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Understanding the professional identity of the
pre-service HPE teacher: conflicts and
complexities

Background



Overview

**The development of HPE
in New Zealand &
Australia**

**Research Background -
Why this work? Why
now?**

**Becoming a HPE teacher
What do we know
Where are the gaps**

Research Question

**Study Design – narrative
stories**

Contexts for meaning making

- **School Experiences**
- **Teacher Education**
- **School Practicums**



The development of HPE in New Zealand & Australia



“ A peculiarly New Zealand/Australian initiative “

(Tinning, 2000 p. 9)

Integration of the two sub disciplines is a relatively recent phenomena

Linked to range of factors – changing government priorities, neoliberal practices and prevailing discourses

(MacDonald & Penney, 2009; Smith & Philpot, 2011)

The New Zealand Story: Curriculum Shifts



1985: Health Education syllabus

1987: Physical Education syllabus

1993: New Zealand Curriculum Framework - new learning area 'Health & Physical Well-being'

1999: Health & Physical Education Curriculum

2007: New Zealand Curriculum – HPE, one of 8 learning areas

The Australian Story: Curriculum Shifts



1989: Hobart Declaration – HPE included as a key area of learning

1994: National Health & Physical Education Statement

2012: Australian Curriculum HPE Shape Paper

2014: Australian Curriculum: Health & Physical Education



Research Background - Why research HPE professional teacher identity?

Our universities role is to prepare pre-service HPE teachers to teach across both sub disciplines

Curriculum spaces in New Zealand & Australia are changing

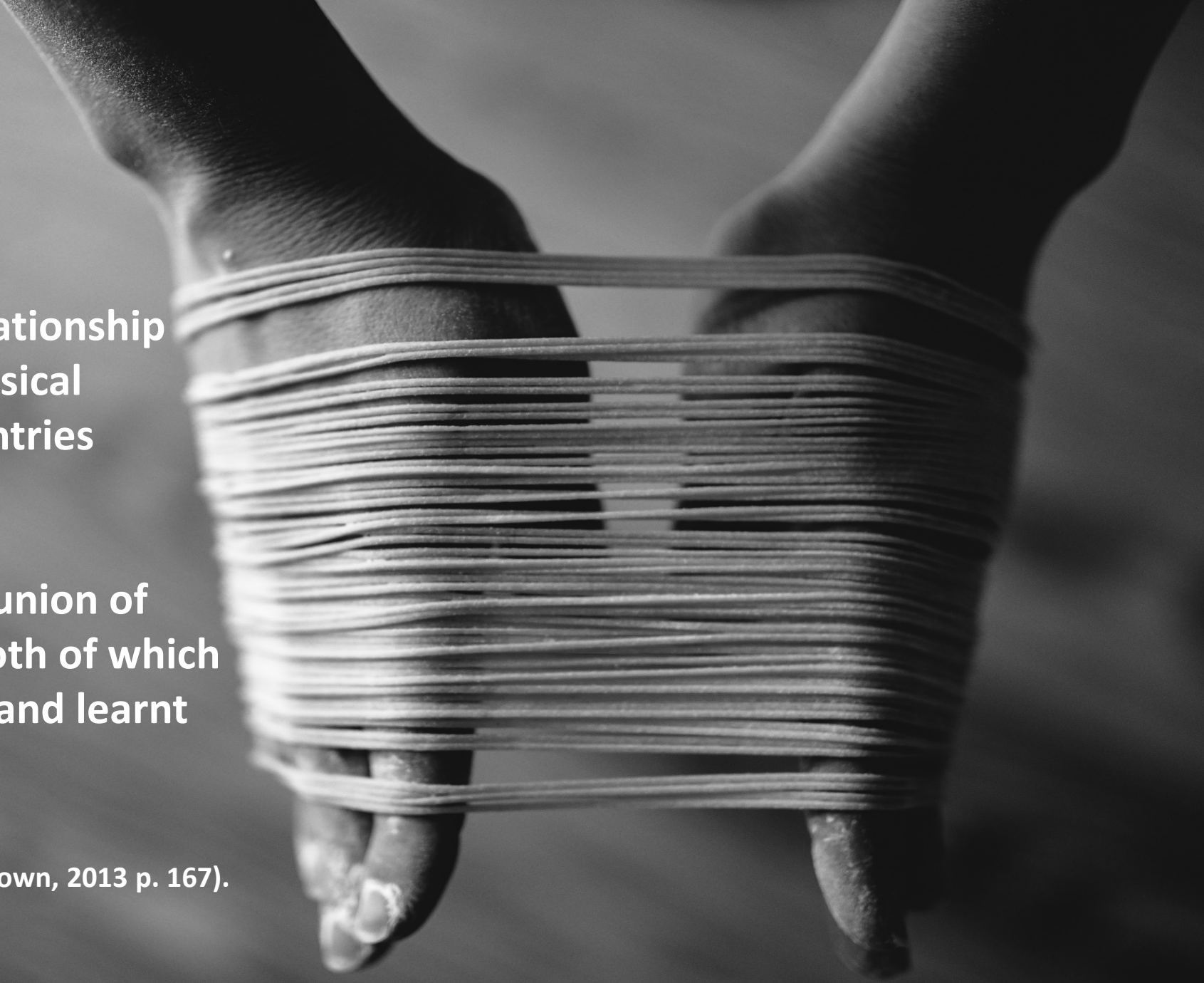
How are we preparing these pre-service HPE teachers to embrace and teach across both sub disciplines

