'Technologies in support of Physical Education, Sport and Physical Activity'. Hall contextualizes his paper in a framework he terms '*narrative technology*', which can be used in designing computing to support and enhance physical education, sport and physical activity. After outlining the theoretical basis of the approach, two information and communications technology examples of the use of different types of computing are presented and discussed. The first example demonstrates the potential of narrative and technology working together to enhance physical activity-interactivity, using what can be categorised as future and emerging technologies. The second example builds on the first, but to create a scalable, low-cost physical education and sport intervention utilising what can be defined as 'everyday' technologies, that is, computing that is widely and freely available. Hall conveys a passion to the reader that the concept of narrative technology can be used by physical education, sport and physical activity academics and professionals to design learning experiences that achieve higher levels of engagement from young people.

Professor Nanette Mutrie delivered a keynote address aligned with the theme 'Physical Activity and Health Policies: Implementation and Implications' within and beyond school with Dr Catherine Woods as a respondent. For this special issue Woods and Mutrie have co-authored an article titled 'Putting Physical Activity on the Policy Agenda'. They discuss why physical

activity policy is important in promoting population based increases in physical activity. They argue that traditional physical activity programmes have had limited success as they have focussed on the individual with limited long term adherence. They then advocate for a more ecological approach to health promotion including a policy based dimension that has the potential to influence the health and well being of an entire population. They use two examples of physical activity policy in Ireland and Scotland showing how physical educators can benefit from such policies or be hindered by the lack of such policies.

We would like to sincerely thank Diane Gill and her team for inviting us to be involved in collating this special issue with the belief that these AIESPE keynotes contribute to the mission of Quest addressing issues and concerns relevant and meaningful to kinesiology and physical education scholars in higher education.

Ann MacPhail & Mary O'Sullivan, Co-editors