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A Position Statement on Social Justice, Physical Education and Bullying: A Figurational Sociological Perspective

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Bullying is increasingly considered to be an important moral, political and social issue within modern society. Academic research on this issue has mostly been examined through a psychological lens, often using questionnaire data to examine and explain the prevalence of different types of bullying. In this position statement, we apply a figurational sociological perspective to examine issues of school-based bullying in physical education. We critically reflect on attempts to position bullying amongst young people as a 'social justice' issue and argue that core figurational principles might potentially help researchers strive towards a more reality-congruent means of conceptualizing the power-relationships that are inherent within bullying. We further maintain that the development of a more detached understanding of issues relating to bullying might provide a more adequate basis to contribute to future ongoing policy development.

Key Words Bullying, physical education, social justice, figurational sociology

Introduction

Data from recent large-scale surveys suggests that between 45-51% of young people experience bullying during their time in UK schools (DitchTheLabel, 2018; Stonewall, 2017). Recent reports also highlight the impact that bullying in schools can have on the mental and physical health of young people and emphasize its lasting effects into adulthood (Brauser, 2014; Smith, 2014). Following instances in which children have committed suicide following their experiences as victims of bullying, bereaved parents have also lobbied the government for the introduction of new anti-bullying legislation (Payne & Keenan, 2016). Such concerns appear to be reflected in the recent increase of anti-bullying campaigns in schools (Anti-Bullying Alliance, 2018). In response to concerns about bullying in the UK schools are mandated to have an anti-bullying policy (GOV.UK, 2018).

Whilst the prevalence of bullying amongst young people has been increasingly positioned by the government and others as an important moral and political issue (e.g.

Department for Education, 2017), there has also been increasing academic debate surrounding the definitional and conceptual issues of what constitutes bullying. Such debates are often based around the close affiliation of bullying to issues such as prejudice, harassment, discrimination and victimization (Volk, Veenstra, & Espelage, 2017). Bullying has also become increasingly difficult to differentiate from 'banter', a form of interaction that is often intended to be more jocular, but can include impolite and offensive language and tone (Nichols, 2018). Recent attempts to define the concept of bullying tend to focus on understanding that such behaviours: (a) involve some elements of goal-orientated aggression; (b) are negative, harmful or injurious to the victim; and (c) can be linked to power-imbalances between those parties involved (Volk, Dane & Marini, 2014).

With increasing debate surrounding issues of bullying, some academic researchers have sought to emphasize the 'moral imperative' for action to reduce instances of bullying in schools (Rigby, Smith, & Pepler, 2004, p.1). At times, such issues have also been aligned with a 'social justice' agenda (Polanin & Vera, 2013). Whilst social justice researchers have made important contributions to academic discussions in recent years, there is however also much debate surrounding the concept of social justice. The underpinning aims of much social justice research are to examine issues surrounding fairness, discrimination and social injustice within society. There is often an underlying ideological desire to change and improve the social world and strive for greater equality and distribution of opportunities, benefits and responsibilities for different people and groups through activism and praxis (Long, Fletcher, & Watson, 2017; Riches et al., 2017; Wetherly, Watson, & Long, 2017). For some social justice researchers, the world should be examined through a 'politics of hope' that 'criticizes the status quo and imagines how things *could* be different' (Trussell, 2014, p.350, cited in Riches et al., 2017, p.218; emphasis added by Riches et al.). The concept of social justice can be heavily value-laden in striving to improve the situation for disadvantaged groups within

society. In the field of education, social justice agendas can broadly be seen as a call for critical theorists and educators to engage and respond to the detrimental effects of globalization on issues of equity and diversity within increasingly neo-liberal educational practices (Azzarito et al., 2017).

The aim of this position statement is to offer a figurational sociological approach as a means of understanding issues relating to bullying in school-based Physical Education (PE). Malcolm and Mansfield (2013, pp.399-400) have summarized the key underpinning principles of figurational sociology as follows:

> (1) human societies can only be understood in terms of long-term processes of change; (2) human life is characterised by interdependent relations which are diverse and shifting and underpinned by ever-changing balances of power; (3) human societies are characterized by different degrees of, and a dynamic interplay between, internal and external social controls, with the increasing internalisation of the latter in relatively complex societies; (4) human acts involve processes in which intentional action contributes to unintended or unplanned patterns of relationships; (5) social life is characterised by balances and blends of emotional involvement in and detachment from the contexts in which human beings find themselves.

