The Importance of Textbooks in Kinesiology

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Physical education programs in the United States emerged in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Over time, physical education became the field of kinesiology with an established disciplinary base with multiple associated professions. Historical context is provided for five different eras. Textbooks, including those authored by National Academy of Kinesiology fellows, played an important role in the evolution of the field, providing direction, context, and content for both the subdisciplines and the professions. Arguments are offered for the value of textbooks as an important form of scholarship (the scholarship of integration), for the value of textbooks in providing visibility and real-world impact for the field of kinesiology, and for the value of associated textbook ancillary materials as teaching resources for faculty in institutions of higher learning.

Keywords: book authors, physical education, scholarship

In this paper, we offer a historical perspective on the role of textbooks in physical education and kinesiology¹ in the United States. The historical context of textbooks in kinesiology provides a base for the discussion of topics related to the value of textbooks in the field. Social trends and trends within K–12 and higher education are discussed. Examples of texts in the field, including texts by Academy Fellows, are presented. In addition, we attempt to answer several questions. Over the past century, who wrote textbooks? What was their influence? Is textbook writing scholarship?

Historical Context of Textbooks in Kinesiology

The profession of physical education was established in the United States in the mid to late 1800s (Lucas, 1989). As the profession, and later the discipline of kinesiology evolved, textbooks were important, not only for the students, but for the college faculty that taught them. In this section, we provide a brief history of the major movements within the field as well as the role of textbooks during each of five different eras.

Late 19th Century to 1930: The New Profession Era

Toward the end of the 19th century and into the early part of the 20th century (late 1800s to 1930), physical education emerged primarily as a teaching profession (Lucas, 1989; Park, 2007). Changes in child labor laws during the early and mid–19th century limited working hours and opened the door for youth to attend school. Physical education requirements and community recreation programs expanded after the turn of the century, which resulted in a demand for more teachers and recreation leaders. Physical education in higher education began in Europe in the early 1800s. In the United States, the Institute of Physical Education in Boston graduated its first normal school class of physical education teachers in 1861 (Newman & Miller, 1990). By 1929, there were 139 physical education teacher education (PETE) programs in 37 states. Columbia’s Teachers College offered the first doctoral program in physical education in 1924 and by 1930, a total of 28 schools were offering graduate programs in physical education (Newman & Miller, 1990).

The American Physical Education Review was first published in 1896 offering an opportunity to share ideas during the period of rapid professional expansion. Later, it combined with Pentathlon to become the Journal of Health and Physical Education (Thurmond, 1976). In 1930, the Research Quarterly (RQ) was established as an outlet for research in physical education (Thurmond, 1976). During the period, the expansion of PETE programs and the need for physical educators in schools and recreation programs created a demand for educational materials including textbooks.

In this article, we use textbook production of fellows of the American Academy of Physical Education (AAKE); later the American Academy of Kinesiology and Physical Education (AAKPE); now the National Academy of Kinesiology (NAK) to illustrate the nature and content of textbooks over five different eras. Certainly, many Academy Fellows were early leaders in research (Cardinal, 2022), but many more were active in producing texts for the new American physical education programs. A search of the Library of Congress Catalog indicates that 27 of the first 29 fellows of American Academy of Physical Education authored one or more textbooks (93%). Certainly, text authorship was not exclusive to Academy Fellows; however, the production of texts by fellows reflects the importance of books of the times. Among the many texts authored by early Academy Fellows were groundbreaking volumes by Hetherington (1925), The Normal Course in Play and McKenzie (1918), Reclaiming the Maimed. Science-based texts including McCurdy’s (1924), Exercise Physiology and Bowen’s (1909), The Mechanics of Bodily Exercise were also published during the era. Also of significance were The New Physical Education by Wood and Cassidy (1927) and William’s (1927) Principles of Physical Education, which advanced the cause of “the new physical education.” William’s text remained in publication well into the 20th century. Texts such as those by Williams, Wood, and Cassidy were both philosophical and programmatic. Texts in the area of tests and measurements, games and activities, dance,
curriculum (manuals), and hygiene were among the topics for texts of the era, including many volumes by Academy Fellows.

