PART 1

Defining Our Field

Courtesy of William H. Freeman

CHAPTER

1

What Is Our Field?

"Our Field": A Term to Represent a Broad Range of Interests

Our field uses physical activity, primarily in the play and sport settings, to produce holistic improvements in a person's physical, mental, and emotional qualities. It treats each person as a unity, a whole being, rather than as having separate physical and mental qualities that bear no relation to and have no effect on each other. Our field is, in reality, a broad field of interests. Its core concern is the improvement of human movement. More specifically, it deals with the relationship between human movement and other areas of education—the relationship of the body's physical development to its mind and soul as they are being developed. This focus on the effect of physical development on other areas of human growth and development contributes to the uniquely broad scope of our field. No other single field is concerned with the total development of the human.

Many names are used to describe our field. From physical education to exercise science, from fitness to sport science, human performance, kinesiology, and many other titles, we find that our field is difficult to describe to others because we have no universally accepted single identifier. For that reason, in this text I will often simply use "our field" to represent the host of areas in which we work and study.

A survey in 1989 found more than 100 different titles used by college departments in our field, while another survey in 2010 found an increase in the number of terms used in departmental titles.[1] That is one reason many introductory textbooks, including this one, use multiple terms in their titles. While some of the terms represent narrower areas of study, most of them have large overlapping areas of concern.

The reason for this confusing state of affairs is discussed in this chapter. It identifies what people in our field study, how our field's component interests came to be, and the shades of difference from one title to another. As you will learn, this confusion of titles is not recent, even though some of the titles are relatively

new. Even in the formative years of American physical education in the late 1800s many different titles were used for programs that had essentially the same focus.

Our field today has its sometimes unclear focus as a result of changes that began half a century ago in the core field of physical education. First, look at the changing motivations for human movement, and then the changing terms for human movement and the changing approaches to human movement.

Changing Motivations for Human Movement

Our field is interested in people's motivation for movement. Why do we exercise? Why do we take part in sport? From prehistoric times to today, we find changing motivations for human movement.

Survival Skills

Survival was the basic aim of education in primitive society—for both the individual and the group. The education of young males was primarily accomplished by physical means that were strongly oriented toward physical strength and cunning. Good hunting and fighting skills were necessary if early men were to feed themselves and their families and provide protection from outside forces.

Primitive education was concerned with learning in two areas: survival skills and conformity conduct.[2] Survival skills included the ability to defend oneself and others; the ability to provide food, clothing, and shelter; and the skills necessary to survive as an individual in the world.

Conformity Conduct

Conformity conduct was designed to ensure the survival of the group by putting the skills of the individual at the service of the group. People had to be able to work with others to meet the needs of the group, or the group would not survive. If the group did not survive, then humans might eventually become extinct.

Fitness and Heath

As society advanced and basic survival was no longer the greatest concern, people gradually realized that movement and physical activity affected their health and fitness. That awareness appeared in early large cultures, but we are most aware of it in the ancient Greeks, with their concept of "a sound mind in a sound body."

As we move toward modern times, the growing awareness of the impact of movement and fitness on health affected developing theories of education. By the Renaissance, some schools were beginning to realize that unhealthy students were less able to learn, so they began to add physical activity to their curriculum.

Sport and Pleasurable Movement

As children, we learn that movement itself is pleasurable. As we get older and our skills advance, we find the simple pleasure of sporting movement. We learn

the pleasure of controlling our bodies to improve our performances, yet there is a simple joy in the movement itself, the doing. Too often our field has overlooked or downplayed pleasure as a motivation or reward for movement and sport.[3]

Gregg Twietmeyer argues that

> *Kinesiology is, in an important sense, an evangelical profession; a profession which must be willing to proudly profess the joys of moving well, for those joys are learned. The degree to which pleasure and intrinsic satisfaction are found in kinesiology depends on how well we steward our inheritance.*[4]

His comments are an outgrowth of the argument made by Klaus Meier more than 30 years ago that "Anything worth doing is worth doing badly."[5] Pleasure does not necessarily require skill.

Changing Terms for Human Movement

Our field has been known by many other labels in the past. Most of them are now considered too narrow and exclusive to express the full scope of the field.

Gymnastics

Gymnastics was the earliest of those titles. During the 1800s, *gymnastics* referred to exercises or activities that took place in a gymnasium, rather than to the activities that today are part of that particular sport. The term was very popular with European programs, but in the United States it was used for only one phase of the total physical education program. Today, because its meaning is limited, the term usually includes an explanatory subtitle, such as Olympic gymnastics or corrective gymnastics.

Hygiene and Health

Hygiene, another popular term of the 1800s, referred to the science of preserving people's health. Its definition is similar to today's health education programs, which developed around 1900 when state legislatures passed laws requiring the teaching of basic health practices. Many of the early leaders in American physical education were physicians concerned with improving the overall health of students.

Exercise and Fitness

Physical culture, a popular term during the late 1800s, was often used with the term *physical training* to sell programs of personal health. Today, in the United States, physical training refers exclusively to conditioning exercises and programs—education only of the physical. The term is still commonly used to describe programs in the armed services, but it is a far too narrow concept of physical education to be used by today's educators.

Physical Education

Daryl Siedentop argues that "there is probably less agreement today on the basic meaning of physical education than there has been at any time in our professional history." However, he notes that the most widely accepted model is the "developmental" model, "education through the physical," which came from the progressive education movement in the first half of the twentieth century and emphasized fitness, skill, knowledge, and social development.[6] The model can be rephrased in this way: Physical education is education of, about, and through the physical.

One of the most lasting definitions for physical education was written by Jesse Feiring Williams: "Physical education is the sum of man's physical activities selected as to kind, and conducted as to outcomes."[7] He explains his definition by debating whether educating only the physical aspect of the body is sufficient to define the field:

> *When mind and body were thought of as two separate entities, physical education was obviously an education of the physical . . . with new understanding of the nature of the human organism in which wholeness of the individual is the outstanding fact, physical education becomes education through the physical. With this view operative, physical education has concern for and with emotional responses, personal relationships, group behaviors, mental learnings, and other intellectual, social, emotional, and esthetic outcomes.*[8]

Williams stresses the point that even though physical education teaches using physical means through physical activities, its goal goes beyond the physical. It seeks to influence all areas of educational development, including the mental and social growth of the student. While the body is being improved physically, the mind should be learning and expanding, and there also should be social development, such as learning to work with others.

The basic points that define the field are named consistently by different scholars:

1. Physical education is conducted through physical means; that is, some sort of physical activity or some type of movement is involved.
2. Physical activity is usually (though not always) moderately vigorous, it is concerned with gross motor movements, and the skills involved do not have to be very finely developed or of high quality for benefits to be gained.
3. Although the student gains these benefits by a physical process, the educational benefits for the student include improvements in non-physical areas, such as intellectual, social, and aesthetic growth, that is, the cognitive and affective domains.

In summary, the meaning is clear: Physical education uses physical means to develop each person's whole being. This is a characteristic that physical education shares with no other area of education. Because the educational results of the physical experience are not limited to the physical or body-improving

benefits, the definition does not refer solely to the traditional meaning of physical activity. We must view the term *physical* on a broader, more abstract plane, as a condition of mind as well as body. Indeed, this physical education should bring about improvements "in mind and body" that affect all aspects of the person's daily living, and the whole person should benefit by the experience. This mind–body holistic approach includes an emphasis on all three educational domains: the psychomotor, the cognitive, and the affective. Indeed, Robert Gensemer refers to "the body as a place for the mind."[9]

Sport

In defining physical education, we must also consider its relationship to play and sport. Many scholars have studied play and its implications for our well-being. Many of their studies consider sport and physical education to be one and the same, but play, sport, and physical education are three different, yet overlapping, entities.

Play is essentially activity used as amusement. We think of play as non-competitive physical amusement, although play does not have to be physical. Play is not necessarily sport or physical education, even though elements of play may be found in both.

Sport is an organized, competitive form of play. Some people view sport simply as an organized form of play, which might put it closer to physical education as we have defined it. However, careful examination shows that sport traditionally involves competitive activities.

When we refer to sport as "organized" competitive activity, we mean that the activity has been refined and formalized to some degree—that is, some definite form or process is involved. Rules, whether they are written or not, are used in the activity, and those rules or procedures cannot be changed during the competition, although new rules may evolve from one episode to the next.

Sport is, above all, a competitive activity. We cannot think of sport without thinking of competition, for without the competition, sport becomes simply play or recreation. Play can at times be sport, but strictly speaking, sport is never simply play; the competitive aspect is essential to its nature.

Physical education has elements of both play and sport, but it is not exclusively either, nor is it a balanced combination of the two. As its title indicates, physical education is physical activity with an educational goal. It is physical and it seeks to educate, but neither play nor sport, even though both can be used in the educational process, always includes the educational aspect of the physical experience as a vital aim.

Play, sport, and physical education involve forms of movement, and all three can fit within the context of education if they are used for some educational purpose. Play can be relaxing and entertaining without any educational aim, just as sport can exist for its own sake without any educational aim. For example, professional sports (some people prefer the term *athletics*) have no educational

goals, yet we still consider them to be sport. An activity does not need to be amateur to be considered sport. Sport and play can exist purely for pleasure, purely for education, or for any combination of the two. Pleasure and education are not mutually exclusive; they can and should coexist.

