I FELT: SELF, MOVEMENT, PARTNER, GROUP: A STUDY OF INTERSUBJECTIVE CONNECTION IN COMMUNITY-ENGAGED DANCE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation research examines students' lived experiences of dance improvisation in a 2014 Hampshire College course titled "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community" taught by the author. Research methodology is informed by the hermeneutic phenomenology of educational philosopher Max van Manen, dance education research grounded in phenomenological methods by Karen Bond and Susan W. Stinson, among others, and researchers and writers of classroom action research.

Sources of qualitative data include students' reflective writings about their experiences of three selected dance improvisations—Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid—in both college and community settings. Additional sources contextualizing students' experiential meanings include course entry questionnaires, videotaped college and community dance sessions, written pedagogical and phenomenological reflections of both the researcher and a teaching assistant, and class discussions. Our Massachusetts community partners were the Treehouse Foundation, Easthampton and the Robert Fitzgerald Kennedy Children's Action Corps, South Hadley.

Student lived experience writings were coded over several cycles to identify categories of meaning in each of the three improvisations at both college and community sites, and these were analyzed for themes across four modes of student participation: self, partner, group and movement (an aesthetic mode). Findings revealed bodily-affective-social-aesthetic meaning making that foregrounds relationality, or *connection,* through embodied experiences. Students' descriptions of connection can be understood as qualitatively distinct kinds of felt intersubjectivity: two-person, merged, and other-first.

Findings are placed in conversation with literature from dance, community-based education, philosophy, and critical pedagogy.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated first and foremost to my loving parents, of blessed memory, Carolyn Rubin Falk and Maurice Falk, who gave me the foundations to want to learn, grow, seek and create. I also dedicate this work to one of my first dance teachers, Janet Mariani, also of blessed memory, who with one question in a single dance class opened all the doors in my body to the power and excitement of dance for a lifetime. Finally, this study is in honor of those that step across borders into communities in order to acknowledge difference, find what connects us and work towards justice.

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It takes a community to write about community. Above all, the students in the fall 2014 “Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community” Hampshire college class were a group of people most teachers only hope to have in their classes—eager, intelligent, open, inquisitive, dedicated, and truly “embodied” in the work we did together. They taught me and continue to teach me as I reflect on their words and movements. In general, the Hampshire community, from administration to colleagues to students, has been a hospitable and welcoming home for this research to occur. I thank Deborah Goffe and Daphne Lowell for their ongoing support during this process. I also thank Paul Dennis and the Dance Department at the University of Massachusetts for technical support and library privileges.

I am grateful to Temple University and Esther Boyer College of Music and Dance for their partial financial support, and for the Dance Department’s belief in me over the years as family obligations took me away from campus. I am thankful for a Committee of such highly accomplished artist-scholars commenting on this dissertation—whose writings, teachings and/or guidance have created a container for deep learning. I discovered that the primary advisor is that—primary, and I am beyond thankful for Dr. Karen Bond, whose intellectual acumen, focused eye, and love of phenomenological research challenged me to bracket, bracket, and bracket again as I learned to stay “present” with the data and oriented to my research focus. Her encouraging as well as challenging words in Sunday morning Skype sessions or in third or fourth drafts of chapters inspired me to persevere. I couldn’t have written this dissertation without her.

I am grateful for the communities I have had the privilege and honor of dancing with in this study and in my life, and for the ever-deepening inquiry dancing in community brings to me. Each interaction with each community brings a series of new challenges and new connections that enrich my life and sustain my own commitment to the process and products of community engagement. I thank specifically the Treehouse Foundation for jumping in and making our puzzle of interdependence, and to the RFK Children's Action Corps for ongoing trust and support for our work together and for the care given to each young person who enters your small but powerful home in South Hadley.

I ask my students to investigate their relationships to their own communities, for in order to bridge to others we must know where we are based. I am fortunate to have engaging and supportive friends from many walks of life, and most of all to have a deeply loving family. Teresa Benzwie offered her home, her wisdom, her love and quickly became my Philadelphia family in my first year of doctoral studies. The process of starting my doctoral work mirrored the beginning of my nuclear family—in the first year of classes I met (well, re-met) and married Gary, birthed our marvelous and miraculous son Matan (at the age of 46), and acquired two wonderful step-children, Dhar and Rosa. My family life evolved with my doctoral work and professional responsibilities, and Gary has throughout it all helped me to see both the forest and the trees, listening to my ideas and also seeing the bigger picture. Unfortunately, my parents, both of whom were first-generation college graduates, who also went on to further their own education and who would have loved to witness the end of this process, passed away during the last years of this writing. It is to them that I owe my passion for knowledge,

love of learning, creative inquiry, and the grit to undergo this project in the first place. It is to them that I first dedicate this study, the process, and its completion.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this doctoral study is to examine higher education students' meaning making in a community-engaged dance education setting. The inquiry focuses specifically on student participation and pedagogical practices in my own introductory course "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community" (herein called "Dance in the Community") at Hampshire College in western Massachusetts in fall 2014. Student experiences and teacher practices are captured through reflective writing and video in our Hampshire campus studio setting and at two different sites with two community partners. Students wrote about their experiences of three replicable dance improvisations in both a college and community session. These writings are the focus of extended phenomenological analysis, supplemented by first day student questionnaires, videotaped sessions, teacher and TA writings, and class discussions, which provide multi-modal context for the student reflections.

Qualitative data analysis is based on the hermeneutic phenomenological approach of educational philosopher Max van Manen (1990a) and the dance education research grounded in phenomenological methods of Karen Bond and Susan W. Stinson (Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001; 2007/2016). The study relies also on aspects of participatory action research (Kemmis, 1993; Norton, 2009; Reason & Bradbury, 2008*)* engaging students' perspectives to inform and enhance course pedagogy. Research findings are situated within the scholarship and practice of community dance and its offshoots in the U. S. and U. K., and literature on student meaning-making in dance education, as well as in relevant literature on embodied learning, phenomenology and critical pedagogy.

This chapter introduces the research focus followed by an introduction of terms and definitions relevant to this study, an exploration of my own journey to this topic and its relevance to the fields of dance and community-based education, and then describes the details of the course, "Dance in the Community," and its community partners.

Research Focus

I embarked on this research project to investigate what students experience and what meanings they may make when engaging in the dance practices of a college class that focuses on interaction with local non-college communities; this is my primary research interest. My desire in this research is to examine student meanings in a course emphasizing dance as a collaboration with local communities rather than students learning dance as a training for artistic performance or as a creative art. In particular, what meaning do students make, if any, of the kinds of movement practices I offer in classes highlighting engagement with communities through dancing. What understandings do they gain through their moving bodies, both in college studio sessions and when interacting with partners across college borders? I place student meanings identified through rigorous analysis in conversation with the general philosophies and aims of community-based learning in the arts and dance in higher education. Analysis of student meanings in "Dance in the Community" also furthers the goal of becoming a more knowledgeable dance educator who specializes in community/campus relationships.

It is important to note that this study does not look directly at experiences and meanings of members in the various communities we worked with. Both communities hold vulnerable populations and would require a level of ethical safeguarding that was not feasible for this study. This study focuses only on college student and teacher

experiences within “Dance in the Community.” More in-depth explanation of the origin and pedagogical approach developed for this course can be found in the chapter 3 section titled “Pedagogical Methodology.”

Terms and Definitions

This section introduces the terms I use in the dissertation and how they are situated within general definitions of terms in literature of community-based arts inside and outside of higher education. Terms can vary for the interactions that occur between academic institutions and their local communities in any field or discipline, academic institutions and local communities in artistic fields (dance, theatre, music, art), and artists and communities without an academic partner. While the abundance of terms and nomenclature can be confusing across these three related types of interaction, it can also point to a fertility of ideas, positions, influences, and philosophies that represent numerous art/campus/community collaborations and relationships. This section provides a brief overview of terms and definitions used in this study, while chapter 2 provides a wider historical framework for nomenclature and definitions. First, I make a distinction between three types of collaborative interactions that intersect with this study: academic/community, art in the academy/community, and art/community.

Academic/Community

Academic/community interactions are ones in which an institution of higher education and a (usually) local community form a partnership to address a concern, often of the community itself, but sometimes a mutual concern (Butin & Seider, 2012; Overby, 2016). The partnership focuses on reciprocity so that both parties benefit. Within this type of collaborative interaction, some are curricular, occurring through a rigorous

disciplinary lens, whereas some are extra-curricular, such as community-service or internship projects for students. Both support young people in higher education to learn about communities, civic life, and community leadership (Hollander, Lapping, Rice & Cruz, 2017). The history of academic/community interaction is discussed in chapter 2. Overall, this category includes many terms that foreground scholarship: *academic service-learning, public scholarship, scholarship of engagement, community-engaged scholarship, community-engagement, community-based learning, community-based pedagogy, socially-engaged learning, civically-engaged pedagogy*, and *service-learning pedagogy* (Boyer, 1990; Goldbard, 2008; Haft, 2012; Hollander et al., 2017; Overby, 2016).

For the purposes of this study, I use the generic term community-based learning, or CBL, in deference to my own local academic community. CBL is used in the Five College Consortium, the umbrella organization of the five colleges where I am teaching, which includes Hampshire College, Smith College, Mount Holyoke, Amherst College and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. In each of these institutions different names are used for CBL, while the Five College organization that ties all of the campus community-engaged offices together is called CBL. CBL is considered an umbrella term as it incorporates academic/community interactions that go beyond individual academic service-learning courses, for instance extracurricular exchanges that still connect students to supervised learning (https://www.fivecolleges.edu/cbl). I use the term CBL to include the plethora of courses and programs in higher education that focus on academic/community interaction in any discipline or disciplines. Courses and programs within CBL range as to purpose and shift with logistics, but the most common focus of

CBL in higher education, as mentioned above, is to engage students in opportunities and challenges in a community setting through a disciplinary lens (Overby, 2016).

Academic Arts/Community

Situated within CBL are academic/community collaborative exchanges based in artistic disciplines. My class and this study reside in this sphere. Again, nomenclature varies, as does the nature of the exchange. *Service learning in the arts, community-based arts*, and *applied theatre* are examples of names used for these exchanges (Cohen-Cruz, 2010; Malandra, 2007). Jan Cohen-Cruz (2010), a U. S. community-based theater scholar, practitioner, and professor who engages theater students in community interactions, uses the term *engaged* to foreground relationships that support many voices and create an exchange between artist and community, "such that the one is changed by the other" (p. 3).

Cohen-Cruz seems to use the term *community-engaged theater* for both collaborative interactions between academia and communities as well as between professional artists and communities with no academic or higher education component. I prefer to distinguish between these types of interactions, as the academy and the professional are different entities with different assets. For instance, the academy can offer university resources to a local community, whereas local professional artists, not held to an academic calendar, might have more flexible time to offer a local community. Malandra (2007) uses the term *community-based arts* when discussing a collaboration between higher education, a community arts program, and local youth, stating that "based" implies that both the art and the issue, or communal opportunity or challenge, are rooted in the community (p. 7).

Academic Dance/Community

In higher education dance, names also vary with the purpose, and sometimes overlap with names used by artists and communities without an academic partner. For instance, the terms *community dance, community-based dance*, and *dance outreach* appear widely on the internet across higher education and within dance companies that interact with various diverse communities through teaching or creating dance. Overby (2016) uses the term *public scholarship in dance,* which serves the goal of advocating for faculty promotion and tenure when engaged in community work and is aligned with Ernest Boyer's (1990, 1996) call for the scholarship of engagement.

"Dance in the Community." Throughout this dissertation research, I, like many before me, struggled with nomenclature. Although I started by associating "Dance in the Community" with *community-based learning in dance* (CBLD), in accordance with the local college community's nomenclature, while writing the dissertation I began to conceptualize the course as a site of community-*engaged* dance education (or, potentially, CEDE). I found this to be a dynamic, interactive way to conceptualize a course that highlights lived experience and mutuality, more so than measurable "learning" per se. In addition, this seemed apt for the 2014 course and doctoral research site of Hampshire College, where students do not receive grades.

The work we did in the 2014 course and doctoral research site fell into several of the above categories of service learning in the arts and dance, and yet stands on its own as a discrete interdisciplinary mélange of dance, civic-engagement, cultural development, dance education, and social justice. The course foregrounds the notion that academy arts/community practices have supportive curricula and specific educational goals, that

can be situated in the disciplinary lens of dance education. Moreover, while "community-based" speaks to place orientation, the integration of academic and non-academic communities that I aspire to is more about theory and practice of mutual engagement, happening in multiple places either physically and/or figuratively—thus, *community-engaged dance education.*

Artists/Communities

The third type of collaborative exchange that intersects with this study happens between professional artists and various communities without an academic component. Much of the literature on dance in community settings (to be detailed in chapter 2) is based in professional practice with artists writing about their experiences working in non-professional community settings. Some terms are *participatory arts, community arts, socially engaged arts, community-based arts, community animation, cultural development,* and *community cultural development* (Goldbard, 2006; Helguera, 2011). Introducing articles in a special community dance edition of *Dance Education and Practice*, Miriam Giguere (2017) defines *community dance* broadly as "any dance that is relevant to or emerges from the concerns of a specific group" (p. 3). Articles in the edition range from dance professionals working with people with Parkinson's to dance companies creating dance programs for families that had been separated due to court mandates. I use the term *community dance* when referring to dance classes, performances, and events that include self-identified non-professionals (in dance) as performers or participants and are based in communities without an academic component. Further definitions, such as community itself, community partner, and CEDE are found in the beginning of chapter 2.

Journey to this Topic

As a dance artist and educator I have worked with professional and non-professional dancers, mixed-ability dance companies, children and adults with special needs, residential treatment centers for first-time offenders, seniors in assisted living facilities, communities in conflict areas, religious and secular institutions, schools for the performing arts, hip-hop artists (Brazil), established and emerging dancers and dance companies in the U. S., South Africa, Nicaragua, Israel, Portugal, Italy, Austria, Germany, and the U. K. My choreographic work sometimes emerged from my teaching, as when I was asked to create dances for CandoCo Dance Company (1994, 1996), a mixed-ability company in the U. K. for dancers who are both able-bodied and physically challenged, after having taught one of its members. This led to choreographing for the Remix Company of South Africa, a mixed-ability company of dancers from the various South African racial and ethnic groups. I have long taught from the belief that anyone can dance if they so desire, and therefore looked at the training of a dancer in holistic ways, seeing choreography, improvisation, and technique wrapped together as ways of knowing, feeling, and being in the world as well as onstage.

From 1992 to 1998 I taught choreographic practices for community settings as an educator in the Laban Centre's Diploma in Community Dance, a post-graduate year long program (U. K.). The Laban Centre's Community Dance program's student body was mainly comprised of self-identified dancers, some of whom had performed professionally. More recently I have taught one semester of the introductory level "Dance in the Community" for Mount Holyoke College and five semesters for Hampshire College with students from various departments including dance, education, French

studies, math, political science, and sociology. Some students identify as dancers, others do not.

The U. K. Laban program was part of an applied post-graduate certificate that purported to train community-based dance practitioners for work in the field. The intention was for students to work as professional dance artists teaching, creating, and engaging in dance with various communities. My course concentrated on choreographic procedures that were "portable," or applicable to various diverse communities and varying experience levels in dance and performance (both students and their respective communities). Individually, students were placed with different communities, taught classes in dance and movement, and created short presentations at their community site, which I attended. In contrast, my Five Colleges courses (U. S.) center on movement practices, facilitated by college students, created to build connections with one to three different communities that we as a class travel off campus to visit; the emphasis in these classes is to foster exchange and reciprocal learning and teaching. Classes do not emphasize a final performance; however, communities are invited to come to the college campus to participate in a final workshop, view a film or photo montage of the whole semester, and enjoy refreshments.

Perceived differences between the two kinds of programs inspired me to inquire about the various ways in which community dance is defined, practiced, and taught in higher education and to wonder about curricular delivery, especially specific movement practices. During my doctoral coursework, I designed a course proposal for higher education that aimed to integrate community-based dance practices into a dance and politics course. I also wrote a research article based on a play in which two communities

in conflict found movement and dance (specifically contact improvisation) an important part of healing and bridging differences in the rehearsal process (Falk, 2013).

A Critical Turn

Then, in the fall 2013 course at Hampshire, I noticed that students' transference of classroom activities to the community setting was not meeting my hopes and expectations. Although I provided a range of movement experiences, as well as tools for engaging the movement preferences, cultural forms, and personal stories (in dance) of our partner communities, and together we discussed how to frame and sequence a class to build to a final event, the student-facilitated community classes jumped from movement game to movement game. The overall goals of the workshops (social and reciprocal learning with our community partners) seemed to be lost in the sea of activities, a common issue in education, according to McTighe and Wiggins (1998/2005).

I also noticed that over time the games became less physical and more verbal. I wasn't succeeding in giving students the experiences that would ground them in what has been variously termed *embodied knowing, embodied learning*, and more recently "dance enaction" (Warburton, 2011), or how *embodied pedagogy* can contribute to dance exchanges with various community partners. I do not propose that there is only one type of dance practice or one physically codified technique for embodying dance in community settings, but I do suggest that focusing on the body can offer students and community partners something that a more verbal class (for example, writing poetry without movement being involved in its making or presenting or playing word games without movement) might not. I became interested in what the body can offer in this environment. I also was and am interested in the distinction between dance making and

embodied creativity versus game playing. Themes of games and play, along with aesthetic meanings, appear in students' reflective writing in this course.

Looking at the work of both community dance practitioners and artist educators in higher education who choose to interact with communities through their courses aids my understanding of this work as a practitioner, educator, and emerging scholar. In some higher education dance programs, community dance means teaching specific forms to members of the local community at large, such as ballet or Ghanaian dance. In the Hampshire class I focus philosophically and pedagogically on dance as a bridge-building and creative interchange between community and campus, using specific forms at times as part of the interchange. For instance, with youth at RFK, one of the community partners I collaborate with, we have danced improvisations focused on bonding, co-created group dances based on personal stories, and learned movements from a range of cultural origins—for example, Bachata, a social dance from the Dominican Republic, and most recently, Flamenco. RFK youth have led or co-facilitated some of our time together; their needs and desires are foregrounded in the time we share.

Overall, I am interested in curricula that emphasize sustained interchange between non-academic and academic communities, some of which cross borders of race, class, gender, age and ability (Giroux, 1992/2005; Keith, 2015; Malandra, 2007). My bias, therefore, is in learning about and then grounding my teaching in the critical pedagogical principles and practices that stem from Paulo Freire (1970/1993) and dance/movement scholar/practitioners who focus on critical pedagogy, feminist critical pedagogy, issues of pluralism in dance, community collaboration, and embodied knowing in dance, as do Albright (1997, 2010, 2013b), Anttila (2007, 2008), Bond (1991, 2001, 2008, 2013, 2017,

in press), Bond and Etwaroo (2005), Bond and Gerdes (2012), Bond and Richard (2005), Bond and Stinson (2000/2001; 2007/2016), Green (2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002), Greene (1995), Halprin (1995, 2000) Lerman (1984, 2003, 2011), Marques (1998, 2007), Shapiro (1999, 2008), Stinson (2016b), Yalowitz (1997), and Zollar (in George-Graves, 2010).

My interest is in building curriculum that challenges students to think of dance as not only codified techniques, improvisation, or composition, but also as aesthetic experiences that create collaborative exchanges between academic and non-academic communities; a further pedagogical aim is for students to think critically about the nature of such exchanges in particular and the nature of civic engagement in general. Making performance might or might not be a part of the collaboration; however, the purpose is beyond making or learning form, crossing into the communicative, expressive and relational processes that can engage community partnerships between the academy and local communities. This can involve learning a cultural form or specific genre when requested or presented by a community partner member or members, and can be taught by college or community partner member/s. Further, in my own class, which is situated in the vein of creating dance partnerships between academic and non-academic communities, I am interested to understand better how the dance studies and practices I create, facilitate, and offer to students engender meaning, both for themselves and in their exchanges with community partners.

Relevance to the Field

My research is driven by a desire to examine how universities educate and train students to partner with communities, to cross college/community borders. At the end of Karen Malandra's (2007) urban studies dissertation on the pedagogical efficacy of a particular college/communtiy collaboration in mainly theater and movement arts, she foreshadows a trend, writing, "Extended research examining how other university-based practitioners educate their students would prove highly beneficial" (p. 531). Arlene Goldbard (2008) envisions the "ripening" of this field across many colleges and universities, based on new writing, research and documentation, and the development of new courses, certificates and degree programs. This is a timely study aimed at opening a dialogue about practices and purposes of higher education dance curricula that focus on community engagement.

Goldbard (2008) wrote that community-based arts have grown within the past 10-15 years in universities and colleges, and even in some high schools in the U. S. and internationally. As of this writing, therefore, the growth of community arts in higher education has occurred over the past 20-25 years. For some programs, growth has emerged from students themselves, present and past, and their pursuits outside of higher education. For example, Warburton (2004) references curricular change toward pedagogy and community-engaged work at the New England Conservatory of Music. In 2003, the Conservatory surveyed their alumni and found that while not all of them were performing, many were teaching or engaged in music within community settings in ways they hadn't anticipated.

> They were teaching artists in schools and day care centers; they played music in hospitals; and they started rock bands with at-risk youth in after-

> school programs. The results of this survey were a wake-up call for NEC's administrative leadership, resulting in a reconsideration of its core curriculum. NEC instituted programs in pedagogy and community service, offering coursework in teaching music and providing more opportunities to engage with the Boston-area community. (p. 94)

Other programs emerge directly out of administration's desire to prepare students for the eventualities of life outside of academia. Risner (2010) encourages higher education dance programs to be mindful of not only focusing more on dance education than on "fine arts" programing, but also on expanding dance education programs to include a community focus. He advocates for "accessible courses of dance study blending inquiry and practice that prepare students to be imaginative and innovative leaders for improving people's lives and social circumstances through dance education and related professions" (p. 132).

The National Dance Education Organization's (Bonbright, Bradley, & Dooling, 2013) summary of empirical research on dance in K-12 education, *Evidence: A Report on the Impact of Dance in the K-12 Setting,* names lack of detailed description of real movement experiences as a key concern in generating evidence-based dance research: "In planning, implementation, and reporting, the researcher must be clear and detailed about what 'movement' is being used, how it is being used, who is teaching it, and why it is being used" (p. 50). In this study, I describe in detail the dance improvisations chosen for the research, along with how they are taught and who is teaching it, ultimately examining student meaning-making in these improvisations.

My intended audiences are fellow educators in or looking to be involved in community-engaged pedagogy, community-based practitioners, and students and researchers of critical pedagogy. I hope to amalgamate information and engender

questioning and debate among those interested in teaching dance with a community-engaged focus. This intention grows from my engagement in the field as practitioner and educator, and now researcher. As alluded to above, I also desire to connect with educators who teach dance beyond codified forms—those interested in dance as a process for learning about self and others and as a bridge building between communities. I hope to reach those who view dance as a modality that can engender awareness of civic life and inequities and oppressive social systems—those who teach dance as a possible emancipatory, critical process.

The Class

The class was advertised as "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community" for the fall semester, 2014 at Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts. I had taught the same course at Hampshire in fall 2013 with the same title, and also in fall 2012 at Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA. At this writing I have taught the class at Hampshire in four separate semesters and am engaged currently in a fifth iteration (spring 2018). In spring 2016, the course was titled "Dance in the Community: Bridging with Bodies" and in 2017 and 2018 it has been titled "Embodied Community, Dancing Community: Building Bridges with our Bodies and our Stories." Title changes over these years have been responsive to both student and community conditions: first, to continue to welcome students who don't consider themselves dancers, and secondly, to emphasize bridge-building, a focus of the class that became clearer as this dissertation project advanced.

As I grew in teaching the course, I changed aspects of it; this study is part of the change process as I moved from theater games to finding dance-specific ways to integrate

social justice issues and movement. I continue to edit the articles, videos, and films I require students to read or view, both to stay current and to support understanding of communities with whom we interact. Further, it has become clear to me that an intensive study of this kind of dance, and of the relationship of the college environment to community life, needs to move beyond one introductory course into a fully developed graduated curriculum of its own, with faculty, resources and a discourse that spans academic and civic life. Malandra (2007) reinforces this proposal, advocating that multi-semester opportunities with established community-based artists as mentors are crucial to the field's integrity (p. 236).

The student body in the fall 2014 class represented a diverse range of academic and artistic interests. The dance-focused students were only a part of a cohort who were studying political theory, English literature, education, and more. At Hampshire, students do not declare a major; instead they create their own program of study that culminates in a thesis or project and is assessed by a thesis advisory committee. Students are encouraged to create inter-disciplinary pathways to meet their thesis goals. This enables students to register for my class who do not identify as dancers, and some even admit to a fear of dancing or being in their bodies. Some take class materials into non-dance spaces, such as meetings of organizations they belong to. In addition to Hampshire students, 2014 participants also came from Mount Holyoke and Amherst. Six of the 19 students did not identify as dancers or having danced in studio settings, but did identify as having moved in sports, clubs, or as very young children, or for "fun." The remaining 13 students discussed their dance backgrounds in contact improvisation, modern, ballet, West African dance, and circus arts. Demographically, the 2014 class contained four self-

identified students of color, 15 self-identified white students, four self-identified males, one self-identified transgender student, 14 self-identified females, and five self-identified members of the LBGTQIA+ community. I am a white Jewish woman.

Along with the goal of exploring our own peer group as a class, interacting with each other through movement, was the goal of creating workshops where students learned to facilitate the exchange, development, creation, and improvisation of movement for all participants—students and community partners. I taught dance exercises that could be manipulated in any way—expanded, contracted, softened, sharpened—for the purpose of supporting accessible movement engagement and interactions with anyone, whether or not they had previous training in any form of dance. Sometimes participants (college and community) made their own dances and created a mock competition; sometimes community partners taught dances that belonged to their cultural identities or backgrounds. At different times in teaching this class the focus might be on creating a short dance to be performed, usually for each other.

The co-facilitated workshops were led by two to three students each, while the rest of the students and community partner members were participants. Each student co-facilitated a workshop once during the semester. As my goal was to create "bridging" opportunities for each group to engage with the other, I also coached students on how to create opportunities for community partner members to teach, facilitate, and lead movement and creative activities. The workshops took place at two different community partner sites with one final collaboratively facilitated workshop on the Hampshire campus site. Students chose the dance improvisations they wanted to facilitate—Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid—from content I offered in the first few weeks of

class, prior to entering community partner sites. In making these choices, students considered the themes our community partners (one a foster community and one a carceral institution) wanted us to work with—interdependence, moving, and fun.

The dance improvisations highlighted in this study draw from the post-modern contemporary dance practices of improvisation, somatic experiencing, and composition, using the dance elements of time, space and energy (or quality) as a basis for creating common vocabulary, verbal and non-verbal. These choices are to an extent based on my teaching and performing skill set, which support creative processes that promote accessibility to dancing and making dances by both trained and untrained dancers. Post-modern contemporary dance practices are in part a reaction to (while still connected to) Euro-American concert dance. Although post-modern contemporary practices might not be as codified or proscribed as European ballet or traditional West African dances, they draw from recognized cultural forms such as contact improvisation, Asian martial arts, Euro-American modern and post-modern dance compositional techniques, and wide-ranging practices of somatic education.

As mentioned above, certain cultural forms are included in our workshops—Bachata and Hip Hop in the 2014 research class, based on suggestions from community members. Such forms were taught by either a community member or a Hampshire student in the workshop and shared as an avenue for engaging with the cultural dance of a community member or members, and for developing possibilities for group composition. Both the post-modern contemporary practices and the cultural forms served as a basis for dancing and creating dances collaboratively within the college setting as well as between college and non-college community partners.

The stand-alone nature of this class at Hampshire condenses a number of curricular needs into one semester: acquainting students with the field in general, learning about movement as a modality for self and social awareness, learning about and interacting with communities, some of which have members who have experienced trauma. Hence, the focus is not on production or some larger collaborative effort of both communities, but on what could be accomplished in a short time period—one evening for 90 minutes a week. The Treehouse/Hampshire collaboration met for two weeks, once a week, while the RFK/Hampshire collaboration met for five weeks, once a week. This particular class, 2014, centered on the immediacy of relationship that can be created through dance experiences designed for all, with input by all.

The class was the research space for this study and students had assignments and responsibilities that were not part of the study. The research relies primarily on student responses to phenomenological writing prompts given after performing certain dance improvisations in the studio as a class and then again after performing the same improvisations together with partners at their community site. Students also completed entry questionnaires and were videotaped while they were dancing or facilitating dancing. A teaching assistant (TA) wrote observational notes during sessions and I maintained detailed phenomenological and pedagogical notes.

Students in the class also had other responsibilities that were strictly for class credit and not a part of the study. They wrote responses each week to articles, websites, and/or films and discussed these in an online forum. They also completed journal questions and a final assignment—a mock grant proposal for a community dance project.

Some students have gone on from the class to actualize these proposals in the real world. Students co-created our final event at Hampshire that included our community partners.

Assigned articles, websites and films ranged from practitioner interviews and essays (Amans, 2008/2017; McGregor, 2013) to films that engage social justice and movement arts issues, such as *Rize* (2005) or *Well-Contested Sites* (2013), to articles on the "superordinary" in dance as experienced by young people (Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001), critical reflections on dance in community settings (Houston, 2005), and articles that contextualize concerns that might arise in community settings. For instance, one of our community partners, described in detail in the next section of this chapter, is a residential treatment center for first-time offending young women. It is part of the Department of Youth Services and the carceral system. To begin to critically understand the prison system from a critical perspective, students read excerpts of Michelle Alexander's (2010) *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, and an article on contact improvisation in a prison setting (Houston, 2009), among others. We also examined and discussed statistics on mass incarceration in the United States (https://www.sentencingproject.org).

Given that most students in the class come from personal and institutional places of privilege (through race, gender or class), these readings and the interaction with community partners from less privilege inspire important discussions that support critical thinking about our interactions with community partners. Community-based arts in the university often involves students facilitating or participating in arts with communities of which they are not a part (Cohen-Cruz, 2001). Awareness of privilege and difference are highlighted as crucial aspects of the work we do together and of community-based arts in

general; for example, students and I question our right to go into communities, especially ones that are so different from the demographics of Hampshire College.

A unique aspect of the Hampshire class is access to the Children, Youth and Learning Grant program. When starting the class in 2013, the grant program director invited me to apply for a grant for courses with a community focus. I applied and received funding for transportation to enable community members to join us on campus our last day, and for catering this gathering. The grant acknowledges the reality that academic community work typically involves the academy, an institution with many resources, and one or more community partners, whether people or institutions, that are often less resourced (see Goldbard, 2008). This resource imbalance can create or exacerbate power and privilege differences that work against the reciprocity and collaborative intentions of partnerships. A further concern is that resourced universities might take jobs and funding away from community-based artists (Cohen-Cruz, 2001).

Regarding the 2014 class, how could we at Hampshire expect our community partners to join us on campus if they didn't have the gas money? How can genuine partnership occur when one partner has a larger measure of financial capital? In subsequent years, the amount of the grant has decreased due to financial hardship at Hampshire. I believe in the principle that institutions with more funding should support ones with less, and it is still necessary to provide food and gas money, or at times hire community-based artists as guests to our class to mentor participants. I therefore continue to seek funding from various sources at Hampshire, piecing together resources to support our community/campus exchanges. As Goldbard (2008) and Butin and Seider (2012)

have stated, academic engagement with communities takes time and resources that colleges and universities need to consider when offering.

On our first day, I asked the students what questions or concerns they had about the work we were about to embark on. Their answers revealed awareness of many of the identified issues related to academic arts/community interactions:

- reciprocity - how to help others connect without being coercive
- responsiveness – how to change plans spontaneously when/if needed in a workshop
- effective and engaged communication, especially around trauma
- self-care while in communication
- follow up, or follow on
- learners are teachers/teachers are learners - how to keep pedagogy horizontal
- how to handle privilege, and economic, gender, and racial difference
- how to handle power imbalances

Logistics has been an important aspect in all the community-based dance courses I have taught: who drives what van; how to encourage community members to attend the workshops; how to efficiently plan a final gathering with several communities, food, a film, and a time to dance together. Students are part of each decision—together we are in concert with real-life application of theory at every turn.

Hampshire students are educated to be conscious of their own privilege and positionality—both economic and social—and to be aware that not everyone falls into mainstream heteronormative roles of gender, race, class, religion, ability, age, and ethnicity. One of the norms of a Hampshire class is the first-day ritual of learning not only each other's names, but each other's preferred pronouns, a practice I have been doing since I started teaching there in 2013. In the 2014 class and research site, students often used the pronoun "they" instead of "he" or "she" in their reflective writings in order to represent gender neutrality. Given this tradition, and the ethical requirement of Temple

University's IRB to keep student identity confidential, I employ "they" instead of "he" or "she" or any other pronoun in this dissertation.

Community Partners

The 2014 "Dance in the Community" class engaged with two community partners over the 15-week semester. One was The Treehouse Foundation, or Treehouse, and the other was the South Hadley campus of the R.F.K. Children's Action Corps, or RFK. The Treehouse Foundation is a non-profit organization that aims to restore and strengthen the health and well-being of children and youth placed in foster care. Their community model includes homes where foster families live, as well as homes for elders who support foster families as informal foster grandparents. Treehouse Easthampton is exactly that community model:

> Our Easthampton Community is a geographically contained, multigenerational, planned neighborhood where adoptive families, their children and elders invest in one another's lives. It is a village where children find not just parents and a home, but also grandparents, playmates and an entire neighborhood designed to help them grow up in a secure and nurturing environment. (https://refca.net)

Our work was with a cross-section of the Treehouse Easthampton community—elders, adults, and children. The 17 Treehouse workshop participants (11 adults and six children) ranged in age from 6-70, including two foster grandparents in wheelchairs and two children with autism, one who participated and one who watched from a corner of the room with a parent. We did not ask community participants to self-identify demographically.

Although I usually have an established relationship with a community partner before bringing students to their site, I had not worked as an artist at Treehouse prior to the 2014 Hampshire class. However, I had had several conversations with Treehouse

administration over a few years prior to the class and taught two former Treehouse youth when employed at a performing arts charter high school. Prior to our final discussion before the project was going to start, my Treehouse liaison left the organization. As is the case in many small organizations, people juggle a lot of responsibilities, and regrouping the project with another member of the Treehouse administration took time. It was unclear even up to two weeks prior if we were going to have enough community participants as advertising and information sharing had not yet occurred.

The class decided to write informal invitations and place them inside all Treehouse members' mailboxes. I also called group leaders and volunteers as well as one of my former Treehouse students who had grown up at the Easthampton campus to help spread the word. One conundrum of making art (with an academic component or not) with community partners is dovetailing the mutual logistical needs of time and space while also achieving mutual content goals such as creation of an art piece or dancing together. The bringing together of all stakeholders to create mutually desired interactions can take time, effort, and skills in building relationships; this is part of the educational challenges of this field (Goldbard, 2008; Keith, 2015).

Although this was my first project with Treehouse, I hoped it would become ongoing, or that the relationship with Hampshire College would be a sustainable one. At the time of this writing, Hampshire College has kept a connection with Treehouse through various internships, and I have kept in touch, but I have not gone back. Due to the amount of work it took to make sure there would be participants, partly due to the late hour, if I were to return I would want to create a longer-term project that fits more within their daily schedule.

The Robert Fitzgerald Kennedy Children's Action Corps self-describes as a "leader in child welfare and juvenile justice" in Massachusetts, offering programs that "support families to deal successfully with behavioral and emotional issues at nearly a dozen facilities throughout the state. Their programs include residential treatment, educational services, community-based services, and therapeutic support" (https://www.rfkchildren.org). The South Hadley facility is a residential treatment center for up to ten female youth ages 14-18 who are first-time offenders. In the fall of 2014, there were 8 RFK youth. Most of the youth participated in all of our sessions; there were times when one or two were out on a day pass or were ill. In the course of our collaboration the youth self-identified as white, Latina, or African-American.

RFK youth are required to attend on-site high school classes according to their grade and achievement level, group activities, group and personal therapy, and extra-curricular activities like our exchange. Youth lose certain privileges if they do not attend, and gain others if they do. This means that participation in our Hampshire/RFK collaboration was not necessarily voluntary; yet youth can opt out, and have done, and are allowed to find other ways to earn privileges to replace attending a group activity. By 2014, I had taken students to RFK twice before and have continued the relationship since; therefore, the Five College/RFK relationship has continued annually for seven years.

Before the Hampshire group went to RFK, a member of its teaching staff visited our class and spoke about the program and answered questions. Issues of race, class and trauma were included in the talk. Prior to each community project, students research the community through articles or online resources and the class meets with a community member, or liaison to the community to orient the students to at least some of what they

might expect. The community partners, if they do not know us already, also receive orientation in some way to us, through my own visits or through a series of conversations.