As Wiggins notes, the famous “Battle of the Systems” involved “very impassioned debates as to the most educationally sound gymnastics system to promote in the schools” (Wiggins, 2021, p. 376). As physical education shifted from European formal gymnastics systems (e.g., German, Swedish) that emphasized “education of the physical” to the new physical education that espoused “education through the physical” the goals of physical education shifted. As the shift was occurring, physical education evolved as a profession. We argue that textbooks played a major role. Texts created by the leaders of the time provided direction and content for those teaching in the new PETE programs and shaped the training of physical education teachers and recreation leaders for years to come.

1931–1960: The Era of Expanding Horizons

By 1931, the profession of physical education was well established. The great depression that began with the stock market crash of 1929 resulted in decreased funding for education and resulted in reductions in physical education programs in schools and community recreation programs (Thurmond, 1976). By the mid 1940s, the post-World War II emphasis on physical fitness brought attention back to physical education and programs regained support. The post-war “baby boom” boosted the number of children of school age by the 1950s.

For men, but not for women, college and professional sports boomed during the period fueled by radio and television that made them more accessible to the general public. High school sports also thrived and physical education faculty in men’s departments often had athletic coaching requirements (Thurmond, 1976). A National Education survey in 1941 indicated that most physical education programs for men were coaching oriented (Thurmond, 1976). Specifically, faculties often included sports coaches who prioritized coaching over teaching.

The GI Bill created opportunities primarily for men interested in college degrees in physical education. Newman and Miller (1990) noted an increase in male physical education graduates from 495 in 1945 to 7,548 in 1950. Women’s programs were typically offered in separate departments and emphasized teaching physical education rather than athletic coaching. However, intramural recreation programs became part of the responsibilities of departments during the era for both men and women. In addition to athletics and intramurals, classes in health education, first aid, safety education, and recreation theory and practice became part of teacher education requirements (Newman & Miller, 1990). Classes in dance, particularly in women’s programs, and driver education, and athletic training in men’s programs were frequently required.

Indicators of the expansion of the profession beyond physical education included the name change in 1937 from the American Physical Education Association to the American Association for Health and Physical Education (AAHPER). “Recreation” was added to the organization’s name in 1938 (Newman & Miller, 1990). During this period, many college departments changed their names from physical education to health and physical education (HPER) and sometimes health, physical education, and dance (HPERD) to reflect the inclusion of health, recreation, and dance offerings. Teaching and service were highly valued, but faculty were increasingly expected to conduct research and publish the results in professional and research journals.

The RQ provided an outlet for faculty research and, as Park noted in her review of the 75 years history of the RQ, the “RQ brought about more research and exacted a positive effect on graduate education (Park, 2005, p. S-4).” The leading contributors to the RQ during this period were Cureton, McCloy, Karpovich, Henry, Affleck, Cozens, Scott, Espenschade, and Hodgson. All were Academy Fellows. The leading topics for articles were physiology and matters pertaining to curriculum (Hertz, 1955).

Other than the RQ, research publication options were limited. The Physical Educator, primarily a journal containing professional articles began publication in 1940. Researchers including college faculty and graduate students presented their findings at the research section of AAHPER.

At the same time, physical education programs in schools and colleges were dramatically expanded. Simply put, more people than ever before were in school, and many were taking physical education classes. More teachers were required. The number of texts increased to accommodate the programs, not only in physical education, but in related areas such as health education, recreation, coaching, dance, driver education, safety education, and first aid, adapted physical education, and athletic training. Through the 1940s and 1950s, many publishers increased the production of textbooks to meet the demands of increased enrollments and new areas of study (Schramm, 1955).

Texts of the period primarily provided resources for PETE students in the now well-established physical education programs (e.g., foundations curriculum, methods, supervision and administration, philosophy and principles, and games and activities). However, the number of texts on topics related to the physical education sciences also increased during the period. Academy Fellows authored texts on tests and measurements (Bovard et al., 1949; Cozens, 1936; McClory & Young, 1954), kinesiology and mechanical analysis (Glassow, 1950; Scott, 1942), exercise physiology (Morehouse & Miller, 1959; Schneider & Karpovich, 1948), research methods (Scott, 1959), and motor development (Espenschade & Eckert, 1967).