Allied Areas: Health Education, Recreation, and Dance

Our definition of physical education is concerned with the development or education of each person, both of their physical body and through physical means. To complete the description of this very broad concept, three areas allied to the field of physical education and sport must be introduced: health education, recreation, and dance.

Health Education

The old concept of health education has become more comprehensive over the last several decades. When we speak of health education, we use it most often in the sense of the total health-related fitness of the person: physical, mental, emotional, and social. The old model had three subareas: health instruction, health services, and health environment.

Today the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion promotes a model that it calls a coordinated school health program (CSHP).[10] The CSHP model has eight components:

1. *Health education*. A K–12 school curriculum to address "the physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions of health."
2. *Physical education*. A K–12 school curriculum "that provides cognitive content and learning experiences in a variety of activity areas. . . . Quality physical education should promote . . . each student's optimum physical, mental, emotional, and social development."
3. *Health services*. Services that "appraise, protect, and promote health."
4. *Nutritional services*. "Access to a variety of nutritious and appealing meals that accommodate the health and nutritional needs of all students."
5. *Counseling and psychological services*. Services "to improve students' mental, emotional, and social health."
6. *Healthy school environment*. "The physical and aesthetic surroundings and the psychosocial climate and culture of the school."
7. *Health promotion for staff*. Improvement of staff health should improve the staff's commitment to student health and their ability to serve as role models.
8. *Family and community involvement*. Involves the school, parents, and community together; uses community resources and services to meet health-related needs.

Recreation

We generally think of recreation as leisure-time activity. However, recreation can fulfill Jay B. Nash's earlier educational goal of "the worthy use of leisure."[11] In that view, activities are selected by the individual to serve a constructive nature, and they are not so much time consuming as time using. These activities are physically, mentally, and socially healthful.

Nash describes recreation as a complement to work and, therefore, a need of all individuals. The emphasis of recreation in this sense is the "re-creation" of the person, the revitalization of body and mind that results from getting away from the stressful things in life. Like physical education, recreation is a broad and rapidly growing field. The growth of park programs across the country led to an expansion of outdoor education and related activities. The educational base of recreation also has been broadened by the need to educate people in how to use their leisure time.

Dance

Dance does not have a large number of professionals, but it is quite large in terms of the popularity of its activities for people of all ages. Dance has been something of a stepchild of physical education because it hangs on the periphery of the field.

Although dance activities can definitely be a part of physical education, dance itself is strongly identified with the arts. Possibly, dance came into the realm of physical education as a natural result of its body movement orientation. Perhaps this bit of the arts can do much to temper the sometimes excessively athletic orientation of physical education with the aesthetics of art. However, most dance programs have now joined fine arts and performance arts programs.

Changing Focuses of Human Movement Studies

The focus of our field has varied over time. A brief look at the changes in focus, roughly in chronological order, shows that although the focus changes, there is still a constant underlying recognition of the value of human movement and exercise.

Health Focus

The first focus of our field was health, in particular, children's health. As discussed elsewhere in this text, physical activities were used even in ancient times to improve health and fitness. During the Renaissance, wealthier parents realized that their children's health was affected by a lack of exercise. The early programs of physical education were focused on improving health and developing social physical skills.

Education Focus

Eventually, educators realized that poor health and fitness was a major factor in students' poor academic performance. By the late 1700s, early private schools in Europe were adding physical activity as a way to improve student health, resulting in improved classroom performance.

Fitness Focus

By the late 1800s, the focus of physical education was increasingly on physical fitness. Though the underlying reason for that focus was the effect that it had on student learning, teachers were increasingly aware of the importance of fitness on long-term health.

Sport Focus

By the 1920s, sport had become a major factor in physical education programs. The reason for the change from educational gymnastics and calisthenics to sports

Courtesy of the News & Observer of Raleigh (NC), photo by Thomas Green.

The move of services from the public to the private sector limits many recreational opportunities to people with higher incomes.

was very simple: Students were more likely to benefit from the programs because they were more fun.

Lifetime Fitness and Wellness Focus

By the 1970s, the focus on popular competitive sports began to give way first to a lifetime fitness focus, and then to a lifetime wellness focus. Lifetime fitness still had a sport emphasis, but it shifted from the most popular competitive sports to sports that people could enjoy throughout their lifetime, such as tennis and swimming, rather than football.

The lifetime wellness focus was a shift from developing high-level fitness and sports skills to a focus on wellness for a healthy life. This meant a focus on levels of basic fitness through moderate exercise that would benefit even people of lower skill or fitness levels, resulting in a longer life span and fewer health problems during their lifetime.

Holism: The Unity of Mind and Body

One of the difficult questions over the ages has been the philosophical clash between the intellectual and the physical. A common belief is that the mind and the body are separate, with an emphasis on either one or the other. In most cases, this belief, called dualism, leads to a preference for the mind and a belief that physical activities are inferior to mental activities. We see this idea in the medieval Church, with its growing belief in the evil nature of the body. Because the body was considered evil, acts that the body enjoyed were discouraged. Even today we see this belief in the idea of the superiority (and separation) of mind over body.

The contrary philosophy is monism, a belief in the unity of mind and body. We trace the heritage of this idea to the ancient Athenians, with the concept of "a sound mind in a sound body." That motto is often considered an ideal statement of the goal of traditional physical education: the use of physical activities to develop all aspects of the person—mind, body, and spirit. It is consistent with Earle Zeigler's argument that the real focus of our field is developmental physical activities, rather than physical activity alone. There is a goal of developing the person in many ways.[12]

However, the real question is not whether we believe in a holistic concept; the question is whether that concept is now dominant in our society, or even in our field. In society, dualism still rules, even though our field stresses monism. Physical education programs are downsized or removed because physical classes are considered inferior to intellectual classes. The belief in the value of using physical means to develop the whole person has not captured the public imagination. Indeed, there is some question regarding whether the holistic concept is dominant even in the practices of our field. Too often people reject healthful activities by citing the lack of value or balance in their school's physical education classes. This difference between what we teach and what we do is a thorn in the side of the field of physical education.

Developing a Field: From Education to Science to Medicine

For the first roughly 80 years from the founding of American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) the field was physical education, and we were concerned primarily with teaching and coaching physical activity.[13] The original impetus for the teaching was the improvement of student health for the purpose of improved learning capabilities in the academic sphere. Many of the early leaders of AAHPERD were medical doctors, though medical education was more limited than it is for today's physicians.

By the 1960s, our field was suffering from decades of a feeling of academic inferiority. Professors at the growing research institutions feared that they were not sufficiently respected because they suffered the indignity that brought horror to research institutions—they were practitioners. Rather than focus on theoretical knowledge, they actually taught people to do things. The more practical or applied a field is, the more suspect it is to research university professors.

What was "physical education" has expanded massively in the last half century. Little side areas of interest became specialties, and then subdisciplines. Too often we stated our "area of focus" arguments too narrowly. Most fields do not change their names. The sad reality was that the primary problem with the name "physical education" was a long history of too many lazy teachers negatively affecting too many generations of students.

The discipline movement arose from the influence of concerned faculty at research institutions. Their expressed concern was that physical education "got no respect" because it was not sufficiently scholarly. It was not known for serious, rigorous research that expanded the bounds of knowledge. While we can successfully argue that a significant portion of the faculty's concern grew from a fear of seeming unimportant in their home institutions, still there was a solid core of truth to the charge. As an adjunct to Schools of Education, whose academic standards were traditionally among the lowest in most universities, the limited research that was done was usually applied studies aimed at solving particular (often small) practical problems.

This concern of research university faculty led to three things happening, each leading to the next:

1. Franklin Henry wrote a seminal article (taken from an earlier presentation) calling for the development of an academic discipline of physical education.[14]
2. In 1989, the American Academy of Physical Education recommended that the new discipline be called "kinesiology." The group renamed itself the American Academy of Kinesiology and Physical Education.
3. In 1990, a series of papers was produced and published in *Quest* arguing that kinesiology was the best name for our field, just because, and creating a field for it almost from the whole cloth.[15] This was received with enthusiasm primarily at research universities.

In that call for kinesiology as the name for our field, Karl Newell defined kinesiology as "the study of movement or, more generally, the study of physical

activity."[16] We need to remember that this argument is based on kinesiology as the name at the college level rather than at every level of application. In fact, it is largely a creature of the largest research-focused universities. We can understand some of the reason behind this drive toward acceptance of the new name by a comment made while arguing the new name's value: "The word kinesiology in its present broad sense is an appropriate image that serves to market our field of study."[17] As Larry Locke put it,

> *I now will embarrass us all by noticing what we are really talking about. This program* [on The Evolving Undergraduate Major] *is about power and turf. It is about who will control the undergraduate major, not about what is in it or its present state of evolution. This program is about who will teach it and which students will be required to take it. . . . The disciplinarians still covet those captive, credit-bearing clients [teacher education majors] who still constitute the largest single population of undergraduate students passing through most of our schools.*[18]

A decade later, after listening to discussions of the future of the field in higher education, Locke remarked that

> *almost all of [this] discussion reflects the particular contexts of Research I and Research II universities. Whether lessons about prospering in those environments can safely be generalized to institutions in the other eight Carnegie categories is still unclear. The majority of kinesiology and physical education programs in North America are not in colleges or universities with research as a primary mission. Thus, in contemplating our professional and academic colleagues' good counsel, we should remember just how narrow and really peculiar the experiences behind these analyses and consequent advice have been.*[19]

The supporters of kinesiology argue that it is a superset of the discipline—a field of study, rather than a discipline. Or, as Waneen Spirduso writes, "a cross-disciplinary field of study rather than an academic discipline, strictly defined." As she emphasizes the value of the focus on studying physical activity, she argues that it "really is the common denominator of sport, exercise, ergonomics, biomechanics and all the other activities that kinesiologists study."[20]

Charles Corbin argues that "becoming a field is more than saying we are one."[21] He uses Myron Lieberman's characteristics of a profession to "provide a basis for developing criteria for establishing a field." Corbin states that a field must have the following:

1. A discipline (unique subject matter) that uses intellectual techniques
2. Disciplinarians with long training in the unique subject matter and its intellectual techniques, who should be dedicated to research that contributes to preparing professionals in the field and providing the field's social service

3. A subject matter related to the delivery of a social service (professional education)
4. Professionals with long training in the disciplinary and professional subject matter
5. A clarified code of ethics and an organization or organizations that govern the field and enforce the code
6. Agencies dedicated to preparing disciplinarians and professionals who have studied all types of knowledge and are dedicated to the field and the social service it provides
7. A clientele that needs and demands the field's services

Corbin argues that we are a discipline, but not yet a field. He says that we need more than simply an organization; we need to commit to the field's common goals.