Before arriving at RFK, everyone had to sign a form stating that they had read the information given about RFK, children's services, precautions on what to wear and bring, and privacy. For instance, hair pins were not allowed, nor were pens, or any sharp object. Pens and pencils, if needed, were given out by the staff and counted when collected to be sure none were missing. Anything sharp is seen as a possible weapon for harming self or other. No youth or college student could exchange personal information, such as email addresses or phone numbers. When we invited RFK to come to the Hampshire campus, for safety reasons we could not speak to the youth about the date. Had a youth spoken on the phone with someone about it, it was conceivable that an unwanted person from outside RFK would show up, or that the youth might try to escape.

At RFK, part of staff duties is to record what the youth are doing every 15 minutes. As collaborators, we were present during all surveillance writing but were not the focus of the writing. We had permission to take photos, but non-identifying—feet, hands, and the back of the youth's heads. I took a video for study purposes, to be discarded after completion of this dissertation. Given all of these control measures, it is understandable that many students were fearful of going into RFK; however, meeting and relating to the youth there assuaged those fears.

Limitations and Delimitations of the study

Limitations

I could not alter class size for the research; capacity was set at 18 students due to van size—we used two vans, and faculty considered class sizes above 12 as valuable to the college. I turned away several students when capacity was reached although ended up adding one audit student. The classroom part of the study was limited to one semester. This limitation posed by an academic calendar creates a tension with CBL's goal of long-term sustainability with community partners.

The potential of the research was limited by my role in the college. During the time of this study, I was a two-year visiting lecturer in Dance Education and Community Outreach at the Five Colleges, a position that was petitioned for renewal but not renewed. Subsequent semesters I have been invited back to teach the course as an adjunct faculty member. Due to this relatively low status within the institution, I have not been able to build a graduated program or ask for the kind of long-term administrative support that an optimal model of this type of arts/academic/community interaction deserves. Although returning to teach the course has allowed my relationship with RFK to continue, a much richer model of collaborative interaction could be developed with long-term support for a tiered curriculum.

Finally, hermeneutic phenomenological research, discussed fully in chapter 3, illuminates *possible* futures, but findings are not generalizable to populations in the manner of quantitative research. For some, this might be considered a serious limitation of this study, which does not provide outcomes-based, or measurable, evidence. This study seeks to illuminate students' meanings of selected embodied practices in a specific

community-engaged dance course, with a view towards enhancement of course content and pedagogy.

Delimitations

Extending on the above, hermeneutic phenomenology focuses research on lived experience, without a pre-ordained theoretical framework or hypothesis. In the present study of college students' engagement in a community-engaged dance setting, I delimited preliminary background literature to descriptors of embodied knowing, especially in dance, community-based learning in general and the arts in particular, and critical pedagogy.

Data collection was delimited to the Hampshire student group. Our two community partner sites included human beings considered at-risk and were not part of data collection. Both Treehouse and RFK held vulnerable populations—children, children with special needs, seniors (Treehouse), and incarcerated youth (RFK). The Treehouse Foundation project was a short-term exchange that was at first tenuous due to administrative changes close to its initiation. The administration at RFK maintains strict confidentiality that includes no photographs or exchange of information that might identify RFK participants. Permission for the use of any information would only be possible after several levels of administration and guardian or parental consent was met.

In any case, this initial foray into research within community-based dance focuses on meanings that my college students and I discovered and explored in "Dance in the Community" and the study is delimited to data collected for this purpose. Studying all members of a community-engaged interaction—both college and community participants, is of course important for comprehensive understanding of community work.

While such comprehensiveness is needed to build the field, it is outside the scope of this dissertation study by a visiting lecturer on two-year contract.

Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation research is to examine meanings of embodied practice in a higher education course in dance that engages with local non-college communities. It focuses on 19 students' lived experiences and my own pedagogical practice in an introductory course, "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community," at Hampshire College in western Massachusetts during fall semester, 2014. I focus on understanding students' experiences while moving and dancing in selected dance improvisations—Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid—both during college studio sessions and when engaging with community partners outside college walls. I also consider how such understanding has influenced my teaching knowledge and practice and contributes to the literature of "community-based dance." The study takes place in an introductory course that I came to conceptualize as community-engaged dance education (CEDE).

In addition to this Introduction (chapter 1), the dissertation contains six chapters. Chapter 2 presents background literature that frames both the class and the study: community-based learning in higher education—including its history and purposes—and community-based learning in dance, critical and phenomenological pedagogy, and embodied knowing or "dance enaction" (Warburton, 2011). Chapter 3 details study methodologies and procedures—both research and teaching. Chapters 4 and 5 describe the results of the analysis—chapter 4 describes the emergent categories of meaning and chapter 5 discusses and thematizes the meaning categories presented in chapter 4.

Chapter 6 focalizes on one specific theme that emerged from chapter 5 and places the theme and its related constructs in conversation with appropriate literature. Chapter 7 summarizes and critiques the study and offers recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

This dissertation is housed in the fields of community-based or academic service learning in higher education, in critical and phenomenological pedagogy, and in dance. This discussion of selected background literature will reflect these areas. The dissertation as a whole offers a wider reading of them. I begin by further defining terms useful to the study.

Further Definitions of Terms

I introduced key terms of the study in chapter 1, and now add others that provide background to community-based arts fields in general.

Community

Defining community could itself fill a dissertation. Often the term can mean a group of people connected by locality, nationality, or common interests or goals. Goldbard (2008) defines "community" in geographic terms (such as a small town or an urban neighborhood), in terms of common interest (such as a shared desire to address environmental concerns or have a voice in local economic development efforts) and in terms of many other affinities (single mothers, Latino elders, incarcerated youth). Benedict Anderson (1983/2006) in analyzing nationalism writes that most communities larger than a village are imagined. Professor and community-engaged educator Nancy Welch (2002) posits that in community-based work, geographical communities can be replaced by linguistic communities—the stories that are told create the community, rather than the space or locality in which the community resides.

In dance scholarship, Maxine Greene (1995) links imagination to the possibility of empathy as well as to community building; community, as she sees it, is a space infused with "imaginative awareness" that allows those involved to think of alternate possibilities for "their own becoming and the group's becoming" (p. 39). Democracy, she describes, means a "community that is always in the making" and that is characterized by "an emerging solidarity, a sharing of certain beliefs, and a dialogue about others," a community that is open to all (p. 39). In much of the literature of community-based learning reviewed, communities are self-identified groups of people interacting with colleges or universities in some kind of exchange or collaboration. In this study, I use the more specific term *community partner* when referring to the two communities with whom we interacted in 2014: Treehouse and RFK.

Community Partner

In general, the term *community partner* in this study and in CBL parlance refers to the partner or partners based in the community rather than at the college/university who co-initiate, create and maintain the college/community project. In our case, the community partners—Treehouse as a foster community and RFK as part of the Department of Children and Youth and a treatment facility for incarcerated youth—operated as distinct institutions outside the college sphere. An important distinction between the community partners is that the members of Treehouse have chosen consciously to live in community together, while the youth at RFK do not choose RFK consciously as a community but are there as a result of crimes committed and resulting sentences. RFK also runs a transition program for youth who do consciously wish to stay there as they transition to jobs and more schooling in the local area.

Community partner members. Since the term *community partners* does not apply to individuals in partner institutions, when describing individuals—the families at Treehouse or the youth at RFK—I use either *participants* or *community partner members*.

College/University Partner

The college or university partner is the college or university class, internship, or other program based at a college or university that co-initiates, creates, and maintains the college/community project. This project was co-created by my class on behalf of Hampshire College, the college partner.

Community Cultural Development

Community cultural development is an umbrella term encompassing all artistic and cultural projects focused on community presentation. Goldbard (2006) suggests,

> There is no archetypal participation and or definitive community cultural development project, no manual that dictates practice. Community artists have used every art medium and many different approaches to create projects designed for the unique circumstances and assets of a particular group of participants. Some projects turn on the creation of public art works, others use dance or theatre, some employ community gardens, some generate videos or computer-based multimedia: every art form can be an instrument of community cultural development. (p. 7)

Encapsulating Goldbard's definition of community cultural development, this work acknowledges its participatory nature, indicates a "generous" concept of culture (not narrowly defined as art), and suggests its own dynamic nature (through the word development) with its "ambitions of conscientization [Freirean term] and empowerment" (p. 21).

Creative Placemaking

Creative placemaking is when artists, arts organizations, and community development

practitioners deliberately integrate arts and culture into community revitalization work—placing arts at the table with land use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, and public safety strategies (https://www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/frequently-asked-questions-arts-engagement).

Roots of Community-Based Dance Education

With origins in turn-of-20th-century progressive educational theories of, prominently, John Dewey (1933/1971, 1934/2005, 1938, 1938/1963), the 1960s began the burgeoning of what was originally termed "academic service learning" in American higher education (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). Nomenclature, definitions, and acronyms have also proliferated over the decades, and in addition to service learning, the broad terrain that encompasses community-oriented education includes outcroppings of community-based learning (CBL), community-based service learning (CBSL), academic service-learning, community engagement, place-based learning, cooperative education, public sphere pedagogy, and more. Each of these has its unique context, goals and nuances of perspective, while sharing an overall aim of integrating meaningful community experiences into academic instruction and critical reflection within a paradigm of experiential education.

As introduced in chapter 1, my orientation prior to this dissertation was to the domain of CBL and community-based arts, which I had elaborated to *community-based learning in dance* (CBLD). The shift to an emphasis on *engagement* rather than the broader construct, *learning*, coining the descriptor *community-engaged dance education* (or CEDE) was in part to reflect the phenomenological interest in student meanings rather than in their "measurable" learning, which, as Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, and Bem

(1993) note, is commonly understood to imply "a relatively permanent change in behavior that results from practice" (p. 98). This approach also fits into the ethos of Hampshire College, where student learning is not graded.

Definitions of CBL in higher education have been informed by national organizations such as Campus Compact, Corporation for National Service, the National Society for Experiential Education, The Center for Engaged Democracy, Bringing Theory into Practice, and The Council for Undergraduate Research (Haft, 2012; Hoy, 2013). Definitions typically include a commitment to civic education, community development and institutional involvement towards a public purpose, with practical applications differing from institution to institution.

Robert Rhoads (1997) distinguishes community service projects (for example, internships) from academic service-learning, stating that service-learning has an academically-oriented intentional component, or the intention to benefit the needs of students as well as communities, built into its design (p. 138). In an internship or community-service project, although students may learn, the learning may not be an intentional curricular aspect of the project. Rhoads acknowledges that some community service projects in universities have an intentional student learning component built into their design. The University of Minnesota (2004) uses the term "service-learning" to describe the type of learning that is consensually aligned with national organizations:

> Service-learning can be defined as both an educational philosophy and a pedagogical technique for combining community service with academic objectives. Academic Service-Learning is a teaching methodology which utilizes a community involvement component as a means for students to gain a deeper understanding of disciplinary course objectives and to gain a deeper understanding of civic life and participation through structured reflection. (p. 2)

History of Academic Community Engagement

Historically, if educating young people for community leadership is part of the definition, then community engagement has been a theme for higher education since its inception in the late 19th century, for example, in colonial colleges, land-grant universities, historically Black colleges, and community colleges (Hollander, Lapping, Rice, & Cruz, 2017). While the history of this type of education can be integrally tied to the history of tertiary education in the U. S., academic institutions have been inconsistent in its practice. In 1995, Ernest L. Boyer, then president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, spoke to the 1778th Stated Meeting on the status of higher education in the U. S., advocating,

> The academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic and moral problems - and must reaffirm its historic commitment to what I have chosen to call, this evening, *the scholarship of engagement*. (Boyer, 1996, pp. 18-19)

Boyer goes on to describe the nation's 350-year history of linking the academy to larger purposes of American society, such as preservation of church and country (after John Eliot, 1636), the teaching of democratic values (after Benjamin Rush, 1798), and the signing of the 1862 Land Grant College Act [the Morrill Act] by Abraham Lincoln, which linked higher education to agricultural, industrial and technological advancements (p. 19).

The second (1890) Morrill Act extended the land-grant program to Black colleges in the South, an important marker for institutionalizing opportunities for Blacks within the higher education structure (Haft, 2012). The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (informally, the GI Bill) provided tuition support combined with unemployment benefits for veterans; a version of this bill has been in place since. Boyer (1996) reports that many

academics were not in favor of the GI Bill (p. 20). W. E. B. Dubois, Carter G. Woodson, Myles Horton, and Septima Clark, African-American educators and scholars throughout the Jim Crow era in the southern United States, integrated scholarship and activism and pushed for deep community engagement (Haft, 2012).

According to Boyer (1996), by the mid-1990s, the historic commitment to the "scholarship of engagement" had declined dramatically and the academy had turned to supporting private benefit rather than public good.

> Increasingly, the campus is being viewed as a place where students get credentialed and faculty get tenured, while the overall work of the academy does not seem particularly relevant to the nation's most pressing civic, social, economic and moral problems. (p. 23)

Earlier in the nineties, according to Saltmarsh and Hartley (2017), Boyer's (1990) similar message in *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* was seminal; as an example, in 1991 the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) launched an annual Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards that drew together administrators and faculty from hundreds of colleges to re-conceptualize the work of the professoriate (p. 115). Further, Jane Kendall (1990) published a three-volume set, *Combining Service and Learning*, which offered practical advice for faculty and readings that raised questions about community involvement.

Work was also underway to shift the nature of faculty work in academic arts education, perhaps prompted in part by President Bill Clinton's establishment in 1993 of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and its Learn and Serve America: Higher Education program, a funding source for service learning initiatives (www.nationalservice.gov/about/legislation). The humanities, arts and design disciplines, however, were underrepresented in the newly created centers for service-learning and

community partnerships in academia (Imagining America, n.d.). In 1999, Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life (IA), was conceived at a White House conference initiated by the White House Millennium Council, the University of Michigan, and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (Haft, 2012; Imagining America, n.d.).

Community Engagement in the Context of Academia

Today IA is a national consortium of more than 70 colleges, universities, artists and scholars working explicitly at the nexus of publicly-engaged scholarship and the humanities, arts, and design. Among other principles, IA's founders proposed that publicly engaged scholarship would strengthen the democratic virtue of civic participation (Haft, 2012). Its leaders agreed with Boyer about the academy's resistance to fully embracing the public mission of the scholarship of engagement, citing: higher education's valuing of research over service; the academic ideal of "disinterested objectivity" being valued over the pursuit of social justice or more subjective applications of scholarship; and devaluing the "popularization" of research to the point of irrelevance to the world outside the "ivory tower." (Haft, 2012). Because of this, IA established a tenure team to report on and advise faculty to help develop and interpret public scholarship in order to support their work as components of tenure, and to share with the larger academic milieu the importance of community-engaged work (Overby, 2016).

In *Public Scholarship in Dance: Teaching, Choreography, Research, Service, and Assessment for Community Engagement,* Lynnette Overby (2016) cites Campus Compact survey statistics showing the growth of university offices devoted to service-learning and community engagement—from 15% of universities responding in 1990 to 95% in 2010.

Butin and Seider (2012), however, suggest that as a movement community-engaged learning, or academic service learning, has "stalled"; Butin (2013) reinforces this by stating that an "engagement ceiling" has been reached in higher education (p. 245).

Many certificate programs, degree programs, and honors programs in CBL have undergone large changes, including changes in student demographics (part-time, commuting students), outsourcing of work to adjunct and contingent faculty, and the complex problem of engaging with community issues enmeshed with multiple racial, political, economic, social and historical realities (Butin & Seider, 2012). Butin and Seider describe a debate over purpose as a factor in the "stalling," asking is the purpose to forefront social connectedness, a valued aspect of the work, or to engage students in learning democratic skills as citizens? (p. 6). Hollander et al. (2017) find that the field is shifting rather than stalling, focusing on promoting civic education in K-12 schools through internships; they also see a shift away from larger universities delivering community-engaged work due to their increasing corporatization which includes decline of tenure-track faculty. Instead, they see that the "niche" of some small liberal arts colleges [such as Hampshire] "will increasingly be that they provide the broad preparation for citizenship, experiential education, and community engagement that some students seek" (p. 24).

Further, most pointedly when calling the field "academic service learning," who is being "served" and in what ways? As stated in chapter 1, community-engaged arts in academia involve the academic community connecting with and supporting a stated need or focus of a local community that is often marginalized or underserved (Goldbard, 2006, 2008). Community-engaged arts practices are thus situated in a contentious and

contradictory zone of higher education that dichotomizes serving itself and serving the public good.

Considering the academy as a place of privilege and intellectual idealism, as well as a place of service and commitment to the public good, artists in higher education can become caught between acting from a position of elite knowledge and agency and a position of "serving," or both. Rhoads (1997) notes,

> Too often community service is structured as a one-way activity in which those who have resources make decisions about the needs of those who lack resources. It is one more example of the "haves" of our society shaping the lives of the "have nots." (p. 127)

In an unpublished interview with Wayne State University's Doug Risner about community-based dance education, Amie Dowling, Chair of the University of San Francisco's Performing Arts and Social Justice Department, reframes the meaning of "service":

> The concept of "service" can produce a power dynamic that sublimates the equality between community members and artists. Community-based arts/dance recognizes that the nature of the "service" is not something being done for, but rather something being done with – we are collaborating, everyone serves and everyone is served. (A. Dowling, personal communication, February 23, 2014)

The contemporary discourse in service learning in the arts articulates the relationship between the academy, local artists and art institutions, and local community groups and agencies as one of reciprocity, sustainability, and equitability in power and resources (Goldbard, 2006). As Overby (2016) reinforces, "no longer is it appropriate to only reach out to the community; you must engage with your community as partners" (p. 13). This change is reflected in nomenclature—moving from community "outreach" to community "engagement." The shift of arts from service to collaboration can be situated

in the educational theory and practice of Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire; many CBL programs in my local higher education community point to Freire as a basis for curriculum and pedagogy (J. Falk, collegial communications, 2014). I discuss his work and its relationship to this study in detail later in the chapter.

Academic community-engaged arts educators Thomas Deans (2000) and Nancy Welch (2002), among others, refer to tensions that exist around the purpose of community-engaged arts in academia. A similar dichotomy noted above between serving self or individual needs and serving public or communal needs arises in service-learning courses for students in literacy education. If a course focuses only on community members' individual literacy outcomes, students might not learn about or understand the systemic problems that can create or maintain lack of literacy; but if a course focuses solely on critique of systems and root causes—for example racism, classism, sexism, and white privilege—then personal relationality can suffer (Welch, 2002, p. 244). Susan Wells (1996) suggests that both approaches maintain the status quo of continuous "ideological reproduction" and make "a convincing argument for the impossibility of social change" (p. 339). Elizabeth Armstrong (2000) asks a similar question: "how can students be introduced to ideas about radical social change without becoming overwhelmed by a totalizing worldview?" (p. 114).

Welch (2002) shares that she has felt afraid that her students, as a whole more privileged and less marginalized than the youth in the communities they are entering, might give in to a "collapse of difference," a concern implied in Bruce Herzberg's "ground-breaking" essay on service learning and composition (as cited in Welch, 2002, p. 246). According to Welch, Herzberg values students' learning the social and cultural

reasons for illiteracy rather than focusing on "personal acts of charity" by writing self-reflections on their experiences with community members (p. 246). Welch's fear that "if students wrote of their [experiences], they would collapse all difference and thus assert, 'And so they are just like me,' implying, 'And they can get ahead just like me'" (p. 246).

Despite this concern, Welch's students write daily about their experiences with community members, and she finds that they convey a back-and-forth relationality and mutuality with community members that does not deny difference, but instead moves "beyond identification to apprehending and appreciating, as feminist psychoanalytic theorist Jessica Benjamin puts it, 'the other subject as a being outside the self'" (p. 245). Welch asserts that the ability to recognize others as subjects whose lives both overlap and exceed one's own—is a precondition to collective action (p. 248). As bell hooks (2003) discusses in *Teaching Community*, denying difference can inhibit the creation of "meaningful community" where difference is embraced, authenticity valued, and we find out what connects us (p. 197). At the same time, seeing only difference, such as deeply entrenched social and economic divisions, can be limiting as well; students can feel helpless to make an impact in such circumstances (Bond, 2017; Deans, 2000; Wells, 1996).

Supporting students to work with both difference and commonality between and among communities, and through other binary tensions in CBL in general and in the arts, is an important aspect of service-learning courses. Writing about both artists/community and academic arts/community collaborations, Pablo Helguera (2011) states that the artist involved in socially engaged art, or SEA, both creates and facilitates art as well as engages in modes of social exchange. The socially-engaged artist facilitates the

participant or collaborator's own knowledge and process. Helguera locates this perspective in the lineage of Freire, suggesting, "Freire's approach provides a path to thinking about how an artist can engage with a community in a productive collaborative capacity" (p. 52). Mary Fitzgerald (2017), dance educator and community-engaged dance facilitator, states that "at the most fundamental level, socially engaged artists aim to promote empowerment and social transformation in the communities in which they live" (p. 2).

Arlene Goldbard (2008) facilitated "The Curriculum Project" and resultant document, *The Curriculum Project Report: Culture and Community Development in Higher Education*. Twenty-eight educators and community artists were interviewed and 231 surveyed on the aims and ideals for community cultural development, or CCD. Considering community-engaged arts curricula, the interviews and surveys suggested that a balance of three foci are important for students of CCD: 1) knowledge of how to work inside of communities; 2) training in an artistic modality; and 3) scholarship focusing on the field's history and animating ideas, as well as its economic and policy environments (p. 16). Community-engagement scholar Barbara Jacoby (2015) adds to these foci the need for curriculum to address diversity and systems of power, and for the field at large to focus more strongly on the impact of community-engagement on communities themselves (Agnieszka, 2016).

Educational Roots and Desired Outcomes

According to many early writings, the practical educational philosophy of John Dewey, the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire, insights on reflection and learning by David Kolb and Don Schon, and feminist philosophy foregrounding critical reflection on

privilege and power in education underpin much of community-based service-learning (Brown, 2001; Butin & Seider, 2012; Cone & Harris, 1996; Deans, 1999; Flecky & Gitlow, 2011; Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999). Some of these influences will be discussed in the next section of this chapter. The formative roots of service-learning direct students to bring practical experience, theoretical knowledge and reflective awareness together.

The Faculty Toolkit for Service-Learning in Higher Education, collated by Seifer and Connors (2007), from the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, focuses student learning outcomes for service-learning in all areas of the academy on four components: 1) active participation of students in organized activities that require collaboration with schools or communities; 2) integration of academic curriculum to enhance the learning experience; 3) use of pedagogical knowledge and skills in real-world situations; and 4) reflection on experiences to enhance students' learning (p. 9).

Reed and Koliba (1995) view cornerstone aspects of academic-service or community-based learning as the integration of community experience and academic knowledge with facilitated and focused critical reflection. Literature illuminating student perceptions of learning in CBL courses has highlighted philosophical and theoretical constructs such as ethic of caring (Rhoads, 1997), concerns about privilege and really "knowing" or feeling known by the people in their community internships or programs (Rhoads, 1997; Welch, 2002), and social cognitive dissonance or "interruption of habitus" when crossing borders between communities (Keith, 2015; Malandra, 2007; Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000). Malandra elaborates:

> While every community arts project is different and each project assembles a different group of people around different social issues, existing patterns of habitus [predispositions or tendencies - Bourdieu, 1972/1977/2013] will always

> be present. Surfacing these patterns and working to alter them is the pedagogical work of community-based arts. (p. 228)

This interruption of habitus is an important step in students redefining their own roles in civic life, but also reflects changes from "traditional" service learning where students learn to serve in a community, filling a need, and "critical" service-learning where students are also asked to question and find ways to resolve deeper systemic issues that cause the need for service in the first place (Mitchell, 2008).

Much has been written about the importance of those entering and serving unfamiliar communities to acknowledge their privilege and positionality and to see the assets rather than deficits of those communities (Keith 2015; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), promote informed citizenry (Boyte, 2013), decenter privilege and suspend "savior mentality" (Flaherty, 2016). Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) suggest that a majority of CBL literature focuses on pre- and post- quantitative analysis of student knowledge relating to two fundamental service-learning goals: increasing civic responsibility and increasing academic outcomes (p. 14).

Although some literature focuses on qualitative student learning outcomes in community-based arts (Keith, 2015; Malandra, 2007; Rhoads, 1997; Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000; Welch, 2002), few studies have applied quantitative measures to assess student outcomes of community dance engagement. A recent study by Giguere (in press) examines the impact of volunteer community dance work on 17 dancers ages 16 to 21 from private studio and undergraduate dance settings (Drexel University, Philadelphia). Through a mixed method approach (surveys and semi-structured interviews, pre- and post-engagement), she investigates influences of engagement on student volunteers' self-esteem, empathy, artistic understanding, and career aspirations, as well as student

perceptions of differences between their community dance work and their other forms of civic engagement.

Sample Programs

As mentioned in chapter 1, a plethora of nomenclature is accompanied by a range of purposes in community-based dance. Overby (2016) outlines existing academic service-learning dance projects in dance and shares their course descriptions, goals and objectives, as well as their relationship to current educational theory and connection to the academic tenure process. College and university websites (as well as those of professional dance companies) cite wide-ranging purposes connecting dance to: health and well-being, healing, social justice and inclusion, marginalized communities (for example, at-risk youth, seniors, people with special needs), interdisciplinary work, civic responsibility, re-infusing artist in society, transcending studio art boundaries, schools and community centers.

The depth of interaction, level of collaboration and participant consciousness of border crossing also varies across the spectrum of community-campus dance projects. Many colleges and universities, for example, Towson University in Maryland and Brown University in Rhode Island, conceptualize "community dance" as the offering of classes to children and adults in the local community. The University of Massachusetts Amherst points to its student ensemble, the University Dancers, which performs in local schools and communities, as its "community outreach" component. Colorado State University takes students to local K-12 schools to interact with students and curricula as a "community dance" component of curriculum, while it also offers "Intercultural/ Community-based dance" to its students, which are classes in African dance, Hip-hop,

and Samba. Giguere (in press) outlines programs where students from Drexel University partner youth with cerebral palsy to dance throughout the year and teach after-school dance technique classes for youth in an urban community center.

Students at Scripps College (California) interact with local communities, create dance experiences with them, and then later perform dances created from movements discovered in those interactions, to which the communities involved are invited. At Temple University, the Department of Art Education and Community Arts Practices at the Tyler School of Art offers courses and internships that augment existing partnerships between the University and local school and communities using visual and performing arts to create art based on the lives and stories of people in North Philadelphia.

Like the Tyler and Scripps programs, some community arts projects in academe foster the creation of sustainable artistic exchanges between students and members of specific communities in the local area; these often contain a conscious social justice intention to raise student awareness around issues of inequity and systemic oppression. For example, the Department of Performing arts and Social Justice of San Francisco offers a performing arts and social justice major that takes students to a local jail to co-create movement experiences and performances. This program emphasizes the intersection of dance and social justice specifically around concerns of mass incarceration. In a telephone conversation, Amie Dowling, chair of the Department of Performing arts and Social Justice at USF, emphasized that her program gives students "a doorway into living life as an active artist—performing and teaching but also being in the world as an artist … having the skills to transfer to something in the real world" (A. Dowling, personal communication, April 1, 2013).

Admitting that "social justice" can be a phenomenon that is different in reality than in rhetoric, Dowling hopes the program trains students to look at the world and issues of power and agency when making art in any location, including San Quentin. Making art in any location can catalyze issues of aesthetics in community arts, discussed in the next section.

Traditional Aesthetics in Community Arts

The literature on community arts often poses the question of whether the products of community processes, for example, the dance, play, film, or mural constitute "good" art (Amans, 2008/2017). Green (2000b) emphasizes that often community-based arts are considered "low art" as opposed to "high art," emphasizing a division between community and professional art that considers questions of class—who the art is by and for—claiming that high art is for the upper or middle-class, and thus, is the more valued. Cohen-Cruz (2001) sees this division as "use-driven" for community-based or applied theater, and "aesthetically-driven" for professional theater (p. 8). According to Amans (2008/2017), in community-based work attention is paid more often to the communal participation process than to artistic product or even artistic education.

Cohen-Cruz (2001) attributes the division of high and low art to Aristotle and finds that "high culture" often espouses art for art's sake, individual authorship, distance from everyday life, and upholding the status quo [in terms of power and positionality] (p. 59). She finds that community performers, who can often "lack craft but are overflowing with the need to express not only their own desires but also those of their communities" challenge the "dominant cultural paradigm that privileges individual over communal expression" (p. 61). Community dance specialist Christine Lomas (2009) proposes that

new lenses are needed to see the range of skills involved in community-based artistic practice, which require more than a technically trained body and include the intention to evoke authenticity and personal potential in self and others.

Questions of "high" and "low" art and process vs. product are not foregrounded in this study, although aesthetic meanings are present in students' written reflections, bringing aesthetic values into greater relief in the community-engaged arts discourse. The notion of "high" vs. "low" as analogous to professional vs. community-engaged art raises questions about what is valued in the community-academy interaction. How much emphasis should be on art-making, authorship, and critical artistic processes, how much on social and economic issues in the communities served, and how much on the individual, social, communal, or experiential aspects of community interaction? Goldbard's (2008) suggestion, that art making is one part of a triad of engaged pedagogy that includes social leadership as well as historical and theoretical context, is a known standard in the field.

To summarize, reviewing selected literature on the history and current status of CBL in the arts and in general in higher education, I found that its role and purposes are being evaluated continuously. While community-oriented education can be traced to the late 19th century, the arts have only developed a comprehensive presence since the 1990's (Dolgon, Mitchell, & Eatman, 2017; Haft, 2012; Overby, 2016), and theoretical framing of the field continues to evolve. Currently, cornerstone philosophical tenets include sustainability, reciprocity, and mutuality of intentions between community partners (Butin & Seider, 2012; Goldbard, 2006, 2008; Keith, 2015), while specific goals remain project-dependent; hence, "goals can range from creating opportunities for students and

faculty to become better citizens while communities better understand their problems, to striving for full-scale societal change and social justice" (Bloomgarden, Bombardier, Breitbart, Nagel, & Smith, 2006, p. 107).

Community Dance Perspective

A survey of the writings of practitioners who work under the general rubric of community dance, i.e., without an academic component, aids in understanding practices and perspectives in the field, and can be seen as a complement to the literature in academic service-learning in the arts and in academic dance/community collaborations. Much early writing on community dance originates in the U. K. from the practitioner's perspective. Most academic or non-academic writing on community dance focuses on a professional not-for-profit group or artist who works with various communities, usually communities considered marginalized or at-risk, facilitating participation in some form of dancing (Amans, 2008/2017; Green, 2000b).

The field, according to U. K. practitioners, is hard to define, in part because doing so separates it from and creates the risk of it being marginalized as, according to Sara Houston, a "second rate appendage to Professional Dance" (Houston, 2017, p. 11). Diane Amans (2008/2017) writes that "defining community dance has always been something of a challenge" (2008, p. 3). She goes on to talk about the history of the field in the U. K., citing surveys and practitioners that work with the Foundation for Community Dance, (FCD), now called People Dancing – The Foundation for Community Dance, the lead advocacy and informational body for the profession in the U. K. She states that some practitioners have become concerned about political machinations in the field related to

"converting the population, establishing dance colonies across the country and creating a dance empire" (p. 5).

One example of a political agenda in the U. K. is the post-Thatcher era in the later 1990s when some dance companies and artists began focusing on community dance work in order to receive government funding for programs focused on social inclusion (Houston, 2005). Qualifying that "many of those who are involved in community dance do sincerely believe in the general public's right to dance," Sara Houston asserts that "many dance leaders have simply seized the opportunity offered to them by government policy to augment and publicize their project initiatives" (p. 170).

Since the mid-1980s, Amans reports, there has been critical debate about purposes, practices, and defining values of community dance in the U. K. It is an interesting study in itself to look through the various definitions and purposes given by U. K. practitioners over time. Rubidge (as cited in Amans, 2008) offers the following:

- to de-mystify dance as an art form;
- to provide opportunities for as large a part of the population as possible to engage in dance activity, irrespective of their age, class, or cultural background;
- to reinstate dance as integral part of the life-style of our society. (p. 5)

Amans conducted a survey of practitioners in 2006 that generated a range of perspectives on community dance:

- working with people using movement;
- gets people moving who may not normally dance;
- mainly takes place with non-professional practitioners (though often facilitated by professional artists/teachers);
- any dance activity, led by professional dance practitioners, that involves participants from an identified community and is publicly funded;

• creates opportunities for anyone—regardless of gender, race, religion, physical or mental health, ability, preconceptions (their own or others), or anything else—to be able to participate in a group dance experience that is positive for them;

• creates work that breaks stereotypes of what dance is and what dancers are;

• performing dance in non-traditional places;

• anything that we, the community, want it to be. (pp. 4-5)

Community dance has concerns that compromise sustainability, including economics, fears of being second-rate to professional dance (tied to funding as well as the previously mentioned high art/low art division), and its own history of privilege. Who are the teaching artists that seek to "convert the population" and "establish dance empires," for instance? What types of dance and whose dance is embraced, and whose dance is being ignored in the focus on definition? In Amans' (2017) second edition of *An Introduction to Community Dance Practice*, she references the People Dancing 2016 Professional Code of Conduct, which states, among other things, that community dance values include: 1) people being able to enjoy dance and connect to each other, 2) an equal concern for people and art, and 3) creating a "safe" space where individuals can fulfill their human and creative potential (p. 6).

In the U. S., once again the bulk of writing does not come from higher education but from personal artistic narratives, such as those published from 1999 to 2010 on a website known formerly as the Community Arts Network, or CAN, now Art in the Public Interest, (http://apionline.org/community-arts-network/). Writings by dance artists on the API site are small in number relative to theater practitioners.

Choreographers Liz Lerman (1984, 2003, 2011) and Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, founder of Urban Bush Women (George-Graves, 2010) are well-known for their work in

community-based dance. Lerman founded the Dance Exchange, a multi-generational dance company known for its site-specific interdisciplinary work that engages local people dancing (www.danceexchange.org). Zollar presents the folklore, religious traditions, and culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora (www.urbanbushwomen.org) as well as a summer institute teaching others how to "leverage arts as a vehicle for social action and civic engagement" (http://www.urbanbushwomen.org/bold/summer-leadership-institute/about).

Paloma McGregor (2013), who has worked with both Lerman and Zollar, highlights a variety of community dance projects in the U. S.—from concert dance that addresses social issues, to building bridges between communities, to fostering community dialogue—bringing awareness of global issues and demanding visibility for communities that have been overlooked historically (p. 1). Although referencing more than a century of social activism by U. S. professional dance artists—galvanizing movements, protesting, and illuminating social concerns—McGregor emphasizes community dance projects and programs where professional dance is only or not at all a part; her interest is in civic engagement and moving bodies.

Central to the efforts that McGregor references is the premise that dance is fundamentally a transformative act (p. 3). Whether shifting thinking, moving conflict, appreciating the earth, or interconnecting with community members, the artists involved speak of transforming themselves and hoping to support transformation in others. Houston (2005), however, critiques the notion of transformation as aspired to in community-based dance practices. She asserts that the assumption of arts experiences leading to personal empowerment and social transformation is often expressed in

simplistic terms (p. 167). Researching two community dance projects in the U. K., one with senior citizens and one with incarcerated men learning and performing contact improvisation, Houston offers various participant responses and suggests variables that might determine them, such as the possibility of an incarcerated person wanting to impress parole boards. Houston summarizes:

> The complexity of dance practice necessitates some caution in proclamations of transformation. At the same time, the community dance sector might feel confident in its ability to act in creating a space where something empowering might happen. In creating that space, practitioners, commentators, and politicians need to respect the power that dance may have to change lives. Without inflating its potential or ignoring the right of the individual to explore and to experience dance as he or she wants, they can simply provide, through dance, the framework of a bridge that participants may or may not wish to build on and eventually cross. (p 176).

Borstel (2003) illuminates Lerman's use of inquiry and community-building while making works about important issues with various community partners. Artistic process is central to Lerman's work as well as civic development; she encourages people to create and recreate their stories while simultaneously supporting democratic engagement. Participants involved in one of Lerman's Dance Exchange projects, the Detroit version of *Hallelujah,* a piece recreated in several U. S. cities, reflected that people coming together, hearing each other's voices, and listening to each other's stories was key to their experiences of engagement in and positive affect about dancing in *Hallelujah* (Borstel, 2003). The Dance Exchange also offers on its website a "toolbox"—instructions, theory and application of community dance practices; this is one of the only sources found that details dance practices in the field (http://danceexchange.org/toolbox/home.html).

Urban Bush Women's website states that UBW has been on the forefront of professional and community art-making, civic engagement, leadership and group dynamics for over two decades (www.urbanbushwomen.org). Jawole Jo Willa Zollar, UBW's founder and director, stated in a lecture demonstration at Southern Methodist University that in 1990 her company was among the first artistic group to use the term "community engagement" rather than "outreach." She suggested that "engagement" speaks to equity and relationship building rather than implying an unequal power dynamic where an artistic institution reaches out, or perhaps down, to local communities (www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBO7wFH396o). Inclusion, equity, grounded history, and movement as an equalizer are some of the tenets of the company's work.

