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**The Challenges of Intersectionality: Researching difference in  
Physical Education**

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## Introduction

Theorising and researching the intersection of class, race, gender, sexuality and disability has been a central focus in feminist and critical work for well over two decades. Indeed, (Maynard, 2002, p.33) has recently argued that 'difference is one of the most significant, yet unresolved, issues for feminist and social thinking at the beginning of the twenty first century'. Given its complexities, it is not surprising that debates about how best to research and theorise 'difference' in social life have been equally complex. At issue is not just the development of 'better' theory, but the implications for 'better' practice that emerge from this different engagement. How differences are conceived; which differences get noted and why some and not other differences are viewed as significant or relevant, and by whom, are important questions for those wishing to make a difference in education (Penney, 2002). Debates in feminism and critical work in education around difference have a long history centred on these questions. As Archer (2004, p.459) has noted, the trajectory of feminism has seen a shift from a position of asserting the differences between women and men, to addressing the differences between women (and men), to the current 'state of play' where a central question remains: 'how 'we' might 'best' conceptualize, talk about, represent (and mobilize around) commonalities and differences between diverse women (and men)' [our emphasis]. Influenced strongly by the critiques of black and disabled feminists (e.g. Carby, 1982; Lloyd, 1992) and those working within postmodernism and poststructuralism (e.g. Walkerdine, 1987) the use of the category 'woman' or other universalistic terms such as 'black' or 'disability' are now recognised as inherently problematic. In addition, researchers reflect carefully on their use of particular terminology to describe groups, with the recognition that the act of 'naming' is itself an important source of power and a possible contributor to creating and maintaining difference and inequalities (e.g. Bonnett and Carrington, 2000; Francis, 2006). Critiques of categorical thinking have led to recognition of multiple and fluid nature of individuals' identities and the complex ways in which enduring inequalities are produced through social relations of difference.

However, although theory continues to shift and develop, new explanations raise new questions. A central problematic remains over the role of the material body. Although schooling is increasingly recognised as an embodied practice, a focus on the body has been somewhat absent in feminist and critical educational research on difference and inequality. Physical Education (PE), as the one subject area where embodiment is fundamental and central to success and 'attainment', has often been ignored or marginalized in broader debates about difference and education. Similarly, feminist and critical work has been marginalized within PE research that is dominated by the bio-behavioural rather than social sciences. By drawing on examples from PE, this paper seeks to address this marginalization, as well as illustrate how research on difference in

PE can learn from, but also contribute to, on going debates around difference, identity, embodiment and education.

### **The Challenges of Intersectionality**

Theorising the relationship between different axes of identity raises complex issues of theory, methodology and politics (see for example, the special Issue of European Journal of Women's Studies, 2006; Brah and Pheonix, 2004; Jordan-Zachery, 2007; McCall, 2005; Wilkinson, 2003; Thomson, 1997). Although its use is not straightforward, like Pheonix, we have found the term intersectionality a useful shorthand term to describe 'the complex political struggles and arguments that seek to make visible the multiple positioning that constitutes everyday life and the power relations that are central to it' (Pheonix, 2006, p.187). However, several authors have traced the trajectory of theoretical work on difference within feminism and highlight the differences within the debates, including the use of the concept 'intersectionality' (see Archer, 2004; Brah and Pheonix, 2004). Two key issues are which differences have been acknowledged and centralized, and how the intersections between these have been theorized. For example, Yuval Davies (2006) points out that one of the differences in approaches to intersectionality has been the focus on particular positions by some authors (what she calls the major divisions of race, gender and class) and the use of the term in more general terms as an analytical tool to study stratification more widely. Archer (2004), too, suggests that race and gender have been a central focus, and that debates over other dimensions of difference, such as age, class or sexuality, whilst evident, have continued 'mostly in parallel with one another'. Interestingly, whilst Archer does not mention disability specifically here, it appears that work that centralises disability has largely developed in this way too. Meekosha's (1998) highlights the marginality of disability in feminist debates around difference, and lack of attention to difference within disability studies:

Over the last decade, disabled women have criticised the failure of feminist theory in broad terms to include disability, while the masculine bias of the disability movement and the ungendered theorizing around disability has been highlighted (Meekosha, 1998, p.164)

