INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600
A POSTMODERN EXPLORATION OF THE DISCOURSE(S) OF
CHILDHOOD AND HOW THEY PRODUCE THE ACTIVE CHILD'S BODY:
A CASE STUDY OF TORONTO PARKS AND RECREATION DOCUMENTS.

by

MARGARET PTOLEMY

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Science
Graduate Department of Community Health
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Margaret Ptolemy 1998
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-40720-9
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend great thanks and acknowledgement to my supervisor and friend Professor Margaret MacNeill. Her wisdom, commitment to excellence and patience has been invaluable to me throughout my graduate education. I cannot fully express the extent of my gratitude to her or the extent of her contribution to this project. I could not have completed this without her guidance and direction. Special thanks to committee member, colleague and friend Professor Brian Pronger for stimulating conversations, encouragement and guidance throughout the project. Thanks also to my committee member Professor Bruce Kidd for your support and comments.

I would also like to thank Professor Greg Malszecki, my external reviewer, for your kind insightful comments, questions and your supportive attitude. Also to Professor Peter Donnelly, my internal reviewer, for a thorough reading of my thesis and invaluable comments and questions.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Crystal Tancredi at the City of Toronto Department of Parks and Recreation. Her assistance has been invaluable to this project.

My fellow graduate students and friends have provided ongoing support and encouragement, and I would particularly like to thank Cora McCloy for her friendship and interest in my thesis.

Finally I would like to thank my family for their continuing support, love, and encouragement. Most importantly, I would like to thank my partner and best friend Tim Daly for his love, support, encouragement and patience. I could not have completed this degree without his help.
A postmodern exploration of the discourse(s) of childhood and how they produce the active child's body: A case study of Toronto Parks and Recreation documents.

By: Margaret Ptolemy

Master of Science, 1998

Department of Community Health, University of Toronto

ABSTRACT

This postmodern exploration of the discourse(s) of childhood and how these discourse(s) produce the active child's body seeks to fill a gap in the research on children and sport which has been based on traditional developmental assumptions about children. Document analysis of staff training manuals for the Toronto Department of Parks and Recreation reveals the myth that children's recreation ought to be competitive sport and the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults. These myths are conveyed and produced by the discourses of patriarchy, capitalism, the cure for social problems discourse and the discourse of development. Children's bodies are also marked by power relations in terms of age, ability, gender, race, and social class, and these Parks and Recreation documents mark children's bodies in ways which privilege the dominant male, white, middle class body. These power relations also organize and constrain children's recreational experiences in the Parks and Recreation programmes. The concluding chapter suggests avenues for resistance and liberation by children through recreational activities.
Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ii

Abstract iii

I Introduction p. 1

II Literature review p. 7
'Childhood'

Theories of power and childhood p. 16
Definition of power p. 18
The child's body p. 20

Research on sport and children p. 28

Children and sport psychology p. 28

Socialization theories p. 32
Socialization into sport p. 34
Socialization out of sport p. 37
Socialization via sport p. 37

Summary of the critiques of this sport psychology and socialization research p. 40

Children, gender and sport p. 41
Girls and gender research p. 42
Boys and gender research p. 43

Children, race and sport p. 45

Children, social class and sport p. 46

Summary of the critiques of the social class, gender, and race, sport research on children p. 48

Children, health, sport and the ideology of production p. 50

Summary of the literature review p. 56
III  The case study  p. 58

Introduction  p. 58

Theoretical foundation and form of analysis  p. 60
Language and text(s)  p. 63
Myth  p. 66
Discourse  p. 68
Role of the researcher  p. 69
Personal rationale and locatedness  p. 71

Chapter summary  p. 72

IV  The myth(s) of children's recreation: Children's recreation is competitive sport  p. 73

Introduction  p. 73

Children's recreation is competitive sport  p. 75

Challenges to the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport  p. 82

What conveys the myth that recreation for children is competitive sport  p. 90

Patriarchy and capitalism  p. 91

The child's body  p. 99

Naturalization of biological differences  p. 100

Curriculum of domination  p. 103

The case of "Streetbuds"  p. 107

Chapter summary  p. 110
V The myth(s) of children’s recreation: Sport develops children into 'good' adults p. 112

Introduction p. 112

Sport develops children into 'good' adults p. 113

Challenges to the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults p. 117

The case of the volunteer p. 120

What conveys this myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults p. 122

Cure for social problems discourse p. 123
Discourse of development p. 130

The child's body p. 133
The individual body p. 133
The value of the child's body p. 136

Chapter summary p. 140

VI The bioculturally marked body p. 141

Introduction p. 141

Age p. 142
Developmental assumptions and promotion of differences p. 143
Age, power and the body p. 146

Ability p. 157
Developmental assumptions p. 158
Disability, power and the body p. 160

Gender p. 162
Reproduction of patriarchal assumptions p. 163
(a) The perpetuation of gender differences p. 163
(b) The promotion of gender specific activities p. 167
Gender, power and the body p. 171
Racially marked and class marked bodies
Racist and classist assumptions and
the production of difference
Race, class, power and the body

Chapter summary

VII Conclusion
Introduction

The construction of the child's body in Toronto
Parks and Recreation documents

Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes for children
Recommendations for Toronto Parks and
Recreation programmes

Future research recommendations
Theory recommendations
Children and sport, recreation, and physical
activity: Specific research questions
Toronto Parks and Recreation: Specific
research questions

Summary

VIII Glossary of terms

IX References

X Appendix A
Chapter One

Introduction

Several years ago, while working at an afterschool program for children aged four to six years of age, I was forced to question why I was bothering to teach these children how to play soccer. They seemed to have no interest in anything except chasing the ball - which is precisely what all 25 of them did. One particular child was not chasing the ball, so in order to have him included, I decided to teach him how to be a goalie. He completely grasped the concept of running back and forth, and side to side in the net, but he was totally oblivious to the game going on around him. At this point, with one child running around in the net, and 24 children chasing the ball around the gym, I felt that my endeavour to teach them soccer was somewhat absurd. This experience lead me to question what the role of sport really was for children, and why we, as adults, often try to teach children adult sports and games. This thesis is a pursuit of those basic questions that I asked myself on that afternoon.

One of the most seemingly simplistic questions is "how is a child defined as such?" The answer to that question, however, is more complex - it depends on who you ask, or where you look. Some historians argue that in the Middle Ages, the first seven years of life were considered infancy, and after that, "children" as we know them, were considered full members of society, with no distinctions between themselves and "adults" (Greenleaf, 1978). Since then, the definition of a child has continued to emerge and change. In the Parks and Recreation documents being studied in this thesis, there are several different ways that a child is defined as such. For example, in the section on child abuse, it states that "A child, according to Ontario law, is someone under
sixteen years of age or someone up to eighteen years of age if under the care of the Children's Aid Society" (Employee Handbook¹, p.27). However, in the Parks and Recreation Fall/ Winter programs (1997/1998), there are greater distinctions and differences, even from centre to centre. For example, in the brochure for Earl Beatty, Fairmount, and Main Square Fall/ Winter Programmes, under the heading "children" are various programmes for children from ages 6 - 16 years of age. At North Toronto Memorial Community Centre, their brochure lists programmes for pre-schoolers (6 months - 5 years), school age (7 - 12 years), and teen (13-17 years). In the brochure for Adam Beck, Balmy Beach and Beaches there is some overlap between their categories - preschoolers range from 2-5 years, children range from 5-13 years, and youth range from 13 - 19 years. Finally, at Regent Park North and Regent Park South, their distinction is quite simple - 14 and under are considered children, and 16 or over is considered youth/adult. Clearly, even within the Department of Parks in Recreation, there is no set definition of a child.

Legal definitions of a child vary as well. As the example from the Parks and Recreation Employee Handbook demonstrates, even within legal definitions of child abuse, the definition of a child varies depending on whether or not they are in the care of the Children's Aid Society. The major legal definition of children is based on the age of majority, which is defined as "full legal age; adulthood; the age when a child acquires the right to vote and to bind himself to contracts, and the age when support payments may be terminated by parents" (Yogis, 1995). Even this

¹ Throughout this thesis references to the Parks and Recreation documents will be made with respect to the title of the manual, rather than the author, because the manuals do not designate a specific author (with the exception of the Women in Action documents, which will be referenced by the author) and there is no publication date. Also, it will improve the readability of this thesis in that the reader will immediately know which manual is being cited. A separate list of all of the Parks and Recreation documents is included after the list of references.
definition varies from province to province in Canada. And finally, cultural definitions of a child vary as well. For example, in Toronto in 1998, children are defined by both the public library system, and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) as 12 years or under. To define what a child is, is quite clearly not a straightforward task. The definition depends on where and when you are, and who you ask.

These questions about what defines a child and what defines 'childhood' have been raised in an emerging literature on the socially constructed category and processes of childhood. This literature will be thoroughly examined in the upcoming literature review. On the other hand, these questions about the socially constructed nature of childhood have yet to be addressed in the sport literature. Recently, the sport literature has begun to address issues of power, specifically with regards to the body, and how power marks and trains the active physical body. This thesis will combine and incorporate the literature on the socially constructed category of childhood and issues of power for active bodies to study documents on children's sport and recreation programs.

This thesis will analyze the texts of a particular set of documents from the City of Toronto, Department of Parks and Recreation. The purpose of this analysis is to determine what myths of childhood and sport are conveyed within and through the documents. The first step of the research will consequently be a myth analysis. Myth, as it will be used in this thesis, is a highly specific term, and it does not correspond to the common-sense understandings of the word which suggest falsity, or fairy-tale. The usage of myth in this thesis is based on Roland Barthes usage of myth, whereby "myth refers to a chain of concepts widely accepted throughout a culture, by which its members conceptualize or understand a particular topic or part of their social experience" (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery, & Fiske, 1994, p.286). Barthes (1973)
describes myth as "a type of speech chosen by history: it cannot possibly evolve from the 'nature' of things" (p. 110). The second step of this research will uncover and critique the discourse(s) which convey the myths. Discourse is the first representation of thought, and discourse(s) are power relations in that discourse(s) are productive of reality. Discourse analysis extends the work of the myth analysis by looking at issues of power, knowledge and politics. Discourse(s) are important because they construct knowledge; discourse(s) provide us with particular ways of talking about, understanding, and creating realities about a particular topic.

The documents that will be analyzed are a set of training and resource manuals from Toronto Parks and Recreation. This set of manuals is the same set of manuals that is sent out to community centres, playgrounds, and wading pools in the summertime. These documents include:

- *The Employee Handbook;*
- *Leadership and Programme Planning manual;*
- *Soccer manual;*
- *Quoits manual;*
- *Games manual;*
- *Track and Field and Potato Races manual;*
- *Special Events manual;*
- *Integrated Programme Planning manual;*
- *Craft manual;*
- *Everything you ever wanted to know about playschool; and,*
- *T-Ball manual.*
In addition to these staff training documents, this thesis will analyze two documents pertaining to the *Women In Action* initiative. Although these documents are not included in the package sent out to Parks and Recreation leaders, they are important documents for this case study. These two documents are;

- *Women in Action*
- *Women in Action: Phase one - awareness: Final report*

The limitations of this endeavour are that the history of the development of the documents is not pursued, the institution which created the documents is not studied, nor is the audience interpretation studied. To pursue these areas would raise additional questions, which, although important in their own right, would not address the questions I seek to address. The goal of this thesis is to determine how childhood and children are being constructed in these particular sport and recreation documents since both broader sociology of sport and theories of the body have ignored these questions.

A thorough review of the literature follows this section in chapter two. The literature review examines the research on childhood, power, the body, and the research on sport and children. Chapter three introduces the case study for this thesis. The choice of the Toronto Parks and Recreation documents is discussed and contextualized, and the research perspective is introduced. Chapter four examines the myth that children's recreation, at Toronto Parks and Recreation, is competitive sport. Chapter five is a discussion of the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults. Both of these chapters also discuss a few of the major discourses which convey these myths, as well as how these discourses might potentially affect the child's
body. Chapter six reviews several bio-culturally produced markers of the child's body — age, ability, gender, social class and race. Chapter seven is a concluding chapter which looks at several key issues raised in the preceding chapters. The issues for discussion include, (a) the construction of child's body in Parks and Recreation documents, (b) Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes for children, and (c) future research on children and sport. Specific suggestions and recommendations for future research on children in sport, for future research on Toronto Parks and Recreation, and for the Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes are included in this final chapter. A glossary of terms is also included at the end of this thesis.
Chapter Two

**Literature review**

This review will summarize the literature from contemporary theories of childhood, postmodern theories of discourse, the relationship between power and knowledge, and theories of the body. Research to date on children in sport will be reviewed under the topics of psychology, socialization, children and gender, children and race, health and children, and the ideology of production.

*Childhood*

Many scholars in contemporary childhood studies have recently argued that childhood is a social construction (Corsaro, 1997; Hoyles, 1989; Jenks, 1992; Jenks, 1996; Kessen, 1983; Lansdown, 1994; Mayall, 1994; Oakley, 1994; Postman, 1994; Prout & James, 1990a; Stainton Rogers, 1989; Stainton Rogers & Stainton Rogers, 1992; Sutherland, 1998). The literature critiquing traditional and dominant frameworks that have been used to study and conceptualize children will be summarized, but first, it is important to note three important influences that have led to the recent interest in the social construction of 'childhood'. The first factor which has led to a questioning of the traditional conceptualizations of childhood has come from an account of the history of childhood. Specifically, Phillipe Aries' (1968) work *Centuries of Childhood* is cited in numerous works as the cornerstone of the history of childhood (Corsaro, 1997; Hoyles, 1989; Jenks, 1992; Jenks, 1996; Postman, 1994; Prout & James, 1990a; Stainton Rogers, 1989; Thane, 1981). Aries states that;
In medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist; this is not to suggest that children were neglected, forsaken or despised. The idea of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children: it corresponds to an awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult. In medieval society this awareness was lacking (1968, p.128).

His work suggests that the concept of childhood emerged in Europe between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This suggestion has had a profound impact on traditional notions of childhood, which had previously been conceptualized as a universal phenomenon (Prout & James, 1990a). Although Aries work has since been critiqued (see Hanawalt, 1993 and Pollock, 1983 for histories of childhood which challenge Aries work) particularly in terms of its ambiguity and sweeping generalizations (Corsaro, 1997), its initial value is nonetheless important. Aries work generated a great deal of interest in the history of childhood.

The second area of study which has challenged traditional concepts of childhood is anthropology. Cross cultural studies, such as those presented in Mead and Wolfenstein [Eds.] (1955), *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures* indicated that childhood was not a universal phenomenon. Thus it is currently accepted that "the concept of what a child is varies within different cultures, different social groups and at different points in history" (Lansdown, 1994, p.34). For example, the experience of and expectations for a child in a developing country are profoundly different from the experiences of and expectations for a child in middle-class North America. A child in a developing country might be expected to work to support his/her family, while a middle-class North American child might be expected to go to school everyday and
participate in extra-curricular activities like sports. The economic basis which constructs a childhood for some, yet denies it for others is an argument that has been used to deconstruct the universality of childhood (Stainton Rogers, 1989). For example, Western middle-class definitions of childhood often include the importance of participating in sport. Pitter and Andrews (1997) suggest that, in America, soccer for middle-class children has been embraced "as a collective expression of a new White suburban identity" (p.93). However, the products and time necessary for this participation require economic resources that many children and families within the culture and globally, do not possess. In fact, the economic basis which constructs this childhood for Western middle-class children is often predicated upon child labour workers in developing countries who produce sports equipment and clothing. For example, soccer balls sanctioned by the international soccer federation (FIFA) are often hand sewn by child labourers in poor nations who make less money than even the lowest poverty wages in those nations (Coakley, 1998)

Finally, the myth of childhood is being challenged by children themselves. In Hoyles' (1989) work The Politics of Childhood, he outlines how children are challenging the myth with their own words and actions, particularly in the areas of work, sexuality and politics. Examples from the world of children's sport can be found in gymnastics and figure skating. Cantelon (1981) highlights his findings in Canada; young gymnasts training up to 30 hours per week and young figure skaters training up to 60 hours per week to prepare for national competition. In Ryan's (1995) account of children's elite gymnastics and figure skating, she found that these athletes routinely train up to and over forty hours per week although United States child labour laws prohibit children from working forty hours a week in 'typical' jobs. That child athletes are working often in excess of forty hours a week at their training, as problematic as it may be, is also
evidence that they are challenging traditional assumptions of what it means to be a child. Whether these children view themselves as 'working' or just 'working out', is irrelevant because they are still challenging the myth of childhood through their actions. In Canada, Donnelly's work (1997a) identified young athletes to whom 20-25 hours per week of training was 'normal', and 35 hours per week was not unusual. As Kidd (1987) has pointed out, when athletes are sponsored by the state, they effectively become 'employees' of the state, albeit underpaid employees, or "sweat-suited philanthropists". Child athletes, regardless of their perceptions of their activities (i.e., working out vs. working vs. playing a sport) are challenging traditional assumptions about children.

The three major influences which have lead to a discussion surrounding the socially constructed category of childhood have been historical and anthropological studies, as well as the actions of children themselves in many contexts. Recently, more critical work has emerged which has examined, and challenged, the traditional conceptualizations of children that permeate social and psychological research and literature.

Stainton Rogers (1989) and Jenks (1996) provide an extensive overview and critique of the traditional frameworks of socialization theories and developmental psychology. A dominant ideology1 in the conceptualization of children and childhood in these traditional frameworks has been the ideology of development (Jenks, 1996; Prout & James, 1990b). Prout and James (1990b) outline three themes that predominate in relation to this concept of development; 'rationality', 'naturalness', and 'universality'. These themes are delineated as follows;

rationality is the universal mark of adulthood with childhood representing the

1 Please refer to the glossary for the definition of ideology used in this thesis.
period of apprenticeship for its development... The naturalness of children both
governs and is governed by their universality... the child developing into an adult
represents a progression from simplicity to complexity of thought, from irrational
to rational behaviour (Prout & James, 1990b, p.10-11).

The argument is that these themes have structured a mode of thought that goes far beyond the
discipline of psychology, "influencing not only sociological approaches to child study but the
this development ideology through three themes; the child as 'savage'; the 'natural' child; and, the
'social' child. The child as 'savage' is based on an early form of anthropological work, where
anthropologists viewed 'savages' as different and these differences were naturalized into a
hierarchy. Savages were seen as a referent for humankind, to question how we used to be and
how far we have "progressed". Jenks (1996) argues that the child is also a referent for adults; the
child "is taken to display for adults their own state of once untutored difference" (p.6). In his
section on the 'natural' child, Jenks (1996) argues that our experiences as being children, having
children, and having to relate to children renders the category of 'child' as 'normal'. This leads to a
ready transformation of our "attribution of it to the realm of the 'natural'" (Jenks, 1996, p.7)
According to Jenks (1996) this understanding is organized around the 'growth' metaphor, a
metaphor which clearly includes the ideology of development. In his section on the 'social' child,
Jenks (1996) formulates the development ideology or 'growth' metaphor as assuming "an essential
and magnetic relation to an unexplicated, but nevertheless firmly established, rational adult world"
(p.9).

The development ideology will be critiqued on two levels: firstly, the use of biology in the
development ideology, and secondly, the ontological assumptions about the nature of children and childhood.

The key concept of development -- and related themes of rationality, naturalness, and universality -- are closely related to the biological differences between children and adults. As Oakley (1994) points out, "children are biologically different from adults, but biology is socially constructed" (p.25). For example, the biological process of puberty is a 'developmental' indicator that children are becoming adults. The naturalization of biological differences so that these differences obscure the social relations in which they are embedded has been highlighted by Pronger (1996) with respect to gender differences in exercise science. According to Pronger (1996);

research has naturalized the social differences of the gender system, seeking out physiological bases for what are actually socially created differences, thus emphasizing a difference between men and women which is usually one of showing the athletic 'inferiority' of women, an inferiority which is then effectively used to exclude women from traditionally male domains... (p.21).

This argument can be extended to include the physiological and biological bases upon which childhood is constructed to be inferior to adulthood, and which consequently leads to children being excluded from traditionally adult domains.

Prout and James (1990b) have developed an emergent paradigm (included in Appendix A), the key features of which need to be addressed by social scientists studying children and childhood. The first, of six, key features of this paradigm addresses the issue of biology;

Childhood is understood as a social construction. As such it provides an
interpetive frame for contextualizing the early years of human life. Childhood, as
distinct from biological immaturity, is neither a natural nor a universal feature of
human groups but appears as a specific structural and cultural component of many
societies (Prout & James, 1990b, p.8-9).

The biological sciences, which emphasize the differences between children and adults, are
neither apolitical nor neutral. Traditionally science has been based on the assumption that "the
world is independent of how we represent it" (Rouse, 1987, p.3). Recent critiques of empiricist
science have challenged the traditional assumptions of neutrality - political neutrality and the
neutrality of scientific knowledge. The traditionally received view of science positions power and
knowledge as extrinsic to one another; "power can influence our motivation to achieve knowledge
and can deflect us from such achievement, but it can play no constructive role in determining what
knowledge is" (Rouse, 1987, p.14). Rouse (1987) challenges this traditional assumption and
argues that "the power to intervene in and manipulate natural events, is not the application of
antecedent knowledge but the form scientific knowledge now predominantly takes" (p.20).
Rouse (1987) also challenges the implied traditional assumptions about the nature of power as
being a repressive and negative force. Rouse (1987) suggests that the power of science is a
productive power, productive in that it creates, transforms and reshapes the world. This critique
needs to be applied to the biological sciences which have presented children to the world as
'children', with all the underlying developmental assumptions that are packed into this category. If
power is knowledge and knowledge is power, what is the role of the biological knowledge that
has given us the categories of children and childhood? This question is central to a critique of the
discourse of childhood, and will be addressed through discourse analysis of children's sport
The second critique addresses the ontological questions of 'what is a child?' and 'how is the child possible as such?'. Jenks (1996) critiques socialization theories and developmental psychology because they are "predicated upon a strong but unexplicated knowledge of the difference of childhood" (p.4). The ontological questions mentioned here have not been addressed by researchers in developmental psychology or social learning perspectives about socialization. This lack of concern with the ontological questions about what childhood is have contributed to the acceptance and taken-for-grantedness of the 'naturalness' of childhood as a developmental period. The concern with this view is that "childhood receives treatment as a stage, a structured process of becoming" (Jenks, 1996, p.9). Consequently, the primary point of childhood is to become an adult. These issue will be addressed further in the section of the literature review on children, health and the ideology of production. Heidegger's work on Being and technology is central to the discussion of the childhood being conceptualized as a stage, a process of becoming.

Lastly, in failing to recognize childhood(s) as differentially located social construction(s), the implicit purposes of bio-physical constructions go largely unquestioned. Other categories of analysis that social science has recognized as cultural constructions, like gender and race, have been deconstructed and examined in terms of dominant ideologies and relations of power. According to Jenks;

the history of the social sciences has attested to a sequential critical address and debunking of the dominant ideologies of capitalism in relation to social class, colonialism in relation to race, and patriarchy in relation to gender; but as yet the
ideology of development in relation to childhood has remained relatively intact (Jenks, 1996, p.4).

It is important not only to recognize these bio-physical constructions as socially constructed, but to move towards understanding how these bio-physical constructions, of race, gender, age, and social class, are actually relations "that have to do with how people define themselves and how they participate in social life" (Ng, 1993, p.51).

The work that has begun in deconstructing traditional conceptions and assumptions about children and childhood needs to be continued and expanded. This review demonstrates how questions about the productive power of science to create childhood need to be explored. While the work reviewed identifies these needs, there is a gap in terms of applying this knowledge to the specific cultural construct of sport. Jenks (1996) discusses this literature in terms of children and the law, particularly in regards to how certain actions of children have challenged people's assumptions about what children are capable of, and how these actions have opened up debates on issues like the Young Offenders Act. Jenks (1996) uses as one example the murder of a British 3 year old, Jamie Bulger, by two ten-year olds. A more recent example includes the Jonesboro shootings, where two boys aged 13 and 11 killed 5 people. News coverage in Time magazine (April 6, 1998) asks, "Why do kids kill?" (Lacayo, 1998, p.26), and "What is justice for a sixth-grade killer?" (Faltermayer, 1998, p.24). The following quote indicates why people have difficulty with these questions: "Childhood should be a game of waiting in the wings, of playing at hearts, broken then mended, of rehearsing life, falling but protected" (Labi, 1998, p.18).

However, these debates are not going on in regards to sport. Pronger's (1997) work has deconstructed the 'science' of physical fitness and has highlighted the power relations that this
'science' marks on the active body. This work needs to be extended and incorporated with the literature on childhood in order to explore how science and sport serve to sustain the "naturalness" and taken-for-grantedness of child development, and childhood. Also, the philosophical implications of viewing childhood as a stage, or a structured becoming needs to be addressed. Lastly, specific definitions of childhood, for example how childhood is constructed in sport and physical education literature, both professional literature on pedagogy and research, need to be deconstructed in order to examine the political and power relations that are produced and reproduced through these particular definitions. Jenks (1996) argues that "the child is assembled intentionally to serve the purposes of supporting and perpetuating the fundamental grounds of and versions of humankind, action, order, language and rationality within particular theories" (p.29). How the child is assembled through sport and physical education discourses, and for what purposes, needs to be determined.

**Theories of power and childhood**

Critical in any deconstruction of a socially constructed concept like childhood is an attempt to account for power and the power relations that have constructed and maintained the dominant hegemonic ideology. The dominant hegemonic ideology of childhood in Western

---

2 Hegemony theory was developed by Antonio Gramsci in order to highlight and expose "the effects of meanings and values learned in the course of cultural practices, in the maintenance (or conversely, the challenging) of patterns of power and privilege in society" (Hall, Slack, Smith & Whitson, 1991, p.44). Power is exercised consenually through naturalization of ideologies to a form of common sense, i.e., power relationships attain a taken-for-grantedness. In sport, for example, the ideology of excellence, or achievement, serves to support and maintain the capitalist class system by reframing social class division in terms of personal achievement and success. The theory of hegemony allows us to question the cultural institution of sport, and to view the practices and beliefs of this institution as cultural constructions which serve to maintain dominant interests, but also allows
cultures is the development ideology. For most people our own experiences as children, and our continuous interaction with children assures the 'naturalness' and taken-for-grantedness of childhood.

Current ideologies about the power dynamic at work behind the maintenance of the traditional 'development' ideology surrounding children can be summarized as follows; (a) 'childhood' as an idea is located in a more fundamental orientation towards the preservation of both social and sociological worlds (Jenks, 1996, p.11); (b) the 'in their best interests' ideology purported by social services is not always beneficial to children because it is difficult for any adult to determine what is in the best interests of a child (Lansdown, 1994, p.41); (c) childhood is not experienced as a consistent set of relationships, because the level of powerlessness of children depends on how the adults in specific social settings conceptualize children and childhood (Mayall, 1994, p.116); (d) children are exploited by adults because "this activity, 'growing up', creates value for both children, in that it provides them with the human capital they will require for investing in their own adult labour, but also for adults, in that it provides the rationale for the wages and salaries of childwork" (Oldman, 1994, p.155); and, (e) that given the chance to contribute to meaningful research, children might not make sense of the adult world the way adults do, which presents a problem for those who view children with the traditional 'developmental' ideology (Oakley, 1994, p.25).

While these critiques and hypotheses about the underlying power relations that exist within and because of the development ideology are useful, recent postmodern theorists posit that the body is the central site upon which power is exercised (Andrews, 1993; Bordo, 1993; for emergent, or challenging practices within dominant structures.
A discussion of the child's body as a site upon which power is invested, needs to be added to contemporary theories of childhood and to sport sociocultural research. Also, these hypotheses fail to address a definition of power, and how even hegemonic power is not static, but is constantly negotiated. These two issues will be examined. First, a discussion of a conceptualization of power, and then a discussion of the child's body as a site for the investment of power.

**Definition of power**

A critical component of Gramsci's hegemony is the idea that "our active participation in understanding ourselves, our social relations and the world at large results in our complicity in our own subordination" (O'Sullivan et al., 1994, p.133). This idea that we actively consent to support and maintain a dominant hegemony implies through the opposite (i.e., active dissent) we have access to power. This suggests that power is not something held by an elite group, but is something altogether different. Foucault's understanding of power is useful to illuminate this point and to extend Gramsci's notion of hegemony. For Foucault, power is not something held by a group of people or institutions, or governments, it is far more complex, dense and pervasive (Foucault, 1980, p.158-159). Rail and Harvey (1995) add:

The notion of power, for Foucault, goes beyond the sphere of the state, to which it was traditionally associated. Power is not ascribable to a class that would possess it. Rather, power circulates through a network of individuals; it is omnipresent; it is in everyone; it is immanent in the structuralist sense of the term (p.166).

This thesis will extend Gramsci's understanding of power by incorporating Foucault's
understanding that power circulates through a network of individuals. The key elements of power then are that individuals are active participants either in their subjugation or their liberation, and this active participation is possible because power is not held by one group over another. Rather, power is a "dynamic of noncentralized forces" (Bordo, 1993, p.261) in which "people and groups are positioned differentially within it" (Bordo, 1993, p.262). This definition of power is critical in a study of childhood because it challenges the conceptualization of children as 'powerless'. A common and reoccurring theme in the discussion of children is that most children experience feelings of powerlessness at some point. Sutherland (1998), through his examination and analysis of interviews conducted with Canadians born from approximately 1910 to 1950, concludes that a sense of powerlessness is characteristic of being a child. His research shows that, "even those who were lovingly cared for occasionally felt imprisoned, bound in by conditions over which they had no control, subject to the arbitrary authority of parents, teachers, and other adults often unwilling to explain or even to listen" (Sutherland, 1998, p.260). Lansdown (1994) elaborates on the powerlessness of children in Britain;

Children have, in general, no access to money, no right to vote, no right to express an opinion or be taken seriously, no access to the courts, no rights - except within the framework of the Children's Act - to challenge the decisions made on their behalf, no right to make choices about their education, within families they have no legal right to physical integrity...and they have no formal voice in society at all (p.35).

In Canada, children are 'protected' by the Canadian Bill of Rights, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Young Offenders Act, and in 1990 Canada signed the United Nations
Convention on the Rights of the Child (Canada, 1990). The existence of these documents and pieces of legislation prompt the following questions. Why and how are children located in such a weak position in terms of power? Why are children in need of special 'protection'? Does childhood sport participation discipline children and subjugate their bodies so that when they become 'rational' adults with legal and economic resources, they are already docile? Are children the most intensely regulated members of society because they have the greatest potential to upset the status quo, because they might not see things or interpret things the way adults want them to?

The above discussion of the powerlessness of children actually outlines the structural and cultural ways that children are located in a weak position within the network of power. Children, by the definition of power used in this thesis, are not powerless, but are positioned in one of the least powerful positions in society. Gramsci's and Foucault's understandings of power both suggest opportunities for resistance or liberation, as well as degrees of power, rather than absolutes (i.e., having power vs. powerlessness). This understanding is crucial in a thesis which recognizes the differential power positions of individuals not only because of their age, but also because of their gender, race, and social class.

The child's body

The emergence of the body in sociology has been traced by several authors. With the exception of anthropology, the body has been absent in mainstream sociocultural theory (Berthelot, 1991; Loy, Andrews & Rinehart, 1993; Turner, 1991). The current interest in the body has been attributed to many factors, and one of these primary factors is the feminist movement (Bordo, 1993; Hall, 1996; Loy et al., 1993; Turner, 1991). Therefore, it is surprising
that although the body in sport has been examined and theorized in gender research involving adults (Laberge & Sankoff, 1988; Markula, 1995; Wacquant, 1992), it has not been utilized in gender research involving children in sport. One recent article, which examined how young children's perceptions of their bodies is influenced by popular culture, included sports heroes or sport images as part of the 'popular culture' being studied (Doupona & Gilbert, 1997). This research, while positive in its recognition that the child's body has been neglected by researchers, is problematic on a number of fronts. Most importantly, the understanding of childhood as a social construction is completely lacking and consequently the ideology of development is taken-for-granted. This is reflected in many of the researchers' assumptions and research methods. The children in the study are conceptualized as passive participants in the creation of their perceptions of their bodies. The film, sports, and fashion industries, they argue, are responsible for influencing and distorting children's perceptions of their bodies and other bodies. The research methodology contains no understanding of the differential power relations between researchers and participants and thus no considerations were made to address this problem. Mayall (1993), in her study involving children, attempts to address this issue by having more than one child present at an interview, and by allowing the children to review her transcripts of the interviews in order to correct, clarify, or elaborate on any issues. She also attempts to conduct her research from the position that she is conducting research for children, not on them. Doupona and Gilbert (1997) did not acknowledge, nor attempt to conceptualize children as active participants in the creation of their own social worlds, body experiences, or in the research process.

Kirk and Tinning (1994) have conducted research on the active body with adolescents in Australia, but again this has not been extended to include children. Kirk (1994) and Kirk and
Spiller (1994) have applied the work of Foucault to schooling and physical education in Australia, and while their research provides extremely valuable insights into the ways in which physical education and schooling contribute to disciplining children's bodies, their research does not involve an examination of the child's embodied experience in school physical education. Although this thesis will not examine the child's embodied experience in Parks and Recreation programmes, it is a highly recommended future stage for research.

The development ideology which underlies most traditional conceptualizations of children and childhood is paralleled in theories of the body. The body is viewed as naturalistic or as socially constructed. Naturalistic views assume that;

- the capabilities and constraints of human bodies define individuals, and generate the social, political and economic relations which characterize national and international patterns of living. Inequalities in material wealth, legal rights and political power are not socially constructed, contingent and reversible, but are given, or at the very least legitimized, by the determining power of the biological body (Shilling, 1993, p.41).