Consistent with the expansion beyond PETE programs, textbook authorship expanded in related areas including works by Academy Fellows. Selected from many were: health education (Derryberry, 1948; Hein & Farnsworth, 1959; Hoyman, 1947; Sharman, 1948; Staley, 1931; Turner et al., 1951), recreation (Mitchell, 1936; Nash, 1953; Smith, 1957), adapted physical education (Rathbone, 1934), coaching (Stagg, 1927), athletic training (Bullock, 1925), dance (H’Doubler, 1940; O’Donnell & Dietrich, 1937), and safety education (Hoyman, 1958). From 1931 to 1960, 75% of the fellows (89 of 119) inductored in the Academy authored textbooks.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, textbooks provided college faculty with resources for teaching in the newly defined professions. Created by the leaders of the time, texts provided content for those teaching in the new PETE programs and shaped the training of physical education teachers as well as professionals in the areas of recreation, health education, dance, coaching, athletic training, and intramurals. We argue, as we did for the previous era, that textbooks played a major role as new areas of study were developed. During the time period that followed (after 1960), many of these areas of study broke away from physical education. Physical education was an effective incubator for these new areas of study.

1961–1980: The Era of Subdisciplinary Expansion

The period from 1961 to 1980 was one of dramatic change. A variety of social and educational factors influenced both the
The science movement led to a new disciplinary focus for physical education/kinesiology (KIN) sparked by the Big 10 Body of Knowledge meetings (Daniels, 1965; Fraleigh, 1966; Zeigler & McCristal, 1967) and Franklin Henry’s (1964) call for a disciplinary foundation for the field. It is worthy of note that history and philosophy (Wiggins, 2021) were included with the sciences (e.g., exercise physiology, biomechanics, motor learning, sport psychology, and sociology) in early body of knowledge reports. However, they did not endure as areas of core study in kinesiology in most undergraduate programs (Wiggins, 2021).

Production of physical education/KIN doctorates increased dramatically during the period, with a spike from 1960 to 1970 (Thurgood et al., 2006). In physical education and kinesiology, the trend was similar. Prior to the 1960s, few physical education and kinesiology departments had faculty with doctoral degrees. National statistics indicate that between 1960 and 1964, 546 doctoral degrees were awarded in physical education/KIN. The number doubled in the period 1965–1969 (1,039), and more than tripled in the period 1970–1974 (1,854; Thurgood et al., 2006). Doctoral degrees decreased in the next two 5-year time blocks to 1,670 and 1,084, respectively (Thurgood et al., 2006). Most early doctoral degrees in physical education/KIN through the 1960s were generalist programs, often not focusing on a subdisciplinary area of concentration. It was not until the 1970s and 1980s that significant numbers of doctorates were awarded in subdisciplinary specialties and research areas. Those well-trained in a subdiscipline took on roles focused on research in research intensive universities. New subdisciplinary organizations were established beginning with the American College of Sports Medicine in 1954. Other subdisciplinary organizations were also established during this period, including, but not limited to, the North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity in 1965 and the American Society of Biomechanics in 1977.

Students, including GI’s returning from military service, began to challenge university general education requirements including required physical education classes (Corbin & Cardinal, 2008). This movement, as well as the disciplinary movement, prompted the development of hybrid classroom/activity courses offered as part of physical requirements at the college level. Conceptual Physical Education (CPE) programs, as they were initially labeled, were first implemented in the 1960s. Unique to these classes were classroom sessions and the use of a textbook to aid students in learning important concepts and principles of physical activity and healthy lifestyles. Big 10 universities that had initiated the “body of knowledge” movement were front and center of the movement offering "fitness and wellness" classes for nonmajors, early CPE classes required a textbook and focused on physical fitness and physical activity promotion. The first of these texts appeared in the 1950s (Wessel, 1957). The number of CPE texts doubled from the 1950s to the 1960s. Early texts included those by Adams et al. (1963), Corbin et al. (1968), Johnson et al. (1966), and Van Huss (1960). Many of the authors of these books were Academy Fellows.