So whilst the importance of addressing the relationships between different axes of oppression - particularly those of race, gender and class - emerged from black feminists challenging their invisibility in white feminists' work (e.g. Brah, 1996; hooks, 1982; Hill Collins, 1991; Mirza, 1997), and more recently within debates around postmodernism and post structuralism (e.g. Butler, 1990), so too, disabled feminists argue against their invisibility in both feminist and disability studies. By ignoring their experiences, black and disabled women argue that feminist knowledge is necessarily limited and distorted in much the same way as

feminists had earlier critiqued the nature of 'malestream' knowledge for ignoring the experiences of women (Lloyd; 1992). Significantly, Meekosha (1998) notes,

Nowhere is the problem more acute than in feminist discourse on the body, their claim to universality corrupted by their unselfconscious exclusion of disability from their world views (Meekosha, 1998, p.164).

Both groups argue that it is only through centring the experiences of black and disabled women that the impact of racism and ableism can be highlighted, and the limitations of existing theory exposed.

A second key issue has revolved around how to conceptualise the inter-relationships between different axes of oppression. 'Additive' accounts, where, different axes of oppression, such as race or class are 'added' to those of gender, so that black women, for example, are seen as experiencing the 'triple' oppression of being a woman, black, and working class, are strongly rejected (e.g. Hill Collins, 1991). As Brah (1996, p.109) has noted,

structures of class, racism, gender and sexuality are experienced simultaneously, and cannot be reduced to independent variables.... The oppression of each is inscribed within the other – is constituted by and is constitutive of each other.

The struggle to adequately theorise such multiplicity has resulted in the use of terms such as 'cross cutting' or 'intersecting' and 'intersectionality', but the use of these terms, too, have been questioned (e.g. Francis, 2001; Archer et al, 2001). Archer (et al) (2001) for example, are critical of the terms 'cross-cutting' or 'intersecting', since they continue to suggest fixed, observable realities and homogenised social categories that are added together in some way, which can, at some later stage, still be separated. Similarly such conceptions raise questions about whether all categories are equally important at all times. Several authors (e.g. Brah, 1994; 1996, Yuval Davies, 2006) have suggested that part of the problem lies with confusion over the level of analysis of difference, rather than just a debate on the relationships between the divisions themselves. Brah (1996) argues, for example, for an acknowledgement of difference as experience; social relation; subjectivity and identity, and questions what she sees as the tendency to theorize the macro and micro levels as separate, almost independent, levels. Instead, in research on South Asian women's position in the labour market, she presents a useful framework that foregrounds the interconnectedness of the macro and the micro. She argues that

analysis of women's narratives must be framed against wider economic, political and cultural processes in non-reductive ways. In the framework I propose structure, culture and agency are conceptualized as inextricably linked, mutually inscribing formations (Brah, 1994, p.152).

Using this framework she shows how interviews with women can provide instances of how individuals' biographies intersect with the changing, socio-economic and political conditions in contemporary Britain. Drawing on Brah's framework in their work on South Asian women and leisure, Scraton and Watson (1998, p.8) conclude that in analysing difference, 'we need to address the construction of power relations, how they are manifest in practice and how individuals respond to and negotiate these relations'. They argue that centralising and exploring the differentiated and heterogeneous lived experiences of women highlights the complex and shifting, rather than stable and given, nature of identities. This 'middle way' theorising (Archer, et al, 2001), between modernism and postmodernism, conceives identities as 'situated accomplishments' (Valentine, 2007) in relation to material and discursive structures of inequalities.

### **Difference and Physical Education**

Although more established within debates around sport (e.g. Hargreaves, 2007; Scraton, Caudwell and Holland, 2005; Sparkes and Smith, 2007; Watson and Scraton, 2001) there has been much less attention to debates around intersectionality and difference within PE (Arrazito and Solomon, 2005). Instead, Penney (2002a) notes, feminist and critical work in PE has tended to focus on difference through what she calls 'single issue' research, where the focus has been on either gender, or race or disability, for example, rather than addressing the complexity of their interrelationships. In this way, PE could be characterised as being 'one step behind' the wider feminist and critical debates that have addressed the complexity of differences, individuals' *multiple* identities and engaged in the specific discussions about intersectionality (e.g. Archer, et al, 2001; Mac An Ghail, 1994). Whilst comprehensive reviews of the nature and findings of research on different differences in PE exist elsewhere (eg. Evans and Davies, 2006; Flintoff and Scraton, 2006; Fitzgerald, 2006), here we overview how difference has been conceptualized and researched within PE. We have used the terms 'categorical', 'relational' or 'post modern/post structural' to describe research that has drawn on broad theoretical trajectories, whilst recognising the limitations of categorizing individual authors' work in this way.