This naturalistic view of the child's body has been prevalent in social science research due to its inter-relatedness with the development ideology. There are a number of critiques of naturalistic views. Firstly they exaggerate the importance of what they hold to be 'natural' in the body and draw unwarranted conclusions from this 'natural' body (Shilling, 1993). Secondly, naturalistic views are reductionist: Complex social relationships and social inequalities are attributed to an unchanging, pre-social body (Shilling, 1993). Lastly, these naturalistic views of the body "are based in a faith in the 'truth' of modern biological sciences" (Pronger, 1997, p.145).
Theories of the body which view the body as socially constructed assume that "the body is somehow shaped, constrained and even invented by society" (Shilling, 1993, p.70). This thesis will incorporate a view of the body which emphasizes the socially constructed body, without losing sight of the actual carnal, flesh-and-blood body. This extends contemporary theories of childhood in order to include a theory of the child's body. Sport sociocultural research has examined the socially constructed racialized body and the socially constructed gendered body but has not examined the socially constructed child's body, nor the intersection of age, class, race, and gender. Much of the analysis of the socially constructed and carnal body will draw upon the work of Michel Foucault. While Foucault recognizes the social body as an abstract symbol of power, "use of these terms derives from the primacy of the actual, flesh-and-blood body in any system of social order" (Kirk & Spiller, 1994, p.88). Thus Foucault's work on power and the body can be incorporated without reducing the body to merely an abstract socially constructed symbol of power. This thesis will overcome the essentialism of both naturalistic views of the body, and socially constructed views of the body, through an emphasis on the social body, while retaining a consideration of the carnal body.

Foucault's work (1977) highlights the importance of the individual body as a site, as the primary site, for social control and regulation. He outlines the historical shift from systems of sovereign power where power was symbolized in the body of the King, to capitalist systems of parliamentary democracy. According to Kirk and Spiller (1994):

As capitalist democracy began to reconstruct and reconstitute society, a more productive form of social control was needed, one which was in accord with new notions of individual liberty and provided at the same time a ready supply of
human resources, a compliant workforce and a market of consumers (p.88).

This new productive form of social control is achieved, according to Foucault, through disciplining the body in order to achieve a docile body. Foucault argues that disciplining bodies produces docile bodies, and docile bodies are bodies that "may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (Foucault, 1977, p.136). This concept of the docile body needs to be incorporated into research involving children, especially if the underlying assumptions about children are that they are being transformed into adults. Are children's bodies disciplined and rendered docile in order to transform them into docile adults? What role does sport play in disciplining children's bodies in order to facilitate this transformation?

Kirk (n.d) argues that many critics of Foucault mistakenly view his notion of docility as simply referring to the subjugation of bodies; "The outcome of specific and substantive power-knowledge combinations was not mere subjugation but, rather, controlled production, a point I suggest Foucault's critics consistently misunderstand" (p.4). Foucault argues that disciplining the body actually creates a relation of docility-utility (Foucault, 1977). Kirk and Spiller (1994) outline this relation between docility and utility;

In capitalist democracies, where the generation of wealth and the ongoing accumulation of capital is at stake, the body must become productive and generative within the political field; 'the body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjective body'. Individual liberty in the political sphere is forcefully counterbalanced by the needs of capital, such as compliant and appropriately skilled human resources and a market of consumers (p.89).

Consequently the purpose of disciplining bodies is to create bodies that are economically
productive yet politically acquiescent. To achieve this end, bodies must be disciplined, and so we turn to an examination of Foucault's application of discipline.

Discipline is used to create the body as the most efficient machine of production. The importance of these concepts - discipline and the docile body - to the study of children, is demonstrated by Foucault. He often uses the example of the elementary school to illustrate the elements that produce discipline. For example, the organization of space, the control of activity, the organization of geneses, and the composition of forces (Foucault, 1977), are evident in elementary schools. A recent study (McCloy, 1996) which looked at gender relations in physical education classes in an elementary school identified how children's bodies are disciplined in gendered ways. For example, McCloy's (1996) work showed how, even within the organized space of the gymnasium, a handful of boys controlled and dominated that space. Consequently the bodies in that class were disciplined differentially - some in dominant, patriarchal ways, and the rest in subordinate ways. Also, Kirk and Spiller (1994) demonstrate overlaps between the invention and emergence of the idea of childhood and the social construction of the modernist body - a body which in enmeshed in the process of social control through disciplinary actions.

The themes of efficiency and production will emerge in the upcoming review of research that has been conducted on children and sport. A critique of the 'production' ideology will follow that section. Foucault's techniques of disciplining bodies to produce docile-utile bodies are useful in conjunction with the development ideology which creates a reality where childhood is seen as a process of becoming, rather than a social location. If children's bodies are disciplined and potentially rendered docile-utile, what then are children in the process of becoming? Does children's sport contribute to disciplining children's bodies, and to what end? These are central
questions that will be addressed in this research.

Critical to Foucault's discussion of how power is invested in bodies, through the techniques of disciplining bodies is a system of surveillance. Foucault proposes a system of surveillance of others and of self-surveillance. This system of surveillance is panoptic. Bentham's Panopticon, an architectural design for maximizing power and control in a prison with minimum effort, is the basis for Foucault's concepts of surveillance (Foucault, 1977). The strength of this system of surveillance, whereby power is potentially exercised by an individual at the same time it is potentially exercised on that individual, is highlighted by Foucault:

In each of its applications, it makes it possible to perfect the exercise of power. It does this in several ways: because it can reduce the number of those who exercise it, while increasing the number of those on whom it is exercised. Because it is possible to intervene at any moment and because the constant pressure acts even before the offences, mistakes or crimes have been committed. Because, in these conditions, its strength is that it never intervenes, it is exercised spontaneously and without noise, it constitutes a mechanism whose effects follow from one another (Foucault, 1977, p.206).

Duncan (1994) applied this idea of the panopticon to a study of SHAPE magazine, and demonstrated how this magazine invites women to survey themselves. Her study, however, did not include children. With respect to children's participation in sport it is necessary to ask, does the structured nature of children's sport lead to self-surveillance and surveillance of others? Sport psychology literature defines competition as a social comparison process (Passer, 1986), and a process of social comparison would suggest an inherent system of surveillance of one self and
others in order to determine one's position in the comparison.

Foucault's work on how power is invested in the body, especially through physical activity is not all negative. Although he outlines at length the various mechanisms which discipline the body, and the panoptic system of surveillance which produces 'useful' and docile bodies, he also points to a paradox which exists when power is invested in bodies. This paradox has been examined by Vigarello (1995) and Rail and Harvey (1995). The paradox of Foucault's work is that "the process of rendering the body docile is not possible without a liberation of forces, without a solicitation of initiatives" (Vigarello, 1995, p.158). This paradox is especially important with respect to disciplining the body through physical exercise. Foucault notes;

mastery, consciousness of one's own body, becomes positive only through the invasion of the body by power: gymnastics, physical exercise, muscular development...But at the very moment power has this effect...emerges inevitably the claiming of one's body against power...Then, what gave power its strength becomes the way by which it is attacked (Foucault, 1978, p.28; as cited in Rail & Harvey, 1995, p.166).

Rail and Harvey (1995) conclude that this paradox, although central in Foucault's oeuvre, has been absent in Anglo-Saxon readings of Foucault. This paradox suggests that physical activity and sport for children could potentially be liberating rather than oppressive, physical activity could free their bodies from power, not subjugate them. It is this potential, the potential to liberate forces through the body, which necessitates a deconstruction and examination of children's sport

---

3Foucault's paradox, which highlights the potential for liberation when the body is being disciplined, is similar to Gramsci's recognition of the constant tension between containment and resistance, the active participation of individuals in their subjugation or resistance.
in order to suggest how it might be reconstructed as an activity which liberates the forces of the body.

**Research on sport and children**

**Children and sport psychology**

A review of this literature identifies research which has focused on individual factors and children's participation in sport, particularly competitive sport. Topics that have received the most academic attention are: *motivation to participate in sport* (Biddle, 1994; Brustad, 1992; Thomas, 1978; Weiss, 1986); *commitment and attrition* (Johns, Lindner & Wolko, 1990; Lindner, Johns & Butcher, 1991; Scanlon, Simons, Carpenter, Schmidt & Keeler, 1993); *competence* (Horn & Hasbrook, 1986; Passer, 1986; Seefeldt, 1978; Weiss, Bredemeier & Shewchuk, 1986; Weiss & Duncan, 1992); *friendship expectations* (Bigelow, Lewko & Salhani, 1989); *self-esteem* (Weiss, McAuley, Ebbeck & Wiese, 1990); and, *causal attribution* (Kimiecik & Duda, 1985; Thomas, 1978; Weiss, McAuley, Ebbeck & Wiese, 1990). The psychology of sport research which examines these various factors with respect to children's participation in sport is engaged in promoting the development ideology of childhood. For example, Malina's (1986) discussion of the concept of readiness, with respect to determining when children are ready to compete in sport, emphasizes the need to look at growth, maturation and developmental issues in order to determine the child's readiness. Kerr (1996) states that "sport is often cited as a means for preparing youth for adulthood" (p.293). She goes on to summarize the various bodies of literature which outline how participation in sport can positively affect youth, including; psychosocial
development and socialization research focusing on the relationship between athletic
participation and 'positive' personal characteristics like good behaviour, discipline, higher self-
esteeem, perceived popularity, involvement in extracurricular activities, and academic aspirations
and achievement, and; psychosocial development and socialization research looking at the link
between athletic participation and 'negative' personal behaviours like dropping out of school and
delinquency. Lastly, Martens (1993) discusses the potential positive and negative factors
associated with various psychological concerns with children's participation in sport. The
development ideology is clear in two examples listed of potential positive outcomes. First,
regarding competitive stress, Martens (1993) states "metaphorically, competitive stress in
children's sports may serve as an inoculation to build antibodies in children against the more
harmful stress viruses they will encounter later in life [italics added]" (p.10). The second example
is a potential positive outcome regarding social development; "sport can help young people
develop [italics added] emotional maturity and psychological skills in order to reach [italics
added] their full potential" (Martens, 1993, p.13). These examples from the sport psychology
literature clearly indicate the unexamined and unquestioned development ideology. In the
quotation about reaching their full potential, we see the process of becoming; for example,
children must be taught skills so that one day they will reach their full potential. This negates the
importance and the very existence of children's full potential as human beings at that particular
moment in time. What is taken for granted in the sport psychology literature are the ontological
questions of what it is to be a child and how the child is possible as such. What is the value of
sport for children, not because they will one day be adults, but because they are children today?
Although there is debate among sport psychologists, practitioners, parents, and coaches about the
ways children's sport participation either positively or negatively contributes to psychosocial development (see for example, Kerr, 1996; Kleiber & Kirshnit, 1991; Martens, 1993; Wankel & Mummery, 1996), the importance of sport as contributing to children's development is assumed and unquestioned.

Critical questions have not been addressed, such as, how does this empirically based scientific knowledge of children and sport transform the world, and our understanding of the world? Why do children need to be trained through sport to be 'better' or more successful adults? What does it mean to be successful in life? How is success defined, and what does this definition of success allow us to do to children and their bodies? For example, Kerr's (1996) work reviews the literature on the benefits of youth sport participation and she concludes that youth who participate in sport are more likely to have increased self-esteem, fewer discipline problems, increased popularity, an enhanced academic role, increased educational aspirations, a lower high school dropout rate, and lower delinquency rates. Are these measures of success, and what it means to be successful? These scientific findings are not neutral, this knowledge is power. What has not been examined is how this power/knowledge dynamic is operating at the level of the individual. What does this knowledge make possible in terms of how children in sport are treated?

These non-neutral scientific findings are often used as the basis for coaching courses and sport and recreation policy documents which seek to 'improve' children's sport. For example, the KidsFirst in Sport project states in the project overview, "In consideration of all research findings, a Community Sport Leader Kit is being designed..." (Parks and Recreation Ontario(PRO) & Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA), 1998, p.1,
emphasis mine). This kit includes: guiding principles for healthy child development in sport, a section on understanding child development, policy statements for children's sports, and, information on recruiting and training coaches and volunteers. Quite clearly the scientific research findings which have informed this project will have a direct impact upon many levels of children's sport participation experiences. So, not only is the original research which informed the project non-neutral, its impact is also political because it affects how sport for children is structured and organized.

Methodologically, sport psychology research on children has primarily been empirical and quantitative. Concepts like self-esteem, perceived control, and motivational orientation are measured with psychometrically 'valid' scales and measures. The critique of the neutrality of this scientific knowledge has been made already (see page 13, Rouse 1987). It is important to add at this point, that Prout and James (1990b) in their emergent paradigm for studying children also address methodology. They directly address observational methodology as the fifth key feature of their paradigm;

   Ethnography is a particularly useful methodology for the study of childhood. It allows children a more direct voice and participation in the production of sociological data than is usually possible through experimental or survey styles of research (Prout & James, 1990b, p.9).

   The importance of ethnographic research, and a further comment on how empirical science produces reality is seen in the following example from sport psychology research. Weiss, Bredemeier and Shewchuk (1986) administered four questionnaires to each child in their study, in order to measure various psychological factors. Procedurally the children, if needed, were helped
with reading and understanding questions. The children were not asked to interpret the questions themselves, or leave it blank if they did not understand or could not answer. Instead, the children were made to see the world as the researchers would have them see it, and then evaluate their own experiences according to this view of the world. The importance of this type of research in terms of producing reality is suggested by Rouse (1987); "we cannot describe what we observe without making use of theoretical assumptions built into our concepts. Even the simplest concepts, such as 'yellow' or 'ball', have been said to involve far-reaching theoretical assumptions" (Rouse, 1987, p.4). Children do not have their own voices in this type of research. If they do not understand or interpret the question 'properly' they are coached until they interpret the question and see the world in the same way the researchers do. Ethnographic methods can allow children a more direct voice in the research project. A competent ethnographer will seek to understand the child's world as the child him/herself understands it, rather than expecting children's understanding of themselves and their worlds to fit into scales and psychometric measures. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to include ethnographic methods, it is recommended as a follow up to this initial stage of research.

Socialization theories

There is a substantial literature on children and sport which is based on social learning perspectives, and these perspectives use terms like 'socializing agents and agencies', 'role learners', 'sex role socialization', and 'social environments' (Hall, Slack, Smith & Whitson, 1991, p.190). Socialization is defined as "the process whereby individuals learn skills, traits, values, attitudes,
norms, and knowledge associated with the performance of present or anticipated social roles" (McPherson & Brown, 1988, p.267; see also Loy & Ingham, 1981). Socialization and social learning theory are essentially psychological concepts, rather than sociological concepts (Hall et al., 1991). Socialization emphasizes the individual, rather than the broader social context. The concept of socialization has been critiqued on several levels. First, socialization assumes children are adults-in-training, are bodies which need to be formed and conditioned by proper 'training' (O'Sullivan et al., 1994). Even updated versions of socialization which position children as active in their own socialization are problematic because they still assume children are learners, adults in the making (Thorne, 1995). Traditional uses of socialization view the 'socialized'[read: children] as passive participants in the socialization process (Hall et al., 1991; O'Sullivan et al., 1994; Thorne, 1995).

The fourth feature of the Prout and James (1990b) paradigm addresses this theoretical and methodological concern:

Children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live. Children are not just the passive subjects of social structures and processes (p.9).

This key feature of the paradigm, viewing children as active in the construction and determination of the their own social lives, is a feature which has been missing from traditional social learning theories, and studies of socialization.

---

4 There has been a movement in sport socialization research away from functionalist uses of socialization and towards socialization research which acknowledges that human beings actively participate in their socialization, and that socialization is "an interactive process through which people
Lastly, socialization has been critiqued because, although there have been numerous studies, the results are inconclusive. According to Hall et al. (1991), "there appears to be no discernible relationship between sports participation and subsequent attitudes, values, self-conceptions or behaviour" (p.190). Lever's (1978) work also supports this conclusion. Lever (1978) suggests that participation in organized competitive team games teaches children what she considers to be valuable life skills, however she clearly notes that no research can support the conclusion that childhood experiences in sport will carry over to adulthood.

There are three components of the sport socialization process --socialization into sport, socialization via sport, and socialization out of sport (Brustad, 1992) -- which will be used to separate and discuss the literature on sport socialization and children.

**Socialization into sport**

This research, determining how and why children are socialized into sport is felt to be important by physical educators because of the belief that "the stability and type of practicing sport during adulthood is strongly determined by socialization experiences during early childhood" (Klein & Liesenhoff, 1982, p.66; Pease & Anderson, 1986). Numerous studies have looked at the role of parents in socializing children into sports (Laasko, 1982; Sack, 1988; Seppanen, 1982; Sergeev, Stolyarov & Gendin, 1988). Hasbrook (1987) has done a study which looks at the relationship between sport participation and social class, however her study involved adolescent females, not children. A critique of this research echoes the critique mentioned above - that the actively connect with others and make decisions that shape their own lives and the social world around them" (Coakley, 1998, p.88). More recent sport socialization research has incorporated this perspective.
children are theorized as passive, they are socialized into sport by their parents. Hasbrook (1982) conducted a study which looked at the reciprocal nature of socialization into sport. The premise of the study was that sociologists of sport have examined if and how much 'significant others' may influence or encourage children's participation in sport but that these researchers had not explored if and how much children may elicit that influence or encouragement from their parents, peers and/or teachers by way of their own behaviour (Hasbrook, 1982).

This study was unique in its attempt to theorize children as active participants in the socialization process. The data from the study suggested the possibility of a reciprocal interaction, but only with the female subjects and their parents (Hasbrook, 1982). Ultimately the work was inconclusive because the data did not "negate the possibility of a unidirectional (i.e., no reciprocity) interpretation of the process" (Hasbrook, 1982, p.150). Although her research was attempting to determine how active children are in the socialization process, her premises about children, based on her location in socialization research, lead her to develop a research methodology which did not account for the lived experiences of children. First of all, her study is open to the critique made by Corsaro (1997) of most research on children; children are always conceptualized in relation to something else such as the family, the school, and so forth. Secondly, her research is "on" children, not "for" children, and her choice of questionnaire type research reflects this distinction. Her study was an empirical quantitative study that failed to ethnographically uncover the lived experiences of children, and the emergent paradigm from Prout and James (1990b) suggests that ethnography is a useful methodology, not only because it gives children a voice in the production of the data, but ethnography also allows the researcher to examine the child's world from within. Later studies by Hasbrook (1993; 1995) incorporate
ethnographic methods to research the lived experiences of children, physicality, masculinity and sexuality (see page 43 of this review).

A final critique is that other researchers have found no direct link between childhood socialization into sport and adult participation in physical activity (Biddle, 1994; Carroll, Hostetter & Eastman, 1994). Carroll et al. (1994) studied the amount of leisure time physical activity for high school students and post-secondary students who were or had been enrolled in physical education courses in high school. They found that high school students who were enrolled in elective physical education courses had higher levels of leisure time physical activity than other high-school students who did not take physical education. Interestingly, this effect was not carried over into the post-secondary sample. Biddle (1994) notes that although popular and common-sense thinking suggests that promoting physical activity to children will affect their participation as adults, there is "little good evidence currently available supporting the notion that motivating children to be active means that they stay active in adulthood" (Biddle, 1994, p.32). One possible reason is that the research on children's participation focuses on their involvement in sport, whereas the research on adult participation focuses on physical activity and exercise (Biddle, 1994). My own search of information on studies which examine physical activity patterns throughout the life cycle turned up several articles, but they all examined physical activity patterns through stages of adulthood (Brown & Frankel, 1993; McPherson, 1984; Rudman, 1989) or measured early childhood participation as a predictor of participation in adolescence (Anderson, Lorenz & Pease, 1986; Butcher, 1985). There is a gap in this research which indicates that there is no clear evidence that early childhood participation in sport and physical activity has an effect on adult participation. This corresponds to the gap identified by Hall et al.
that socialization of values, attitudes, beliefs, and so forth through sport does not necessarily carry over to adult life, there are too many other factors in life which affect the development of our values and beliefs.

**Socialization out of sport**

The literature about socialization out of sport involves psychological as well as sociological reasons for children withdrawing from physical activity participation. A study by Tyler and Duthrie (1979) lists possible reasons for dropping out of competitive hockey: burnout, too much pressure, lack of playing time, and new interests. While some authors suggest that burnout is the reason why 80 to 90% of children drop out of organized sport by age fifteen (Gould, 1993), other researchers demonstrate that it is usually conflicts of interest or interest in new activities which are the most constantly cited reasons for children dropping out of sport (Gould, 1993; Weiss, 1993). Another sport psychology study cautions that "we believe that the search for dropout motives has concentrated on factors within sport, at the expense of milieu-related factors and factors of a developmental nature" (Lindner et al., 1991, p.4). Sociological research on socialization out of sport with respect to children has primarily focused on gender. The research on children, gender and sport will be reviewed in an upcoming section.

**Socialization via sport**

The majority of research on children in sport has been concentrated on this issue of socialization via sport. "The sport domain has often been viewed as a primary socialization vehicle for teaching children interpersonal skills with adults and peers" (Weiss & Duncan, 1992, p.178).
Some of the benefits of sports participation for children are; building character (Tutko, 1989); the inculcation of the values of "efficiency and achievement" (Tyler & Duthrie, 1979, p.50); "the all-round harmonious development of the personality in children" (Stoljarov, Gendin, Sergeev & Falaleev, 1985, p.63); and, "the development of leadership, sportsmanship, and other desirable personality attributes" (Pease & Anderson, 1986, p.3). As previously discussed, there is no clear evidence that socialization through sport is possible (Hall et al., 1991; Lever, 1978).

Another major area of work regarding socialization through sport is in the area of gender. There has been substantial work in this area, specifically with respect to girls (Anderson, Lorenz & Pease, 1986; Bailey, 1993; Evans, 1986; Landers & Fine, 1996; Lever, 1978; Ryan, 1995; Scraton, 1992; Thorne, 1995). The work on gender socialization out of sport is closely linked to the research on gender socialization through sport. The assumption is that the way girls are socialized through sport often leads to their dropping out of sport. Role 'conflict', traditional heterosexual notions of femininity and sexuality, the unequal access to facilities and resources, and the different goals of boys and girls are transmitted through sport and thus lead to girls dropping out of sport. These issues will be addressed in the upcoming section on children, gender, and sport.

Recent work by Hargreaves (1993), in a feminist appropriation of hegemony theory, has argued that "male interests predominate in most sports, and in many of them male hegemony has probably been more complete and more resistant to change than in other areas of culture" (p.179). Consequently male patriarchal interests are maintained through the cultural institution and practice of sport. However, patriarchal interests are not necessarily in the best interests of either men or women. As Hargreaves (1993) points out, "women are oppressed by men in sport, both
men and women are oppressed in sport, and women and men experience freedom in sport" (p.183). The options for women's participation in sport, given that sport currently serves patriarchal hegemonic interests, are; "(1) co-option into a male sphere of activity; (2) a separatist all-female strategy, and; (3) a co-operative venture with men for qualitative new models in which differences in the sexes are unimportant" (Hargreaves, 1993, p.183). As discussed earlier, children hold a weak position of power in society, and have very few resources with which to secure outcomes. Consequently, the second and third option suggested by Hargreaves (1993) are unlikely for children, as they do not have the resources to secure either of these outcomes. So, the only option for girls is co-option into a male sphere of activity. This is problematic in terms of girls participation and socialization because patriarchy is based on male privilege and female subordination (Whitson, 1990), and sport has perpetuated this patriarchal system by providing "an institution that encourages men to identify with other men and provides for the regular rehearsal of such identifications" (Whitson, 1990, p.21). In order to maintain this institution, women and girls are not encouraged to join, and this contributes to girls being socialized out of sport.

Socialization, as previously mentioned, is defined as "the process whereby individuals learns skills, traits, values, attitudes, norms and knowledge associated with the performance of present or anticipated future roles" (McPherson & Brown, 1988, p.267). Hegemony is also concerned with "the many ways in which the lessons of everyday experience become part of popular knowledge, a common sense that offers us 'normal' aspirations and ways of feeling, as

---

5 Gruneau (1988) suggests that power should be viewed as "the capacity of a person or group of persons to employ resources of different types in order to secure outcomes"(p.22).
well as orthodox ideas" (Hall et al., 1991, p.44-45). However, socialization theories fail to direct our attention to the political aspects of culture. Hegemony extends the concerns of socialization theories to include the power relations and historical struggles which underlie our dominant cultural practices, like sport. Hegemony theory allows us to question why certain practices are privileged and whose interests are served by this. What socialization theories take for granted as 'natural', hegemony theory exposes as cultural.

**Summary of the critiques of this sport psychology and socialization research**

The critiques of this research which have been addressed are: 1) the unexamined underlying development ideology which is prevalent in psychological and mainstream socialization research on children in sport; 2) the assumptions underlying socialization theories, that children are seen as passive participants in their own socialization; 3) the focus on the individual in both psychological and socialization theories, at the expense of broader social factors; 4) the use of empiricist, quantitative methodologies which are not neutral, and do not give children a voice in the research process; 5) the underlying assumption that participation in physical activity as a child will increase the likelihood of participation as an adult, and will inculcate good social values which are necessary as an adult; and, 6) that socialization theories naturalize socially constructed dominant practices.

This research will address these critiques both through theoretical concepts and research methods. Myth analysis and discourse analysis⁶ will be used to explore how children are

---

⁶ Myth and discourse are explained in both the glossary, and the upcoming chapter on the case study and form of analysis.
conceptualized in Toronto Parks and Recreation staff training and resource documents. Although discourse theory views the individual as the site upon which discourses are reproduced, use of Foucault's definition of power allows the individual to be active in the production of the network of power - active to resist or active in subjection. The focus on how discourses attempt to regulate and produce sport programmes for children will not negate a discussion of broader social factors. Firstly, childhood is being conceptualized in this thesis as a variable of social analysis which cannot be viewed apart from gender, social class and ethnicity. Secondly, discourse theory is concerned not only with the individual but also how knowledge is power and power/knowledge is productive of reality. In other words the nexus of knowledge and power can create or transform reality for individuals and for society.

**Children, gender and sport**

Children, gender and sport is the most researched area in the sociocultural study of children and sport, although the interest in gender has been a fairly recent development. The interest in gender, children and sport has come primarily from the research which has shown that levels of participation in sport drops off significantly for females only around age 13, or puberty (Brown, 1995; Fasting, 1994; Fitness Canada, 1989; Straw, 1994; Tyler, 1973 as cited in Boutlier & SanGiovanni, 1983, p.109).
Girls and gender research

Sport sociology research focusing on gender and the reasons why girls participation drops at this time have identified several issues. The first is role theory conflict (Boutlier & SanGiovanni, 1983; Fasting, 1994), which assumes that there are different sex roles for girls and boys, that the values and practices of sport are 'masculine' and thus create conflict for girls and their 'feminine' sex roles. Hall (1996) has provided a detailed critique of role theory and functionalist conceptions of gender. One of her critiques is that "functionalist conceptions of gender applied to sport have failed to theorize femininity (and masculinity) as socially constructed, historically specific, and mediated by social class, race, ethnicity and other social categories" (Hall, 1996, p.23). Recent research which examines the socially constructed notion of femininity and sexuality (Burton Nelson, 1994; Cahn, 1994; Gilroy, 1994; Lenskyj, 1990; Lenskyj, 1994) has started to overcome this critique. Issues of femininity and sexuality are related to girls dropping out of sport participation at adolescence, because as Rail (1990) notes, "childhood tomboyism, cross gender wishes, alienation from peers and preference for boys' games were thought to be components of a disease called 'childhood gender nonconformity', which was supposedly a predictor of lesbianism in later life" (p.7).

The second issue is research which identifies different goals and priorities in sport participation between girls and boys (Evans, 1986; Fasting, 1994; Lever, 1978; Thorne, 1995; Williams, 1995). For example, Lever's (1978) work, which included diary keeping by children as well as observation of children's play, lead Lever to conclude that boys engage in competitive play activities to a much greater extent than girls do. She found that girls were more apt to play in cooperative games. Lever's work has been critiqued because she privileges the male gold
standard of competitive games while dismissing the value of cooperative games and activities. The ideology of cooperation as an alternative to the competitive sport model will be discussed in the chapter on children's recreation and competitive sport.

A third issue with respect to girls and sport participation is the research which identifies an unequal distribution of resources for girls sports compared to boys. This research has identified obstacles to girls participating in sport because of lack of access to facilities and appropriate programs (Straw, 1994; Williams, 1995).

A final related body of research has examined sexual harassment of girls and women in and through sport (Brackenridge, 1994; Brackenridge & Kirby, 1997; CAAWS, 1993; Donnelly & Sparks, 1997; Kirby, 1995; Lenskyj, 1992) which has identified sport as an area where athletes, children and adult, are often in subordinate positions to coaches, who are usually male, and are thus in vulnerable positions with respect to sexual abuse.

**Boys and gender research**

The research on boys, gender and sport is closely linked to the research on girls, gender and sport in that a discussion of how sport and physical activity is used to create and maintain traditional notions of femininity cannot be discussed without a corresponding look at how sport maintains traditional notions of masculinity. This work overcomes the limitations of functionalist 'sex-role theories' by addressing and critiquing the cultural, economic, and political basis of 'masculine' sport, and by highlighting how differences between men and women are 'naturalized'. The majority of work on sport and masculinity has been concerned with adults, men and women (Messner, 1985; Messner & Sabo, 1994; Whitson, 1990). Primarily the concern is how sport is
used to celebrate heterosexual masculinity through specific types of physicality — aggression, physical strength, skill, violence — and consequently devalue both 'feminine' types of physicality such as flexibility and grace and women who display 'masculine' types of physicality. Hasbrook's recent research (1993 & 1995) employs ethnography to study an inner-city elementary school. She examines physicality in children, and how physicality is used by the children to produce masculinity and patriarchy. Similarly, Thorne (1995) has also conducted ethnographies at two elementary schools with a focus on how gender is organized and understood by children through their play activities. These studies are unique in that they are ethnographic examinations of children's social worlds. This methodology has permitted these researchers to move beyond the traditional suggestions which have emerged out of socialization theories. For example, Messner and Sabo (1994) suggest, albeit conditionally, integrated sports for children because this might assist in socializing boys to understanding that women can be equal participants, or at least valued participants in sport. They do point out the downside, or limits of equal opportunity, such as giving girls and women equal opportunity will not change sports role in the perpetuation of sexist ideology, as long as sport is judged by the 'male' standard of excellence. However, the initial suggestion of integration is a simplistic suggestion based in social learning theory, which has been critiqued in this literature review. Thorne (1995) and Hasbrook (1993; 1995) provide unique insights into the complexity of gendered constructions of masculinity and femininity, and Hasbrook in particular attempts to discuss how this varies with social class, race and ethnicity.
Children, race and sport

The research on race, children and sport is scarce. Primarily research on race and sport has concentrated on adult, male professional (American) sport. Issues which have been addressed are: categorical analyses of racial composition in sport (McPherson, 1989); stacking in player positions (Coakley, 1998; Hall et al., 1991; McPherson, 1989); discrimination in key positions in the professional sport industry (Hall et al., 1991; Lapchick, 1991; McPherson, 1989); sport participation and education (Harris, 1991; James, 1995; McPherson, 1989; Melnick, Sabo & Vanfossen, 1992); sport as a means for racial minorities to be socially mobile (Coakley, 1998; Fleming, 1991; McPherson, 1989; Melnick, Sabo & Vanfossen, 1992; Parry & Parry, 1991), and; the intersection of race and social class concerns with the provision of private and publicly funded sports programmes, based on concerns about 'social problems' (Pitter & Andrews, 1997).

There has been some research on youth, race and sport (Fleming, 1991; James, 1995; Melnick, Sabo & Vanfossen, 1992; Wilson & Sparks, 1996), but this work has involved teenagers, high-school students, rather than children. Methodologically, the work on race and sport with respect to youth has focused on observation (Fleming, 1991), ethnography (James, 1995); and focus groups (Wilson & Sparks, 1996), as well as interviews (Fleming, 1991). This work is consistent with the emergent paradigm from Prout and James (1990b) in that the youth are categorized as active participants in constructing their racial sporting identities. This research, however, is limited by it's mostly singular focus on race. Social class is occasionally included into the analysis (Fleming, 1991; Pitter & Andrews, 1997; Wilson & Sparks, 1996), as is gender (James, 1995), but generally this work fails to significantly deal with the intersection of race, class, gender and childhood.
Children, social class, and sport

Social class is an important variable of analysis, and the relationship between social class and participation in sport has been well investigated with respect to adults (Boulanger, 1988; Gruneau, 1976; Laberge & Sankoff, 1988; McCutcheon, Curtis & White, 1997). This research can be summarized by the following statement:

For the Canadian adult population, we can summarize it like this: young, well-educated, white males who belong to the professional or managerial occupational categories, and who have relatively high incomes, are the most likely to participate in at least one sport (Hall et al., 1991, p.156).

The finding that one's social class enhances or limits one's likelihood of participating in sport or fitness activities has been reproduced in the United States as well (Coakley, 1998; Eitzen & Sage, 1989). Little, if any, research has been conducted on the relationship between social class, children, and participation in sport. Several studies (Armstrong, 1984; Foley, 1990; Hasbrook, 1986; Hasbrook, 1987) have been conducted on teenagers, or high-school age youth. These studies show that private boarding schools reproduce the white upper class ethic of Muscular Christianity (Armstrong, 1984), that high-school football in small American town serves to reproduce the interests of the dominant white males (Foley, 1990), and Hasbrook (1986; 1987) demonstrates a relationship between social class and sport participation for girls only, but not for boys.

A critical contribution to the work on social class and participation in sport has come from the work of Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu's work demonstrates that the relationship between social class and sport participation is not straightforward, that is, participation in sport (or lack of
participation) cannot be reduced simply to socioeconomic status. Bourdieu argues that there are three factors which determine the distribution of sporting practices among and within the social classes; economic capital, spare time, and cultural capital (Hall et al., 1991). Economic capital and spare time are self-evident in terms of distributing sporting practices among the social classes (i.e., the time and money required to play polo, or to go yachting). It is Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital which has been an important contribution to the understanding of the relationship between social class and sport participation. Cultural capital is a concept which recognizes that "some kinds of knowledge are much more socially prestigious than others" (Hall et al., 1991, p.163). Consequently, knowledge of and proficiency in certain types of sports (e.g., downhill skiing, sailing) confers a higher social standing in comparison with other types of sports (e.g., boxing).

Another major contribution of Bourdieu's work is the recognition of how these social inequalities, in terms of sporting (among other) practices, preferences and tastes become embodied. Bourdieu's concept of the body habitus reflects the embodiment of social status and location. According to Laberge and Sankoff (1988)

A body *habitus* is made up of all the dispositions one has towards one's body, themselves determined and conditioned by the material conditions of existence.

Body *habitus* is revealed by the manner in which the body is carried (upright or listless), groomed, nourished, and cared for... (p. 271).