Tensions

Historically uneasy relationship
between Health & Physical
Education in both countries

‘relatively superficial union of
two learning areas...both of which
continue to be taught and learnt
in dichotomous ways’

(Alfrey & Brown, 2013 p. 167).





Challenges?

Culture & cycles of reproduction

Certain bodies of knowledge are privileged

The type of person attracted to become a teacher of HPE

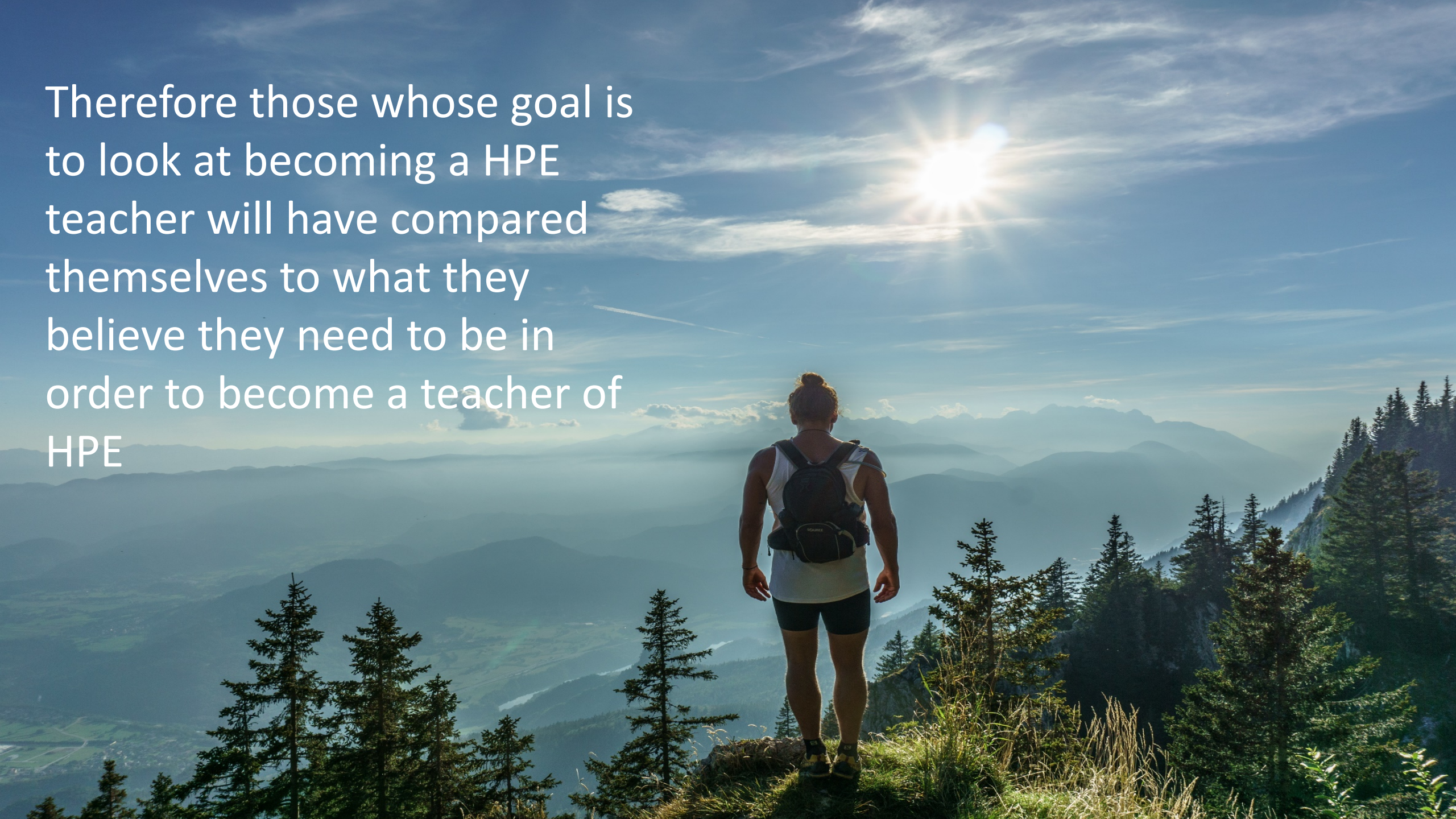
Impact of socialisation on the future HPE teacher