This approach is similar to an earlier recommendation by Earle Zeigler when he described physical education as going through stages of being a multidiscipline, a cross discipline, and finally an interdiscipline as the subdisciplines begin to interact once again. He called for

> *a recognizable state of reunification within what we presently call the field of sport and physical education. We do need a new name, but it should be a name that reflects both the disciplinary and the professional aspects of our work. . . . We simply must figure out ways and means of unifying the various aspects of our own quasi-profession/quasi-discipline to at least a reasonable degree.*[22]

At the same time, some scholars questioned the value of the discipline movement. As Lawrence Locke points out and Elizabeth Bressan emphasizes, we did not develop disciplines—we simply declared that they are present. Locke says that disciplines do not appear by being declared or "proven." "They are created by the labor of inquiry, the accumulation of knowledge and theory, the fortunes of social recognition, and the accidents of history."[23]

Elizabeth Bressan writes that young scholars in the disciplines are, in fact, trained in the language and bases of fields other than physical education, so that

> *there is no real community of scholars who study physical education, or human movement or sport or whatever particular delineation of content upon which we might settle. A sound disciplinary structure is supposed to promote such communal identity and effort.*[24]

Jan Broekhoef suggests that a discipline is not as necessary as we originally believed:

> *The assumption . . . is that persons who have mastered the formal content of the academic discipline will be better prepared to teach than those who possess only professional and applied knowledge.* Unfortunately, there is no evidence to support such an assumption *[my emphasis]. . . . Theory and practice should stand in a reciprocal relationship.*[25]

Broekhoef argues that because the field is concerned with educating people, there is a need to place the disciplines into an educational context so they will contribute to the role of physical educators. He notes the weakness of a theory-based program that is not rooted in practice, saying: "I should like to throw in a Latin phrase of my own: *Primum vivere, deinde philosophari*. Freely translated this means that people have to live first before they can philosophize."[26] In other words, theory must be grounded in practice. His point is reinforced by Joan Vickers, who points out the problems caused by our trying to teach methods without having first taught an underlying basis of skills (or applied experience).[27]

Christopher Hopper joins in the call for increased emphasis on the professional side, arguing that "the emphasis in academic and research-related areas of knowledge and the neglect of personal competency in activities is leaving the prospective teacher inadequately prepared to offer a variety of physical education experiences to children and adults." He suggests a return to "pedagogical commitment," adding that "such a mission would facilitate the integration of knowledge from research to practice."[28] This integration of the theoretical with the practical is a critical mix because "the reflective physical educator, with an adequate knowledge base, is a better teacher than a non-reflective highly skilled one."[29]

This call for a return to the original mission of physical education—the concern for helping others in areas related to health and for teaching physical activities—has been increasingly echoed in the field, as it was in 1940 in C. H. McCloy's article of challenge and complaint, "How About Some Muscle?"[30] Indeed, we need to remember Charles Poskanzer's remark that

> *Having agonized for years over the proper title for my own academic department . . . I have come to an inescapable conclusion. Academic respectability is acquired and maintained through intellectual honesty and professional integrity. The name matters not, and the label is unimportant. The ingredients are the important things. It's the substance, not the style, that counts.*[31]

Physical Education: Developing a Profession

For many years physical educators have spoken of themselves as members of a profession: teaching. In 1915 Abraham Flexner suggested a set of criteria for professional status. His criteria are still the most commonly accepted in the field. Flexner described six characteristics that determine whether a field really is a profession:[32]

1. Intellectual activity (a "body of knowledge")
2. Practical use
3. Research resulting in new knowledge and ideas
4. Self-organization
5. Capacity for communication (internal and external)
6. Dedication to helping others (altruism and service)

First, a profession's activities are intellectual. Physical skills may be involved in performing the work, but the work must have an intellectual base, or "body of knowledge." The intellectual nature of the field must be one of the most important aspects of the work, rather than the physical or other skills used to apply the knowledge. This is the area where physical education has been most criticized by outsiders.

Second, a profession's work must be practical. It must have a genuine use. Even though it is based on knowledge, that knowledge has no value unless it is applied. Most physical educators agree that physical education has an intellectual base, and every physical educator will agree that the work is practical. The knowledge is applied to develop and improve people's fitness, skills, and health.

Third, a profession is concerned with research that results in new knowledge and ideas, which are then tested and applied in the professional work. This characteristic certainly is true of physical education, although some educators are dissatisfied with the limited amount of research and the tendency to experiment only in the most narrowly practical areas. Some critics argue that physical educators and coaches are the most resistant of all groups to change, even when research has shown that the changes are needed.

Fourth, a profession has a formal organization. Examples in physical education are the numerous professional groups, such as AAHPERD and the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). Organization is closely related to the fifth characteristic, the capacity for communication.

Fifth, a profession has formal means of communication among its members, not only to enable them to work together to solve common problems but also to distribute information. AAHPERD is the largest group that assists physical educators in meeting those communication requirements. It holds regular meetings at the state, district, and national levels and also sponsors many publications. The ACSM has a large annual convention and also sponsors publications.

Sixth, a profession practices altruism and service. That is, the members of the profession are dedicated to helping others. A profession shows concern for people's welfare, and it exists (at least in part) to help improve or protect others' lives. Few people would disagree that this characteristic applies to teaching.

Most physical educators consider their field a profession. It does meet all of Flexner's criteria to some degree, though some may disagree about the importance given to some of the criteria. However, 2 decades after Charles A. Bucher argued that physical education was not a fully matured profession but instead was an emerging one, Robert Gensemer echoed Bucher with his description of the field as "an emergent profession."[33]

Do people see physical educators as rendering a "unique and essential social service," one that could not be rendered by a non-professional? Some people believe physical educators are doing a job that most well-coordinated people could do. Are physical educators selective about the people admitted to the field? Research consistently indicates that the students majoring in the teacher preparation programs in our colleges rank low in intelligence and academic training

among our nation's college students and that certification and licensure requirements sometimes vary so widely as to be almost meaningless. Are "rigorous training programs" provided for future members? There also are many doubts in this area. Finally, is physical education "self-regulatory"? Are unethical or ill-prepared members dealt with within the field? This has rarely been the case.

Bucher and Gensemer suggest, rightly, that physical education has not yet earned the full status of a profession but is still emerging. Though some educators argue that it has spent a long time emerging, its basic shortcomings as a profession are clear. Although physical education's goals equal the characteristics of a profession, its public status has not yet risen to that level. That is still a critical task for today's physical educators.

In the past, physical education was considered an applied field, one in which practical skills were gained through personal experience and then applied in teaching and coaching in the school setting. When the discipline movement grew in the 1960s and 1970s and advanced a more scholarly, research-based emphasis, that emphasis was largely defined as sport, though it was sometimes broadened to the less sport-centered term *movement*.

In the 1990s and with a shift toward a redefined kinesiology as the scholarly focus of a broader, more unified field of study, the idea of a research-focused subdiscipline of sport pedagogy has grown. During the early years of developing a discipline, many subdisciplines were proposed, debated, and justified, such as sport biomechanics or sport history. However, not every proposed subdiscipline found widespread acceptance.

A section on "The Academic Foundations of Exercise Science and Kinesiology," includes an overview of the subdiscipline of sport pedagogy. At this point, I simply want to emphasize the importance of physical education and sport pedagogy as a legitimate subject for scholarly study. The distinction between the two terms is that *physical education* traditionally refers only to school-related activities (though this book prefers a much broader definition), and sport pedagogy "is a broad field concerned with the content, processes, and outcomes of sport, fitness, and physical education programs in schools, community programs, and clubs."[34] Perhaps *movement pedagogy* would be a more accurate name for the subdiscipline. In short, movement pedagogy studies the organized teaching or learning related to human movement, regardless of where the activity takes place.

One factor in the development of a more scholarly focus in physical education was the Holmes Group report, which recommended a greater academic focus for all teacher education programs.[35] In a sense, it shone a light on weaknesses in the scholarly underpinnings of teacher education programs. Many state legislatures began to strengthen academic requirements for teacher education, and professional groups reacted by developing plans to raise their professional status with more academically oriented requirements. However, the legislatures have resisted the Holmes Group proposal to make teacher education a 5-year program, a proposal that was also recommended in the 1950s and 1960s.