Research by Laberge and Sankoff (1988) and Boulanger (1988) illustrates the differences in body habitus between the various social classes, and in the case of Laberge and Sankoff (1988) their study is limited to the differences between women of various social classes. The evidence of this
research clearly indicates differences between the different social classes in terms of how they view their bodies and how they treat their bodies, specifically in regards to sport and fitness participation. Neither this research, nor the concept of body habitus, has not been extended to include an analysis of children, social class, body habitus, and sport participation.

**Summary of the critiques of social class, race and gender research on children**

Although the work on children, gender, race, social class and sport is diverse, there are several criticisms or weaknesses in these bodies of literature. Firstly, there is a general lack of examination of the socially constructed category of childhood. This is evident particularly in the work on gender. Thorne (1995) is the only researcher who acknowledges an understanding of the socially constructed nature of childhood, yet she does not incorporate this perspective at all in her work. It informed her ethnographic position, but not the interpretation of her results. For example, she discusses the use of gender separating terms like 'boys and girls' by teachers. She notes the use of terms like 'big boy' or 'big girl' as terms of praise, especially in kindergarten and grade one, and the ironic use of the phrase 'ladies and gentlemen' by teachers in the higher grades (five and six). She discusses this use of terms with respect to gender, and how it reinforces gender separation and the creation of gendered identities. However, she does not address the development ideology which underscores these terms. These terms suggest growing up, or

---

7 Although there are specific differences and details from the research, the general difference between the lower classes and the upper classes in terms of their relation to their bodies is that the lower classes tend to view their bodies as a means to an end, while the upper classes view their bodies as an end in itself.
adolescence as having characteristics which children should strive for. These terms constantly serve as reminders to children that their behaviours are 'childish', and need to be changed so they are more 'adultlike', and they are praised for developmental behaviour with phrases like 'you're a big girl now'. The opposite of praise along these lines, is the commonly heard chastisement 'stop being so childish'.

Secondly, methodologically, there are many progressive examples of researchers using ethnography and other research techniques which give children an active voice in the research process. For example, Mayall (1993) conducted ethnographic research on children in order to discuss the division of labour in health care between children, parents and teachers, and the basic premise of her ethnographic position was that she was conducting research 'for' children, not 'on' them. Her research methods included strategies for reducing her power position, both as an adult and as a researcher, over the children, as well as opportunities for the children to comment on her interpretation of their discussions. What is lacking methodologically in the current sport studies on children, race, social class and gender is an understanding of childhood as a dimension of critical sociocultural analysis. The second key feature of Prout and James (1990b) emergent paradigm states that;

  Childhood is a variable of social analysis. It can never be entirely divorced from other variables such as class, gender, or ethnicity. Comparative and cross-cultural analysis reveals a variety of childhoods rather than a single and universal phenomenon (p.8).

Lastly, this research on children in gender, race, social class and sport has not incorporated postmodern theories of the body, which position the body as the central site upon
which power is invested. Hasbrook (1993; 1995) discusses how children use their bodies to express physicality and sexuality, however she does not extend this discussion to include power, and how power is invested through physical activity in children's bodies. Nor has the physical child's body been conceptualized as a site for the liberation of forces, a contested terrain, as a place to resist the dominant hegemonic status quo. The conceptualization of children's sport and physical activity for the sole purpose of enhancing the experience of childhood⁸, rather than as a training ground for future life as an adult, has not been explored.

**Children, health, sport and the ideology of production**

Interest and research on children and sport has expanded from strictly socialization and developmental issues to include health concerns. The 'problem' of children's inactivity has been cited by numerous researchers (Bamford, 1994; Brown, 1995; CAHPERD, n.d.; DiNubile, 1993; Shalala, 1997). According to CAHPERD, "four in ten Canadian children have at least one risk factor for heart disease - reduced fitness due to an inactive lifestyle" (p.1). And Shalala (1997), in the United States, adds, "Childhood and adolescence are critical times to lay the foundation for lifelong physical activity" (p.4). However research on physical activity patterns have shown that children and youth are the most active segment of the Canadian population (Active Living Alliance for children and youth, 1992), but there is a steady decline in physical activity through

⁸ Although use of the word childhood is problematic because it is produced by an oppressive discourse, there is no alternative or resistant term to use which conveys an understanding of this period of the life course.
adolescence to adulthood (Active Living Alliance for children and youth, 1992; Allison, 1995; Statistics Canada, 1995). Given that children and youth are the most active segment of the Canadian population, the question of why inactivity has been problematized needs to be addressed. Research with adults has indicated numerous health benefits associated with a physically active lifestyle (Meredith, 1988), particularly reduced incidence of coronary heart disease. However, with respect to children, Meredith (1988) notes that;

After a thorough review of related articles, Montoye (1986) concluded that with the exception of body fatness, cardiorespiratory fitness has not been shown to be an important factor in reducing risk factors of CHD [coronary heart disease] in children (p. 182).

Consequently, the problematizing of child and youth physical inactivity needs to be critically addressed in terms of the underlying assumptions, discourses, and the nexus of power and knowledge. The discourse around lifelong involvement and promoting physical activity in children so they will be active as adults needs to be addressed. There is no substantial evidence that childhood involvement will lead to adult involvement, as participation rates for both male and female youth decline steadily towards adulthood. According to Meredith (1988) there are still questions about the health benefits of physical activity for children, and if and how these benefits carry over into adulthood, as well as the determinants of carry-over of children's physical activity behaviour patterns into adulthood. The promotion of mass participation physical activity programs by government agencies has been critiqued by physical educators and health promoters as a way to elevate "the personal etiology of illness over the societal-structural etiology of illness" (Ingham, 1985, p.50; see also Crawford, 1980; Harvey, 1988; White, Young & Gillett, 1995).
This individualized ideology of healthism is based in historically middle-class 'gentlemanly' values like collective effort, self-denial, leadership, recognition of authority, sportsmanship/ fair play, and the good of the group valued over the good of the individual (Armstrong, 1984; Hargreaves, 1986; Rigauer, 1981; White, Young & Gillett, 1995). This focus on the individual fails to account for the structural factors which affect health, factors like socio-economic status. Ingham (1985) notes that:

If jogging is not for you, then there are other routes to fitness - routes which conveniently ignore the fact that millions of people who hover around and below the poverty line cannot afford ten-speeds, tennis racquets, and memberships in health fitness centers. And as an active rather than passive lifestyle, it exhorts us to burn off calories while denying State dependents the food they need to survive (p.50).

These middle-class values historically have been linked with the moral development of middle-class male youth, through sport, in order to prepare them for their roles as productive citizens and leaders of lower class workers (Armstrong, 1984; Hargreaves, 1986; McIntosh, 1979). The developmental and socialization research has already been critiqued in this review (see page 40) with respect to children and sport however the 'production' ideology, or the sport-work relationship needs to be addressed.

Rigauer (1981) critiques the myth that sport does not have the elements of work because sport is supposedly playful, joyful and has no clear purpose. The ideologies of sports, according to Rigauer (1981), function most importantly to cover up the work-like structure of sports. The link between childhood sport, and the inculcation of values, and a future role in the workforce has
been made by several researchers (Berlage & College, 1982; Fine, 1989; Orlick, 1986; Stoljarov et al., 1985). Berlage and College (1982) argue that children's sports resemble training grounds for the adult world of business, and the evidence from their study points "to the fact that children's competitive team sports are socializing agents for corporate America" (p.323). Fine (1989) identifies elements of both work and play in his study of Little League baseball. Both of these studies identify elements of work in children's sport, however neither study questions the power relations behind this in any detail.

All of this work, including Rigauer (1981), is premised on socialization theories, which have been critiqued earlier in this paper. There is no clear evidence that the values or lessons learned in childhood sport are carried into adulthood, nor are the health benefits clearly carried over. The explanation that these values are "basic to American society" (Berlage & College, 1982, p.324) and are present in sport in order to train children for their future adult roles fails to address the 'naturalness' of these values. These explanations are grounded in the developmental ideology, thereby excluding any questioning of what a child is and what impact these 'work values' have on children, and childhood. It is also interesting that 'work values' related to sport are celebrated, and as Cantelon (1981) argues, contribute to child labour in elite sport being overlooked as an issue. The ethical and moral arguments which are raised to defend children's participation in highly competitive organized sport, can be summarized by three of the most common arguments; the assumed positive 'work values' which are learned through competitive sport are "the development of self discipline, the ability to rationally organize one's life and the cultivation of a personal moral and ethical code which is seen to be 'universally good'" (Cantelon, 1981, p. 17).
Donnelly's (1997b) recent work examines the issue of child labour in sport. Donnelly (1997b) documents the striking parallels between exploitive child labour and children's involvement in high performance sport. Although Donnelly's (1997b) premise that "child labour become an issue when we do not think of childhood as a distinct stage in development" (p.396) is problematic because of it's link to the ideology of development, his suggestion that the 'ideal' would be a "child-centred system in which parents, coaches, administrators, physicians and educators worked together in the best interests of the child athlete under the auspices of the sport governing body" (p.401) is nearly ideal. What is lacking in his conception of a child-centred system is the child him/herself, and the child's critical role in discussions about what is in his/ her best interests.

This thesis will extend this discussion of 'production' discourses beyond the concerns of socialization toward a concern of how these discourses affect 'Being'. Being is, according to Heidegger (1993), the most universal and emptiest of concepts, and the term Being resists any attempt at definition. For this thesis the term Being will be used to express the opposite of the disciplined, subjugated, technologized body. Being will represent the ability, or state, of self-emergence. Central to the discussion of 'Being' is Heidegger's work on technology and being. Technology, for Heidegger, is "not mechanical inventions, chemical manipulations, advanced transportation, communication, and the like; these are but the products of technology" (Pronger, 1997, p.152). Heidegger looks at the Greek term "techne" in order to understand technology. According to Alderman (1978), Heidegger interprets the term 'techne' "as signifying any way in which beings can be made manifest" (p.44). So for Heidegger, modernity has been characterized by a technology which is "a pervasive modern (Western) disposition towards beings that has
engendered scientific and technical discovery/ function" (Pronger, 1997, p.151). The concern is that this modern technological way of being fails to attend to the essence of being human, and therefore fails to appreciate what it is to be human (Pronger, 1997). Technology "is the unique mode of making beings manifest which provokes 'nature' into delivering what is required and demanded by man" (Alderman, 1978, p.46). Modern technology reveals beings in such a way that they can be used for something else, as resources. Beings are either ends or means, in the technological view. The danger, according to Alderman (1978), is that "ends become means to yet further ends - ends that are posited by man. In this way we see that in the technological doctrine of Being, Being becomes subordinated to the goals and purposes of man" (p.45). The technological body then, is akin to the docile-utile body. The body is disciplined and rendered useful to the production needs of capitalist society. As discussed previously, both Gramsci's notion of hegemony and Foucault's paradox of disciplining bodies, highlight the possibilities for resistance and liberation. Being is the term used in this thesis to represent these possibilities.

This thesis will examine how the discourses of childhood which are prevalent in the Toronto Parks and Recreation documents can potentially serve to make children's bodies useful to the needs of society, rather than enhancing the experience of what it means to be a child. This thesis will argue that Toronto Parks and Recreation children's programmes, which profess to develop children into 'good' productive, healthy adults, actually disciplines children's bodies and transforms their bodies into useful, productive things. This thesis will also examine potential opportunities which exist in the Parks and Recreation documents which would allow children to

---

9 Alderman's exclusionary and sexist use of the term 'man' is problematic with respect to this thesis, because my analysis of childhood is inextricable from gender and race. Alderman's work will be applied, in this thesis, to boys and girls inclusive.
resist or transform their recreation experiences. Sport can be transformed into a practice which enables children to produce their own childhood(s) and senses of Being, rather than sport being a practice which is designed to transform children into something useful.

**Summary of the literature review**

This review of the literature has introduced the concept of a socially constructed category of childhood, a category which has not been utilized in sport research. Traditional assumptions about children are based in a development ideology, an ideology which views children as not yet fully developed adults - physically, mentally, and socially. The work by contemporary 'childhood' scholars will be extended in this thesis by incorporating postmodern theories of the body. Postmodern theorists of the body argue that the body is the central site upon which power is invested and discourses are reproduced and regulated. Postmodern discourse theorists view knowledge/power as productive, capable of creating and transforming reality. The concepts of children, childhood, and the child's body as socially constructed will be applied to an examination of children's sport.

Research on children and sport to date has not included an examination of what a child is or what it means to be a child. For the most part, the awareness of childhood as a variable of social analysis is completely lacking from all the research. Although postmodern theories of the body have been used in sport research involving adults, these theories have not yet been applied to
a discussion of children and sport.

Methodologically sport research on children has primarily been quantitative and empirical. Contemporary 'childhood' scholars have suggested an emergent paradigm (see Appendix A) for the study of children, and this paradigm proposes qualitative methods for studying children, such as ethnography and discourse analysis. Although a few researchers have used ethnographic methods in the study of children, these studies have not included childhood as a variable of social analysis intertwined within gender, ethnicity and social class. This study employs qualitative methods which uncover the discourses and myths which circulate through the Parks and Recreation documents. The following chapter will introduce and describe these methods in more detail.
Chapter Three

The Case Study: Toronto Parks and Recreation staff training documents

Introduction

Parks and Recreation in Toronto has existed in various forms for about 100 years. Many of the early parks and recreation initiatives originated with private citizens, or private citizen groups, and were then taken over by the municipality. For example, the first supervised playgrounds in Toronto came about because of the National Council of Women. This group was the driving force behind Canada's first supervised playgrounds (Wright, 1984). The City of Toronto's public school board was one of the first in Canada to utilize school facilities and grounds after-hours for recreation, starting just after the turn of the century (Wright, 1984). Playgrounds supervised by the school board were opened in 1908, and the City of Toronto took over the operation of these playgrounds in 1912 (Andrew, Harvey & Dawson, 1994; Wright, 1984). Allan Gardens in Toronto is another example of a park which was donated and originally maintained by a private citizen until the City took over responsibility for it in 1888 (Andrew et al., 1994). Until 1945, playgrounds and recreation services in Toronto were administered by the Board of Education, and public parks were administered by the Parks Department. The McCallum Report on Community Centres was presented to City Council in 1945, and this report's recommendations included the following: "that all Board of Education centres be turned over to the Parks Department for operation; that the Parks department continue to use school facilities even though they were not entirely suitable; and that any new school buildings should be constructed on the basis of use for child education and community recreation services"
(McFarland, 1970, p.46). The McCallum Report also recommended that a "Recreation Director" be appointed and an advisory council established (McFarland, 1970). This report was accepted and the recommendations were implemented, and this lead to the creation of the department which exists today - the Department of Parks and Recreation.

There were several reasons for choosing the Department of Parks and Recreation in Toronto as the case study for this thesis. Firstly, the City of Toronto1 is a large, and highly diverse community. According to the 1991 census, the City of Toronto has a population of 635,395 people (Employee Handbook, p. 3), and Toronto's first state of the City report (1993) shows four demographic trends in the city; an increasing population; an aging population; changing family structures, and; ethno-racial diversity (p.8). According to this report, Toronto is a highly diverse, multicultural city with over 100 languages and dialects spoken by its citizens, and over one-third of Toronto residents identify a language other than English or French as their mother-tongue (Healthy City Toronto, 1993). More generally, it was noted that 50% of all immigrants and refugees coming to Canada settle in Southern Ontario (Healthy City Toronto, 1993, p.13). Secondly, in order to provide services to this large population, the Department of Parks and Recreation is, itself, large and highly organized. This benefits my study because the Department has to provide training and resources to all of its staff across the city. The Department maintains hundreds of facilities, including 31 Community recreation centres, 210

---

1 For this thesis, the City of Toronto will refer to the original city which existed prior to the megacity which was created in January 1998 with the amalgamation of all the jurisdictions of Metropolitan Toronto into a new city, Toronto. As the amalgamation process is currently ongoing, this thesis will focus on the previous City of Toronto Department of Parks and Recreation only, as the new Toronto parks and recreation services have not yet been amalgamated or implemented.
playgrounds, and 413 parks (Employee Handbook, p.3; Healthy City Toronto, 1993). All programmes are offered free of charge and are viewed as essential services (Employee Handbook; Healthy City Toronto, 1993; Pirk & Foley, 1995). In terms of staff, the Department of Parks and Recreation has approximately 550 permanent staff and over 1500 part-time staff (Employee Handbook, p.3). The documents used in this case study are the training and resource manuals provided to part-time employees, and, although no assumptions or conclusions can be made about their effect on employees or how the employees interpret or utilize the information within these manuals, the fact that the Department must\(^2\) train and provide resources to a large, diverse group of staff who must service such a large and diverse community, makes the analysis of the discourses in these manuals an important task. These documents present the Department of Parks and Recreation's official guidelines and expectations for all the staff who work throughout the City of Toronto, and therefore the question of whether these documents adequately represent the diversity of the staff and of Toronto's population is important to answer.

**Theoretical foundation and form of analysis**

This thesis will draw upon particular insights and theories that have been developed by some scholars in the area of critical cultural studies. Critical cultural studies will be defined in this thesis as a tradition which "treats culture and systems of meaning in connection with questions of

\(^2\) Staff training is conducted to ensure some consistency in staff behaviour and adherence to the policies and procedures of the Department of Parks and Recreation. Staff training also provides the basis of legal protection for the Department in the event of inappropriate staff actions.
power and politics" (Alasuutari, 1995, p.2). While cultural studies resists definition (Johnson, 1983), there are key premises which are relevant to this thesis. These premises will be listed here and discussed in detail throughout this chapter, including: a) a critique of empirical, positivist methods of research; b) the critical role of language, texts, and representation with regards to meaning, knowledge and power; c) the appropriation of the most useful research methods and theoretical perspectives from academic disciplines; d) the importance of discourse(s), particularly in light of Foucault's definition and use of the term; e) the acknowledgement and embrace of multiple meanings and multiple interpretations; f) the premise that meaning(s) are a product of culture, are variable, and are historical, and; g) the understanding that researchers are engaged in producing meaning, not merely exposing meaning.

According to Graham, Doherty and Malek (1992) there are three major tenets of modern social science which have been challenged by critical cultural theorists, among others; "the assumptions of a sovereign subject or actor; the acceptance of a correspondence theory of truth; and the formulation of the idea of progress" (p.14). The first assumption of an independent actor as the basic component of society (Graham et al., 1992) has been critiqued and challenged, which has lead to an increase in new ways of thinking about society and social worlds. It is argued, through the theory of discourse, "that individuality itself is the site, as it were, on which socially produced and historically established discourses are reproduced and regulated" (O'Sullivan et al., 1994, p.94). The second assumption which has been critiqued, is that there is one truth, and "acceptance of a correspondence theory of truth means accepting the idea that knowledge is a representation of reality" (Graham et al., 1992, p.15). A key element in this critique of a correspondence theory of truth is the role of language. The work of linguist Ferdinand de
Saussure, first published around 1916, has provided an important part of the basis for this thinking in critical cultural studies. Saussure's important contribution was to distinguish langue (language) and parole (speech). Langue is the underlying, abstract system of signs and conventions which structures all speech acts (parole) (O'Sullivan et al., 1994. See also Hall, 1997b). This recognition, that speech acts were constrained by an underlying system lead to new understandings and conceptualizations about language and its purpose. For example, it is now argued that "any representation of the world expressed through the medium of language cannot be objective or disinterested in any ultimate sense for, ..., it is culture and not some independent world of objects which is encoded in language" (Graham et al., 1992, p.16). This understanding of culture as embedded in language, rather than language representing the 'truth' has lead some critical cultural scholars to elevate "language and text to a key position in any discipline which aspires to study social phenomena" (Graham et al., 1992, p.16). The idea that the world, and the 'truth' are waiting to be discovered through study has been rejected, and the belief that the world and the objects in it that we study are socially constructed has been embraced. The third critique of modernist research identified by Graham et al. (1992) is based on the modernist assumption of progress, that we are progressing closer to an understanding of the 'truth'. The notion of progressive stages of development, particularly in regards to developing an understanding of "the" truth, has been replaced with the belief that researchers should recognize many voices and many interpretations of progress (see discussion below of Johnson's critiques of textual research).
**Language and text(s)**

The critique of modern social science presented earlier in this chapter suggests that the role of language and texts are critical elements which must be studied and discussed in any social inquiry. Language and texts do not represent an objective, independent social world, which research uncovers. Rather language, texts and knowledge themselves are socially and culturally constructed. As Haraway (1991) notes "language is not about description, but about commitment" (p. 214). This reflects the constructed nature of language in that when we speak or write something, we are committing ourselves to a position, contributing to a discourse. This clearly has profound implications for the study of texts, but also for a researcher who writes about a study of texts. In writing this chapter, and this thesis, I am committing myself through text to particular discourses. My commitment, through this text, is to enter into the discourses of childhood in the Parks and Recreation documents, and to critically expose particular myths that circulate in the texts, and to subvert dominant discourse(s) which convey the myths. My goal in so doing is to present a resistant (or emergent) perspective about children and their involvement in sport, in contrast to the dominant perspective which currently circulates in the literature on sport and children. I am seeking to subvert the dominant discourse(s) in order to challenge the dominant meanings of what it is to be a child, and what sport does for children. While I am producing a discourse through this thesis, as all researchers do, it is a discourse which seeks to expose myths and discuss the discourse(s) which convey these myths.

---

3 The use of myth here relates to the definition by Roland Barthes, which is markedly different from other theoretical uses of the term. According to O'Sullivan et al. (1994), Barthes definition is that "myth refers to a chain of concepts widely accepted throughout a culture, by which its members conceptualize or understand a particular topic or part of their social experience"(p.286).
Text-based studies are one of the three main types of research models in cultural studies (Johnson, 1983). The other two models are; a) production-based research, which focuses on how and where texts are produced - what is the process of production and what is the organization which produced the texts about, and; b) studies of lived culture (the audience) (Johnson, 1983). Johnson (1983) points out that each method on its own gives an incomplete account, however trying to include all three models is equally problematic. With respect to text-based studies, Johnson (1983) has pointed out two requirements, or suggestions, that are necessary for hooking up "with the production and readership perspectives" (p.80). Although this thesis will not attempt to do that, future research into the production of these documents and/or research on how staff interpret and utilize the documents should be connected to this initial stage. The first recommendation is the reading of a text "has to be as open or multi-layered as possible, identifying preferred positions or frameworks certainly, but also alternative readings and subordinated frameworks, even if these can only be discerned as fragments, or as contradictions in the dominant forms" (Johnson, 1983, p.80). The second recommendation is that analysts of texts have to move beyond evaluating the text as good/bad, and "the aspiration to text-analysis as an 'objective science'" (Johnson, 1983, p.80). Both of these recommendations for textual analysis will be taken up by this researcher - however this will affect, positively I believe, the type of research that is produced. If in approaching a text a researcher must be open to the multiple voices and interpretations of that text, and must not attempt to provide a single 'objective' reading as scientific research often professes to do, then the goal of this type of research will be quite different from that of modernist social science research. Bruce and Greendorfer (1994) point out
that for several types of research, including postmodern and critical cultural studies research, the merit of the research should be based on the researcher's ability to write about their research credibly, within the assumptions of their paradigms — rather than producing valid, reliable, reproduceable research which provides answers to the 'truth'. Reproduceable research is impossible under these conditions because the analysis of the same texts by different researchers should result in different interpretations. The distinction between these research goals is expressed by Graham et al. (1992) through the differentiation of 'enquiry' versus 'conversation'.

   In enquiry the 'end' is all that matters and a map can guide that seekers to the predetermined destination of the 'truth'...Conversation is quite different. In conversation the ultimate goal disappears and the travelling becomes important simply for its own sake (p.18).

In order to generate a conversation about the Parks and Recreation texts, I will be using Barthes (1973) framework for uncovering myths. This framework will expose some of the myths of childhood that circulate in these texts as well as how they are negotiated and mediated within the texts. Secondly, I will be looking at how the myths are conveyed by particular discourses, what the implications are in terms of power and knowledge, and what limits and contraints are on the meanings and understandings of the texts by virtue of the discourse(s) they are engaged in circulating.
Myth

Barthes' work on myth and myth analysis will be drawn upon throughout this thesis. Barthes (1973) use of the term myth differs significantly from other uses of the term, which are associated with naturalizing culture and presenting stories about human truths. Barthes use of the term can be understood as follows, "myth refers to a chain of concepts widely accepted throughout a culture, by which its members conceptualize or understand a particular topic or part of their social experience" (O'Sullivan et al., 1994, p.286). And, an important part of Barthes' use of the term is the understanding that "myth is a type of speech chosen by history: it cannot possibly evolve from the 'nature' of things" (Barthes, 1973, p.110). Barthes' definition and use of myth is clearly connected to the premise mentioned that knowledge and texts are socially produced. The importance of myth is that it seeks to make the cultural appear natural, inherent, and commonsensical and the process of demythologizing involves reading against the grain of history and culture and exposing the production of meaning (Makaryk, 1993, p.529). Consequently, the process of demythologizing is also linked to one of the fundamental goals of critical cultural studies, which is to be "concerned with the how of representation, with how language produces meaning" (Hall, 1997a, p.6).

Barthes' (1973) framework for myth relies heavily on the theoretical approach of semiotics. Semiotics is the "study of the social production of meaning from sign systems" (O'Sullivan et al., 1994, p.281). There are two concepts which constitute a sign, according to

---

4 Barthes use of the semiotic meaning of myth is presented by O'Sullivan et al. (1994) in comparison to the traditional ritual/anthropologic use of the term and the literary use of the term. The semiotic use of the term myth differs significantly from the other two uses of the term myth, most notably in that the semiotic use recognizes myth as culture-specific, historically-specific, taken-for-granted, and its prime function is to make the cultural appear natural.
Saussure, the signifier and the signified (Barthes, 1973; O'Sullivan et al., 1994). The signifier is the physical form of the sign as it is perceived by our senses and the signified is the mental concept of what it refers to (O'Sullivan et al., 1994). According to Barthes (1973), myth contains these three elements (the signifier, the signified and the sign), however myth is "a peculiar system, in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it is a second-order semiological system" (p.114).

Because myth is a semiological system, it is open to the critiques made of semiotics. Most of the critiques of semiotics are based on the structuralist use of semiotics which "refuse the very idea of essential or intrinsic meaning, together with the notion that individual texts or individual people are the source of the meanings they generate" (O'Sullivan et al., 1994, p.302). Critics of the early structuralist work expose the goal of semiotics, which is the project of a 'science of meaning', as impossible to achieve. It is impossible to achieve because of the recognition of "the necessarily interpretive nature of culture and the fact that interpretations never produce a final moment of absolute truth" (Hall, 1997b, p.42). Barthes' method, however, is "much more loosely and interpretively applied" (Hall, 1997b, p.42). Nonetheless, there are some limitations to strictly using myth analysis. Issues of power are not addressed by semiotics (Hall, 1997b), as the main concern of semiotics is to expose how meaning is conveyed and produced through language and texts. Barthes himself argues that "if the alienation of society still demands the demystification of languages...the direction this combat must take is not, is no longer, that of critical decipherment but that of evaluation" (Barthes, 1977, p.168). The use of myth analysis is important in this project, as its goals are compatible with those raised in the review of the literature. The socially constructed category of childhood, and the assumptions contained within this category, have been
naturalized. An important aspect of cultural studies is that it "treats culture and systems of meaning in connection with questions of power and politics" (Alasuutari, 1995, p.2). Consequently it is necessary to investigate not only the meanings which are conveyed by myths but also to make links to the issues of power and knowledge. The issues of power and knowledge, as critical to understanding the production of meaning and representation will be addressed through the use of discourse analysis. According to Hall (1997a), "the discursive approach is more concerned with the effects and consequences of representation - its 'politics'") (p.6). The link between myth and discourse is that myths are conveyed by discourse(s).

**Discourse**

The concept of discourse, as with many of the terms and concepts used in this thesis, is defined differently among various academic disciplines. For this thesis, it is the concept of discourse that has been developed by Foucault which will be used. Foucault's 'discourse' is closely linked to knowledge, and consequently to power: "Discourse is the first representation of thought. As such, discourse and knowledge are closely related to each other. Knowledge is like a language whose every word has been examined and verified" (Cousins & Hussain, 1984, p.27). The discursive approach, based on Foucault's work,

examines not only how language and representation produce meaning, but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates conduct, makes up or constructs identities and subjectivities, and defines the way certain things are represented, thought about, practiced and studied (Hall, 1997a, p.6).
The inclusion of discourse analysis will extend the myth analysis to include questions about power and knowledge, and how particular discourse(s) construct, constrain, and limit what myths are conveyed about children, childhood, and sport at this particular moment in history.

**Role of the researcher**

My role as a researcher needs to be discussed since one of the main features of the tradition of cultural studies is "its reflexive even self-conscious mood" (Johnson, 1983, p.9). The purpose of my research is to enter into the discourses and myths of the manuals that I am studying and try to 'demythologize' and make manifest certain assumptions, which have to date been taken-for-granted. However, in doing so, and in writing about my interpretations, I am producing my own discourses of childhood. This dilemma has been raised by Prout and James (1990b) in their emergent paradigm. The sixth key feature of the paradigm states:

- Childhood is a phenomenon in relation to which the double hermeneutic of the social sciences is acutely present. That is to say, to proclaim a new paradigm of childhood sociology is also to engage in and respond to the process of reconstructing childhood in society (p.9).

My goal, and my commitment, through this discourse, is not to proclaim a new paradigm of childhood, but is to contribute to a discourse which seeks to denaturalize and demystify childhood.

A second concern for the researcher is the issue of locatedness. For some critical cultural studies and postmodern researchers the issue of locatedness is problematic because "in theory,
deconstructionist postmodernism stands against the ideal of disembodied knowledge and declares that ideal to be a mystification and an impossibility" (Bordo, 1993, p.225). Susan Bordo (1993) goes on to distinguish between a 'modernist' position, which is defined as a 'view-from-nowhere'
and a 'postmodernist' position which she calls the 'dream of everywhere'. Bordo (1993) critiques the postmodern goal of 'becoming multiplicity' through the use of the metaphor of the body. Bordo argues that "if the body is a metaphor for our locatedness in space and time and thus for the finitude of human perception and knowledge, then the postmodern body is no body at all" (Bordo, 1993, p.229). Bordo (1993) cautions that deconstructionist postmodern researchers must be aware that this ideal, of 'becoming multiplicity', "obscures the located, limited, inescapably partial, and always personally invested nature of human 'story making'" (p. 228).

Consequently, in order to be reflexive about my own locatedness, I am viewing my project much as an ethnographer should view his/her position while observing or participating within a particular culture. My entrance into and examination of the discourses and myths of the texts, by virtue of being observed, changes them, but my conversation about what I find is also grounded in my own body, my own locatedness in space and time. While I may seek to expose multiple and heterogenous meanings from the texts, I cannot separate my work from my self, nor can I escape the limits of my locatedness.

5 The Archimedean view-from-nowhere is the goal of modernist researchers, that they stand outside the phenomena they are studying, and that the researcher holds a position of objectivity.
**Personal rationale and locatedness**

My interest in this research has developed not only out of my academic endeavours, but has been motivated by my practical experiences. I spent a great deal of my time as a participant in Parks and Recreation programmes and I eventually worked at Toronto Parks and Recreation facilities. As I mentioned in the introduction, a particular experience teaching sport to children at Toronto Parks and Recreation sparked my interest in this topic. At Toronto Parks and Recreation I worked not only with children, but in various adult sport and fitness programmes, as well as summer programmes for seniors. I was also involved as a City employee, for several years, in the yearly staff training sessions. More recently, I have been involved in managing a summer camp program for children. All of my experiences in delivering physical recreation programs have contributed to my interest in this subject and also have contributed to my personal and social location. However, I must also include my social location in these programmes. As a participant and as an employee, I attended Parks and Recreation facilities in a white, middle-class neighbourhood in Toronto. My participation as a child was voluntary -- I was never left at Toronto Parks and Recreation as an alternative to daycare. My experiences as a participant and as an employee reflect the experiences of a white, middle-class girl and women, who lived in a white middle-class neighbourhood.
Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined information which contextualizes the case study, not only in terms of the documents chosen for study, but also in terms of how they are studied. This chapter, and the previous literature review form the basis which lead me to interrogate particular myths of childhood which circulate throughout the Parks and Recreation documents. The next chapter exposes the myth that recreation for children is competitive sport, as opposed to other forms of physical activity. Two discourses will be discussed as contributing to the circulation of this myth; the discourses of patriarchy and capitalism.
Chapter Four

The myth(s) of children's recreation:

Children's recreation is competitive sport

Introduction

Although there are a number of myths about children's recreation programmes which circulate in the Parks and Recreation documents, only two of these myths will be examined. Firstly, it will be argued that a predominant myth about children's recreation is that children's recreation has become synonymous with competitive sports. This myth is not simply a representation of the ideology of competition, although this myth is a carrier of that ideology, because competitive sport programs are taken-for-granted as the most appropriate form for children's recreation and the dominance of this competitive sport model is the result of historical and cultural struggles. This chapter will examine this myth. A related myth which serves to sustain this myth that children's recreation is competitive sport, is the myth that participation in sports develops children. This myth, and the discourses which convey the myth, will be examined in the next chapter.

The myth that children's recreation is competitive sport will be exposed in this chapter. However, before proceeding to that it is necessary to define the term recreation, as it is a term which is often used interchangeably with the term leisure. Kelly (1996) defines leisure in a broad sense and confines the term recreation to a much more specific usage. For Kelly (1996), "recreation is defined as voluntary non-work activity that is organized for the attainment of
personal and social benefits including restoration and social cohesion" (p.27). Thus Kelly's definition of recreation has some important characteristics which define it from leisure. First there is the organized, programmatic nature of recreation. Second, Kelly (1996) includes the idea of the attainment of social benefits through recreation as an important characteristic of recreation, in comparison to leisure. For Kelly (1996) leisure activities may be destructive to the self or to society (i.e., drug use, drinking alcohol, vandalism etc. may be leisure activities for some) but recreational activities must have some intended personal and social benefit. Kelly's (1996) definition of recreation appears to be akin to the official definitions of recreation used in Ontario. In the Toronto Parks and Recreation Employee Handbook letter to new employees, it states "Arnold Toynbee wrote 'to be able to fill leisure intelligently is the last product of civilization'. Leisure time is an integral part of each person's daily life and our goal is to provide the best recreation services in the City of Toronto" (p.2). This mirrors the official definition of recreation from the non-profit organization Parks and Recreation Ontario, which is that recreation "includes all of those activities in which individuals choose to participate in their leisure time and is not confined solely to sports and physical recreation programs, but includes artistic, creative, cultural, social, and intellectual activities" (Parks and Recreation Ontario, 1998). Also, in terms of the positive personal and social benefits which are an important element of Kelly's (1996) definition, Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation (OMTR) have compiled a document titled The Benefits of Parks and Recreation: A Catalogue. This document includes benefit statements based on evidence from the literature pertaining to the areas of personal benefits, social benefits, economic benefits and the environmental benefits of parks and recreation programmes and services. These benefit statements have been utilized by
Toronto Parks and Recreation to justify its status as an essential service (H. Pirk, lecture, Oct. 24, 1995).