Socialisation takes place through an 'apprenticeship of observation'.

From this observation they bring with them a 'subjective warrant to teach' which encompasses set beliefs about teaching and knowledge construction in relation to their subject area which are hard to shift.

Lortie 1975

Therefore those whose goal is to look at becoming a HPE teacher will have compared themselves to what they believe they need to be in order to become a teacher of HPE



The 'subjective warrant to teach' can be a very powerful force


'Consists of each person's perceptions of the requirements for teacher education and for actual teaching in schools'

Lawson (1983a, p6)

HPE teachers are often invested in the physical sense of self

PE teachers are found to have very similar biographies and histories with respect to the central place that physical activity, sport and the body occupies in their constructions of their professional identities

(Templin & Schempp, 1989; Macdonald & Tinning, 1995)

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a red magnifying glass. The magnifying glass is held over a snowy landscape with bare trees. The lens of the magnifying glass shows a magnified view of the scene, which includes a snow-covered ground and the branches of a tree. The background is a blurred view of the same snowy landscape.

**What do we know
about pre-service HPE
teacher identity?**



Digging Deeper: HPE teacher identity research:

Beginning PE teachers identity work in rural and provincial contexts (Macdonald & Kirk, 1996)

PE teacher identity; coaching role conflict
(O'Connor & Macdonald, 2002)

HPE teachers identity making in subject depts.
(Sirna, Tinning & Rossi (2008)

Pre-service PE teachers identity & pedagogical practice (Wrench & Garrett, 2011)

Contextual Factors

- Personal Experiences
- School Experiences
- Teacher Education
- School Practicums
- In the workforce

Becoming a HPE teacher: what does the research tell us?



However...



**Where
are the
gaps?**

**Within
NZ &
Australia**

Study Design

Interviews across
different time points

Narrative Inquiry - the
living and telling of
experiences

“Stories to live by”
(Clandinin & Connelly, 1999 p. 4)

Research Question:

How do pre-service HPE
teachers come to
understand and make
meaning of their
professional identities



School Experiences: Physical Education



School Experiences: Physical Education

Mia

[...] it was positive because I was an athlete...I could do everything...I loved being active...because I was very able at it, but looking back I could see for others it wasn't a positive experience at all

Riley

[...] it was very positive...I would always be chomping at the bit so we were like we don't want to be in here we don't want to be in the classroom.

Finn

[...] P.E was very positive...we're going away from it now but you know you do this sport for a week and then this sport and I was very... competitive and I loved it.

School Experiences: Place of Sport

A high-angle photograph of a school sports field. The field is green with white markings for soccer. A red running track surrounds the field. Several students are playing soccer on the field. There are three soccer goals visible. The background shows trees and a fence.