In this position statement, we provide a figurationally-informed synthesis of key themes relating to issues of bullying in PE and begin to offer a critical reflection on recent attempts to label bullying amongst young people as a social justice issue. The more ideologically-driven focus and occasional political involvements of some social justice researchers can, at times, guide such research from the outset, leading such researchers to examine problems, troubles and issues of the day from a more involved short-term perspective. Figurational sociologists argue that examining social processes from a long-term developmental

perspective can aid in the development of more detached forms of knowledge (Dunning, 1992).

PE, gender and bullying: A long-term perspective

Figurational sociologists argue that a developmental approach in the research process can facilitate a more adequate understanding of the long-term power-struggles that often underpin social inequalities and unequal power-chances for different people and groups within society (Elias, 1978). Elias (1978) argued, this can allow sociologists to consider how people's actions are enabled or constrained through their interdependence with others. Historically, PE has long been a gendered subject, particularly given that PE has (and often continues to be) viewed synonymously with sport. At the time of the emergence of modern sport during the 18th and 19th centuries, gender relations between men and women were vastly unequal in politics, education and public space. Sport was largely a male preserve, a social institution honoured, demarcated and both organizationally and ideologically dominated by males.

Various modern forms of sport/PE started to emerge and develop in the male public schools of the 18th and 19th centuries (Dunning & Sheard, 2005). Sport was an activity that was seen to enhance Victorian ideals of masculinity. The development of masculine ideals within public schools was linked, in part, to the widespread occurrence of bullying in early forms of PE, often linked to greater power-chances for older and/or stronger boys (Dunning & Sheard, 2005). The levels of physical violence that took place between pupils can appear somewhat severe and, at times, brutal when examined from a more modern-day perspective. However, these levels of violence were legitimized through the emerging prefect-fagging system, which was implemented to maintain power imbalances, control and hierarchies both between teachers and pupils and amongst the young males themselves (Dunning & Sheard, 2005). This experience was even considered by many teachers and parents at the time as an

important aspect of character development for instilling ‘manliness’ amongst male pupils (Dunning & Sheard, 2005).

In the late nineteenth century, the emergence of public schools for middle-class and upper-class girls involved physical activities that took place away from public view, behind closed doors (Hargreaves, 1994). Whilst contributing to the tendency to omit female participation from the history of early forms of modern sport, this provided an enabling female-only space where more male-dominated sports and activities – including sports like cricket – could be played (Velija, 2015). There was nonetheless still an expectation that girls/women who were playing sport within public schools would adhere to strict behavioural codes that emphasized notions of femininity, thus posing no direct challenge to the dominance of male sport (McCrone 1998).

In the intervening period, there have been important changes in gender relations during the course of the 20th century. In line with broader civilizing processes and ongoing long-term power-struggles, the diminishing focus on manual labour work and women’s growing access to social, political and educational spheres have contributed to gradual processes of functional democratization (equalizing trends) between the sexes (Liston, 2018). However, sport remains an area in which gendered power relations remain unequal; something that also still remains evident in the design and delivery of PE in schools. In the UK, young people are involved in physical activity through the formal PE curriculum as well as extracurricular opportunities. Despite this, girls tend to be less physically active both in and out of school settings (Green, 2010). The recent co-authored Youth Sport Trust and Women in Sport survey (2017) reports that 71% of boys compared with 56% of girls enjoy and are happy with the amount of physical activity in which they take part. This is despite the introduction of the 1992 National Curriculum in England and Wales for all children in state schools, which was intended to equalize the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils.

The national curriculum is compulsory for all pupils and was partially designed to be inclusive, yet to some extent, the gendered nature of the NCPE contributes to negative experiences for girls and does not inspire lifelong participation. A critical perspective from the outset expressed concern about: (1) the emphasis on games; (2) the optional nature of dance; and (3) the place of outdoor education (Penney, 2002). The continued dominance of games over other forms of physical activity has implications for gender equity for two reasons, namely, that the content of games in PE have been most persistently associated with sex differentiated provision and that the delivery of these activities has been most closely associated with gendered patterns (Penney, 2002). Today, PE continues to be a subject area in which dominant gender ideologies are socially constructed by teachers delivering the curriculum and by pupils, who often begin their experiences of PE with notions of gender and sport that, in many instances, are already fairly established (Williams & Bedward, 2002).