**Children's recreation is competitive sport**

The Parks and Recreation documents and 1997/1998 programme brochures circulate the myth that children's physical recreation is synonymous with competitive sports. This is not consistent with the definitions of recreation introduced above, definitions used by Toronto Parks and Recreation. Therefore it is necessary to expose this myth in order to understand why this myth is circulated in the documents and reproduced in the Parks and Recreation programmes. The goal of myth is to make the cultural appear natural, or to naturalize what are actually cultural constructions. With regards to the myth that children's recreation is competitive sports rather than other types of physical activities, Parks and Recreation documents naturalize this myth through privileging competitive sports in Parks and Recreation children's programmes and also by presenting competitive sports as beneficial.

Sport has been defined as "any competitive physical activity that is guided by established rules" (Eitzen & Sage, 1989, p.16), or, in other words, institutionalized competitive activities (Coakley, 1998). Several Parks and Recreation manuals state that "sports play a major part in our programmes" (Quoits Manual, p.3; Soccer Manual, p.2; T-Ball Manual, p.3; T & F and

---

1Herb Pirk delivered two lectures at the University of Toronto, and since the content of these lectures is not recoverable, they will be cited throughout the thesis as personal communications. Herb Pirk, at the time the lectures were given, was the Commissioner of the City of Toronto, Department of Parks and Recreation.
Potato Races Manual, p.3), and by applying the above definition of sport to the Parks and Recreation Fall/Winter 1997/1998 programme brochures, it is clear that this is the case. How do the Parks and Recreation documents define sport? There is no overt definition presented in the brochures or documents distributed to the Toronto Parks and Recreation leaders, however several of the Parks and Recreation programme brochures adhere to the above definition. Many of the program brochures differentiate their programs under the headings "physical", "social", and "creative". In certain cases, all children's programmes were grouped together with no differentiation, such as the brochures of John Innes CRC, NTMCC, St. Lawrence CRC, and Trinity CRC. However, in all but one of the program brochures examined (which used the three distinct headings), children's dance programmes were classified as "creative" or "social", not "physical". Under the heading "physical" appeared programmes including; ball hockey, soccer, basketball, martial arts, gymnastics, little leaguers, and sports skills. These "physical" programmes play a major part in Parks and Recreation programmes for children. They hold a privileged position in comparison to "creative" and "social" activities like dance and drama. For example, at J.J Piccininni CRC 27.5 hours per week of children's programmes were "physical", while only 15.5 hours per week were "creative" and "social" (arts and crafts, dance, drama). For the centres Adam Beck, Balmy Beach and Beaches together, their "physical" programmes for

2 The Fall/Winter 1997/1998 program brochures that I examined were from the following Recreation Centres; Adam Beck Community Centre, Balmy Beach Community Centre, Beaches Recreation Centre, Bob Abate Community Recreation Centre (CRC), Earl Beatty Community Centre, Fairmount Park Activity Centre, John Innes CRC, Joseph J. Piccininni CRC, Main Square Community Centre, Matty Eckler CRC, Maurice Cody Community Centre, North Toronto Memorial Community Recreation Centre (NTMCC), Regent Park North Community Centre, Regent Park South Community Centre, Rose Ave. Community Centre, S.H. Armstrong CRC, St. Lawrence CRC, and Trinity CRC.
children equal 60 hours per week compared to "creative" programmes at 22 hours per week (11 hours of which were dance programmes). Quite clearly 'sport', defined as a competitive physical activity governed by established rules, occupies a privileged position in Parks and Recreation children's programmes. As mentioned this contradicts the previously mentioned definitions of recreation as well as the programme planning guidance in the Parks and Recreation documents; "For effectiveness, your programme should provide a balance of the following activities: creative/educational; physical (individual and team games); social; unstructured activities" (Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, p.30).

The Parks and Recreation documents circulate the idea that competition, or competitive sport will increase participation. In a number of documents it states, "The Department attempts to provide instruction and participation to the greatest number of boys and girls possible, and for this reason, encouragement is given to the formation of house league and inter-playground teams" (Quoits Manual, p.2; Soccer Manual, p.1; T-Ball Manual, p.2; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.2). The Fall/Winter 1997/1998 programme brochures indicate that Department programming reflects this goal - the 'physical' programmes hold a privileged position in the children's programming schedule, and the 'physical' programmes, for the most part, are competitive sports activities (basketball, soccer, ball hockey, cosom hockey, gymnastics, little leaguers are the most prominent), often with a house league element. Historically, Parks and Recreation programmes for children also reflect this myth. As McFarland (1970) points out, "inter-playground competition was an important feature of early Toronto playgrounds. Boys were known by the playgrounds they represented in such sports as hockey and baseball" (p.33). Furthermore, there are four separate manuals for four specific competitive physical activities - Quoits Manual, Soccer
Manual, T-Ball Manual, and the T & F and Potato Races Manual - while the other recreation manuals each deal with an entire topic (i.e., crafts, special events, games, leadership and programme planning, etc.). This reinforces the privileged position of competitive physical activities, compared to other types of activities offered by Toronto Parks and Recreation.

References to competition which serve to naturalize its 'goodness' are seen most clearly in the sections on coaching and leadership. For example, several of the documents state that,

The teaching of game skills and a winning attitude is only secondary to the cultivation of leadership potential in your players. A good coach sees these game skills and winning merely as important tools, a means to a more lasting end [italics added] (Quoits Manual, p.3; Soccer Manual, p.2; T-Ball Manual, p.3; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.3).

Winning, or losing, is only possible through a competitive activity, because "competition identifies a situation in which two or more people vie for a prize, honour or advantage" (Gilbert, 1987, p.45). Consequently these references to a 'winning' attitude and 'winning' are clearly referring to competition in sports. Also, the myth of recreation for children as competitive sport is conveyed through the documents discussions about leaders. The first example also illustrates how competition is naturalized as a 'right' of children; "As a leader, you may provide the fun and the healthy competition that they so richly deserve" (T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.8). The second example co-opts the alternative of co-operation into the myth of competition and states, "Team leaders are characterized as being competitive and co-operative" (Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, p.4).

These examples illustrate the myth that children's recreation, at Toronto Parks and
Recreation, is competitive sport. This myth, however, is a type of speech chosen by history, however, in order to appear 'natural' and commonsensical, this myth must keep its history at a distance, that is, keep the cultural and historical specificity of the myth at a distance. Donnelly (1993) argues that;

The two dominant ideologies in modern sport - Olympism and professionalism - are clear cases in point; and the recent convergence of these ideologies has created a relatively monolithic value system in sport (p.425).

The history of Olympism's and professionalism's struggles to achieve this dominant position, is also the history which the myth of competition must keep at a distance, in order to naturalize this form of sport. This history has been well documented already (Hall et al., 1991; Kidd, 1996; Metcalfe, 1988; Morrow, 1986; Morrow, Keyes, Simpson, Cosentino & Lappage, 1989), however it is worth noting several of the alternatives to Olympism and professionalism, which challenged these two ideologies along their path to dominance. The Native game of lacrosse stands out as one example. Prior to this game being appropriated by Europeans, natives played lacrosse for many reasons, including preparation for war and hunting, and spiritual reasons like medical healing rites, or fertility rites (Eisen, 1994; Poulter, 1997). While clearly there was competition, as there were two teams playing against one another, winning was not the point of the game (Eisen, 1994; Poulter, 1997). Another movement which developed in the 1920s came out of concerns about the 'male model' of sport. This lead to the 'girls rules' and 'play day' movements, which de-emphasized competition and stressed maximum participation (Hall et al., 1991; Kidd, 1996). Kidd (1996) argues that these alternatives, 'girls rules' and 'play days', were less about restricting the intensity, or challenge, or womens sport, and more about creating a more
educational alternative to the 'male model' of sport. The Olympic Movement also struggled for dominance. The Worker's Sport Olympics provided an alternative for many immigrants, working class people, men and women, who could not compete in the Modern Olympic games. This movement encouraged maximum participation; there were no entry standards for participation nor limits on the size of teams; and women, men, children, people of any age were welcomed to these games (Kidd, 1996).

Another example which illustrates the beginning of the cultural construct of competitive sports for children becoming naturalized comes from Australia. Although this example is not generalizable to Canada, and it deals with physical education, not recreation programmes, it is nonetheless an interesting example of the history which the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport seeks to distance.

Kirk (1994) demonstrates, using an example from the history of physical education curriculums in Australia, the point at which, in Australia, competitive sports became synonymous with physical education. His discussion of the Grey Book, an influential physical education curriculum document which was published and circulated in the 1940s in Australia, points to the same phenomenon seen in the Parks and Recreation documents, although in the Parks and Recreation documents it is taken for granted that recreation for children is mainly defined as competitive sports. Kirk (1994) is worth quoting at length on this subject;

In a significant conceptual leap, the writers [of the Grey Book] went on to equate 'play', within this new notion of physical education, with playing competitive team games, and in one stroke conflated the key elements of the middle-class games ethic with the progressivist's notion of play through the idea that all children in
government schools had the right to participate in competitive team games. This probably continues to be the single-most significant conjoining of concepts underpinning contemporary physical education programmes, since it positioned sport as pivotal to the educational legitimation of physical education [italics added] (p. 172).

The cultural aspect of sport, which is distanced by myth, can be exposed through critical challenges to hegemonic taken-for-granted definitions of sport. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, sport is often defined, although with some minor variations, as an institutionalized competitive physical activity which is guided by rules. This limited definition of sport has been critiqued (Coakley, 1998; Hall et al., 1991) largely because it fails to address larger questions, for example, 'rules institutionalized by who?' and 'whose competitive physical activities count and whose do not?'. Hargreaves (1986) provides a definition of sport which focuses our attention on these questions; "sport is, above all, best categorized as a cultural formation, and that cultural elements constitute absolutely fundamental components of power networks" (p. 8). Myth seeks to distance this understanding of sport as a cultural formation.

The current dominant ideologies of Olympism and professionalism in North American sport have undergone historical struggles and battles to achieve their dominance. Many alternatives to this sport model have existed at various times throughout history. The myth that recreation for children is competitive sports, which circulates in the Parks and Recreation documents, distances this history of cultural struggle so that the myth of competitive sport is naturalized -- physical recreation for children at Toronto Parks and Recreation appears to be dominated by competitive sport activities.
**Challenges to the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport**

Although the myth that recreation is competitive sport circulates throughout these Parks and Recreation documents, it does not circulate unchallenged or uncontested. The two major challenges comes from the 'co-operation' ideology and the ideology of healthism\(^3\) which also circulate in the Parks and Recreation documents.

The ideology of co-operation challenges the myth of competitive sport throughout the manuals. Cooperation, unlike competition, is based on the principle of working together to achieve an end, and Gilbert (1987) argues that cooperation is generally a much more popular tactic for securing outcomes than is competition: "Getting what we want by taking it from somebody else in an overt contest is usually for us, as for other species, a last resort" (p.46). In terms of the Parks and Recreation documents the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport is challenged by the ideology of cooperation. For example, several manuals state that a good coach "should emphasize cooperation and participation rather than a competitive 'win at all cost' attitude" (*Quoits Manual*, p.3; *Soccer Manual*, p.2; *T-Ball Manual*, p.3; *T & F and Potato Races Manual*, p.3). Also, one manual suggests leader's should "emphasize that doing one's best is more important than winning or losing" (*Leadership and Programme Planning Manual*, p.6).

The *Games Manual* is an entire manual which provides rules and ideas for a variety of games, with an emphasis on cooperation. According to this manual, "co-operation also means maximum

\(^3\) Healthism is a term coined by Crawford (1980), and is defined as "the preoccupation with personal health as a primary focus - often the primary - focus for the definition of achievement and well-being" (Crawford, 1980, p.368). The ideology of healthism "tends to place responsibility for body vigilance solely on the individual, and deflects attention away from the social and cultural conditions which shape and constrain health" (White, Young, & Gillett, 1995, p.160).
participation" (Games Manual, p.1). Is this 'cooperation' alternative a real threat to the dominant hegemony, or myth that recreation is sport? The answer is no on both counts.

A key concept of hegemony theory is the idea that social practices and transformations take place over contested terrain, including the terrain of sporting practices. Consequently, "the control or influence implied in hegemony - the 'dominant' - is never total or complete. Rather, it always exists in relation to alternative or oppositional practices or ideas, some of which may themselves become dominant, some of which may become incorporated into the dominant culture" (Ingham & Hardy, 1993, p.1). Although the alternative cooperation ideology circulates throughout the documents, and presents a challenge to the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport, it is effectively incorporated by this dominant myth. The cooperation alternative does not really circulate through the manuals as an independent alternative, but rather, it is co-opted by the dominant myth of sport. One way this is done is through the partnering of competition and cooperation. This suggests that a competitive environment can foster cooperative behaviour, even though the two concepts are practically antithetical. For example, as mentioned earlier, competition and cooperation are presented as positive attributes of a team leader. In terms of cooperation the captain of the team "encourages and helps all members on the team" (Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, p.4), whereas the attribute of competition requires no explanation in the manual. Obviously the team captain must be competitive so that he or she can lead the team to victory. Also, the Leadership and Programme Planning Manual states; "Physical activities have a universal appeal, especially if there is a minor emphasis on intense competition, and a major emphasis on co-operation" (p.30).

Another way the 'cooperation' alternative is co-opted by the dominant myth is through the
terminology of competition. For example, the Games Manual states;

The emphasis on the games listed in this manual is cooperation. People will play with one another. The thrill is the fun and the challenge, not to overcome other people - EVERYONE WINS! (p.1).

A similar slogan, "Everyone's a winner", appears in the Special Events Manual at the bottom of the page discussing "Olympic Day". By definition, winning is not possible unless there is a loser. This use of 'competitive' terminology serves to undermine and co-opt the 'cooperation' alternative into the dominant myth.

Finally, the 'cooperation' alternative is marginalized in terms of it's importance in the overall Parks and Recreation programme philosophy. As previously mentioned, the documents state that "sports play a major part in our programmes" (Quoits Manual, p.3; Soccer Manual, p.2; T-Ball Manual, p.3; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.3), and an examination of the 1997/1998 programme brochures substantiates this claim. On the contrary, the Games Manual, which emphasizes cooperative games, is positioned as a "survival guide when you hear those little words 'I'm bored!' or 'It's too hot!"' (Games Manual, p.1). Whereas the sport programmes "may be organized at playground or centre level, area level, regional level or as part of a city-wide competition" (Quoits Manual, p.2; Soccer Manual, p.1; T-Ball Manual, p.2; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.2), cooperative games are viewed as 'last resort/ children are bored' activities. The Parks and Recreation 1997/1998 programme brochures indicate one cooperative games programme for children, and this programme is called "Cooperative games and nerf sports" (Adam Beck Community Centre). This lack of cooperative games programming, as well as the inclusion of 'nerf sports' in the programme title, reinforces argument that the 'cooperation'
alternative is not really an independent or challenging alternative to the dominant myth.

Cooperation has merely been incorporated into the dominant myth of competitive sport as recreation for children.

This cooptation of the cooperation alternative by the dominant myth that children's recreation is competitive sport may be viewed as one example of the relation of docility-utility. The body disciplined through competitive sport activities will be useful to the needs of capitalist society because this body will have learned how to be better than others, to dominate and subjugate other bodies. However the cooperative body will be a docile body, a body which has learned to put aside its own needs in order to achieve a common goal. Consequently the combination of the dominant myth of competitive sport and the cooperation ideology is necessary in order to discipline children's bodies into relations of docility and utility.

The previous section examined the cooperation ideology which presents a challenge to the dominant myth that children's recreation is competitive sport. This section will highlight another ideology which challenges the dominant myth, the ideology of healthism. A key focus of the ideology of healthism is the emphasis on participation in sports and fitness activities. Although the dominant myth suggests that the "formation of house league and inter-playground teams" (Quoits Manual, p.2; Soccer Manual, p.1; T-Ball Manual, p.2; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.2) will provide instruction and participation opportunities for the greatest number of girls and boys, the structure and purpose of competitive sport makes this an impossibility. These house league and playground teams are governed by 'rules of eligibility' which serve to limit participation based on age, area of residence, and team affiliation. An example of this can be found in several manuals, "any player who is registered on a team and played at least (1) league game cannot be
released to play for another team or another series in the current season" (Quoits Manual, p.2; Soccer Manual, p.1; T-Ball Manual, p.2; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.2).

The rules of eligibility allow for some modification at the centre or area level, however for regional or city-wide events, the rules of eligibility must be strictly adhered to (Quoits Manual, p.2; Soccer Manual, p.1; T-Ball Manual, p.2; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.2). Participation is limited for specific competitions as well. The Track and Field and Potato Races Manual and the Soccer Manual outline further restrictions on participation. For track and field meets, the restrictions are (a) three competitors per event and per centre, (b) competitors in each team event must be from the same centre, (c) one relay team per location, (d) competitors cannot be members of an organized track club (T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.5), and (e) for soccer, "any player who is a member of or receiving training from an organized Soccer Club other than playgrounds, is ineligible to compete" (Soccer Manual, p.4). It is also suggested that leaders "keep a record in a rough notebook of all the persons participating in athletic practices. This will be of assistance when selecting [italics added] entries for the Athletic Meet" (T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.8). These eligibility rules and discussions about selection quite clearly contradict the suggestion that coaches should "emphasize cooperation and participation rather than a 'win at all costs' attitude" (Quoits Manual, p.3; Soccer Manual, p.2; T-Ball Manual, p.3; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.3). Although the manuals suggest that house league and inter-playground teams will promote maximum opportunities for girls and boys, it is clear that the structure and philosophy (to win) of these types of activities is not consistent with that argument. Why the contradiction? Why the concern with providing the maximum number of opportunities? This is where the ideology of healthism contributes.
The second way the dominant myth is challenged is through the ideology of healthism. This ideology is expressed throughout the documents in a variety of ways, and provides a greater threat to the dominant myth that children's recreation is competitive sport than does the ideology of cooperation. One of the programme aims of the Department of Parks and Recreation is "To involve as many citizens as possible on the value of a healthy lifestyle" (Employee Handbook, p.5). The Track and Field and Potato Races Manual suggests leaders should "Encourage athletics; emphasize Physical Fitness(sic)" (p.8). The Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool manual even has a brief section on fitness activities, fitness related crafts and fitness related songs for 3-6 year olds. It is also important to note that this playschool manual does not include any competitive sport activities. This is likely due to developmental assumptions about three to six year olds regarding the lack of cognitive and motor skill abilities needed for competitive sport activities. One recreation centre (Adam Beck Community Centre) also has fitness programmes for children - Fit n' Fun for 5-6 year olds, and Workout & Wellness for 10-12 year olds.

The ideology of healthism in these manuals is part of a larger circulating ideology which is concerned with the health of individual citizens as a 'cost-reducing' measure in the health care system. According to Harvey and Proulx (1988),

Since the mid-1970s - just as the Canadian welfare state entered a financial crisis - the state has shown growing concern about the physical fitness of Canadians, not only with the aim of improving their well-being, but also with a view to reducing the cost of health services (p.95-96).

This concern is also reflected in several of the benefit statements about parks and recreation. For
example, two of the personal benefits are that physical recreation and fitness contribute to "a full and meaningful life" and one of the best methods of "health insurance for individuals" (PRO & OMTR, 1992, p.9). In terms of the economic benefits of parks and recreation it is argued that "investment in recreation as a preventative health service makes sense" and "a fit work force is a productive work force" (PRO & OMTR, 1992, p.13).

As mentioned in the literature review the promotion of mass physical participation programs, and other health promotion campaigns targeting individual 'lifestyle' behaviours (smoking, alcohol consumption, dietary habits, etc.) by the government, have been critiqued because of their emphasis on individual health behaviours, thereby obscuring the social and structural contributors to disease (like poverty, unemployment, pollution, etc.). This *ideology of healthism* challenges the dominant myth that children's recreation is competitive sports because a large component of this ideology is the encouragement of mass participation. As previously demonstrated, the competitive sport model does not generally encourage mass participation because it is exclusionary and selective. How are these two conflicting ideologies dealt with in the manuals? As with the previous discussion about the 'cooperation' alternative ideology, the dominant myth unsuccessfully attempts to co-opt the challenging ideology of healthism for its own purposes. This is evident in the suggestion that the formation of house league and inter-playground teams will provide the maximum number of opportunities for girls and boys, even though the documents themselves go on to contradict this assertion. Another example of this attempt to join these two ideologies is in the following statement; "The development of a good athletic programme, including teaching and training contributes to the fitness of the nation" (*T & F and Potato Races Manual*, p.8). A final example of how the ideology of healthism is co-opted
by the dominant myth is in the Special Events Manual in the following statement about the Olympic Day special event; "This is the perfect event to stress the importance of physical fitness" (p.28). Using the Olympic Games as a model, or springboard, to promote physical fitness is highly problematic. As Kidd (1995) points out,

> At the highest levels of competition, the dominant pattern remains pathological, as the all-embracing pressures to perform stunt athletes intellectually and socially and cripple them physically and emotionally....Not surprisingly, 70% of the national team members whom Peter Donnelly (1993) interviewed said that they would not do it over again unless major changes were made in their sports (p.238).

Thus the ideology of healthism presents much more of a challenge to the dominant myth than the cooperation alternative does. The cooperation alternative is easily, and successfully co-opted by the dominant myth. The ideology of healthism is not so easily co-opted, as the inconsistencies with the dominant myth are much more apparent. Does this ideology represent a real threat to the dominant myth? Not really, because, as will be discussed in the upcoming chapter on the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults, the ideology of healthism is positioned as part of the 'cure for social problems' discourse and thereby supports this development myth. Also, as Harvey (1988) argues, the emphasis on mass participation is congruent with the neoconservative agenda because the onus for participation is placed on the individual, while social programmes are rolled back. Toronto Parks and Recreation, as a municipal government organization, is often targeted for financial rollbacks as part of the neoconservative agenda, but as a potential promoter of mass participation for individuals, Toronto Parks and Recreation also has value for provincial and federal governments. The benefit statements about parks and recreation which have been
mentioned in this chapter are a reflection of Parks and Recreation's attempt to position themselves in this way.

While the ideology of healthism somewhat challenges the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport, it is not an ideology which circulates independent of the dominant myths in these manuals because it is used to support the myth that sport develops children, and because the emphasis on the individual makes it congruent with capitalist and neoconservative discourses. It is also an ideology which is marginalized in comparison to competitive sport, not only in the Toronto Parks and Recreation documents, but also at broader levels of government. According to Harvey (1988), "Since the inception of the act [Bill C-131], a much larger sum of money has been devoted to high performance sport than to recreational programs and fitness" (p.324). In fact, the inception of Bill C-131 lead to the creation of Sport Canada and Recreation Canada, but in 1980 the federal government withdrew from recreation and Recreation Canada become known as Fitness Canada (Hall et al., 1991). Consequently, the ideology of healthism has the potential to be a serious challenge to the myth that sport is competition, but it is unlikely to occur in the present Canadian historical - cultural climate of the crisis of the welfare state and a return to neoconservative political agendas.

**What conveys the myth that recreation for children is competitive sport?**

It is not enough to simply expose some of the myths that circulate in the Parks and Recreation documents. Although an important and necessary step, myth analysis fails to account for the 'politics' of these myths, the issues of power which drive the production and reproduction of the meaning of myths. In order to extend the myth analysis to discuss the relations of power
which convey these myths, discourse analysis will be used. The myth discussed above, the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport, is conveyed by a number of discourses, however, the following discourses will be discussed in relation to this myth - patriarchy and capitalism. A central concern of this thesis is the child's body, and how power relations are marked on the child's body. Consequently, the discussion of discourses will also include a discussion of how these discourses might affect the child's body through Parks and Recreation programmes.

**Patriarchy and capitalism**

Both discourses of patriarchy and capitalism are extremely important in conveying the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport largely because of their prevalence in producing competitive models for economic, class and gender relations. These two discourses will be discussed together because of their inextricable link to one another.

Patriarchy is defined as "a system of power relations by which men dominate women" (Hargreaves, 1993, p.172). Sport is still considered a male institution, a masculinizing project (Hall et al., 1991; Hargreaves, 1993; Whitson, 1990), and more generally is "an active agent in the production and reproduction of social inequality" (Donnelly, 1996, p.232). This raises the question of inequality not only in terms of gender (under a patriarchal system) but of inequality in terms of race and ethnicity. This form of inequality will be discussed in this section because the

---

4Hargreaves (1993) outlines the debate between radical feminists and Marxist feminists regarding patriarchy and capitalism, and which is the primary reason for women's oppression. Radical feminists believe it is patriarchy which is at the root of women's oppression, while traditional Marxist feminists believe it is class which is at the root of women's oppression. This thesis will examine the two discourses together, without positioning one as the primary cause of oppression.
privileged position in North America is not only male, it is white.

As discussed earlier, the Parks and Recreation documents and Fall/Winter 1997/1998 programme brochures privilege competitive sport programmes for children. These programmes consist of a large majority of all children's programmes, and account for close to 100% of children's 'physical' programmes. The competitive sports which predominate in Parks and Recreation programme brochures are basketball, ball hockey, and soccer. The Parks and Recreation manuals, although not privileging basketball and ball hockey, do privilege soccer and T-Ball (which is a form of baseball). These competitive sport activities mirror the most prominent professional sports in North America - hockey, baseball, basketball - and soccer is emerging as a popular professional sport in North America. Pitter and Andrews (1997) suggest that soccer, in the United States, has been embraced by the followers of the 1970s fitness movement for their children "as a collective expression of a new White suburban identity" (p.93). These competitive sport activities "continue as institutions through which the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity, and through this, male hegemony, are actively pursued" (Whitson, 1990, p.28).

Patriarchy, as a discourse, supports and conveys the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport, because competitive sports reproduce male dominance and female subordination. This is achieved because the major competitive sports in North America (basketball, hockey, soccer, baseball) are predicated upon winning and consequently physical attributes like strength, power, and force are valued in these sports. These physical attributes of strength, power, and force are equated with masculinity in our culture; "Sports emphasizing aggression and competition 'fit' with the dominant definition of masculinity in many cultures; they do not fit with most ideas about femininity or with alternative definitions of masculinity"
(Coakley, 1998, p.236). And as Donnelly (1996) points out, "the citius, altius, fortius\(^5\) nature of modern sport is designed to expose inequalities between individuals" (p.231), particularly in terms of physicality. In terms of gender, this emphasis on faster, higher, stronger results in biological determinants of female physical inferiority (within this particular sport model) being equated to social inferiority (Donnelly, 1996). The discourse of patriarchy conveys and supports the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport because this competitive sport model perpetuates the 'naturalization' of socially constructed biological differences between men and women, which consequently leads to women's subordination within sports, as well as in society in general. The potential effect of the patriarchal discourse and the competitive sport model on the child's body will be discussed, but first, inequality with respect to race and ethnicity will be discussed.

As with gender, the competitive sport model, driven by the patriarchal-colonial discourse, reveals inequalities in terms of physicality; however, the inequalities manifest differently with respect to race and ethnicity. For race and ethnicity, particularly African-Americans and African-Canadians in particular sports like basketball, this translates into beliefs about physical superiority (unlike gender, which is equated with physical inferiority), but nonetheless is equated with social inferiority (Donnelly, 1996). Although race and ethnicity become equated with physical superiority, it is in a limited way - racial and ethnic minorities are assumed to be physically superior in a few sports, not all of them. Since the dominant competitive sport model is a particular historical and cultural construct, Metcalfe (1988) argues that the struggle for sport in Canada is the history of struggle "by the anglophone middle class male to create sport in his

\(^5\) This is the motto of the Modern Olympic Games and it translates; faster (or swifter), higher, stronger.
image" (p.35). Consequently, the competitive sport model does not reflect or represent the wide variety of cultures who currently live in Toronto.

As Donnelly (1996) indicates, "sport is clearly an active agent in the production of racial and gender inequality. In both of these cases, science and ideology have formed a powerful alliance to attribute meanings to measurable physical and performance characteristics" (p.232). Science produces biological differences which are used ideologically to subordinate women and people whose race or ethnicity distinguishes them as "other". The discourse of capitalism is also involved in producing and reproducing inequalities, and the link between the discourse of capitalism, the patriarchal-colonial discourse, and the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport will be examined.

The discourse of capitalism is a second discourse which is extremely important in conveying the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport. Capitalism is a term, or theory, which refers to the economic basis and structure of a society. Canada is predominately a

6 The debates surrounding the characteristics and the development of industrial relations, the economy, and society in capitalist societies like Canada are numerous. Godard (1994) discusses three major theses which reflect two polar views, and one view which combines elements of the other two. These three theses are; the capitalism thesis (Karl Marx); the industrialism thesis (Emile Durkheim); and the industrial capitalism thesis (Max Weber). While Marx's capitalism thesis is useful for highlighting the class-based nature of capitalist societies, it is reductionist, and does not really account for human agency. Durkheim's industrialism thesis is highly functionalist, and consequently does not account for, or address, issues of power. Weber's industrial capitalism thesis is the most useful because "under this thesis, modern society is hierarchical, characterized by multiple classes and status groups rather than a two-class dichotomy [Marx] or a plurality of equal interest groups [Durkheim]...The employment relation is based upon a combination of coercion and consent rather then upon one or the other"(Godard, 1994, p.59). This allows for the inclusion of gender and race, as well as class (or socio-economic status), as components which affect a person's position in the social order. As well, the acknowledgement of human agency, through the idea of consent in employment relations, makes this theory compatible with the hegemony theory.
capitalist economy, and this type of economy has two primary characteristics;

First, it is characterized by free markets, whereby goods and services are allocated primarily on the basis of supply and demand, with a multitude of firms competing against one another and with limited (if any) direct government intervention.

Second, it is characterized by private enterprise, whereby firms are owned and controlled by private individuals and investors who invest their capital in the expectation of realizing a profit (Godard, 1994, p.15).

Godard (1994) goes on to note, however, that in practice, particularly in Canada, there has been a considerable amount of government intervention in the Canadian economy. Another key component of capitalist societies is the emphasis on the individual, rather than the focus on the collective good. Gruneau (1988) points out that;

New individualist philosophies which valued the free market began to emerge, and groups began campaigns to entrench individual 'freedoms', such as the right to own property, freedom of speech, and freedom of representation, in the emerging structures of the modern liberal-democratic state (p.12).

The emergence of children's rights is a part of this emphasis on the rights of the individual, however these rights for children are conceptualized not as individual rights for children, but as dependence on adults for the children's 'best interests'.

As outlined in the literature review the emergence of capitalist society and the emphasis on the individual had a profound impact on the body as a site for social control. The emergence of the individual body as the primary site for social control through disciplinary technologies and self-surveillance is inextricably linked to the needs of capitalist society, that is, the need for a more
productive form of social control - one which retained notions of individual freedom but also supplied a productive workforce and a market of consumers.

The previous section has outlined the organization and relationships of capitalism. Capitalism is also ideological because productivity, individual achievement, success, and competition are valued in western culture. Economic success (winning) becomes proof of individual worth and ability (Coakley, 1998). Achievement is determined by individual competition and domination over others. In order to express the ideology of capitalism, particularly as it has permeated North American sport, a term coined by Bruce Kidd (1987) will be used: *the philosophy of excellence*. The philosophy of excellence is linked to both the discourses of patriarchy and capitalism. The philosophy of excellence is linked to patriarchy, and consequently the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport, because of the emphasis on winning, and, as Coakley (1998) notes, "dominant sport forms normalize the idea that masculinity involves aggressiveness and a desire to outdo or outperform others" (p.239). Within these two discourses, the philosophy of excellence has come to be synonymous with competition and winning, that is, being better than other people, as opposed to the original modern Olympism goal of excellence of being the best that you can be (Donnelly, 1996). Sport psychology literature defines competition as a social comparison process. A process of social comparison suggests a system of surveillance, that is surveillance of oneself and of others in order to make comparisons. Thus the philosophy of excellence which promotes competition and winning also promotes and reproduces a system in which surveillance of one's body in comparison to other bodies is paramount.

Kidd (1987) notes that "the unquestioned assumptions of 'excellence' reinforce both the
hierarchy and the social relations of patriarchal state monopoly capitalism" (p.25). The philosophy of excellence, as an important part of both the patriarchal and capitalist discourses, has critical implications for children's participation in sport, not only in terms of their gender and race, but the introduction of the capitalist discourse also raises the question of social class. Social class refers to "the ability of those with economic power to organize social life to their own advantage, and to the relationships between economic power and privilege in virtually all the 'official' institutions of society" (Hall et al., 1991, p.161). The research on social class and sport participation introduced in the literature review indicates that sport participation is related to one's social class location. This is true even in Canada, a country which is considered a welfare state. As stated previously, in Canada, there has been considerable government involvement in the capitalist economic system, thus contributing to Canada being considered a welfare state. In general, a welfare state may be defined as one,

in which organized power is deliberately used (through politics and administration) in an effort to modify the play of the market forces in at least three directions...the provision of a minimum income for all...the provision of income for certain contingencies, such as sickness or old age...the provision of certain social services (Djao, 1983, p.6 as cited by Harvey, 1988, p.315).

The recognition of Canada as a welfare state often leads to the general conclusion that society is democratized (Gruneau, 1976). The goals of the welfare state are not the goals of the capitalist discourse, however, the assumption that we live in a welfare state (although this is currently being challenged in Canada) can lead to ideological beliefs which do support the capitalist discourse. For example, the recognition that Canada is a welfare state can lead to the belief that Canada is a
democratized society. This, according to Gruneau (1976), leads to the argument that, if there is still some measure of inequality today, the existence of an expanded opportunity structure implies that differences between individuals and groups can be explained on the basis of individual achievement rather than on the basis of commonly shared social characteristics (p.112-113).