School Experiences: Place of Sport

Scott

[...] Yeah so I was like if you were *involved in sport, any sport, all the teachers that would coach the teams...they'd kind of have a respect for you...*

Mia

[...] got a lot of sporting achievements at school ...I guess that was an enjoyable *part...the sporty kids were the ones that were admired the most within the school... I guess I've always had that embedded in me P.E equals sport or P.E equals games*

Lucy

[...] *didn't really enjoy sport that much...I've always felt that sport is too competitive and there's too much pressure applied to people. It was just always the competitiveness. It was win or lose*

School Experiences: Health Education



School Experiences: Health Education

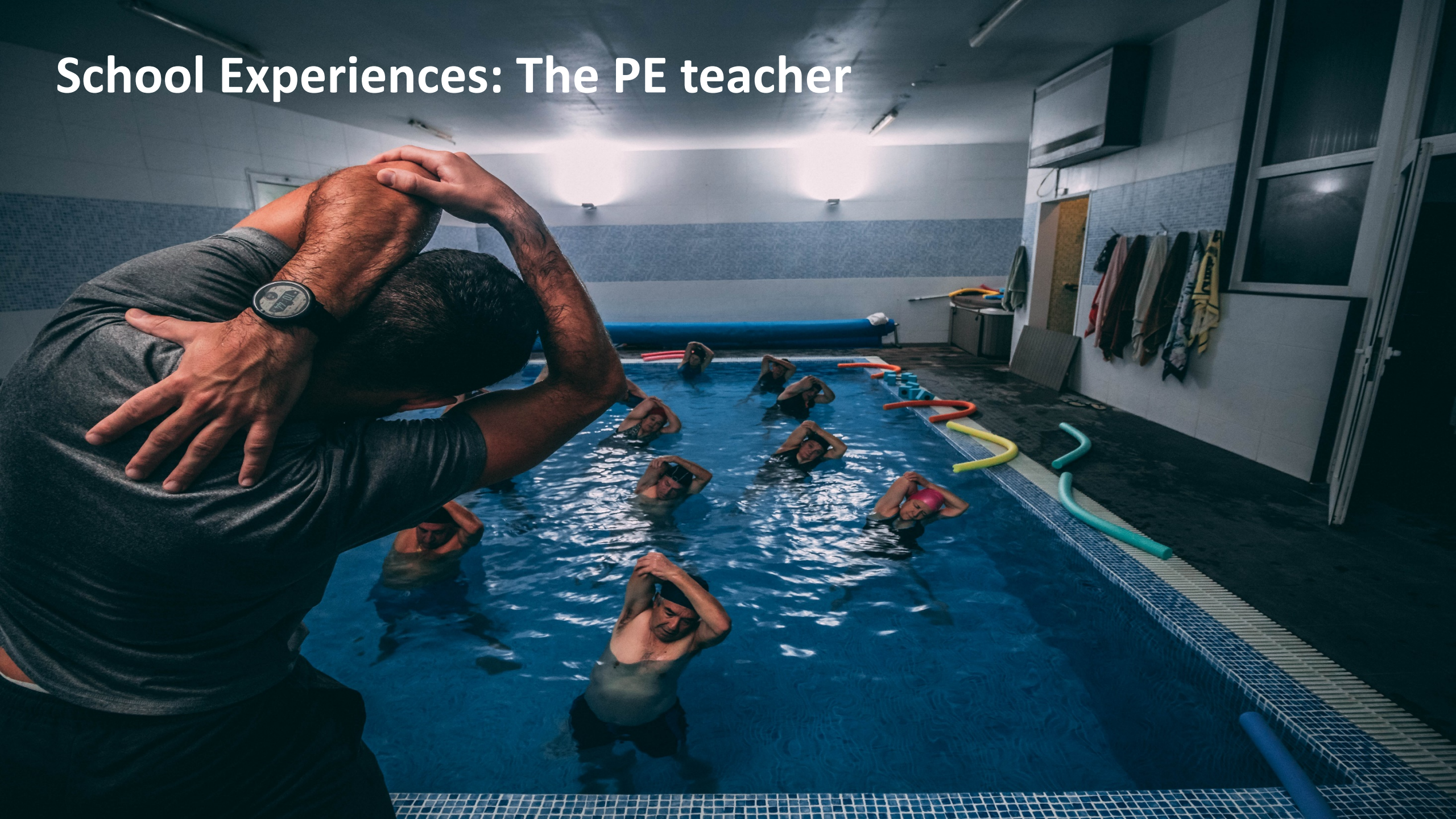
Mia

*[...] From what I remember the health education we had was very limited and **very black and white**...this is **the body and this is how it works** and I don't remember any sexuality education or mental health things like that...there were **no strategies**, there was **no bigger picture***