Power differences in, between and among communities in community dance projects is implied in community dance's general focus on reciprocity, inclusion, and equity. Negotiating power differences can be complex; for instance, Ross (2008) and Berson (2008) examine the question of whether dancing in carceral institutions, similar to our RFK community, further facilitates a carceral institution's rehabilitation goals (such as cooperation or self-expression) or can be a possible vehicle for transgression, especially as dance "extends freedom of movement to highly regulated bodies within a system that depends on docility and discipline" (Berson, p. 81).

Chris Thomson (1994), U. K. writer and dance educator, categorized community dance practice into three types: alternative, ameliorative and radical. Roughly, *alternative* is a holistic approach to body/mind therapeutic connection; *ameliorative* is practice that focuses on well-being and recreation or leisure, and *radical* emphasizes empowerment for participants to overcome discrimination or oppression, challenging institutional order.

Linda Jasper (1995), another U. K. dance writer and educator, adds *community building* as a fourth category, where the focus is less on dance than on community development, and in particular the individual within the community (p. 187). Lomas (2009) adds yet another category—*interventionist*—where the focus is on developing and augmenting the potentiality and authenticity of each individual within themselves and their experience (p. 198). More recent anthologies of contemporary dance that include community-engaged work (Butterworth & Wildschutt, 2009; Karkou, Oliver & Lycouris, 2017) seem to align with these categories as well as focus on community-dance work performed by dance therapists as well as dance artists (Karkou et al., 2017).

My intention is to carry out conscious, mindful, bodily and bodily-aesthetic inquiry in a context of community-oriented pedagogy. I am not interested in whether this experience makes good dances, but on whether dancing makes good experiences. By that I mean I am curious about what these experiences, whatever their value, teach me as an educator/practitioner through the lenses of students and their lived understanding of their "experiential knowing." This interest in student meaning and understanding is congruent with critical, feminist, and phenomenological epistemologies of dance.

My interest in the lived experiences of my students leans on the educational phenomenological work of Max van Manen (1982, 1996, 2007, 2011, 2014), and the hope for students to discover meaning through dancing aligns closely with feminist dance education (Anttila, 2007, 2008; Bond, 1994a, 2000, 2017, in press; Frichtel, 2012, 2017; Marques, 1998, 2007; Stinson, 2004, 1998/2016d, 2016b). As mentioned above, pedagogical theories of Paulo Freire and John Dewey underlie CBL and its offshoots (Butin & Seider, 2012; Deans, 1999; Morton & Saltmarsh, 1997; Stanton, Giles & Cruz,

1999). Following is a discussion of critical, liberatory and phenomenological pedagogy and the influence of these perspectives on feminist dance educators.

Critical, Liberatory, and Phenomenological Pedagogy

Critical Pedagogy

Contemporary proponents of "engaged scholarship" (Butin, 2005; Butin & Seider, 2012; Deans, 1999) often point to Paulo Freire's (1970/2014, 1998; Freire & Macedo, 1987) work as the basis for theoretical and practical pedagogy. Based on his teaching of illiterate adults in Brazil and farmers in Chile, his theories have become the foundation of critical educational theory, or liberatory education. The first assumption of Freirean pedagogy is that any teaching must be forged "with, not for, the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity" (Freire, 2014, p. 48). Guarding against false liberation or fake demonstrations of help by oppressors, which maintains a patronizing stance, Freire argues that only those who have been oppressed, whose voices are not heard or valued, can free themselves as well as their oppressors from the dehumanization that racial, political, educational, gender, economic and cultural oppression creates.

Freire (1970/2014) posits a "problem-posing education," a humanist and liberating praxis in which people subjected to "domination must fight for their emancipation" (p. 86). He distinguishes this from the "banking" concept of education where teachers deposit learning into students who receive and file the deposits. In Freire's model, teachers and students become "subjects of the educational process" and the "world ... becomes the object of that transforming action by men and women which results in their humanization" (p. 86). Cultural theorist Henry Giroux, in a foreward to

Antonia Darder's (2017) second edition of *Reinventing Paulo Freire: A Pedagogy of Love*, emphasizes Freire's eminence as one of the founders of critical pedagogy and his ongoing struggle for justice and democracy (p. xi), maintaining Freire's focus in education as "eminently political" as it offers students conditions for self-reflection, a self-managed life, and critical agency (p. xii). According to Giroux, Freire positions education as an intervention, proposing that students enter a critical dialogue with history through dynamic interplay of many media and personal awareness, so that they might imagine a future that "would not merely reproduce the present" (p. xii).

Ira Shor (1987a, 1992), whom Giroux states is a leading author on how to guide teachers practically in Freire's work, is a proponent of how to use Freirean "dialogue pedagogy," which poses problems from student experience for class inquiry. Freirean dialogic pedagogy focuses on promoting student participation, affective engagement, and situated and multicultural self-consciousness, as well as instructing teachers on how to be problem-posers (rather than "bankers" depositing knowledge in students) and to facilitate critical dialogue, or dialogic education, in the classroom. Mutual discussion that balances the teacher's authority with student input is the basic premise of dialogic education, and among many aims, is meant to "de-silence" students.

Critiques of critical pedagogy over the last two decades have fueled major debates, which, according to Darder, Torres and Baltodano (2002/2017), have served to "prompt a deepening consciousness as to our interpretations of critical pedagogical theories and practices within school and society" (p. 14). Some of the critiques have been rooted in feminist views of identity, politics and pedagogy from scholars such as Elizabeth Ellsworth, Carmen Luke, Jennifer Gore, Patti Lather and Magda Lewis (2017,

p. 14). In general, feminists have called for the inclusion of personal biography in pedagogy and scholarship and for critical pedagogues to challenge patriarchy, even in the discipline's own use of language. For instance, Kathleen Weiler (1991) offers a critique of Freirean critical pedagogy through a feminist theoretical lens. Recognizing Freire's groundbreaking work in critically challenging traditional pedagogical norms especially within the class system in Brazil, Weiler also challenges the abstract nature of some of his terms, such as "humanization", which may mean different things to different groups of people, as well as the lack of intersectionality of his thinking—for "oppression", for instance, "what is not addressed is the possibility of simultaneous contradictory positions of oppression and dominance…[Freire] slides over contradictions and tensions within social settings in which overlapping forms of oppression exist" (p. 453). An example she gives is that a man can be oppressed by his boss at work, but then oppress his wife at home.

Weiler also suggests that the Freirean generic male teacher in his writings overlooks important reflections about race, class, gender, and ability that individual teachers and individual students need to consider about themselves and each other when reflecting upon transparency in teacher/learner relationships. Ellsworth (1989) and Orner (1992) also critique Freire in this regard, challenging Freire's abstract language and urging educators to scrutinize their positions of power, the meanings and uses of the student voice, and power relations in the liberatory classroom that might perpetuate injustice in the name of student empowerment. Orner (1992) states:

> It is important to note the currency that the concept of the student voice has across the so-called "paradigms" of educational research. Different rationales have been offered to justify the solicitation of the student voice. It is clear that why students are being asked to talk, and what they are

> being asked to talk about, varies along with the social, political, economic and cultural commitments of an array of research and teaching agendas. But what is more deeply entrenched, and less examined across the various calls for student voice, are patterns of relating to students and youth as Other. These patterns are virtually unassailable, given currently dominant conceptualizations in both mainstream and oppositional educational theory of the unified, rational subject. (pp. 76-77)

Other critiques of the field of critical pedagogy include its inaccessibility to people for whom it may be most useful through its elitist language, not focusing on class difference enough, its separation from human connection to nature and traditional forms of community knowledge (Darder et al., 2017, p. 18), and its whiteness—in representation of scholars and in its "failure to treat questions of race, culture and indigeneity as central concerns or from the specific location of racialized and colonized populations themselves" (Darder et al., pp. 15-16).

The spring/summer edition of the *Journal of Thought* (2008) is entirely devoted to the question: "Is it time to shelve Paulo Freire?" Editors Douglas Simpson and Sally McMillan list many critiques of Freire's work: he isn't Marxist, feminist, or Catholic enough, or his theory is too shallow, not taking into account complex global issues, or that his notion of love humanizes the dehumanizer (p. 4). However, these critiques, according to Simpson and McMillan, still speak to the influence Freire has on critical pedagogy, and the articles in this edition, despite the title, are tributes to Freire's work through contemporary iterations. McLaren and Kincheloe's (2007) *Critical Pedagogy: Where are we Now?* is another critique of Freirean legacy, with Kincheloe calling on the need for wider audiences, open-access writing and publishing, and learning insights from the "often subjugated knowledges of African, African American, Asian and indigenous peoples" (p. 10-11). And, although stating that critical pedagogy does not begin and end

with Freire, and foreground critiques (as mentioned above), Darder et al. (2017) find in Freire a living politics that reinforces the necessity for solidarity among critical pedagogical theorists and educators, and a loving ethics that supports educators to nourish an on-going emancipatory educational movement (p. 22).

In spite of critiques—or perhaps because of critical pedagogy's ongoing "deepening" (Darder et al., 2017) response to critique, critical pedagogy is known to support the philosophy and practice of democratic education and teaching for social change. Perhaps also, as Berdayas (2004) states, "Freire's writings illustrate the connection between a corporeally centered pedagogy and democratic politics" (p. 229); this connection might be what draws some dance educators towards critical or liberatory pedagogy. Berdayas suggests that Freirean dialogical relationship, where student-teacher interaction takes the form of a mutual dialogue, occurs inside an embodied encounter between student and teacher, or individuals, where a flexible and mobile interpersonal interaction is key to assuming a "plurality of perspectives" (p. 224).

Critical and experiential pedagogy. Related to critical pedagogy's focus on education that comes from the worldview and context of the students themselves, and is more experiential than didactical in nature, is John Dewey's (1938, 1938/1963, 1934/2005) experiential and democratic philosophy of education. In Dewey's conception of education, all learners—both teachers and students—are participants in the act of progressive education. A leading proponent of pragmatism, Dewey advanced the idea of learning as an active adaptation of humans to their environment (*Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, n.d.). Thomas Deans (1999) posits that Dewey's philosophies provide "precursor to and exemplar for" the theory and practice of service-learning (p. 15).

Relating Dewey and Freire, Deans suggests that they overlap in their emphasis on experiential education, connection of individual to society, and service to democratic ideals. Further, they both theorize the nature of reflective action (or Freirean "praxis") in relationship to learning and service, and in their roles as publicly engaged intellectuals and progressive political actors—Dewey as teacher and union leader, and Freire as a leader in grassroots literacy movements. In terms of difference, Deans proposes that Freire invites more critical reflection than Dewey does on race, class and power (p. 15). As mentioned above, however, some critics suggest that Freire does not go far enough into personal reflection on teacher and student identities. Deans emphasizes that the philosophies and practices of both Freire and Dewey contribute significantly to service-learning pedagogy. Freire, Dewey, and Max van Manen, pioneers within the lineages of critical pedagogy, pragmatic experiential education, and educational phenomenology, respectively, are pillars that scaffold the pedagogical lens of this study.

Phenomenological Pedagogy

Democratically engaged classrooms working within the ethos of critical and experiential pedagogy, where student input, life context and awareness, and reflection on their own meaning-making, is in alignment with phenomenology's "natural attitude." Bracketing assumptions about our world, in order to see it more "soberly" (van Manen, 2007), is both the premise of phenomenologically-oriented research such as this study (discussed in depth in chapter 3) as well as important practice in pedagogy and when meeting people and communities, similar or different to one's own.

> Phenomenology is a project of sober reflection on the lived experience of human existence– sober, in the sense that reflecting on experience must be thoughtful, and as much as possible, free from theoretical, prejudicial and suppositional intoxications. But, phenomenology is also a project that is

> driven by fascination: being swept up in a spell of wonder, a fascination with meaning. (van Manen, 2007, p. 12)

Educational phenomenological research influences practice, and vice versa. Kiely (2005) reports the service-learning field was looking to develop more rigorous frameworks to serve service-learning educational research; at the time much of the focus was on the impact of service-learning on students' personal, civic and cognitive development (p. 5). Kiely suggests that researchers should generate knowledge of, and develop theories about, the contextual, visceral, emotive and affective aspects that enhance transformational learning in service-learning (p. 18). Research from a phenomenological hermeneutic lens (such as this study) attends to the "how" (visceral, affective) of student experiences. This focus on how students experience the practice of service-learning supports in rigorous ways reflective learning, scaffolding the "praxis" of community-based dance education and influencing my own pedagogical practice in community-engaged dance education.

van Manen (1982) writes about phenomenological pedagogy as a calling to answer, a responsibility towards either student or child. Pedagogy is "something that lets an encounter, a relationship…be pedagogic" (p. 285); it is an act of being present to the particular student or child in that particular moment. This presence, or focus on being in the present, allows the educator to "bracket" theory and stay in connection with what the "calling" is in the moment of learning. van Manen also is concerned with how that moment may influence pedagogical tact. van Manen (1996) quotes Langeveld (1979), an

educator/philosopher who co-founded the Utrecht school of phenomenological pedagogy, as suggesting that phenomenological pedagogy is a moral act:

> Pedagogy does not just want to know how things are; pedagogical inquiry always has an inherent practical intent because sooner or later this knowledge figures in how one must act. (as cited in van Manen, 1996, p. 43)

Dance educators who apply phenomenological methods in their teaching and research include Ann Cooper Albright, Karen Bond, Sondra Fraleigh, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, and Susan Stinson, among others. Sheets-Johnstone's (1966/2015) first monograph, *The Phenomenology of Dance*, was the germinal treatment of the subject, focusing on how structural constituents of dance—force, time, space, rhythm, and expression—are comprehensible physically and intellectually to viewers, and how the qualities that arise in the phenomenological analysis of the experience of movement—tensional, linear, amplitudinal, and projectional—are understood immanently by actual participants. This immanent understanding can be elicited in words through phenomenology's focus on writing lived experience. Students engaging in this self-reflexive process with their own movement can add "sober" embodied meaning to their perceptions in community-engaged dance education.

Next is a brief exploration of how some dance educators have encapsulated critical pedagogy, experiential learning, and the highlighting of students' lived experiences into their teaching.

Critical, Feminist Dance Pedagogies

Dance educator Jill Green (2000a, 2001) uses Ellsworth's and Orner's questioning to reexamine her privileging of somatics education, which she views as a "liberatory" approach to dance education. Orner, Ellsworth, and Green advocate rigorous

self-reflection while teaching—on one's own assumptions about students and student voice—when working with a dialogical teacher-student relationship. As Berdayas (2004) states above, the dialogical relationship, where both student and teacher are investigating a part of the world and reflecting on their own presuppositions (p. 224), is used to facilitate supporting students' own voices and queries, which can in turn help lead the course's direction. In reflection on student voice, dance educator Eeva Anttila (2007) pinpoints not just what is said and who is saying it, but how it is said, the affective dimension such as tone or even silences (p. 51).

Anne Morris (2012), a dance educator interested in creating democratic classrooms, states that student input into the classroom's collaborative construction of knowledge, is predicated on an ontological view of a self that is, as Orner suggests in her critique of critical pedagogy, non-unified and non-rational:

> Our approach to teaching and learning should be constantly changing, constantly created anew, just as we are continuously creating and imagining our realities. This philosophy—that we have the power to create and change our realities, and that this process is continuous—seems to be a necessary perspective in an approach to critical pedagogy that emphasizes the student's power to be involved in the construction of knowledge and to be continuously involved in the creation of his or her own reality and a collective one. (p. 248)

Morris references Ellsworth's view of fluidity of self and the co-construction of knowledge across traditional boundaries of student/teacher. Ellsworth (2005) imagines a democratic civic pedagogy that creates "places in which to think about 'we' without knowing already who 'we' are," emphasizing the fluid notions of knowledge, power, and boundaries in a community that is constantly being created (p. 95).

Ojeya Cruz Banks (2009) employs Freire's critical pedagogy as a vehicle to understand that dance itself can be an expression of critical consciousness in addressing

cultural injustices and mobilizing social action. Banks focuses on the decolonization of education through the insertion of non-dominant forms of dance (p. 365). As noted earlier, in this study I work with improvisational dance practices of post-modern contemporary dance, which although western in origin, also move beyond the dominant practices of ballet and modern dance in American colleges and universities. Banks also sees somatic experiences as pathways to knowledge and identity, teaching us who we are and who we can become. Personal and professional alignment with this premise was part of my rationale for examining students' lived experiences of the three replicable post-modern dance and theater exercises chosen as primary data for the study. At the same time, I acknowledge that all embodied experiencing, based in any cultural form or dance genre, can create new knowledge.

Isabel Marques (1998, 2007), a dance educator who worked with Paulo Freire in Sao Paulo, Brazil from 1991-1992, foregrounds his work in her "context-based dance education," a term Marques coined for her model of dance education, which emphasizes students' relationship to their personal lives and contemporary issues. Anttila (2008) adopts Freire's concept of dialogic education along with theologian Martin Buber's focus on interrelationships in her dance teaching. She emphasizes joint responsibility and input of teacher and students into learning and material learned and the valuing of each individual contribution to the process.

Feminist dance educators and writers whose pedagogy include and engage with the lived experiences of their students and use these experiences to help shape curriculum also include Cooper Albright (2013b) through contact improvisation and feminist theory, Bond (1994b, 2000, 2013, 2017, in press) and her collaborations with Etwaroo (2005)

and Gerdes (2012) through phenomenological analysis of students' creative and literary contributions, and Stinson (1995, 1998/2016d, 2004, 2016b) through feminist theory's valuing of students' embodied meanings.

Community Crossings in Critical, Phenomenological Pedagogy

An underlying emphasis on horizontality is present in the critical pedagogy classroom, and with this, on *community* as an important aspect of learning. Traditionally, as bell hooks (2003) states, "colleges and universities are structured in ways that dehumanize, that lead [students] away from the spirit of community" (p. 48). In highlighting community, CBL and critical pedagogy are related and together can seem in opposition to academia. Parker Palmer (1998) states that it is impossible to nurture "communal ways of teaching and learning" in academia, and that those in the education field need to shift the focus from the individual as the "agent of knowing" to recognize that knowing and learning are communal acts that "require many eyes and ears…and discussion, disagreement, and consensus over what has been seen and what it all means" (p. 25). This study foregrounds this shift to the communal and relational growth of knowledge with its emphasis on student perceptions, bodily, written, verbal, and ever-changing, with many eyes and ears, within community partnerships.

Giroux (1992/2005) combines the historically and culturally situated perspective of cultural studies with critical pedagogy to define a radical critical pedagogy that has implications for CBL and community-based dance education. "Border pedagogy," his term for this radical educational intervention, is a riff on the cultural studies meme of "border crossings," the metaphoric and literal spaces where dominant and non-dominant ideologies and people intersect, and where power is differently inscribed on bodies,

minds, and cultures. Border pedagogy not only celebrates difference between cultures and people, but also provides the basis for "extending the struggle for justice and equality" into broader spheres of life (2005, p. 150). Giroux suggests that teachers use their authority to address difference as an historical and social construction in which all knowledges are not equally implicated in relations of power (p. 151).

Differences between cultures, people, and communities—of race, class, ethnicity, ability, age, languages, and worldviews—and their relationships to power, agency and resources, are a defining factor in any academic service-learning or community-based course. Giroux's theory of border pedagogy invites understanding of the "fragility of identity as it moves into borderlands…languages, experiences, identities intermingle with the weight of particular histories that do not fit into the master narrative of a monolithic culture…a potential source of creativity and possibility" (p. 151).

Students' level of comfort or lack of comfort in borderland artmaking was the focus of Karen Malandra's (2007) doctoral study of a community-based movement/theater project in North Philadelphia. The project was co-created by Church of the Advocate, the Arts Sanctuary (a community-based arts organization), and the Cross-Disciplinary Arts in Community Program at Tyler School of Art/Temple University. Malandra discovered that for students, border crossing was disturbing, challenging, discomforting and disorienting of their sense of self and self-knowledge—their ways of being, predispositions, and propensities—as well as being creative, playful, re-orienting, collective, and transformative (p. 182).

The present study, situated in CBL in education and critical pedagogy, including Giroux's (1992/2005) "border pedagogy," foregrounds the student-teacher relationship,

student voice (verbal and nonverbal), collaborative and communal learning, and steps across borders of socio-economic class and race. The course was delivered primarily through bodily experiences rather than text books and lectures, although students were given many visual and literary resources to view, read and write about. As their reflective writings examined for this research were based on their lived experience of selected dance improvisations, the vehicle for this study is the dancing body.

Embodied Knowledge, Dance Enaction, Somaesthetics

I consider that the concepts of "embodied learning" and "embodied knowledge" reflect the evolution from dualistic mind/body separation prevalent in western philosophy to the more contemporary understanding of body/brain/mind interconnectedness (Bresler, 2004, 2007). The idea of embodiment in the field of education references how the body/mind/brain learns, how the body/mind/brain knows, and how the body/mind/brain is wise. This integrated outlook on human capacity appears in current discourses in science, philosophy, literature, and the arts. Bresler (2004) offers a holistic perspective on embodiment, calling it, after Susanne Langer, a *Grand Idée,* which Clifford Geertz (1973) defines as "an idea that burst upon the intellectual landscape with a tremendous force…becoming the conceptual center-point around which a comprehensive system of analysis can be built..." (p. 3). Regarding her own education, Bresler (2004) shares that training in aesthetics and musicology gave her theory and analytic tools, while her "body…made those experiences meaningful and vibrant" (p. 9).

The idea that mind and motion are interrelated is not recent in western thought. In psychology, William James (1890) emphasized the "ideo-motor" connection in *Principles of Psychology*. In philosophy, German phenomenologists Edmund Husserl and

Martin Heidegger privilege the lived, sensorial experience as a source of knowing, and French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962/2012) focuses on body as the site of psyche, and on moving and being moved (or touched) as primary perceptions of the world. To Merleau-Ponty (1962), the body is the "horizon latent in all our experience … and anterior to every determining thought" (p. 92).

In education, the premise of an inherent connection between mind and body has been attributed to John Dewey and Alfred Whitehead, proponents of experiential education and "learning by doing," as well as through abstract thinking. Dewey (1933), who coined the term "body-mind" to attempt a linguistic integration, took apart what he considered the typical view of how thought is tied to language and rationality, stating, "language includes more than oral and written speech…gestures, pictures, monuments, visual images" (pp. 230-231). This moment in the journey of reunification (in western thought, at least) of mind, brain and body proposes that if abstract words alone are not tied to thought, then body, movement, gesture, and other behaviors can be. Harvard educational psychologist Howard Gardner (1983/2003, 1993, 1999) identified a bodily-kinesthetic intelligence as one of his original seven intelligences to which humans are predisposed, citing Martha Graham as an example (Gardner, 1993). Antonio Damasio (1999) refines the work of William James by delineating details of how our bodies support, enervate, and create feelings, and consciousness.

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1999) write extensively about embodied knowledge as the neural circuitry that is in concert with the outer environment and creates our ability to map our world: "An embodied concept is a neural structure that is actually part of, or makes use of, the sensorimotor system of our brains. Much of

conceptual inference is, therefore, sensorimotor inference" (p. 20). They place the locus of reason squarely in the body. In later work, Johnson (2007) revises this theory, proposing that sensori-motor interaction with the environment is dependent on even more "submerged dimensions of bodily understanding," the purview of "qualities, feelings, emotions, and bodily processes that make meaning possible" (p. x). An interest in the *felt* experience of human meaning-making developed in the present study as data analysis progressed.

Neurophysiologist and cognitive neuroscientist Marc Jeannerod (2006) details the neural anatomy of motor cognition in *Motor Cognition: What Actions Tell the Self*. Through human action the brain co-creates with the outer environment the following phenomena: consciousness, perceptions, distinctions between self-other, language, and more. This co-creation of knowledge between environment and human challenges the binary of biologically determined versus culturally-situated knower-in-movement. For Carrie Noland (2009), this co-creation introduces the possibility that kinesthetic knowledge gained through moving not only permits acquisition of cultural norms and follows biological predispositions, but also allows for realizing a potential for agency and creativity that goes beyond both (p. 15).

Dance Embodiment and Enaction

The term embodiment, used widely in many disciplines (Warburton, 2011) refers to theories that see the body and movement to be an integral part of knowledge, affect, memory—in general, human meaning (Barsalou, Niedenthal, Barbey & Ruppert, 2003; Sheets-Johnstone, 2003). Embodiment in dance (Koch, 2006; Koch & Fischman, 2011), refers to bodily phenomena, such as sensorimotor processes, in which the body as a living

organism, “its expressions, its movement, and interaction with the environment play central roles in the explanation of perception, cognition, affect, attitudes, behavior and their interrelations” (Koch & Fischman, 2011, p. 60). Human meaning therefore emerges from sensorimotor transactions with the world, and with other humans. Bodily-felt movements are central in human understanding and meaning-making. “Meaning arises from a nonconscious preverbal level coupled with the perceptual recognition of other human beings and given by intersubjective interaction” (p. 61). Aligned with the epistemology of constructivism that scaffolds this study, the concept of embodiment supports this study’s focus on how individuals can discover and create meaning from dancing, and how that meaning is co-determined and co-created by students’ bodies moving in relationship to other bodies, in space and time.

Dance educator Edward Warburton (2011) notes that the concept of embodiment has become important in many disciplines. He quotes Legrand, Grunbaum and Kreuger who state, “mental activity depends essentially not just on the brain but on the body as well” (as cited in Warburton, 2011, p. 66). Warburton also states that embodiment, and what embodiment means, varies among disciplines, compromising its power as a construct in scholarly discourse (p. 66). He proposes a re-languaging of embodiment in the field of dance as “dance enaction,” enaction being a term borrowed from cognitive science (Gallagher, 2005; Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 1991), which encompasses the lived experience of dancing and its intertwined emotional and cognitive nature, as situated in biological and cultural histories, moving through the world and being moved by the world. He parses the lived experience of dance into somatic, kinesthetic, and mimetic aspects of dance knowledge and skills. One constituent of dance knowledge is

empathy; Warburton sees dance empathy specifically as combining the feeling "in" the body (somatic), feeling "of" the body (kinesthetic) and feeling "for" the body (mimetic) (2011, p. 73).

As stated, "enaction" emerges from recent developments in cognitive science. In *Enaction: Toward a New Paradigm for Cognitive Science*, Stewart, Gapenne, and Di Paolo (2010) write that *enaction* offers not only an alternative to cognitive science's original computational theory of mind, but has developed since its first articulation in Varela, Thompson and Rosch's (1991) *The Embodied Mind*. To see cognition as enaction is to value the sensorimotor interplay between an organism and its environment: "A living organism *enacts* the world it lives in; its embodied action in the world constitutes its perception and thereby grounds its cognition" (Stewart et al., p. vii). Enaction conceives of knowledge as embodied action in the world (Koch & Fischman, 2011). Enaction also sees that the world itself is molded—it is not an assumed static concept. While acting, humans transform themselves and their world, as well as the world transforms humans. Making distinctions between embodiment and enaction, Koch and Fischman state: "The embodied approach gives greater emphasis to the individual aspect, whereas the enactive approach emphasizes the interactional and environmental aspects of corporeal meaning" (2011, p. 58).

Embodied Knowing While Dancing

Both embodiment and enaction in dance focus on the body's role in meaning-making, citing particular ways the dancing body teaches and how movement itself is its own form of cognition. Susan Stinson (1995, 2004, 2016b) writes about the "lessons learned" from a life in dance and dance education, and in a moving body. She relates a

number of instances of metaphorical gleanings from bodily sensations, such as the idea of holding on or letting go in her neck when swimming one day becoming the realization of holding on or letting go being the choices for classroom management (2004, p. 162). She concludes that we can "think only with what we know 'in our bones' and that attending to the sensory, followed by reflection, is a valuable source of such knowledge" (p. 162). Stinson quotes dance phenomenologist Maxine Sheets-Johnstone's claim that the "lived body is the basis for the evolution of human thought," and "finds a bodily basis for the origins of counting and language, as well as art-making" (as cited in Stinson, 2004, p. 162).

In *Thinking in Movement*, an evolving essay, Sheets-Johnstone (1981/2009a/2011b/2017) writes even more directly about the fallacy of separating thinking, movement, and rationality, stating that the very notion of "embodied knowledge" is a tautology; for her, movement *is* thinking, and our bodies have their very own "kinetic bodily logos" (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009a, p. 33). She discusses dance improvisation to argue that movement itself is thinking and not a vehicle for translation of thought, asserting that dance improvisation is the paradigm of thinking in movement. Movement *is* thought, happening in the moment and adapting to and with the world. She explains, "A certain way of moving calls forth a certain kinetic world, and a certain kinetic world calls forth a certain way of moving" (2009a, p. 34). Thinking in movement includes knowing and experiencing one's body and self as the subject of experience making. Later, Sheets-Johnstone (1999/2011b) rejects the terminology "embodied experience" and "embodied knowledge" for "bodily-kinetic-tactile experience," and also uses "kinesthesia" for the ability to sense inner sensations, asserting that this experience

is, again, knowledge itself. Dancing and knowing by dancing, while dancing, are interchangeable.

Sheets-Johnstone (2009a) uses phenomenological writing to describe the "kinetic bodily logos" inherent in dancing. I quote her first-person account of what happens as a mover in its entirety as a phenomenological description of thinking as bodily-kinetic-tactile-experience:

> To say that in improvising, I am in the process of creating the dance out of the possibilities which are mine at any moment of the dance is to say that I am exploring the world in movement; that is, at the same time that I am moving, I am taking into account the world as it exists for me here and now in this ongoing, ever-expanding present. As one might wonder about the world in words, I am wondering the world directly, in movement. I am actively exploring its possibilities and what I perceive in the course of that fluidity of other dancers about me, for example, or a sharpness and angularity in their movement. The density or fluidity, like the sharpness and angularity, are not first registered as a perception (still less as stimuli, and certainly not as sense-data), a perception to which I then respond in some manner by doing something. Qualities and presences are enfolded into my own ongoing presence and quality. They are absorbed by my movement, as when I become part of the swirl of dancers sweeping by me or am propelled outward, away from their tumultuous energies, or when I quicken to the sharpness of their movement and accentuate its angularity or break out of its jaggedness by a sudden turn and stillness. In just such ways, the global dynamic world I am perceiving, including the ongoing kinesthetically felt world of my own movement, is inseparable from the kinetic world in which I am moving. (pp. 31-32)

Sheets-Johnstone illuminates the inseparability of movement and movement choices from the world of moving, thinking, action, and perception. Perception isn't an isolated phenomenon creating an action or response. "Qualities" and "presences" of the world become enfolded into one's own qualities and presences: the world is experienced as a co-created inter-subjective and inter-dependent web of movement, thought, response, and action. Our sense of ourselves—our subjectivity—is integrated intersubjectively with that of others.

Miriam Giguere (2011) and Anna Pakes (2009) focus on specific cognitive capacities students employ while dancing and creating, whereas Finnish dance specialists Jaana Parviainen (1998) and Leena Rouihiainen (2008) reflect on the sensuous experiences of bodies in action, which promote, as Parvianinen wrote, "kinesthetic knowledge" (as cited in Rouihiainen, 2008, p. 253). Monica Frichtel (2017) explores the skills and content knowledge students report that is aligned with values of the Partnership for 21st century learning while engaged in a dance outreach program in an urban setting. Evolutionary anthropologist Ellen Dissanayake (1988, 1992, 2000) finds that humans have a biological predisposition to make art, based on the rhythms and movements of our early bonding relationships, which Bond (2008) and Sheets-Johnstone (2009b) theorize for dance specifically.

Oberlin University professor Ann Cooper Albright (2013b), one of the few dance educators who reference students' responses to specific dance practices in her classes, in particular contact improvisation classes, foregrounds meanings and knowledge that arise through dancing, which she describes as a "dialogue between the self and the world" (p. 240). Through this dialogue, "one becomes aware of the intriguing possibilities of interdependence, including a deeper sense of responsibility…an ability to respond…to be present with the world, and as a way of being present with oneself" (p. 240). Albright also suggests that dancing sparks co-created knowledge among dancers; she calls this "intersubjective dancing" (p. 257), where dancers are present, in different ways, to others.

Bond (2017), Bond and Etwaroo (2005), Bond and Gerdes (2012), and Frichtel (2012, in press), examine students' meanings of dance in a general education dance pluralism course at Temple University. This studio course, fulfilling Temple's diversity

study requirement, explores race, gender, ethnicity, class and ability—identity and difference—through dance. Bond and Etwaroo (2005) illuminate student meanings in their parallel sections of the course during the semester of the "9/11" terrorist attacks on New York's World Trade Center. Bond (2017) and Frichtel (2012, in press) studied multiple sections of the course over some years (2008-2014), finding student meanings related to gender, freedom, transformation, and community.

Privileging the construction of knowledge gained by moving, alone or in groups, as well as researching student perceptions, are two ways "Embodying Pluralism" connects with "Dance in the Community"; class discussions that center on issues of diversity is another. Both courses share the underlying assumption that when moving, we are indeed thinking, understanding, and learning as well as creating and relating. Research into students' meanings in higher education dance, through students' own words, is rare in dance literature—and arguably rare in education generally (Hounsell, 2005). Examples of student-focused research in dance in higher education, in addition to those mentioned above in which their own students in their classroom/studios were the subjects, include Alter (1972, 1997), Bracey (2004), Dyer (2010), Green (2001), and Huxley (2012).

Dance scholarship, whether phenomenological, ethnographic, artistic, or educational (or combinations of these), contributes to knowledge about the roles, meanings, definitions, politics, cultures and practices of dance throughout the world. For some, dancing offers a way of being in the world that not only teaches about the world, but also teaches something specific to moving. For instance, Warburton (2011) found in his first movement class as a child that "human beings can bond together through

rhythmical movement and expressions like joy, and dance is fundamentally about making those connections: to self, to others, to the world, and beyond" (p. 65). Similarly, in *The Body Keeps the Score*, Bessel van der Kolk (2014) suggests that rhythmically attuned movements, or synchrony, can promote self-regulation and community connection (p. 87).

Dancing as a way of knowing assumes body as knower, and engagement in this bodily modality encourages a kind of knowing that Lomas (2009) describes as "an empowered interaction within our lives in our capacity to create metaphor, to be human" (p. 195). Lomas questions the nature of professional and community dance and techniques, landing not on the "right body" or rigorous technical training (which might or might not result in a "good" dancer), but on the ability to "express through dance activity something authentic of self, some sense of ownership" (p. 197). The "dancing body" might know something of how to be human, affording a new understanding of what it means to be a "good" dancer.

Somatics, Somaesthetics: Feeling Body in Dance

Bodily awareness, bodily knowing, and the nature of embodiment are at the heart of somatics and somatic training in dance. "Somatics" encompasses the plethora of movement and body practices that focus on internal sensory-physical perception, or *interoception*. Thomas Hanna (1988/2004), considered the philosopher-practitioner who coined the term *somatics*, and pragmatist philosopher Richard Shusterman (1992/2000a, 1997, 2000b, 2004, 2012) writes about various movement techniques in relation to physical and mental health, as well as learning. Shusterman's (2000b) "somaesthetics" is the "critical, ameliorative study of one's experience and use of one's body as a locus of

sensory-aesthetic appreciation and creative self-fashioning;" he elaborates that, "knowledge is largely based on sensory perception" (p. 138).

Interoception, the perception of inner bodily states, can refer to sensations as well as feelings. Damasio (2000) describes interoception as "the ability of the internal viscera to sense changes in the chemical environment of the cells throughout the body, allowing humans to feel and sense what is going on internally" (p. 150). Albright (2013b) refers to "gut feelings" as part of felt sensations. Colloquially, and perhaps also intuitively, we "know in our gut." Somatic educator Eddy (2002, 2016) focuses on movement as a mode of conflict resolution and source of wellbeing, noting that movement studies can alter our actions in the world. Shusterman (2004) echoes Eddy, stating, "it is only by means of our bodies that we can act" (p. 52).

Philosophers Lakoff and Johnson (1999) and Russon (2009) agree that it is not only physical acts but also metaphorical, emotional and social acts that facilitate human interrelationships. Considering human relationships, dance writers and educators have described dancing as a pathway towards community (Bond, 2008; Frichtel, 2012; Lerman, 2011; Lomas, 2009; Rouhiainen, 2008). Leena Rouhiainen (2008) notes that our bodies "connect us to the … information, currency, artifacts, people, and thinking we live amongst" (p. 251) and "tuning into our own bodily experience is a way to "begin to construe ethical relationships with others" (p. 249). Relating feelings of our own bodies to feelings towards others, some dance educators propose that dancing can lead to the practice of empathy (Reynolds & Reason, 2012).