Don Hellison points out that as the emphasis on scholarly research in physical education has increased since the mid-1960s, a consistent thread of whole-person emphasis is visible. The result is that "the personal and social development claims of the past have begun to be clarified and validated."[36] He adds that the more successful research approaches have been encouraged by this new emphasis on research. Hellison argues that the field is benefiting from the growth in scholarly research, in part because research is both establishing the value of educating through movement and showing us how to achieve the teaching outcomes that are our goal. As this chapter argues, those educational benefits are holistic, rather than just physical.

Scholarly research enables us to learn more about the effectiveness of modes of instruction to discover whether we can get the outcomes that we desire from the educational process. At the same time, new research is proving the value of the work done by physical educators. The original impetus for the formation of physical education programs was to improve the health of students, leading to improved scholarship on their part. Those holistic goals still exist, including the physiological benefits of physical activity, the socialization potential, the behavioral effects, and the original goal of better health.

Now scholars are closely examining the importance and role of physical education in achieving basic health objectives and in terms of the national educational strategy, Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Such research evaluates the impact on adults as well as schoolchildren. It is critical because we fear that American youth are losing the core of fitness and health that they once had. Even so, the standard was not a high one. The critical value of physical education in the schools and for the development of people as children, and even in old age, has never been more important than it is today.[37]

The Call for a Discipline of Physical Education

Scholars spent decades debating the status of physical education: Is it a profession or a discipline? Where does it fit in the academic scheme? However, our field has many dimensions. One of them is a body of knowledge, which is required by a discipline, and another centers on the field as a profession. To determine the status of the field, we must understand exactly what a profession and a discipline are, and then see whether our field has the characteristics of either one. However, a field does not have to be only a discipline or a profession.

When Franklin M. Henry called for a discipline of physical education in the 1960s, he envisioned it as a field with a broad concern, drawing from the expertise and methods of a range of outside disciplines—not just as a science, but as a field in the broader category of "arts and sciences," the study of all aspects of skilled human movement.[38]

What he got was something quite different. As different areas of interest became organized as subdisciplines, adding rigor to their research and focusing inward on their singular concerns, the pendulum began to swing toward a scientific field, rather than a broad one. Though these processes were happening in both the United

States and Canada, their driving forces were not the same. In Canada the move toward professionalizing sport to produce *high performance* success (such as at the Olympic Games) required administrators and sport scientists to operate the program. The knowledge of volunteers was not sufficient to gain success on the world stage. Many of the Canadian specialists did graduate work in the United States, where they encountered the other driving force: status in the research universities.

I defined a discipline as an area of knowledge and theory that can exist purely for itself with no need to show that it has a practical application. The interest in that side of the field began to develop in the mid-1960s, promoted by Franklin M. Henry's definition. The result was a flurry of discussion about whether physical education was a discipline, whether it had the required focus of attention and particular mode of inquiry. The question of whether physical education could demonstrate a body of knowledge caused particular concern.

Daryl Siedentop discussed the idea of a discipline by describing it as "value-free" because it tries to study "what is" rather than "what should be." He suggested that the difference between a discipline and a profession could be summarized by the idea that "a discipline describes while a profession prescribes."[39] A discipline avoids bias in research. On the other hand, a profession tries to solve a specific problem and must therefore study a specific group, which results in a biased study and results.

The interest in a discipline centered around Franklin Henry's 1964 article and its implications. While scholars tried to define a discipline and its area of study, AAHPER (as it was known then) worked to demonstrate the field's "body of knowledge." At the same time, scholars in the Big Ten Conference schools organized a series of annual conferences to discuss the different newly emerging disciplines or subdisciplines in sport studies. Meanwhile, the American Academy of Physical Education debated whether a new name was needed for physical education, one that would better demonstrate the true focus of its study.

In the years since Henry's article first appeared and spurred interest in developing a discipline, many changes in direction have affected our broad field. The first notable change was the split between groups focused on the profession and those focused on developing the discipline. Many conflicts seem to match physical education against exercise and sport science, "teachers" against "researchers." The more practical appearance of the profession side of studies has created problems for those interested in the discipline or research side because each group sometimes questions the other's validity or importance.

In truth, both groups contribute to our field in important ways. Their conflicts often seem to be little more than arguments over differing points of view, though often the real argument has been political rather than theoretical, a struggle for power or funding. However, the scholarly side of physical education is far more prominent today than it was then.

A second notable change has been the appearance of new professional societies representing the subdisciplines and their scholarly focuses of interest.

Those new groups have promoted scholarship in their areas by initiating national conferences and by publishing journals that offer more scholarly and specific outlets of research than those provided by the older organizations of physical education. By the late 1970s, AAHPERD recognized the growth of the scholarly interests and started discipline-focused academies within its own professional structure.

A third change in the direction of the field that has become evident over the last several decades is the great burst of scholarly research and writing. That growth of scholarship has been invaluable in revitalizing our field and presenting it to the outside world as an academically respectable field.

Our Field as a Discipline

The difference between a discipline and a profession can be confusing because a field can be a discipline, while its practitioners can be members of a profession. In essence, a discipline is an area of knowledge and theory that can exist purely for itself, but a profession must have a practical application. We have shown that our field has practical uses (such as developing people's fitness and health) and thus can be considered a profession. What, then, is necessary for the field to be considered a discipline? Franklin Henry defines an academic discipline as an organized body of knowledge collectively embraced in a formal course of learning. The acquisition of such knowledge is assumed to be an adequate and worthy objective as such, without any demonstration or requirement of practical application. The content is theoretical and scholarly as distinguished from technical and professional.[40]

Henry's definition (a synthesis of several other definitions of a discipline) makes it clear that to be considered a discipline, our field must have a "body of knowledge," that is, it must focus on some specific scholarly knowledge. Is this the case with our field? Henry and many others believe that it is.

We can think of a discipline as an area of basic science concerned with the discovery of new knowledge but not really obligated to find any use for that knowledge or to apply it in any way. The primary object of a discipline is to gain knowledge, while in a profession it is to apply that knowledge in a way that serves others.

Gerald S. Kenyon suggests that three criteria are necessary for a field to be a discipline:

1. A focus of attention
2. A unique body of knowledge
3. A particular mode of inquiry (research method)

Many authors suggest that the focus of attention of physical education as a discipline is the human movement phenomena, or as Kenyon puts it, the study of "man in motion." Although there is some argument over whether our field also possesses a unique body of knowledge, many people do feel that such a body of knowledge exists and that it has expanded vastly over the years. Kenyon

suggests that our field's difficulty in becoming a discipline is in its use of a variety of research methods, rather than a single unique method. Kenyon writes that the field of study is still too broad and that the question of research methodology still must be settled.[41]

Perhaps the argument for a single particular mode of inquiry has been overstated as a requirement for a discipline. As a contrary example, historians use a wide range of methodologies in conducting their research. Historians have used methods from sociology, from econometrics, from archaeology, from psychology, even from art, to great effect and without criticism that they are failing to have a single method of inquiry or research method.

Research should be active in both a profession and a discipline. The difference in their research is that research in a profession focuses on solving specific questions or problems, so it is applied research. Research in a discipline focuses on the broader questions of advancing knowledge in the field.

In the early years of the discipline movement, Walter Kroll explained the need for research this way:

> *Whether physical education [or exercise science] is only a profession or is both a profession and an academic discipline, its research efforts must be as much in evidence as its avowed dedication to good works. Only through research can a profession examine the basis of its practices and improve the quality of its services to society . . . it must be prepared to discover knowledge essential to its progress as a learned profession. . . . Regardless of how one chooses to think of [the field], research is essential to its progress and existence.*[42]

Many people in our field see a discipline emerging not necessarily from the profession, but rather parallel to the profession. That is, the field is dividing into two groups: educators (the profession) and scholars (the discipline). Indeed, this has been the process for decades. Both the discipline and the profession have made great progress. However, we need to remember that one does not necessarily exclude the other, as the discussion of the proposed field of kinesiology shows.

Defining the Theoretical Base of the Discipline

The 1973 discussions of the theoretical base of physical education centered on four different areas: (1) human movement, (2) fitness, (3) sport, and (4) a multitheoretical base.[43] In the case of human movement, movement is an open concept, more of a process than an absolute. In a discipline centered on human movement phenomena, there can be no physical education without movement. The definition of fitness included mental and physical fitness. Sport, the most widely accepted focus in the 1970s, was viewed broadly so that it covered sport for all, rather than elite sport only. The multitheoretical argument was that the field was too broad to focus on a single area of theory. In arguing for the multitheoretical approach, Celeste Ulrich noted that, even though each of the suggested areas was

All children enjoy and benefit from quality exercise programs, increasing the job satisfaction of teachers.

called the base that lies at the heart of our field, each is actually part of a greater whole. In an argument that precedes the kinesiology movement of the 1990s, she pointed out that

> *the concepts cannot be isolated. One moves to be active. Sport is based upon specific patterns of activity. Fitness results from activity carefully "selected as to kind and conducted as to outcome." . . . But there may be a way of putting it all together. If [we] will stop seeking a uni-theoretical approach and agree that the uniqueness of [our field] is in its multi-theoretical approach.*[44]

From this point of view, our field draws from many areas of theory. In other words, people need not limit themselves to any single area of theory to say that

they are working with the theoretical base of our field. That view is slowly emerging as the dominant one in the field.