Although other perspectives on difference in PE are evident, a 'categorical' or 'distributive' perspective remains common. In categorical research, differences between groups, such as boys and girls, are emphasized, with distributive research seeking to identify inequalities through statistical reviews of opportunity, access and distribution of resources. More often using quantitative survey methodologies, individuals are grouped as different by drawing on one (or sometimes more) aspect, such as age, or sex, which are then treated as 'variables' in the research methodology. In doing so, patterns of differences *between* the groups can be highlighted, but only at the expense of suppressing those *within* groups. So, for example, surveys of PE and school sport

participation consistently show girls' lower participation rates compared to boys and disabled compared to non-disabled youngsters (Sports England, 2001; 2003). This research mirrors that addressing differential levels of achievement and performance in schooling more broadly (e.g. Arnot, David and Weiner, 1996; Gillborn and Gipps, 1996) with some of the more recent studies developing more sophisticated analyses that attempt to account for the relationships between categories (e.g. Gilborn and Mirza, 2000).

Whilst weak on explanation, distributive analyses are useful for describing and highlighting patterns of inequality, and point to the need for action. They also remain significant not least because these kinds of analyses are the ones most often used by politicians and policy making. However, since distributive accounts are not explanatory, they open up the possibility of specific groups of young people becoming 'labeled' as under-achievers, or as 'problems' for their low participation, as measured as deficit against a so-called 'norm' or 'target' (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000 ). So, for example, South Asian or girls' under-representation in participation figures in PE and sport have been explained as a result of their problem culture or religion or as the result of low self esteem, or motivation (e.g. Carroll and Hollinshead, 1993).

Reflecting developments in broader educational research, a key development in theorizing in PE has been to establish difference as fundamentally about hierarchy and value – about relations between different groups, rather than simple characteristics held by different groups. As Evans and Davies (2006, p.798) suggests in their discussion on class,

The label social class....implies not just a categorization or classification of some people with reference to some "quality"...but an invidious, hierarchical ranking of people which is inherently value laden....

Similarly, in early debates about gender, and girls' and boys' differing experiences of PE, it was important not only to establish the social constructive nature of gendered behaviours, but also that it was those attributes and activities associated with masculinity that were most highly valued (Scruton, 1992). Teachers' discussions about coeducational PE, for example, rarely focused on the lack of boys' opportunities for traditionally 'girls' activities, such as dance, in quite the same way as they did for improving the opportunities for girls. More usually drawing on qualitative methodologies, such analyses centralize specific groups' lived experiences as the starting point from which macro structures and processes can be referenced and foregrounded.

However, gender has been the dominant 'lens' of relational accounts of difference in PE (see Flintoff and Scruton, 2006; Penney, 2002), with many studies taking such a 'single issue' focus, and paying insufficient account of the ways in which other identity markers intersect with those of gender. Most of the work on gender and PE has remained centrally concerned with white girls and



women, (Flintoff and Scraton, 2001; Rich, 2001; Hills, 2006; Cockburn and Clarke, 2002). Benn's work (1996; 2000; Benn and Dagkas, 2006) made a key early contribution to broadening this focus, and by highlighting the struggles of Muslim women to access PE as part of their primary initial teacher education course, showed the complex interplay of gender, race and religion. Others have developed this work by going on to explore Muslim girls' and young women's experiences of Western models of PE (Kay, 2006; Knez, 2007). However, there remains a dearth of research exploring black or other minority girls' experiences, leaving the few studies centering race very much on the periphery, and the enduring effects of racism largely unexplored within mainstream theorizing in PE (but see Oliver and Lalik, 2004).

In addition to race, disability too, has been absent as a key 'lens' of difference in PE. Much of the research on disability remains categorical and underpinned by medical model understandings of disability. From a relational perspective, few PE researchers have concerned themselves with issues centering on disability. However, Goodwin and Watkinson (2000) explore disabled young people's experiences of PE, and similarly, Fitzgerald's (2005) work has sought to centralize their perceptions and understandings in her attempt to show how disability is socially constructed through PE.