Although there has been an abundance of research which challenges the fact that sport opportunities are democratized in Canada (Donnelly, 1996; Gruneau, 1976; Hall et al., 1991), the capitalist discourse is served regardless of the degree of the welfare state - if we view ourselves as living in a democratized welfare state we attribute differences as 'individual' problems, rather than social ones, and if the welfare state is in crisis (as it currently is in Canada), we see a return to neoconservative agendas and policies which privilege individual rights and freedoms over the collective group needs.

The philosophy of excellence, as an important part of the patriarchal-colonial and capitalist discourses, contributes to the privileging of certain physical bodily forms over others. As mentioned in the literature review, Bourdieu's work (as well as others) demonstrates that social location becomes embodied in a body habitus, and that participation in sports is a reflection not only of economic capital and spare time, but is also a reflection of the right 'fit' between the individual's body habitus and the sport in question. The philosophy of excellence contributes to perpetuating and reproducing a system whereby particular bodily forms (physical capital) and sporting practices have more social, cultural, and symbolic value than others. The bodily forms and sporting practices which are privileged reflect the preferences and tastes of the upper classes, that is, those who can organize social life to their own advantage. The physical capital of the
child's body in Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes will be elaborated in the next chapter.

The capitalist discourse, as it conveys the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport, reproduces and legitimates the broader capitalist social structure and ideology. Success (or excellence) in competitive sport, and society, is viewed as an 'individual' accomplishment, and as something not connected to a person's gender, race or social class. However, the patriarchal-colonial and capitalist discourse operate through sport, and through society to create a system in which the values, bodily forms, and sporting practices of the dominant class become the standard for everyone, and biological differences are used to naturalize social inequalities. Because discourses are power relations which are productive of reality, and the body is the primary site for social control, these discourses can potentially affect and produce the child's body in recreation programmes. The next section will address two potential themes in relation to how the child's body might be affected by these discourses which convey the myth that recreation for children, at Toronto Parks and Recreation, is competitive sport.

The child's body

The patriarchal-colonial discourse and the capitalist discourse potentially affect the child's body in a number of ways. Two potential effects of the discourses of capitalism and patriarchy, as they convey the myth through the Parks and Recreation documents that children's recreation is competitive sport, will be discussed: (a) the naturalization of biological differences and how these

---

7 It is beyond the scope of this thesis to assess how this myth and these discourses are operationalized by the Toronto Parks and Recreation leaders and the participants in the programs. Further ethnographic research is needed to uncover the lived experiences of the children and the leaders as they are produced by these discourses.
differences are given ideological meanings which affect the child in society in general, and (b) the curriculum of domination competitive sport offers (Kidd, 1995) and its various manifestations on the child's body.

**Naturalization of biological differences**

The patriarchal-colonial discourse, in order to maintain the dominant hegemony, naturalizes assumed biological differences. These differences are used to obscure the socio-cultural relations which are embedded within these differences. Vertinsky (1995) argues that,

> The division of humans is thus a cultural act that has varied historically according to different social contexts. Science especially has worked historically to rationalize and legitimize distinctions of race, as well as gender and class, to the disadvantage of the powerless (p.39).

As discussed above, the competitive, 'faster - higher - stronger' model of sport seeks to expose differences, particularly physical differences and thus sport is actively involved in producing and reproducing gender and racial inequalities based on 'naturalized' biological differences. How does this affect the child's body? Before discussing that, it is important to note that not only are gender and racial biological differences naturalized through sport for children, but the biological differences of aging are also naturalized through sport for children, and these biological differences are also given ideological meanings. The importance of age as bioculturally marking the body will be discussed in chapter six, however, it is important to note that, when discussing children, gender and race are not the only social variables where the 'naturalization of biological differences' affects social inequality.
In terms of the child's body, the arguments made previously (see page 92-94) about gender and racial biological differences being inscribed on their bodies through sport apply also for the child's body. In terms of these Parks and Recreation documents, the specific relations which bioculturally mark the body will be examined in chapter six. It is necessary to extend the discussion in this section to include how the biological differences of childhood are also inscribed on the child's body through sport. As discussed in the literature review, a central theme related to the ideology of development is the importance of the adult world. The development ideology emphasizes the need to properly prepare children to reach this adult world. Consequently, the development ideology and the dominant sport model share a similar philosophy - faster, higher, stronger is better in sport, and growing up is better in childhood. Regardless of sport, children's bodies are inscribed with power because of the changing carnal body\(^8\) - increasing age and growth have ideological and social consequences in terms of power and social standing (i.e., ability to get a job, drive a car, vote, drink alcohol, go to 'grown up' movies, stay up later at night, etc.).

Within the dominant model of sport, the ideological meanings attributed to biological differences are compounded (perhaps even two or three fold, in the case of 'other' gender and 'other' ethnicity). The changing carnal body, because of the 'faster-higher-stronger' motto of sport, may positively contribute to some children's social standing, but may negatively affect others. A child who grows faster, and is bigger than other children her/his age, may find themselves in a dominant or superior role within the dominant sport model. The effects of the changing carnal body will affect children differentially based on their gender, race, and social class. For example, a girl who

\(^8\) This terminology is being used in order to avoid scientific, biological terms like 'growth', or growing up, which this thesis recognize as produced by discourse, and thus are power relations.
grows taller and bigger than other girls, and boys, may not receive a dominant role within the competitive sport model, although faster, higher, stronger is valued, because her height and strength are not consistent with patriarchal definitions of appropriate femininity. On the other hand, a boy who grows taller and bigger than other boys and girls will likely receive a privileged position in the competitive sport model because of the 'faster-higher-stronger' ethos of patriarchal sport. Or, a working class child might experience greater emphasis placed on positive growth in the context of sport participation, if success in sport could translate into social mobility. The physical capital of the changing carnal body may have more value to a working class child who hopes to translate that physical capital into economic and cultural capital. Conversely, for a middle or upper class child, the physical capital of the changing carnal body may not have the same importance, as sport is less likely to be viewed as a potential career. Further study is needed to determine if, and how, the biological differences of growth, which are discursive, produce different and limited realities for children's experiences in and through sport.

The discourse of capitalism is also important in perpetuating the naturalization of biological differences, because the naturalization of biological differences serves to naturalize social inequalities (as the biological differences are given ideological meanings). For example, children, because of discursively produced biological differences, are 'naturally' given a socially inferior position - social privileges are accorded to children based on biological criteria like age. The capitalist discourse functions because of differences and inequalities. Capitalism supports the notion of individual freedoms, and thus lack of success can be attributed to personal failings, rather than structural or societal barriers to opportunity and achievement. Harvey (1988) argues that neoconservatives believe that "the welfare state commitment to equalize opportunity for all
leads to the demise of individual freedoms because of the recognition of collective rights enforced by a powerful bureaucratic state apparatus" (p.326). Looking at state institutions, like Toronto Parks and Recreation, can be useful because their policies and programmes often reflect these larger political-economic concerns. It is argued that the welfare state is currently being challenged, or questioned (Andrew et al., 1994; Harvey, 1988), and we are seeing the neoconservative solution to perceived problems - the rolling back of state control through cutbacks to social agencies, including Toronto Parks and Recreation. Part of the neoconservative agenda is the re-commodification of sport and recreation services (Harvey, 1988), and in terms of Toronto Parks and Recreation, this will be discussed in the upcoming section on Streetbuds. The naturalization of biological differences is an important goal of the capitalist discourse, particularly the neoconservative agenda, because the social-structural nature of these inequalities is masked through the discourse on individual rights and freedoms.

The patriarchal-colonial and capitalist discourses which convey the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport reproduce and reinforce the naturalization of these discursively produced biological differences by structuring a competitive sport system which favours certain biological characteristics over others - and these favoured biological characteristics are classed, gendered and racially based.

**Curriculum of domination**

Bruce Kidd (1995) argues that "sports remain a pedagogy of domination in which participants learn the propensities and skills of territorial and interpersonal aggression" (p.238). This curriculum of domination, according to Kidd (1995) is not limited to the domination of
others, but extends to domination of self, and domination of the 'natural' world. The discourses of patriarchy-colonialism and capitalism are critical to the maintenance of this curriculum of domination, and the potential effects of this curriculum of domination to the child's body in sport will be discussed.

The first way that the curriculum of domination can affect the child's body in sport is in terms of the physical well-being of the body. As discussed, the patriarchal-colonial discourse which conveys the dominant sport model, celebrates what are considered to be the characteristics of masculinity: aggression, violence, space and people-dominating behaviours. The effects on a child's physical well-being, consequently, are various. Girls, and boys, who choose not to participate in the dominant model, or are not participating because of lack of opportunity (i.e., they could not make the team), may find few other physical recreation activity options. As discussed earlier, Toronto Parks and Recreation privileges the dominant sport model in its 'physical' programmes for children. Consequently, these children may not experience the positive feelings of physicality and *embodiment*\(^9\) that can accompany participation in physical activity, even competitive sports. Boys, and girls, who participate in competitive, masculine sport model, may subject their bodies to brutalizing activities within the sport itself (i.e., hitting people in hockey, football, basketball, rugby, etc.) or as training for the sport (i.e., overtraining, steroid abuse, eating disorders, etc.). The curriculum of domination, therefore, is central to the project of disembodiment. As Duquin (1994) indicates, "Socialization towards self-abnegation and bodily

\[^9\] This thesis challenges the notion that there is a 'natural' world, a world independent of discourse.

\[^{10}\] Please see the glossary of terms for a definition of embodiment.
sacrifice in sport involves the process of disembodiment" (p.270). Disembodiment is reflective of mind/body dualism, which Bordo (1993) contends is common in Western philosophy. The central features of mind/body dualism, according to Bordo (1993), are: the body experienced as alien (p.144), the body experienced as confinement and limitation (p.144), the body is the enemy (p.145), and the body is the locus of all that threatens our attempts at control (p.145). The implications and outcomes of disembodiment through sport are problematic, as it can lead to destructive, dominating behaviours like steroid abuse, eating disorders, and overtraining (Duquin, 1994). For children in sport, however, there is another concern. Their changing carnal bodies may become viewed with a disembodied gaze; children may view their changing bodies as alien, as the enemy, and so forth. The curriculum of domination, however, and the disembodied discourse, suggest that the disembodied body can be dominated and controlled. In sport, there are examples of young female gymnasts attempting to dominate their growing bodies through exercise and disordered eating in order to retard the growth phase of puberty (Ryan, 1995). For boys, the process is somewhat reversed, instead of trying to retard growth, they seek to facilitate growth. Shilling (1993) cites a 1992 American study which estimated that nearly 500,000 school children were taking stimulants and steroids to improve their sporting prowess. Their disembodied dominating behaviours include taking steroids in order to overcome and better the carnal body. Aside from the potential negative health outcomes (physical, psychological and social), there is another concern for the child's body within the curriculum of domination. This sport discourse of domination, driven by the patriarchal-colonial and capitalist discourses, "represents the athletic body as a tool or machine whose purpose is successful performance" (Duquin, 1994, p.270). As the literature review shows, most research has been concerned with the socializing effect of work
values' in competitive sport, and sport is viewed as a socializing agent for corporate America. What has not been addressed is how competitive sport, and the capitalist discourse which drive it, affect Being.

Part of the curriculum of domination which is conveyed by the capitalist discourse is the domination of technology. Pronger (1995) argues that we live in an epoch of technological domination, and the implication of this technological domination is that everything, including human beings, is turned into a resource. Competitive sport for children, through the curriculum of domination and disembodiment, contributes to the technical subjugation of the child's body. The child's body becomes a resource for capitalist society - as a product for others work, as a future 'healthy' and 'productive' worker, as a citizen, and as a consumer. The Parks and Recreation documents and children's sport programmes are problematic because they aggressively technologize and discipline the child's body through the advocacy and provision of competitive sports. Children's ability to self-emerge is subordinated to the project of technological domination through competitive sport practices.

The myth that children's recreation, at Toronto Parks and Recreation, is competitive sport is conveyed by many discourses; however two of the most important discourses which convey this myth are patriarchy and capitalism. Although this thesis cannot provide evidence regarding how these discourses are operationalized in specific Parks and Recreation settings, it can and has suggested potential outcomes for the child's body. The final section of this chapter will highlight one specific Parks and Recreation program for children called Streetbuds. This particular

---

11 Please refer to the literature review for a definition of technology, as the use of technology in this section is not the 'traditional' use of the term.
program illuminates many of the issues already addressed in this chapter.

The case of Streetbuds

The case of "Streetbuds", a ball hockey programme run throughout the recreation centres in Toronto, is important to mention because it reveals the convergence of the patriarchal-colonial and capitalist discourses and the re-commodification of recreational services, and the way in which this Parks and Recreation programme could potentially affect the child's body in terms of physical well-being and technological subjugation.

Streetbuds is a ball hockey programme which has been conducted at Toronto Parks and Recreation for about the past four years (T.Daly, personal communication, May 5, 1998). Of the 1997/1998 programme brochures which I looked at, Streetbuds was conducted at eleven recreation centres. Streetbuds is a co-operative programme which was originally organized by the National Hockey League Players Association, the National Hockey League, and Nike (NHL, 1998). This programme originated in American cities like Anaheim, Dallas, and other southern American cities as an outdoor ball hockey programme (T.Daly, personal communication, May 5, 1998). It only operates in cities which have an NHL team, and Streetbuds is the name used in Toronto - each city operates with a different name (NHL, 1998). The intent is to create interest and educate youth between the ages of six and seventeen about the excitement and rules of hockey (NHL, 1998). The programme has expanded to include other cities, like Toronto. At the time of writing this thesis Streetbuds is run in co-operation with Toronto Parks and Recreation.
In terms of the themes discussed above, *Streetbuds* provides an interesting and focussed example of how the discourses of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism are circulating throughout a Toronto Parks and Recreation programme. The express intent of the *Streetbuds* programme is to create interest in the NHL, a male professional sports league. As discussed previously, in terms of physical well-being, this emphasis on male, competitive models of sport can lead to brutalizing behaviours for those who remain in the sport programme, or can lead to a lack of physical activity for those who do not enjoy this particular model of sport. The competitive nature of sport is reinforced by *Streetbuds* as each centre is asked to create a houseleague ball hockey programme. Part of the *Streetbuds* programme also includes area tournaments two to three times per year and a year-end city-wide tournament (T. Daly, personal communication, May 5, 1998). The final game for this city-wide tournament is held at Ontario Place, and the importance of winning, to the corporate organizers, is demonstrated by their presence at this event -- one year Darryl Sittler and Cliff Fletcher, from the Toronto Maple Leafs organization were present, and the finals received media coverage on a local television station, CITY-TV (T. Daly, personal communication, May 5, 1998).

The promotion of the corporate, male-dominated professional sport occurs through the provision of monthly prizes for the 'most sportsmanlike player', both male and female. This prize consists of a certificate for the "NHL/ Nike player of the month", a pin from the corresponding NHL team (in this case the Toronto Maple Leafs) and a calendar from the local NHL team (T. Daly, personal communication, May 5, 1998). This calendar has pictures and statistics on the best players from that team. Although the prizes are provided for a male and female winner, the overall emphasis and focus of the league is on perpetuating the dominant hegemonic masculinity,
and promoting male-centred professional sport. This is hardly conducive to gender equality or equity, which has been identified as one of the major initiatives for Toronto Parks and Recreation in the 1990s (H. Pirk, lecture, March 29, 1993; H. Pirk, lecture, Oct. 24, 1995). As discussed above, the competitive sport model, conveyed by the patriarchal-colonial and capitalist discourses, serves to naturalize biological differences between people, and this contributes to social inequalities. The competitive sport model also contributes to producing disembodied bodies, and this, in conjunction with the curriculum of domination, contributes to the technological subjugation of the child's body.

Through the technological subjugation of the child's body, the body becomes a resource for capitalist society. The example of Streetbuds demonstrates how the child's body becomes a resource as a 'consumer' in consumer culture, and as an economic resource for Toronto Parks and Recreation. The Streetbuds programme is designed to generate interest and excitement about a professional sport - hockey, and a particular brand of hockey equipment - Nike. This is, no doubt, intended to stimulate consumer interest in the present, as well as to cultivate a future audience when these children become adults. Thus, the children at Parks and Recreation are already resources for capitalist society, but are also being cultivated as future resources for the capitalist society. For Toronto Parks and Recreation, the children are resources because the Department can 'deliver' this audience to the corporate sponsors. This idea of the child's body having 'value' will be discussed in the next chapter.

The Streetbuds hockey programme is an example of the re-commodification of recreational services within the neoconservative agenda, and agenda which prefers the spending of public monies to increase the potential of capital accumulation (Harvey, 1988). This is precisely
the case with *Streetbuds*. Public monies are being spent on this programme in terms of facilities, staff, and sometimes equipment, in order to increase capital accumulation of the NHL and Nike corporations.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter exposes one myth that circulates through the Parks and Recreation documents, the myth that children's physical recreation is competitive sports. Although there are two ideologies, the cooperation ideology and the ideology of healthism, which circulate throughout the documents which provide some challenge to this dominant myth, the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport incorporates and marginalizes these two challenging ideologies. The myth that children's recreation is competitive sport is conveyed by many discourses, but two of the most important are the patriarchal and capitalist discourses. Although a project like this one, which examines only documents, cannot discuss the actual embodied experiences of children in Parks and Recreation programmes, potential effects on the child's body may be discussed based on previous research and literature. Two themes, which are intricately linked to the discourses of patriarchy and capitalism, are the naturalization of biological differences and the curriculum of domination. The potential effects on the child's body in Parks and Recreation programmes were discussed within these two themes. Finally, the case of

---

12 Part of the arrangement between the corporate sponsors and Toronto Parks and Recreation is that Nike provides the following equipment: hockey sticks, nets, and goalie equipment. However, the actuality of this arrangement is that replacement equipment is not sent, and the sticks are of poor quality (T.Daly, personal communication), thus there are additional equipment costs to the City of Toronto.
Streetbuds was used to illustrate the convergence of the patriarchal and capitalist discourses, and the recommodification of recreational services in Toronto.

Chapter five will examine the myth that sport develops children into healthy, productive adults. The only opportunity for children to resist this myth is through the role of the volunteer. Two of the important discourses which convey this myth, that sport develops children into 'good' adults, are the 'cure for social problems' discourse and the discourse of development. These discourses, and the myth that sport develops children into healthy, productive adults, may potentially affect the child's body in Parks and Recreation programmes. Two themes in relation to the potential effects on the child's body will be discussed; the individual body and the 'value' of the child's body.
Chapter Five

The myth(s) of children's recreation:

Sport develops children into 'good' adults

Introduction

The previous chapter examined the myth that physical recreation for children is competitive sport, a myth which circulates throughout the Parks and Recreation documents. This chapter will examine another important myth which circulates in the Parks and Recreation documents - the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults. In this particular myth, sport develops children into healthy, productive citizens. This myth is a carrier of the ideology of development however it is also a myth because the conception of children as being in a period of development is the result of historical and cultural struggles. This myth is integral to supporting and sustaining the myth that recreation for children is competitive sport because it justifies and legitimates the privileged position of competitive sport in Parks and Recreation programmes for children. The challenge to this myth comes from the opportunity for children to be volunteers with Parks and Recreation, because it is an opportunity for children to be active participants in provision of recreation services. Two of the discourses which convey the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults will be discussed. These two discourses are the 'cure for social problems' discourse and the discourse of development. Finally, the potential outcomes for

---

1 The generalized term 'good' adults is used throughout this thesis to highlight the socio-historical context of what is defined as a 'good' adult. Also, the definition of what makes a 'good' adult is dependent on a number of factors including class, gender, ability, and race.
the child's body will be discussed within the themes of the individual body and the value of the child's body.

**Sport develops children into 'good' adults**

The second major myth that circulates throughout these documents, with respect to sport and children, is the myth that sport develops children into adults who are healthy, productive and properly 'developed'. This myth is repeated through many different forms, however they all serve to support the myth that sport has a developmental impact on participants, particularly children.

The following examples demonstrate the myth of development as it is circulated in the Parks and Recreation documents. First, is the naturalized assumption that participation in sports positively influences a child's character. For example, several manuals state that "since sports play a major part in our programmes and are probably the richest medium for influencing people's character, the role of the coach is of the utmost importance" *(Quoits Manual, p.3; Soccer Manual, p.2; T-Ball Manual, p.3; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.3)*.

This concern for the role of coach in terms of influencing and developing people is extended, and the myth reinforced, through the following examples;

> A good coach sees these game skills and winning merely as important tools, a means to a more lasting end. A good coach is primarily concerned with providing wholesome attitudes and practices which will influence and direct a person long after that person has stopped participating in a sport. In other words, *game skills*  

---

2 It is important to note that I am not arguing that there is no such thing as development but that development has been appropriated as a disciplinary technology for children. Children and adults continue to develop throughout their entire lives.
lead to life skills [italics added] (Quoits Manual, p.3; Soccer Manual, p.2; T-Ball Manual, p.3; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.3):

You have a tremendous responsibility to instil in participants a lifetime of values related to creativity, sportsmanship, competition, and individual expression. You can help participants become all they dreamed of becoming [italics added] (Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, p.6).

Young people whom you come in contact with are in the most formative period of their lives. They are as easy to influence and impressionable as wet clay [italics added] (Quoits Manual, p.3; Soccer Manual, p.2; T-Ball Manual, p.3; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.3).

The concern for development also extends to enjoyment of physical activity and lifelong participation. In the Track and Field and Potato Races Manual it states that, "The increased speed, endurance, poise, agility and fitness are valuable outcomes. These values are carried over into adult life allowing more enjoyable participation in recreation activities" (p.8), and "Elements of proper running, jumping and throwing are the basic (sic) in the growth and development of children" (p.8).

As discussed in the previous chapter, myth seeks to naturalize the cultural, and in order to do so, must distance itself from its history. With regards to the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults, the history of 'character' development through sport has been well documented.
The origins of the idea that sports develop character is usually attributed to the British public school system espousing Muscular Christianity which was also popularized in the fictional book *Tom's Brown's Schooldays*. However, McIntosh (1979) indicates that this connection, between character (or moral) development and sport actually emerged with Rousseau's work *Emile*. Rousseau's ideas included the importance of physical education in the early education of his fictional boy/character Emile because physical education "was to aid and anticipate moral development" (McIntosh, 1979, p.24). Critiques of the amateur sport model which emerged out of the British public school system and Muscular Christianity, have been made on a number of fronts, including; the highly class-based, elitist origins of amateur sport (Armstrong, 1984; Coakley, 1998; Hall et al., 1991; Morrow et al., 1989); the patriarchal ideology of amateur sport (Coakley, 1998; Hall et al., 1991; Whitson, 1990), and; the way in which this amateur sport system served to reproduce dominant interests in terms of labour and production (Armstrong, 1984; Coakley, 1998; Kidd, 1996). While this history has provided a great deal of information regarding the historical and cultural construction of this idea of 'character' being developed through sport, the history and cultural construction of 'development' has been overlooked. The myth that sport develops children distances this history of development and thus naturalizes the myth that childhood is a period of development and that sport contributes to this development.

The idea of childhood, as discussed in the literature review, is a recent social construct. Early discussions, around the beginning of the nineteenth century, on the 'nature' of children were initiated by two philosophers, with differing views. These two differing views have affected, and continue to affect how we treat and process children as 'normal' (Jenks, 1996). John Locke argued that children were born a blank slate, an unformed person who "through literacy,
education, reason, self-control and shame may be made into a civilized adult" (Postman, 1994, p.59). In contrast, Jean-Jacques Rousseau argued that "the child possesses as his or her birthright capacities for candor, understanding, curiosity, and spontaneity that are deadened by literacy, education, reason, self-control, and shame" (Postman, 1994, p.59). As mentioned earlier, Rousseau also felt that physical education had an important place in aiding in the moral development of the child. Although these two differing views have affected our notions of childhood, it is the work of Freud (Greenleaf, 1986; Postman, 1994) and Dewey (Postman, 1994) which crystallized the idea that childhood was a development period. Postman (1994) refers to this as the developmental paradigm\(^3\) of childhood. As Postman (1994) notes, "All the psychological research on childhood that has been done in this century -- for example, by Jean Piaget, Harry Stack Sullivan, Karen Horney, Jerome Bruner, or Lawrence Kohlberg -- has been mere commentary on the basic childhood paradigm" (p.63). Consequently, this basic childhood paradigm, or the ideology of development, which is based on the premise that childhood is a developmental period, has gone largely unchallenged, and it is this history which the myth seeks to distance. By distancing this history, the myth that sport develops children is naturalized. The political, economic and social factors which surrounded the emergence of the ideology of development, will be discussed in the upcoming section on the discourse of development.

---

\(^3\) Postman (1994) uses the term 'developmental paradigm' of childhood, while the literature review identified the term 'ideology of development' in relation to children. Both Postman's term and the ideology of development are compatible, and are, I would suggest, are indistinguishable. Use of the term paradigm thus is in specific reference to Postman's work, while the ideology of development is consistent with the entire thesis.
Challenges to the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults

The developmental paradigm of childhood, or the ideology of development, is closely linked with the social-psychological project of socialization. Both frameworks point out that children go through different stages of development, and the socialization project attempts to use these developmental periods to achieve a particular outcome - a properly 'socialized' adult. As Mayall (1993) points out, "Children as the objects of socialisation by adults are commonly conceptualized as incompetent, vulnerable, incomplete persons, and thus as projects requiring induction under adult supervision and care into adult norms" (p.464). Using this definition of children as one driving the myth that sport develops children, we can look for challenges to this myth by finding opportunities where children are conceptualized as active, competent participants in the Parks and Recreation documents.

This challenge to the myth that sport develops children into good adults circulates throughout a number of the documents, and largely takes the form of enabling children, or participants, to have some control over the programmes. For example, the Crafts Manual states that, "this manual should only be used as a guide. Participants should be encouraged to use their imagination and experiment with the crafts if they desire to do so" (p.3), and "encourage participants to bring their own craft ideas" (p.3). In the Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, the emphasis is on participant participation in the planning of activities. For example, the manual suggests, "let participants choose the priority they give to the activity. Listen to what they say, adjust your expectations and plan the programme accordingly" (Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, p.6), and the first item on the "Leaders Planning Checklist" is to involve participants in planning (p.34). In the Integrated Programme Planning Manual children are
presented, albeit conditionally, as active participants in the inclusion of disabled children into programmes, "Often, the disabled child, or the other children create ways for him to participate, but many times this challenge remains with the leader" (p.11). This manual also grants children some control over their levels of participation in cooperative games and the types of games played; "In cooperative games, children are given the choice to participate at the level they want or choose. Players are also given some responsibility for making sure everyone is involved" (Integrated Programme Planning Manual, p.14), and; "Let participants suggest their own versions for playing a game and encourage persons to make their own adaptation and rules" (Integrated Programme Planning Manual, p.17).

Yet, this challenge to the dominant myth is continually restrained and subjugated to the dominant myth. For example, in the Integrated Programme Planning Manual, the same manual which suggests children should choose their level and type of participation, and talks about children finding ways to include disabled children, also says, "The less control the leader has over the design of the game, the less able he is to facilitate the integration process and that children of all skill levels can feel involved" (p.14). The Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, which emphasizes the importance of participant involvement in programme planning, also states, "You have a tremendous responsibility to instil in participants a lifetime of values related to creativity, sportsmanship, competition, and individual expression. You can help participants become all they dreamed of becoming" (p.6). There is a tension in the Parks and Recreation documents between viewing children as active and competent participants and viewing children as needing guidance, instruction and supervision. As mentioned in the literature review, one of the current ideologies about the power dynamic at work behind the maintenance of the traditional 'development'
Ideology is that children are exploited by adults because the activity of 'growing up' creates value for adults who work with children. Children are 'products' for adults to work on. However, the tension between these two areas -- (1) the need for control and supervision, and (2) the need for active participation and involvement -- is not limited to the documents discussion of leaders and participants, adults and children. This tension also exists between the manuals, as representatives of the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the leaders, as employees of the Department of Parks and Recreation. For example, leaders are recommended to "try new things and invent your own games" (Special Events Manual, p.3), and to "see every person as unique, with particular likes and dislikes" (Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, p.3), while at the same time are told, "Remember always, regardless of your personal philosophy on the subject, you are a City of Toronto coach and have a responsibility to uphold the Department's philosophy foremost" (Quoits Manual, p.3; Soccer Manual, p.2; T-Ball Manual, p.3; T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.3), and are given "Standards of Behaviour" (Employee Handbook, p.13) which govern work relationships, personal business, conflicts of interest, safety, and personal habits like smoking, drug and alcohol use.

Although these two ideologies are competing, with the dominant myth being that children are in a developmental period and need adult supervision and guidance, and the challenging ideology being that children are active, competent participants in their own recreation experiences, there is one ideology which is separate and discreet from the dominant myth and the challenging ideology, and this ideology may present an opportunity for children to have meaningful and active participation in their own recreation experiences. This ideology is the ideology of volunteerism. It represents an important potential avenue for children to become
active participants in the planning and delivery of recreation programmes.

Before exploring the case of the volunteer it is important to note that, although the myth that sport develops children circulates in the Parks and Recreation documents, children's individual experiences within the Parks and Recreation programmes will vary. How these myths are operationalized and to what extent they produce, create, or structure children's recreational experiences will vary depending on the staff person involved as well as the child's race, and gender, and social class, among other things. It is necessary to conduct further research to determine to what extent, and in what circumstances, children experience the programmes differently.

**The case of the volunteer**

The position of 'volunteer' as it is presented in the Parks and Recreation manuals, offers a potential active role for children in their recreation experiences. Volunteers, according to the Integrated Programme Planning Manual, "come from all different age groups and background" (p.7), and while the emphasis is certainly on recruiting adult volunteers such as neighbours, teachers, people from church groups, social agencies, clubs, or participants in recreation programs, the list also includes siblings of participants (Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, p.15). As well, the Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool manual states that "people who can be volunteers are older children, care-givers and parents who are available to assist you when ever possible in your programme" (p.2). Unlike the many programmes at Parks
and Recreation, volunteers are not defined in terms of age\(^4\), with the exception of the vague term 'older children', and consequently this opens up the opportunity to volunteer for children. The role of the volunteer, as it is defined and presented in the manuals, has many more freedoms and opportunities for active participation in the creation of meaningful recreation activities. For example, leaders are encouraged to have volunteers "use their own experience and creativity to enhance your playschool programme" (Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool, p.2). Also, the "Bill of Rights for Volunteers" includes the following point, "The right to be heard, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions to have respect shown for an honest opinion" (Leadership and Programme Planning Manual, p.16). Finally, the "Do's and Dont's (sic) when working with volunteers" includes the idea of reciprocal learning - an idea not circulated throughout the manuals in any other form; "Take advantage of any learning opportunities. Each volunteer brings with him/her a unique set of experiences and expertise. Be ready and willing to learn from each other" (Integrated Programme Planning Manual, p.8). How this opportunity is actually operationalized, in terms of the actual participation children volunteers have in the planning and decision making process, could only be assessed through ethnographic research. Research conducted about volunteers in sport and recreation programs in Ontario only accounts for adults fifteen and over (Leisure Information Network (LIN), 1998a) and adults eighteen and over (LIN, 1998b). The fact that this opportunity exists in the manuals, however, is an important element as a potential challenge to the dominant myth, that sport develops children into 'good' adults.

\(^4\) The next chapter will demonstrate that age is the primary way in which children's bodies are bioculturally marked by the Parks and Recreation manuals and programmes.
On the other hand the potential for volunteering, depending on how the opportunity is operationalized, may simply be another avenue for disciplining the child's body in a relation of docility-utility. As a volunteer, the child's recreation time becomes more and more useful and productive. As a volunteer, the child has a position in the recreation field. If denied the opportunity to volunteer, the child might find no place for him/herself in recreation. Thus the opportunity to volunteer may simply present an avenue for keeping children and young adults in useful and productive recreational activities. A volunteer would also play a similar role to that of a staff person and would be bound by the same duties and obligations: to survey the children in the recreation programmes and ensure that they are properly participating in the programmes. Thus a child who progresses from being a participant in the Parks and Recreation programmes to being a volunteer also progresses from being surveyed to surveying others while still continuing to be surveyed themselves, thereby entering further into a mechanics of power.

**What conveys this myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults?**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is not enough to simply reveal the myths that circulate in the Parks and Recreation documents. Discourse analysis of the myths reveals the power relations that conveyed and reproduced through the myths. Two discourses will be discussed in conjunction with the myth that sport develops children. These two discourses are the 'cure for social problems' discourse and the discourse of development. As with the previous chapter, the discussion of discourses will also include a discussion of how these discourses might affect the child's body through Parks and Recreation programmes.
'Cure for social problems' discourse

The 'cure for social problems' discourse helps to convey the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults because this discourse presents sport as a potential avenue for curing social problems. The definition of what constitutes a social problem is historically and culturally located, and consequently the social problems that sport can potentially solve have varied over time. The 'cure for social problems' discourse was predominant in the early development of recreation for children. In the 1920s, the Canadian Welfare Council was interested in recreation for children, and "the Council library assembled resource material on the part played by recreation in the healthy development of the child, and early files indicate that many letters were received from individuals and organizations seeking guidance from this material" (McPhedran, Barbous & Jackson, 1948, p.126). It is also important to note that, historically, this 'cure for social problems' discourse was highly class-based. For example, the Playground movement was consciously reformist, in Canada and the United States, with the goal of socializing and 'Americanizing' immigrant children (Greenleaf, 1978; Guttmann, 1988). Conversely, the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, and YMCA/ YWCA programmes were geared towards 'protecting' middle-class youth and enhancing their proper development (Guttmann, 1988; MacLeod, 1983; Markham, 1994; McKee, 1982). And in the 1930s and 1940s it was social welfare professionals who were central to the development of recreation services for children (Andrew et al., 1994). According to Andrew et al. (1994), "recreation had always been seen in a moral context and this was picked up by the growing professionalization of social welfare as a key area for public action" (p.7). Andrew et al. (1994) argue that the 'cure for social problems' view of recreational activities became less important in the post-war period, as the welfare state was consolidated and citizenship was
defined in terms of having the right to recreational services. They further argue that the current welfare state is in question, and citizenship is now defined in terms of 'customers' or 'clients': "the state, then, is to market its services [like recreation] to the population, seen as potential clients" (Andrew et al., 1994, p.12). Hall et al. (1991) argue that the emphasis in children and youth sports has shifted from character building (which is another way of preventing, or curing social problems) to sport skill development. I would argue that the character building, or 'cure for social problems' discourse has not really disappeared, not as a topic of interest for researchers, particularly in the fields of sport psychology and health promotion, and not in the Toronto Parks and Recreation documents.