Interestingly enough, all of those arguments are still strongly held. Though sport was the most widely accepted focus for much of that time, there has been a gradual shift toward human movement or physical activity as the preferred focus under an umbrella term, such as exercise science or kinesiology. We must recognize that in a way this is a return to the original umbrella fostered by AAHPERD, which was largely abandoned as an organization by the same groups of discipline specialists who now recommend that we have an umbrella field called kinesiology.[45] At any rate, as Linda Bunker notes,

> *the profession . . . must refocus on the centrality of the study of human movement. [We] have too long diluted the basic field rather than emphasize the common mission of understanding human movement and the contribution it makes to human physical and mental health*.[46]

Or, as Seymour Kleinman puts it, "The inherent and legitimate territory of our field, its uniqueness, is in the creation of, and engagement in, a variety of movement forms."[47]

Sport: The First Focus of the Emerging Discipline

Sport holds a prominent place in modern life. Millions of people participate in sporting activities, watch and read about them, and spend billions of dollars annually on sport-related activities and equipment. Though this massive interest in sport was noticed decades ago, the study of sport was largely ignored, except by sports journalists and the occasional scholar whose professional coworkers often considered the pursuit of such interests as scholarly "slumming."

But the impact of sport on modern society makes it clear that sport is a very legitimate field of academic study that has slowly crept into the academic mainstream. As Max Scheler noted in 1927,

> *Scarcely an international phenomenon of the day deserves social and psychological study to the degree that sport does. Sport has grown immeasurably in scope and in social importance, but the meaning of sport has received little in the way of serious attention*.[48]

We now see sport used at the international level for many blatantly political purposes: prestige, a show of friendship or of international acceptance, propaganda, and the influencing of public opinion. In the early 1970s, China invited a U.S. table tennis team to play as a sign of improving relations. Cuba used the 1976 Olympic victories of Alberto Juantorena as an argument that the Cuban political system had improved life there. Just as Hitler used the 1936 Olympics to show the "superiority" of his Nazi system, the Soviet Union used the 1980 Olympics to serve the same flagrant propaganda purposes for its communist system, and the United States used the 1984 Games to show the strength of its free enterprise system.

Sometimes we fail to realize the extent of our interest in modern sport. As Allen Guttmann notes:

> *One reason that sports are not understood is that familiarity has made their significance seem obvious when it is not. Another reason is that the philosophers, historians, sociologists, and psychologists who have concerned themselves with sports have only rarely written for the ordinary reader. They have communicated mainly with each other.*[49]

"Sport science" was the discipline arm of physical education during the 1970s and 1980s. Though scholars were arguing that human movement is the focus of the discipline, sport was a more popular choice as the focus. Human movement was considered too broad because it could include such things as learning to hold a pencil or to walk, while sport is more specific to the type of activities that are actually used in the field. However, that idea was changing in the 1990s.

During the 1970s and 1980s, sport grew quickly as an area of study. Although it scarcely existed as a scholarly subject in 1970, it quickly became a large part of academic programs. Our basic areas of concern in sport studies are the meanings and relationships of play, games, sport, and athletics because their definitions are the focal points at which the study of sport begins. Hal A. Lawson calls them "ludic activities" because they are forms of playing.[50]

Sociologists have tried to define precisely the terms of sport studies. Play is described in many ways because the true meaning of play is not clear. Perhaps the most common definition of play is really a contrast, with play defined as the opposite of work, as in **Figure 1.1**. Because work is utilitarian (effort applied to a useful purpose), play is considered non-utilitarian. That is, play serves no useful purpose, at least according to the usual definition of "useful purpose." Not only is play non-utilitarian, but also it is pursued simply for its own sake. It is autotelic, too; that is, the pleasure of play is in performing the activity, rather than in the accomplishment (success or failure) of the activity. Performance (active participation) is the purpose of play. Because of this quality, play offers a type of freedom that is not available in daily work.

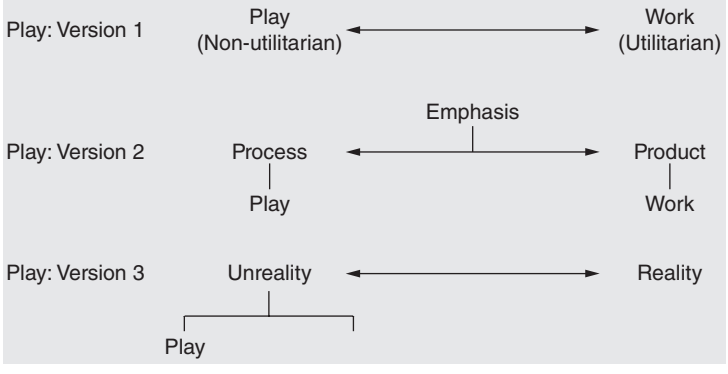

Figure 1.1 Definitions of play by contrast

Play can also be defined without contrasting it to work. Stephen Miller defines play in terms of the relative importance of means and ends.[51] In play, the means are more important than the end result. This can be rephrased by using the terms *process* and *product*. In play, the process is more important than the product. Klaus Meier suggests that play has two aspects: It is voluntary, and it is autotelic (pleasurable).[52] The voluntary aspect makes play different from work. The autotelic aspect (pleasure in the doing) does not necessarily contrast to work because work also can be pleasurable. Meier explains the major trait of play, however, when he states that "the prize of play is play itself."

Sigmund Freud defined play a third way, arguing that the opposite of play is reality.[53] Play is unreality; it is different from the real world. Thus, play is an escape from reality. This aspect of play can be both a strength and a weakness. Some escape from reality is useful in maintaining a balanced, harmonious life because it can act as a pressure release. On the other hand, a person can be too anxious to escape from reality and to seek that release too often, choosing instead to live in a dream world where the pressures of reality can be ignored.

In his work *Man, Play, and Games*, Roger Caillois defines play in terms of *paidia*, which might be called "child's play," and *ludus*, which might be called "complex play" or "adult play." He states that

> *[games can] be placed on a continuum between two opposite poles. At one extreme an almost invisible principle, common to diversion, turbulence, free improvisation, and carefree gaiety, is dominant. It manifests a kind of uncontrolled fantasy that can be designated by the term paidia. At the opposite extreme, this frolicsome and impulsive exuberance is almost entirely absorbed or disciplined by . . . a growing tendency to bind it with arbitrary, imperative, and purposely tedious conventions . . . in order to make it more uncertain of attaining its desired effect. This latter principle . . . requires an ever greater amount of effort, patience, skill, or ingenuity. [This second component is called] ludus.*[54]

Daryl Siedentop uses a paidia–ludus continuum to show ways of playing and their part in physical education. He explains that "as play moves from paidia to ludus, an ever increasing amount of skill, effort, patience, and ingenuity is required in order to be a successful player."[55] The free-spirited, no-limits play that is paidia has rules and structure forced on it, making it less free, yet much more complicated and challenging. The relatively formless play of children is not appropriate for organized education, but the more structured ludic form of play can be very useful in an educational setting.

Allen Guttmann explained the relationship of play, games, and sport with contrasting terms that show the elements forming each term, beginning with play. He defines play as "any non-utilitarian activity performed for its own sake," then subdivides play into two categories: spontaneous and organized.[56] Although we usually think of play as being spontaneous, Guttmann suggests that "most play is

regulated and rule-bound." This is particularly true when play loses its individual characteristics and involves more than one person. Some organization becomes necessary when this occurs. In short, the more people who are involved in play, the higher the level of organization that is needed.

Organized play is called games, and to Guttmann "games symbolize the willing surrender of absolute spontaneity for the sake of playful order." He further divides games into competitive and non-competitive games, with competitive games called contests. He then divides contests into two categories, intellectual and physical, with the physical contests called sports. According to Guttmann, this distinction gives a final definition of sports as "playful contests which include an important measure of physical skill."

None of the subdivisions suggested in Guttmann's model is absolute; play is neither totally spontaneous nor totally organized. Contests are neither totally intellectual nor totally physical. Each category exists along a continuum, with different activities appearing at different points between the opposite ends. As an example, even a chess match, which is basically intellectual, has its physical side. The pieces must be moved, which requires physical effort. Furthermore, long periods of mental effort at a high level require physical stamina; even chess masters use much physical training to increase their stamina for a major match or set of matches in a championship.

A variation of Guttmann's model illustrates a different distinction between sports and contests and at the same time clarifies the distinction that philosophers make between sport and athletics. Although Guttmann presents sports as always being competitive, and therefore being contests, he cites Johann Huizinga's description of the intersection of games and contests that, when blended, can also be described as sport. Guttmann rejects this choice, but he notes that it does have its supporters. The contest can be viewed as a higher order of sport that is farther along the line toward organization and farther away from the "pure play" concept than sport because contests emphasize the victory (the ends) rather than the joy of competition (the means).

This brings us to the distinction that philosophers make between sport and athletics. The distinction is, at its core, one of emphasis. In athletics the emphasis is on the victory; the product or end (victory) is more important than the process or the means (play or sport) that leads to the end. Indeed, as David Young points out, the word *athletics* comes from a Greek word that means "to contend for a prize."[57] Obviously, the victory is the real goal, rather than the joy or spontaneity of the competition.

We often fail to distinguish between professional sports, which are purely goal centered and thus are athletics (if not entertainment), and intercollegiate athletics, which are supposedly genuinely sport and less goal centered. The term used for college activities probably is more accurate in philosophical terms than the term for the professional activities. Both are usually athletics rather than sport.

