

Abstract

- Title:** The Making and Breaking of a Female Culture: The History of Swedish Physical Education in “a Different Voice”.
- Language:** English
- Keywords:** Feminist theory; Gender and power; Woman teachers; Ling gymnastics; Physical Education; Female culture
- ISBN:** 91-7346-480-5

This study originates from the experience of a male–female imbalance in literature about the history of Swedish physical education (PE), and is particularly raising issues concerning the consequences of co-educational PE in school and teacher training. The study aims at:

- making visible women teachers’ and girls’ involvement in the field of PE in Sweden, from the early 1800s up to the late 1900s;
- finding a theoretical basis for understanding gender issues in this field, and for examining changes over time.

The development of physical education is described and analyzed in relation to contemporary development in the surrounding society, particularly in school and sports. Central to the study is a feminist perspective on gender. Questions about gender and power, patriarchal structures, hegemony and resistance are essential. In addition, different rationalities and ethics are described and discussed. Document analyses, descriptive statistics, and interviews are being used. The results show that women have been present in the field of PE in Sweden nearly as long as men, but that female and male traditions developed in different directions. The female PE culture went through an intensive development up to the mid 1970s, thereafter it gradually has declined. Although several other changes in society, sports and gymnastics occurred about simultaneously, the co-education reform seems to have played a key role in this process.