During the 1950s a total of 19 CPE texts (academic fitness texts) were published. That number doubled during the 1960s and doubled again during the 1970s. During the next 3 decades, publication of CPE/academic fitness texts continued to increase dramatically (218 in the 1980s, 327 in the 1990s, and 261 from 2000 to 2008; Corbin & Cardinal, 2008). Just as textbooks became available to provide majors with body of knowledge content, CPE classes (now typically referred to as Fitness and Wellness [FW] classes) brought the body of knowledge to nonmajor students. The market for these texts was far greater than for “majors’ classes” because many colleges and universities required all students to complete a FW class (Corbin & Cardinal, 2008). A unique feature of the CPE/FW textbooks is the true integration of subdisciplinary content. CPE/FW texts surveyed content in multiple subdisciplines as they provided information about adopting lifelong healthy lifestyles designed to promote fitness, health, and wellness.

Another development of the later 20th century was the addition of extensive ancillary materials provided with textbooks. Instructor guides with lecture and laboratory outlines/lesson plans, blackline masters and color transparencies for use on overhead projectors, sample quizzes, and tests, as well as other resources accompanied textbooks. These materials, available to text users, were especially helpful for those who were asked to teach in content areas for which they had little training, including, but not limited to, subdisciplinary classes and CPE/FW classes.


During the last 2 decades of the 20th century, changes in higher education that began in the previous era continued including the focus on science and disciplinary studies in kinesiology. At the 1989 meeting of the Academy, the name kinesiology was adopted for the body of knowledge and for undergraduate baccalaureate
degrees (Corbin, 1989). PETE programs became less common in research universities and, in some cases, were relocated in academic units other (e.g., education) than kinesiology.

During the period, the number of K–12 students taking required physical education leveled off. CPE/FW programs in colleges and universities became more common (Corbin et al., 2020), but more traditional college requirements became less common. As programs shifted away from PETE and focused more on subdisciplinary studies, the demand for faculty members in physical education decreased and the need for subdisciplinary faculty increased. This occurred in spite of the fact that sport pedagogy (the science of teaching) is an important area of subdisciplinary study in kinesiology.

Within the discipline of kinesiology, research and grantsmanship became more important for advancement in higher education settings. The infusion of subdisciplinary classes and majors was uneven across universities. Research intensive universities made the shift readily. However, nondoctoral degree granting institutions were slower to implement subdisciplinary-based programs. Many still had coaches as faculty members who were less prepared and less willing to implement disciplinary-based classes. By the end of the time period, however, “mission creep” began to affect previously nonresearch universities and efforts to hire disciplinary faculty and implement disciplinary programs became more prevalent. The primacy of research publication and grantsmanship became well established (Wiggins, 2021), not only in previously research intensive universities, but in traditionally undergraduate institutions as well.

As noted earlier, the production of academic FW texts, many for use in CPE/FW classes, increased dramatically from the 1970s to the end of the century. This reflects the fact that CPE/FW classes were almost universal as required classes or electives for non–kinesiology majors in colleges and universities (Corbin & Cardinal, 2008). In 1979, the first secondary school CPE/FW text was published (Corbin & Lindsey, 1979), and it continues in publication today (Corbin et al., 2022). CPE/FW programs in secondary schools have been effective in helping prevent the loss of physical education requirements in many school districts (Corbin et al., 2020).

Textbook production for use in kinesiology’s subdisciplines continued to increase during the 1980s as more and more schools began to adopt a core of kinesiology classes for majors. However, toward the end of the century, textbook production in kinesiology began to decrease (see Table 1). Of the 155 Academy Fellows inducted from 1981 to 2000, 123 were textbook authors (74%).