Keegan

*[...] **I can never remember a time** when, looking back I was sitting in a health class but maybe, maybe we did...**I literally can't remember it**...I just never experienced it myself... it **never occurred to me that it would be a subject in its own right***

School Experiences: The PE teacher



School Experiences: The Physical Education Teacher

Keegan

*[...] He was just a really **down to earth** guy that really did **get along with the kids really well**...just having some **sort of aura**...really easy to get on with, he was just like another peer.*

Alice

*[...] It was the year eleven and twelve that cemented it...**I need to go into P.E teaching, I need to be like her. Whenever it's like, draw your perfect teacher I always draw Tanya.***

Teacher Education: Theory meets Practice!



Teacher Education: Theory meets Practice

Finn

*[...] I do feel like there's such an **academic, philosophical and idealistic view** that we get told about and taught about **at Uni** but its **not in line with the reality of school***

Riley

*[...] Yeah I, you get so much **more out of your placements than** you do sitting in front of **a university lecture...** from a teaching point of view you just learn by just doing it like **being in front of a classroom***

Owen

*[...] They are **filling us with ideas**, go into your department's next year and be the **agents of change**, which is a **great catch phrase** they love to throw around and **the HOD** is just going to be like, **that's great but that's not how we do things.***

Teacher Education: New Lenses



Teacher Education: New Lenses

Mia

*[...] I've been armed with **the tools to critique other teachers** and say, hey I see why they do that um but **that's not aligned with me** and so I may teach like that just while I'm on this practice because that what I kind of have to do **but this is what I really think.***

Owen

*[...] you start getting an understanding of **what can be taught in health** and then you start **seeing glaring holes** in not just **other schools, health curriculums** but like **what I received as a student.***

Teacher Education: Conflict & Power



Teacher Education: Conflict & Power

Elle

*[...] I feel like **some of them can tend to shut you down** a little bit... yeah just tend to trump your idea a little bit and **put you down**. Kind of like, **no that's not going to be any good**. Like, oh, okay, I'm not even going be able to give it a go and try it?*

Finn

*[...] I feel like the **University** has also given me a **lot of negative things** as well... its made the job a lot scarier I just **feel a lot of confusion** going into placements...thinking this looks really great but **we're told not to do this** so... I sort of have that with the **Uni that we're up there** but they don't really see **what its really like for us down here***

School Practicum: Problematizing Practices



School Practicum: Problematizing Practices

Elle

*[...] the teacher **hasn't planned a health class** and, oh look guys **we'll just go and do P.E...** it's just them **prioritising P.E over and health** and just making it that **health isn't as important** and I mean, the young ones, their minds are so easily moulded I guess and I mean **if the teacher puts health behind P.E so will they.***

Alice

*[...] they run a beep test twice a term ... **one of the teachers prints out their results and puts it on the wall** and puts like **an expected level with their name**, I felt I wouldn't do that... I was just like **WHAT, why would you do that? Why would you do that to a kid?***

School Practicum: Relations of Power



School Practicum: Relations of Power

Owen

*[...] you have to, to an extent **no matter what shaped peg you are, you do have to fit through a certain hole.** But, so it's kind of what you're tossing up is, **do I push my own agenda here or do I just kind of go along to get along, within the school?***

Jade

*[...] I worry that I won't be taken as **like professionally as the teachers that have been there for a while or they might chuck away some of my ideas because I'm just a first-year teacher***



School Practicum: The supervising teacher

School Practicum: The supervising teacher

Dane

[...] I think with that, the teacher I was with last year was a great guy but I didn't agree with his teaching style but I felt like I had to emulate that when I taught which I look at it now and I probably shouldn't have.

Nico

[...] I was coming in and using some new knowledge and everything and he said, oh, that was really effective, I'd like to use that to. Which was a big compliment on my behalf,

A spiral-bound notebook with a silver pen resting on it. The notebook is open to a blank, lined page. The pen is a sleek, silver-colored ballpoint pen, lying diagonally across the page. The notebook's spiral binding is visible on the left side. The background is a dark, textured surface.

CONCLUSION



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