Another important development in schooling during the course of the 20th century, to the present day, has seen long-term changes and/or increasing concerns regarding instances of bullying. Such developments are indicative of long-term and complex interweaving civilizing processes, in which people's sensitivities to instances of violence (as well as other forms of behaviour that were considered to transgress expected social norms) have become increasingly heightened (Elias, 2000). With gradual trends towards more civilized forms of behaviour – in which greater levels of self-control were increasingly expected and required from people in many areas of social life – being labelled 'a bully' has, over time, increasingly tended to elicit feelings of shame and embarrassment. This is not to suggest that bullying in and of itself has decreased, but people's perceptions of (and attitudes towards) bullying has changed over time. The gradual growing levels of repugnance towards physical aggression offers one explanation for why there is now a greater variation in the types of bullying, which now tends to be more verbal or indirect through forms of social exclusion and gossiping.

Along with the emergence of cyber-bullying, these forms of bullying are also more pervasive, as they are harder to escape from, detect and regulate. Equally, a consequence of long-term civilizing processes is that, within schools, young people are increasingly expected to respect the feelings of others and exercise foresight into the consequences of their actions, or at least refrain from verbal or physical conflict. However, young people are involved in increasing complex networks of interdependencies which involve tension-balances and power-relations which are always in flux. Part of their individual civilizing process (becoming more rational) therefore involves learning to relate with others in a socially acceptable manner and internalise a growing number of behavioural polices, such as school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies.

Gender-based 'bullying' and 'space' in secondary PE

In the UK, young people often only experience PE classes for up to two hours per week, although this can be expanded if they engage in school sport and extra-curricular activities. Whilst minimal, this time has been considered pivotal in young people's understanding, development and expression of gender (Connell, 2008). Most primary schools in England include mixed-sex PE lessons, whilst PE in most secondary schools is single-sex with a same-sex teacher. Noret et al.'s (2015) four-year study of 15,023 young people at primary and secondary schools in England provided sex-variance data regarding the occurrence of bullying in single-sex PE environments. They found that an equal proportion of secondary school young males and young females reported being bullied because they are good at sport, a finding that somewhat contradicts the more common assumption that being good at sport offers males, in particular, kudos amongst their peers. However, they also found that more young males reported being bullied because they are not good at sport, a finding that aligns more with established notions relating to cultural ideas and stigma of gayness, effeminacy and physical weakness.

Often synonymous with competitive sport, secondary school PE often values and indeed celebrates traditional masculine ideals of strength, power, physicality and skill (Tischler & McCaughtry, 2011). Therefore, with few other spaces in school normalizing, accepting and, at times, rewarding masculinized cultures, some young males experience a gendered pleasurable excitement in male PE (Gerdin, 2017). However, young males' attempts and necessity to embody this value-system inevitably creates a hierarchy premised on 'those who can' and 'those who can't'. The visual nature of the power discrepancies derived from this process can present opportunities for some young males to ridicule and bully others (Tischler & McCaughtry, 2011). For some dominant young males, the pleasurable excitement that they experience in PE is informed by their dominance over certain 'weaker' peers.

Whilst the severity of physical aggression may have diminished in schools in line with long-term civilizing trends, the highly visible external body in PE means that feelings of embarrassment and humiliation in relation to young people's physical ability/competence has arguably increased. These feelings and power imbalances between young males are often highlighted and maintained through gendered peer-commentary e.g. 'you bunch of girls', 'you throw like a girl'. One increasingly popular means by which pupils engage in more indirect verbal forms of bullying is through the guise of 'banter'. Banter has become synonymous with 'lads' and is often associated with sport settings. Banter seems to have risen in popularity as a term to explain and excuse language which is on the margins of acceptance (Nichols, 2018). Viewing banter from a long-term developmental perspective, the term, and its use, could be understood in response to certain males' resistance to the perceived restriction on certain masculine habitus and concerns with the increasing feminization of society.