Alongside these gaps, we should also note that relational accounts in PE have rarely 'studied up' in the power structures as, for example, in Ball's (2003) work on middle class positionings within schools. So, for example, the concerns with boys' so called 'underachievement' in schooling generally (e.g. Epstein, et al, 1998; Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2003; Skelton, 2001) have not resulted in any similar, sustained, attention to boys' experiences of PE (although there appears to have been more attention to this in Australia, than in the UK, see Hickey and Fitzclarence, 1999; Gard and Mayenn, 2000).

In highlighting discourse, culture and identity, post structuralist explanations of difference have sought to rebalance the tendency to overplay the impact of structural inequalities within relational analyses. However, these explanations have been slower to develop in PE than is evident in educational research more broadly. Wright's comprehensive overview of 'post' theorising in PE – drawing from postmodernism, poststructuralism and post colonialism - shows the limited uptake of these perspectives to date. As with relational analyses, here too, gender has been a central focus of studies adopting this perspective in PE (e.g. Azzarito, et al, 2006; Garrett, 2004; Hills, 2006; Webb and Macdonald, 2007a;b; Wright, 1996). However, not all agree that such analyses are helpful, warning that an over-emphasis on difference and diversity should not be at the expense of ignoring enduring, material inequalities that remain evident (Francis, 1999).

## Ongoing challenges of Intersectionality

### *Bodies and embodiment*

Francis (2006; in press) has recently highlighted some of the ongoing questions for feminism surrounding the role of the material body in gender relations. She traces the different ways in which feminism has considered the material body. Early feminist theory argued convincingly for the introduction of the concept of gender, separate from sex, to describe the ways in which differences between men and women were socially constructed, rather than biologically given. The terms 'femininities' and 'masculinities' are now commonplace to stress their social construction, and to acknowledge the differences within, as well as between, sex groups. However, Francis argues (in press, no pages) that these too are problematic; if 'femininity and masculinity' are socially constructed, or performances, there is arguably a risk of

replacing the problem of essentialising bodies via categorization as male/female) with the problem of essentialising expressions (via categorization of particular aspects of performance as masculine or feminine).

Two problems arise for her: one is the impact of the (sexed) body in informing the way in which gender is constructed mutually by self and others, and the other, the problem of deciding on what constitutes masculine and feminine.

These issues are particularly significant for PE. Studies of young people's experiences clearly show the importance of their embodiment to their identities and positioning in PE and schooling (e.g. Evans, Rich and Holroyd, 2004; Gorely, et al, 2003; Scruton, 1989; 1992; Wright's, et al, 2003). Different bodies do matter in PE; how they move and how they 'look' is central to whether individuals feel comfortable, and are judged as having 'ability', and hence status, in the subject (Evans, 2004). The close relationship between masculinity and sport (and associated dominance of sport within contemporary practice, Evans and Penney, 1999) has contributed to the gendered body in PE receiving significant attention (see above). However, as highlighted earlier, less attention has been given to the ways in which gendered bodies are also racialised and classed bodies, or disabled or non disabled. Here, we draw on two examples of qualitative research focusing on young people's lived experiences for their insights into the embodied self and suggest that such research can contribute to ongoing debates around intersectionality, and the issues raised by Francis. These studies move beyond the 'single issue' focus of PE research critiqued earlier, whilst still drawing 'boundaries' around and centralising particular identity positions – in this case, race and disability. The lack of attention to racialised bodies within a PE setting is reflected in our choice of the first study by Oliver and Lalik (2004). Although part of a broader study within PE, this particular aspect focuses on a school practice outside of the subject area – the annual,

fund raising 'Beauty Contest'. Indeed, we found it hard to identify many other studies within PE that have centralised the racialisation of bodies.

Oliver and Lalik's (2004) study illustrates the differential valuing of racialised bodies in a taken-for-granted, annual school practice of a 'Beauty Walk' (contest) for girls. The Beauty Walk was an annual school fund-raiser where adolescent girls appeared on stage before an audience of parents, teachers and peers to be 'judged' on physical beauty. As part of a larger, critical pedagogy project on the female body, the authors help four girls to explore the 'hidden curriculum' of this popular school practice. The project successfully helped the girls to identify the ways in which conceptions of beauty rewarded through the Beauty Walk were highly racialised – white girls were consistently chosen as winners, although were in the minority in the school population and competition entries. Although the project revealed incidences of resistance and challenge by some of the girls to the racialised practice, most girls in the school, nevertheless, supported the Beauty Walk. The study shows how the practice was complicit in the reproduction of heterosexualised, engendered bodies, but also how this is closely tied to discourses of white heterosexual femininity attractiveness (see also Scraton, 2001).