In terms of research, the link between sport and character development is still investigated. As discussed in the literature review on sport psychology research and children, themes in Kerr's (1996) review of sport psychology research centred on the relationship between sport participation and the development of 'positive' personal characteristics (discipline, good behaviour, etc.) and the relationship between sport participation and 'negative' behaviours like delinquency and dropping out of school. Further, in an article discussing the role of youth sports as 'serious' leisure, as opposed to meaningless leisure, the authors work from the premise that "children's sport has been affirmed for the contribution it makes to building strong bodies and character" (Siegenthaler & Gonzalez, 1997, p.299). And finally, recent books like Gough's (1997), Character is Everything: Promoting Ethical Excellence in Sports confirms that the idea of character development through sport still circulates.

This idea, that sport develops children and thus contributes to 'curing' social problems, also circulates in federal government sport policy documents. For example, in Sport: The Way
Ahead, in terms of 'why the federal government should contribute funding and support for the development of sport', one of the reasons given is that,

Sport is a developmental experience. It provides training in human relations, team building and leadership. It provides a set of values useful throughout life, and learning from the value dilemmas sport presents. We know people learn and produce better when physically fit and active. At a time when youth are dropping out of school at alarming rates, sport helps to confirm the importance of a rounded education that builds physical, mental and life skills and health (p.257).

Finally, Pitter and Andrews (1997) argue that, in the United States, the underprivileged are increasingly the focus of a new brand of social welfare, and this has created a social problems industry. Unlike in Canada, where there is some public funding for sport and recreational services, the United States does not have any such municipal publicly funded system. Consequently in terms of sport provision, the cure for social problems discourse, which clearly underlies this social problems industry, justifies public and private expenditures on sport programmes for underserviced youth - like the Midnight Basketball League in Memphis (Pitter & Andrews, 1997).

The emphasis on character development through sport is still evident in sport psychology research, federal government documents, and recreation service provision particularly in the United States. In terms of Toronto Parks and Recreation documents, the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults has been documented through examples already. Also, the Toronto Parks and Recreation policy of offering all recreation services free of charge is part of this 'cure for social problems' discourse. As Pirk & Foley (1995) argue,
Public recreation centres, in working poor communities, are the only game in town. The City of Toronto uses this fact to stake out a moral position by offering recreation services to all its citizens free of user fees (p.8)... This service is justified as a social and economic investment in the lives of its children - a precious human capital (p.9).

Also parks and recreation services have been linked to child development and curing social problems in the benefit statements document (PRO & OMTR, 1992). For example, one personal benefit of parks and recreation stated is that "children's play is essential to the human development process" (PRO & OMTR, 1992, p.9). Also, the benefit statements talk about the potential of curing or preventing the social problems of crime and vandalism, drug use, and environmental issues (PRO & OMTR, 1992). These benefit statements have been used by Toronto Parks and Recreation to justify its position as an essential service (H. Pirk, lecture, Oct. 24, 1995).

Although the 'cure for social problems' discourse is not overt, it circulates nonetheless particularly through the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults. The argument above, by Pirk & Foley (1995) is reminiscent of early recreational services, which Andrew et al. (1994) argue was marked by the idea of charity; "Recreational opportunities were to be offered to certain deserving categories of the population, on a basis decided by those offering the assistance, not by those receiving it" (p.5). Tillotson (1989) argues that, originally (i.e., in the 1940s when the recreation movement emerged from earlier movements), public recreation services were viewed as a way to foster active citizenship, in the face of alienation created by the welfare state. Tillotson (1989) shows how the original intent was for recreation directors to assist and enable citizens to develop their own programmes, not to impose other 'approved' programmes on communities. This period
of consolidation of the welfare state was characterized by two themes, "an articulation by the municipal state of a positive role for itself in the recreation area and a definition of civil society in terms of rights to services" (Andrew et al., 1994, p.11). The view of recreation as a potential way to promote active citizenship did not last long in the period of consolidation of the welfare state, and now that the welfare state is in question, it has long since disappeared. Citizens are now viewed as consumers of recreation services, "individually voting their preferences by attendance, rather than as constituents collectively deciding community priorities" (Tillotson, 1989, p.32). This is problematic, and indicative of the 'cure for social problems' discourse, because citizens, or consumers, of recreation services do not have the ability to decide, or define what their needs or problems are.

This links back to the idea of charity. Recreation professionals are deciding what programmes would best serve the 'needs' of their community, rather than the community deciding. The following is an interesting example of how these two different areas, community needs and recreation professionals, coexist. It is taken from an article written by a citizen in the Toronto area who, at her recreation centre, helped organize a 'village' - an indoor playground/meeting area. She notes;

As more people came, the indoor park became a problem for the centre. This is not surprising. It seems to me that, in a certain way, the closer we came to being a community, the more disturbing was our presence for the people who ran the community centre (Mason, 1994, p.11).

Her perception that the community village became problematic for the recreation staff is a reflection of Foucault's paradox. This represents an example whereby recreation services are
utilized not to discipline bodies, but are utilized by individuals to liberate themselves.

The Parks and Recreation staff manuals, and Fall/ Winter 1997/1998 programme brochures do not reflect a large diversity of programmes for children. As mentioned, competitive sports are the favoured activity, particularly ball hockey, soccer, and basketball. These programmes do not reflect the diversity of the communities in Toronto. The Toronto Parks and Recreation staff also do not reflect the diversity of the communities in Toronto (H. Pirk, lecture, Oct. 24, 1995). Consequently, in working poor communities, Parks and Recreation may be the only game in town, but it is a game with rules and programmes decided by the people who are providing the service, not by the people who are using it. This is charity, and does not really reflect freedom to choose from a wide spectrum of recreational activities. In terms of democratization, this Parks and Recreation philosophy reflects a process of democratization whereby "opportunity is given" through the "doctrine of good works" (Donnelly, 1993). The 'doctrine of good works' is very much akin to the 'cure for social problems' discourse, as it reflects one group introducing activities to disadvantaged, or historically marginalized groups because these activities will be good for them. As discussed with the idea of charity, which still partially drives the Parks and Recreation philosophy and programming, the problem with this type of democratization is that it always means that one group is deciding "the form, content, and even the meaning of activity for another group" (Donnelly, 1993, p.422). According to Donnelly (1993);

A fully democratized sport and leisure environment would include both the right to participate, regardless of one's particular set of social characteristics, and the right to be involved in determination of the forms, circumstances and meanings of
In terms of Parks and Recreation programmes for children, this would require constantly determining how children define 'meaningfulness' in terms of their leisure activities and then providing the appropriate programmes. It is not enough to have community advisory councils, which exclude children, and have adults deciding what would be in the child's 'best interests'. Children themselves need to be involved in the process.

The 'cure for social problems' discourse requires changing and variable definitions of what constitutes a social problem. One of the 'social problems' regarding children which has recently emerged is the 'problem' of inactivity. As discussed in the literature review, the 'problem' of children's inactivity has been investigated and cited by a number of researchers, however, children are also the most active segment of the Canadian population. Also, there is no evidence that activity in childhood will affect health or activity level in adulthood. Another 'social problem' which is highly visible in the Parks and Recreation documents, and programme brochures, is the 'problem' of substance abuse. The Employee Handbook indicates that "Our Department is dedicated to playing our part in eliminating substance abuse in and around our community centres, recreation facilities and parks" (p.21). Their strategies for accomplishing this include; a) prevention, part of which is to promote a positive, healthy lifestyle, b) partnership and linkage, with social agencies, other community groups, and the police, c) training and development, which is geared towards staff, volunteers, permit holders, and community members, d) enforcement, which is self-explanatory, and e) security, which provides suggestions for staff on how to deal with these 'problem' drug users without foregoing their personal safety. These two particular 'social problems' - children's inactivity and substance abuse - are conveyed by the ideology of
healthism which is part of the 'cure for social problems' discourse. As discussed in the previous chapter, the ideology of healthism elevates the personal role and responsibility in health, while subsuming the structural-societal roles in health. This can affect the child's body because these 'problems' become inscribed on the social body and are viewed as individual problems, rather than structural problems. Also, these inscribed social 'problems' contribute to the social value of the child's body.

**Discourse of development**

So far this thesis has introduced several terms related to 'development', including the ideology of development and the developmental paradigm of childhood. Both of these terms may be used as a framework for understanding how childhood has been conceptualized, both in research and in social life. However, development is not simply a framework for understanding or conceptualizing children. Development is discursive, the *discourse of development* produces children. The discourse of development refers to a power relation which structures and produces the boundaries and limitations of cultural conversations we have about children and the experience of being a child. The discourse of development is certainly not limited to children, however for this thesis, that will be the primary focus. The historical emergence of the discourse of development will highlight how it has produced and limited the experience of being a child.

It is necessary to examine the emergence of this discourse in terms of the broader socio-political-economic climate. Again, although ideas about child development have circulated since the 1700s, most notably through the work of Locke and Rousseau, the entrenchment of the
western idea that childhood was a developmental period came with Freud's work around 1900. The emergence of this discourse coincided with structural changes to the life experiences of children. Gaffield (1991) and Peikoff and Brickey (1991) argue that, throughout the nineteenth century, most children played an essential economic role. Schooling, even after the inception of the Common School Act in 1816 in Canada, was largely a luxury of the aristocracy and the emerging upper-middle class (Gaffield, 1991; Peikoff & Brickey, 1991). The roles and positions of children changed dramatically throughout the nineteenth century, generally from that of producer to pupil. This transformation, however, was the result of many factors. According to Peikoff and Brickey (1991);

Put simply, the onset of industrial capitalism in the latter half of the nineteenth century produced a crisis in reproduction. Indications of this crisis were a declining birth rate, and the increasing reliance on immigration to meet capital's labour needs and the conflicting demands on women to be industrial workers and domestic labourers. The response of the state to this crisis of reproduction was to enact legislation and implement social policies that would have the effect of making the state itself an active participant in the care of children and the structuring of the home...The consequences of these structural and ideological changes were to transform children into precious creatures in need of special care and to transform motherhood into a sacred position best qualified to providing much of the special care required by these new precious creatures (p.60-61).

So, the entrenchment of the discourse of development, which is clearly linked to Peikoff and Brickey's (1991) idea of children as 'precious creatures' to be safeguarded through to adulthood,
occurred at a time when the workforce was a contested terrain. Many legislative changes were made which created and reinforced this new role for children. Some examples of legislative changes include the **Canadian Factory Act**\(^5\), the **Shop Act of 1886**\(^6\), and the institution of compulsory education in Ontario in 1871. Clearly the discourse of development is historically located within a struggle over economic and labour power, and the needs of capitalist society.

The discourse of development, while emerging out of the contested terrain of labour market disputes, has extended across all spheres of social life. Issues of development are critical in determining the 'value' of unborn fetuses, and in determining the experiences of children (and adults) who are deemed 'abnormal'. The discourse of development produces a particular reality for fetuses who are aborted because of 'developmental' problems, adults and children who were separated from society and possibly sterilized because of 'developmental' problems, children who must attend 'special education' classes or schools because of 'developmental' problems, and so on. While there are many issues connected to the discourse of development, this chapter, and the next chapter, will examine how the discourse of development produces a reality which structures and limits the child's body in Parks and Recreation programmes.

---

\(^5\) This Act was passed in Ontario in 1884 and it prohibited the employment of boys under 12 and girls under 14, and restricted employment for boys 12-14, girls 14-18 and women to 10 hours per day, or 60 hours per week (Peikoff & Brickey, 1991).

\(^6\) This Act limited the number of hours children could work in wholesale and retail establishments (Peikoff & Brickey, 1991).
The child's body

As discussed in the previous chapter, this thesis cannot provide evidence of how these discourses are operationalized in the Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes for children. However, this thesis will examine two potential effects on the child's body in Parks and Recreation programmes which are produced by the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults and the cure for social problems discourse and the discourse of development. The potential effects on the child's body will be discussed in terms of how these discourses reproduce the individual body as the primary site for social control and how these discourses contribute to assigning differential 'values' to children's bodies.

The individual body

As discussed in the literature review, Foucault's major contribution to the study of the body was demonstrating the shift from the sovereign body as the symbol of power to the power being disseminated and internalized within individual bodies. This internalized and individualized type of power is produced and maintained by disciplinary technologies and self-surveillance. The two discourses, the cure for social problems discourse and the discourse of development, produce and reproduce the individual body as the primary site of social control. The disciplinary technologies of the discourse of development will be discussed at length in the upcoming chapter on the bio-culturally marked body (specifically in the section on age). What will be discussed here is how these two discourses generally contribute to the internalization of power in the individual body and self-surveillance.

Both the discourses of development and 'cure for social problems' produce the individual
body in relation to the 'tyranny of the normal'. The tyranny of the normal is, as it implies, the harsh, rigid definition of what is 'normal', and consequently anything which falls outside the boundaries of this definition is considered 'abnormal'. The tyranny of the normal extends to all parts of the carnal body - height, weight, ability, appearance, and so forth, and thus renders a social body defined in relation to 'normality'. The *discourse of development* contributes to producing the tyranny of the normal by defining, in many different ways, what is 'normal' for children. These 'norms' are usually marked on the child's body by age. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, however it is important for this chapter to see how the discourse of development creates and produces 'normal' children's bodies, and then consequently how children can self-survey in order to maintain 'normality'. The 'cure for social problems' discourse also produces the tyranny of the normal in relation to whatever socio-historical behaviour is deemed to be a 'social' problem. Normal body weight, normal exercise patterns, normal alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, drug use, sexual activity have all been, at one time or another, assigned a standard by which a 'social' problem was defined.

In producing the tyranny of the normal, these discourses contribute to panoptic surveillance of the body. One's own body, as well as other bodies are regulated, judged, monitored and controlled in relation to the tyranny of the normal. As well, the path to 'normality', within panoptic, disciplinary society is viewed, in many cases, as the prerogative of the individual. Deviations from the 'norm' are the result of personal choices, or individual faults, rather than a product of broader social factors. The strength of this system of surveillance is that "it is possible

7 This phrase was coined by Leslie A. Fielder (1996), and was used as the title for the anthology which contained her work (among others).
to intervene at any moment and because the constant pressure acts even before the offences, mistakes or crimes have been committed" (Foucault, 1977, p.206). Consequently, the child's individual body, through the *discourse of development* and the 'cure for social problems' *discourse* is reproduced as the primary site of social control by adults, and this power is exercised largely through a panoptic system of surveillance, which is conducted in relation to the 'norms' produced by these discourses.

Much of the research reviewed in the literature review, particularly sport psychology, socialization research, and some health promotion research, also reproduce the individual child's body as the primary site of social control. This is done by studying the individual child independent of their social and historical location. While this may not, at first, seem connected to Foucault's discussion of disciplinary society and the body as the primary site of social control, the critique of this research and Foucault's theories of power and the individual body can be linked by the concept of the 'life course'. Featherstone and Hepworth (1991) argue that it is a result of the emergence of disciplinary society, and panoptic surveillance, that "we now see a much more extreme institutionalization of the life course socially structured in orderly sequences of psychosocial 'growth' and development" (p.372). Their use of the term life course is a deliberate attempt to overcome the fixed, rigid categorizations of the term 'life cycle', a term which "implies fixed categories in the life of an individual and assumes a stable system" (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1991, p.386). As we can see from this definition, the 'life cycle' is a concept largely produced by the discourse of development. The *discourse of development* produces standards of behaviour and development related to age, and the *discourse of development* produces childhood, and other parts of the life cycle, as universal, independent of social location - three year olds can
do this, four year olds can do that, five year olds like to do these things, and so forth. The term life course "suggests more flexible biographical patterns within a continually changing social system" (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1991, p.386).

So, the discourse of development and the 'cure for social problems' discourse reproduce the individual body as the primary site for social control, and they produce the tyranny of the normal, which provide the basis for panoptic self-surveillance. The emergence and progression of disciplinary society has produced, and has been produced by these discourses, which has lead to the concept of the life cycle -- a developmental concept which underlies much of the sport socialization and psychology research on children. This research also produces the individual body as the primary site for social control by studying individual bodies independent of their historical and social locations, but more importantly by producing the body as the source of any perceived deviations from the 'norm' and the cure for any deviations or transgressions. The Parks and Recreation documents, through the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults and the cure for social problems discourse and the discourse of development produce and reproduce the individual child's body as the primary site for social control.

**The 'value' of the child's body**

The discourse of development and the 'cure for social problems' discourse contribute to creating the 'value' of the child's body. The 'cure for social problems' discourse creates 'value' through the 'fixing' or prevention of these social problems. For example, to repeat a quotation mentioned earlier, the Parks and Recreation no-fee for service policy is justified as "a social and
economic investment in the lives of its children - a precious human capital" (Pirk & Foley, 1995, p.9). Also the parks and recreation benefit statements also address preventing or fixing the social problems of inactivity, health care costs, criminal activity, vandalism, and the environment (PRO & OMTR, 1992). The child's body also has value for the recreation leaders. In the manuals, under the questionnaire to determine if you are a good leader (questions to ask yourself, and see if the answer is 'yes'), it states, "You, as a leader, can render a real service" (Quoits Manual, p.4, Soccer Manual, p.3, T-Ball Manual, p.4, T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.4). Although it is not clear what service the leader can render, it undoubtedly has to do with their impact on the children, if they are 'good' leaders\(^8\). The 'cure for social problems' discourse also creates 'value' in a child's body, depending on what social problems they might have. As White, Young, and Gillett (1995) argue regarding the ideology of healthism (which is a reflection of a current 'social problem');

The view that anyone can be healthy with enough effort extrapolates to the idea that everyone should be healthy...Indeed, the social construction of the healthy self requires the co-responding construction of the unhealthy other, as is the case with popular representations of persons living with AIDS, the terminally ill, or the alcoholic, which emphasize absence of willpower. In this way, the physical body is also a social body whose condition mirrors a broader social condition (p.173).

Consequently, the 'healthy' child's body has value to society and to the child, as it represents the

---

\(^8\) This questionnaire includes for example; "Do you insist that your players play fairly?"; "Do you encourage and promote good sportsmanship among your players?"; "Do you lose a game with dignity?"; "Do you try to impart more than just game skills to your players?"; "Do you exploit 'teachable moments' to instil sound sporting attitudes and practices in your players?" In addition, there are 9 other questions.
socially desired state of the productive body. Other 'social problems' are marked on the child's body as well - cigarette smoking, drug use, poverty, and so forth, and thus give these socio-cultural bodies less 'value'. This ideology of healthism, as part of the 'cure for social problems' discourse, is linked to the body in consumer culture. This link to consumer culture also provides 'value' for the child's body because,

Within consumer culture it is hardly surprising that aging and death are viewed so negatively - they are unwelcome reminders of the inevitable decay and defeat that are in store, even for the most vigilant of individuals (Featherstone, 1991, p.186).

So, on the one hand, the child's body has positive 'value' because of its youth in consumer culture, but on the other hand it also has negative 'value' because of its youth within the discourse of development.

The *discourse of development* contributes to the 'value' of the child's body, in a few different ways. Firstly, this discourse produces biological differences, which become naturalized, between adults and children, but also produces biological differences amongst children (i.e., 5 year olds compared to 8 year olds, etc.). This in turn creates value for the child's body in terms of what it will become (an adult) rather than what it currently is. References to children being "a precious human capital" (Pirk & Foley, 1995, p.9) or, as Pronger (1995) notes, "it is commonplace to hear that 'the nation's children constitute its greatest resource'" (p.433), also support the idea that the child's body has value because of what it will become, not what it currently is. The 'value' is in what the child's body will develop into, what kind of adult he or she will become, how this person contributes to society in 'positive' ways. The corollary of this is the 'value' of the child's body for those who are involved in "developing" children (mothers, fathers,
teachers, day care workers, coaches, etc.). The importance of creating "good" adults gives a
certain value to the jobs associated with teaching and influencing9 children. A final type of value
of the child's body is in terms of it's 'physical capital', the body is "a possessor of power, status and
distinctive symbolic forms which is integral to the accumulation of various resources" (Shilling,
1993, p.127). There are two elements with respect to physical capital, the production of physical
capital and the conversion of physical capital. The importance of this work, according to Shilling
(1993) is that;

Bourdieu does show very clearly how different social classes produce distinct
bodily forms. This is important to his theory of social reproduction as there are

substantial inequalities in the symbolic values accorded to particular bodily
forms" (p.133).

Bourdieu's work focuses on the differences between working-class adults, and the dominant
classes (middle and upper classes). What is lacking is any research on children of different social
classes, genders, and ethnicities. This thesis cannot determine if and how Parks and Recreation is
involved in the production or conversion of physical capital, or which bodily forms are privileged
in their programmes from textual analysis alone, although this would be important future research.

In terms of Toronto Parks and Recreation, the child's body has value in terms of justifying
the existence of the programs, since Parks and Recreation sport programmes convey the myth that

9 This thesis will not take a position on the argument put forth regarding the 'value' of
child-rearing. Quite often there are discrepancies between what child-care workers feel is an
appropriate salary and social standing in relation to their jobs, and what they actually receive in
payment. What is important for this thesis is to recognize that these disputes reflect the discourse
of development, and the fact of the 'value' of the child's body is never questioned in these disputes.
Both sides of these disputes recognize that the child's body has 'value', they just do not agree on
how much value.
sport develops children into 'good' adults. Also, as the section on *Streetbuds* in the previous chapter demonstrated, the child's body also has value to Parks and Recreation, because Parks and Recreation can use the child's body to garner partnerships with private corporations - Parks and Recreation delivers the child's body to the private capitalist corporations where the body is positioned in consumer culture and within a capitalist, patriarchal system. Parks and Recreation may also be involved in privileging particular bodily forms and physical capitals, thus reproducing social inequalities through sport programmes.

**Chapter summary**

This chapter exposes the myth that sport develops children into 'good' adults, and discusses one of the challenges to this myth, that is, the case of the volunteer. Although there are many discourses involved in circulating this myth, two discussed in this chapter are the discourse of development and the cure for social problems discourse. The potential effects on the child's body are explored under the themes of the individual body and the 'value' of the child's body.

The next chapter will address some of the ways in which the child's body is bioculturally marked by the Parks and Recreation programmes and documents.
Chapter Six

The Bio-Culturally Marked Body

Introduction

The importance of the individual body as the primary site for social control in culture has been discussed in the literature review, and this understanding of the body owes a debt to the work of Michel Foucault. The previous two chapters have discussed potential ways in which the discourses and myths which circulate throughout the documents could affect the child's body in Parks and Recreation programmes. Although further ethnographic research is needed to uncover the actual embodied experiences of children in these programmes, the previous chapter discussed ways, based on other research, that the child's body might be affected. This chapter will examine the various ways in which the child's body is bio-culturally marked by power relations through the Toronto Parks and Recreation documents. Foucault (1977) reminds us that the body "is also directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs" (p.26). The Parks and Recreation documents bio-culturally mark children's bodies in several ways - age, dis/ability, gender, race and social class. Bodies, as the primary site for social control, are marked by age, dis/ability, gender, race and social class in order to control and regulate them, as

---

1 The term 'bio-culturally marked body' attempts to account for both the carnal body, the actual flesh-and-blood body and the way in which culture marks this carnal body. It is an attempt to overcome the essentialism of viewing the body either as a 'natural' body or as a socially constructed body, by suggesting that while an actual flesh-and-blood body exists, it is never produced independent of discourse.

141
well as position them differentially within the network of power which circulates among all individuals. As mentioned in the literature review, the markers of age, race, class, dis/ability and gender are not simply categories but are "relations that organize our productive and reproductive activities, located in time and space" (Ng, 1993, p.50).

**Age**

Age is the predominant means of bio-culturally marking the child's body through the Parks and Recreation documents. It takes precedence over, and is a part of, every other marker - none of them exist independent of age. Age plays a critical role in the disciplining of children's bodies in order to create docile and useful persons. Before exploring the role of age as disciplinary technology, the predominance of age and the developmental assumptions which are bio-culturally marked on the child's body, throughout the Parks and Recreation documents will be discussed.

In terms of the predominance of age within the documents, every programme for children in the 1997/1998 Fall/Winter programme brochures is designated by age or age groups. Within the staff training documents every craft idea, every co-operative game, every team, every track and field event and every talent show event is designated by age. In terms of eligibility for tournaments, children must provide 'proof' of their age, either with a birth certificate, a passport, or a legal affidavit (Quoits Manual, p.2, Soccer Manual, p.1, T-Ball Manual, p.2, T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.2). Finally, in both the Special Events Manual (p.17) and the Leadership and Programme Planning Manual (p.30), 'age of participants' is the first factor leaders are told to keep in mind when developing programmes or special events.
Developmental assumptions and promotion of differences

The Toronto Parks and Recreation manuals bioculturally mark the body for age in terms of assumptions about the body's social and physical development (i.e., how far down the development path they are). These assumptions lead to promotion of the idea that there are great differences between children of different ages. The developmental assumptions about children are reflected in statements like the following:

Clear and simple rules are essential, especially with younger children, in running an enjoyable game (p. 1). When dealing with younger children (9 years and younger) it is very important to plan games of short duration with a lot of variety... It is impossible to instruct young children to split themselves into groups (Games Manual, p. 2).

Also, the discourse of development is quite clear in the following example;

Young people whom you come in contact with are in the most formative period of their lives. They are as malleable and impressionable as wet clay. Attitudes formed and habits moulded now will be lasting (Quoits Manual, p. 3, Soccer Manual, p. 2, T-Ball Manual, p. 3, T & F and Potato Races Manual, p. 3).

And finally, in the Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool manual, there is an entire section called 'Child development', and this section outlines "What to expect from..." a two year old, a three year old, a four year old, and a five year old (as well as "What to expect from..." YOU - the leader). This section provides point form expectations and developmental levels for children of these ages. Some examples of these points for each age are listed below:

What to expect from... a 3 year old: coordination is improving, however still has
trouble judging distance and control; child will set out to draw a person; colours and repetition are important.

**What to expect from... a 4 year old:** seeks approval; can skip, jump forward and straight up and down; can paint well with a brush and cut fairly accurately with scissors.

**What to expect from... a 5 year old:** thrives on adult oriented projects or being a helper; starting to enjoy competitive games; capable of climbing, balancing and throwing (*Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool*, green pages).

It is important to question why this information on each specific age is included in the playschool manual when the playschool programme is for children 3-6 years of age. Activities within the playschool programme are not broken down along these age lines, so why does the manual provide such detailed information on each age group? This question will be addressed in the section on age, power, and the body.

These developmental assumptions are taken-for-granted, and consequently they also take for granted an expectation of differences between children. For example, the *Games Manual* provides an excellent example of 'naturalized' differences between children. Each section of this manual describes different types of games, and within each section, each game has an 'appropriate' age range listed. What is striking about this is that within each section, as well as between sections, there is a tremendous variety of age ranges for the games listed. For example, in the 'social and introductory' games section, the following age ranges are used for the various games; playschool, 4-8 years, 4-12 years, 5-10 years, 5-12 years, 6-12 years, 6-teen, 7-14 years, 10-adult, 12-adult. The other sections of the manual, describing 'quiet games', 'active group games', and
'parachute and earthball' games are similar. These various age distinctions suggest that there are great differences between children one or two years apart in age, differences that would affect their ability to enjoy or participate in games of a similar nature (i.e., social and introductory games). These various age distinctions actually contradict the stated purpose of the Games Manual which is that the "emphasis of these games is cooperation. Games are designed to be adapted to the needs of the players" (Games Manual, p.1). If each of these games can be adapted to the needs of the players, then why is there a need for age distinctions in the first place? There is no explanation or justification for why these age distinctions have been made. There is no attempt to point out what the differences are between these children, but it is quite clear the manuals suggest that differences do exist. This can also be seen in the Special Events Manual in the discussion of children to leader ratios for outings; "Child to leader ratio for outings with children seven and older should be 12:1 and for playschool age children the ratio should be 5:1" (p.15). Again, the difference here is not explained or justified, but is taken for granted. Younger children, because of their 'lack' of development, require stricter supervision than do older children - simply because of their age. Finally, the Track and Field and Potato Races Manual provides several examples of the 'differences' between children, through their track meet events. The track events are running races, yet the distance of the race depends on the child's age. Boys and girls aged 6, 7, or 8 run in a 50m dash (separately), while boys and girls aged 9 and 10 run a 75m dash, and boys and girls aged 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 run a 100m dash. Children aged 10 to 15 run full relays, while children 6 to 9 run 'mini-relays', and the rules are quite specific that "there are no

2 Playschool age refers to the City of Toronto's Playschool programme, which is designed for children 3 - 6 years old (Playschool Manual, p.1).
substitutions in a relay i.e., a 6 year old may not move up to run with the 12 year olds etc." (T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.7). The choice of this particular example is interesting in contrast with the 'coaching' philosophy and with the goals of the Department. The coaching philosophy says that a good coach should "emphasize cooperation and participation rather than a 'win at all cost' attitude" (Quoits Manual, p.3; Soccer Manual, p.2; T-Ball Manual, p.3, T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.3), and the goal of the Department is to provide as many opportunities for participation to boys and girls. In the example of the 6 year old - if there were not enough 6 year olds, or other age 'appropriate' children for this child to race with, and if winning is not the main purpose, what would it matter if the 6 year old ran with the 12 year olds? In fact, it is the same argument if a 12 year old wanted to race with younger children because there were not enough children in that age range. It is also important to note, for this hypothetical example, that the manual forbids relay teams comprising children from different centres (T & F and Potato Races Manual, p.7). So, unless a centre can put together a full team for each age division, children lose the opportunity to participate.

Age is bio-culturally marked on the recreation manual's representations of the child's body, and implicit in this process of aging are developmental assumptions. The next section will examine what the relationship of these assumptions, and the bio-culturally age-marked body, is to power relations.

**Age, power and the body**

Age is the predominant way in which the child's body is bio-culturally marked through the Parks and Recreation documents, and this marker is driven by the discourse of development.
What is important to ask is how this socially constructed knowledge about the aging child contributes to power relations, and how power is invested in the child's body.

Age markers and the discourse of development are technologies which contribute to the disciplining of children's bodies and the potential of the creation of docile bodies. According to Foucault (1977), "a body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (p.136). How does the marker of age and the discourse of development contribute to the creating a docile body? This question can be answered by looking at how the child's body is disciplined by aging, and thus rendered docile. One of the first elements of discipline is that "it proceeds from the distribution of individuals in space" (Foucault, 1977, p.141). The marker of age, for children, distributes them in space. The Parks and Recreation programmes and documents demonstrated a deliberate and precise separation between children, sometimes only one or two years apart in age. Children are the only age group to whom this rigid division occurs. The separation of individuals by one year, or two years, occurs only at this end of the life course. As the child's carnal body ages, age divisions become much more broad. For example, the Parks and Recreation programme brochures use the following age ranges to distinguish 'adult' programmes; 18+, 25+, 16+, or no age range at all (Adam Beck/ BBCC/ Beaches, 1997/1998; Earl Beatty/ Fairmount/ Main Square, 1997/1998); and seniors programmes are usually designated as 55+ (Adam Beck/ BBCC/ Beaches, 1997/1998; Earl Beatty/ Fairmount/ Main Square, 1997/1998). These age ranges for adults and seniors encompass, potentially, thirty to forty year age differentials with no apparent problem. However, age divisions for children distribute and separate them as individuals within their own social worlds and between their social worlds and 'adult' social worlds.

The discourse of development also contributes to the provision of 'rank', based on one's
According to Foucault (1977),

Discipline is an art of rank, a technique for the transformation of arrangements. It individualizes bodies by a location that does not give them a fixed position, but distributes them and circulates them in a network of relations (p. 146).

The discourse of development, which is based on the premise that childhood is a 'stage of becoming' and that the purpose of childhood is to reach adulthood, consequently positions 'older' children as better, that is, more developed, than 'younger' children. The differences between track and field events in the Parks and Recreation documents are evidence of this (i.e., the 50m dash for 6-8 years vs. the 100m dash for 11-15 years). Age, as a form of rank, also changes, it does not provide a fixed position - in fact, a child's rank can change from circumstance to circumstance. At daycare, he or she may be the oldest child, and consequently have the 'highest' rank, but at home, he or she may be the youngest, and consequently would have the 'lowest' rank.

Another element of discipline is the control of activity. Age, or aging, particularly for children, has become a controlled activity. Foucault (1977) discusses, among other things, the use of a timetable and the quality of time used, that is, constant supervision to ensure that time is 'usefully' spent, as parts of this 'control of activity'. Ageing, through the discourse of development, has been put on a timetable. From the time children are born, they are compared against 'norms' for their age in terms of weight gain, bowel and bladder control, physical development, sociability, locomotion, intellectual and mental development, sight, hearing, height (or length for a baby), and development of teeth (Hilton, 1993; Stoppard, 1995). Another part of this element of discipline is the quality of time used. As discussed by Mayall (1993), children are highly supervised - they have very little, if any, unsupervised time or space. The level of
supervision is also dependent on age, as the leader to children ratio in the Parks and Recreation documents demonstrates. Younger, 'undeveloped' children require more supervision, while older, more developed, and arguably more docile children require somewhat less supervision in terms of the number of leaders, although the supervision is constant nonetheless.

According to Foucault (1977), "The disciplines, which analyze space, break up and rearrange activities, must also be understood as machinery for adding up and capitalizing time" (p.157). This element of discipline is called the organization of geneses. Foucault's (1977) example to illustrate this concept is taken from changes in the form and content of schooling, and he is worth quoting at length because of the correlation to the discourse of development:

It is this disciplinary time that was gradually imposed on pedagogical practice - specializing the time of training and detaching it from the adult time, from the time of mastery; arranging different stages, separated from one another by graded examinations; drawing up programmes, each of which must take place during a particular stage and which involves exercises of increasing difficulty; qualifying individuals according to the way in which they progress through these series (p.159).