Feeling embodied empathy. Some dance educators have studied the role of bodily empathy in community-building. Albright (2009) suggests that the "more aware

we are of our own internal sensations, the more empathetic we are with other people" (p. 149). Marques (2007) factors empathy into reforming her teaching, "changing the focus…so that we dance with each other, not only for each other is one way that we can acknowledge the presence of others in our lives (p. 153). Groves and Roper (2015) practice "empathic pedagogy' in their dance teaching, noting:

> Lived experiences transcribed in the body shape the way we view the relationship between the many parts of ourselves, our relationship with others and our relationship with our environment, as fully integrated beings. This ability to connect 'self to self' and 'self to other' lies at the heart of empathic pedagogy. (p. 128)

Bond (2008) describes the development of an intergenerational "aesthetic community" grounded in practices of kinesthetic empathy through sharing rhythms, partner mirroring and group synchrony. She associates "aesthetic community" with anthropologist Victor Turner's "communitas," a social phenomenon characterized by participant absorption, recognition across difference, equability, and liberation from status hierarchies, among other bodily-aesthetic attributes.

In summary, it is becoming widely understood that knowledge is created through bodily experience, as examined and conceptualized in the past few decades as "embodied learning," "dance enaction," "somaesthetics," and other descriptors. *How* bodies "know" becomes the question in this study—specifically, how a group of college students in a community-engaged dance education course experience moving, and what kinds of knowledge they create.

Feminist Philosophies of Embodied Knowing

According to feminist philosophers Susan Bordo (1993) and Elizabeth Grosz (1994) issues of power and dominance are embedded in our bodies. Women have been

seen as enmeshed in bodily existence in a world that often privileges unembodied rationality: "Women are somehow more biological, more corporeal, and more natural than men" (p. 14). In dance, as discussed above, both male and female bodies are sources of knowing. Many feminist, phenomenological dance scholars (Albright, 2013b; Bond, 2017, in press; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Bond & Gerdes, 2012; Stinson, 2016b) hold an educational perspective that emphasizes "the lived experiences of our students' lives" (Shapiro, 1998, p. 9). Sherry Shapiro (1999) discusses the interpenetration of mind and body in how one comes to know the world, and how the world of mind, or rational world, is privileged or valued over the world of body, or sensual world. After Heidegger, she states, "thinking and being are, in a sense, one in the same" (p. 4). She cites his work on how early philosophical traditions led to epistemological exclusion of the concepts of *being*, *sensing*, and *body* in favor of thinking and knowing from a disembodied mind (p. 37).

Feminist theory suggests that inequities of power and dominance arise from mind/body dualism along gender lines (Bordo, 1993; Darder, 2011; Grosz, 1994; Shapiro, 1999; Young, 1977/2005), as well as those of race and class (McClintock, 1995). Mind/body dualism equates body, feminine, and private, juxtaposing these qualities against the more valued mental, masculine, and public. According to Shapiro (1999), however, meaning is created in the "living body," where both dominance and resistance of dominance are found:

> Embedded within perceptions and interpretations are personal experiences understood through a hegemonic consciousness that suspends us in the contradictions between a dominant and a resistant consciousness. From this space between domination and resistance is where meaning is found, securing the living body as the material that holds both. Ideas do not exist somewhere outside this living material. (p. 31)

Shapiro interviewed three female graduate student dancers about their lives in dance and found three key issues: the artist as solitary individual, the dance studio as home, and the body as a site for resistance and oppression (p. 107). Paying attention to how women's connection to the world has been defined historically by the relationship of their bodies to the world (pp. 106-107), she turns the discourse from the "mind in the body" to one of "minding of the body," or paying attention to body's ways of knowing and being (p. 107). Shapiro calls on critical pedagogy to subvert dominant ideologies that are "pressed into our flesh" (p. 79), a form of "cultural tattooing" (after McClaren, 1989) where bodies are inscribed by dominant ideologies. She gives a literary example, from Toni Morrison (1987/2006): "Hear me, they do not love your neck unnoosed and straight. So love your neck, put a hand on it, grace it, stroke it, hold it up" (as cited in Shapiro, p. 79). This act, subverting what is "pressed into our flesh," loving what is unloved, being in our bodies and acting from our embodied selves, is for Shapiro, a "task that an embodied critical pedagogy must choreograph in the intimate act of teaching" (p. 79).

This research is situated historically in the field of community-based learning (CBL) in the arts. Content and teaching methodology align with the values and goals of critical, feminist and phenomenological pedagogies, privileging the lived experience of dance, emphasizing its "intrinsic bodily authority" (Bond, 2001, p. 49)—its knowing "in the bones" (Stinson, 1995, p. 46). The next chapter presents the study's multi-modal research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGIES FOR ACTION: RESEARCH AND TEACHING

This chapter presents the study's epistemological underpinnings: research methodology and procedures are described in detail for a hermeneutic phenomenological project that affiliates also with aspects of participatory action research. The study's aim is to illuminate student meanings gathered from movement practice inside of "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community," a community-engaged dance education course at Hampshire College, Amherst, MA during the fall semester, 2014. I intend that this study will lead me to refine, reorganize, and redirect my work in the field and contribute to the literature on body-based practices in community-engaged education in the arts in general and dance in particular.

Epistemological Framing

This inquiry into the lived experience of students and teacher in a community-engaged dance program in higher education is situated within a post-positivist qualitative research paradigm grounded in constructivist and phenomenological epistemologies. Jill Green and Susan W. Stinson (1999) describe "post-positivist" as an "umbrella" term that underlies the variety of approaches to research that have arisen in response to the limitations of positivist traditions of research (p. 92). In this kind of inquiry, multiple methods and perspectives support an attempt to secure in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question rather than prove or disprove a quantifiable theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Green and Stinson (1999) refer to feminist educator and author Patti Lather's categorizations of post-positivist research purposes, such as understanding,

emancipating, or deconstructing, as ways of seeing the world, rather than the positivist goal of prediction (p. 93).

A typical post-positivist approach would be to collect data from diverse sources, often called triangulation. I prefer Laurel Richardson's (1990) term "crystallization," implying openness to more than a finite number of perspectives and viewpoints, like a crystal whose facets afford a clear, dynamic reflection. We can never capture reality with total objectivity, but we can approach an understanding of meaning, an appreciation of the depth of a given topic, and look closely at the phenomenon in question.

Constructivism

Constructivism posits that knowledge is created by individuals in relation to past knowledge and present environment; it assumes the relativity of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by various subjects, and aims toward interpretive understanding of subject meanings (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Twentieth century developmental psychologist Jean Piaget is generally thought to be the originator of constructivism, with Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner noted as major constructivists from psychological and educational fields.

Constructivism approaches knowledge differently from positivism's premise of an objective, "real" world independent of the subject. Instead, "knowledge refers to conceptual structures that epistemic agents, given the range of present experience, within their tradition of thought and language, consider viable" (von Glasersfeld, 1989, p. 124). Knowledge, therefore, varies according to background and experience, and is created and revised in relationship to context and other subjects. This study embraces the voices and perceptions of college students in "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community"

during the 2014 fall semester at Hampshire College, along with my own phenomenological and critical reflections on learning and teaching in the course.

As an emerging researcher within the constructivist tradition, I embrace the epistemological perspective that recognizes a mutually influential relationship between people, social systems, and the creation of knowledge. As a teacher who stands on the shoulders of educators who embody critical and liberatory pedagogy, or "problem-posing" pedagogy (Freire, 1970/2014), I hold the perspective that my students and I can co-create, with "co-intentionality" (Vandenburg, 2002), inquisitiveness, and an understanding of our own growth and change. In phenomenological terms, I hope to co-create with my students to achieve understanding beyond what is given, known, or accepted as a given by the dominant culture (Vandenberg, 2002). In this vein, I employ phenomenological methods in concert with aspects of participatory action research, as discussed in depth in the following sections.

Researching Lived Experience: Phenomenology

The focus of this practice-oriented educational research is to illuminate what is known, and what can be known, about student meaning making in a college dance course that interacts with non-college communities. Students' reflective writings about selected dance improvisation experiences are the main source for in-depth analysis. An entry questionnaire, class video recordings, informal talks and discussions, teacher and teaching assistant written reflections—both phenomenological and critical—supplement students' words and emergent meanings. I am also guided by dance scholars who apply phenomenological theories and methods in researching, writing, and teaching, especially

those who attend to student meanings of dance, such as Ann Cooper Albright, Karen Bond, Sondra Fraleigh, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, and Susan Stinson.

Educational phenomenologist Max van Manen (1990a) focuses especially on the links between researching lived experiences and pedagogical theory and practice. His work is based on the premise that research in education ought to "reflect on the lived experiences and practical actions of everyday life with the intent to increase one's thoughtfulness and practical resourcefulness or tact" (p. 4). He defines pedagogical tact as "an active intentional consciousness of thoughtful human interaction…a moral concern: we are always tactful for the sake of the good of the other" (p. 43). I seek to increase my thoughtfulness and tact as a teacher and scholar in the field of community-based dance.

In the present study, application of phenomenological methods to collect and analyze student data was intended to create a space for considering the meanings created by students in selected dance improvisations. Specifically, students' lived experiences, as reflected in their writing, speaking and moving, were analyzed, at times in poetic form, to decipher and thoughtfully, carefully, respectfully step into their proverbial shoes to feel and understand their experience from their perspective. This approach attends to each unique, singular voice, placing these in relation to the elusive wholeness of a phenomenon, sometimes seeking the "essence" of the phenomenon, that is, seeing meaning, or "in-seeing" into "the heart of things," as van Manen phrases it, referencing Rainer Maria Rilke (as cited in van Manen, 2007, p. 12). Phenomenological research strives to illuminate human possibility.

> An appropriate topic for phenomenological inquiry is determined by questioning of the essential nature of lived experience: a certain way of

> being in the world…a preoccupation with both the concreteness (the ontic) as well as the essential nature (the ontological) of lived experience. (van Manen, 1990a, pp. 39-40)

A phenomenon can be anything that humans experience and that looking deeper into might reveal meaning and understanding. James Magrini (2012) writes, "There are transcendental ontological structures [phenomenon] that provide form to our empirical existence, we instantiate these structures when enacting our existence yet proximally and for the most part we are not aware of them" (n.p.). Researching a phenomenon, such as the bodily experience of a dance improvisation, we are looking to find the "essential nature" of that experience, the thing or things one might feel or understand without necessarily being aware of feeling or understanding them. Phenomenological inquiry is meant to recognize and possibly further understand these experiences.

Phenomenological inquiry is aligned with post-positivism in recognizing the *lifeworld*, or world as "lived" (van Manen, 1990a), as too complex to define in objective, rational terms. Further, the phenomenon researched, those experiencing the phenomenon, and those researching the phenomenon are related intersubjectively in the process of discovering more about the phenomenon and its meaning. van Manen argues for a broadened notion of rationality that includes redefinition of *objectivity* and *subjectivity*, as well as for standards for disciplined self-reflection. Understanding meaning does not need to become a vague or inconclusive opposition to rationality. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) offer an alternative to the "myths" of objectivism and subjectivism in "experientialism," which honors rationality and imagination but does not uphold objectivism's claim to absolute truth or subjectivism's claim to unrestrained imagination. Meaning is situated as well as structured, personal as well as perceived.

According to van Manen (1990a) the aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive reliving and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful: a notion by which a reader is powerfully animated in his or her own lived experience (p. 36). His methodological process includes the following actions in dynamic interplay:

- turning to a phenomenon [a human experience] that seriously interests us and commits us to the world;
- investigating experience as lived rather than conceptualized;
- reflecting on themes that characterize the phenomenon;
- describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting;
- maintaining a strong and oriented relation to the phenomenon; and
- balancing the research context by considering parts and whole (pp. 30-31)

van Manen explains that phenomenological themes are not generalizations, but rather "like knots in the webs of our experiences, around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through meaningful wholes" (p. 90). Themes are like clues to navigating and exploring the meaning behind experiences.

To mine textual data for thematic meanings, van Manen points to three approaches—holistic, selective, and line-by-line. In the holistic approach, one attends to the text as a whole and tries to formulate a phrase the captures its meaning. In the selective approach, the text or words are reviewed several times and statements that seem essential or revealing about the phenomenon are highlighted as "clues to meaning." In the line-by-line approach, every sentence is viewed as a meaning unit that might shed light on the phenomenon being described (pp. 92-93).

Phenomenological methods in dance research. Albright (2011) proposes that the body's prominence in perception, and therefore in phenomenology, is a main reason that dance scholarship has taken it up as a serious research methodology:

> Over the course of the last thirty years, phenomenology has replaced aesthetics as the philosophical discourse of choice for dance studies, prodding scholars to think about a broad continuum of moving bodies within the cultures they inhabit. Generally speaking, phenomenology is the study of how the world is perceived…a way of describing the world as we live in it—a philosophical approach that positions the body as a central aspect of that lived experience. (p. 8)

Dance scholars have been influenced by phenomenologists of the 1990s who according to Fraleigh (2000) were, "opening up new vistas of organic being, mapping our way back to the body, our body back into the natural world" (p. 54). These include David Abrams (1996), Alphonso Lingis (1998) and Bruce Wilshire (1998), as well as the earlier French existential philosophers who extended the work of German phenomenologists Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger: Simone de Beauvior, Gabriel Marcel, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Paul Ricouer, and Jean-Paul Sartre.

Fraleigh's (1987, 1991, 2000, 2004, in press) existential phenomenological writings seek to elucidate dance from the lived perspective of both dancer and viewer. She values the pre-reflective, immediate experience of being in the world over the process of interpreting experience through existing critical theoretical frameworks. Lived experience writing speaks to the kinds of sensing, feeling and knowing available in dance. Fraleigh (1991) counters criticisms by cultural theorists that phenomenological writing is too subjective, isolated, or internal to offer meaning; she draws out the importance of the individual's interaction with the surrounding world, as constituted by "objects, natural phenomena, and other human beings," stating, "inter-subjectivity is a given" (p. 11).

Carrie Noland (2009) extends the subjectivity discourse. Arguing that post-structuralism fails to account for subject agency and that theorists interested in subject

individuation have neglected to look at the experience of movement as a source of agency, she asserts that movement, what she calls "gestures," are formative in the creation of what is considered subjective. She defines gestures as "the organized forms of kinesis through which subjects navigate and alter their worlds" (p. 4), embody and challenge culture—through corporeal performance (p. 3). For Noland, "subjectivity" includes the embodied history of the subject—the moving, gesturing and learning body over time, including its cultural layers—and how bodies, through movement, vary, resist, comply, and challenge the cultures to which they belong. I read Noland as arguing that subjectivity itself is both "cultured" and "singular," and that the moving body is the nexus of the two. Noland references dance writer Susan Leigh Foster's (1995) formulation of the body as text:

> The possibility of a body that is written upon but that also writes asks scholars to approach the body's involvement in any activity with an assumption of potential agency to participate in or resist whatever forms of cultural production are underway. (cited in Noland, 2009, p. 15)

Fraleigh (2000) suggests three possibilities for developing phenomenology in dance research: 1) validation of personal and shared experiences—learning how to voice the somatosensory experience to share it (to make the personal social); 2) to create knowledge "that brackets body-mind integrity as the descriptive essence of phenomenology and provides a basis for self-understanding"; and 3) to link human consciousness to the nonhuman world, "seeking to amend the destructive nature/culture split" (p. 55). In this study, I am concerned with the first two possibilities. My intention is to illuminate personal and shared experiences of certain dance improvisations through students' and my own descriptive writing. I also invited students to speak about their

experiences and endeavored to create a classroom environment of self-inquiry related to what our bodies can discover, learn, and know.

Stinson, Blumenfeld-Jones, and Van Dyke (1990) applied van Manen's (1990a) phenomenological hermeneutic method to study student meanings of dance, focusing on advanced-level adolescent studio dancers. Bond and Stinson (2000/2001, 2007/2016) widened the lens to study a large multi-age (3-18), international sample of multi-modal data (interviews, observations, and young people's drawings and writings about dance). Their two published studies highlight young people's experiences of the superordinary in dance (Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001), and of work (as in labor) and achievement in dance (Bond & Stinson, 2007/2016).

Since the early 1990s, Bond, along with colleagues and graduate students, has generated extensive multi-modal research focusing on participant meanings of dance and influenced by van Manen (Asker, 2001; Bingham, 2017; Bond, 1994, 1999, 2001, 2008; Bond & Deans, 1997; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Bond & Richard, 2005; Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001, 2007/2016; Conley, 2014; Dalgleish, 2002; Dunphy, 1996; Elkins, 2007; Frichtel, 2012, in press; Mullane, 2000; Nance, 2014, in press; Richard, 2009, in press; Schlusser, 2000; Vieira, 2007, in press; Vieira & Bond, 2017; Vlassopoulos, 1996; Wu, 2005). Bond's solo work has become increasingly articulated within a feminist critical phenomenological perspective (Bond, 2013, 2017, in press). The present study affiliates with this lineage of experiential researchers, adding to phenomenologically-based scholarship in dance and dance education.

Researching 348 students' perceptions of gender in 16 sections of "Embodying Pluralism," a general education dance course at Temple University (2008-2014), Bond

(2017) adapts van Manen's analysis methods for isolating themes, also drawing on conventional qualitative content analyses procedures (Saldaña, 2009). She rigorously analyzes student writings, generating categories of meaning, all the while pursuing a layered holistic analysis after van Manen (2014). Themes emerge that elucidate student experiences of gender, extending gender discourses in evolutionary biology, neuroscience, social and cognitive psychology, as well as dance. Research findings are presented thematically, with theoretical reflection following. Bond also at times includes poetic depictions, or research poems made from dancers' words, intended to distill or crystallize dance meanings (Bond, 2001, 2017; Bond & Deans, 1997; Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001).

In this dissertation research, thematic analysis is grounded in immersion in students' writings, employing van Manen's (1990a) holistic, selective and line-by-line procedures described above. I aimed to keep in "bodymind" (Dewey, 1938) the importance of "situating the experiential voice" (Fraleigh, 2000, p. 55), making sure to also allow for discrepant, overlapping, and dissenting voices. In finding personal meanings we might not be able to release entirely from the cultural and political, the contexts in which we live. According to Fraleigh, even in situating the experiential voice in the cultural and political, which makes it unique and differentiated, phenomenology is concerned with intersubjective connection, or what is shared, in experience.

Phenomenology does not rest just on the uniqueness of subjective experience. Rather, its mission is to find "irreducibles of subjectivity, those affective connections humans have with each other and non-human nature as well. In the language of phenomenology, this is 'intersubjectivity,' our transcendence of self toward others and

the world" (p. 56). By researching students' lived experiences of dancing in the context of community-engaged dance education, I hoped to discover meanings that are singular and those that are collective—understandings that students shared through their unique positionalities and contexts.

Fraleigh (2000) layers research methodology into two levels of knowing, or consciousness: 1) the intuitive descriptive, where what is written is "what matters" in the moment of description; and 2), the hermeneutic, where one comes to understand meaning, or what has been discovered in the descriptive process (p. 59). These levels of consciousness reflect van Manen's (1990a) phenomenological hermeneutics, which: pays attention to description of the lived experience as closely as possible, bracketing assumptions and interpretations, and reflects on what that description might mean.

Protocols used in the present study asked students for description, including sensory awareness, of their dancing experiences, and prompted them to avoid interpretation and evaluation of their experiences. I then sought to understand or elicit meaning from student writings and my own teaching reflections, also bracketing interpretation and assumptions at first, and then, staying as close to students' words (and my own) as possible. I endeavored to access layers of meaning through extensive analysis and in-depth "steeping" (my word) in the data.

Through the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology, or descriptive interpretation, my desire in this study is to know more about how my students and I experience and learn from some of the somatic experiences I offer inside a class in community-engaged dance education. I examine participant experiences of studying dance and movement, and my hope is to learn by so doing how I might change and grow as a teacher and learner in

these experiences. This emphasis on pedagogical transformation locates my study in the methodological domain of action research.

Action Research

There is nothing so practical as a good theory. (Lewin, 1951, p. 169)

The act of studying one's own class by collecting ongoing data and feedback from students has origins in mid-twentieth century developments in action research. Action research has metamorphosed over the decades since Kurt Lewin, widely credited as the founder of the action research movement in the mid-1940s (Kemmis, 1993). Lewin (1951) focused on how research and social action influence each other, and proposed cycles of within-group research involving planning, action, and fact-finding interspersed with group reflection and feedback. Lewin is also known for his integration of theory and practice, as in the quote above, and in coining the term "group dynamics."

There is some contention about Lewin's paternity of action research. Stephen Kemmis (1993) suggests that Jacob Moreno, who influenced Lewin, was involved in action research that aimed to develop activism and influence social movement, not just change or shift individual behavior. In the 1950s, action researchers became divided into those wishing to highlight social action (Corey, 1953; Shumsky, 1956) and those viewing action research more as a method of inquiry in general (Chein, Cook, & Harding, 1948; Kemmis, 1993). Lin Norton (2009) identifies two main traditions of action research: a British school linking research to the improvement of educational practice, and the American school, which has a social change agenda (p. 51).

Action research in education refers to a disciplined inquiry done by a teacher (in this case a college instructor) with the intent that the research will inform or change their

practices in the future (Ferrance, 2000). Action research in education is focused on translating research to practice, not theory alone. This process includes posing questions with students, gathering data from students, reflecting on the data, and deciding on a course of action. In the present study, the course of action is the continued development of coursework and the pedagogy of bodily practices in community-engaged dance education. To these ends, Carson and Sumara's (1997) statement in *Action Research as a Living Practice* is relevant:

> When forms of research are specifically organized around questions of learning, understanding, and/or interpretation, they are, in the broadest sense, concerned with education and, thus, may be considered educational. When they self-consciously attempt to alter perception and action they are transformational. Any form of inquiry that fulfills these three criteria, we believe, constitutes a form of action research. (p. xxi)

Action research focuses on creating change, bettering some aspect of what is researched. van Manen (1990b) critiques some of the assumptions held in early formulations of action research, including that action research will create change. He poses questions about how change comes into effect and what constitutes real change in education. For instance, although action research is predicated on making change through researching what is needed to create that change, van Manen asserts that in actuality, action research can focus better on what has occurred than on planning for a future occurrence. Action research as a methodology cannot itself create a changed future, but an understanding of the past (p. 154). This study is among those focused on the notion of teacher as researcher, a position that teacher education in the U. S. has embraced only recently, according to dance educator/researcher Jill Green (2001). Green references Adler (1993) and Hammack (1997) who suggest that the benefits of teacher-as-researcher

projects can include greater professionalism, intimacy with data and participants, and productive collaboration (Green, 2001, p. 160).

Origins of this dissertation research are in the classroom. Students were invited to participate, and our classroom and its materials were part of the research and part of the consensual process of each student in deciding to take the class; in this sense, the students are de facto partners in the research process. We collaborated by relaying information verbally and drawing out themes that arose in our discussions together. More specifically, I conducted action research grounded in phenomenological data to better understand students' lived experience of their bodies and movement. At the same time, I pursued an interest in improving my own teaching practice through the research. The kinds of change I seek are ones that can transform my practice and support student learning in relation to their bodily awareness, their understanding of movement experience, and their meanings of dancing with college peers and community partners.

Carson and Sumara (1997) call for a holistically oriented view of action research and of the lives of educational practitioners, students, and communities. They espouse that research is included in the complexity of the researcher's lived experience, not something separate and done to or with a group of people:

> The question of "How does one conduct educational action research?" is thus replaced with the question 'How does one conduct a life that includes the practice of educational action research?'...Who one is becomes completely caught up in what one knows and does. (p. xvii)

This perspective on educational action research supports my goal of learning as I teach, reflecting as I learn, and interfacing with the responses and feedback of my students. Cycles of doing and reflection support a praxis of embodied learning and knowing that I engage with and hope to continue to engage with alongside my students. Using four

components of service-learning pedagogy—preparation, action, reflection and evaluation, or PARE (University of Maryland, 1999) and how service-learning in the arts can develop social and emotional learning in teacher and learner (Russell & Hutzel, 2007), I hope that my teaching continues to be strengthened by embodied critical reflection within the context of a class that is focused on how movement teaches and how movement might change, and change us, as we practice it in various settings.

Norton (2009) outlines a five-phase action research strategy: 1) identify a problem/paradox/ issue/difficulty; 2) think of ways to tackle the problem; 3) doing it; 4) evaluating it (actual research findings); and 5) modifying future practice (p. 70). Applying Norton's steps, my "issue" or "problem" (mentioned earlier in the dissertation) was that in previous classes students have taken a "games" approach to bringing movement into community settings, so that movement itself or embodiment takes a back seat to games. I offer various movement activities in the first few weeks and then help students create classes to lead in community environments. For example, during the fall 2013 class at Hampshire, many students co-facilitated workshops that became a series of games strung together, without curricular cohesion, depth, or range of physical experiences. Some of the games also were primarily verbal.

While my own work includes movement games, I also create lesson plans that extend a dance idea and build to a dance and at times dance-theatre event. I wanted to keep the fun aspect of games, but to "tackle the problem." In the fall 2014 class and research site I increased the content involving physicality and dance—learning and knowing from a bodily perspective. I included more advanced teaching methods: how to extend a movement idea and goal throughout a single session and a series of workshops

to create an "arc" of a more complete and cohesive experience. My aim was for both Hampshire studio peer sessions and community partner sessions to have clearer progression and greater cohesion. We accomplished this through dancing, discussion, writing, and co-facilitating dance experiences. Finally, per Norton, I "evaluated" the research findings for the purpose of future modification of my teaching and to share this process and practice with others. The student writings shed light on what students might learn in a cohesive dance experience and in specific dance improvisations, deepening understanding of CEDE at large and of what emphasis on dancing and embodiment over verbal experiences can offer the field of community-engaged education in the arts.

According to Norton's (2009) review of action research in schools and universities, critiques of action research often fall into two categories: 1) it is not seen as "proper" research in the positivist, scientific tradition; or 2) it is seen as largely untheorized descriptions of practice (p. 60). Norton (2009) frames the debate about proper research by suggesting that the ultimate purpose of action research is similar to positivist social science: persuasive, purposive, positional, and political. He suggests that promotion of action research's emphasis on collaboration and subject engagement might shift it into a more acceptable position in the university research culture, that is, as an effective way of changing knowledge and practice (p. 62). Norton also emphasizes that positivist PhD research can have findings of little practical use and a small readership. Along with other researchers (Bartlett & Burton 2006; Clough & Nutbrown, 2002/2012; Cotton & Griffiths, 2007; Elliot, 1998), Norton (2009) argues that it is precisely the description of practice—the collaborative production and articulation of "little stories,"

the lived experiences of students and teachers, that improves the quality of pedagogical practice (p. 65). In describing our world, our world changes.

Dance educator and researcher Miriam Giguere (in press) situates her approach to action research within Reason and Bradbury's (2008) framework of first person, second person and third person, and Noffke and Somekh's (2009) elaboration of personal, professional, and political. First-person/personal action research aims to refine teaching practice via systematic self-reflection; second-person/professional focuses on others' learning in an area of mutual interest in order to improve educational practice; and third-person/political extends inquiry into the wider community for the purpose of improving it in particular ways or advocating for social change (Giguere, 2014; Noffke & Somekh, 2009; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). The present study, with its primary focus on student meanings of embodied practice in "Dance in the Community" as well as on how these meanings inform and improve my pedagogical understanding and practice, spans first person/personal and second person/professional categories.

Pedagogical Methodology

Determining phenomena to study that might transform my practice was based on a number of variables, including the nature of vulnerable populations and ethical considerations in studying community partners. Further, the literature on what I came to call community-engaged dance education (CEDE) was sparse on actual dance practices and even more so on student meanings of those practices. Further delimitations were discussed in chapter 1. The decision to zone in on college students' written reflections on three replicable dance improvisations that they themselves chose to share with

community partner members was a social constructivist strategy emphasizing my attempt at a horizontal leadership style in this class.

In this section, I describe the pedagogical approach I brought into the study. I include this for the sake of transparency, to situate the course in the field at large, and to provide an entry point for identifying changes in my teaching, both philosophical and practical. Initial details of the class, including student demographics and sample reading references, were provided in chapter 1 (see The Class) and a detailed syllabus can be found in Appendix E.

As introduced in chapter 1, community-engaged courses in higher education generally begin with addressing an area of mutual concern or focusing on a need of a particular community or community partner. In this study, the class's two community partners had both indicated through conversations over several months (RFK) or several years (Treehouse) that they wanted to engage with dance in some way. Although I had begun a conversation with Treehouse a few years earlier, the dance connection occurred first in this class. The administration at Treehouse was interested in how dance could further acknowledge their foster community members' interdependent relationship. The theme of interdependence appeared as a Treehouse core value on community posters, for example, on the main social room wall, and I assumed it was a familiar theme for members.

For RFK, entering the community—an important aspect of community-based work (https://www.urbanbushwomen.org/learn-with-ubw/), was a different process. The first U. S. iteration of this class I taught was at Mount Holyoke College, and I found RFK through their CBL office. This was an institution Mount Holyoke was hoping to establish

more connection with. I met the head teacher (the youth go to school on site) and administrators over a few months to discuss if and how they wanted to offer dance for the youth in their treatment center. Both teacher and administration emphasized wanting the youth to move, to dance, and to have fun. The head teacher also focused on the value of connecting college students to youth at RFK as a way of opening up horizons for the youth.

It is important to note that neither the youth at RFK nor the community members at Treehouse were contacted about their desires prior to our first session with them. For RFK, an institution where youth are temporarily in residence (for three to five months), entering and exiting according to when they are sentenced, prior communication is not possible. Although the youth at RFK were mostly present at all five weekly sessions in 2014, attendance is often unpredictable. Prior to entering either community, the college students either met a representative of the community partner or I provided information for students to read reflecting its values and goals.

Given the needs identified by the administrations of both community partners (interdependence, fun, and moving), and the short time frame of our interactions (Treehouse – two sessions in two weeks; RFK – five sessions in five weeks), I created a syllabus that addressed those needs in ways that both my students and community partner members could lead the process at various times. For instance, at Treehouse, the dance improvisations (Human Puzzle, Mirror) were meant to augment the idea of interdependence. While both improvisations were facilitated by two or three college students with their peers participating, Treehouse members created and led the making of a visual puzzle completed together on our second day. I encouraged student facilitators to

support the larger goals of the collaboration and the more immediate goals of the community. For instance, student facilitator lesson plans for the day that Treehouse led this visual puzzle process included a warm-up using the Mirror as a way to "form movement relationships that could contribute to the art piece" and the time and space for Treehouse to lead the visual puzzle.

At RFK, Hampshire students led the Approach/Avoid improvisation after which RFK youth wanted to use movements that emerged from this improvisation, among other movements they created, in a dance-off event that they initiated during a conversation with Hampshire students. I encouraged Hampshire students to ask RFK youth and Treehouse members what they wanted and what kinds of dancing they wanted to do. Given the short time frame for both, I decided that a mixture of student led and community member led approaches was appropriate. For instance, at one session an RFK youth requested learning Bachata, and the next week one of the Hampshire students who knew the dance co-led a Bachata lesson with one RFK youth, along with input from other RFK participants who were familiar with but wanted to know more about the form. Student facilitator lesson plans for the day the Bachata was co-led included Approach/Avoid as a way to "bring the component of touch as a preface to the Bachata."

Overall, my focus pedagogically was on bridge building, so that students and community partner's members had the chance to learn from each other and engage in leadership opportunities. In general, the activities I offered Hampshire students encouraged input from all participants—their stories, needs, and ideas—including creative activities such as making short dances that invited collaboration, and providing opportunities for community partner's members to lead. The three dance improvisations

mined for student meaning in this study—Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid—were chosen by students during the first three sessions of our class from several possible improvisations. Students' choices of improvisations they would take to community partner sites were based on class discussion of community partner's stated goals and co-facilitated by three students on either the first or second day in community partner sessions.

My pedagogical approach for "Dancing in the Community" during the 2014 research semester was to introduce college students to community-based dance work, to represent the directions that this work has taken in the U. S. and the U. K., to problematize the relationship of college and community interactions, to discuss issues of privilege and power differential inside this work, and to facilitate their co-creation of dance-focused workshops that highlighted bridge-building and co-learning with non-college populations. Readings and viewings that students wrote about and discussed in class were exemplified briefly in chapter 1 and are available in Appendix E.

Importantly, the foci that community partner administrations requested—interdependence (Treehouse) and embodied fun (RFK)—lent themselves to what Thomson (1994) has called an "alternative" approach, one that is oriented towards a body/mind therapeutic connection, and in part (for RFK) to an "ameliorative" approach, focusing on well-being and leisure, as distinct from a "radical" approach, which emphasizes empowerment for participants to overcome discrimination or oppression, challenging institutional order (as cited in Amans, 2008, p. 12). I also situate my community-engaged pedagogy in part in the "community-building" approach (Jasper, 1995), focusing on community development (p. 187) and while engaging in this study,

also saw the course as "interventionist" approach (Lomas, 2009), augmenting the potentiality of each individual within themselves and their experience (p. 198). Class discussions, readings and viewings oriented students towards a more "radical" approach, forcing students to reflect on concerns of privilege, power and systemic oppression.

In sum, in the 2014 iteration of "Dance in the Community," a course I came to conceptualize as "community-engaged dance education," I endeavored to integrate phenomenological, feminist, and critical pedagogies. This included questioning the role of the artist in various communities and considered reflection and discussion on issues of race, privilege, gender, class, and power, along with student and teacher reflection on lived experiences of movement engagement and interaction.

Since the 1990s, a number of dance educators have examined higher education students' lived experiences and reflections for insights into dance teaching and learning, and to develop as teachers (Albright, 2010, 2013b; Bond, 2017; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Bond & Gerdes, 2012; Dyer, 2010; Frichtel, 2012, in press; Green, 2001; Morris, 2012). Albright (1997, 2010, 2013), Bond (2017), Bond & Etwaroo (2005), Bond & Gerdes (2012), Frichtel (2012), and Morris (2012) are particularly relevant to my study for their focus on non-major dance students.

Summary of Epistemological Framing

This study is based on the following qualitative sources: lived experience writings related to selected dance improvisations in college and community settings, teacher-researcher observations of video-taped movement and class discussions, and teacher reflective journaling about the pedagogical process. Although contextualization for student lived experience writings came from student questionnaires administered at the

start and finish of the course and students' journal writings, due to the meanings students shared about their general knowledge of dance studies and CEDE, the main sources of data for the study are the student writings describing lived experiences of three dance improvisations—Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid—at Hampshire, Treehouse, and RFK.

As the data are gleaned from explorations of humans into their "lifeworld," van Manen's hermeneutic reflective process incorporates what he terms "lifeworld existentials" (p. 101) as guides for reflection; these include lived space (spatiality), lived body (corporeality), lived time (temporality), and lived human relation (relationality or communality). van Manen suggests that in research one can study the existentials in their differentiated aspects. As a dance practitioner, I recognize these existentials as associated with the elements of dance articulated in Laban Movement Analysis (LMA)—body, space, time, energy (energy is not in van Manen's existentials), and relationship (Preston-Dunlop, 1998). The congruence of van Manen's and Laban's categories created a sympathetic pathway for me to enter as I read and reviewed the data. The alignment between van Manen's lifeworld existentials and LMA concepts could have created a "shortcut" to interpreting the data; but instead, many times, I endeavored to suspend my prior knowledge and assumptions in order to stay in "wonder," or to "make the familiar strange" (Sheets-Johnstone, 2015, p. xxiv), Sheets-Johnstone's metaphor for bracketing. However, even though I focused solely on students' words rather than on an a priori assumption about what the words might reveal, the data themselves did suggest temporality, corporeality, spatiality and relationality, along with Laban's energy, or "effort."

In this multi-site study, I wondered whether perspectives discovered on campus or at our community sites would support, counter, or extend current conceptualizations of community-engaged learning, as discussed in chapter 2. As I examine students' meanings and my pedagogical musings, I hope to add to the literature on embodied knowledge in community-engaged dance education. This multi-modal research project is designed to illuminate the bodily meanings of dance practices inside of a particular CEDE setting, while simultaneously giving me a methodological mirror through which to see my own gaps, limitations, and strengths in order to better myself as an educator in CEDE pedagogy.

Research Methods and Procedures

Post-positivist researchers have been critiqued for the stance that the researcher is a central and visible part of the research (Fraleigh & Hanstein, 1999); from a positivist perspective, the researcher being central and visible renders an investigation biased and nonobjective. Both phenomenology and action research answer this critique with the post-positivistic assertion that all research is in some way altered by the researcher and that such alteration is important to acknowledge for ethical transparency (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Heron & Reason, 1997). My intention was to stay as transparent and unbiased as possible throughout the research by applying the discipline of phenomenological bracketing—in data collection, data analysis, and writing, and in my pedagogical practice.

IRB/Ethics

This research took place in the classroom/studio of my introductory course, "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community" at Hampshire College. As

mentioned, student participants signed consent forms and had the right to exit the study at any time and remain in the class. The study was approved by the Temple University IRB, and the Hampshire College IRB gave permission based on Temple IRB's approval. At Hampshire, students receive written evaluations instead of grades, while the other Five College students who participated in the class—from Amherst College, Smith College, Mt. Holyoke College, and the University of Massachusetts, received grades. As noted above, I did not begin review of any materials of the research project until the course was completed and evaluations and grades were submitted.

