

Why physical educators need to explore movement

Dean Barker is Associate Professor in the School of Health Sciences at Örebro University, Sweden. He has worked as a physical education (PE) teacher educator in four countries over the last 20 years. In this time, he has investigated a broad range of questions related to movement capability, inclusion, and health in PE. The common thread running through his research and teaching is a focus on learning. He is currently investigating the types of practical knowledge that become legitimate within physical education teacher education (PETE) and how these types of knowledge reflect the disciplinary boundaries of PE.

In this keynote, I will develop the thesis that exploring ways of moving and knowing how to move are two sides to the same coin. From this proposition, I will contend that movement exploration must occupy a more explicit, and more central, position within PE at all levels. To develop this thesis, I will draw on 10 years of research that illustrates how movement exploration can be conceptualized and enacted. I will consider questions that have been asked of movement exploration and offer some considered responses to physical educators' concerns. I will suggest that PETE provides preservice teachers with relatively few opportunities to explore movement, and that this omission limits the teaching profession's capacity to help pupils become physically educated. I will reflect on why movement exploration holds a peripheral position within PE and PETE and conclude with a couple of general proposals on how this situation might be remedied.