John McClelland offers a variation of this explanatory model.[58] His model adds warfare to the field of contrasts, arguing that sport and work can be described as productive activities, while play and warfare are wasteful (play in

terms of time, and warfare in terms of time, money, and lives). At the same time, play and sport are ludic activities, contrasted to work and warfare, which are serious activities. His model expands the view of play and sport to fit into a broader outside world.

Of course, these definitions are open to considerable argument from both philosophical and semantic approaches. Play can be described as the opposite of work or by emphasizing process (the joy of participation). Games can be described as an organized form of play, and sport can be described as games with a primarily physical focus. The complexity of these concepts results in considerable overlapping of terms. Only when each concept is more clearly defined can we determine how each fits in real life and how each can be best used in the physical education program. At this time, the definition of each varies from person to person, from region to region, and from nation to nation. As Allen Guttmann puts it, "I shall be less intent on whether the sport appears than with how it appears."[59]

Modern society is more involved in athletics than in sport. As a result, philosophers such as John Keating and Paul Weiss have given more attention to the differences between sport and athletics. Keating describes the distinction as follows:

> *In essence, sport is a kind of diversion which has for its direct and immediate end, fun, pleasure, and delight and which is dominated by a spirit of moderation and generosity. Athletics, on the other hand, is essentially a competition activity, which has for its end, victory in the contest and which is characterized by a spirit of dedication, sacrifice, and intensity.*[60]

In his book *Sport: A Philosophic Inquiry*, Paul Weiss's theme for athletics is the pursuit of excellence.[61] Indeed, the first chapter of his book is called "Concern for Excellence." Harold VanderZwaag suggests that Weiss's book should have been entitled *Athletics* rather than *Sport*.[62] The theme of excellence and the idea of the pursuit of excellence as a major goal of athletics reappear throughout Weiss's work.

VanderZwaag maintains that sport and athletics cannot be contrasted as if they are exact opposites. He suggests another continuum, running from play to athletics, with sport between them and athletics viewed as an extension of sport. He further suggests that games can be placed along the continuum from play through sport and into the realm of athletics, although they do not reach the extreme end of the continuum. Instead, their nature changes as the activity moves toward pure play or pure athletics.

VanderZwaag also points out another contrast between sport and athletics. In sport, the spectator is unimportant, while in athletics the spectator is always important and may even become more important than the participant. An athletics event is frequently changed in some manner simply for the convenience of or appeal to the paying spectator. Thus, athletics differs from sport in both the importance of the outcome of a contest and the importance it places on the spectator, the source of the money that encourages the shift from sport to athletics.

Human Movement: The Current Focus of the Discipline

Under the brand of kinesiology, we argue that we are studying human movement. Because human movement is a very broad term, including the crawling of an infant, it may be more accurate to say that our discipline studies *skilled motor performance*. Traditionally, our field has not focused heavily on normal child development or basic movement patterns of elderly adults. Instead we have dealt with the improvement of performance, but through improved skill patterns and improved physiological capabilities, especially in a sport setting. Indeed, in 1964 Franklin Henry referred to "the development of personal skill in motor performance."[63]

Arguments were made for human movement as the focus of our discipline during the name debates published in the 1973 *Academy Papers*. In 1961, Eleanor Metheny and Lois Ellfeldt referred to physical education "as we prefer to call it 'movement education.'"[64] Although kinesiology broadens its definition to include medical aspects of movement beyond those traditionally part of our field, we are indeed concerned with human movement.

Formalizing the Subdisciplines

During the first decade of the discipline movement, scholars had two particular concerns. One was developing a definition of the field, along with a clearer name to represent the field. The other was developing the subdisciplines of the field. Each subdiscipline is a major subfocus of the field, such as biomechanics, exercise physiology, sport history, or movement pedagogy.

A university professor with a doctorate is trained with a primary focus on a single subdiscipline. Formally developing a subdiscipline followed much the same process as developing the larger discipline, except that it could be done more quickly. People interested in each subdiscipline worked to define more clearly what they studied and the methodology that they used in their research. At the same time, they began to form organizations devoted to their subdiscipline.

By the late 1960s, new subdiscipline organizations were holding their first academic meetings, and by the mid-1970s most subdisciplines had national organizations with annual conferences and scholarly publications.

Concerns About Our Field as a Science

In the United States, the drive was for status in the research universities, which required production of acceptable research and winning money for research grants. This was easier to accomplish in the sciences; sports groups and businesses spend little money on external research, but huge amounts are spent for medical research. Physical educators in the sciences followed the money.

In the early years of the discipline movement this was considered a good thing; we looked more academic, and we gained outside money through research grants. In the longer term, however, other related changes became noticeable.

The curriculum became more and more focused on science courses, and the sociocultural and educational focuses began to dwindle and even disappear.

Even 20 years ago concerns were expressed that our field had become "scientized" and too technocratic. As David J. Whitson and Donald Macintosh argued, in the new version of the discipline people were taught that their function was a technocratic one, the improvement of performance. Those goals were rarely challenged. As they argue,

> *Thinking differently about sport . . . requires exposure to alternative discourses, which allows the possibility of envisioning different roles for ourselves. That is why it is important that university physical education reconstruct a place for the humanities and for scholarship that is cognizant of questions that simply are not raised when improvements in performance are celebrated uncritically. If the purpose of the university is not only to train experts in a technical sense but to prepare them to play leadership roles in society, it is crucial that students are encouraged to think about the limits of their own knowledge structures.*[65]

They cite Linda Bain as expressing an alternative vision

> *in which physical activity (including sport but also dance and outdoor activities) is a medium for individual and collective exploration, and physical education is a discipline whose presupposed system goal is facilitating exploration and discovery. Here the discourse of physical education is articulated with those of empowerment and of emancipatory education. Physical education has a rich tradition of concern with such problems, but it is a tradition that is today in danger of being marginalized.*[66]

While some scholars have challenged the increasingly science-only focus of kinesiology in academic conferences, there had been a backlash against it in the field also. Many people have become concerned that kinesiology is so limited in its focus that its growth is a danger to our greater field. Scott Kretchmar wrote of this stage of the growth of the discipline, arguing that

> *in some ways the promise of science, and the unreasonable optimism that accompanied its early phases, has run its course. Science will not solve all the world's problems . . . not because science or scientists are inept, but rather because the typical reductionistic model on which science has operated cannot, in principle, produce a complete understanding of human behavior or fully predict it. . . . Worse yet, science done in the absence of moral research and reflection is dangerous. What can be done is not always what should be done, and a growing realization is emerging that "should" questions need the attention of specialists in philosophy and nonspecialists alike. . . .*
>
> *A growing disenchantment with the skeptical spirit that typifies much scientific inquiry also seems to be on the horizon. Oversimplified,*

> *the hard-nosed empirical attitude that is the target of some ire can be portrayed as follows: If it cannot be logically demonstrated, measured, or otherwise physically observed, it is not worth talking about. In physical education, some think that this attitude led to a curriculum top-heavy in courses like physiology, biomechanics, experimental psychology, motor learning, and other scientific bases of movement, but far too light in philosophy, ethics, history, and literature.*[67]

In short, a completely science-focused field is too narrow in its view and methods to do justice to the broad range of valuable interests and concerns of our field.

Defining Our Field's Focus: Still an Issue

Rather than moving in a consistent direction, the focus of the field has bounced around like the ball in a pinball machine. We still have many issues debated within the field, things of greater importance than the significance of the field's best name. A critical one is how best to prepare students in the field. In the early years of the discipline movement, the common idea was to have students study an academic program unconnected to any professional goal. After 4 years of college, they could spend a year focusing on the professional side to qualify them for their workplace goals.

Ultimately this approach failed. It has been tried several times as an approach to preparing physical education teachers, with the fifth year being a master's degree program. Students (and their parents) have been resistant to the idea of a 4-year degree that does not qualify you for any kind of job. In related fields, such as physical therapy, bachelor's and master's degree programs have largely disappeared and have been replaced by 3-year doctoral programs, following an interdisciplinary undergraduate program, such as exercise science or kinesiology.

Walter Kroll addressed the dangers of overly theory-focused programs in the early years of the discipline movement, writing that

> *any graduate program [in an academic discipline] must provide for an optimum balance among teaching, service, and research emphases according to some goal. If, as in the case of medical and nursing education, a program over-emphasizes the scholar-research component then some deficit may arise in the service obligation. Such a deficiency in a profession could be disastrous. A similar deficiency can [also] result . . . in a program designed to produce an individual prepared to work in an academic discipline. In the case of those Ph.D.'s prepared in an academic discipline who find employment in institutions of higher learning, an extreme emphasis upon the scholar-research component may jeopardize the extent and quality of their teaching and service obligations. A point frequently overlooked is that an academic*

> *discipline located in a university setting has both a teaching and a service commitment as well as a commitment to scholarly research.*[68]

In the years since that was written, medical education has been significantly changed because that field found that too many doctors were incapable of interacting and communicating with their patients. They were great in the lab, but poorly skilled in the hospital.

Many smaller colleges and universities (the producers of the majority of graduates in our field) have difficulty finding qualified doctoral faculty members. The problem has been an excessive focus in doctoral training on a single subdiscipline, such as exercise physiology, and a lack of wider exposure to the field as a whole. The result is one-subject teachers, when the colleges need people who can teach in more than one area and at the same time work effectively and knowledgeably with people who are trained in the other subdisciplines.