In the same way that the role of the sexed body is 'problematic' within feminism, Fitzgerald (2005) suggests that debates within disability studies are similarly tasked by the 'problem' of the body. She argues that there is somewhat of an 'impasse' between the medical and social model of disability. A social model of disability seeks to move the debate away from a focus on impairment, adaptation and deficiency that characterises the medical model of disability, to a focus on the social construction of disability through practices and discourses in society. However, as Marks (1999) notes, both models might be best seen as different sides of the same coin, and both, by themselves, offer restricted understandings of individuals' experiences of disability. She shows the significance of embodied experiences, by attending to disabled pupils' everyday, lived experiences of PE (in this case, boys). For boys in particular, valued bodies in PE are those that are muscular, large and have ability in high status, major team games, such as rugby where an aggressive, competitive physicality is necessary for success. As Connell (2008) notes, PE is one particular context of schooling that is 'gender-saturated', where gender is strongly marked, such is the close link between hegemonic masculinity and embodiment. Although actively engaged in disability sports such as Boccia, the boys in Fitzgerald's (2005) study are all too aware of the differential valuing of the physicality needed for these sports compared to 'mainstream' games such as rugby and football.

By attending to the lived experiences within particular contexts such as PE, both of these studies demonstrate the centrality of the material body to the young people's sense of self and their identities, and the link between physical and social capital. Agreeing with Valentine (2007) who calls for further analysis of how identities are accomplished within specific spatial contexts, we argue that

PE is an important space for continued research. These studies would show how different individuals see themselves across different spaces (e.g. in the PE class compared to other subject areas; physical activity contexts in and out of school and so on), and contribute to ongoing debates around embodiment, identity and power. For example, Wright's, et al (2003) longitudinal work exploring the place and meaning of physical activity in different young people's lives is attempting to grapple with some of these theoretical challenges.

### ***Politics and practice***

It is clear that research on difference in PE needs to move beyond the limitations of a single issue focus. However, whilst centralizing difference within groups, we must not lose the link with inequality. Alongside the theoretical challenges comes equally complex questions about how increasingly sophisticated analyses of difference can help to bring about change. As Weiner (1994) has noted, one of the attractions of the early 'implementary' or 'girl-friendly' theories of liberal feminism was their link to clear action strategies. More 'fundamental', anti-sexist, theories, which centralize the complex power relations of patriarchy, capitalism and racism - by their very nature - are more challenging to identify frameworks for action. By highlighting the differences within groups the basis for mobilizing around shared characteristics of a group becomes more problematic. Several authors have warned of the dangers of highlighting difference at the expense of inequalities (Walby, 2000; Corker and Shakesphere, 2002). Whilst acknowledging the complexities involved, there will still be the need to draw what Archer et al (2001) describes as strategic, 'provisional boundaries' around particular groups, in order to engage in particular political projects. In this way, the commonalities of their experiences, as well as their differences, are not lost. But, as Penney (2002a) reminds us, power is also reflected in the process of setting research questions in the first place, and in *which* differences get noted and why. Choosing a provisional boundary should not random, but rather, Archer et al (2001) suggest, recognised as a power relation in itself. They conclude that researchers need to acknowledge the significance of drawing particular boundaries, and ensure that these are located firmly within the 'close contextual analyses' of the data, whilst at the same time being aware of the interconnectedness to macro relations and their own position in the production of theorisations. Walby (2000) suggests that one way forward might be to retain a focus on transformation – that is, not on what we are but what we want. Through dialogue and discussion that is focused on transforming practice, she argues, that it is possible to bridge some of these difficult theoretical, methodological and political struggles. We would argue that PE must draw 'provisional boundaries' around and centre the experiences of those experiencing political exclusion and discrimination, such as black and minority ethnic and disabled young people, and by so doing, address their marginalisation within academic theorising too.