2001 to Present:
The Modern Era of Kinesiology

The trend toward kinesiology and away from physical education initiated in the previous era continued. Physical education was deleted from the names of national organizations and kinesiology became central (e.g., AAKPE became NAK; NAPEHE became NAKHE. By the turn of the century, kinesiology was becoming an established discipline as indicated by its recognition by the National Research Council (Spirduso & Reeve, 2011). As was true in previous decades, institutions of higher education changed and expectations for faculty changed. Many undergraduate and nondocoral institutions adopted research models similar to traditional research institutions. The entrepreneurial or business model of higher education became more common with a premium on “return on investment” especially among state universities as state legislatures provided less funding. As tenure track professors focused on research and grantsmanship, teaching increasingly became the domain of graduate students and clinical faculty.

The modern discipline of kinesiology inspired more advanced content for both undergraduate classes. The content of subdisciplinary texts became more advanced. In addition, texts for the newer professions associated with kinesiology (e.g., fitness management, cardiac rehabilitation, sports management) became more common. The market for CPE/FW texts remained strong as they were used in “service” classes for nonmajor students through high school and for use in secondary schools. Ninety-eight of the 174 NAK fellows (56%) inducted from 2001 to 2020 were textbook authors. This percentage is considerably less than the 93%, 75%, 75%, and 74% figures for previous time periods. The lower percentages in more recent eras may be related to the increased emphasis on research and grantsmanship.

The production of texts in the subdisciplines leveled off by the turn of the century. It is beyond the scope of this article to explain all of the possible reasons for the decrease in text production in kinesiology and text authorship by Academy Fellows. However, some brief comments seem warranted. At the turn of the century, there was a reduction in the number of publishers as large companies acquired smaller ones. This resulted in the publication of fewer books in our field. It is also possible, and some would say likely, that the decreases in new text titles and authorship of text by Academy Fellows was associated with the “audit culture” that rewards quantitative indices of faculty production (Sparks, 2013) and the emphasis on grantsmanship in academia (Wiggins, 2021). Other than these brief comments, we will leave this issue for further debate by others.

A significant trend during this era was the development of new delivery and learning management systems (LMS) that made it possible to offer online classes with higher than normal class sizes that contributed to the higher education money-making enterprise. The internet (world wide web) and LMS opened up opportunities for the delivery of online classes using digital texts and other course materials. Text authors were called upon to provide support

### Table 1 Textbooks by Decade in Selected Areas (Based on Arizona State Library search)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Exercise physiology</th>
<th>Functional anatomy</th>
<th>anatomical kinesiology</th>
<th>Biomechanics</th>
<th>Sport psychology</th>
<th>Sport sociology</th>
<th>Motor learning and development</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961–1970</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971–1980</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981–1990</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991–2000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001–2010</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2020</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
materials for use in online classes and face-to-face instruction using institutional LMS or platforms developed by publishers. Materials included, but were not limited to, digital worksheets and assignments (e.g., logs, journals), videos, text-related questions for group discussion, quizzes, tests, and test banks. In addition, materials to aid instructors included lesson plans, digital slides, instructional videos and animations, and LMS that facilitate record keeping (e.g., delivery of assignments and course materials, tools for assessing and grading, and student record keeping).

Early online classes were new to many teachers who relied on textbooks and accompanying LMS and ancillary materials as they began their online instruction. These technological advances integrated digital texts with LMS materials into comprehensive course materials. As instructors were provided with professional development classes, they were able to create additional materials to supplement those provided by publishers. Texts and ancillary materials remain a principal source of content for online classes (Petrone, 2020). This was especially true when the COVID pandemic emerged with full force in 2020 and 2021. As more and more classes went online, teachers relied heavily on texts and associated instructional materials. Online classes now account for a significant number of students in institutions of higher learning and are a significant source of income. They often have higher enrollments than traditional face-to-face classes.

Also worthy of note, is the fact that the world wide web made it easier to produce self-published digital books, including open-access books, and course materials such as those produced by Taylor & Francis Group (2021). Pirated and copyright violating also became more common.