Jeffrey Ives and Duane Knudson address this concern in calling for greater disciplinary balance in exercise science. As they write,

> *[while] other allied health disciplines are adding areas in their scopes of practice, exercise science education and professional certifications remain narrow and limited. We can find no evidence that such a narrow scope of practice is beneficial, but rather that the omission of historically recognized and clinically relevant subdisciplines such as biomechanics and motor behaviour is a danger to the acceptance of exercise science as a profession. Just as importantly, an inability to integrate these disciplines as part of a holistic systems approach to human wellness and performance severely limits clinical decision making abilities. Strong interdisciplinary programs with an applied research base and field experiences to teach clinical skills are needed.*[69]

Diane Gill speaks of the need for integration within the field of kinesiology, meaning integration of multidisciplinary scholarship, focused on physical activity, integration of academic scholarship and professional practice, and work in public service "to serve the larger central mission." As she notes,

> *isolated multiple subdisciplines do not make for an integrated academic area, and a collection of cross-disciplinary areas that simply live together does not constitute an integrated kinesiology discipline. Inter-disciplinary implies actual connections among subareas, and an interdisciplinary kinesiology that integrates subdisciplinary knowledge is essential.*[70]

For years people in our field were dissatisfied with the term *physical education* because they felt that it did not clearly define the field. A related problem is that many people believe that the term recalls the close ties between physical education and school sports, which too often had little relationship to education. Some people wanted to drop the connection to sports, believing that only in this

way could physical education show its true worth in the schools. For reasons such as these, people have long debated a new name for our field, one that will clearly tell people what the field is all about while giving a new image that is free of ties to the past.

Exercise science was first used at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in the 1960s and became widely used in the 1990s. It has the advantage of defining a wider area of emphasis than simply sport. Another of its strengths is that it is easier for people outside the field to recognize its focus. This trait is valuable when a major driving force for a new name is to improve the reputation (and name recognition) of the field among both the public and scholars in other fields. The term is sometimes combined into *exercise and sport science*.

Kinesiology is a title that some departments began using as early as the 1960s. Primarily research oriented, the term refers to the study of human movement or, more recently, physical activity.[71] However, in the sense that it refers to a particular study, it gives no indication of the breadth of what is taught. A student in physical education does not necessarily study movement. Teaching the strategy involved in playing a team game, for example, is definitely a part of physical education, but it is not kinesiology or the study of movement skill. Because practitioners are not always involved in studying the movement itself, kinesiology is too narrow in scope to define the whole field.

Although the American Academy of Physical Education selected *kinesiology* as its preferred title for the field in 1989, it recommended the title for academic units (in universities), not for teacher preparation programs.[72] However, the academy's members are scholars teaching at research universities, so they have their own bias toward that definition. They rarely include practitioners in their group. A major handicap of the name is that it is not one that the public understands.

Sport sciences or simply *sport* are too narrow to represent the whole field of physical education. We have discussed sport and what it represents earlier. The first description of a major sport science program was by Clark Whited in 1971.[73]

Some people prefer to keep the title physical education. Although many physical educators are not satisfied with this title, they realize that the public at least has some idea of what it means. They believe that developing a new image for the old term may be easier than trying to teach the public to recognize a new, unfamiliar title. However, it will not be easy to do, as the current reputation was developed over almost a century.

No matter what the final designation, we should keep in mind that each of the proposals depends heavily on individual interpretations of the focus within the field. Perhaps that diversity of opinion is a virtue in itself because it echoes the earlier definition of our field as a very broad area of work and study that includes

many people who seem to have little relationship to each other in their interests and tasks.

In the future we may see the term *kinesiology* as the preference at research-oriented universities, *exercise and sport science* at the midlevel universities, and variations of names that include *physical education* with another term or terms to reflect the focus and mission of smaller college departments.

Our Field: No Consensus on a Defining Name

Today's Program Names: Divided by Focus

The different names used by academic programs today are based on their focuses, generally education, the disciplines, or medicine. Education primarily means teaching and coaching, which are the common focuses of physical education departments. The disciplines and applied programs usually use a variation of exercise and sport science or human performance as their names. Kinesiology as taught in the research universities is an adjunct of medicine or the health sciences.

Kinesiology: Unifying the Field or a Change of Focus?

For many decades the field has sought a better title for itself. The first reason for a new title was to better represent what the field is today; the title *physical education* essentially limits itself to teaching and coaching. Today the field is far broader in its reach than that old title indicates.

Franklin Henry's article "Physical Education: An Academic Discipline" called for the development of "*this cross-disciplinary field of knowledge*" [my emphasis], rather than the various separated subdisciplines we see today.[74] He specifically noted that it was *not* an amalgam of knowledge from other disciplines. The first program to try the discipline approach for its major was the "sport science" program at Brockport State. Clark Whited wrote that"Kinesiology, or the study of human movement, has long been an integral part of professional physical education curriculums, but it has never attempted to commandeer the field."[75]

A second motivation for a new title was the increasing emphasis on the scientific underpinnings of the field. Since the 1960s scholars have been conducting research leading to a higher-level understanding of the performing human body. Researchers wanted a name that reflected that more scholarly level of work.

A third motivation came primarily from faculty at the research-focused universities. They were concerned that the traditional title of physical education hurt their scholarly reputation among their fellow faculty in other fields. Some might consider this concern an example of social snobbery, but it was not an unjustified concern. Since the 1990s American research universities have in many cases dropped departments that train teachers, including physical education, as

not sufficiently scholarly (in their opinion) for a research university. Beyond lip service, teaching is not respected in the research universities.

The search for a better name for the field is almost as old as the discipline movement. By the early 1970s, scholars were arguing for the adoption of a single academic focus and name for the field. Even after 40 years there is limited agreement, as seen by the large variation in current names used for departments across the nation.

By 1978, Franklin Henry was looking at the 14 years since his call for a discipline and finding that the picture was not as pretty as he had hoped. There was considerable discord, and an attempt to settle on a single descriptor for the focus of our field, published in *The Academy Papers* in 1973,[76] was unsuccessful. People could not agree. Indeed, a 1989 study by Stan Brassie and Jack Razor found something like 115 different titles for departments across the United States.[77] Even after 35 years, no term was dominant.

Also interesting is that just before the call by the research university for kinesiology as a name for the field, only one of 318 surveyed physical education programs reported that their department or unit was named "kinesiology," while 287 included "physical education" in their title.[78] Only 6 of the 52 units that were considering changing their title were considering kinesiology as their title.

Over the past decades, the subdisciplines were organized, devoted to the expansion of knowledge within their single subdisciplines. One of the problems created by the new groups was that many of the specialists turned their attentions away from the greater field and focused solely on their new subdiscipline groups. This caused the fracturing of the field. In 1985, Shirl Hoffman wrote of the danger that the specialization that was fragmenting the field could destroy our graduate programs.[79]

In the past, most people in the field were members of what today is AAHPERD. Many university faculty, especially those at research universities, were also members of the National College Physical Education Association for Men (NCPEAM) or the National Association for Physical Education of College Women (NAPECW), when men and women were loath to share roles across the sexual divide. At some point, reality (and perhaps Title IX) led them to unite in what became the National Association for Physical Education in Higher Education (NAPEHE), which later added kinesiology to its title, and then in 2012 dropped physical education. Some scholars were selected as members of the American Academy of Physical Education (whose name was also extended to include kinesiology).

In the early 1990s, several professors at research universities began to promote strongly the use of kinesiology as the name for the broad field, as well as the focus of its study. Numerous professional groups have added the term to their titles over the last 2 decades.

The picture is not as simple as that, however. Most university departments that took kinesiology as their title are in research universities. Few universities that put a greater focus on teaching than on research have converted to the new title. Several

reasons can explain why, despite its popularity in the research universities, the new title has not largely replaced the old ones.

First, rather than truly representing the whole field, kinesiology was originally the name for a single area of study within the field. Thus, renaming the whole field kinesiology is much like defining the complete range of interests of the field as limited to motion analysis.

Second, although a major stated objective of the name change was so the public would more clearly understand what the field is, in reality the general public has no idea what *kinesiology* means. Almost every new title proposed for the field over the last 40 years is more recognizable to the public than *kinesiology* is.

Third, an unexpected thing happened in the kinesiology movement of the last 20 years: Although it supposedly started as a more scholarly name for the broad field that spreads around physical education, at some point it changed into a completely different field: health science. Kinesiology departments and major programs today act almost exclusively as preprofessional programs for graduate programs in the health sciences, such as physical therapy. They have turned into another version of biology premedical and preprofessional programs.

Since the foundation of the discipline groups, many members, mostly those in the science-focused subdisciplines, have moved to ally with the ACSM. Others stay largely within the confines of their subdiscipline group. The result is a field whose potentially contributing researchers are often involved in little or no collaboration for or contribution to the greater field of which they are ostensibly a part.

Rather than contribute to the scholarly development of the whole field, instead the new areas focused on self-aggrandizement of their subdiscipline and, in doing so, largely abandoned any interest in a unified greater field. We are human, and one of the human weaknesses is a tendency to view our personal interests as more important, more significant, simply because they are *our* interests. Instead of contributing to a greater field, each group tended to split away, mingling only with its own members.

In essence, the research university kinesiology programs left the field and became something only distantly related to their original field and its various subdisciplines. At colleges and universities that do not define themselves as research universities, kinesiology is most often found as one of several major programs within a larger, broader department with a title such as physical education or exercise and sport science. Meanwhile, the research university kinesiology programs are drifting toward absorption in larger units defined as health sciences.