Changing rooms have often been identified as a particularly prominent space for bullying in school PE (Atkinson & Kehler, 2012). Irrespective of the rise of co-educational PE, during secondary school, young people get changed in single-sex changing rooms. This single-sex space has been described as a 'hidden' gendered curriculum whereby some young males face 'ritual (and indeed, systematic) bullying and humiliation' (Atkinson & Kehler, 2012, p.166). Young males' narratives of changing room cultures recall tormenting, verbal abuse, physical confrontation and outright violence (Atkinson & Kehler, 2012). Of note here is that these bullying relations take place in a space often devoid of adult presence, largely due to teachers' perceptions of youth privacy and fears of being accused of breaching child safeguarding procedures (Atkinson & Kehler, 2012). Without a key authoritative figure, certain young males have been able to exercise their power advantages over perceived weaker peers in this confined space, at times making PE a 'chilly' and 'toxic' environment for other male pupils (Atkinson & Kehler, 2012, p.166).

The issues that pupils experience within the changing room environment can be explained in relation to broader long-term civilizing processes. Elias (2000) argued that, over time, the naked body has gradually come to be associated with heightened levels of shame and embarrassment, and thus, has become increasingly pushed behind the scenes of public life. The process of changing from school uniform to PE kit therefore publicizes an otherwise private experience. Young people's mandatory exposure of their semi-naked bodies to peers, for whom they may or may not have established relations based on friendship and respect, comes at a pivotal time during their development of body consciousness and gender identity. This process is further impacted by modern sensibilities concerning adults' surveillance of young peoples' semi-naked bodies, meaning that despite their professional status, teachers minimize their entry to changing rooms. One unintended outcome of such modern sensibilities is the provision of opportunities for undetected bullying.

Power-relations in PE and everyday interpretations of 'bullying'

Green (2003) has argued that there is a tendency to reify PE, that is, to conceptualize it as an entity in and of itself. However, we must not forget that PE is inherently a social construct, one that is co-constructed by teachers and young people (Green, 2003). One way to avoid reifying PE is to consider PE as a figuration, 'a structure of mutually oriented and dependent people' (Elias, 1978, p.261). Adopting this sensitizing research tool helps to place human relations at the centre of any PE-related conceptualizations. In secondary PE in England, mutuality is created through the mandatory nature of the subject, whereby young people are usually categorized by gender and ability-sets. Therefore, young people's relationships with peers may include 'new' relations with peers who are not usually in their other classes.

PE teachers are pivotal in the PE experience and young people often consider them as role models for the promotion of caring peer-relations (Gano-Overway, 2013; Smith & St. Pierre, 2009). However, media portrayals regularly depict PE teachers as drill sergeants/bullies, whose harsh authoritarian pedagogies fail to create inclusive environments (McCullick et al. 2003). There is some evidence that PE teachers can be complicit in normalizing behaviours usually deemed as bullying in other facets of school, as well as promoting and engaging in bullying relations between young people. For example, O'Connor and Graber (2014) found that male and female PE teachers acculturated a bullying climate by, amongst other things, promoting aggression and violence through implementing inappropriate curricular selections. Some PE teachers even perpetuated peer-ridicule through sarcastic comments or mocking demonstrations of poor skills (O'Connor & Graber, 2014).

At the centre of this teacher-pupil relationship was a discrepancy between banter and verbal bullying, which illustrates, amongst other things, differing adult-child sensibilities to commentary based on difference and levels of offense caused. The difference between adult

and child interpretations causes further tensions when PE teachers are tasked to adopt a whole-school universal anti-bullying policy. Despite expressing desires to combat bullying, previous research has shown that PE teachers held little knowledge of their school's anti-bullying policies and adopted diverse strategies of dealing with bullying, which included verbal put-downs and making light of the situation (O'Connor & Graber, 2014). The normalization of jocular interactions in PE is further evidenced by young people reporting PE teachers as present in 55% of peer-teasing incidents, but recalling that teachers ignored it, brushed it off, or, on some occasions, laughed at crude peer-comments (Li & Rukavina, 2012). Other teacher interventions included telling victims to ignore comments or avoid perpetrators (Li & Rukavina, 2012). Adding further weight to claims of a normalization of verbal teasing/bullying in PE, researchers observed and young people reported that PE teachers were more likely to intervene in incidents of physical bullying compared to verbal bullying, resulting in many young people expressing how they felt that their teachers did not care about bullying (Li & Rukavina, 2012).