The Value of Textbooks in Kinesiology

In this section of the paper, we discuss the value of textbooks in kinesiology, not only as a form of scholarship but as an agent of change.

Textbooks as Agents of Change

As noted in the previous sections, the field of kinesiology has changed considerably over the past century. Textbooks and the scholars who authored them, in our view, have been agents of change that moved us from where we were in the early 1900s to the recognized field of kinesiology that we are today.

During the era 1931–1960, a new group of leaders joined the early pioneers to continue to move physical education forward. During the subdisciplinary era (1961–1980), textbooks and ancillary materials played a major role in the teaching of new “body of knowledge” classes and general education classes (CPE/FW). Toward the end of the 20th century (1981–2000), the subdisciplinary and CPE/FW movements were refined. Text and text ancillary materials continued to aid instructors who found themselves teaching classes outside of their specialties.

In the 2 decades after the turn of the century (2001+), kinesiology emerged as the name of the field (Weiss, 2010) that encompasses many subdisciplines and many professions incubated by early physical educators. This 2-decade era, while characterized by advanced research and grantsmanship in kinesiology, also is an era characterized by online instruction in kinesiology (courses and degrees) and CPE/FW classes. Textbooks and associated ancillary materials have played a major role in the online movement of the era.

Textbooks as Scholarship

We argue that textbooks in kinesiology are a valid form of scholarship—they count. Faculty, regardless of institution, have no doubt experienced the debate concerning “what counts” when considering criteria for raises, tenure, and promotion. Boyer (1990) suggests that “work of the academy has changed throughout the years—moving from teaching to service, and then research, reflecting shifting priorities both within the academy and beyond” (p. ix).

“According to the dominant view, to be a scholar is to be a researcher and publication is the primary yardstick by which scholarly productivity is measured” (Boyer, 1990, p. 2). Research is an important criterion when evaluating faculty production. Researchers in the various subdisciplines of kinesiology provide us with the pieces of the puzzle, while those in the professions put the pieces of the puzzle together. Boyer (1990) argues, That the most important obligation now confronting the nation’s colleges and universities is to break out of the tired old teaching versus research debate and define, in more creative ways, what it means to be a scholar. It’s time to recognize the full range of faculty talent and the great diversity of functions higher education must perform. (p. 2)

Boyer (1990) proposed four general types of scholarship discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Scholars in kinesiology have echoed Boyer’s call for recognition of the many forms of scholarship other than discovery (Corbin, 2012; Gill, 2007; Metzler, 1994; McNeill, 1996). While texts have implications for the scholarship of application and teaching, we suggest that kinesiology textbooks are a prime example of the scholarship of integration. Boyer (1990) indicates those engaged in discovery ask, “What is to be known, what is yet to be found?” (p. 19). Those engaged in integration ask, “What do the findings mean?” (p. 19).

In proposing the scholarship of integration, we underscore the need for scholars who give meaning to isolated facts, putting them in perspective. By integration, we mean making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists, too. In calling for a scholarship of integration, we do not suggest returning to the “gentleman scholar” of an earlier time, nor do we have in mind the dilettante. Rather, what we mean is serious, disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research. (Boyer, 1989, p. 18)

Boyer (1990) further elaborates,

Writing for non-specialists—often called “popular writing”—also should be recognized as a legitimate scholarly endeavor. In the past, such work has frequently been dismissed as “mere journalism,” but this misses, we believe, a larger point. To make complex ideas understandable to a large audience can be a difficult, demanding task, one that requires not only a deep and thorough knowledge of one’s field, but keen literary skills, as well. Such effort, when successful, surely should be recognized and rewarded. (p. 35)

Texts provide valuable information to professionals and the public, which Gill (2021) refers to as “real impact.” Gill (2021) indicates that to have real impact,
We need to move out of the lab and connect with the profession and real people—actively—as in contributing to public health initiatives or working with professionals and community partners. Few scholars have moved their research agendas into real-world applications, and still fewer have truly engaged with the community. (p. 14)

van der Mars concurs, indicating that “kinesiology must come to grips with the reality that one’s work cannot be limited to only conducting and publishing research” (van der Mars, 2021, p. 581).