The American Kinesiology Association was formed to promote kinesiology as a field. It worked with professors who are members of the National Academy of Kinesiology to gain recognition of kinesiology as a research field in the taxonomy of the National Research Council. After years of effort, in 2006 kinesiology was added as a "life science." In their presentation to the council, the group defined the field as

> *Kinesiology . . . examine[s] exercise and human movement at the cell level, in cultural practices, and everywhere in between. We use the tools of*

biochemistry, physiology, engineering, anthropology, sociology, and other mainline disciplines to better understand human physical activity.[80]

This recognition makes it easier for university programs to get research grants.

The original Franklin Henry premise was cross-disciplinary research that would expand our knowledge of our field (with resulting improvement of academic programs and prestige of its professors). Instead, as medical research increasingly adapts that model, our field moves away from it.

One of the pitfalls of the effort by research university faculty to name our field kinesiology, and turn it into a health science, is that we often lose sight of what we are really studying and of what our students will do with it once they leave us. One of those problems is losing sight of the holism of the human. Don Hellison called for an integration of study, a return to an understanding that the body is not simply a sum of its parts.[81] Scott Kretchmar has spoken of our subdisciplines as silos, warning of the dangers of what he called "silo-limited, in depth graduate training."[82]

Jeff Ives and Duane Knudson have written of the need for greater disciplinary balance in exercise science, pointing out weaknesses of student preparation because of an overfocus on exercise physiology.[83] As they put it, "*The drift away from a balance and integration of academic preparation in exercise science represents a threat to the acceptance of exercise science graduates as exercise professionals*."

Along that line, Benoît Bardy in writing of the European perspective on kinesiology notes that the term is used almost exclusively in North America, that is, the United States and Canada.[84] The most common international terms are still "physical education" and "sport sciences" or "exercise science."

Names Reflect Program Focuses

Today there is no consensus on a name for our field, despite contrary statements by some professional groups. The following data are from fall 2009, collected from the websites of the universities themselves.[85] **Table 1.1** shows the complexity of naming patterns in the field. Almost two-thirds of departments in colleges and universities in the United States use more than one title in their naming, clearly demonstrating that there is no single name accepted by professionals as representing the whole field. This reflects Gilmour Reeve's statement, "*When will we acknowledge that an individual department does not (or can not) represent the entire discipline of kinesiology, rather than thinking whatever we do in our department is all that kinesiology is*."[86]

Table 1.1 Title Patterns of University Departments

Single Title	267	34.2%
Multiple Titles	490	62.7%
Not given	24	3.1%

Note: n = 781

Table 1.2 University Department Names

Name	Departments	
Physical Education	265	33.9%
Exercise and/or Sport Science	222	28.4%
Kinesiology	181	23.2%
Human Performance	95	12.2%

Table 1.2 shows the most common department names used in colleges and universities in the United States, in order of use. Because teaching and coaching are still popular goals, *Physical Education* is still the most widely used departmental title. Next most common are variations of *Exercise and/or Sport Science or Studies*. Third, at just under one-fourth of the titles, is *Kinesiology*, followed by *Human Performance*. Some departments use numerous other terms, but most of those titles are used by fewer than a dozen schools.

Table 1.3 shows the primary focuses of major programs offered in colleges and universities in the United States by the single word in major titles. One-third of the focuses are on education, with just under one-fourth each on exercise and science. Sport and kinesiology each have 7% of the major titles.

Table 1.4 shows the most common major programs offered in colleges and universities in the United States. One-half of the major programs are degrees in physical education, with another one-third in exercise and sport science. Kinesiology represents 10.7% of the major programs across the nation, followed by human performance with 4.3%.

Table 1.3 Terms in Major Program Titles Within University Departments

Education	582	34.1%
Exercise	406	23.8%
Science	378	22.1%
Sport	119	7.0%
Kinesiology	119	7.0%
Fitness	82	4.8%
Movement	21	1.2%

Table 1.4 Major Programs Within University Departments

Physical Education	582	52.4%
Exercise and/or Sport Science	362	32.6%
Kinesiology	119	10.7%
Human Performance	48	4.3%

Physical education, exercise science, sport, human performance, and kinesiology form a house of many rooms, and although communications between those working and studying within each of the rooms may sometimes be difficult, it is still one house, and its inhabitants have but one goal—that of our field, as I have broadly defined it.

Summary

Our field is a term used to represent a broad range of interests. We use physical activity, primarily in the play and sport settings, to produce holistic improvements in a person's physical, mental, and emotional qualities. We deal with the relationship between human movement and other areas of education—the relationship of the body's physical development to its mind and soul as they are being developed. No other single field is concerned with the total development of the human. Many names are used to describe our field. Our field today has its sometimes unclear focus as a result of changes that began half a century ago in the core field of physical education.

The motivations for human movement include (1) survival skills, (2) conformity conduct, (3) fitness and health, and (4) sport and pleasurable movement. The past terms for our field have included gymnastics, hygiene and health, exercise and fitness, physical education, and sport. The traditional allied areas are health education, recreation, and dance. Over time the focus of our field has moved from health to education to fitness to sport to lifetime wellness. The overall concern is with holism, the unity of mind and body, rather than dualism, the belief that the mind is superior to the body. Our field uses physical means to develop each person's whole being, mind, body, and spirit into "a sound mind in a sound body."

Over the past century or so, the field has gradually shifted its academic focus from education to science to medicine. Programs centered in education focused on developing a profession. In 1964, Franklin Henry called for the development of an academic discipline of physical education. A discipline is an area of knowledge and theory that can exist purely for itself with no need to show that it has a practical application. The discipline movement sought to improve scholarship by shifting the curriculum from education to science. In 1989, the American Academy of Physical Education recommended that the new discipline be called kinesiology.

When Franklin Henry called for a discipline of physical education, he envisioned it as a field with a broad concern, drawing from the expertise and methods of a range of outside disciplines, a field in the broader category of "arts and sciences," the study of all aspects of skilled human movement. Instead, as different subject areas became organized as subdisciplines, they divided into separate independent narrow interests, rather than joining a single broad one.

Defining the theoretical base of the discipline is still an issue. Early suggestions were (1) human movement, (2) fitness, (3) sport, and (4) a multitheoretical

base. Sport was the first focus of the emerging discipline, but today the focus is more on physical activity or skilled human movement. Because *human movement* is a very broad term, it may be more accurate to say that our discipline studies skilled motor performance.

While some scholars have challenged the increasingly science-only focus of kinesiology, there has been a backlash against it in the field also. Many people believe a completely science-focused field is too narrow in its view and methods to do justice to the broad range of valuable interests and concerns of our field. A critical question is how best to prepare students for the field. Many smaller schools (the producers of the majority of our graduates) have difficulty finding qualified doctoral faculty because the graduate schools are training one-subject teachers, when the colleges need people who can teach in more than one area, plus work effectively and knowledgeably with people who are trained in the other subdisciplines. We need greater disciplinary balance.

The focus problem is reflected in the wide variety of department names in the field. We have no consensus on a defining name. Program names reflect their focuses, generally education, the disciplines, or medicine. Education primarily means teaching and coaching, which are the common focuses of physical education departments. The disciplines and applied programs usually use a variation of exercise and sport science or human performance as their names. Kinesiology as taught in the research universities is an adjunct of medicine or the health sciences.

A real question is whether today's kinesiology title unifies the field or represents a change of focus to the health sciences. Almost two-thirds of American university departments use more than one title in their names, clearly demonstrating that there is no single name accepted as representing our whole field. The most commonly used department names, in order of use, are (1) physical education, (2) variations of exercise and/or sport science or studies, (3) kinesiology, and (4) human performance. The research university kinesiology programs are drifting toward absorption into larger health sciences units.

Physical education, exercise science, sport, human performance, and kinesiology form a house of many rooms, and although communications between those working and studying within each of the rooms may sometimes be difficult, it is still one house, and its inhabitants have but one goal—that of our field, as we have broadly defined it.

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Discussion Questions

1. **a.** Jesse Feiring Williams defined physical education as "the sum of man's physical activities selected as to kind, and conducted as to outcomes." Explain his definition, and give examples of how it would be interpreted in practice.

   b. How would you define physical education?

2. How has the philosophy of dualism affected the development of physical education through history?

3. How does a holistic field of physical education, exercise and sport science, and kinesiology contrast with the dualistic philosophy? What implications do those differences have for physical education programs?

4. Briefly define physical education, play, and sport. How does each compare to the others, and what is their interrelationship?

5. Briefly define *profession* and *discipline*, and explain how they are alike and how they are different. How can they come together within a field?

6. Discuss the criteria needed for a discipline. Show how physical education either does or does not meet the criteria, and why it would or would not be considered a discipline, as you interpret the criteria.

7. The question of the value of a discipline in physical education still arouses controversy. What are the good points of having a discipline? What do critics consider the not-so-good aspects of the discipline?

8. Compare and contrast the characteristics of a discipline (Flexner) with those of a field (Lieberman).
9. Discuss some of the models used to define play and sport, such as that of Guttmann. How does the paidia–ludus continuum fit into the models?
10. Compare and contrast the terms *sport* and *athletics*.
11. Using the various models suggested for defining play and sport, where would the following activities that are sometimes considered sports actually fit in?
    - **a.** Billiards
    - **b.** Sports car racing
    - **c.** Horse racing
    - **d.** New Games
12. The Holmes Group report called for a stronger academic core in the education of teachers. Why did it make that recommendation? If the recommendations are implemented seriously, what effects might they have on the field in the future?
13. What do you consider the most appropriate name for our field, and why?

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