A further concern with teacher-pupil relations was the perceived inequality within these relations. PE teachers' use of banter involved certain young people within the class and not others. Some young males bemoaned teacher-pupil bonding, which they perceived as teacher favouritism (Atkinson & Kehler, 2012). These young males recounted how their male PE teachers bonded with their perceived sporty peers through what they perceived as over-praising and regularly joking with them, whilst 'non-sporty' males received negative feedback and were mocked or neglected by male PE teachers (Atkinson & Kehler, 2012). This level of favouritism was cited by some young males as a contributory factor for why they or their peers failed to intervene and/or report instances of bullying as victims or bystanders (Atkinson & Kehler, 2012).

The findings presented here illustrate a generational divide between teachers and young people's interpretation of socially acceptable and inappropriate behaviours. PE teachers have a significant power advantage in the PE figuration due to their status as adults and professional teachers. Therefore, as described here, they play a significant role in the normalization and everyday perceptions of bullying and banter in PE. Power-relations in PE are not fixed or static, but should be considered as a series of shifting tension-balances. For instance, the influence of PE over young people may differ depending on their level of experience, teaching approach or the age of pupils in the PE class. Equally, whilst historically PE teachers appeared to benefit from greater power chances through authoritarian teaching pedagogies that created a clear power hierarchy between them and young people, accounts of young people bullying teachers suggests that power-relations between the two can or are shifting to a more negotiated position (Espinoza, 2015). This apparent shift in teacher-pupil relations can be explained through broader shifts in power-relations between adults-children that have taken place as consequences of long-term civilizing processes, a process that Elias (1978) referred to as functional democratization.

As co-constructers of PE, young people and their relations need to be considered in their own right. The literature on bullying in PE suggests that bullying almost always takes place within a peer-group setting and is more likely to be verbal than physical. One example of this is Symons et al. (2014) study of 536 young people, including 399 self-identified same-sex attracted and gender diverse youth, who found that 20% of young people encountered physical abuse in PE (shoved, pushed, etc.) compared to 32.3% who indicated that they were verbally abused (name calling, threats, etc.) at least semi-regularly (sometimes, often or frequently). Comparatively, Hurley and Mandigo (2010) found that 11.6% of young people reported being physically bullied, whilst 13.6% experienced verbal bullying. The difference in variance between these studies may be linked to differences in sample characteristics and

mixed-sex and single-sex class dynamic. Verbal and social bullying (exclusion and gossiping) amongst young people was centred on perceived differences, primarily in appearance and physical competency (Hurley & Mandigo, 2010). Specifically, young people cited appearance-based differences as including body-size, personal attire, personal characteristics (such as hairstyle) and perceived lack of attractiveness (Hurley & Mandigo, 2010). It was often young people lacking in physical competency, based on sporting skill and athletic ability, that were bullied, but there were some instances reported whereby those highly skilled were bullied (Hurley & Mandigo, 2010).

As demonstrated, due to de-routinized practices and more informalized relations and behavioural norms, PE differs somewhat to other classroom-based subjects. These behavioural norms inform those involved perceptions of banter and bullying within PE, which can differ between and within the two social groups (teachers and pupils) and lead to school anti-bullying policies not being implemented. The informality of PE/sport spaces (whereby the use of banter may resist the more rigid forms of civilized restraint that are more common in classrooms) means that young people are confronted with a need to be able to 'do', 'take' and 'not perceive' banter as verbal bullying. Therefore, the normalization of physicality and verbal jousting in PE helps to explain relationally-informed subject-specific interpretations of bullying in PE and discrepancies between those individuals involved. In these more informalized settings, certain behaviours become normalized and exploitation of socially constructed power differentials by some young people can go unpunished.

Why adopt a figurational approach to bullying in school sport and PE?

This position statement has argued that PE is an environment whereby everyday interpretations of 'bullying' are less heightened than those in other facets of schooling. In this sense, we agree with Rivers's (2010) call that school-based research needs to be more subject-specific in order to gain a greater situational understanding of bullying. By focusing

on figurational dynamics within broader figurations, a figurational approach helps avoid generalized conceptions of bullying in schools. It also helps emphasize the need to consider the sub-cultural variances between and within different social groups, as well as key contributory factors such as gender and sexuality and, although not discussed here, issues of race, dis-ability and class. The following discussion expands on how a figurational perspective can be used to understand the issue of bullying in PE.