Although Parks and Recreation does not have examinations which separate the different stages, there are definitely examples of different stages in the documents and programme brochures. For example, the track and field running race events - they increase in length as children increase in age. Also, the playschool programme is designed for children who have not yet attended school, it is a pre-cursor for some children, "Playschool is often a child's first experience in group play" (Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool, p.1). The playschool manual also
provides details about the separate stages of development, so although there are no examinations to pass to proceed from one stage to the next, children are presumably to be classified as 'normal', 'advanced for their age', or 'slow for their age', based on the criteria set out in the "Child Development" section of the manual. Finally, the T-Ball Manual as a pre-cursor to the game of baseball also reflects the organization of geneses. Young children should progress through T-ball in order to be prepared for the more advanced, increasingly difficult game of baseball.

The final element of discipline, according to Foucault (1977) is the composition of forces. This is a culmination of the other three elements, and it is through the composition of forces that the most efficient machine of production is produced. Foucault (1977) uses the industrial analogy of the machine to highlight this demand to which discipline must respond: "to construct a machine whose effect will be maximized by the concerted articulation of the elementary parts of which it is composed" (p. 164). Foucault (1977) uses examples of changes in military tactics, industrial labour relations and the schooling of children to show how bodies are disciplined into relations which make each individual useful and maximally efficient. There are two important elements of the composition of forces, with respect to children and age. First, according to Foucault (1977), "the body is constituted as a part of a multi-segmentary machine" (p. 164) in order to achieve the most efficient machine, and secondly, time is conceptualized such that in each moment the "maximum quantity of forces may be extracted from each and combined with the optimum result" (Foucault, 1977, p. 165). Ageing, for children especially, plays a part in this element of discipline. As mentioned previously, from the moment of birth a baby is expected to do certain things (i.e., eat, sleep, smile) at certain times. During this period of infancy babies are usually cared for by one person. As the child ages, it becomes more efficient and productive to have several children cared
for by one adult (i.e., daycare, preschool, school, etc.). This process continues as children age.

Children are useful to others because they are a product for adults to work on. However children are also expected to be useful and productive in their own development. Participation in extracurricular activities like Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes is part of this process. These programmes, as indicated by the benefit statements (PRO & OMTR, 1992), are useful and productive because of how they assist children in 'becoming' good adults. The link between age, usefulness and maximum efficiency does not stop when children become adults. As Vertinsky (1991) notes "the ageing individual, lacking the ability to produce, was no longer of use to the evolution of the species and was increasingly viewed as programmed for death" (p.73).

Recreation programmes are often a vehicle for making these individuals, who are marked by age as less productive and useful, through volunteer opportunities and intergenerational programmes.

The second feature, that of being able to extract the maximum quantity of forces in each moment, is also clearly related to age with children. As mentioned previously, the Parks and Recreation documents, as well as other medical documents, have precise ideas about what children should and should not be able to do at every age. The younger children are, the more time is temporally elongated in order to extract the maximum quantity of forces. From birth, children age in weeks, then months - with expectations for extracting forces connected to each of these time periods (height, weight, speech development, teeth, sitting, crawling, walking, etc.). Then, the time period for extracting forces is measured in years. The expectations for yearly changes continue as children age (i.e., walking, talking, reading, running, hand-eye coordination, bicycle riding, competitive sports, etc.), and become quite broad for adults and senior citizens.

The Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool manual described some of the
expectations for children aged three, four, and five (see pages 143-144).

The previous section discussed how age, and the discourse of development, are involved in disciplining the child's body, and thus producing a docile but useful body. Age, and ageing are disciplinary technologies which contribute to rendering the child's body docile, yet at the same time also making the child's body useful - not only for what it will become as an adult (economically productive and politically acquiescent), but what is. The child's body, while not economically productive itself, is a product to which other people's economic productivity is based upon - including Parks and Recreation leaders and programmes. The child's body is also expected to be productive in producing itself -- through involvement and success in 'enriching' activities like Parks and Recreation programmes. One of the questions raised in the literature review was why there seems to be such an emphasis on regulating childhood, and children - by way of 'protecting' children, legislating their freedoms (or lack thereof), and generally attempting to supervise every minute of their existence. I would argue that these social restraints on childhood freedoms, in combination with the disciplinary technology of ageing, are necessary in order to discipline children, from birth, to become docile adults. Why children, more so than adults? Because children are not born disciplined, consequently their bodies are subject to far more stringent techniques of discipline - as the section on ageing described, the expectations of extraction of forces is great for each year of the child's life. It is, perhaps, that power, for young children, resides in the body of their parent(s), rather as power used to be symbolized in the body of the sovereign. Consequently, because power is not internalized and individualized in children, children have more potential to experience freedom and liberation. As a result of this, we see
ageing as the primary disciplinary technology, it takes hold from the moment of birth\(^3\), and consequently the ageing process is really a reflection of the tension between bodily freedom and the disciplined body. Postman (1994) has argued that childhood is disappearing. If childhood represents freedom (or at least impartial inculcation) from disciplinary society, and adulthood represents total indoctrination into disciplinary society (docility-utility), than perhaps evidence of young girls (as young as six years of age) dieting, or children participating in highly competitive sports (which discipline bodies) does represent the loss of childhood. Nonetheless, the paradox of disciplinary society is that "the process of rendering the body docile is not possible without a liberation of forces, without a solicitation of initiatives" (Vigarello, 1995, p.158). Consequently, physical activity programmes for children might contribute to disciplining their ageing bodies further, but physical activity for children might also contribute to the liberation of forces from their bodies. Without further study it cannot be determined to what extent Parks and Recreation programmes provide children's bodies experiences of liberation, however it is important to note that the potential, in any physical activity programme, or in any disciplinary activity - like ageing - for liberation of forces always exists.

Age, as marked on the body, can also contribute power relations in two conflicting ways for children. This will be discussed in terms of the body in consumer culture and the body in the discourse of development.

Mike Featherstone (1991) argues that "the basic freedom within the culture [consumer culture] is the freedom to consume" (p.176). This is one freedom which has been extended to

\(^3\) In fact, it can take hold prior to birth with the new medical technologies and interventions which assess 'normal' fetal development.
children. Kid culture, or children's consumer culture is a growing market for advertisers (Derevensky & Klein, 1992; ZenithMedia, 1996) and magazines such as *Sports Illustrated for Kids* confirms this. The body plays an important role in consumer culture, particularly the 'young' body:

Within consumer culture the body is proclaimed as a vehicle of pleasure, its desirable and desiring and the closer the actual body approximates to the idealised images of youth, health, fitness and beauty the higher its exchange-value (Featherstone, 1991, p.177).

The contradiction for children is that they have 'young' bodies, yet their bodies do not have a higher exchange-value because of the discourse of development. It is not actual youth which is valued, just the appearance of youth. Actual youth does not connote a higher exchange-value on the body because actual youth is connected to a state of development, a 'stage of becoming', a stage of 'not-quite' an adult. The physical capital of youth is only capital for those who are not actually young. In their essay, "The Mask of Ageing and the Postmodern Life Course", Featherstone and Hepworth (1991), discuss the role of old-age, and there are similarities between the stigma of old age (which is the absence of the 'appearance' of youth) and the stigma of youth (which is the actual state of youth);

Turner (1987) argues that we can theorise the stigma of both youth and the aged with reference to a disengagement (expressed as a relative absence of reciprocity) from the community. Turner has devised a 'reciprocity-maturation curve' to demonstrate an increase in social prestige as one moves into mid-life and reciprocity and social integration increase. The community grants esteem to such
people for their services and for the value it has for them. In line with disengagement theory, as people become elderly and unable to reciprocate and perform responsibilities they are forced to withdraw from powerful social roles and lose prestige. Likewise young people score low on reciprocity because it take time to build up the skills and 'capital' that make this possible - they are unable to reciprocate and to become involved in the community. This model may go some way towards explaining the low status of the old and children (p.386).

Of course, the accumulation of other types of capital, like cultural, economic, social and symbolic (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1991), contribute to social standing and the accumulation of these types of capital increases with age. The differential possession of these types of capital will affect both the young and old in terms of their increased status or relative loss of status.

For the most part the physical capital of youth, although highly valued in consumer culture, does not contribute to a higher exchange-value of the 'actually young' body because of the discourse of development, and the necessity of accumulating other types of capital for social standing, it is the appearance of youth, when one is not 'young' which bestows a higher exchange-value on the body. There are some exceptions to this generalization. Young athletes like Tara Lipinski are celebrated for their youth and their achievements, and thus their 'young' bodies do have a higher-exchange value. This example from sport (and the many others from the music and entertainment industry, for example) do not contradict my previous argument because these children and young adults embody successful 'development' in their particular field. Their youth is valued because of their 'advanced' development and success. However, there is another impact on the body, both the child's body, and adult's body and the senior's body, which needs to be
considered.

Featherstone and Hepworth (1991) discuss, what they call the ageing mask, in terms of old age, and what they find is that most people have conceptions of their age which go beyond simple chronological terms of age. For example, they distinguish between personal age, which tended to be younger than chronological age, and there was 'look age' compared with 'feel age', and that how people 'look' and how people 'feel' represent very different aspects of their total personal age (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1991). This disparities, between 'look age' and 'feel age' contribute to the ageing mask. According to Featherstone and Hepworth (1991) "it is the ageing mask which is pathological or deviant and the inner essential self which remains - even beneath or 'inside' Alzheimer's disease - as normal. Such a conceptualization of ageing sets great store on the belief that ageing is a potentially curable disease..." (p. 379). The ageing mask reflects a state of disembodiment, as previously discussed and outlined by Bordo (1993): the body experienced as alien (p.144), the body is experienced as confinement and limitation (p.144), the body is the enemy (p.145), and the body is the locus of all that threatens our attempts at control (p.145). What needs to be determined is if children also experience this disembodiment because of their ageing process. Do children feel trapped behind an ageing mask? Do they conceptualize their age based on 'look age' and 'feel age'? These questions need to be answered because, quite clearly for the elderly, the mask of ageing reflects a state of disembodiment, and the role of competitive sport for children as contributing to their potential disembodiment has been discussed. But perhaps it is not only competitive sport activities which contribute to this disembodiment, perhaps it is also the ageing process, and the conflicting notions around the 'value' of the youthful body which contribute to the disembodied child's body.
**Ability**

The bioculturally marked disabled body, either physically or mentally, is an important but not central discourse in the Parks and Recreation manuals, however it will be discussed here for two reasons; first, it is connected to the ageing body because of the discourse of development; and secondly, because there is one entire manual devoted to integrating sports and games for disabled children.

The Toronto Parks and Recreation documents naturalize and take for granted the able body and thus marginalize the disabled body. References to the disabled body exist overtly in only one manual, the *Integrated Programme Planning Manual*, which is specially geared for programming involving disabled children. References to disability occur in a much more general fashion in one other manual (*Leadership and Programme Planning Manual*), and the reference is in conjunction with other bioculturally marked bodies;

- Your role as a leader is to creatively modify programmes so that they are fully accessible to all members of the community regardless of age, sex, religion, social status, or ability level....Most programmes can be modified to suit any physical, mental or social need (*Leadership and Programme Planning Manual*, p.12).

Also, in terms of the 1997/1998 programme brochures, there were limited references to disability. In one brochure, on the first page, it stated, "The City of Toronto Parks and Recreation Department provides any resident who has a disability the opportunity to participate in any of our recreation programs listed in this brochure" (*Earl Beatty/ Fairmount/ Main Square*, p.1).

Otherwise there were no references to disability.
**Developmental assumptions**

The bioculturally marked disabled body, either mental or physical, is driven by the same discourse of development which drives the production of the aged body. The discourse of development produces and reproduces the idea that,

To become an embodied person and to become a fully fledged member of society necessarily involved developmental sequences of biological growth; the body has to grow to produce the physiological coordination necessary to facilitate movement, facial and bodily gestures and other interpersonal responses...If the process of becoming an acceptable human being is dependent upon those developments, the loss of cognitive and other skills produces the danger of social unacceptability, unemployability, and being labelled as less than fully human (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1991, p.376).

The discourse of development drives and perpetuates the tyranny of 'normality' which marginalize persons with a disability because they can never reach, according to this discourse, a fully developed state. As discussed, the discourse of development also perpetuates notions of 'normality' in terms of age - for each age in fact. Children are judged in relation to a standard for their age in terms of height, weight, intelligence, motor skills, etc. The sign of successful integration, according to the manuals is "to treat people with disabilities in the same way you would treat any other people of the same age" (Integrated Programme Planning Manual, p.4). It is interesting that age is the symbol of normality by which disabled children are judged, even though their disability may never change, regardless of their age.

In terms of physical programmes for children, the discourse of development, which posits
Age and ability 'norms', is perpetuated by the dominant sport model which is prevalent throughout the documents and programmes. The dominant sport model, as discussed, is based on the ethos of 'faster, higher, stronger'. Winning, which is a result of dominating others, is the goal or value of the sport. Although, quite clearly, this model presents problems for children with a disability, the solution in the Parks and Recreation documents is not to challenge and change the dominant sport model, but simply to modify it.

One section of the Integrated Programme Planning Manual "lists some general adaptation suggestions and examples of popular activities and adaptations" (p.11). The discourse of development and the dominant sport model create and reinforce socially constructed distinctions between 'normal' and 'not normal'. The discourse of development produces what 'normal' bodies look like, and what 'normal' bodies can do, and when they can do it. The dominant sport model tells us what 'normal' sports are. These culturally produced and socially constructed definitions of normality are not challenged by the Parks and Recreation documents, but are reproduced. For example, the Integrated Programme Planning Manual provides examples of how to modify baseball and volleyball, which are 'real' games, so that disabled children can play them (p.24-25).

This manual also suggests; "Make every effort to keep activities as nearly normal as possible...The less change in an activity, the more the disabled child will feel that he is like other children, and a part of the group" (Integrated Programme Planning Manual, p.11). There is no attempt in these Parks and Recreation documents to critique what is defined as 'normal' or why, however, the following section on power, disability and the child's body will attempt to do just that.
Disability, power and the body

Shilling (1993) argues that "Educational, sporting and other fields in society are generally not structured in ways that provide frequent opportunities for value to be bestowed on working class bodies" (p. 137). I would argue that this should be extended to include disabled bodies. Although the Parks and Recreation goal is integration, the discourses of development and the dominant sport model which circulate and are reproduced in the Parks and Recreation documents contribute to the separation and marginalization of disabled bodies. The manuals themselves are the first indication of this. The information on integration is not itself integrated throughout all of the manuals, it exists in a separate manual.

Secondly, the process of modification implies a 'norm' or standard which must be modified to suit the disabled child's needs and abilities. In terms of the disabled child's body, this can potentially contribute to less cultural and social 'value' in two ways. For the disabled child him/herself, the disabled body has less physical capital within the dominant sport model because of the ethos of faster, higher, stronger. For the other, able-bodied children, the presence of a disabled body leads to their experiences in physical activity programmes being altered. No longer are they playing a 'real' sport, in which success has social, cultural (and potentially economic) capital, but they are playing a 'modified' version, with little or no cultural capital. Consequently, the disabled body is marked not only in terms of its own participation in sports, but also is a marker, or problem, for able-bodied children in Parks and Recreation sports.

Runte (1998) in a discussion about her own personal experiences as a disabled women suggests that these experiences are not unique to the sporting world. She says, "The playgrounds of my youth were ultimately supplanted by university classrooms, boardrooms, and offices. The
rules of the game, however, remain strikingly similar" (Runte, 1998, p.101). She goes on to indicate that it was only upon making her disability 'invisible' to her employer and co-workers, that she finally received the recognition she felt she deserved as a competent adult and employee. Her experiences, and attempts to hide her disability, are a reflection of how the body is viewed in consumer culture; "the tendency within consumer culture is for ascribed bodily qualities to become regarded as plastic - with effort and 'body work' individuals are persuaded that they can achieve a certain desired appearance" (Featherstone, 1991, p.178). Runte (1998) was rewarded for her 'body work' efforts, which concealed her physical disability, however, her triumph of the flesh was short-lived. Ultimately her condition deteriorated and she realized that she had been denying a part of herself - the disabled part. In order to succeed in a world, sporting or otherwise, where the discourse of development is predominant, a disabled person must overcome their carnal body, and in so doing, furthers the project of disembodiment.

The disabled body is a marker for degrees of competence, or lack of competence and full adult status, because of the discourse of development. Within the social world of Parks and Recreation sports programmes, or other social worlds, the disabled body marks the individual as 'less' than complete, and within consumer culture, the disabled individual should be able to overcome these 'plastic' or malleable physical characteristics. Just as an obese body is assumed to be a marker for poor moral character in North American culture, so too is the able body a marker for competence and full 'adult' status.
Gender

The gendered body in the Parks and Recreation documents, is a contested terrain. The documents included in this case study, and the 1997/1998 programme brochures serve to produce and reproduce traditional patriarchal conceptualizations of the gendered body. For boys and men this contributes to the encouragement of strong, athletic, aggressive, bodies whereas for girls and women this contributes to encouragement of attractive, passive, non-threatening bodies. However this is challenged by the "Women In Action" programme which is represented by the "Women In Action" documents (City of Toronto, n.d.; Straw, 1990; Straw, 1994). Although these documents are not part of the documents included in the training package for all leaders, they are analyzed as part of this case study, to illustrate the contested terrain of the bioculturally marked gendered body of children.

The bioculturally marked gendered body is not overt in the documents or the brochures. The underlying assumption seems to be that all Parks and Recreation programmes are open to all children, boys and girls, and consequently any further differences in participation along gender lines would be voluntary. There are some examples in the documents and brochures which reproduce 'traditional', or patriarchal conceptualizations of gendered bodies, male and female, masculine and feminine, however these will be discussed below. In the "Women In Action" documents the gender of girls and women is the primary focus of the documents. In the "Women In Action" pamphlet it states, "Women In Action is a project developed by the City of Toronto's Department of Parks and Recreation in co-operation with it's many communities, agencies and organizations to address the unequal opportunities and participation of women and girls in leisure, recreation and sport services"(City of Toronto, pamphlet). The "Women In Action" documents
recognize that in Parks and Recreation facilities and programmes, "the historically dominant, traditionally male, activities currently hold prominence" (Straw, 1990, p.9). This understanding is precisely what is lacking in the other Parks and Recreation documents which have been used in the case study.

**Reproduction of patriarchal assumptions**

Traditional patriarchal assumptions about men and women are based on the assumed and taken for granted *differences* between boys and girls, men and women. With respect to sports, this contributes to the perpetuation of the idea that girls are 'naturally' weaker than boys and thus will never be able to compete at the same level. Other assumed differences are often cited in regards to the types of games and physical activities that boys and girls 'naturally' like to play. Boys are assumed to enjoy competitive, aggressive games and sports while girls are assumed to enjoy cooperative games and activities. The Toronto Parks and Recreation documents perpetuate and reproduce traditional patriarchal assumptions about gendered bodies by (a) perpetuating the idea that there are gender 'differences' and, (b) by promoting gender specific activities.

**(a) The perpetuation of gender differences**

The perpetuation of differences is not overt, for example, there are no activities or programmes that are limited to boys only (i.e., football, wrestling, rugby), or girls only (i.e., gymnastics, dance). All programmes are open to both boys and girls. The question of how this manifests in terms of participation along gender lines cannot be answered by looking at these documents. However, the perpetuation of 'differences' between boys and girls is achieved, most
notably, in the Track and Field and Potato Races Manual. Although the activities offered at the track meet are the same for boys and girls of the same age, the issue of gender 'difference' is highlighted in the following discussion about the Tug-O-War event;

Each Tug-O-War team is limited to 10 competitors, two of which are spares. Only 8 competitors can pull at any one time. The teams must consist of 4 boys and 4 girls pulling and the spares must be 1 boy and 1 girl. If using the spare puller, only the girl can substitute for a girl and vice-versa (T and F and Potato Races Manual, p.5).

What the exact difference between girls and boys is, is not clear, however the breakdown of teams and substitutions along gender lines suggests that substituting a girl for a boy, or a boy for a girl would somehow render the competition unfair. Although certainly the rules are positive in the sense that they provide an equal opportunity for girls to participate, the rules nonetheless reinforce the assumption of gender difference. If the team composition was based on hair colour or shoe size, and only someone with the same shoe size could substitute for another player, the absurdity of the basis of difference, with respect to ability in a Tug-O-War contest would be obvious. However, when the division is based on gender, the taken-for-granted 'differences' between boys and girls renders these rules unproblematic. A further example from the same manual is the rule that there cannot be co-ed teams for the relay races. Again, this rule could be viewed as positive, in that it provides opportunities and space for girls participation. However, the rule itself perpetuates the notion of gender differences. There is no explanation of why this rule exists, nor are there any indications that this rule may be changed. While this rule may provide girls with their own space for participation, the rigidity of the rule may also lead to limits
on their participation. For example, if a recreation centre cannot put together a full 'girls only' relay team, any girl (or two) who wishes to participate loses the opportunity. Co-ed teams may be the only way that a recreation centre can field a team, however the rules clearly do not allow for this, even though one of the goals of Parks and Recreation is to provide opportunities for the greatest number of boys and girls. This rule about no co-ed teams suggests that the perpetuation of gender differences is more important than achieving the goal of providing opportunities for the greatest number of girls and boys.

In the 1997/1998 programme brochures the notion of gender 'difference' is perpetuated in subtle ways. No doubt, as a result of the "Women In Action" project, many recreation centres offer 'girls only' programmes. These will be discussed in more detail in the section on gender specific activities, however there are some characteristics of these programmes which suggest the assumption of gender differences. For example, Beaches Recreation Centre offered a Streetbuds ball hockey programme for girls only in the 1997/1998 fall/winter season. There are two notable distinctions between this 'girls only' programme and the other Streetbuds programmes (which are open to both sexes, however we cannot know to what extent the co-ed programmes attract girls). First is the age range for the 'girls only' programme. The programme brochure indicates two 'girls only' Streetbuds programmes running simultaneously - one for 10-12 year olds, and one for 13-16 year olds. Beaches Recreation centre has two gymnasiums, however, the programme brochure also indicates an adult fitness class which runs at the same time. Therefore, the two 'girls only' programmes must be run in combination, and so the age range is from 10-16 years of age for the 'girls only' programme. This is strikingly different from the other Streetbuds programmes which have rigid age definitions which correspond to the area and year-end tournament rules - 6-9
years, 10-11 years, 12-13 years, 14-16 years. Consequently, a 'girls only' team including 10-16 year olds would not be eligible to compete in any of the area or year-end tournaments. Perhaps this is the point of having the expanded age range, or perhaps it is assumed that no 'girls only' team could really compete in these tournaments. It would seem as though the rigid age definitions, whatever their basis, are not as important for 'girls only', but are important for co-ed programmes (which may translate into almost 'boys only' at many centres). This Streetbuds program is not the only example of expanded age divisions for girls only programmes. Fairmount Park ran a girls sport programme for girls aged 9-16, and Adam Beck Community Centre ran a girls sports club for 7-12 year olds. Both of these age ranges represent changes from the other afterschool and weekend programmes, which are usually separated into the age ranges 6-9, 10-12, 13-15 (or 13-16). The importance of rigid age divisions was discussed previously in this chapter, however the expansion of these age divisions for girls suggests gender 'differences' - differences which are not clearly articulated but are assumed. Girls only programmes, for whatever reason, are not seen to need the rigid age divisions that accompany co-ed programmes (which again, may be assumed oftentimes to be comprised mostly of boys). In terms of age being a disciplinary technology, it is a less important disciplinary technology because girls are also subject to being disciplined by a patriarchal society.

Another difference, which is quite clearly visible through these 'girls only' programmes is the difference in importance between these 'girls only' programmes and other co-ed programmes. In the case of the Beaches Recreation Centre girls only Streetbuds programme, it is important to note the placement of this programme in the schedule. The girls only Streetbuds programme (for 10-12 and 13-16 year olds) was run on Wednesday evenings from 7-8pm. All other Streetbuds
programmes at Beaches Recreation Centre (and Adam Beck C.C and Balmy Beach C.C. for that matter) were held after school - prime children's programming time. The evening time slot for girls only serves to marginalize the programme, and thus create a real difference in the perceived importance of the programme. This reflects my own personal experience at Adam Beck Community Centre, and their interpretation of the "Women In Action" initiative. When I worked at Adam Beck (around 1994), the contribution to the "Women In Action" project was to run a women's sports programme on Friday evenings at 8:00pm - 9:30pm. Not surprisingly, this Friday evening time slot did not attract a large number of women from the area - many of whom worked all week, and/ or had children. This programme did not replace or challenge any of the existing programming (which for adults, consisted of predominately male sports programmes like ball hockey, indoor soccer, and basketball) - it was slotted into a consistently problematic programming time - Friday nights. Both of these examples reflect an attempt to satisfy the "Women In Action" initiative, however both also reflect the marginalization of women's athletics - by providing programmes at non-peak times, and by perpetuating assumed and unspoken gender differences.

(b) The promotion of gender specific activities

The promotion of gender specific activities is not overtly done through the manuals or programme brochures. Again, apart from the occasional 'girls only' sport programme, all other programmes are considered to be open to boys and girls. There is one example in the Integrated Programme Planning Manual in the section on lifestyle concepts. Two gender specific tasks, or lessons, recommended for disabled children are "Girls only - learn how to use cosmetics,
etc." (p.34) and "Boys only - learn how to shave" (p.34). Many of the images in the documents and 1997/1998 programme brochures reinforce and reproduce 'traditional' patriarchal assumptions about gender appropriate behaviours. For example, there are several images in the Everything you wanted to know about Playschool manual which reproduce traditional patriarchal gender assumptions, however the focus seems to be more on appropriate roles for girls - which, by default, indicates what is inappropriate for boys. The fitness image, which is designed to be reproduced and distributed to the children so they can colour it, depicts a girl on roller skates, wearing a dress. She also has long hair which is tied with a bow. In the "Hawaii" section, there are two images of girls, both with long hair and smiling faces, and these two pictures are used to illustrate the "Hawaii" arts and crafts - tissue paper leis and grass skirts. Although these crafts would no doubt be used for the entire playschool class, which would include both boys and girls, the illustrations suggest the 'gender' appropriateness of wearing necklaces and skirts for girls, and not boys. These illustrations do not show the process of making these crafts, but rather the end product and consequent wearing of the crafts. Girls are not portrayed as 'makers' or producers of these objects, but rather as models for the objects. In contrast, within the playschool manual, and some of the other manuals, males - boys and men, are illustrated as active participants in the activities. In the Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool manual, there are two illustrations of boys, and both times they represent illustrations of active participation in the activity being described -- mud fingerpainting and a giggle-a-thon. The only other illustrations in any of the other manuals are also of males. In the Track and Field and Potato Races Manual an illustration of a faceless male is used to show the stages of the running long jump, and in the Leadership and Programme Planning Manual depicts an illustration of a male leader being
followed by a male participant - both examples highlight males as active participants in the Parks and Recreation programmes.

The colouring handout of the girl on rollerskates depicts an active female, however it is important to note that this illustration is to be duplicated for 'colouring'. It does not represent an image of an active female Parks and Recreation participant. Rollerskating is not an activity outlined in the playschool manual, nor in any other manual for that matter. Consequently this image does not really represent an exception to the conclusion that males are portrayed, in what few images exist in the manuals, as active participants in Parks and Recreation programmes, while females are portrayed in ways which reproduce traditional patriarchal assumptions about femininity - women and girls as objects, rather than active participants.

The 1997/1998 programme brochures also contribute to the reproduction of traditional patriarchal assumptions about gender appropriate, or gender specific activities. The images used in the programme brochures reinforce and reproduce the appropriateness of male dominance in competitive sporting activities, and the appropriateness of aerobics (body maintenance activities) for women and they reproduce the patriarchal construct of the mother as the primary care-giver. The images (which are used throughout many different brochures) which reproduce the primary position of men in competitive sports include a photo of male professional basketball players, a photo of a basketball referee holding a ball, a photo of a hockey stick and puck, a photo of a professional baseball player holding a ball, and the photo which is included within the brochures, but also is the image on the cover of all of the programme brochures - the young hockey player in full equipment. Although it cannot be ascertained for certain whether this child is male or female, it is redundant. Hockey playing, with full equipment, is usually associated with boys, and rarely
with girls. If the child is actually a girl, by not clearly indicating this in the photo, any opportunity to challenge the dominant patriarchal assumptions is lost. The photos of women in the brochure are related to group fitness activities - aerobics with some light weight training, or as mothers. The only photo image of active boys and girls, which occurs in every programme brochure, is the photo accompanying the "We're Clear Here" campaign, or message. This photo contains the images of three young adults - two boys and one girl - and each of them is holding a piece of sports equipment. This photo, however, is not being used to illustrate girls and boys actively involved in Parks and Recreation programmes, it is being used to promote the Department's campaign against substance abuse. So while this image is positive because it represents an image of a girl being involved in sporting activities, it is negative because it is not used to promote sporting activities - these 'children' are representative not of active Parks and Recreation participants, but are representative of 'children' who are not abusing drugs or other illegal substances.

The Parks and Recreation manuals and programme brochures, while not overtly limiting participation based on gender, nonetheless reproduce traditional patriarchal assumptions about gender appropriate behaviour and activities. The 'differences' between girls and boys are assumed and taken-for-granted, and clearly impact programme delivery and service. Girls only programmes are marginalized in two ways; first, by offering them at non-peak times, and; secondly, by widening the age range for 'girls only' programmes, in comparison to all the other programmes. Traditional patriarchal gender appropriate roles and activities are reproduced through the images in the manuals and programme brochures. Boys and men are seen as active participants in the manuals, and the importance of male, professional sports is reinforced through
the images included in the programme brochures. Women are portrayed as participants in aerobics and body shaping classes, and are portrayed as mothers, the primary care givers for their children. An examination of power, gender, and the child's body will examine why these traditional patriarchal assumptions are reproduced through the Parks and Recreation documents.

**Gender, power and the body**

The literature on gender, power and the body is extensive, however, as the gendered body is not the main focus of this thesis, I will only briefly discuss some aspects of the gendered body and power. An earlier chapter argues that the discourse of patriarchy was one of the more important discourses which conveyed the myth that physical recreation for children was synonymous with competitive sport. The discourse of patriarchy produces the dominant sport model - competitive sport - which is designed to expose inequalities between bodies, particularly in ways which privilege men's bodies and subordinate women's bodies.

The discourse of patriarchy, as the above discussion indicates, creates realities for gendered bodies in other ways. For men and boys, images of professional male athletes as well as images of active male participants and leaders reinforce their privileged position in physical recreation programmes (which have become synonymous with competitive sports at Toronto Parks and Recreation). The discourse of patriarchy produces a privileged social reality for boys and men through the type of programmes offered. As discussed earlier, competitive sport programmes comprise the majority of all children's recreational programming time.

For girls and women the discourse of patriarchy produces the 'female' body as subordinate to, as different from (and thus, not as 'good') the male body. As discussed in the literature review
and in the chapter on the myth that children's recreation is competitive sport, this is largely due to the 'naturalization of biological differences'. These differences between men and women, boys and girls, have been identified by the science of biology, and these differences have become naturalized, taken-for-granted, but more importantly, are imbued with ideological meaning. This argument needs to be extended to address the issue of the productive power of the science of biology. Biology is discursive, it does not represent or simply uncover the reality of human bodies, but rather biology produces these differences. For girls and women the Parks and Recreation programmes and images reproduce traditional patriarchal ideas about femininity - girls are presented as objects rather than as active participants. Programmes which seek to challenge these traditional patriarchal ideas, like girls only Streetbuds are marginalized by virtue of their programming time slot and because the programme is opened up to girls from a wider age range than is used in the other Streetbuds programmes and tournaments. Women's bodies are presented either participating in aerobics (compared to male professional athletes) or as mothers. Although the focus of this thesis is on the child's body in Parks and Recreation programmes, the gendered 'mothers' body has an important connection to the child's body. Earlier in this thesis, in the discussion about the social-historical context in which children emerged as 'precious creatures' in need of protection (which was the emergence of the discourse of development), it was noted by Peikoff and Brickey (1991) that motherhood, correspondingly, was elevated to a sacred position, as mothers were deemed the most suitable people to care for these 'precious' developing children. These new 'roles' - children as products for others labour (rather than producers, workers in the labour market), and mothers as the most important care givers (rather than workers in the labour market) - correspond to a period of crisis in the labour market. Women and children comprised a
steady pool of cheap labour, and with increasing urbanization, they found themselves unwanted in the labour market (by male labourers). Peikoff and Brickey (1991) and Gafffield (1991) outlined the many factors which lead to this change for children and women, which included a declining birth rate, an increasingly level of immigration, fears of race suicide, and thus a crisis of reproduction. Consequently, the bioculturally marked 'aged' child's body and the discourse of development are linked to the bioculturally marked 'mothers' body, they are in fact inextricably linked.

The productive power of the science of biology produces 'differences' between men and women, girls and boys, and the discourse of patriarchy produces the ideological meanings of these 'differences'. The Parks and Recreation programmes, brochures, and documents reinforce and reproduce traditional patriarchal gendered bodies, which thus leads to male bodies being placed in a dominant power position and women's bodies being placed in a subordinate power position.

**Racially marked and Class marked bodies**

The racially marked body and the class marked body are, at the same time, the least predominant of all the bioculturally marked bodies previously discussed in this chapter, and the most predominant bioculturally marked bodies. The most predominant, taken-for-granted body in all of the manuals and brochures is that of the dominant race and class -- middle class 'whiteness' - - or, the white middle class body. This body is predominant in its invisibility, its exclusion from the category of race and class. As McCarthy and Crichlow (1993) note, "the study of 'race' must not exclude the study of 'whiteness' as though it were a category that stands, unmarked, outside of history" (p.xxvii). This argument can be extended to include class as well. This is precisely what
is reproduced through the Parks and Recreation manuals, 'whiteness' as a racial category is
transparent, as is middle class - the dominant culture occupies a position of middle class
'racelessness' (Omi & Winant, 1993). Consequently, race and class become defined as 'other', they
are defined in terms of their difference to the dominant, transparent white middle class. These
'other' categories of racial and class identity are the least predominant bioculturally marked bodies
in the programmes and manuals.

The way in which the Parks and Recreation manuals and brochures deal with the issues of
race and class is nicely described by one of the guiding principles of the Recreation Division - "We
are responsive to ethnic and minority group needs" (Employee Handbook, p.5). Parks and
Recreation positions 'other' races and classes against the dominant, transparent white middle class,
and then makes the needs of these 'other' groups their own responsibility - The Department of
Parks and Recreation assumes no proactive role in providing appropriate opportunities or
programmes for the needs of these groups. These groups, defined as 'other' must make their
needs known to the Department. Whether or not the Department is truly open and responsive to
the many needs of various groups cannot be determined from this textual analysis. However, the
underlying assumptions, that these ethnic and minority groups constitute 'otherness' in relation to
the dominant culture, is important for this project.