### ***Empirical research***

These theoretical and political debates about difference raise important questions for our research practice. How do we reconcile the complex theoretical debates with the practicalities of doing research and its application? Maynard's (2002) study on women and ageing illustrate some of the practical concerns that arise from addressing difference in empirical research practice, not least - who should be involved and how are they to be accessed and selected? In choosing qualitative research as methods best suited to explore the meanings of old age, she accepts that the findings will not be generalisable, but nevertheless, acknowledges factors such as socio-economic, housing and marriage patterns and other factors such as working and domestic practices will be important to these experiences and significant in trying to obtain a balanced sample. But, as she stresses, it is one thing to recognise these, another to operational them – for example, is it possible to include all of these in a meaningful way? Are some more important than others? How are the boundaries of differences to be drawn? Inevitably, she argues, the final judgement will be pragmatic, with consequences for the overall project outcomes. For example, she highlights some of the practical dilemmas of having to use pre-determined categories at least initially in her research and the problems this raises when people's self-definition may not rely on these at all, a point highlighted earlier. Quantitative methods may compound these issues still further.

The methods we choose to use for researching difference will each have important implications for our practice. Above we highlighted the advantages of attending to the lived experiences of individuals as the starting point for researching difference, and this would tend towards the use of qualitative methods. There is a need to develop innovative methods of research practice, but also of 'writing research', capable of capturing the fluidity of individuals' identities across different contexts and spaces. Valentine (2007), for example, shows the advantages of collecting participants' in-depth narratives of their lives in order to illustrate the complexities of intersectionality as it is lived, and how identities are highly contingent and situated accomplishments. She does this by using a number of 'stories' to show the ways in which 'gender, sexuality, class, motherhood and the cultural/linguistic identity 'Deaf' become salient/disappear, are claimed/rejected, and are made relevant/irrelevant' in the different temporal and spatial moments' in one woman's (Jeanette) life (Valentine, 2007, p. 15). She uses the stories illustrate that the ways in which Jeanette experiences the intersection of categories such as gender, class, sexuality and disability in her life are not stable, and how at different times, and in different places, she has refused particular identity positions, or how particular identity positions have become more salient and stabilized. Her stories also describe the operation of relations of difference such as patriarchy, heteronormativity, oralism and their connections to the production of space.

Developing research practice, including data collection methods, the process of analysis and the construction and dissemination of 'findings' that can adequately address intersectionality is therefore far from simple or straightforward. Indeed, it

may be that in choosing to make visible the experiences of particular marginalised groups that we are pushed to thinking innovatively about how best to work with particular respondents to understand their experiences. For example, Fitzgerald (2007a) used drama with young people with learning disabilities in order to capture their experiences of PE. Similarly, in trying to ensure that the findings of their study on older women's experiences of physical activity were both accessible and conveyed the emotional and physical consequences of aging and the aging body, Douglas and Carless (2004; 2005) 'performed' and recorded their findings in poems and songs on a CD.

A further dimension of difference in the research process revolves around the impact of differences between the position of the researcher(s) and the researched on the conduct and outcome of the research. At issue are the power relations between the researcher and the researched. Whilst earlier critiques from within feminism and disability studies have advocated that we try and reduce the power held by the researcher (Maynard and Purvis, 1994; Oliver, 1997), the possibilities of achieving this in practice are now recognised as far more problematic and complex. What does this mean for researchers that are differently positioned to those with whom they work? For white women working with black women? For women interviewing men? For non-disabled aiming to understand the experiences of disabled young people? Elsewhere we have reflected upon these issues in detail in our own work (Flintoff, 1997; Scraton and Flintoff, 1992; Watson and Scraton, 2001; Fitzgerald, 2007b). We would agree with others who have argued for reflexivity on the part of the researcher, and for our research outcomes to be presented as contingent, and open to 'constructive criticism from those from material backgrounds different to ourselves' (Archer, 2004, p.169). Whilst space limits us here, we suggest that addressing these issues remains an ongoing challenge, and one which all researchers need to continue to take seriously.

### **Concluding comments**

In drawing from examples in PE research, we have identified some of the ongoing challenges for researching difference in feminist and critical work in education. Whilst highlighting some of the strengths and limitations of this work to date, we have also argued for an ongoing focus on the specific context of PE as part of schooling, for the insights its can offer to theorising and researching around embodiment, identity and power. Finally, in specifically drawing examples from PE, we have also sought to contribute in a small way to redressing its marginalisation within broader feminist and critical work.

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