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Educating bodies to be good citizens: the politics and practices of physical education in Australia and France

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**Educating bodies to be good citizens:
The politics and practices of physical
education in Australia and France**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

from

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

**Lyndal Groom, Bachelor of Arts (Hons)
Faculty of Education**

2006

CERTIFICATION

I, Lyndal R. Groom, declare that this thesis, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Lyndal R. Groom
18 September 2006

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Acronyms

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Commission
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACHPER	Australian Council for Health, Physical Education & Recreation
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ARC	Australian Research Council
AS	Association Sportive
BO	Bulletin Officiel
BoS	Board of Studies New South Wales
CAPEPS	Certificat d’Aptitude au Professorat d’Education Physique et Sportive
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DAA	Dietitians Association of Australia
ENA	Ecole Nationale d’Administration
EPS	Education Physique et Sportive (Physical and Sport Education)
HPE	Health and Physical Education
INPES	Institut national de prévention et d’éducation pour la santé
INSEE	Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques
IUFM	Institut universitaire de formation de maîtres (University institute for teacher training)
KLA	Key Learning Area
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NSW	New South Wales
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDHPE	Personal Development, Health & Physical Education
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
RSL	Returned Services League
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SNEP	Syndicat National de l’Education Physique et Sportive (National EPS Union)
SNES	Syndicat National de l’Enseignement Secondaire (National Secondary Teachers’ Union)
STAPS	Sciences et techniques des activités physiques et sportives
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
UFR	Unité de formation et de recherche (Research and training unit)
UNSS	Union Nationale de Sports Scolaires
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZEP	Zone d’éducation prioritaire

Abstract

This thesis is a cross-cultural comparative analysis of the physical education taught in secondary schools in France and Australia. My study begins with an analysis of embodied citizenship. Embodied citizenship comprises both explicit and implicit forms of *habitus* as structured through government institutions and regulations, for example, the legal requirements of citizenship as well as the informal social constructs of citizenship such as belonging. While the formal rules of citizenship have been amended over the centuries to provide greater equality (for example between men and women), tacit and unspoken rules and beliefs and the marketplace maintain forms of exclusionary behaviour for citizens. This includes state instituted practices such as public commemorations, national and local celebrations and award ceremonies, particularly those related to the remembrance war and the founding of nation-states.

The second half of this study takes this theoretical framework to examine the politics and practices of physical education in schools. Physical education is an example of a state-instituted practice designed to help develop 'good' citizens, obedient and efficient. In order to do this, a Foucauldian network of expertise and skills has emerged to 'regulate' the discipline of physical education and draws upon intercalated discourses of health, morality, sport, and physical activity. While the politics of physical education, in the shape of the school curriculum, espouse a doctrine of equality of citizens, the practices incorporate forms of differentiated embodied citizenship that continue to privilege and reward particular hegemonic characteristics.

The value of cross-cultural analysis emerges with the comparison of political positioning of the French and NSW syllabi. As the later stages of my research shows, policy is one thing and classroom practices are often another. The personal engagement of teachers with discourses of physical culture is a major influence for implementing syllabi.

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