A long-term processual approach helps provide a more detached account of bullying, which is necessary to better rationalize and understand how such conceptions and emotional attachment towards bullying came to be as well as contextualizing long-term changing perceptions of what constitutes 'bullying' in different eras and appreciating that such issues remain dynamic. Whilst definitional notions of repetition and intent will remain subjective, focusing on flux asymmetrical power imbalances helps to understand how and why bullying in PE may take place. It is from this position that we are able to better consider means of addressing significant power differentials that underpin bullying, and not get tied to or embroiled in definitional clarity or issues.

A long-term processual understanding of human-relations also helps identify the 'sociological inheritance' (Elias, 2000) that young people have to embody as part of their individual civilizing process. This process refers to a period of socialization in which issues of self and external restraint are shifting, whereby young people are increasingly expected to refrain from emotional outburst (physically and, increasingly, verbally). Increasing levels of behavioural and emotional refinements reflect changing power relations in which societies with relatively tight-knit networks of interdependencies and relatively strong mutual identification and mutually expected self-restraint is required (van Stolk & Wouters, 1987). These relations are no less constraining than previously. If anything, they require greater levels of mutual identification and self-restraint from young people, a process which

demonstrates the complexity of modern relations and self-restraint. For instance, we have referred to how young people are challenged to identify and understand what banter is and what verbal bullying is, whilst simultaneously having to interpret when peers (and teachers) are adopting banter rather than verbal bullying. These complex emotions and relations with others demonstrate the demands on young people to learn to restrain their thoughts and behaviours in ever more complex socialization process. Helping young people to understand their relations with others, as well as power imbalances and their 'figurations', may enable them to better understand their emotions, and their emotional responses to others.

Given these increasing complex processes of socialization there has been an extension of the notion of youth, epitomized through the introduction of mandatory schooling until eighteen in the UK, whereby young people have longer to develop emotional self-control. Linked to this, in discussing the hinge, Elias emphasizes how the physical body and self-regulation are interwoven with learned mechanisms that emerge at different points in time (Atkinson, 2012). The hinge is introduced by Elias to challenge the nature-nurture dualism and convey a relationship which heightens our awareness that the two are fundamentally linked and could not exist in separation (Velija & Malcolm, 2018). *The Civilizing Process* can be viewed as a case study of the hinge, 'illustrating how self-restraint is partially an unlearned human drive, but forged in relation to changing, more interdependent, pacified, centralized and functionally democratic environments' (Atkinson 2012, p.55). Considering the relation between learned and unlearned behaviours may enable young people to deconstruct gendered elements in PE and challenge these. This would require PE teachers to be able to do this and thus challenge their views and occupational/gendered habitus in which they consider gender to be biologically fixed and do not question these taken for granted assumptions which continue to separate boys and girls in PE, drawing on established ideas about the capabilities of male and female bodies.

A relational approach not only helps with historical to modern comparisons, as mentioned above, but also helps us to consider how bullying is often: (a) manifested differently within different educational settings; (b) relationally conceptualized along socially constructed behaviours deemed ‘acceptable’; and (c) determined through adult eyes and heavily influenced by adult norms. Linked to this, a relational approach also helps encapsulate the increasing speed of change in more modern societies within acceptable adult and child behaviours, alongside broader changes in adult-child and gender relations, over the last few decades, which can offer a more detached understanding of what a short-term perspective may consider as fixed, static and inappropriate teacher conduct and teacher-pupil relations.

The positioning of bullying in schools as a social justice issue is, in itself, not surprizing and can be broadly understood as a reflection on changing adult and child relations, the emotive response to children in distress, increasing constraints on parents and parenting styles, teaching styles, and broader changes in education, which prioritize research agendas that have impact. However, the two are not as mutually exclusive as they may seem, as a researcher can contribute to knowledge and understanding and be concerned with social issues (or social justice). However, the method for doing so may differ. As Dunning (1999, p.9; original emphasis) has noted, a ‘concern with relatively detached understanding has to be tempered by a motivating and familiarity-conferring *involvement*’ which, amongst other things, assists in understanding the experiences and views people express about their situations and life worlds. We echo the work of Smith et al. (2018) here to say that whilst our concerns might indeed be primarily academic, namely to develop a relatively detached understanding of bullying, this is needed to develop a relatively detached understanding for the development of more effective short-term and long-term policy formation and enactment. Future research should concentrate on the workings of power within PE and figurational

dynamics and dominant social processes that enable the development and maintenance of significant power imbalances between young people in PE.

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