Because of the dual role of teacher/researcher, students might have felt obligated or pressured to speak, write, or act in a way to please me. This concern was moderated by data analysis taking place after the class was over; during the course, I did not know how many or who in the class had consented to be in the formal study. All 19 gave informed consent (17 registered students, one auditing student, and one TA); however, as discovered upon opening the sealed envelopes at the completion of the course, two students did not write for these prompts. The same students participated in all other physical, verbal and written aspects of the course and they, although they had the opportunity, did not choose to formally exit the study. Our research together was an integral part of the curriculum, so I needed to be watchful, ethically, for any tendency to lead students' discussions towards any bias or theory that I might have been inwardly or tacitly holding. Keeping a teaching journal allowed me to continue reflective inquiry, challenge my assumptions and beliefs, and hopefully stay open to the research process as it unfolded.

Data Collection

Students were first introduced to the research via the course description during registration in March 2014 (Appendix E). Prior to class starting, I wrote a letter to registered students informing them of the research and letting them know I would be talking about it on the first day, where they would have the option of consenting, or not, to the study (Appendix B). On the first day of class in September 2014, after describing the research, I left the room while students who agreed to participate completed consent forms (Appendix A). These were collected and sealed in an envelope by the teaching assistant of the course, who volunteered to do so. Consent forms were stored in a secure place until two weeks after grades were submitted.

On six occasions during the semester I invited students to write about selected/chosen dance improvisation experiences to be examined for the study. I conducted practice runs of this kind of lived experience writing (guided by van Manen, 1990a) early in the semester (Appendix C). Students wrote after the Hampshire sessions of Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid and after Treehouse and RFK sessions of either Human Puzzle, Mirror, and/or Approach/Avoid. I did not open students' sealed responses until after they had completed course evaluations and received their assessment reports. This ethical strategy was intended to moderate teacher-student power asymmetries, especially the teacher's authority to grade student performance and was required by Temple University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Students wrote directly after each dance improvisation in the Hampshire studio setting and after the same movement exercises at community sites. The lived experience writing prompts (after van

Manen, 1990a) were (see Appendix C for prompts, guidelines and examples given to students):

- Describe in detail what this movement exercise was like for you from the inside—the mood, emotions.
- What were your bodily feelings, sensory impressions?
- Can you recall a particular highlight? Describe.
- Can you recall a challenge? Describe.

I video recorded each session and watched the videos after class to review students' movement and verbal utterances during the class. I also kept a teaching journal documenting themes and issues discussed in class and my "live" observations of movement. The teaching assistant (TA), who had taken the course in 2013, also wrote notes, which we compared and discussed at the end of each class. I asked her to document student responses while the class was in session to "catch" some of the questions, concerns, words, thoughts, and general input students expressed. In addition, entry questionnaires were handed out to students on the second day of the class. (Appendix D).

Data Analysis

Students' lived experience writings recorded after Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid at Hampshire, Treehouse, and RFK were the subject of immersive phenomenological analysis to generate findings, discussion, and hopefully, new knowledge. Student writings were focalized to illuminate students' lived experiences of actual practices in "Dance in the Community." I reviewed and took notes on videos of classes, the TA's and my live observational notes, and class discussions. Entry questionnaires provided information on students' prior dance and movement experience and what they understood about community-based dance at course entry.

Prior to writing the research findings, I employed bracketing, a phenomenological practice of endeavoring to suspend or set aside pre-existing beliefs about the phenomenon of inquiry. Bracketing is phenomenology's way of studying the world without bias, to try to let the world, in this case the students' words, speak for themselves, without interfering with or confusing the message. Considering that this study is a culmination of a class that I taught, in a field in which I am deeply involved, bracketing was difficult and at times felt impossible. First, I hoped students would write from lived experience and not from opinions, explanations, and evaluations, as suggested in van Manen's (1990a) guidelines, and I also held back from interpreting or evaluating their experience.

Students did not always follow the guidelines and their interpretations were at times, de facto, the data. Giorgi (1992) advises that the phenomenologist's responsibility is then to *describe* the interpretive text, which I endeavored to do. After authoring the course and its content and knowing the existing literature and its political influence, bracketing at times felt like an act of Sisyphus, that is, an uphill battle. For instance, after my first round of analysis, I began to theorize too quickly and created categories that did not always correspond to students' words, but rather my inferential interpretations. I had to redo cycles and continue cycling until I surrendered to stay focused closely on students' language.

How does one bracket, in Husserl's (1931/2012) terms, the "natural attitude," and move from personal biases and assumptions into really opening to what another is saying and doing? Indeed, phenomenologists since Husserl, for example, Merleau-Ponty, have argued that bracketing is impossible for a fundamentally interpretive mind (see Sparrow, 2014). Dahlberg, Dahlberg and Nystrom (2008) suggests "bridling" as an alternative to

the “impossibility of bracketing” (p. 92). Bridling restrains one’s pre-understanding, while bracketing suspends it. Yet, Dahlberg et al. (2008) suggests that bridling is more pro-actively engaged with the phenomenon at hand rather than trying to surrender (bracketing) the past:

> “While “bracketing” is directed backwards, putting all energy into fighting pre-understanding and keeping it in check “back there”, not letting it affect what is happening “here and now”, “bridling” has a more positive tone to it as it aims to direct the energy into the open and respectful attitude that allows the phenomena to present itself” (p. 130).

Timing is important in bridling :

> We “bridle” the events of understanding so that we don’t understand too quickly, too quickly or in too slovenly a manner; in other words, so that we don’t make definite what is indefinite. (p. 92)

Influenced by Levinas, Bond (2018) views bracketing as a form of ethical intentionality, an effort (however impossible) to be fully present and accountable for other. van Manen (2014) discusses bracketing as “invitational,” identifying five forms, all grounded in “opening:”

- heuristic: becoming open to simple wonder
- hermeneutic: opening oneself through transparency of self
- phenomenological: opening attention to living and dynamic meaning
- eidetic: opening to the particular to see through to wholistic meaning
- methodological: opening oneself to finding an emergent methodological approach
- ontological: being open to alternative possibilities of being (pp. 222-226)

During my initial post-course access, the data were already sectioned into the three dance improvisations selected for the research and into their Hampshire, Tree and RFK contexts. I began an extensive time of immersion, reviewing and rewriting the data informed by van Manen’s (1990a) holistic, selective, and line-by-line approaches described earlier. I created different formations of the data, placing key words and

phrases from each line or paragraph side by side with original whole texts. I felt that this gave me a side-by-side view of part-to-whole data, from which I felt I could grasp both holistic and more particular meanings. I then wrote a first draft of chapter 4, which presents meaning categories found in the data by improvisation and site. I was striving to embody the notion that writing is an integral part of the research process (Richardson, 2005; van Manen, 2014) by discovering even more about the data as I wrote. As introduced earlier, for a student-focused analysis this draft was too interpretive, or "unbridled," with inferential leaps away from experiential data to premature "definitiveness," if not ungrounded explanations.

I also developed, after the first draft, a visual graph of each line of the data, putting the data into categories that were connected to students' words but this graph, although helpful to see connections between data, still foregrounded categories that were not yet fully representative of the student data. Second and third drafts focused progressively more on students' actual words and phrases (what Saldaña (2009) calls "in vivo" codes), to formulate strong and oriented meanings. Chapter 4 presents the core words and phrases and their translation to meaning categories, some of which occur in all six data contexts: (Human Puzzle: Hampshire (1) and Tree (2); Mirror: Hampshire (3) and Tree (4); Approach/Avoid: Hampshire (5) and RFK (6). I compiled three poetic compositions, one for each improvisation, of student writings to more fully reflect lived experience (Richardson, 1992, 1994).

Once chapter 4, Puzzling, Mirroring, Approaching, Avoiding, was completed as a phenomenological analysis of student meanings, I shifted into a thematic approach, resulting in chapter 5, "'I felt: Self, Movement, Partner, Group' – A Bodily-Affective-

Social-Aesthetic Analysis." Chapter 5 presents themes structured according to modes of participation of Self, Partner, Group, and Movement. Themes in each mode illuminate how students perceived themselves, each other, their own moving bodies, and their experiences in Hampshire, Tree, and RFK dance improvisations.

Summary of Methods and Procedures

This dissertation research is based on constructivist epistemology—the theory that knowledge is created by individuals and collaboratively within communities over time from past knowledge and present environment. Applying methods of hermeneutic phenomenology and classroom action research, I sought to understand students' lived experiences of selected dance improvisations in "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community" based at Hampshire College in fall semester, 2014. I anticipate that such understanding will improve my teaching and my pedagogical scholarship, advancing the discourse in community-based dance.

Sources of data included six collections of student reflective writings about their experiences of Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach-Avoid—with peers in the college studio setting and members in one of two community settings (Treehouse Foundation and Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps [RFK]), along with videos, first and last day questionnaires, my own and a teaching assistant's written and verbal reflections. Chapters 4 and 5 are the results of mining the rich, detailed, lived experiences found in Hampshire students' phenomenological writings about the selected dance improvisations. The students were willing participants in inquiry, guiding the study through curious discussions and opening to wonder. I share the "little stories" (reference) of these students, starting with the first day of class.

CHAPTER 4

PUZZLING, MIRRORING, APPROACHING, AVOIDING

Introduction

As detailed in the last chapter, during "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community," a community engagement course offered at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, students responded to phenomenological writing prompts related to three dance improvisation exercises: Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid. These three improvisations were only some of the movement improvisations I taught the students and were part of a larger theme and residency vision when students facilitated them. For instance, the Human Puzzle students facilitated at Treehouse was part of a theme of relational interdependency that Treehouse wanted to explore. However, for the purposes of this study, these three improvisation exercises were chosen to focus on what students learned while performing them in both Hampshire and community sites. Students wrote twice about each exercise for 10-15 minutes, first in a session with classmates at Hampshire and then again at either the Treehouse or RFK communities. During the Hampshire sessions students wrote close to directly after the exercise, and in the community sessions, students wrote close to directly after the full hour session.

Adapted from Max van Manen's (1990a) guidelines for gathering lived experience description, the writing prompts included: 1) Describe in detail what this movement exercise was like for you from the inside - the mood or emotions. 2) What were your bodily feelings and sensory impressions? 3) Can you recall a particular highlight? Describe. Can you recall a challenge? Describe. Over six occasions, students generated a rich collection of experiential descriptions.

This chapter presents an analysis of students' written reflections by improvisation and in chronological order of when the exercise was introduced at Hampshire. Sixty-nine student responses were included in the analysis: 1) Human Puzzle: Hampshire-2, Tree-15; 2) Mirror: Hampshire-15, Tree-15; 3) Approach/Avoid: Hampshire-13, RFK-9. While all 18 students plus one teaching assistant consented to be a part of the study, I discovered on opening the envelope with the sealed data that two students did not submit writings. They gave no explanation and did not formally exit the study. Students were participants in both college and community sessions, with the exception that in each community session, 3 students facilitated the session.

Findings are structured according to the major categories potentiated by the first two writing prompts—body and feeling states—extended with emergent major categories and sub-categories found through exhaustive coding. The third writing prompt, highlights and challenges, are layered into these major categories, adding nuances and deeper understandings of student experiences. As discussed in chapter 3, some of the student data are presented as three research poems, one for each section, highlighting students' behaviors and their written meanings that stood out for me as participant observer. I created poetic composites for each section based on different reasons. In Human Puzzle, I created a composite because of the small amount of material (see below in Human Puzzle section) meant that similar coding analysis as was done with other data was not possible, but the words collected were still important and evocative. In Mirror at Hampshire, the data from the students about Extreme Mirror matched my written observations, and this created for me a mutually resonant experience that I detailed in the poem. Finally, the third composite was written after witnessing (and writing about) my observations of

students dancing Approach/Avoid at our community site, RFK, observations that also matched student writings on a kind of bodily approach/avoid dance occurring as part of the actual improvisation.

After writing the chapter, I reflected on my descriptive phenomenological analysis and was struck by an overall sense of students' aesthetic engagement, which to date has not been a focus of research in community-engaged dance education. Students' aesthetic experience was evidenced in immediacies of multisensory receptivity, or aisthesis (Bond, 2008; Maletic, 1980), and their engagement with a bodily-felt holistic temporal, spatial, and energetic capacity that constitutes the formal nature of dance for scholars in the western aesthetic tradition (Laban, 1960, 1974; Louppe, 2010; Maletic 1987, Preston-Dunlop, 1998; Sheets-Johnstone, 1966/2015). I decided to code this chapter's distilled data for "aesthetic," presenting the codes as in-text parenthetical descriptors. In each section, my own phenomenological or pedagogical reflections are recounted for an inclusive presentation and to maintain transparency as participant-observer. The chapter concludes with a section comparing the data from both college and community sections of the dance improvisations.

Further chapters will present overarching meanings and themes, along with theoretical implications of these findings. I then reflect on study findings in relation to salient literature. The dissertation concludes with a critique of the study and the class as well as recommendations for further research.

Table 1 outlines the dates when the three dance improvisations were offered at college and community sites, and when data were collected through students' experiential descriptions of the improvisations.

Table 1: Class and Research Outline

1 – Sept 8: Introduction

2 – Sept 15: Mirror (Mirror writing #1)

3 – Sept 22: Human Puzzle and Approach/Avoid (HP writing #1, A/A writing #1)

4 – Sept 29: Prepare for Treehouse

5 – Oct 6: Treehouse #1 (HP writing #2)

6 – Oct 13: No class – Columbus Day

7 – Oct 20: Treehouse #2 - Mirror (Mirror writing #2)

8 – Oct 27: Debrief Treehouse and prepare for RFK

9 – Nov 3: RFK #1

10 – Nov 10: RFK #2 Approach/Avoid (A/A writing #2)

11 – Nov 17: RFK #3

12 – Nov 24: RFK #4

13 – Dec 1: RFK #5

14 – Dec 8: Final Event at Hampshire

The Human Puzzle: "Wild, kind of like noodles"

Human Puzzle at Hampshire College

The story begins with some student observations made immediately after their first experience of Human Puzzle on our first day of class at Hampshire College (see Table 2 for a content description of Human Puzzle). I asked the question, "what did you

see or notice about this exercise?" The class became quiet, and then six of the 19 students, along with a teaching assistant, spoke up. Directly after class, I wrote down their responses from memory. Their tones, words, and the silence in between each person speaking sounded like spontaneous poetry, as did much of the students' writing overall:

> I see the struggle—all of us struggling together.
> I see the effort.
> I see that we create a world that is playful and full of joy.
> I see how no touching can lead to intimacy, so close, but not touching...a sweetness.
> (Some silence)
> …a respect.
> Yes.

Two weeks later, I reintroduced Human Puzzle along with Approach/Avoid. Due to lack of writing time on the day Human Puzzle was first introduced, I asked students to choose which improvisation to write about. They would write again about these exercises after experiencing them with community partners later in the semester. The choice I gave students had benefits and drawbacks. Offering a choice was intended to show that I value and privilege students' agency; however, this created an uneven amount of writing for the exercises, as only two people chose to write about Human Puzzle, perhaps since we had already shared about it verbally after first exposure.

In order to acknowledge the "minority voice" in the Hampshire setting, I created a poetic composite from the two students' words and phrases about their experience of Human Puzzle, inspired by Bond (2001, 2017), Bond & Stinson (2000/2001), and ethnographer Laurel Richardson (1992, 1994). Richardson (1994) posits that poetic renderings of research perhaps more fully achieve the goal of retelling lived experience by making another's world more accessible to the reader.

Puzzle for Two

My brain was a movie.
Making a giant puzzle and trying to get out of it
Sudoku
Contrast, complement, and copy…learning
I was contributing and helping complete something.
I felt needed, like I belonged.
Connected
Acceptable clumsiness, forgivable mistakes
I loved the accidental touches.
People laughed – it was nice.
My body was soft and able to breathe.

With the inclusion of the above and two other research poems in the dissertation, I am inviting readers' bodily-affective response. When I read the above, I feel my pulse get a little faster, my chest a little more open, a slight smile comes to my lips. I can imagine the belonging depicted—the sense of giving and taking, of creating together and accepting the mistakes and the clumsiness. I feel the softness and breath of the writer's body and the connectedness of relationship, as I have known (as perhaps all sentient beings can know) what "helping to complete something" together feels like. I sense implied time passing as in a movie and in trying to get out of a puzzle. I imagine the spatial interplay between bodies as accidental touches are forgiven, and I see the puzzle come together and get taken apart in a body/space/time continuum that is both ephemeral and lasting in some way in felt memory: "it was nice."

The next section presents student meanings found through qualitative coding of the Human Puzzle writings—two from the Hampshire College studio site and 14 from Treehouse, 16 in total. Given the small number of students who wrote about Human Puzzle at Hampshire, this section relates mainly to students' experiences of Human Puzzle at our first community site, Treehouse Foundation.

Table 2: HUMAN PUZZLE

- The group stands in a circle.
- One person (A) goes into the circle and makes and holds a shape with their body - like a puzzle piece.
- A second person, (B), self-chosen, enters the circle to "fill the negative space" by making a shape that fills the empty spaces of the first person, without touching them - like a linking piece in a puzzle but without touch.
- When B is still, A leaves the center and re-enters the circle, disentangling themselves without touching B.
- The process continues until everyone who desires has had a chance to go into the circle.

Variations:

- Duets: extend the process so that partners continue to create interlocking shapes with each other.
- Group: the first person begins with a shape and eventually all in the circle add on to make a large human puzzle; variations below -
  - End there in large group
  - All slowly shift as a large group to one or more positions with new empty spaces to fill without touching, in a count of 3 to 10.
  - One at a time, in chronological order of how the puzzle started, each person disentangles and comes back into the circle, without touching. End in circle.
  - Inside the puzzle, each person enters and exits their negative space pose via a movement phrase they create.

Human Puzzle at Treehouse

During week five of "Dance in the Community," we engaged in our first off-campus community partner interaction with Treehouse. On the first day of our two-day, 90-minute, once a week community experience with Treehouse, Human Puzzle was the final activity of the evening. Seventeen Treehouse members volunteered and participated: six children (ages 6-12)— one with autism as stated by his parent—and eleven adults, including three seniors, two of whom were wheelchair users. Another child with autism, a

brother of the other autistic child, did not participate but watched with his parents. Although no written or self-identified information was given on race or ethnicity, most Treehouse participants were white-appearing. Fourteen Hampshire students wrote responses (three were absent; two didn't write as mentioned) immediately after the workshop.

An initial read-through of all the Treehouse Puzzle writings preceded line-by-line coding, which, due to the strong overall prevalence of words related to *body* and *feeling,* quickly became a keywords analysis that generated several categories of experience. Further cycles of qualitative analysis (coding and categorizing) showed that students often integrated descriptions of *body* and *feeling* for this Human Puzzle-Treehouse session, yielding major experiential categories of *feeling body* and *feeling other/s*. As *body* descriptions were often qualified with *feeling states*, I amalgamated these two "givens" into one major category—*feeling body*. Descriptions include body awareness and lack of body awareness, body ease and discomfort, body engagement and disengagement, body-mind relationship, and dissociation from body—where body is objectified as "the body" rather than "my body," or "I." Students also alluded to their bodies in relation to others and the space.

Feeling Body

> I felt numb in my limbs.
>
> Grasping but not quite reaching, seeking extension in the neck, in the fingers, weight spreading into the toes. (aesthetic)
>
> My posture was closed/reserved with arms crossed behind back and legs crossed.
>
> I felt comfortable in my body...at ease.

I was in my body, but I wasn't concerned about my body.

I felt my whole mind and body engage.

The body couldn't help but join, even if the mind was hesitant.

I noticed my nervousness pulling me from my body into my head.

For a moment, self-critical thoughts and body discomfort disappeared.

My body woke up as others came closer, becoming more aware of itself.

Being close to other bodies made me feel open and silly.

My body felt wild, kind of like noodles (ha-ha) because of the excitement in the room. Very free. (aesthetic)

There was a warmth in the room.

The energy in me and in the room suddenly seemed to settle and focus. (aesthetic)

I was not in touch with my body throughout the workshop.

I felt uncomfortable taking up space…sad about the disconnect to my own body's and everyone else's energy.

Feeling Other/s

Just as the preceding student felt "sad" about their inability to connect with "everyone," many students expressed awareness of and concern for the engagement of Treehouse members. This concern was particularly present in Human Puzzle-Treehouse writings, and I wondered whether this might be attributed to this being the students' first community visit of the course. For a majority of students, community member engagement was a highlight of Human Puzzle-Treehouse, particularly of children.

I am just very excited to have made a friend!

The human puzzle felt surprisingly friendly.

There was more space between people than at college…but the feeling of connectedness was strong. (aesthetic)

Release and ease when Treehouse folks joined in.

Happy to see people happy.

I felt anxious and excited every time a new person came into the circle.

When the first community member joined in, I felt a subtle burst of excitement. (aesthetic)

Grateful and joyous that community members seemed to be really enjoying themselves.

I really liked everyone's enthusiasm.

There were lots of us, lots of noise. (aesthetic)

A highlight was seeing people being brave and excited and trying again and again.

A highlight was everyone wanting to join right away.

The children. Numerous students wrote about their experiences with Treehouse children as a highlight of Human Puzzle:

A highlight for me was when the first child joined the human puzzle.

I liked that the younger members felt comfortable enough to participate.

It was awesome seeing the kids feeling comfortable and adventurous enough to join in!

It was super heartwarming to bond with one of the kids enough to have her tell me that she would go again if I went!

A highlight for me was seeing how excited the young people were, and how they brought their creativity to the entire experience. (aesthetic)

A highlight was two children complementing/mirroring each other's movements. (aesthetic)

A highlight was when the boy with autism was moving around on the floor and everyone clapped. That was powerful. (social aesthetic)

> A highlight was seeing the boy with autism visibly overjoyed and energized.
>
> When the kid underneath V and I had to exit the space, she was so careful! (aesthetic)

Some of the college group noticed younger members' engagement increase over the one-hour session.

> I enjoyed watching the kids get more confident and adventurous. It was amazing how much the atmosphere changed in an hour.
>
> The children seemed to get really into it after a while.
>
> As the kids became more sure they could do it, their shapes got more complex and interesting, and the kinds of stories being told changed. (aesthetic)

One Hampshire student described an interaction between two children and empathetically assigned emotions and even words to one of them.

> I recall one moment when a young girl saw her older friend in the circle. Although the young girl had already had a turn, she seemed to uncontrollably burst out of the circle into the center, where they held a position that looked like anticipation of a hug. Her face gleamed with love and an almost "I can't believe I am doing this right now!"

Upon reviewing the video and my notes for this session, I also noted this moment as special, emanating a quality of bodily joy. I witnessed the "hug," and the community cheering when this happened. I also observed (both on video and recalling the live moment) another encounter between the two just after the "hug." The girl who was hugged (the "older friend") returned to the center of the circle and instead of creating a position that filled the negative space of the younger girl in the center, she sat right in front of her and copied her position, reminding me of Rodin's *The Thinker,* with hand on chin and elbow on knee, supporting her head.

The two stared straight at each other, and the surrounding community of students and Treehouse members laughed and smiled. When the center girl left, the "older" child who had copied *The Thinker* looked around at all of us with a contagious smile and darted her eyes around waiting for someone to join her. In the video of the group part of Human Puzzle, the smiles and looks shared between participants appear joyful and open, ending the activity on a plane of heightened group relationship.

Feeling others' lack of engagement. Students also wrote about community members' observed lack of participation, some expressing hopes and wishes for greater involvement, especially of elderly members.

> Sad to see some people couldn't or didn't…
>
> I was picking up on people's hesitation.
>
> It was difficult to get everyone to participate so it wasn't just the Hampshire class in the middle.
>
> I would like in future to have more community participation from the Treehouse people.
>
> I wanted to send my energy out to people on the sidelines so they would feel comfortable stepping in.
>
> I wonder if there is a way to make it easier for the elderly.
>
> Longing for older generations to participate.

A few students wrote about the challenges of working with children and adults together.

> A challenge was dealing with how I felt when an adult stepped in when a child was about to.
>
> I felt it would be better if I didn't participate…I might have gone in when a child wanted to.

Concluding this Human Puzzle-Treehouse section, a Hampshire student provides a critical perspective on what was at stake in this community engagement setting, writing,

"Everybody who added to our puzzle was like another affirmation of the project." The importance of our work being affirmed by community partners will be discussed later in the dissertation.

Feeling body and *feeling other/s* were major experiential categories emerging from Human Puzzle at Treehouse, and also at Hampshire: "my body—soft and able to breathe, my brain like a movie," "I felt needed…belonged…connected." The two students who wrote about Human Puzzle-Hampshire depicted the activity itself: "Sudoku," "giant puzzle," and "contrast, complement, and copy…learning," as well as the fun atmosphere: "people laughed." Students found that Human Puzzle-Hampshire offered an accepting social space: "acceptable clumsiness" and "forgivable mistakes," while at Treehouse, Human Puzzle became a space for making community partners feel accepted and supported to participate. Attention to both one's own experience and that of the other, such as a partner, through detailed descriptions is reflected in students' writings about the next two dance improvisation activities, Mirror and Approach/Avoid. The following section on Mirror presents students' categorized descriptions, pedagogical reflections from my notes taken after each class, and a poetic composite.

Mirror: "To extend the experience of living"

Mirror at Hampshire College

We are gathered in the Hampshire dance studio for our second weekly session together. Most students from the first day are back, and a few more have come to see if they can join the class. The focus today is to review what happened as a class the first week, do more movement exercises together, and talk about how to build workshops—from ice-breaker to closing—that welcome the cultures, ideas, voices, and input of all

participants. The feminist critical pedagogy I aspire to in my classes values equity, emotional safety, and recognition of difference as authentic components of building community (Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Darder, 2002, 2003, 2011; hooks, 1994, 2003; Luke & Gore, 1992/2014; Palmer, 1980, 1998/2017). My goal is to share these values with students who will then create and facilitate workshops through this pedagogical lens. After several community-building activities, I introduce Mirror—(see Table 3 for a content description), a well-known theater game and dance improvisation score, with music and two variations (see Appendix F for descriptions of class community-building activities).

Writing observations and reflections after class, remembering students' comments about Mirror, I used all capital letters, and on reflection I can still recall the intensity of my response to the class.

> I LOVED HEARING THEM SPEAK. WISH I HAD TAPED IT. THE ENERGY OF DISCOVERY, OF FINDING THE NUANCES OF WHAT MOVEMENT CAN DO, THE LEVEL OF CARE IN SPEAKING AND SHARING, THE TACT (!!!) WITH WHICH PEOPLE SPOKE TO EACH OTHER AND THE DELIGHT IN DISCOVERY!! I LIVE FOR THIS!!!!!

From memory, I also jotted down students' verbal comments about Mirror, as I had done with Human Puzzle. These related largely to feelings—especially joy ("so much joy leading to joy"), boundaries ("dissolution of boundaries," "embodied yet disembodied," "I see you smiling…is that silly smile…oh it's my smile"), and to "connections," including feeling like "we had a past together."

In addition to *body* and *feeling states*, experiential categories found in studio Mirror writings include *movement, partner, roles (leader and follower), boundary and no boundary, connection, play, and learning and satisfaction*. In Mirror-Hampshire writings,

movement emerges as a sub-category of *body* and I again offer brief pedagogical reflections.

Table 3: MIRROR

- Everyone chooses a partner. One partner is the "actor" and one is the "mirror."
- The mirror imitates the actor's movements, as if a mirror to the person.
- The actor's use of speed, levels, direction of "front" (facing), body parts, and distance (between actor and mirror) create ease or challenge for the mirror.
- At a given time, roles switch. This can be announced by a person or "felt" by the partners. I usually announce the switch and if the activity goes on for a while, I invite the partners to change roles on their own without speaking.
- For some participants, the activity is easier when actor and mirror focus on each other's eyes and view the rest of the body peripherally, rather than moving their heads to look at each other's limbs.

Variation 1: Extreme Mirror

- This starts the same as above with partners: an actor and a mirror.
- The actor chooses an extreme expression of movement elements - time, space, or energy, in order to challenge the mirror's responses, perceptions, and instincts. For instance, the actor may move far away from the mirror, move quickly, or move in a vibratory manner and then stop suddenly.
- The mirror does their best to imitate the actor's movements and expressions.
- Partners switch roles.

Variation 2: Delayed Mirror[1]

- This starts the same as above with partners: an actor and a mirror.
- The actor moves any way they like, preferably in a short phrase to help the mirror.
- The mirror watches the actor's movement and expressions, and then repeats whatever they remember.
- The actor then repeats what they saw the mirror do, which is the mirror's interpretation of the actor's movement.
- The mirror then repeats what the actor did, and this process continues until the movement left is a distillation of the original movement by the actor.
- Partners switch roles.

[1] The "Delayed Mirror" used in this class is a variation of Liz Lerman's exercise of the same name available at *Online Toolbox*: http://danceexchange.org/toolbox/tool09b8.html?Line=5

Body

Students described a range of body experiences directly after Mirror-Hampshire: "My body filled with energy;" "I sensed my body changing shape." (both aesthetic). Some wrote about body sensations in relation to their partner's body:

> My body tingled every time we locked eyes.
>
> I was trying to sense their weight—muscular attention to tone and quality in another's body. (aesthetic)
>
> The sight of my partner's moving body instilled a feeling of electrical charge through my own. (aesthetic)

As in Human Puzzle, some 'wrote the body' as an object, "slightly disconnected" from self, or holding "disembodiment tension." One student wrote about an experience that seemed to be out-of-body or crossed a bodily border: "I felt a strange sensation like I was no longer contained to my body." In any case, body is the sentient aspect of self that feels, fills with energy, changes shape, and attunes with other bodies, as described above. Coding the Hampshire Mirror writings, I began to see even more clearly how difficult it is to separate body from feeling states:

> My body—silly, free, excited.
>
> It was exhilarating to be using my body since I am a very inactive person.
>
> Wow, this is very dramatic. My body wants to dance. (aesthetic)

The Mirror-Hampshire writings add nuance to the body category, with many students writing about the experience of movement itself, describing kinds and qualities of movement, affording a bodily-aesthetic dimension to research findings.

Movement.

> I LOVED when the movement phrases became one. (aesthetic)

> A highlight was falling across the room while navigating other bodies in the space and coming to a precarious stop just before the wall. (aesthetic)
>
> I found it easier on my brain and body when we were doing fast and repetitive movements. (aesthetic)
>
> Movement felt natural, like any other movement I make throughout the day.
>
> I moved my body in ways I haven't tried in too long – powerful. (aesthetic)

Students described experiences of flow and energy in moving:

> I felt my energy peaking and falling, according to the "mood" of my movement. (aesthetic)
>
> I was not relying on decisions and pre-thought. I just moved and poured out my energy. I moved as I felt the urge…as inspiration came. (aesthetic)
>
> A highlight was when my partner and I used almost the entire space with very little movement in our bodies. (aesthetic)
>
> Many wrote about moving with or in relation to their partner's movement:
>
> I sensed an 'essence' of a certain character as my partner and I changed movement. (aesthetic)
>
> I was...using another's motion like my own. (aesthetic)
>
> The movement we shared had many similarities—a joyful experience. (aesthetic)
>
> It was liberating for me that my partner enjoyed similar movement.
>
> My partner and I traveled across the space, interacting with other partnerships and taking on some of their characteristics. (aesthetic)

Several described movement with partners in relation to cultural traditions and backgrounds:

> The commonality in our movement background allowed us to predict where each movement was going. (aesthetic)
>
> We connected most over movements that are Caribbean, inherited from West African traditions. (aesthetic)

> I found that I move into the movement traditions that I know and have known. (aesthetic)

Finally, several students described movement challenges in Mirror:

> A challenge was when a movement became "stale" and needed to be changed. (aesthetic)
>
> A challenge was prepping and clearly transitioning into and out of jumping movements. (aesthetic)
>
> Mirroring my partner's movements made me feel bound – my movements are more free-flowing, initiated from the pelvic area. (aesthetic)

One student noticed that a sense of self was present in spite of their attempt to move without planning:

> Although I tried to keep my movements instinctive and random, a lot of myself did emerge.

Feeling States

As evident above, much if not most of students' writing about *body* and *movement* in Mirror-Hampshire was abundant with "affect:" emotional and cognitive *feeling states*.

> This was difficult, but also very fun.
>
> I felt light, but attentive.
>
> I felt lost…halfway intentionally.
>
> I felt excited.
>
> Joyful
>
> I felt myself experiencing new emotions.

Some compared themselves to others and found themselves lacking:

> I felt incompetent.
>
> I felt too slow.

I felt nervous.

For some, shared eye contact was a catalyst for feeling states:

I felt vulnerable looking into someone's eyes as I moved.

I felt like I was part of something very intimate - we made eye contact.

My eyes look into their eyes and there is no fear.

The following student experienced escalating joy through 'whole face' communication:

Joy floods my face. I watch joy flood their face. More joy at the recognition of their joy.

Partner

Many of the preceding Mirror studio anecdotes depict the importance of relationship to partner. Partnering emerged as a distinct phenomenological category of experience that was not intrinsic to the writing prompts. Students wrote about the experience of partnering, both with and without reference to specific roles of leading and following. Further, partner anecdotes are full of "felt" experiences.

I was anxious to get to know my partner.

To my surprise and joy I found that my partner was extremely receptive and deft at following. (aesthetic)

Learning the ways my partner moved was exciting. (aesthetic)

I felt exhilarated to only be with my partner rather than many other people.

I have a comfort zone…it didn't line up with my partner's. I was pushed out of it.

Roles: Leader

It was strange to see the focus on *me*, just me and my movements.

I spent time inside my own movements, making discoveries about their parameters and possibilities. (aesthetic)

> A highlight was when I led and was able to move to the rhythm of the song and my partner was able to follow. (aesthetic)
>
> Even as the leader, I needed to make sure I wasn't moving too quickly for my partner.
>
> Beginning as the leader gave me authority over the direction of the game. That gave me comfort.

Roles: Follower

> I became very focused…when I was the mirror. (aesthetic)
>
> I got excited, especially when I was the mirror.
>
> My consciousness as follower felt remote.
>
> Being the mirror felt stiff and unnatural.

Students wrote about "mirroring" in a way that suggested a perceptual shift into an unfamiliar or new space, including a merging of leader and follower:

> As the mirror, I felt like I was at someone's house for the first time. It wasn't unpleasant, it was just unfamiliar.
>
> I enjoyed moving as the mirror…I entered a new world, completely unique. (aesthetic)
>
> My partner's body was like an extension of my own…I let their movements guide mine, even though the exercise called for me to lead.
>
> We have built a story – we know it from the inside; it belongs to us and us alone; we are making something. (aesthetic)

Boundary and no boundary. Students also described shifts and dissolutions of boundaries that moved them beyond assigned partnership roles.

> It was a warm, curious, unfamiliar experience that dissolved the typically felt boundaries of ordinary classmates.
>
> I sensed a loss of self.
>
> I felt as if I was breathing in my partner's energy.

> I am lost in an infinite mirror of reflection. Who is who, I do not know. (aesthetic)
>
> I was taking on an embodied shape that wasn't mine. (aesthetic)
>
> It was like I couldn't tell who was supposed to be the person and who was the mirror.
>
> Wow I join with them in energy. We are one intent. (aesthetic)
>
> I wasn't looking at my body to make sure I replicated my partner's movements… it was as if I was just doing them myself (disconcerting, but enjoyable).
>
> I immediately had to drop my own demeanor and adopt the movements and expressions of my partner.

Connection

Keywords analysis revealed that students often used the word "connection" in relation to Mirroring. Some focused on their own feeling of connectedness, and others described connection to their partner. One student suggested that they "knew" their partner, "having connected."

> It was joyful to see the connections we had in our bodies. (aesthetic)
>
> I felt connected, especially when we slowed down & made eye contact. (aesthetic)
>
> I felt worried, yet connected.
>
> I want to connect with everyone.
>
> The first mirror activity made me feel connected with my partner.

Finally, by now it is perhaps unsurprising that *play* emerged as an important category of experience, one that holds the liberation and joy, the fun and silliness, the dissolution of boundaries, and the agency and connections that students discovered in Mirror.

Play

> We are playing! How fun it will be to watch them repeat this nonsense.
>
> Shock, wow, this person mirroring me is so silly, are they really doing what I am doing?
>
> The mood was simultaneously playful and careful, especially when navigating how to 'lead.' (aesthetic)
>
> The mirror quickly became a game of trying to trick the other and be as silly as possible.
>
> We both, very often, were able to predict where each movement was going, unless we were trying to trick each other.
>
> There was a palpable shift when my partner and I began to actively play with the sequences, allowing the translations to become distorted and warped. (aesthetic)
>
> Delayed mirror started with a movement phrase I immediately forgot and became a game of expressing each other's confusion and failed attempts at trying the movement, including shrugs, eye rolls, and all.
>
> Our mirror experience was already pretty intense, and this amplified it…making it as difficult for the other as possible by doing things quickly, far away, or out of sight. (aesthetic)
>
> I laughed a lot.

