Kropp och makt
i rörelse

av

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This dissertation is concerned with **body and politics**, or, more specifically body, power and governance. The central question is how specific individuals and bodies are constituted in the teaching of Physical Education (PE) in school. Inspired by Foucault’s work and the research field that emanates from the concept of governmentality, one of the ambitions is to **develop a method** that facilitates the study of power and governance processes in teachers’ and students’ interactive actions and dealings. With the aid of this approach, 15 video-recorded physical education lessons in 5 Swedish nine-year compulsory schools are analysed in order to demonstrate how governance processes are included in the work and activities in terms of how the processes of governance–self-governance are staged, and the direction this takes. In using the term direction I am here referring to the content the governance is aiming towards, where the question of which subjects and bodies are constituted is of substantial interest. This means that the study not only focuses on what is done, but also on the way in which it is done, i.e. it analyses *both process and content*.

The results show that physical exertion and the desire for physical work is a thread that runs through the analysed material. It is mainly scientific knowledge about the body that is referred to in actual teaching practice. This is displayed through the use of a scientifically inspired language when talking about the body, where effects on muscles and degrees of oxygen intake are considered in connection with the physical activities. In connection with physical exertion, pupils are encouraged to do their best, try the activities on offer, cooperate with others and face challenges.

In line with the governmentality perspective’s problematisation of the process governance–self-governance, the study highlights a governance mentality that is not characterised by coercion, but is rather directed towards different *components of willingness* where the students are expected to be participatory, take responsibility and govern their own actions in the direction of that which is most desirable and reasonable. The willingness component appears as the actual hub of character-building, where the students ought to be physically active, should want to do their best, be willing to try, should want to show solidarity and should want to defeat the others.

The process of governance–self-governance is staged as different ways of appealing to one’s willingness in the activities studied. Specific governance techniques are used to support and promote self-governance work, i.e. different forms of encouragement strengthen the correct action, emphasising physical exertion as pleasurable, and focuses on the fact that we are all involved in a common project.

In the dissertation it is shown how the body is included in a socio-political context. Through the body the individual is turned into a participant of physical projects concerned with becoming a certain kind of social citizen. The body thus symbolises the complex encounter between the individual and society. In this way the study demonstrates and highlights tendencies that are evident in modern society. It is thus a narrative that indicates how we all become part of a discourse system.

**Key words**: Foucault, Power, Governmentality, Physical Education, Body, Governing processes, Actions, Video-recordings.