We argue that well-written and well-researched textbooks that deliver kinesiology’s practical messages are good examples of the scholarship of integration that can have real impact. CPE/FW textbooks reach thousands of students and evidence suggests that general education courses using the texts provide information for “real-world applications” and are effective in promoting knowledge, positive attitudes, and postcourse physical activity patterns (Corbin & Cardinal, 2008). Kinesiology textbooks used in professional preparation programs have a real-world trickledown effect. Faculty use texts to prepare professionals. Professionals, in turn, impact their students, clients, and patients, often using textbooks as reference sources.

The NAK began evaluating doctoral programs in 2002 (Spirduso & Reeve, 2011). Subsequent NAK evaluations have been completed every 5 years. The criteria (faculty indices/productivity) used for the most recent doctoral review included book chapters (5%), but not books (Challis, 2021). The criteria for the future doctoral program evaluations are now under review. In the latest draft, book chapters are assigned a weighting of 5% and books a weighting 7% (Knudson, 2021b, p. 16). This change, if effected, would give added recognition of the value of books as scholarship.

Visibility is also one of the categories used as an index of faculty productivity (Knudson, 2021a). While book authorship is not included as one of the criteria for assessment, we argue that textbook authorship is a very important factor in faculty visibility. The following is but one example offered in support of this notion. In 1989, Edwards polled 138 HPED department heads asking them to identify the 10 most notable people in the field. Two categories were used: all-time notables and contemporary notables (Edwards, 1989). All of the All-Time notables were Academy Fellows and text authors. All but one of the Contemporary Notables were Academy Fellows and all were text authors. In addition, NAK fellows, among the most recognized scholars in our field, have gained visibility because of their textbooks, as well as other forms of scholarship.

Given the currency of publication statistics, citations of textbooks are worthy of mention. Examples of citations using the Google Scholar tool (http://scholar.google.com) for selected kinesiology texts are shown in Table 2. The information in Table 2 confirms the use of kinesiology texts in subsequent scholarship. In addition, the information in Table 2 indicates variations in citation rates for textbooks in kinesiology. This is consistent with evidence (Knudson, 2014) that journals in some areas of kinesiology (e.g., exercise physiology, multidisciplinary) are more often cited than journals in other areas (e.g., professions, humanities, social sciences). Citations are also related to the length of time a publication has been in circulation (Welk et al., 2014). All of the cited texts have been in publication for at least 18 years, no doubt, accounting for their high citation rate.

### Countering Antitext Arguments

In addressing the values of kinesiology textbooks, we have chosen to take a positive approach. However, we would be remiss if we did not at least comment concerning anti-text arguments often expressed in academia. Alred and Thelen (1993) identified many of the most common including: “mass market” commodities fail outside a scholar’s proper work, texts merely expand on the body of knowledge rather than contributing through research, text authoring takes time away from “real scholarship,” texts are a “commercial venture” rather than scholarship for which authors are commercially rewarded, and texts are not truly peer reviewed.

We believe that the contents of this article rebut many of these criticisms. Regarding monetary rewards, Alred and Thelen (1993) write,

### Table 2  Google Citations for Selected Undergraduate Textbooks in Kinesiology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text topic</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>1st edition</th>
<th>Citationsa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motor learning and control</td>
<td>Schmidt et al. (2018)</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>9,691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Magill and Anderson (2020)</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise physiology</td>
<td>Mc Ardle et al. (2015)</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>7,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kenney et al. (2021)b</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>5,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport psychology</td>
<td>Weinberg and Gould (2019)</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>5,880</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gill et al. (2017)</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>867</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sociology of sport</td>
<td>Sage et al. (2018)c</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>1,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coakley (2020)</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>6,650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biomechanics</td>
<td>Bartlett (2014)</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knudson (2021)</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport pedagogy</td>
<td>Siedentop et al. (2020)</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pangrazi and Beighle (2019)</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>738</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research methods and tests and measurements</td>
<td>Thomas et al. (2015)</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>5,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morrow et al. (2015)</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General education (Fitness and Wellness)</td>
<td>Corbin et al. (2019)</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1,457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aReflect total citations for multiple editions as of December 21, 2021. bFormerly Wilmore et al. cFormerly Eitzen and Sage.*
Whatever an author’s motivation, the notion that textbooks are somehow disreputable because they may earn profits for authors is simply bogus. It denies that academics receive royalties from traditional scholarly books, stipends for invited lectures and professional reviews, salary increases from job offers by competing institutions, and so on. In essence, it denies that “scholarly work” translates into financial value for both the individual and the institution. More importantly, as a matter of principle, the profit a scholar may or may not earn from a textbook or any other product of his or her labor should never be a test of its propriety or scholarly worth—the only consideration must be the nature and quality of the work itself. (p. 467)