Learning and Satisfaction

A number of students reflected on what they were gaining from the "embodied" curricular modality—how they were acting, planning, experiencing and extending self.

> This movement exercise made me step up my attention and intention skills.
>
> It was exciting to do things I wouldn't normally do. (aesthetic)
>
> I tried to keep track of everything without looking away, which made it easier.
>
> I found myself anticipating the next move, and feeling satisfied when I got it right. (aesthetic)

> They did a move I thought I would be unable to do but I did it and felt very accomplished.
>
> The exercise gave me the freedom to truly be who I am.
>
> The experience of mirroring was a lot of keeping up, competing with time to extend the experience of living.

As I looked over the notes I wrote after class and students' written responses, I created a poetic composite of what I observed and felt in the session. I noticed, too, that Extreme Mirror had been highly evocative and engaging for me as an observer and that amplified qualities of Extreme Mirror were also described in student writings. I wrote this composite of student writings keeping in mind my observations of Extreme Mirror at Hampshire:

> **Mirror Play**
>
> Joy in faces
> Serious faces
> Shrugs and eye rolls
> Eyes
> Eyes
> Electrical charge
> Shoulders, upper limbs,
> Movements flowing from the pelvis
> Navigating bodies in space
> Precarious stops
> Silly, free, excited
> Fast and repetitive
> Falling across the room
> Losing connection
> I feel powerful in my body.

I also noted the influence of African music on the group's playfulness and was surprised that none of the students wrote about this (except for the student who mentioned the highlight of moving to the rhythm of a song while leading). Further, I recorded, as some participants did, a difference in mood between Extreme Mirror and Delayed Mirror:

> The extreme mirror - it seemed like so much fun in the room. People were going out of their way to surprise, to play and the relationship to the music - a lot of African music, had a lot to do with the playfulness, it seemed...folks imitated the rhythms and beats. The delayed mirror was more subdued - more head-thinking, less spontaneity.

Mirror at Treehouse

In week seven, the Hampshire College class met with the Treehouse community for the second day of our two-day residency. We arrived in two vans and one car to be greeted by participants offering food they had made for us—a smorgasbord of fruit, lasagna, bread, cheese, and pumpkin bread—sponsored by a grant from Hampshire College's Children, Youth and Learning Program (CYL).

Three Hampshire students prepared and led the entire workshop while the rest of the Hampshire class were participants. Students had signed up on the second day of class to lead a workshop on a particular day; students signed up based on their comfort level with when they would present, (first, last, in the middle of our time…) and for the most part did not know who their co-leaders would be. Some students, however, based on relationships built the first day of class decided to sign up together to lead with another classmate. Due to the number of students and the number of workshops, there were three students per facilitation group. The workshop began with reviewing each other's names, using a wave and echo pattern, where after a person says their name and makes a gesture, the gesture and name are repeated, one by one, by each person in our large circle. This looks like a wave and sounds like an extended echo. Shortly after the name-echo dance, we broke into Mirror, including Extreme Mirror but not Delayed Mirror. The three facilitators had mentioned the week prior that Delayed Mirror might be too difficult, fragmented or disconnecting, an assessment reflected also in written descriptions and in

our post-improvisation discussion about Delayed Mirror at Hampshire. With 17 Treehouse members and 19 students, the Mirror partnerships were mostly Treehouse/Hampshire duets. In addition to *body* and *feeling states,* categories of experience identified in students' Mirror-Treehouse writings were *movement, laughter-fun-playfulness, partner, roles,* and *group*.

Body

> Bodily looseness, ease in the muscles, focus behind the eyes.
>
> Pleasant, tingly sensations
>
> It was slow. I was carefully embodying. (aesthetic)
>
> I felt at home in my body.
>
> I felt lost in my body.

Two students described relational experiences of body as a conduit to "connection" or "understanding."

> My body shifted from being contracted and small to a more expansive embodiment of belonging and connection. (aesthetic)
>
> I was so in tune with another body despite difference. Somatically, there was understanding.
>
> **Movement.** Movement descriptions ranged from "flowy" to disjointed.
>
> The movement was serene, flowy, tranquil, peaceful. (aesthetic)
>
> It felt like moving…momentum. Like a ball on top of a hill—ready to move. (aesthetic)
>
> A challenge was following very quick level changes, communicating traveling directions. (aesthetic)
>
> I moved, and I was home again. (aesthetic)
>
> Disjointed movement, not dancey. (aesthetic)

Subtle movements, gentle, and connected. (aesthetic)

Feeling States

Like in Mirror-Hampshire, students' feeling state descriptions written directly after the Treehouse workshop ranged from calm to excited, awkwardness to ease—revealing an array of nuanced meanings.

I was calm.

I felt at ease for the first time in days.

Joy, exploratory - curious. (aesthetic)

Trying, effort, attention.

I felt grateful for this opportunity.

I felt awkward at times, shy.

I was curious…

I was calm and excited. I was not concerned or anxious, rather present and happy.

Gentle, nurturing, supportive, warm.

I couldn't keep my smile from spreading across my face.

Laughter, fun, playfulness. About half the students wrote specifically about their felt experiences of laughter and fun.

The highlight was when we laughed.

Silliness turned into laughter, and mimicking laughter turned into more genuine laughter.

The activity was giddy & giggly, even though the movements were slow & soft. (aesthetic)

I had a lot of fun.

Light, playful, expressive, expansive. (aesthetic)

> I felt happy, jittery, and playful.
>
> Getting upside down and making silly faces. (aesthetic)
>
> I got so giggly and silly…it was a great way to bond.

My post-session observational notes align with students' experiential descriptions:

> Laughter...in extreme mirror - playful, challenging, can you get it? Treehouse children very engaged...what is engagement? They are fully doing it and invested in the partnership - present and playful and in the exercise... smiling, laughing, bodies extending… (aesthetic)

Partner

Writing about partners, students often focused on quality of engagement and connection, including lack of these.

> When my partner was a classmate it was faster, but when it was a community member, adapting to fit movements she wasn't following me was a challenge. When we finally synchronized, I was really excited. (aesthetic)
>
> I was so engaged with my partner. I was not the focus. My attention was solely on my partner's movement and repetition of those gestures and motions. (aesthetic)
>
> I performed the mirror activity with a woman in a wheelchair. Both sitting, we saw eye to eye. I wanted to make her ability feel important and beautiful. (aesthetic)

A few students wrote about merging with their partner, echoing the boundary dissolution written about in Mirror at Hampshire: "I absorbed my partner's smile." One student who wrote about boundary dissolution in the college setting also noted this in the Treehouse session, writing, "I felt merged with my partner." Some were aware of others' emotions and wrote about what they observed the other was feeling:

> A highlight was seeing how happy my partner was. She had the most content expression on her face. I loved seeing her get a little funky with her motions despite being one of the older folks. I had to work to keep up with her…awesome. (aesthetic)

> My partner enjoyed it too, laughing the whole time like I was.
>
> Watching the young boy and the woman in the wheelchair was a highlight. They were different ages, but they had the same amount of joy when dancing with their partner.

One student wrote in detail about a particular moment with their partner that relayed presence and connection:

> My highlight came when A and I bent over and lifted our heads to make eye contact. I felt a deep connection in that moment. I saw past the outer motions and expressions. We paused to acknowledge one another and there was something so striking about that pause and glimpse. To me, that eye contact communicated more than any single movement could.

Aligning with anecdotes from the Hampshire studio session, a number of students used language like "connecting" and "bonding" to reflect on their experience of Mirror, with several alluding to Mirror's motivational value.

> This is such a great bonding and engagement tool.
>
> It's so fun and a great way to quickly bond with someone.
>
> This was engaging. Connecting.
>
> The mirror activity immediately created common ground.
>
> The mirroring activity was the first time I felt everyone was active and engaged.
>
> I was finding equivalence despite physical "abilities."

Several students reflected on roles in Mirror: "The highlight was leading." One noted, "I was careful and cautious as the mirror" (follower). Several offered aesthetic reflections: "Both roles required careful attention" and "It felt complete when we switched roles so I got to be both mirror and mirrored." Overall, students wrote less about roles in the Treehouse setting than in the Hampshire Mirror session. At Treehouse, the

partner was more of a focus, regardless of role. Finally, a category not found at all in Hampshire studio Mirror data emerged at Treehouse, that of *group*. Even though the movement experience of Mirror is based on pair work, some students experienced a sense of group, the larger whole.

Group

> I felt like the group was one unit.
>
> There was an overall sense of togetherness even though we were in pairs.
>
> I felt nourished, warmth, and genuine bonding with the group.
>
> It's hard in a big group for everyone to be seen and heard, but with this activity every person is being listened to and validated.
>
> I felt the group moving as one. I felt attached to myself, my movement, my partner and the rest of the group.

Student reflections on Mirror at both Hampshire and Treehouse offer perspectives on mirroring itself – "we are one intent," and on the nuances of partnership inside a group setting—for example, experiences of boundary. The third dance improvisation that students wrote about, Approach/Avoid, adds physical contact to partnering, creating the opportunity to reflect further on boundaries and the feeling states that touching and being touched can evoke. The next section presents categories of experience found in students' Approach/Avoid writings, along with my own reflections, which include an imaginative poetic variation of some of the students' writings.

Approach/Avoid: "Kind of like kissing someone for the first time..."

Approach/Avoid at Hampshire College

On the third day of class, three weeks into the beginning of semester, the students and I began to create the workshops we would facilitate for our first site, the Treehouse

Foundation. I also continued to share movement frameworks and themes that could be part of our second site, the Robert Fitzgerald Kennedy Children's Action Corps (RFK), a residential treatment center for first-time female youth offenders. I introduced the improvisation I dubbed Approach/Avoid—I had not heard a name for this improvisation— which I had explored in various contact improvisation classes (see Table 4 for a content description of Approach/Avoid). The response of one student in particular struck me. She had been a quiet participant and observer mostly, so when she visibly reddened, I became curious. I approached her after class and jotted down her comments as she was speaking:

> It was an accomplishment. I felt hot. I trusted A, [her partner], and it was a new exercise for me. I was startled about the ease of it. I felt a preliminary 'ehh,' then a 'maybe,' and then 'fine,' closing my eyes and responding to touch from a stranger...whew. My breath came out and I didn't feel threatened...leaning into a touch...that's new. And it was okay to do it, which is exciting and an accomplishment. It was a great activity.

Other words students used when I asked them about Approach/Avoid directly after class included: trust, pressure (as in touch), trance/meditative state, agency and willingness (making decisions about moving and being moved), separateness, manipulation, and in control or loss of control depending upon role, mover or moved.

Table 4: APPROACH / AVOID

Approach

- Partners - usually two people.[2]
- One person stands comfortably, in a "neutral" state with eyes closed. [Neutral state: relaxed, ready to be receptive to touch and responding to touch, able to take care of themselves if need be]
- The partner, or person who will move the other, or "artist," as I call them, influences the mover, or "clay," to move towards the artist's touch, to approach the artist's physical initiation. The touch could be from the artist's hands, other body parts, or

[2] The night Approach/Avoid was introduced to the Hampshire class, there was an uneven number of students. I chose to create one threesome, and one person in the threesome expressed discomfort with having two partners touching them.

Table 4: APPROACH / AVOID continued

even from the use of voice or breath.

- The "clay" comes back to neutral after responding to the artist's pressure.
- The "clay" stays in the position where the movement last moved them, waiting for the next signal from the artist.

- The artist can try various levels of force/pressure or timing of the touch.
- Both artist and clay have responsibility to remain respectful, for example, not so much pressure as to hurt, and no touch inside the "bathing-suit line."
- Change roles.
- A variation would be to have artist and clay change roles between touches.

Avoid

- Partners again.
- Similar exercise as approach; however, this time the "clay" moves away from the partner's touch.
- Sequencing from the clay coming back to neutral to the clay following the movement to its logical conclusion and waiting for the next touch from the artist is the same as approach.
- The variation is the same as for Avoid.

Reviewing the video and my teacher notes for this third session revealed that I did indeed ask students about their "feeling states," and perhaps drew them to this kind of thinking about body. I did not remember using it in class or in writings prior to reviewing and coding the data. "Feeling states" were thus potentiated by the writing prompts as usual, and this time possibly by my verbal input on the day. According to video documentation, I did not use this phrase in class on any other day. Yet, on this day, I watched myself direct students to that verbal/physical territory and then noted similar words and concepts in their writing as what they had verbalized in class after performing Approach/Avoid. On one hand, students were demonstrating "learning" as retention; on the other, their language might not have been fully congruent with their lived experience. However, in reflecting on the data from all improvisations and sites, the focus on feeling

states was consistent; poetic affective language was used even when my prompting was not as directly related as it was on this day.

To encourage students to learn from body sensations, I invited them during the discussion directly after Approach, and then again after Avoid, to describe what they were experiencing. Reviewing the video during the analysis process reminded me of their answers, which focused on sensation, time and texture, and feeling power or not, or feeling for the safety of their partner:

> When I asked everyone for their first impressions of Approach, a student stated, "willingness." I asked, "What is the bodily sensation of willingness?" The answer: When being the one touched, "acknowledgement…going to interpret what they [their partner] are doing and allow it to happen…and on the initiating side [the one touching], trying one finger on their scalp—a willingness for experimentation." I acknowledged this student's response by echoing their sentiment: "I hear you talk about making choices, having agency, making interpretations, and being willing to listen to what is happening."
>
> Then I asked, "what is your feeling state?" After partners switched roles, staying in Approach, one student, after hugging their partner, responded that it was a "delightful experience." I asked what delightful felt like. Their response was "warm." Another said, "I felt time and texture." One student answered, "I felt powerful, and weak…what I had envisioned for her to do, she didn't do…my fault – I couldn't guide her… I was guiding, like God in some way." I asked, "What does God feel like?" There was some laughter in the room. After Avoid, I asked what new information occurred. The first person who spoke up said, "fear… I was fearful for the safety of my charge."

Categories of experience identified in student writings (outside or as part of *body* and *feeling states*) for Approach/Avoid-Hampshire were: *sensations and images, movement, partner,* and *roles*. In the *body* category, as before, some students wrote about their bodies as if separate from themselves or from their minds, sometimes using the pronoun "it." Bodies responded, felt unsure, or even became "powered over" by the "I" whose body it was. In Approach/Avoid's *body* category, a given of all three

improvisations discussed in this chapter, student responses are more relational than in Human Puzzle or Mirror.

Body

> I had autonomy over my body - there was power.
>
> My body felt attentive, charged, and soft. It felt unsure of where to go at times, paranoid of tripping over myself or my partner - yet there was a gratifying tension in touch that balanced this feeling. (aesthetic)
>
> My body felt disoriented/disconnected.
>
> When I was being molded, I was aware of my body, the whole thing, attuned to the stimuli it received. (aesthetic)

A student working in a threesome due to odd numbers of participants in the class did not enjoy the bodily experience: "My body did not like having that much contradiction stimulation. It was uncomfortable and difficult being the "'clay.'"

Sensations and images. A number of students in Approach/Avoid-Hampshire wrote about specific bodily sensations and images they experienced, including what might be called "altered states" of bodily consciousness, further elaborating the *body* category:

> I felt warm and there were some pleasant tingly sensations wherever I was approached and touched.
>
> I felt like I was going to sleep for surgery, before I really begin to feel lightheaded and confused.
>
> A heightened awareness of the weight necessary to follow directions...surrender. (aesthetic)
>
> I felt a steadiness in my feet, heightening of attunement to sensation, delicacy... (aesthetic)
>
> I felt a gingerness to the touch, considerate of body heat, any directionality, softness, muscular ease. (aesthetic)

Movement. In Approach/Avoid, a number of students wrote about moving itself as freeing, new, and exploratory, some describing integration of movement, body, mind and feeling states.

> M would move me and I would respond both from my mind and in my body.
>
> I was just able to move.
>
> I paid attention to shifting movements. (aesthetic)
>
> I felt free to move in a manner that fit my current needs.
>
> I felt an overwhelming confidence in the quality of my movement. (aesthetic)
>
> Closing my eyes made me move differently…more slowly, more fluidly, and I was also more receptive to suggestion. (aesthetic)
>
> All the movement was driving me into myself.
>
> I was moving in a fog...like the true force that moved something. (aesthetic)
>
> There was a movement when M brushed my arm in sort of a diagonal swoosh and my body responded by spiraling to the ground. My brain did not even think. (aesthetic)

A number of students described movement as a highlight of the session:

> A highlight was noticing the tendency toward unfurling, reaching and opening in Approach...[and] folding, curling and wrapping movements in Avoid. (aesthetic)
>
> A highlight was when I discovered I could move in various levels, and hold my pose for longer, not needing to be in constant flow. (aesthetic)
>
> A highlight was when J slapped my back while I was lying down and I jumped with my body horizontal. (aesthetic)

Two students noted movement challenges:

> A challenge was keeping M from running into walls!

At one point I was told to move in two opposing directions and I decided not to do either (working in a threesome).

Feeling States

I felt a sense of comfort and attention.

I felt safe, like I was being guided by a close friend. Guided. Not controlled.

I was calm…focused…present.

I felt secure... I was not afraid or preoccupied by the world outside my eyelids. I just felt present in the moment…no hesitancy or urgency.

I experienced tension - the emotion could be described as fear.

Some students described complex or seemingly opposite feeling states:

I felt submissive and powerless. At the same time, there was power.

For me this exercise felt like peace and passion.

It felt very safe, in a way, but also frightening. I was on the edge between the two, but still relaxed.

Feeling state writings foregrounded relational experiences:

Curious and eager but patient and understanding

Light and blissful…secure and respectful

I felt very dependent.

It was a connecting experience.

I felt supported.

Playfulness and care.

I felt like someone was respecting my boundaries, kind of like kissing someone for the first time.

Partner

> Being led by my partner felt exhilarating, giving in completely and thinking only of following his directions - making shapes just for him. (aesthetic)
>
> My eyes were closed...I had to trust my partner to keep me from crashing into someone.
>
> The highlight was working with my partner.
>
> The highlight was my partner telling me just to do whatever felt right. (aesthetic)
>
> A challenge was feeling comfortable accepting my partner's desired movements.
>
> A challenge was navigating my partner safely through unexpected changing space, knowing their eyes are closed.

Some students wrote about what they perceived their partners to be feeling:

> When we moved away from each other, I felt like my partner didn't want to be close to me.
>
> I felt in synch with my partner because I could see on her face that she felt my intentions and emotions: the dissatisfaction, the support, the caring, the anger—all the things.

Touch. As alluded to above, students wrote about the experience of touch between partners and the relational feelings that emerged:

> I felt open and connected to my partner's touch, which gave me a sense of security.
>
> My partner's touch guided me gently and her touches were considerate…she would sense my discomfort and touch me to comfort.
>
> My partner gave a very light touch. I found myself always looking for the sensation and I felt very cared for. She was delicate with her touch, setting the mood…When I felt a touch, I would move toward it. Then it would go away kind of leaving me to find my own way, looking for the next touch.
>
> My focus was on the touch, the impression of my partner. This connection allowed me to relish the moment without concerns or distractions.

> Feeling my partner push firmly against me, there was a comforting compression. Moving according to her touch felt effortless and gentle. But touching her, I didn't want to be too firm.

Roles. Students wrote about both personal and social affects and images when describing their partner roles in Approach/Avoid.

> When I had to avoid, I felt disassociated from myself and my partner.

> I was not getting the attention I wanted, which gave me a feeling of being alone or unwelcome.

> I felt disconnected, cringing, collapsing, fear, isolation. I felt challenged.

> The movement felt like an abandonment, a collapse. A rejection.

> With Avoid I felt like I was running away from something.

A student who was unhappy working in a threesome felt shut down:

> It felt overwhelming having two partners, two kinesthetic impeti, often telling me contrasting information. My body and brain became scattered and stretched thin. It made we want to shut down.

Only one person wrote about performing clay in the avoidance part of the exercise as a positive experience, expressing it poetically:

> Enter the void...felt familiar, comfortable and exciting. Having my eyes closed, retracting from touch gave me a sense of lightness, agency, and freedom. There was a power I enjoyed in responding, a dialogue with a more nuanced kinesthetic patience. (aesthetic)

Two students described performing clay in Approach: "I felt like I was searching for something;" (aesthetic) "I felt trust and playfulness."

Approach/Avoid at RFK

As introduced earlier, we visited our second site, the Robert Fitzgerald Kennedy Children's Action Corps (RFK), once a week for five weeks. RFK is a residential treatment center for first time female youth offenders, ages 13 to 18 years. Youth are at

this center for three to five months as a substitute for being incarcerated and are monitored by the Department of Children and Families. The youths' racial and ethnic backgrounds, based on their self-identification during our time together, were white, African-American, and Latina. They follow a school curriculum with differentiated instruction and have access to therapy and other group mental health processes. They are not allowed to leave the premises without permission, and must earn, by good behavior, the opportunity to leave RFK and visit our college campus on our final day together.

The youth were told they had to participate in our workshops and were allowed to sit out only after they gave it a try. During our time at RFK, some members chose to sit out some of the time, but no one chose to stop or drop out completely. We had to read and sign our names to rules regarding our behavior, dress, and what we could and could not bring to the site, such as no pens or hair pins—nothing that could become a weapon or an instrument for cutting oneself. Being together once a week for five consecutive weeks supported greater collaboration in our RFK movement experiences than in our two weekly sessions with Treehouse. For example, RFK members came up with movement material to teach us, and one night we held a mini dance competition complete with team names and announcers.

Three Hampshire students introduced Approach/Avoid to the RFK group on the second evening of the residency, during week ten of our Hampshire College course. The following week, the dance competition week mentioned above, a few RFK students in the groups used some of the movement generated by this improvisation. Since the Hampshire group contained 18 students and one teaching assistant and RFK's program capacity is eight to nine young women, we split the Hampshire group in two, a workshop group and

a discussion group. This created cumbersome logistics, but every Hampshire student was involved in at least three workshops and two discussion groups during the five weeks. Further, everyone met all together for the beginning and ending of each workshop, so that all were included in the ice-breakers, warm-up, final showing (if there was one), cool-down, and group reflections.

Since the discussion group met in a separate room at RFK and joined the workshop group only at the beginning and end of the workshop time, only eight students participated in Approach/Avoid at RFK and provided written responses. I invited discussion group members to respond as viewers of the workshop ending, one of whom accepted the invitation. In sum, data were collected from nine Hampshire participants: eight workshop group members and one viewer who responded to the same prompts from a witness perspective.

The major categories of experience identified in students' Approach/Avoid writings are *body, feeling states, and partner.* The *body* category again contains meanings related to body as subject, body as object—for example, to be explored or hidden, and body as communicator.

Body

My body sensations were connected, familiar, and warm.

My body felt limber and movable…loose and flexible.

Tightness in my limbs, clenching in my stomach, a rigidness in the spine

Eyes closed contact with flesh—easier to pay attention, to connect

My body was tired. I tried not to let it show on my face.

I experienced a freedom to explore my body in an open manner.

One student's experience extended their experience of body and self: "I felt a communication happening between bodies - beyond selves."

Feeling States

I love Approach/Avoid.

Light touch, tentativeness

Gentle

I felt like a puppet and a ballet dancer and a Tom and Jerry character. (aesthetic)

Pleasure and play. A number of students described states of playful pleasure: Approach/Avoid was "fun."

It was fun to watch the ways people began to play with each other.

It was very enjoyable.

Giggles. Laughter. Ease.

Laughing was fun.

Silly and giddy and goofy

Like the above expressions, students' descriptions of feeling states often point to relational meanings: connection, empathy, unsureness, and vulnerability were part of students' felt experience.

Inside I had feelings of vulnerability in a healthy, expressive way.

I felt awkward doing it…fun, too, but mostly awkward.

Empathy

I felt timid this time, an unsureness.

I felt silly and a bit lost.

I felt a unique sense of connection and individuality.

The preceding anecdote alludes to the element of partnership, which was a major focus of students' written reflections on Approach/Avoid at RFK overall.

Partner

Students wrote about the experience of partnership itself, such as the actions or reactions of a partner, and about the direct relationship between self and partner.

> My partner's smiles and active commentary gave the activity even more excitement.
>
> My partner and I had great chemistry and connected extremely well.
>
> I experienced a relationship establish where I was able to welcome my partner's manipulation without thought or apprehension.
>
> My partner was not into the exercise and gave very brief initiations.
>
> My partner had a lot of trouble focusing.

Some commented on what seemed like an obligation to change, convince, or take care of their partner:

> A challenge was convincing my partner that it was ok to be unsure, encouraging with voice...
>
> It was hard, especially when I was touching, to keep my partner excited and interested. Maybe I didn't even have to keep her entertained but I felt like I did.
>
> I felt strongly about making sure my partner felt comfortable and excited.
>
> I don't know if my partner knew how great she was at the activity.
>
> How do I express to this person that they are doing a perfect job, that they already are creative and that I love working with them? This shouldn't be difficult - but it was. Work on it.

Reviewing student writings on RFK Approach/Avoid, I created a poetic composite of the *body* and *feeling states* categories of experience; these categories seemed to me like a rich representation of students' felt perceptions of the improvisation

and upon reflection of my notes, I sensed a bodily dance of a real approach/avoid in the room—some students seemed to me to be physically "warm" or "present", while some seemed to be hesitant, or "tentative."

Between Bodies

Warm, limber, loose and movable
Tight, clenching, rigid and tired
Limbs, stomach, spine and eyes -
I try to not let it show on my face.

Free, open, familiar and flexible
Gentle, enjoyable, tentative, vulnerable
Fun but awkward, silly but lost -
I feel like a puppet and a ballet dancer.

Empathy,
Healthy and expressive,
Feeling self and feeling other –
I felt a communication between bodies – beyond selves.

Analysis of students' writings by improvisation and site generated a further question: What might be learned through improvisational studies in a college dance class as distinct from a college/community-engaged context? The next section offers a descriptive comparison of students' writings in the college sections and those in the community-partnered sections. Portraying differences in students' responses across sites provides a broader perspective on possible meanings of lived experiences of embodied practices in community-engaged dance education, taking into account inevitable situational variations.

College / Community: A Descriptive Comparison

Student writings from the Hampshire College studio work in Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid show some differences from those completed for the same

improvisations in the participating community settings. Some differences included the fact that student writings in community environments tended to focus on the community member or partner's happiness, participation, and motivation as being at times more important than the student's own positive experience or that of their college peer group. This "other-focus" can be seen in the sense of obligation described in writings from Approach/Avoid-RFK and in the *feeling-others* category related to participants' engagement or lack of engagement in Human Puzzle-Treehouse. Students' writings at community sites also tended to focus on *group engagement*, whereas the Hampshire studio writings focus more generally on what the individual student experienced or learned—alone, in partnership, or in the group. For instance, in Mirror-Treehouse writings, students described how the dancing created "groupness": "a great way to bond," "engaging, connecting," "common ground," "everyone was active and engaged." In the college section of Mirror, however, students wrote more about how the dancing affected them personally: "this exercise gave me energy," "gave me the freedom to truly be who I am," "made me step up my attention and intention skills," "I did it and felt very accomplished."

In the *partner* category of Approach/Avoid from Hampshire data, students wrote primarily about receiving their partner's touch and all of the emotions that went along with touch, such as security, caring, and trust. In contrast, the *partner* data from Approach/Avoid-RFK revealed that five out of ten students communicated a sense of obligation towards their partner's engagement. Distinct categories that emerged in either college or community sites also speak to subtle differences: *sensations* in Hampshire studio writings and *group* in Mirror-Treehouse writings.

As noted above, perhaps the role of student-as-facilitator in the community setting created teacher-participant separation between Hampshire student teachers and community partners. Student facilitators described feelings of obligation towards partners, which could have contributed to some students focusing on and valuing community partners' experiences above their own.

Reflection

This chapter has presented the major categories of experience distilled from students' written reflections on three movement and dance improvisations—Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid—carried out on campus with the Hampshire College peer group and again with either Treehouse Foundation community members or youth living at the Robert Fitzgerald Kennedy Children's Action Corps. Although students were encouraged to write solely descriptive responses to three open-ended prompts, they sometimes made interpretive inferences and evaluations as well. They, as well as I, needed reminding to stay close to experiences. After van Manen (1990a) and Bond (2017), reminding myself during the stages of analysis to keep suspending assumptions and premature, that is, ungrounded, theoretical interpretations was a daily discipline as I coded the 69 student responses collected across activities and sites, discovering ways to "stay with" students' language of body, feeling states, highlights, challenges, and emergent meanings.

The core data of this study are the lived experiences of students as they recall them directly after selected episodes of moving. Through immersion in my students' descriptions, what it might have felt like to be moving in the student-selected exercises and with the particular student and community members came alive to me. Some

experiential categories are inherent to the exercises, and from my perspective evidence learning in the recognition of structural aspects of the improvisations themselves: in particular *body, movement*, and *partner* (*leading* and *following*). The *body* and *feeling states* categories are inherent to the first two writing prompts, which invited students to focus on these elements of experience.

Emergent categories and sub-categories illuminate nuance in student responses to the dance improvisations of Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid: *feeling body, feeling other/s, feeling lack of others' participation, sensations and images, connection*, *pleasure, play, learning and satisfaction, group.* Felt experiences of "playfulness" and *play* as well as "connection" and *connectivity* were also described across all three improvisations and both college and community sites. As noted above, some categories or lack thereof in particular exercises were surprising to me: *group* in Mirror-Treehouse responses, which students experienced in the midst of a partner exercise, and *sensations* in Approach/Avoid-Hampshire but not at RFK. Experiences of *group* are found mostly in Human Puzzle writings, yet also appear in Mirror-Treehouse, illuminating the sense of group as an aspect of that improvisation with that community.

Teasing out the layers of meaning each student presented is an ongoing process—there is still much to discover about dancing self and other within and across learning communities. The general pattern I see upon data reflection is that although meaning is layered and unique, students in general focused more on what they learned about themselves in college sessions and more about what others might learn in community sessions. While learning primarily about my students' experiences, I also learned about

my own teaching, my philosophy in this work, and my position in relation to the field of community-engaged dance education.

The next chapter engages more deeply with the findings articulated so far, highlighting student meanings that appear across improvisations and sites, and suggesting what might be some of the core understandings achieved. The college participants described their involvement as separate selves, as partnered selves, and as selves in a group. Along with *movement* itself, these modes of participation seemed to scaffold feeling, understanding, and therefore learning. These modes are discussed in the next chapter along with emergent themes.

CHAPTER 5

"I FELT: SELF, MOVEMENT, PARTNER, GROUP": A BODILY-AFFECTIVE-SOCIAL-AESTHETIC ANALYSIS

Introduction

In the previous chapter, student meanings were presented in categories of experience by the three improvisational exercises that students chose to share with community partners (Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid). An initial process of open coding generated 15 categories and sub-categories, some of which were found in all three exercises across sites and some were discrete to one or two exercises or sites. Two categories of experience, *body* and *feeling states,* were anticipated in two specific writing prompts*,* while the third prompt about highlights and challenges generated meanings across categories.

All three exercises can be considered classic improvisations built on partnering, which created the direct opportunity for students to highlight partner work in their reflective writings. However, I propose that *partner* is a genuinely emergent category. Writing prompts did not ask specifically for responses to partnering and some students mentioned partnership or another person in what could be considered group work. Partnership, or more specifically partnering, and the feeling state of partnering, is illuminated as an important relational structure, contributing to the discourse on community-engaged dance education.

In this chapter I identify overarching themes across students' written reflections, independent of content and site. Themes are presented within four distinct modes of students' experiential participation—self, partner, group, and movement, an aesthetic mode of participation. For this phenomenological hermeneutic analysis, I revisited the

distilled data in chapter 4 across chronology, sites (Hampshire, Treehouse and RFK), and categories of experience, finding in one student's language a holistic structure for scaffolding student participation and housing emerging themes: "I felt attached to myself, my movement, my partner, and the rest of the group." This quote captures the layered participation described in chapter four: all the students experienced meanings in the improvisations that related to themselves, their movement, their partners, and the larger group. Students also described a kind of aesthetic engagement that shaped their experiences of self, partner, and group, pointing to CEDE as an inherently artistic—not just social or therapeutic—domain of learning.

The two most documented categories of meaning delineated in chapter four—*body* and *feeling states*—begin to present a bodily-affective prism through which to view student meanings. The bodily-felt nuances students described went well beyond the writing prompts into rich worlds of affective learning. Adding the category of *partner*, a key word in four of the six occasions studied, and alluded to in the remaining two, as well as the categories of *feeling body* and *feeling other* found in Human Puzzle writings, the data continued to coalesce from a bodily-affective to a bodily-affective-social/relational prism through which to understand students' experiences and meanings. In the interpretive analysis below, this lens, which can be written more phenomenologically as *body-feeling-into-self-and-others*, is a window onto the world of students engaged in this class. Below, in order to tease out the subtleties of *body-feeling-into-self-and-others*, each mode of student experiential participation, Self, Partner, Social/Group and Movement, begins a distinct section in which themes that emerge are related to existing dance literature.

The aesthetic experiential modality, or what I am choosing to write as Movement, derives from the poetic quality found in student writings, centering on artistic and aisthetic (Bond, 2008; Maletic, 1980) experiences and understandings, as identified in chapter 4. This participation mode, and its associated themes—for example, qualities of dancing, creating, and appreciating beauty—is presented at the end of the chapter, giving an artistic finish to the emerging bodily-affective analysis: *body-feeling-into-self-and-others-dancing*.

The next section highlights student meanings through the four modalities, themselves phenomenologically and kinetically derived. I describe them as the phenomena of self, partner, group and movement, and, in a nod to Albright (2013b), as gerunds—selfing, partnering, grouping, and moving to emphasize their kinetic nature.

Self

Selfing: The Phenomenon

Students engaged in all three dance improvisations in ways that highlighted learning about themselves—their bodies, discoveries and self-awareness. Distinct themes that emerged when students focused on themselves were: Finding Me (or the freedom to be oneself) and Body, which included the experience of flow, ease and unease.

Finding Me

Finding oneself, awareness of "I" or "me," was an important focus of students' writing in the college sessions. This included experiences of "new emotions" or new accomplishments, creating possibility: "All the movement was driving me into myself." A sense of self might persist even when students attempt to explore "random" or "instinctive" movements, while new ways of moving can be "exciting," "exhilarating,"

and afford self-discovery: “I spent time inside my own movements, making discoveries about their parameters and possibilities.” Further, new ways of moving can evoke a sense of accomplishment: “I felt an overwhelming confidence in the quality of my movement.” Students wrote about experiencing greater “attention” and “focus,” although focus directed on oneself can also be uncomfortable.

Supporting existing dance education literature (Bond, 2000, 2001, 2017; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Bond & Gerdes, 2012; Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001, 2007/2016; Frichtel, 2006, 2012, in press), a sense of personal freedom emerged as a salient student experience in both college and community movement settings. Freedom is a bodily-felt experience that for some equates with agency: “The exercise gave me the freedom to truly be who I am.” The following anecdote conveys a kind of “freedom to be” in the improvisational moment: “I felt secure and calm. I was not afraid or preoccupied by the world outside my eyelids. I just felt truly present in the moment…no hesitancy or urgency.”

Body

The first writing prompt asked students to describe their bodily feelings and sensations, and their moods during each exercise. Participant responses highlighted aspects of body awareness, ease, and unease, ranging from direct expression of the centuries old linguistic dichotomy of body and mind—the integration or lack of integration between the two—to in-between states, such as “flow.” Close attention to students’ word choices showed that “body” and “mind” felt separate at times, or one led the other, or were integrated in students’ perceptions. Some wrote of self, “I,” in juxtaposition with body, where “I” was more powerful, or more privileged, while for

others body carried the power or privilege: “Wow, this is very dramatic. My body wants to dance.” “Mind and body” were also described as an integrated entity: “I felt my whole mind and body engage.”

Students described being “lost” in their bodies or movement, yet “not in a negative, absent-minded manner;” or “halfway intentionally.” Students described what could be called altered states of consciousness: feeling outside their body, or between waking and sleeping, or “moving in a fog.” Some can find movement stimulation excessive in group improvisation: “My body and brain became scattered and stretched thin. It made me want to shut down.”

Flow. Students described a state in which their bodies just moved without thinking, self-consciousness, or self-criticism: “without thinking, I could tune in;” “self-critical thoughts and body discomfort disappeared.” Capturing an element of dance improvisation epistemology, some wrote about “just moving” without pre-planning: “I just moved and poured out my energy…as I felt the urge, no censorship. As inspiration came, I moved.” One student described an experience of relational flow: “When M brushed my arm, my body responded by spiraling to the ground. My brain did not even think.” As noted by the following student, thinking can disturb the flow: “awkward at transitions, maybe I was thinking too much.”