**Racist and classist assumptions and the production of difference**

The racist and classist assumptions which are reproduced throughout the Parks and
Recreation manuals and documents reflect 'difference' and 'sameness' at the same time. This
reflects the distinction earlier about 'whiteness' and middle class status as a transparent social
identity, and other racial and class identities being defined in terms of their difference to this white middle class. The racial identities which are defined as 'other' are perpetuated through the documents by highlighting differences between cultures, however these differences are highlighted in ways which marginalize these 'other' racial identities. For example, overt references to race and ethnicity in terms of programming are referred to in the Special Events Manual. For the "Around the World in a Day" special event it is recommended that leaders, "Find out which cultures are represented by the participants on your park. Maybe they would be willing to provide some information and or activity ideas from their culture that you can include in your special day" (Special Events Manual, p.20). Issues of racial and cultural diversity, like gender and disability, are not integrated throughout the manuals, but are treated in separate and distinct manuals. It is interesting to note that Parks and Recreation does produce a manual called An Introduction to Racial and Cultural Awareness however this manual was not included in the package for this case study, and thus it is not a manual which is routinely distributed to all incoming playground leaders. It is a manual which is supposed to be available upon request from the Recreation Co-ordinators, but is not widely available. Consequently, concern regarding issues of race and ethnicity become the 'problem' of the leader, rather than the problem of the Department. Leaders must seek out their supervisors and track down the manual dealing with racial and cultural diversity, if they choose to do so. The Employee Handbook also reinforces the idea that these issues are the leaders 'problem', not the Department's problem;

The demographics of Toronto is constantly growing and changing. The

---

4 I called the Recreation Co-ordinator at one of the centres where I used to work to see if I could borrow a copy of this manual, however she was unable to locate a copy.
neighbourhoods across the City are all quite different, each having their own unique blend of cultures, races, and ethnic groups... As part of your job, you will be expected to know the people who live in your community. You should be aware of their values and beliefs [italics added] (Employee Handbook, p. 14).

It is not clear what leaders are supposed to do with this information about the diverse cultures in their neighbourhood, however it is quite clear that if they want this information, it is their individual responsibility to get it.

While the manuals, albeit rarely, do acknowledge different races and cultures living in the city of Toronto, these different cultures are positioned as 'other' in relation to the dominant culture. As with gender, the 'differences' between cultures are assumed to exist, but specific cultural differences are not indicated, nor it is clear what leaders are supposed to do, based on these differences. There are no suggestions, beyond having a 'special day' to celebrate cultural differences, regarding how these cultural or racial differences might affect social relations between and among staff and participants on the playground or in the recreation centres. Consequently, these manuals serve simply to perpetuate the idea that they are 'differences' between cultures and races, although the differences are not explained in relation to Parks and Recreation activities.

In terms of classist assumptions and the transparent white middle class body which is produced by the Parks and Recreation documents, there are not overt references to modifying or including activities from other classes (like there are for culturally specific activities). In fact, the complete invisibility of social class as a 'programming' factor reflects either one of two classist assumptions; (a) that physical activities are not class-based and exist independent of class relations, or, (b) that the activities offered at Toronto Parks and Recreation are the 'best' activities
for everyone to do, regardless of their social class location. I would suggest that the latter explanation is consistent with the invisibility of class in the Parks and Recreation documents. Although the Employee Handbook mentions that Toronto is a diverse city with vastly different neighbourhoods, the programmes offered by Parks and Recreation are strikingly similar (for the programme brochures which I examined). For children, Streetbuds, basketball, soccer, ballet, jazz dance, and gymnastics were the most popular activities. Also, as discussed in earlier chapters, the 'cure for social problems' discourse circulates through the Parks and Recreation documents and conveys the myth that sport develops children. The ideology of healthism which is part of this discourse, and the historical origins of character development through competitive sports, are securely rooted in white, middle class values. Consequently the provision of the same competitive sport activities for children throughout the City of Toronto reflects classist assumptions, or the 'doctrine of good works' whereby recreation activities take the form of one group deciding what is in the best interests of another group.

One recreation centre offered a unique dance programme for children, modern Caribbean dance. Whether or not this programme originated out of community interest cannot be determined in this project, however this unique programme would seem to reflect a change from programmes which reproduce the dominant white middle class culture. Also, in terms of the guiding principle, which states "We are responsive to ethnic and minority needs" (Employee Handbook, p.5), further study would be required to see how this guiding principle is operationalized in an era of neoconservative cutbacks and fiscal restraint. Exactly how is the Department responsive to ethnic and minority needs? Will they purchase equipment for new programmes, even if it's not in their budget? Will they move or cancel currently popular
programmes in order to give ethnic and minority groups prime programming time? What is the process for ethnic and minority groups to indicate what their needs are? Are these groups solicited, or do recreation centres just wait and see who asks for space or time or money? These questions are important and require further study, however a discussion of the child's body, race, ethnicity, and power, based on the findings in this section will be conducted in order to ascertain potential outcomes of these racialized discourses on the child's body.

**Race, class, power and the body**

The racially marked body and the body marked by class are inscribed with power. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, race and class, as well as gender, age, and disability, are actually relations, rather than simply categories with which to classify people. As with gender, the literature on race, class, power and the body is vast, but as it is not the main focus of this thesis, the discussion about race, class, power and the body in Parks and Recreation documents will briefly examine some of the issues. The Parks and Recreation documents and programme brochures are part of the system which justify and support the notion of white middle class superiority. As mentioned above, race and class difference are assumed in relation to an undefined standard - the 'white' middle class dominant culture.

The child's carnal body becomes a tangible marker of 'other' racial or class identity, an identity which is based upon supposed 'differences'. Consequently, the body, as a marker of 'other' racial and class identities is important with respect to the relations of social power. The racially marked body and the class marked body contribute to a child's social relations and
practices, including participation in Parks and Recreation programmes. As discussed in an earlier chapter, the 'differences' between racially marked (and gendered) bodies are discursively produced by the science of biology. African American and African Canadian bodies are assumed to be 'naturally' superior in terms of athletic ability in particular sports like basketball. These produced differences then become naturalized, or taken-for-granted, and are imbued with ideological meanings. For example, for African-Americans, as pointed out earlier, supposed differences contributing to physical superiority in sport (certain sports only) nonetheless support and justify ideological differences of social inferiority. The body, as a marker of 'difference' contributes to social inequality, even though the 'differences' are socially constructed, and serve to justify white superiority.

In terms of the body marked by social class, the 'differences' are not discursively produced by biology but are highlighted by the symbolic and cultural capital of certain bodily forms and knowledges. The middle class body habitus, which includes treating the body as a means in itself through disciplinary body maintenance, is valued and continually reproduced by Toronto Parks and Recreation documents. Toronto Parks and Recreation reproduces this body habitus because it justifies their position as an essential service. Parks and recreation programs provide personal, social and economic benefits when the body is treated as a means in itself. The body marked by social class through the body habitus contributes to social inequality and serves to reproduce the interests of the white middle class.

In terms of discussing how this relates to power and social inequality, it is important to remember, and understand that class difference and "racial difference is the product of human interests, needs, desires, strategies, capacities, forms of organization, and forms of mobilization"
What is the purpose of perpetuating class and racial differences and then socially constructing these differences as inferior? To make the dominant culture the preferred, prominent, sought-after standard by which all other cultural institutions are judged. Thus, the racially marked body and the class marked body become valued not for their 'difference', but for how well they 'fit in' to the dominant culture. Unfortunately, the racially marked body and class marked body will never totally 'fit in' because it is marked by difference, however, it would seem that racially marked bodies and class marked bodies are valued even in their attempts and efforts at 'fitting in'. This assimilation of different classes and cultures into the dominant culture is certainly not an overt, stated goal of Toronto Parks and Recreation, but nonetheless, it would seem to be outcome anyway. Ng (1993) argues that "In Canada formal education has always served as an assimilationist tool. It was designed by the dominant groups to impose cultural conformity upon subordinated groups by eliminating the latter's cultural heritage" (p.54). I would argue that recreation programmes for children has also always served as an assimilationist tool. The early playground movements (which preceded the development of Parks and Recreation) were overtly and unapologetically assimilationist. What has really changed since then? The Parks and Recreation documents and 1997/1998 programme brochure reflect the privileged position of Western, middle class competitive sports, and across all the recreation centre brochures which I examined, the programme offerings for children were quite homogeneous. There was little to indicate any type of diversity, or 'difference' in the programmes for children. Cultural difference is celebrated on 'special days', as part of special events, but otherwise there is no indication of how leaders are supposed to deal with cultural or class diversity in their everyday programming. Also, diversity is dealt with by the Department only 'in
response' to ethnic and minority needs. It would interesting to investigate if these needs become 'problems' for the recreation centres, and to what extent these needs are addressed through regular programmes.

The racially marked body and the class marked body is bioculturally marked as 'different' and thus inferior, particularly if the 'other' body celebrates that difference. Racially marked bodies and class marked bodies become 'valued' when they are docile and useful to the needs of the dominant culture. Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes serve an assimilationist agenda by perpetuating the racially marked body and the class marked body as 'other' in relation to the dominant transparent white middle class body, and by marginalizing diversity by providing homogenous programming marked by the occasional 'special days'. Further research would need to be conducted to determine how the 'needs' of ethnic and other minority groups are dealt with by the various recreation centres. Do these diverse 'needs' become problems for the Department, and, how are these 'needs' addressed?

This section on race, class, power and the body in Parks and Recreation programmes has not attempted to account for the complex literature on race, class, power, and active bodies. This has been a brief discussion which has attempted one potential reading of the racially marked body and the body marked by class as it is conveyed and produced by the Parks and Recreation documents and programmes.
Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed several ways in which the Toronto Parks and Recreation documents bioculturally mark the child's body. Age is the most predominant marker and it is an aggressive disciplinary technology which marks the child's body from birth. Age also organizes potential access to Parks and Recreation programmes as well as relationships in realms of sport and recreation. The marker of age is produced by the discourse of development. The discourse of development is also involved in producing the marker of dis/ability. In both cases the discourse of development produces developmental 'norms' which are measured against age. Deviation from these norms reflect an assumed 'lack' of proper development, and in the case of disability reflect a failure to reach full adult status according to the discourses which produce the Parks and Recreation documents.

The body is also marked by gender, race, and social class through the Parks and Recreation documents. The Toronto Parks and Recreation documents tend to reproduce the male, white, middle class body as the standard, or dominant body. Variations from this standard are identified as 'other' while the male, white, middle class body is transparent and taken for granted.

The next chapter is a final discussion and conclusion of the major themes raised throughout this thesis. The next chapter also includes a list of recommendations which are derived from the findings of this thesis.
Chapter Seven

**Conclusion: A postmodern exploration of the discourse(s) of childhood and how they produce the active child's body**

**Introduction**

This chapter will discuss and explore the questions raised throughout this thesis in the literature review and in the three preceding analysis chapters. The discussion will be broken down into three separate themes, (a) the construction of the child's body in Toronto Parks and Recreation documents, (b) Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes for children, and (c) future research recommendations and suggestions.

**The construction of the child's body in Toronto Parks and Recreation documents**

This thesis has highlighted both the potential ways that the child's body might be affected by the discourses which produce the Toronto Parks and Recreation documents *and* some of the ways that the child's body is marked by the Parks and Recreation documents (age, gender, ability, social class and race). This discussion section will expand on these areas in order to address major questions raised throughout the thesis.

The child's body is produced by many discourses. Discourses are power relations. Why and how do these discourses produce the child's body in this particular way? The most pervasive and aggressive discourse which produces the child's body is the discourse of development. This
discourse primarily produces the child's body through marking it with age. It is not simply the marking of age which produces power relations, but it is the developmental assumptions and expectations which accompany each childhood 'age', which mark the child in relation to a standard of 'normal' development. The tyranny of the normal produces expectations for the child's body in all potential areas of development (i.e., motor skills, psychological, social, physical, etc.). While there is always the potential for liberation and resistance, the tyranny of the normal and the discourse of development also produce the fully 'developed' body as a marker for competence and status as an adult. The production of standards, or 'norms', produces a system of comparison and thus surveillance. Children's bodies are surveyed in comparison with other bodies, and deviations from the norm mark 'problems' on the body. These 'problems', which are socially and historically located, contribute differing 'values' to the body. A properly developed body which is free of these 'problems' has the highest cultural exchange value. However there is also value in bodies which are marked by these 'problems'. Toronto Parks and Recreation justifies its position as an essential service based on its presumed ability to fix, or solve some of these problems (i.e., developing children, producing fit and productive workers, reducing crime and vandalism, etc.). The child's body, because it is 'developing' thus has value because of what it will one day become (a 'good' adult), but also the 'developing' child has value for those whose work is to ensure the proper and progressive development of the child. The child's body marked by 'problems' also has value for the same reasons.

The 'developing' child, however, is not conferred value because of what it is in the moment. The 'developing' child is useful in the moment as a product for adults and society to work on, and is useful if the child's body is engaged in producing itself as a future resource.
Participation in Parks and Recreation programmes are an important part of the process whereby children make the most productive use of their leisure time. As definitions of recreation show, as opposed to the notion of leisure, positive social and personal benefits are a critical component of recreational activities (as opposed to leisure activities which may be harmful to society or the self). Competitive sport programmes, like the ones which predominate for children at Toronto Parks and Recreation, are also produced by discourses. These discourses, like patriarchy and capitalism, combine with the discourse of development to produce a system which reproduces social inequalities including the subordination of children, women, disabled people, and racial and class minorities.

Competitive sport programmes for children reproduce and reinforce the discourse of development because both privilege the 'faster-higher-stronger' ethos of competitive professional sports. The discourse of development privileges bodies which are 'faster-taller-stronger' than other bodies of the same age, because these bodies appear to be closer to the ultimate stage of becoming an adult. Also, this faster-higher-stronger ethos seeks to expose physical inequalities between people, and quite often these inequalities are naturalized and taken for granted. In terms of gender and race, the assumed biological differences between bodies are imbued with ideological meanings which position female and non-white bodies in inferior positions to the dominant white, male bodies. Biological differences between children's bodies are also naturalized by the discourse of development, and these assumed biological differences are imbued with ideological meanings which reproduce children's social inequality.

In terms of competitive sport programmes, this faster-higher-stronger ethos has been linked to the production of disembodied bodies -- athletic bodies become viewed as tools,
machines, resources which can be manipulated and dominated into relations of maximal efficiency and production. Does the process of ageing have the same effect on the child's body? Does the discourse of development promote the disembodied child's body -- are children's bodies viewed (by themselves and others) as tools, machines, resources? It has been clearly demonstrated that children's bodies are viewed as resources in the Parks and Recreation documents, not only in terms of what they will become, but also in terms of their current use-value as products for others work. This raises important questions about the role of competitive sports for children. Participation in competitive sport programmes would seem to augment and reproduce the discourse of development by further producing the child's body as a resource. If the discourse of development produces the child's body as a resource, then competitive sports programmes, like Toronto Parks and Recreation, mould and train that resource to make it maximally 'resourceful'. Consequently, sport and recreation programmes are a vehicle for producing the 'best' resources possible.

Finally, the process of childhood is produced by the discourse of development in order to discipline children's bodies into relations of docility-utility. The process of becoming an adult is laden with a multitude of expectations around physical, social, and psychological changes. These changes are measured in comparison to age 'norms', and deviation from these norms are marked on the child's body as 'problems'. From the moment of birth children are disciplined through age into relations of docility-utility. Children are expected to use their time efficiently. Parents are expected to plan 'quality time' for their children. Parks and Recreation programmes represent one means whereby children are useful and productive in their leisure time. Competitive sports programmes are assumed to teach life skills, prepare children for adulthood, and make them
physically fit so they will be healthy and productive adults. At the same time, the discourses which convey these myths about children's recreation also reproduce the child's body as the primary site for social control.

This section of the discussion has addressed some of the issues raised throughout this thesis regarding the construction of the child's body through the Toronto Parks and Recreation documents and programmes. The next section will discuss the Parks and Recreation programmes specifically.

**Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes for children**

Definitions of sport which recognize that sport is a cultural construction often pose the questions 'whose activities count and whose do not', and if sport is defined as a set of institutionalized rules, then the question posed is 'rules institutionalized by who?' For the most part, the Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes for children reflect and reproduce the values and interests of the male, able-bodied, white middle class. The programmes offered throughout the diverse regions of the City of Toronto are very similar. Competitive sports which mirror the North American male professional sports hold a privileged position in children's programming time and in the Parks and Recreation documents for leaders. These programmes also reproduce the myth that competitive sports, and recreation programmes in general, contribute to the 'proper' development of children into 'good' adults.

The Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes for children, which are largely comprised of competitive sports, are justified as an essential service because of what children will one day become — healthy, productive, socially responsible adults. What needs to be addressed is what
are the value of these programmes for children because they are children today? This question can only be answered by truly democratizing children's recreational programme activities. In order for children's recreation to be truly democratized Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes "would include both the right to participate, regardless of one's particular set of social characteristics, and the right to be involved in determination of the forms, circumstances and meanings of participation" (Donnelly, 1993, p.417). This would require constant consultation with children to determine what recreational activities are meaningful to them and why. This is not to suggest that Parks and Recreation programmes resort to 'open gym' time where the children who show up get to decide what they will play because this type of approach often leads to the dominant children (often male) deciding the forms and circumstances of participation for all the children (see McCloy, 1996). The process of truly democratizing children's recreational programmes would likely be met with a great deal of resistance because children's ideas of what is meaningful to them may not be what adults or recreation leaders feel is in the child's 'best interests'. It is important to go back to the discourse of development and recognize that adults cannot really decide what is in the best interests of the child, just as the dominant class should not be able to decide what recreational programmes are in everyone's 'best interests'. In order for children's recreational activities to be truly democratized, traditional assumptions about children and childhood need to be challenged.

All of the Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes for children are designated by suitable age ranges and in the documents adherence to age ranges is enforced and proof of age is strictly monitored. This raises questions about children who do not 'fit' into the age based assumptions. What happens to the twelve year old who is just learning how to play ball hockey
and he or she joins a Parks and Recreation programme where most of the other participants have been playing since they were six years old? Is this child best served by remaining with his age peers (which is the only option at Toronto Parks and Recreation) and will this child continue with the programme? In is not only in terms of age and sporting ability assumptions which may not apply that the child might not 'fit' into the Parks and Recreation programmes. Bourdieu's work shows that participation in sports is a reflection not only of economic capital and spare time but is also a reflection of the right 'fit' between the body habitus and the type of activity. Consequently participation in Parks and Recreation programmes may not be assured simply because the programmes are free of charge. This further demonstrates the need for truly democratized recreation programmes for children (and adults) as programmes that are meaningful to the participants would reflect the right 'fit' with their body habitus. This suggestion should not be taken in such a way as to imply that class distinctions be reproduced, but that a variety of activities which appeal to a broad range of habitus' would provide many options for people to move beyond their habitus.

The potential for creating truly democratized recreation programmes may be compromised by the neoconservative agenda of recommodification of recreation services. The case of the Streetbuds programme represents an example of the potential recommodification of recreation services, and the spending of public monies to increase the potential of capital accumulation. The Streetbuds programme reproduces the traditional male, white, middle class competitive sport model. With the amalgamation of the seven municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto into the new municipality known as the City of Toronto, the potential for further recommodification of recreational services is increased. Prior to the amalgamation, the City of Toronto Department of
Parks and Recreation was the only municipality to provide recreation programmes free of charge. This will not be extended to the new City of Toronto recreational programmes, but rather user fees will be implemented. The Toronto Transition Team (Dec. 1997) made the following recommendations regarding the amalgamation of parks and recreation services for the new City of Toronto:

Basic recreational services should be provided free or at nominal cost across the City, e.g., swimming, drop-in programmes, casual (no permit required) use of outdoor facilities and skating. Fees for other programs (beyond basic services) should be harmonized as soon as possible across the City so that fees represent 50 per cent of the direct cost of delivering the program. At the same time, an access policy should be developed to ensure that low-income families and individuals are not penalized (p. 248).

Recreation programmes in the new City of Toronto will no longer be free of charge. Participants will increasingly be viewed as 'customers' who exercise their personal choice through attendance at and payment for the programmes. As such, the new City of Toronto will have a much larger customer base to deliver to corporations interested in partnerships with recreation programmes, like Nike and the National Hockey League, as the new City will be responsible for the provision of parks and recreation services for 2.4 million citizens. The recommodification of recreational programmes would be a likely step in order to reduce or remove user fees for programmes. If the new City of Toronto can make corporate partnerships which cover 50 per cent of the direct cost of delivering the programme, this would likely be met with approval from community members who no longer have to pay for that programme. While this may be viewed as a potential positive
outcome of recommodifying recreational services, it is likely that, as in the case with the
*Streetbuds* programme, the interests of the dominant white, male, middle class will be reproduced
through these partnerships.

It is not only the *Streetbuds* programme which reflects and reproduces the interests of the
dominant male, white, middle class. This thesis has shown that while there are Parks and
Recreation documents which address gender issues, race issues, and integrating disabled people
into the programmes, these issues (and the documents pertaining to these issues) are marginalized
and subordinated to the dominant interests. Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes for
children, and the manuals for the leaders, privilege competitive sports activities and position these
activities as the standard. These normal activities are 'modified' for those bodies who do not fit
into this model, and consequently these bodies are marginalized because they are not 'normal'.

The future of Parks and Recreation programmes for children is uncertain due to the
amalgamation of the new municipality of the City of Toronto. One report on the amalgamation
suggests that "in the new governing structure, it would be vitally important that recreation
programming continue to be delivered in a decentralized fashion to ensure that programs reflect
the needs of local communities and involve members of those communities" (Sancton, 1996, p. G-6).
I would suggest that the documents and programmes evaluated for this case study do not
reflect the needs of local communities, as the programmes for children are homogenous
throughout the recreation centre locations. Perhaps the new amalgamation will allow for greater
community input and involvement in the determination of recreational programmes and activities.
Conversely, the introduction of user fees for recreation programmes might lead to increased
community involvement only from those members of the community who are sure that they will
be able to afford the user fees -- the middle class.

**Recommendations for Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes:**

i Involve children in the planning and evaluation of all children's recreation programmes. Conduct focus group discussions and planning sessions with the children prior to, during, and after the course of the programme. Children could also be encouraged to plan and run programmes themselves, with some assistance and facilitation from the recreation leaders.

ii Produce staff training manuals which integrate gender, race, and dis/ability issues throughout them, rather than as separate manuals.

iii Produce staff training manuals which do not privilege certain types of physical activities and games (competitive sports) and marginalize or trivialize others (cooperative games).

iv Work towards democratizing Parks and Recreation programmes for children by investigating what children experience as meaningful in their recreational activities. To start this process ethnographic research on children's recreation experiences should be conducted, including observation, focus groups and perhaps journal keeping by the children.

v Carefully consider any potential partnerships with private corporations in order to see if the corporation's contribution will be consistent with the social equity goals of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

vi Solicit information from ethnic and minority groups about what their recreational needs are -- do not simply respond to needs that are brought forward by select segments of the population.
Future research recommendations

This section will highlight questions and issues which should be addressed through future research. This includes suggestions regarding theory issues as well as specific research questions for both research on sport and children in general and Parks and Recreation programmes. The first section will identify several theory recommendations. This section will be followed by specific research questions about children and sport which need to be addressed. The final section will list research questions that are specific to the study of Toronto Parks and Recreation. These recommendations and research questions could form the basis for a follow up project to this thesis.

Theory recommendations:

vii Researchers must recognize and investigate the culturally constructed relation of childhood. Childhood, as a social location which intersects with gender, race, and social class, needs to be exposed and explored in relation to children's involvement in sport, recreation, and physical activity programmes.

viii Researchers should incorporate the suggestions of the Prout and James (1990) emergent paradigm for the study of children and childhood into studies on children in sport, recreation, and physical activity programmes because this paradigm highlights issues which challenge many of the taken for granted assumptions commonly incorporated into research on children. However, this paradigm should be used as a guideline, rather than as a 'new' paradigm or ideology of childhood, and it should assist researchers in the types of questions they ask, the way they conceptualize children, and the type of research that they undertake.
Postmodern theories of the body need to be extended to the study of the active child's body. Also, the child's body as the primary site for control needs to be theorized and explored, as well as the relations of power which are marked on the child's body.

Researchers should replace the term 'life cycle' with the term 'life course(s)' because the term life cycle is produced by the discourse of development and it focuses solely on the individual thereby excluding the social context of an individual's life.

**Children and sport, recreation, and physical activity: Specific research questions:**

Bourdieu's work on the body habitus needs to explore the child's body habitus, the child's gendered habitus, and the child's racial habitus, and the relation of the child's habitus to their participation in sports and physical activities. Also, the study of the child's habitus may provide information on the formation of the habitus.

The work on the naturalization of biological differences, with respect to gender, race, and sport, needs to be extended to examine an analysis of the naturalized biological differences of childhood, and how these differences are imbued with ideological meanings, and why.

The active child's body needs to be studied in order to ascertain how the child's changing carnal body produces different and limited realities for children's experiences in and through sport, recreation, and physical activity.

The discourse around lifelong involvement in physical activity needs to be revisited and extended beyond the socialization research. Firstly in order to challenge the assumption that children's participation in physical activity will lead to lifelong involvement and
secondly to look closely at the encouragement of childhood activity on the basis of assumed future potential beneficial outcomes. This leads into the next recommendation.

Children's participation in sport, recreation, and physical activity needs to be reconceptualized and studied from the perspective of what it offers in the moment, as opposed to the assumed future outcomes (becoming a 'good' adult). How can children's participation be meaningful to them, in the moment, rather than as a vehicle for producing a future resource.

In order to uncover what makes children's active experiences meaningful to them ethnographic research must be conducted which seeks to uncover the lived, embodied experiences of children in sport, recreation, and physical activity programmes.

Research on the life course and the ageing mask needs to be extended to study children. Do children also experience disembodiment because of differences between their 'look age' and 'feel age'? Also, in terms of participation in sports, recreation, and physical activities, does a child's 'look age' (if it differs from their actual age) affect their experiences in these programmes, either positively or negatively?

**Toronto Parks and Recreation: Specific research questions:**

Ethnographic research which seeks to uncover the lived experiences of children in the Parks and Recreation programmes in order to compare the actual embodied experiences of children in the programmes with the findings from this thesis.

Research needs to be conducted to investigate to what extent and in what circumstances children experience the Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes differently -- as
passive participants or as active agents in their recreational experiences.

Further research should be conducted to determine if and how Toronto Parks and Recreation is involved in the production or conversion of physical capital and which bodily forms are privileged in the programmes.

Research looking at the forms that children's resistance and liberation take, if any, in Toronto Parks and Recreation children's programmes.

Research which investigates what makes Toronto Parks and Recreation programmes meaningful to the children involved, as well as what would be needed to make the programmes meaningful to those children who choose not to participate.

Research into the process and extent of community involvement in the programming at Parks and Recreation locations. Further, the process by which the Department solicits, assesses and responds to ethnic and minority needs.

Summary

This chapter has highlighted some of the most critical issues which were raised throughout this thesis. The future of Parks and Recreation programmes for children in Toronto is unclear due to the amalgamation and restructuring of the former municipalities into one municipality.

Nonetheless the recommendations and suggestions for future research could be carried out as the amalgamation process occurs, but these recommendations also extend beyond this case study to the research on children and sport in general. This thesis has challenged traditional assumptions and frameworks for understanding children and childhood however has consciously avoided
postulating a new theory of childhood. The goal of this thesis has been to challenge and expose the discourses which have produced traditional developmental assumptions about children and childhood. Also, a major concern of this thesis has been the potential for children's sport and recreation programmes to be liberating. This thesis can only point to the potential of democratizing children's recreational programmes and the opportunities in the documents where children are conceptualized as competent, active participants in the recreation programmes. Further ethnographic studies with children need to be conducted to explore the forms and meanings that children attach to their recreation experiences.
Chapter Eight

Glossary of terms

Being: For this thesis the term Being will be used to represent the opposite of the disciplined docile-useful body. The opportunity for Being is the opportunity for resistance and liberation, for self-emergence.

Body: This thesis recognizes the tension between the carnal body and the socially constructed body, and does not take the essentialist position that the body is either 'natural', or 'socially constructed', but that both elements must be considered. While emphasis, in this thesis, is placed on the socially constructed body, the carnal body is not forgotten, nor ignored.

Childhood: Childhood is recognized in this thesis as a socially constructed relation which is imbued with ideological meanings, and is conveyed by particular discourses. Childhood is theorized as a culturally specific, historically located relation of social experience.

Discourse: Discourse is defined within this thesis as "the first representation of thought" (Cousins & Hussain, 1984, p.27). Important points in the definition of discourse are; a) the understanding and recognition of the close link between discourse and knowledge; b) how discourse regulates, constrains, and limits the conversations we may have about, and our ways of understanding, particular topics. Our knowledge of topics is confined by discourse; c) discourses are power relations; d) discourses are power relations because they do not describe reality, they produce reality. It is this final point which points to the importance of studying discourses, that is, discourses are productive of social reality.

Embodiment: This term describes the experience of the lived body. It acknowledges that the body is not simply a physical entity, but is our connection to the world. Kirk and Tinning (1994) describe this as "our bodies are not in everyday, routine life experienced as 'things'; they are, rather, our practical mode of engagement with a range of external events and situations" (p.606). Disembodiment, on the other hand, is the process of viewing the body as a 'thing'.
Ideology: The definition of ideology which informs this thesis, is a definition from Crawford (1980). According to Crawford (1980), ideology is "a socially and culturally constructed way of seeing, interpreting and evaluating some aspects of the physical and social world and the relation of the self to those worlds" (p. 367).

Myth: The use of myth in this thesis is based upon Roland Barthes (1973) usage of the term myth. Myths are widely accepted, taken for granted concepts which help a culture to understand a particular topic or part of their social experience. Myth seeks to make 'natural', what is actually socially constructed. For Barthes, "myth is a type of speech chosen by history: it cannot possibly evolve from the 'nature' of things" (Barthes, 1973, p. 110).

Power: The definition of power used in this thesis draws on the work of Foucault. For Foucault, power circulates throughout a network of individuals, it is a dynamic of noncentralized forces. People are positioned differentially within this network of power, which accounts for relative differences in power amongst various groups in society. Gruneau (1988) suggests that power be viewed as the capacity to utilize various resources in order to secure outcomes. Consequently, all members of society have access to some resources, and thus have some degree of 'power', but there are definitely highly privileged members of society who have access to far more resources, and thus can refashion society in ways which suit them. Another important aspect of power, which is derived from Gramsci's theory of hegemony, is the understanding that individuals are active participants in their own subjugation, by way of consent. This is useful because it reminds us that power, or dominance is never fully achieved, or secure, but is constantly negotiated and contested, and that individuals are complicit in their own subjugation (or, potentially, their own liberation). Gramsci's definition of hegemonic power is compatible with Foucault's definition of power because both highlight the potential for resistance and liberation.

Recreation: Recreation is defined by Kelly (1996) as "voluntary non-work activity that is organized for the attainment of personal and social benefits including restoration and social cohesion" (p. 27). The organized and programmatic elements of recreation, along with the personal and social benefit goals is what distinguishes recreation from the more general term leisure.
Sport: This thesis applies the traditional definitions of sport to the Parks and Recreation documents. For example, sport is often defined as "any competitive physical activity that is guided by established rules" (Eitzen & Sage, 1989, p.16). However, this thesis is grounded in the understanding that sport is a cultural construct.
References


Cantelon (Eds.), Not just a game: Essays in Canadian sport sociology (pp. 248-265). Canada: University of Ottawa Press.


CAHPERD (n.d.). *Time to take off the gloves: Physical inactivity is hazardous to your health.* Canada: CAHPERD.


City of Toronto, Department of Parks and Recreation. (n.d.). *Leadership and Programme*


City of Toronto, Department of Parks and Recreation. (n.d.). Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool. Toronto: Author.


Doupona, M., & Gilbert, K. (1997). The body, young children and society. Paper presented at the International Symposium on Sport of the Young, Bled, Slovenia, October 7-10,


Healthy City Toronto. (1993). *Toronto's first state of the City report*. Toronto, ON: Department of the City Clerk, Information and Communication Services Division.


Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.


Kerr, G.A. (1996). The role of youth sport in preparing youth for childhood. In B. Galway...
and J. Hudson (Eds.), *Youth in transition: Perspectives on research and policy* (pp. 293-301). Thompson Educational Publishing.


States: Madison Books.


States: University of Chicago Press.


Meredith, M.D. (1988). Activity or fitness: Is the process or the product more important for public health. *Quest, 40*, 180-186.


Toronto: Department of Parks and Recreation.


United States: Cornell University Press.


153-166.


Department of Parks and Recreation.

Sutherland, N. (1998). *Growing up: Childhood in English Canada from the great war to the age of television*. Canada: University of Toronto Press.


**Electronic communication**


Parks and Recreation Case Study Documents


City of Toronto, Department of Parks and Recreation. (n.d.). Everything you ever wanted to know about Playschool. Toronto: Author.


Appendix A:
Prout and James Emergent Paradigm for the Study of Children and Childhood

1. Childhood is understood as a social construction. As such it provides an interpretive frame for contextualizing the early years of human life. Childhood, as distinct from biological immaturity, is neither a natural nor a universal feature of human groups but appears as a specific structural and cultural component of many societies.

2. Childhood is a variable of social analysis. It can never be entirely divorced from other variables such as class, gender, or ethnicity. Comparative and cross-cultural analysis reveals a variety of childhoods rather than a single and universal phenomenon.

3. Children's social relationships and cultures are worthy of study in their own right, independent of the perspectives and concerns of adults.

4. Children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them, and of the societies in which they live. Children are not just the passive subjects of social structures and processes.

5. Ethnography is a particularly useful methodology for the study of childhood. It allows children a more direct voice and participation in the production of sociological data than is usually possible through experimental or survey styles of research.

6. Childhood is a phenomenon in relation to which the double hermeneutic of the social sciences is acutely present. That is to say, to proclaim a new paradigm of childhood sociology is also to engage in and respond to the process of reconstructing childhood in society.