It goes without saying that all kinesiology textbooks are not created equal, just as all research articles are not created equal. Not all texts, nor all research articles, contribute to scholarship. However, like peer-reviewed research articles textbooks can be judged. Review is part of the process. Scholarly journals typically use several (often three or four) reviewers for peer review. Texts, on the other hand, do not have the same review process. This does not mean that they have not been subjected to review. Many, if not most, of the texts from major publishers have been copy edited and reviewed by professional editors as well as three or four reviewers—typically people who teach courses related to the book content and other experts in the textbook content. In addition, books are reviewed by faculty who make choices for their courses. In some cases, texts are reviewed in scholarly journals. It is worthy of mention that many of the reviewers of texts are also reviewers for research journals. We argue that many current, well-developed textbooks in kinesiology that have been subjected to review (see above) are a valid form of integrative scholarship in the field of kinesiology.

Academic Books

The focus of this paper is on textbooks. However, a few comments about “academic books” are, we think, appropriate. Textbooks are typically created for use in transmitting knowledge on a specific topic for a specific group of learners. As we have noted, they can be considered to be “academic,” in nature. An academic book, as opposed to a textbook, is a long-form research publication. Articles in research journals are considered short-form publications.

Within kinesiology, philosophy and history research is often published in long-form academic books. Like textbooks, research for academic books takes time because of their length. We argue that both types of books can be examples of high-quality scholarship. As noted earlier, the study of history and philosophy were included as core topics in the early iterations of the body of knowledge for our field. However, they have not received the same emphasis as the sciences. We feel that it is important to acknowledge the importance of history and philosophy in kinesiology. Academic books in these areas should be considered as long-form scholarship.

Summary

Over the past 100 plus years, the field of kinesiology has emerged from the physical education programs of the late 1800s and early 1900s in the United States. Textbooks have proved valuable in providing direction, context, and content for the inevitable changes that occurred through time. Included are texts on subdisciplinary topics for use in subdisciplinary studies and in core courses for the professions, texts in professional areas that have expanded well beyond physical education, and general education textbooks (FW) that extend kinesiology offerings to nonmajor students. Consistent with the notion that the field of kinesiology has common goals and different roles, each type of text has its own audience and contributes in its own unique way. We contend that textbooks are worthy of consideration as legitimate forms of scholarship (the scholarship of integration). In addition, they provide visibility and real-world impact for the field of kinesiology. Over time, textbooks, and associated ancillary materials, have made it possible for faculty in institutions of higher learning to adapt and move the field forward.

Notes

1. The term “kinesiology” is used as an overarching term that includes the body of knowledge (the subdisciplines) as well as related professions (e.g., physical education, fitness management, sports administration, physical therapy). The term “physical education” is used for the time periods prior to the acceptance of “kinesiology” as the accepted name for the field. The field of kinesiology includes both the discipline/subdisciplines and related professions (Corbin, 1993). “Physical education/KIN” is used as the designation for information related to early and later eras.

References


Thurmond, R.C. (1976). The history of sport and physical education as a field of study in higher education [Doctoral Dissertation]. Oklahoma State University.


Textbook References

Text references located via the Library of Congress Catalog, accessed prior to December 29, 2021.