Existing dance education literature (Albright, 2013b; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001, 2007/2016; Douse, 2017; Frichtel, 2012; Novack, 1990) points to flow states as described by Csikszentmihalyi (1975, 1990)—moments of complete experiential absorption—as a salient feature in students’ dance experiences. Students in the current study suggest that flow can release bodily discomfort and

"thinking too much," allowing the participant to be present, in the moment. Presence is discussed in existing literature as a desired state in dancing (Albright, 2013b; Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001). The data of Self reveal phenomena of student learning through bodily felt experiences, including self-discovery, or Finding Me, and the freedom to be oneself, also aligning with previous literature. Enjoying a sense of flow, with physical ease, absorption, and release of thinking (at least thinking as the mind-body duality students also described) is considered a creative and optimal state for learning and performing (Hefferon & Ollis, 2007).

Bodily ease and unease. Some participants wrote about receiving energy in the practices or of bodily ease: "filled with energy," "limber and movable, loose and flexible." Ease of body was also written as softness, focus, familiarity, warmth, "connected," and ability to breathe. Some students showed whole body awareness in their written reflections: "grasping but not quite reaching, seeking extension in the neck, in the fingers, weight spreading into the toes." Experiences of bodily challenge and unease while moving, included "numbness in my limbs," "closed" posture, tightness, clenching stomach, and rigid spine. Environmental conditions such as temperature can affect participation: "The room was very warm and that was my primary bodily sensation…heat." Bodily fatigue and "disconnection" were also described.

As introduced above, *partner* emerged as a mode of participation and experiential perspective across students' writings. Students' descriptions of partnering are wide-ranging and nuanced—from complete identification to alienation—adding value to the literature on community engaged dance education and dance literature in general. The act of partnering, or *body-feeling-into-other*, and the holistic and relational lifeworld it

opened up for students, is the next participation mode presented. Themes related to partnering offer insights into the act as well as the feeling state of partnering.

Partner

Across improvisations and sites, student writing often included the word "partner," even though writing prompts did not ask about partnering per se. This makes sense, as two of the three exercises involved pairing, or duets—having a partner, and the third, Human Puzzle, involved (in the beginning) partnering while being witnessed by the whole group. However, what the writing reveals about partnering creates a discourse on the quality and affective dimension of duets, or "dueting," (Merker, 2000) or in more "dancerly" terms, the *pas de deux* (step of two) in CEDE, an aspect that is seldom addressed in literature—there are some exceptions (noted in chapter 6) in web-blogs on partnered social dancing (Riva, 2015; Ruper, 2016).

Partnering: The Phenomenon

Student writings about "my partner" and the act of partnering include descriptions related to the fact of partnering, emotional interactions, actions that emanate from being in partnership, merging with a partner, kinesthetic empathy, lessons learned from a partner, service and obligation to partner, and the joy and playfulness that can be shared between partners. Writings include mostly positive and some negative aspects of partnering, especially in the Hampshire college sections when a few students didn't feel connected to their partners or felt resistance to connecting, revealing complex and subtle processes experienced by Hampshire students in the "Dance in the Community" class. Collating the rich data on partnering, themes identified include Care, Joy, Play, and

Connection (with subthemes of eye contact, bonding and intimacy, merging, partner first, and resistance).

First, the very fact of having a partner was a highlight for students, for some "exhilarating." Learning about another through partnership was a focus in class writings; a partner's movements and responses to a dance improvisation gave insight into the partner (and at times into self). As in Finding Me above, a partner can encourage one's own self-expression and self-knowledge: "the highlight was my partner [a college partner at Hampshire] telling me to do whatever felt right."

In contrast, some students' descriptions about partners contained emotional distance, including observations of partners' troubles or lack of engagement: "My partner had a lot of trouble focusing;" "My partner was not into the exercise and gave very short brief initiations." Most students, however, described a sense of responsibility to partner. One experienced a sense of satisfaction from being able to predict their partner's movement: "I found myself anticipating the next move and feeling satisfied when I got it right."

Care

Students wrote about being "careful" while moving with their partner and also with their attention: "carefully embodying" and "not moving too quickly" for the partner and giving "careful attention." Being careful also required being 'full of care,' attending to partner and being equally attended to by their partner. Students wrote about feeling supported, cared for, and comforted.

Some described a kind of caring responsibility towards or from their partner in relation to touch:

> Feeling my partner push firmly against me, there was a comforting compression. Moving according to her touch felt effortless and gentle. But touching her, I didn't want to be too firm.
>
> My body felt attentive, charged and soft. I felt unsure of where to go at times, paranoid of tripping over myself or my partner, yet there was a gratifying tension in touch that balanced this feeling.
>
> My partner gave a very light touch so I found myself always looking for the sensation, but with that I felt very cared for. She was delicate with her touch, setting the mood as a very gentle place.

Conscious touch can relate to the sense, as above in Self, of a flow state, or being in the moment without judgment or thought, and feeling the sensations of the moment: "My focus was on the touch, the impression of my partner. This allowed me to relish the moment without any concerns or distractions." Feeling flow inside a partnership where eyes are closed meant that trust was an implicit foundation created in the caring partnership: "I experienced a relationship where I was able to welcome my partner's manipulation without thought or apprehension."

Conscious and caring touch also allowed students to "find their own way," the agency to make choices to "move toward" or search for contact: "I would move toward it, then it would go away leaving me to find my own way, looking for the next touch" Moving away from touch could also afford agency in the sense of being in a kinesthetic relation with their partner: "Having my eyes closed, retracting from touch gave me a sense of lightness, agency and freedom. There was a power in responding, a dialogue with a more nuanced kinesthetic patience."

Creating safety for partners also was an important component of caring for some students. For example, the experience of guiding or being guided felt like friendship and was important to some students: "I felt comfort…safe, like I was being guided by a close

friend. Guided. Not controlled…I was calm…focused…present." Other students wrote about guiding, or navigation, as an active precursor to trust and safety: "A challenge was navigating my partner safely through unexpected changing space, knowing their eyes are closed"; "eyes closed…I had to trust my partner to keep me from crashing into someone." The ways one guided or was guided by a partner were associated with creating trust, safety, caring, a sense of friendship, and even empathy: "my feelings were that of empathy."

Some related the care that allowed them to feel safe and secure with that of respecting boundaries. Poetically, students felt "light and blissful and secure and respectful." For one student, the sharing partnering offered was like "kissing someone for the first time," an experience of closeness without fear: "My eyes look into their eyes and there is no fear. Our faces move around with no concern." The imagined lips and the real gaze, the face before them, were focal points of a body that offered trust, intimacy, and freedom from concern. Bodies and parts of bodies can be both imagined and felt keys to caring. In dance education, the ethic of care is a desirable attribute of studio classes, one that is not always present in traditional dance training (Bond, 2013, 2017; Green, 2000a, 2001; Lakes, 2005; Stinson, Blumenfeld-Jones, & Van Dyke, 1990; Warburton, 2004).

Joy

A phenomenon described across most college and community settings and all the dance improvisations was that of joy—joy itself, and affiliated phenomena of laughter, smiles, "goofiness," and "fun." Students expressed embodied joy. It was "joyful to see the connections we had in our bodies." Joy moves: "Joy floods my face. I watch joy flood their face. More joy at the recognition of their joy." Joy was amplified through shared

laughter: “My partner enjoyed it, laughing the whole time like I was;” “Silliness turned into laughter and mimicking laughter turned into genuine laughter.” Laughter was a highlight of the movement experience for some: “I couldn’t keep a smile from spreading across my face.” Students used words like “silliness,” “goofiness,” “giggles,” “giddy,” and “fun,” one recalling, perhaps paradoxically, “The activity was so giddy and giggly, even though the movements were slow and soft.” For some, similarities between self and partner increased the feeling of joy and even freedom: “the movement we shared had many similarities—a joyful experience;” “it was liberating that my partner enjoyed similar movement.”

Play

Students in both college and community settings experienced play and playfulness in the dance improvisations, and I wondered whether students had chosen these exercises to share with the communities for these very qualities (Nachmanovitch, 1990): “trust and playfulness,” “light, playful, expressive, expansive,” “It just felt so playful and happy,” “playfulness, care” and “I felt happy, jittery, playful.” Just the exclamation “We are playing!” reveals a perhaps surprised realization that was hard to contain. Certain actions were attributed to playfulness, such as “navigating how to lead,” and “getting upside down and making silly faces.”

Playfulness turned into game-playing or game-devising for some. Predicting where each movement was going, especially with similarity of movement styles, was one way students turned to game-playing. Tricking each other or developing strategies added an adventurous or competitive aspect to partnering: “We were able to predict where each movement was going, unless we were trying to trick each other;” “making it as difficult

for the other as possible by doing things quickly, far away, or out of sight." One student described the shift from exercise to game: "There was a palpable shift when my partner and I began to actively play with the sequences, allowing the translations to become distorted and warped." A game started when a student forgot the movement they were supposed to do in the exercise: "It started with a movement phrase I immediately forgot and it became a game of expressing each other's confusion and failed attempts at trying the movement, including shrugs, eye rolls, and all." One student shared the importance of their role in the game: "Having authority over the direction of the game…gave me comfort."

Scholars have addressed the salience of play and playfulness in dance and life (Anttila, 2008; Bond, 2008, 2013, in press; Huizinga, 1949/1955; Kealiinohomoku, 1976; Lindqvist, 2001; Nachmanovitch, 1990; Nussbaum, 2011; Stinson, 1997/2016a; Svendler Nielsen & Burridge, 2015). In the introduction to this study, chapter 1, I disclosed that I was uncomfortable with former students resorting to "play" rather than staying with the aesthetic experience of dancing. I was focused on play as a distraction from what I saw as a more intentional aesthetic experience of dancing—using the body moving in time and space. The literature, the data in this study, and in this experiential modality of Partner show how relevant play is, and how much play, dance and aesthetic experience are interrelated. Bond (2008) refines the distinctions and connection between dance and play in her theory of "aesthetic community."

Connection

Students wrote about numerous experiences of connection to partners in terms of bonding, intimacy, understanding, seeing, empathy, and specific movements or moments

of connection in both college and community settings. Many referenced "connection" without defining the term, but used qualifiers that reveal associations with engagement, subtlety, gentleness, richness, and complex affects: "engaging…connecting," "subtle movements, gentle, and connected," "rich, connected," "I felt worried, yet connected." Self-perception and awareness can shift in partner work: "My body shifted from being contracted and small to an expansive embodiment of belonging and connection"; "I felt a unique sense of connection and individuality." Aesthetics can also afford the opportunity to bridge into affective meaning-making: "We have built a story…we are making something. It feels connected."

Eye contact. As with embodied care above, through the imagined lips and real eyes and faces, descriptions of connection highlighted the body, mainly the eyes, both eye contact and eyes closed: "I felt connected, especially when we slowed down and made eye contact"; "eyes closed contact with flesh—easier to pay attention, to connect," "we made eye contact as either of us moved"; "my highlight came when A bent over and lifted…to make eye contact…deep connection in that moment—pause and glimpse—communicated more than any single movement could." Students expressed viscerally and sensually distinct experiences of connection and vulnerability through their eyes: "The sight of my partner's moving body instilled an electrical charge through my own…I tingled every time we locked eyes"; "I felt vulnerable looking into someone's eyes as I moved."

Bonding, attunement and intimacy. The Mirror, in particular, was described by students as a bonding experience in both college and community sites: "such a great bonding and engagement tool," "so fun and a great way to quickly bond with someone."

Bonding was for most a fun experience: “I got so giggly and silly—it was a great way to bond.” Students also wrote about intimacy and feelings that can arise from intimacy and closeness: “I felt like I was part of something very intimate”; “Inside I had feelings of vulnerability in a healthy, expressive way.” Attributing felt sensations of intimacy to the state of feeling connected, students expressed a knowing of their partner: “My partner and I had great chemistry and connected extremely well”; “Having connected, I know my partner now.”

Students wrote of understanding and attuning to their partner as a somatic phenomenon: “I was so in tune with another body despite difference. Somatically, there was understanding.” Here, being in tune with a partner shifted the student’s perception of “difference,” as they were working with a woman in a wheelchair, “seeing eye to eye,” and “finding equivalence despite physical ‘abilities’.”

Emotional attunement or energetic resonance provided some the opportunity to connect and bond with a partner, or witness bonding through observing equivalent emotion and intensity of emotion between partners. Watching a young boy and an older woman in a wheelchair was a highlight: “They were different ages, but they had the same amount of joy when dancing with their partner”; “A highlight was seeing how happy my partner, M, was. She had the most content expression on her face.” Not only emotional but rhythmic attunement, or synchrony, was underscored: “A highlight…when I was able to move to the rhythm of the song and my partner was able to follow.”

Bodily attunement created an enhanced awareness of partner, as in “attuned to the stimuli I received” and “heightened awareness of the weight needed - a surrender,” while dancing. One student experienced tension between feeling attuned to their partner and

separated from their own body: “The mirror created dual attunement/disembodiment.” Finally, some students experienced a kind of merging with their partner, a felt, merged intersubjectivity.

Merging. “Who is who?” and “faces moving around with no concern” touch on a theme that arose in student writing about partnership in the college and community sections of Mirror, particularly in the college sections. Students wrote about moving as if they shared one or more body parts with their partner or merged into one identity or “one intent.” This is the question of who is the mirror and who is the mirrored: “I am lost in an infinite mirror of reflection. Who is who, I do not know”; “I couldn’t tell who was supposed to be the person and who was the mirror.” A participant inquired whether the person facing them was actually doing what they were doing, evidencing the fuzziness of the boundaries that can exist between partners: “Shock, wow, this person mirroring me is so silly; are they really doing what I am doing?” Another wrote, “I felt merged with my partner as the mirror.” Merging might be absorbing some aspect of a partner: “I absorbed my partner’s smile” and, poetically, “I felt as if I was breathing in my partner’s energy.”

Participants wrote about taking aspects of their partner, as in the energy above, or in feeling like their partner’s body or movements became their own: “I wasn’t looking at my body to make sure I replicated my partner’s movements—it was as if I was just doing them myself—disconcerting, but enjoyable,” or “taking on a body shape” that wasn’t their own, or even using their partner’s body “as an extension of my own, letting their movements guide mine, even though the exercise called for me to lead.”

Merging and becoming, for a short time, enmeshed with the other was “exhilarating” for some, an act of surrendering, “giving in completely and thinking only

of following his directions—making shapes just for him." Poetically, taking on another person was akin to being a visitor in another's home: "As the mirror, I felt like I was at someone else's house for the first time. It wasn't unpleasant, just unfamiliar." Taking on another, or how some students were *bodies-feeling-other*, occurred through "sensing weight in another's body," attending to "tone and quality," focusing attention solely on the partner's movements and repeating them, losing focus on self, and dropping their own "demeanor to adopt the movements and expressions" of the other.

Some participants described states of bodily and emotional synchrony with their partner or between other partners: "I felt in synch with my partner…I could see on her face that she felt my intentions and emotions—the dissatisfaction…the caring, the anger—all the things." Being synchronous led some to feel known, or to "feel felt" (Siegel, 1999, 2012); this aligns with data in which students describe feeling that they know their partner because they feel connected.

Participants also talked about going beyond merging or taking on aspects of their partner into an unfamiliar relational space that belonged to neither partner. "I felt a communication happening between bodies—beyond selves." Some sensed an essence of a character between themselves and their partners, while others felt that the between space was dissolving: "It was a warm, curious, unfamiliar experience that dissolved the typically felt boundaries of ordinary classmates."

Partner first. For college students in the community setting, connecting to one's partner held responsibility, sometimes a sense of obligation, towards the other. Students expressed concern for their partner's happiness or level of engagement: "Convincing my partner that it was ok to be unsure," "encouraging" their partner, and making their partner

feel “comfortable and excited.” Students wrote about uplifting their partner, wanting to making them feel positive about themselves or their performance:

> I performed the mirror activity with a woman in a wheelchair. Both sitting, we saw eye to eye. I wanted to make my partner’s ability feel important and beautiful.
>
> I don’t know if my partner knew how great she was at the activity. How do I express to this person that they are doing a perfect job, that they already are creative, and that I love working with them? This shouldn’t be difficult to express, but it was. Work on it.

Not all of the partnerships felt connected or merged; not all of the students enjoyed the process of partnering. Sometimes students felt resistant to partnering, to taking on the other, or to bond with them in ways that support them wanting to uplift their partners. Sometimes helping a partner feel good about an exercise seemed to be at odds with students’ own happiness, placing obligation above enjoyment: “It was hard, especially when I was touching, to keep my partner excited and interested”; “Maybe I didn’t even have to keep her entertained but I felt like I did.”

Resistance. Connection was not always possible, and for some, it was desired but not fulfilled. Some students felt uncomfortable taking on their partner’s movements: “A challenge was accepting my partner’s desired movements”; “I have a comfort zone… it didn’t line up with my partner’s. I was pushed out of it.” One student felt bound when mirroring their partner, recognizing that their own movements, initiated by the pelvis and more free-flowing, were not like their partner’s movements. One student wrote about the challenge of adapting to their partner’s needs while leading the Mirror at the community site, and emphasized (as above) the role of synchrony:

> When my partner was a classmate it was much faster, but when it was a community member, adapting to fit movement she wasn’t following was a challenge. When we finally synchronized, I was really excited.

For some students, the Avoid section of Approach/Avoid at the college felt "disconnected." Students' descriptive language included "disassociated," "abandoned," "collapsed," "isolated," "fear," "disconnected," "challenged," and "rejected." Two students wrote quite vulnerably about feelings of rejection: "I was not getting the attention I wanted, which gave me a feeling of being alone or not being welcomed"; "When we moved away from each other, I felt like my partner didn't want to be close to me." Another student in the college portion of Approach/Avoid wrote about feeling dependent, which for some can be a negative aspect of "connection" to another person: "I felt very dependent when I was moving."

Students also wrote about others who were not partners, mostly at the Human Puzzle community site, yet also as a relational feeling state: "I felt nervous" when with a partner relating to other partnerships and to the room as an emotional space. What is learned when dancing in a group, and when does a group sense emerge even when dancing in partnership or solo? In the Group mode of participation, some of the same themes emerged, such as Connection and Other First, as students related to the group itself, or the community partner itself: *body-feeling-self-and-others.*

Group

Although much of the writing about group or relating to others beyond partner occurred in the Human Puzzle writings, a sense of group—partners relating to other partnerships, and how the group of students or community partners affected students, their sense of themselves and their bodies—emanated from the other two improvisations as well, substantiating Group as a student experiential participation mode. Themes

identified in data on Group align with and add to the modes of Self and Partner presented above.

Grouping: The Phenomenon

The group, or *body-feeling-others*, shares similar themes as the other two participation modes: bodily-felt self-awareness, connection, empathy, or somatic resonance, and what seemed an ethic of others first, akin to partner first. Students' descriptions of group experience were strong and nuanced. Themes that emerged include Body (in Group), Connection (with sub-theme of Emotional Resonance), and Others First.

Body in Group

Proximity to others affected students' sense of their own bodies, "waking it up as others came closer," "becoming more aware of itself," and being close to other bodies made some feel "open and silly," or "wild, like noodles," and "free." One student wrote that proximity created moments of accidental encounter: "I loved the accidental touches." Being with other bodies can be an opening, freeing experience.

Connection

Some students wrote about how the group created or embodied a sense of connection. Connection felt "friendly" and safe, as in it is safe to make mistakes: "forgivable mistakes…acceptable clumsiness." Feeling needed afforded a sense of group belonging: "I felt needed, like I belonged, connected." Belonging or being a part of a whole was discovered in collaboration with others: "I felt like I was contributing and helping complete something." Students wrote about time and space aspects of group connection. Some felt connection build over time, for example, "towards the end of the

evening." A student noted that even with space between people, inhibiting chances of touching, feelings of "connectedness" were "strong." Fun and play were aspects of group experience. A student who witnessed the dancing reported, "I got to watch—fun—the ways people began to play with each other"; "People laughed. It was nice." One likened group work to a game: "Sudoku."

Not all students felt connected to group, and some descriptions held negative self-comparisons. One felt "uncomfortable" and "sad" about their lack of connection to "everyone else's energy." Another experienced disappointment that they were too serious while "everyone else was open to being silly." Such students might wish they could be more connected to the group than they feel they were.

Even during partner dancing, students experienced a sense of group: "I felt nourished, warmth and genuine bonding with the group all wrapped up in pleasant tingly sensations." The "group" became a meaningful entity to which some students bonded or belonged: "There was an overall sense of togetherness even though we were in pairs"; "I felt like the group was one unit." Echoes of merging from above, this time with the group, resonate in these words. I repeat here the student's words that coalesced into the framework for this chapter, "I felt the group moving as one. I felt attached to myself, my movement, my partner and the rest of the group." A sense of group translated into partners dancing among other bodies or partnerships, attending to others in the space; highlights included "when my partner and I traveled across the space, interacting with other partnerships and taking on some of their characteristics," and "falling across the room, navigating other bodies in space."

Emotional resonance. Students wrote about emotional responses to the group: "Happy to see people happy"; "I was picking up on people's hesitation"; "grateful and joyous that [the group] was really enjoying themselves." Students witnessed group members react, reflect, and respond to each other, anticipating hugs, waiting for others to respond to them. Sometimes, as in Partner above, students attributed emotion to others. Community workshops with Treehouse included two young boys with autism, one of whom participated with us while the other watched mainly from the side. A few people wrote about the participating child, interpreting his response: "A highlight was seeing one of the boys with autism so visibly overjoyed and energized by the presence of new people and new activities." One student focused on the community's group response-in-resonance: "A highlight was when the boy with autism was moving around on the floor and everyone clapped. That was powerful."

Students' bodies were affected by the group or being in the group, but their feelings, across all improvisational exercises, were often relational. Students expressed gratitude, patience, fear, and when comparing themselves to others, at times fell short. They felt "too slow," awkward, shy, nervous, or incompetent. The room itself became a metaphor for the group and carried social emotions: "There was a warmth in the room and even though there was some awkwardness, there was also much surprised comfort!" The student who wrote about their body feeling like noodles related it to the excitement in the room; the room held and amplified emotions with which students resonated.

Others First

A large portion of students' writings on group focused on responses to community members' participation. Similar to Partner First above, where students wanted to uplift or

support their partner's participation, yet different as many wrote about their desire, longing, or need for community members to be involved, sometimes above and beyond concern for their own participation. Other first in the group modality seemed to focus more on the engagement and participation of the community partner's members rather than on individual relationships as in partner first. A number of students didn't want to participate if members of the community didn't go first: "I felt like it would be better if I didn't participate…I might have gone in when a child wanted to." One student in particular didn't make a division between student and community group, reflecting, "It's hard in a big group for everyone to be seen/heard, but with this activity (Mirror) every person is being listened to and validated." Most students, however, reflected on community members' participation.

As detailed in chapter 4, this other-focus was pervasive in community settings, especially in Human Puzzle, which was our first site visit. In addition, students in community sites were either facilitators or participants, yet even as participants, due to the fact that their peers were facilitating, students could have experienced a difference in how they felt as participants—perhaps they became more participant-facilitator by default. This mixed role could also have contributed to other-focus. One focus was on youth members, making sure they had time and space to join in, above students' own participation. Students were positively affected by youth engagement, describing awe, or joy, or noting the first child to join in the puzzle as a highlight. Some wrote about the quality of children's participation and how this was influenced by time: "The children seemed to get really into it after a while"; "I really enjoyed watching the kids get more

confident and adventurous. It was amazing how much the atmosphere changed in an hour."

Students wrote about community participation as a whole, revealing other-focus: "A highlight was everyone wanting to join the group puzzle right away!" Some responses were visceral, revealing emotional connection and resonance to community members' engagement: "release/ease when Treehouse folks joined in"; "When the first Treehouse community member joined in, I felt a subtle burst of excitement from my core"; feeling "anxious and excited" when a new person joined in. One student reflected that community participation affirmed the purpose of our work: "Everybody that added to our puzzle was like another affirmation of the project." As detailed in chapter four, lack of community engagement evoked students' longing, hope, and wishes for more participation from community members. Wishing and "longing" for senior members to participate more, some wondered about ways to make that happen, such as sending "energy out to people on the sidelines."

Lived experiences of *body in group*, *group connection*, *sense of group*, *emotional resonance* with group, and *others first* described above are new to dance literature and connect to curricular goals of CEDE. A further category of meaning that emerged from all three dance improvisations and across all modes of student participation was that of Movement, which I theorize as an aesthetic mode of participation. Students described their aisthetic perceptions while moving—their direct felt perceptions of immediate bodily experience (Bond, 2008; Maletic, 1980) and aesthetic experiences of their dancing bodies through time, space and energy. Themes emerging from aesthetic experiences such as *dancing*, *creating*, *appreciating/beauty* and *genre*, further elucidate student

experience, adding another facet to the prism through which one can see, hear and feel student meaning: *body-feeling-into-self-and-others-----dancing*.

Aesthetic Experience: Moving

Prompted by my own holistic sensibilities and those of my dissertation advisor, I went back to the collective body of student writings and performed a final coding for descriptions of "aesthetic experience," a subtle yet pervading layer of meanings, through a hermeneutic lens. That students were aware of the aesthetic experience of dancing in time and space was evident in their descriptive, often poetic, writing across improvisations and sites. Students wrote about feeling themselves dancing and moving, creating, witnessing and appreciating the experiences and artistic nature of dance in both college and community sections of the course; and specific ways of knowing or cognition that correspond to dance experiences emerged (Giguere, 2007, 2011; Pakes, 2009). The data below are culled from chapter four and careful review of students' original writings. Emergent themes are Qualities, Creation, Appreciation, and Culture.

Qualities

Students provided rich descriptions of their felt experiences and qualities of moving. At times, pure experience was highlighted: "falling across the room," "just moving," "shifting movement," "jump[ing] with my body horizontal." Qualitatively, moving was "disjointed, not dancey," "subtle," "connected," "giddy," "slow" or "fast," "wild," "fluid," "careful," "peaceful," and "flowy," and more. Agency in moving was noted, for example: "I felt an overwhelming confidence in the quality of my movement." A student wrote, "I entered the activity without expectations, which allowed me to 'go with the flow' and enjoy my spontaneous gestures."

Students who focused on the lived experience of moving offered a glimpse into the aisthetic: “seeking extension in the neck, in the fingers, weight spreading into the toes,” “aware of my body, attuned to the stimuli,” “steadiness in my feet, heightening of attunement,” and “gingerness to the touch—softness, muscular ease.” One student drew upon their immediacy of bodily perception to respond to a partner in an accompanying way. After feeling a sense of freedom and lightness, this student responded in kind, in a “dialogue with a more nuanced kinesthetic patience.” Moving became patient. To borrow from Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (2017) students were thinking in movement—responding, making decisions, carrying on “nuanced dialogues.” Thinking in movement was emphasized in descriptions of creative experiences, highlighted next.

Creation

Students described embodied creation and creativity. Actively transforming the dance experience by molding, playing, shaping and amplifying, they described choreographic devices and compositional experiences: “Allowing transitions to be distorted and warped,” “doing things quickly, far away, or out of sight,” or “keeping track of everything without looking away” are ways that movement experiences supported being creative in the moment, thinking on one’s feet, or as mentioned above, thinking in movement. One student described their aesthetic partnership as “using the entire space in the room with very little movement in our bodies.” Some students highlighted making artistic choices: “A highlight was when I discovered I could move in various levels, and hold my pose for longer, not needing to be in constant flow.”

Groups of people challenged themselves creatively: “As everyone got more into the activity, they began to experiment more and move more freely.” One student’s

comments encapsulated choice-making from an inner temporal-spatial perspective, spending "time inside my own movements, making discoveries about their parameters and possibilities." Challenges such as knowing when a movement was "stale and needed to be changed" or when to "prep and clearly transition into and out of jumping movements" offered opportunities for practicing choreographic intelligence. Some found satisfying aesthetic collaborations:

> A few times we achieved a flow of movements and initiations that were seamless and performed in silence.
>
> We have built a story—we know it from the inside; it belongs to us and us alone; we are making something.

Watching others find their creativity was a highlight for some students, watching how the young people brought their creativity to the entire experience, or watching youth mirror or complement each other's movements. Watching, witnessing, and appreciating the world around them was another way students experienced their aesthetic selves.

Appreciation

> Pausing to notice how beautiful our shapes were…We were making amazing dance, the kind we work towards in my contemporary dance classes. As an artist, not as a "dance teacher." I enjoyed it.

The same student who appreciated beauty in a different activity at a different site wanted to make her partner feel "important and beautiful." Another student "loved seeing her [partner] get a little funky with her motions despite being one of the older folks." Enjoying their partner's style, this student highlighted the juxtaposition of a more youthful style in the body of an older person. One student "loved when the movement phrases became one," appreciating the transformation that took place during one of the improvisations, while another noted distinctive movement qualities for different actions:

"unfurling, reaching and opening in Approach" and "folding, curling, and wrapping movements in Avoid." Responding to observed transformations in a dance improvisation as time unfolded, one student described: "As the kids became more sure they could do it, their shapes got more complex and interesting, and the kinds of stories being told changed."

Culture

Some students employed cultural metaphors or forms of dance when describing feeling states while moving or connections with partners:

> I felt like a puppet and a ballet dancer and a Tom and Jerry character.
>
> I found that I moved into the movement traditions that I know and have known.
>
> We connected most over movements that are Caribbean, inherited from West African traditions.

In class, we spoke about the aesthetics of CEDE and community dance in comparison to traditional western concert dance, and the topic was addressed directly in some assigned readings (Amans, 2008/2017; Borstel, 2003) and indirectly in some of our resources (*Bill T. Jones: Still/Here with Bill Moyers*, 1997; Croce, 1994). In reflecting on these readings and resources, students noted that there was a difference in community dance and professional dance in terms of how it is valued, as in a typical "high" vs. "low" art duality, whom it serves or is for, where it happens and what kind of dance is prioritized. Students began to find their own values and perspectives on this; for instance, when looking at the community-based non-professional dancers in *Bill T. Jones: Still/Here with Bill Moyers*, some students opined that the community dancers were more "beautiful" because their movement, although not virtuosic or done with technical rigor,

was truly “authentic” and performed with full presence. Lomas (2009) discusses authenticity as a kind of technical rigor of the community dancer.

Based on students’ many references to dancing, composing and appreciating their improvisational dance experiences, it seems clear that CEDE can offer aesthetic experiences and learning beyond the social and therapeutic. Humans are an art-making species; even in the “simple” tool-making of tens of thousands of years ago, aesthetic value was likely as important as the functional (Dissanayake, 1988, 2000). Thinking *in* movement, rather than movement representing thinking (Sheets-Johnstone, 2017) and the cognitive strategies and group thinking that dance-making offers (Giguere, 2007, 2011) connect students’ reflections on their perceptions of learning in this study to aesthetic meaning and understanding.

Summary

Finding Me, Body, Care, Joy, Play, Connection, Body in Group, Others First, Qualities of Movement, Creation, Appreciation, and Culture emerged as themes when ordering student data according to their modes of experiential participation—self, partner, group, and aesthetic. Play, Joy, and Connection emerged in three of the four modes of student participation and each of the three dance improvisations, and Partner/Other First was found in both the Partner and Group modes of student participation.

Student descriptions captured nuanced bodily-affective states, for instance, Body: through ways bodies feel and flow; Connection: through ways students felt in and out of connectivity; Play: through ways that the improvisations supported motivation and joy; and Other/Partner first: through ways students let other or group of others be important. All of these findings illuminate student embodied aesthetic understandings within a

community-engaged dance education course and curriculum. Aesthetic ways of being gave body and voice to artistic ways of knowing experienced by students, challenging dichotomies between dance/art that is community-based and that which is based on western concert dance and the type of dance taught traditionally in the academy (Amans, 2008/2017; Green, 2000b; Parrish, 2009). The data reveal in-depth and diverse understandings students may gain in CEDE.

In the next chapter, I theorize understandings gleaned from the above affective, experiential themes to the emerging field, in practice and literature, of community-based learning (connected to service-learning and community-engaged learning) in the arts, and specifically dance. I also contextualize, contest and corroborate these understandings in relation to salient literature from critical pedagogy, philosophy and psychology.

CHAPTER 6

FROM PAS DE DEUX TO ENTRE LES DEUX: THE DANCE OF INTERSUBJECTIVE CONNECTION

> Lacking mutuality, we lack humanity. (Dissanayake, 2000, p. 42)

> Sensation is neither in the world nor in the subject but is the relation of unfolding of the one for the other through a body created at their interface. (Grosz, 2008, p. 72)

Student meanings presented in the last two chapters created rich material for pedagogical reflection. Experiences in the three focus exercises—Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid—both in the Hampshire studio peer group and with community participants at Treehouse or RFK, complement, contest, and extend the literature in community-engaged dance education (CEDE). Student descriptions capture nuanced phenomenological themes that connect to and strengthen the extant dance literature on student meanings of dance in higher education (Albright, 2010, 2013b; Alter, 1997; Alter, Denman & Barron, 1972; Bond, 2017; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Bond & Gerdes, 2012; Bracey, 2004; Dyer, 2010; Frichtel, 2012; Green, 2000a, 2001; Morris, 2012; Stinson et al., 2016e), in goals and outcomes for students and practitioners in community arts and CBL literature (Amans, 2008/2017; Bloomgarden, et al., 2006; Dolgon et al., 2017; Goldbard, 2006, 2008; Green, 2000b; Helgera, 2011; Houston, 2005; Keith, 2015; Malandra, 2007; Parrish, 2009; Rhoads, 1997; Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000), illuminating embodied aspects of learning that students might encounter when dancing in a CEDE course.

A rigorous coding procedure generated categories of meaning found in students' reflective writings within and across the three focus exercises (chapter 4). Four modes of

student participation were also identified—*self, partner, group*, and *movement*—as encapsulated in a student's summary reflection: "I felt attached to myself, my movement, my partner, and the rest of the group." These modes became the structure for presentation of themes (chapter 5) distilled from categories of meaning (chapter 4).

Emergent themes within the four modes of participation included Finding Me, Body, Care, Joy, Play, Connection (with sub-themes in the partner mode of Eye Contact, Bonding, Merging, Partner First, and Resistance*),* Body in Group, Others First*,* Qualities*,* Creation, Appreciation and Culture. Some themes reach across the modes, such as Play, while others are associated distinctively with one mode, such as Finding Me, in *self* mode. Students' language created a variety of feeling states, phenomenologically arriving at a lens through which to understand student meanings: *body-feeling-into-self-and-others-dancing.* This lens for understanding emerged, a bodily-affective lens primarily, which also contains aesthetic perspectives; looking through this lens into one mode of participation in particular, the *partner* mode, is the purpose of this chapter.

The wide range of feeling states that the data portray, such as *feeling self, feeling other/s*, and the bodily and movement feeling states presented in chapter 4, pointed me towards the literature on affect in contemporary theory. Although the writing prompts, and my one-time verbal prompting as captured on video, might have influenced students to reflect on bodily sensation and feeling states, the nuanced detail and rich, at times poetic, language that emerged revealed a proclivity towards affective (and aesthetic) learning in CEDE. This bodily-affective learning and knowing reached across all four modes of participation, while offering particular insights into the nature of partnering as a

mode of knowing and feeling while dancing. This constitutes a major contribution of the dissertation to the field of dance education, including CEDE.

This chapter begins with a brief discussion of the "affective turn" in contemporary scholarship, followed by and overview of "partnering" in dance, both of which categories support the empirical findings of the study. I then proceed to discuss in depth the experiential themes found in *partnering*, placing them in conversation with selected literature. Themes that arose in partnering, especially the affective theme of Connection—Eye Contact, Bonding, Merging, Partner First and Resistance—are then discussed in relation to intersubjectivity and affiliated constructs. Finally, I reflect on the ways in which some of the dance improvisations support the affective nature of the theme of Connection and scaffold intersubjectivity.

The Affective Turn

The "affective turn" references the emergence of affect as a focus of analysis across multiple disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, cultural studies, education, and beyond. The "watershed moment" for the most recent resurgence of scholarly interest in affect and theories of affect "undoubtedly" came in 1995, according to Gregg and Seigworth (2010), editors of *The Affect Theory Reader*, with the publication of two essays, one by Sedgwick and Frank ("Shame in the Cybernetic Fold") and another by Massumi ("The Autonomy of Affect") (p. 5). This turn or "re-turn" to affect foregrounds the importance of bodily feelings, sensing, and emotions in scholarly research after more than three centuries of privileging rationality and the false dichotomization of reason and emotion—mind and body—in the West.

Along with Clough (2007), Athanasiou, Hantzaroula, and Yannakopoulos (2008) identify generative influences in the affective turn as Spinoza (1632-1677) and 20th and 21st century philosophers Bergson, Deleuze, Guattari, Massumi, and Kosofsky-Sedgwick. La Caze and Lloyd (2011), however, locate treatises on affect much earlier, in the classical Hellenistic philosophies of Plato and the Stoics, as well as in 20th century thinking of Merleau-Ponty and Sartre. According to Clough (2007), the re-emergence of affect as a scholarly interest is being energized by social and cultural theorists who are, as we all are, facing "the analytic challenges of ongoing war, trauma, torture, massacre and counter/terrorism" (p. 1). Objectivity and "critical distance" make little sense in a globalized world where trauma is pervasive. According to affect theorists Bakko and Merz (2015),

> affect has reignited and augmented writings on the body, the everyday, relationality, cognition, and emotion in relation to, but also attempting to go beyond the dominant epistemological parameters of the linguistic turn. It has transformed scholarship on subject-object dichotomies, ontology, psychoanalysis, (post)structuralism, and the relationship between the social sciences and the biosciences, particularly the neurosciences. (p. 7)

Practical phenomenology can be seen in this light—as a method for examining affect, augmenting understanding of body and relationality.

van Manen (2011) identifies a number of micro "turns" that can be applied in phenomenological analysis, all of them affective in nature: the convocative, evocative, invocative, provocative, revocative and the vocative (n.p.). This study sits inside the "turn," not only in methodology but in the readiness with which students were able, willing, and observably eager to write about their lived experiences of dance improvisations and dance partnering, demonstrating what van Manen calls "the

revocative turn," which "through anecdote and imagery, brings experience vividly into presence, making it immediately or unreflectively recognizable" (n.p.).

These turns were evidenced in descriptive language that revealed how affect influenced students' experiences of partnering and how partnering influenced affect. Bakko and Merz (2015) reference critical theorist Hemmings (2005) as "help[ing] us to understand the relation of affect to the social as one where not only the emergent world is shaped by affect, but in turn the social world mediates affect" (pp. 8-9). They note a number of theoretical lenses defining affect as "potential, as practice, as technology, as emotion, as feeling, as labor, as relationality, as bodily intensive force, and as below, above, or alongside structure and power" (p. 7). In "An Inventory of Shimmers," their editors' introduction to *The Affect Theory Reader,* Gregg and Seigworth (2010) orient the lens of affect to:

> phenomenological and post-phenomenological theories of embodiment; cybernetics and theories of the human/machine/inorganic; non-Cartesian traditions in philosophy; aspects of psychological and psychoanalytic theory; traditions critical of normalising power including feminism, queer, and subaltern and disability studies; a collection of attempts to react to the linguistic turn; critical theories and histories of the emotions; and aspects of science and neurology. (pp. 6-8)

The discourse on affect, feeling, and emotion is complex and wide ranging, as were the affective meanings found in students' writings. Communications and media educator Shouse (2015) provides categorical perspectives: feelings are personal and biographical, emotions are social, and affects are pre-personal (n.p.). Shouse references the influence of Massumi's (1987) translation of affect in Deleuze and Guattari's, *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980/1987) on his categorization of affect. Massumi's notes on his translation are worth quoting here, as his use of the terms *affect* and *affection* corresponds

to students' meanings of partner-partner connections through his focus on affect as a pre-personal intensity that influences bodily states and capacities to act:

> *L'affect* (Spinoza's *affectus*) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act. *L'affection* (Spinoza's *affectio*) is each such state considered as an encounter between the affected body and a second, affecting, body (with body taken in its broadest possible sense to include "mental" or ideal bodies). (p. xvii)

Shouse and Massumi refer to affect as pre-personal and even "pre-social"; Massumi equates affect with intensity (Massumi, 2002, p. 27) that is felt before it is qualified by the "sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience" - after which is then defined as personal (p. 28). Massumi posits that affect is thus pre-personal. Clough argues against affect as solely pre-personal, stating, "There is a reflux back from conscious experience to affect, which is registered…as affect" (p. 2). It seems from students' writing in this study that affect is intra- and inter-personally layered, a "nonlinear complexity" (p. 2) of a kind of visceral potential or dynamism that emerges and reverberates from, between, and in connection with self and others, conscious and unconscious: "I was the force that moved something"; "moving in a fog," or "absorbing my partner's smile."

Seigworth and Gregg (2010) extend the notion of encounter between bodies, seeking affect's originary state: "Affect arises in the midst of *in-between-ness*: in the capacity to act and be acted upon," and is "the name we give to those forces—visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally other than conscious knowing…" (p. 1). According to van Manen (2007), phenomenological experience scaffolds these pre-conscious "alongside" conscious forces, giving "significance to the meanings that

influence us before we are even aware of their formative value" (p. 26). In this study, students experienced affective understandings through partnering, writing about sensations, bodily reflections, and awareness that fall in and among the folds of conscious and "other than conscious" knowing.

Further pertinent to this study, youth arts and culture scholar Hickey-Moody (2013) writes that for research purposes affect "is a visceral prompt," a starting place to:

> develop methods that have an awareness of the politics of aesthetics: methods that respond with sensitivity to aesthetic influences on human emotions and understand how they can change bodily capacities. (p. 79).

Hickey-Moody suggests that researching feelings is a way into understanding affect, and that affect can help to understand how the aesthetics of "popular or high art make embodied shifts in capacity" (p. 79). Hickey-Moody proposes that taking affect as a method of research shows the "impact that everyday aesthetics has on our subjectivities" and arts learning constitutes "affective pedagogy;" aesthetics "teaches us by changing how we feel" (p. 79). Aesthetic activity is political activity, according to Hickey-Moody, as these bodily changes create shifts in the way humans interact with themselves and others. Affect, or pre-personal intensity, is then a way into understanding how art-making influences human interaction.

Personal aisthetic and cultural aesthetic (Bond, 2008; Maletic, 1982) influences braided together as students described their felt sensations of subjective self, relating with other/s, and changing their bodily capacities as movers ("I did something I never thought I could do"), and as *bodies-feeling-into-others* ("My partner's body felt like an extension of my own"). As Hickey-Moody suggests, affect became, in this study, a visceral prompt that indeed influenced how students felt, how their bodily capacities changed, and how

they acted, e.g., becoming more caring (in the moment of dancing) or more playful. Data reflected feeling states that highlighted the affective nature of partnering and the aesthetic nature of bodily-affective connection. The next section discusses *partner* and *partnering* in western forms of dance art, dance recreation and dance education.

It Takes Two: Partnering in Dance and Life

As described in chapters 4 and 5, a major theme found in students' writings is *partner* and *partnering*, as represented in bodily-affective experiences of *in tune with*, *merging, absorbing*, and *breathing in*, along with partnering's trope of *connection* (a word students used frequently), as well as *care*, *joy* and *play,* across campus and town communities. Experiences that lack connection are also salient to understanding the dynamics of partnering and pair work, a core relational modality in CEDE. The present study illuminates affective nuances of *connection* as described by students, vitalizing extant writing on *connection*, giving *connection* a felt body and voice.

Educational philosopher Nell Noddings (1984, 1992) is noted for her theorization of *care* as a pedagogical modality, an epistemology that can be traced further back to the Dutch pedagogical phenomenologists and elaborated through van Manen (1991, 2014, 2015). A student of van Manen in the 1990s, Karen Bond (2000) theorized dance education as a "culture of caring." Values and meanings of pedagogical care also appear in Bond and Etwaroo (2005), Stinson (1993/2016c) and Warburton (2004). Noted earlier, affective states of *joy, fun,* and *play* are also prominent in dance and dance education literature (Bond, 1991, 2000, 2008, 2013, in press; Kealiinohomoku, 1976; Stinson, 1997/2016a; Warburton, 2011).

Partnering takes multiple forms in human dance: people dance in pairs (for example, the famous American dance partnerships of Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, and of the Nicholas brothers),[3] dancers partner musicians, and dance organizations partner with each other, such as a college and its community partner or any two organizations that support dance education or performance. Dance literature is rich with material on social dancing, often called partner dancing, as in ballroom or vernacular social dance (Demers, 2013; Vermey, 1994; Winkelhuis, 2001). Popular television shows such as *So You Think You Can Dance* appear to foster intimate partner relationships between dancers (Elswit, 2012).

Many culturally specific dance styles are performed in pairs, for example, salsa (Borland, 2009), tango (Manning, 2007; Savigliano, 1995; Thompson, 2005), and waltz (Yaraman, 2002). Partnerships between well-known choreographers and dancers are highlighted in literature (Morris 2001; Simon, 1997; Zimmer & Quasha, 1989), including partnerships in improvisational dance (Novack, 1990; Kaltenbrunner, 1998/2004), and in the literature on teaching and performing improvisation (Albright & Gere, 2003; Blom & Chaplin, 1988; Foster, 2002; Goldman, 2010; Morgenroth, 1987; Wunder, 2009; Zaporah, 1995). In contrast, Australian dance writer Gardner (2007) suggests that the detailed nuances of partnerships and "intercorporeal" modes and relations of production between choreographer and dancer in modern dance have been rendered "invisible" in dance literature (p. 36); I find the same with the literature of community-based dance education, specifically in relation to the affective nature of dancing-and-choreographing-while-partnering.

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[3] Nicholas Brothers: see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBb9hTyLjfM; Astaire and Rogers: see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydxcHACwX4Y

While *partnering* is represented in dance teaching literature, emphasis is on the actions of partnering—such as lifting, turning, dipping—and other partner movements specific to ballet, ballroom dance, and contact improvisation (Dolin, 1950; Moore, 2005; Nelson & Smith, 1997; Novack, 1990; Pallant, 2006; Serrebrenikov & Lawson, 1978). Across cultures, partnering in dance is often gendered: the male performs certain sets of actions (lifting, jumping, leaping) and the female another (balancing, turning, being lifted) (Moore, 2005; Serrebrenikov & Lawson, 1978). Partner dances in ballet are called *pas de deux*, or "step of two," focusing on the classical balletic duet between male and female dancer; there are traditional proscriptions for stage etiquette, such as taking bows, as well as how to walk, lift, and stand (Dolin, 1969/2005; Serebrennikov, 2000). Counter to much of the more physical how-to literature on *pas de deux* in ballet, Kronenburg and Guerra (2016) also speak to issues of artistry, trust, familiarity and connection—helped along by strong eye contact— needed between partners in ballet, for "two to become one" (p. ix) and to support an artistically and technically strong *pas de deux*. Studies on salsa (Borland, 2009) and waltz (Yaraman, 2002) discuss gendered partnering as well. Outevsky (2011) researched dancers' perceptions of weight-bearing, visual cueing, and touch in partnering across a variety of styles.

Partnering has been described in educational settings. Ann Cooper Albright (2013) presents student writings on partnering in contact improvisation that touch on psychological perceptions and speak directly to what she has called "intersubjective dancing" (p. 257), making her writings important to this study. Bond (1991, 1994, 2008) examined dance partnering between nonverbal deaf-blind children and adult care workers in a residential educational setting, finding that accommodation of children's personal

style in partner dancing afforded the development of "aesthetic community" (see also Bond & Richard, 2005; Richard, in press). Expanding the notion of partnership, Vieira and Bond (2007, 2017) reflect on pedagogical relationships in higher education dance. Drawing on stories from 35 dance teachers from six countries, they identify a theme of "connectivity," and its constituent phenomena of intimacy, "chemistry", sensitivity, trust, and "group presence." Teaching stories illustrate that a sense of community can be generated while partner dancing, a phenomenon found in the present study. The authors conceptualize the teacher-student relationship as a form of partnering; the study's theme of "connectivity" is salient to findings of the present inquiry, which addresses college students' experiences of leading/teaching others.

With some exceptions in the small body of "student-centered" research literature discussed in chapter 2 and referenced throughout the dissertation, studies that focus on intersubjective concerns—such as dancer-audience relationship, dancer-teacher relationship, and dancer-dancer relationship—often apply a pre-ordained theoretical framework without grounding in bodily-affective perspectives of students' or dancers' lived experience. For instance, Marques (1998, 2007), as mentioned in chapter 2, focuses on dancer-teacher relationships through the framework of critical pedagogy, and Warburton (2004) writes about dancer-teacher relationships from the perspective of an historical overview of the culture of caring in dance education. Fraleigh (1987) theorizes dancer-audience relationship from the lens of existentialism and phenomenology, including her own personal bodily-affective perspective, and in later works (1991, 2000) offers perspectives of students and fellow dancers. This study is an exception to the "norm" of theory-driven scholarship in dance studies. I turn next to a discussion of

partnering, and the theme of connection as evidenced and recounted by a group of students in selected dance improvisations with both peers in a college studio environment and in community partnership settings.

Connection

> The self is not a substance…but a relation. (Levinas as cited in Levinas & Hand, 1989, p. 63)

In this dissertation on student meaning making in a community-engaged dance education (CEDE) course, partnering became a discovery of relational knowledge—a way of knowing self and other as well as self-with-other. Students wrote about movements in partnership sometimes as action-oriented and bodily-focused; for example, "there was a movement when M brushed my arm in sort of a diagonal swoosh and my body responded by spiraling to the ground." Much of the time students wrote about the affective nature of what they were experiencing while partnering, associating their movements with feeling states, especially feelings of connection. Connection or lack thereof with partners could be associated with feelings of intimacy, vulnerability, abandonment, or merging. Students described their experiences while partnering intersubjectively: as two selves dancing together, as merging beings with "one intent," or as privileging the other over self.

Students' documented experiences of relational knowing through movement support Vygotsky's (1978, 1987) constructivist premise that human cognition is afforded by the social and cultural processes in which it is situated. Luria (1981), a student and colleague of Vygotsky, wrote, "In order to explain the highly complex forms of human consciousness one must go beyond the human organism. One must seek the origins of

conscious activity … in the external processes of social life" (p. 25). Student reflections on partnering extend traditional constructivist views on relational learning, adding a physicalized, bodily-affective aspect. Further, the present study supports critics of Vygotsky who assert that both personal and social/cultural processes support knowledge creation (Liu & Matthews, 2005; Saifer, 2010), as well as more recent cognitive scientists who suggest that meanings are co-created. Fuchs and De Jaegher (2009), for example, argue that "our primary and everyday encounters with others are not solitary observations but interactions in the second-person perspective" (p. 468). Dancing together allowed for interactions in both second-person and first-person perspectives, and sometimes a mixing of the two.

Students' specificity in writing about "partner" and partnering—the felt or lived experience of partnering—primarily denoted feeling, seeking, or desiring connection. *Connection* between partners as a bodily-focused, affective language—encompassing trust, caring, merging, being attuned with, responsible for, attending to a partner—is not a fully realized concept in the literature of community-based dance, with or without an academic component. Some students convey a psychological or originary sense of partnering, the dance of interdependence that has been attributed to the earliest relationship in the life cycle of humans and other animals, that of infant-caregiver—the first duet of life (Aitken & Trevarthen, 1997; Trevarthen, Kokkinaki, & Fiamenghi, 1999). Evolutionary anthropologist Dissanayake (2000) calls the earliest human partnership the "dance of mutuality" (p. 42), from which springs a desire for greater mutuality and also the drive and innate propensity to "make special," or "artify" (Dissanayake, 2017).

Improvisational dances between Hampshire students and their partners, whether on campus, or at Treehouse or RFK community sites, reflected both the desire for "connection" and the motivation and delight in making something special: "We have built a story – it feels rich, connected…we know it from the inside…it belongs to us both and us alone"; "we are making something"; "we were making amazing dance." Students experienced both bodily-affective and aesthetic meanings while dancing in partnership.

As introduced earlier, *connection* as a term in partnership is referenced mainly in terms of physical connection—to support lifts and steps in ballet (Serrebrenikov & Lawson, 1978), or the physical frame, tone, and posture of the connection between social dance partners (Demers, 2013). Kronenberg and Guerra (2016) use the word "connection" to refer to the psychological connection partners need to create to dance well artistically and technically in the ballet *pas de deux*. Writings on social or partner dance found in websites and blogs appear to define "connection" as the physical technique needed to enact leader-follower interaction while dancing. A few website blogs, however, distinctly refer to the "soft-skills" of connection as what "informs the depth of connection" (Riva, 2015, n.p.). These skills, according to Riva, include vulnerability, being in synch, being in the "zone," and taking care of yourself and your partner in order to feel safety and comfort. Many of these "soft-skills" were described poetically by students in this study: "I just moved and poured out my energy" or giving a partner "careful attention."

Social dance blogger and author Ruper (2016) informally interviewed several dancers about what they meant when they said or heard the word "connection" and distilled seven associations in social dancing: connection to ground, to music, to partner's

movement preferences, abilities and styles, to partner's emotional state, eye contact, to quality and boundaries of touch, and connection "intimately or romantically" or "chemically," as in sharing a moment of "loving attention" with a partner before moving on to another (n.p.). Many of these associations were made by students in the present study—eye contact, feeling "in tune with," quality of touch, and "chemistry," and will be discussed later in the chapter. Although not a traditional academic genre, blogs are included as grey literature as they focus on the lived experience of dancers' embodied connections and therefore bear a clear relationship to the data in this study.

Students in the Hampshire 2014 class wrote the word "connection" or "connected," whether feeling it or wishing for it, several times across the three dance improvisations and all four modes of participation (self, partner, group, movement), and also used terms associated with connection such as *belonging* and *togetherness*. As with much of the data, students' language gave *connection* a bodily-affective-social meaning: "my body expanded"; "I felt connected"; "sense of togetherness even in pairs," as well as aesthetic: "making shapes just for him." From students' descriptions, I could feel into their bodily experiences of connection to their partner while dancing and making dances. Sondra Fraleigh's (1987) germinal work on phenomenology and dance offers insight into the intersubjective relationship between dancer and "other," suggesting that dance becomes art once it is seen by another, where it is "performed within the expressive condition of being-for-other" (p. 58).

Connections were felt, and as felt were associated with gentleness, freedom from worry, expansiveness, bodily ease, intimacy, vulnerability and a positive regard for other or others. Data revealed that in the "dance of connection," students felt themselves as

subjects interacting in intimate ways with college or community partners who were also subjects. Students' embodied connection with a partner might foreground two subjects dancing together: "My partner and I had great chemistry and connected extremely well," or blending, in "merged subjectivity" (Rabinowitch, Cross, & Burnard, 2011, p. 111): "Who is who, I do not know."

One partner might place the other in a position of privilege or *partner first*: "Maybe I didn't even have to keep her entertained but I felt like I did," or feel resistance to connection: "A challenge was accepting my partner's desired movements." The range of subjectivities encompassed two distinct subjects (connected to disconnected), one blended subject, and one subject of the two being more "valued." *Connection*, a social and bodily-affective construct, lived in ways that, as students described, danced between partners. In balletic terms, to play on words and refer to the title of this chapter, the *pas de deux*—"step of two", morphed into variations of *entre les deux*—"between the two," foregrounding various self/other, or self-feeling-into-other, connections.

For students in this study, felt connections revealed a range of subjectivities that I consider to be constituents of intersubjectivity. Students gave connection a bodily-affective sensibility that narrated a negotiated relationship of intersubjectivity between partners. Focusing mainly on the theme of *connection* in the partnering mode of participation described in the last chapter, the next section offers theoretical context for intersubjectivity and its relationship to connection, as found in student writings. This discussion contributes to how I interpret the curricular possibilities of CEDE.

Intersubjective Connection

Intersubjectivity is a large topic, an *idée grande*, found across disciplines of philosophy, psychology, sociology, cognitive science, education, and the arts. Scholars have attributed the origins of the term to different philosophers. For example, psychoanalyst and social theorist Benjamin (1988) locates its origin in the social theory of Habermas (1970), while anthropologists Csordas (2008) and Duranti (2010) credit it to mathematician and philosopher Husserl, founder of the school of phenomenology, in the early 20th century. Within developmental psychology, Trevarthen (1979) defined subjectivity as individual consciousness and intentionality and intersubjectivity as the sharing of intentions, emotions and certain cognitive processes amongst subjects (Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001). Bruner (1996) offers an adaptive, constructivist definition: "how people come to know what others have in mind and how they adjust accordingly" (p. 161).

Duranti (2010) asserts that Husserl's definition of intersubjectivity provides "an overall theoretical frame for thinking about the ways in which humans interpret, organize, and reproduce particular forms of social life and social cognition" (p. 17). Husserl's definition encompasses more than shared intention or mutual understanding among subjects; in fact, according to Duranti, intersubjectivity does not even require an immediately perceivable human presence but is "closer to the notion of the possibility of being in the place where the Other is" (p. 16). The lack of perceivable human presence and the *possibility* of being in the place where the Other is are reconcilable through the imaginal sense of the other, an intuitive "intercorporeality" (Csordas, 2008) and empathy

(Duranti, 2010). Both Csordas and Duranti agree that the possibility of understanding—an existential condition—is distinct from actual understanding.

In this study, the presence of the other was immediately perceivable, yet I wondered whether the feelings some students attributed to their partners were "actual": "I could see on her face that she felt my intentions and emotions—the dissatisfaction, the support, the caring, the anger—all the things." A student might feel that, "Having connected, I know my partner now." Whether through dancing a student can indeed "know" their partner, or what a partner is feeling, the *possibility* of knowing other through empathy and or an imaginal sense of the other's feelings, was present. Duranti (2010) suggests that the process of opening to the other, or empathy, is more important than the *actuality* of understanding the other.

> For Husserl, intersubjectivity means the condition whereby I maintain the assumption that the world as it presents itself to me is the same world as it presents itself to you, not because you can "read my mind" but because I assume that if you were in my place you would see it the way I see it. (p. 21)

Reading it this way, intersubjective connection can be a practice of empathy, or of relating to another that foregrounds the possibility of understanding one another, while maintaining one's own subjectivity: "You would see it the way I see it." Husserl (1989) wrote,

> The things posited by others are also mine: in empathy I participate in the other's positing. E.g., I identify the thing I have over and against me in the mode of appearance… To this belongs the possibility of substitution by means of trading places. Each person has, at the same place in space, "the same" appearances of the same things—if, as we might suppose, all have the same sensibility. And on this account, even the "view" of a thing is Objectified. Each person has, from the same place in space and with the same lighting, the same view of, for example, a landscape. But never can the other, at exactly the same time as me (in the originary content of lived experience attributed to him) have the exact same appearance as I have.

My appearances belong to me, his to him. (as cited in Duranti, p. 21)

In reading Husserl, Duranti (2010) surmises that intersubjectivity is not a product or an effect of communication between people (and the world), but a condition for its possibility (p. 24).

Influenced by Husserl and Ricoeur, Csordas (2008) argues that the body of one person to another—or the "hinge of intercorporeal reciprocity," such as "learning a chant through seeing the chanter's lips, is the doorway to understanding intersubjectivity as an intuited 'wordless intercorporeality'" (p. 114). Meyer, Streeck and Jordan (2017) explore intercorporeality as a preverbal social and relational interaction between people. Phenomenologist Susan Stuart (2017) posits that this intercorporeal reality or reciprocity is co-intentional and co-constructivist:

> "It isn't just that our affective sensorimotor enquiry and action overlaps and interweaves with the affective sensorimotor action and enquiry of the other; it's that, as meaning-making activities, they co-constitute one another." (p. 54)

Experiencing bodies cross-culturally places intersubjectivity in the space of nonverbal, co-created meaning-making. Body image scholar Weiss (as cited in Csordas, 2008) writes,

> To describe embodiment as intercorporeality is to emphasize that the experience of being embodied is never a private affair, but is always already mediated by our continual interactions with other human and nonhuman bodies. (p. 119)

Looking at intersubjectivity through Husserl, Weiss, Csordas, and Duranti brings up a question posed in the community-based learning literature referenced in chapter 2: Can we interact with "other," ones different from ourselves, without feeling the same, as in "collapsing difference," or feeling opposite and unable to relate? Csordas (2008)

proposes, “We are neither isolated *cogitos* that must bridge a gulf of solipsism nor participants in the same shared subjective substance. We are similar…” (p. 113).

Cognitive scientists look towards intersubjectivity to advance theories of social cognition. Di Paolo and De Jaegher (2015) write that the field has “more and better tools” to “explore the role of interactive phenomena and interpersonal histories in conjunction with individual processes” (n.p.). Through resonance, rhythmic play, and attunement people can “participate in each other’s sense-making,” De Jaegher & Di Paolo’s (2007) definition of embodied intersubjectivity (p. 488). Editing 42 scholarly contributions on embodied intersubjectivity for *Frontiers in Psychology*, Di Paolo and de Jaegher (2015) show that embodied intersubjectivity is a genuine research interest that crosses disciplines to explore “recent” trends that “investigate the dynamics of actual interactive encounters between people” (n.p.).

Students in this study return again and again to experiences of felt connection through embodied intersubjectivity that touches on finding “common ground,” or feeling connected to their partners in a mutual dance, finding the possibility of communication with and perhaps understanding of other. Students’ responses were situated in actual interactive encounters rather than hypothetical encounters or theories about encounters; they were participating in the other’s positing, as Husserl (1989) put it. Students’ words, generated from focused orientation to their own lived, felt experiences, make a unique contribution to the literature on intersubjectivity as well as partnering in dance, detailing with bodily-affective description how they experienced felt connection. The following sections summarize the ways in which students narrated intersubjective connection in their reflective writings about three dance improvisations.

Two-Subject Intersubjective Connection

Students' experiences of partnering involved two discrete subjectivities—student and partner—dancing and moving separately but connected through sight, touch, emotions, and rhythm. I employ students' written anecdotes to illustrate the nuances of *two-subject intersubjective connection* as perceived by one member of the pair—the student.

Even a single moment of interactive encounter can generate strong affects: "I felt an electrical charge at the sight of my partner's moving body." This student is writing about two subjects, one whose bodily self is affected or "charged" by the other. Another student described, "I tingled every time we locked eyes." This is more than a class exercise; it is a transmission of energy that connects student and partner. Students' writings reveal a multi-sensory intersubjective exchange that a student (and possibly both) might perceive as transformative, generating greater *connection.* Student "receives" partner and is changed—affectively, viscerally, kinetically.

Eyes are a focal point; eye contact in general, or closing of eyes in a trusting partnership, were important transmitters of connection: "I felt a deeper connection in that moment;" "it communicated more than any single movement could." A single glance can communicate. Partner dancing offers an intimacy where eyes can be also dancing, as contrasted with both partnered and non-partnered dancing for oneself, or with a large group facing a mirror or an audience. Sometimes "seeing" can have a quality of 360-degree perception. One of Albright's (2010) contact improvisation students, Grace Phelan, described:

> Even if my back is turned to my partner and they are out of sight, I can feel their presence, support and energy. When my partner is in sight, my

> movement feeds her dancing and vice versa. The smallest movement from her could send me spiraling through space. Our energies inspire each other…Coming into contact might be making eye contact for the first time, coming into close proximity with your partner, or mirroring each other's movements. (as cited in Albright, p. 19)

Dance anthropologist Sklar (2001) discusses the primacy of movement as an immediate corporeal experience in which one can experience "empathic kinesthetic perception" without the use of sight:

> Empathic kinesthetic perception suggests a combination of mimesis and empathy. Paradoxically, it implies that one has to close one's eyes to look at movement, ignoring its visual effects and concentrating instead on feeling oneself to be in the other's body moving. Whereas visual perception implies an "object" to be perceived from a distance with the eyes alone, empathic kinesthetic perception implies a bridging between subjectivities. This kind of "connected knowing" produces a very intimate kind of knowledge, a taste of those ineffable movement experiences that can't be easily put into words. Paradoxically, as feminist psychologist Judith Jordan points out, the kind of temporary joining that occurs in empathy produces not a blurry merger but an articulated perception of differences. (pp. 31-32)

Students in this study discovered a kind of "empathic kinesthetic perception" with eyes open and closed, at times as a "bridging between subjectivities" or, in contrast to Jordan's description, as a, temporary, "blurry merger." Jordan (1984) takes issue with earlier developmental bias towards individualization or autonomy with little or no regard for "we-ness" (p. 2); however, Jordan's focus is that empathy, a needed state for intimacy, is "a complex process relying on a high level of ego development and ego strength," (p. 3) and is also an "attainment of the appreciation of the paradox of separateness within connection" (p. 2). Jordan's view of empathy allows for the "blurry merger", albeit temporarily, in an "as if" scenario, where there can be a "momentary overlap between self and other representations as distinctions between self and other blur experientially"

(p. 3). The "blurry merger" intersubjectivity is discussed more thoroughly later in this chapter.

Like the eyes, the face as a whole can interlock in mutually understood affect: "our faces move around with no concern." As illustrated in the last chapter, eyes, faces, and imagined lips ("like kissing someone for the first time") represent embodied intimacy that led to a feeling of empathy for some: "my feelings were that of empathy."

For some students, felt connection might be articulated metaphorically. One employed a trope, "chemistry," that often denotes a romantic partnership: "My partner and I had great chemistry and connected extremely well." Here, partner is a separate, individuated subject with whom the student feels connection as "chemistry." Husserl's focus on the existential quality of intersubjectivity—affording the possibility of understanding other and not necessarily the actuality of such understanding, supports the premise that whether the "chemistry" is actual or metaphorical, is not important. The salient learning here is how dancing together facilitates other processes: of feeling together, feeling connected, or feeling chemically or electrically charged. The three student writings on electricity, "tingles," and chemistry suggest that this connection via dancing is a viscerally heightened event.

A feeling of embodied connection can afford a sense of "knowing" other: "Having connected, I know my partner now." Although the student doesn't state what they mean by the word "know" and "to know" has multiple definitions, here the word "knowing" is related to *connection*. Welch (2002) discusses students' feelings of "knowing" a community partner or youth in a service-learning context, inquiring into, with herself and her students throughout a service-learning project, where along a

continuum they may feel they identify (to know), or feel different from (not to know), a youth in the Community Center where the project was taking place. She discusses this "knowing" through contemporary feminist object-relations theory, which "meditates on the question of how we come to recognize others as subjects related to but outside ourselves" (p. 248). "I know my partner now" might be viewed by some as assumptive—I know at first reading, I did—to imagine that one can know another from a ten-minute dance improvisation. Yet students described the dance improvisations facilitated with community members as "great bonding tools" that "really validate everyone" in the room. It might be possible, therefore, to know, or get to know, other through even one partner dance.

The statement "I know my partner now" was written in the Hampshire studio setting where this feeling of "knowing" emerged from one improvisation exercise (Mirror) involving two students of color who also shared enjoyment of West African dance. I'm interested to understand better how a student might feel they "know" someone through sharing a brief dance improvisation. Further, can connecting through dancing, with a college or a community partner, make one feel "like" another, or identify with another, regardless of background, or any of the social or economic forces that produce inequity and difference between people? Students' writings point to a quality of affective knowing that is chemical, electrical, visceral—a bodily-felt, [pre-personal?] knowing.

The range of bodily-affective experiences described by students suggest that dancing together can mediate between the "collapse of difference" and the nihilism of complete separateness, the pendulum swings discussed in the literature on community-based work (see chapter 2) (Deans, 2000; Keith, 2015; Welch, 2002; Wells, 1996).

Perhaps partner dance improvisations such as Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid meet Hickey-Moody's (2013) criteria noted earlier for, "methods that respond with sensitivity to aesthetic influences on human emotions" and can help us "understand how they can change bodily capacities" (p. 79).

Welch (2002) asserts that feminist psychoanalytic theory refocuses the issue of seeing other as self, or seeing other as never self, by looking at how humans create spaces for communicative play of self-with-other (p. 255). Following her students' reflective journaling over the course of a semester, she found that they continually construct and reconstruct a sense of knowing or recognizing that the "subjectivities, perceptions, and positions of [members of the youth group they worked with] exceed their initial constructions of them" (p. 259). Perhaps dancing can, again, support the *possibility* of knowing as distinct from actual knowing (Duranti, 2010), and this *process* allows students to say that they "know" someone, and also know that there is a distinct someone to know. Perhaps dancing together can support *learning* to know someone, and as with Welch's (2002) study, allow students to perceive the other as exceeding their initial construction of them, to know them more, and see them more fully.

A further question arises: can embodied relational understanding bypass developmental expectations of "gradualism" (Kagan, 1994). "Knowing" and "understanding" need to be examined in their unique contexts; each student will use these words differently. For example, a sense of relational knowing might develop instantaneously between people with similar cultural movement preferences. Similarity breeds recognition, connection, and heightened emotions, as evidenced with students who related that similitude of movement preferences with their partner gave them a sense of

joy, *liberation*, or *connection*. Further, studies on homophily show that "similarity breeds connection" (McPherson, Smith-Loving, & Cook, 2001, p. 415); connection happens more readily and regularly between people who are similar (in demographic, geographic, value, and aspiration terms, as well as in gender [Bond, 2017]) than between those who are dissimilar.

A few students described connection through similarity of movement styles and some expressed discomfort with difference in movement style and patterning. Overall, however, students' focus on connection and wanting connection was strong, even when movement preferences of student and partner were dissimilar, or when partners were dissimilar in other factors (age, race, cultural background). For one student, who partnered with an older person in a wheelchair, understanding was still felt: "Somatically, there was understanding."

Moving together in rhythm created strong connection for many students: "I was able to move to the rhythm of the song and my partner was able to follow"; "I felt in synch with my partner." Entrainment—coordinated rhythmic movement or synchrony in music or movement—has been studied in communities such as dance clubs (Van Dyke, Moelants, Demey, Deweppe, Coussement, & Leman, 2013), studios, and laboratories (Large, 2000; Phillips-Silver, Aktipis, & Bryant, 2010). Some studies have shown that synchrony in music and movement creates social bonds such as trust, empathy, compassion and feelings of affiliation (Freeman, 2000; Reddish, Fisher, & Bulbulia, 2013; Tarr, Launay & Dunbar, 2014). Tarr et al. (2014) suggest that endorphin release during exertive synchronization facilitates interpersonal social bonding in dance, while Reddish, et al. (2013) tie intentionality with synchrony in creating greater cooperation

among partners through rhythm and game-playing. Moving in rhythm together—or synchrony—has been theorized (see chapter 2) as a vehicle for emotional regulation and social bonding (van der Kolk, 2015).

Phillips-Silver et al. (2010) inform that coordinated rhythmic movement between people is considered a "special case of spatiotemporal coordination where the rhythmic signal originates from another individual" (p. 3). They state, "there is perhaps no stronger behavior to unite humans than coordinated rhythmic movement" (p. 3), a claim supported by parent-infant observations that show increased bonding through coordinated gestures and vocalizations (Feldman, 2007; Trehub, 2003; Trevarthen, 1979). The earliest duet—parent/infant—consisting of coordinated rhythmic partnering, likely prepares us for later abilities to empathize, enjoy partnering, and feel an immediate and remembered sense of connection. In this study, as noted, students describe rhythmic synchrony with a partner as an affective highlight: "When we finally synchronized, I was really excited." In short, rhythmic synchrony afforded social bonding between partners.

In this study, two-subject intersubjectivity afforded the possibility of attuning with and knowing another, feeling a visceral *connection* along with understanding or empathy for another while also experiencing one's own individuality. Two-subject intersubjective connection foregrounds two unique subjective entities—separate yet connected, as described by a student in relation to their community partner: "I felt a unique sense of connection and individuality." The next section addresses students' experiences of *two-subject intersubjectivity with disconnection*, that is, a sense of disconnected individuality.

Two-Subject Intersubjectivity and Disconnection: Disrupted Intersubjective Connection

The data on *disconnection* are also important to understanding the range of subjectivities embedded in *connection*. Experiences of disconnection point to resistance (for example, through self-centeredness or fear), to rejection, and to unrequited desire to connect. Resistance can be related to perceptions of difference between self and partner: "A challenge was accepting my partner's desired movements"; "I was pushed out of my comfort zone"; "Mirroring my partner's movements made me feel bound. My movements are more free-flowing." Students might feel rejected by a partner: "I was not getting the attention I wanted…I felt alone and unwelcome"; "When we moved away from each other, I felt like my partner didn't want to be close to me." The desire for attention and connection or closeness with a partner can be unrequited or echo a sense of lost intimacy or nostalgia for closeness or connection when a partner moves away.

Alienation and connection can be considered poles of intersubjectivity, as Fraleigh (1991) notes. She writes about intersubjectivity as a given in both relationship and solitude and suggests that phenomenological experience is also a both/and relationship: both unique and universal, individual and shared.

> Phenomenology…hopes to arrive at shared meaning, recognizing that this world is indeed "our world", that our being-in-the-world is conditioned by the existence of others. Individual subjectivity is therefore understood in view of its intersection with a surrounding world, constituted by other objects, natural phenomena and other human beings. Intersubjectivity is a given…the basis of both alienation and communion, all possible shades of relation and solitude, for to be alone is to be (in fact or feeling) without others. (pp. 11-12)

Students felt connected or disconnected to their partners as distinct subjects. Fraleigh references above how we are connected even when alone. Students experienced

disconnection, sometimes through perceiving difference between self and partner and sometimes through desiring but not achieving connection. Two separate subjects, student and partner, can be engaged in an affective dance of connectivity or disconnection, with elements of intimacy in both. Students also described a blending of self and partner, as addressed in the next section.

Merged Intersubjective Connection: Mutual Incorporation

Fuchs and De Jaegher (2009) highlight a form of intersubjectivity they term "mutual incorporation:" the "reciprocal interaction of two agents in which each lived body reaches out to embody the other" (p. 474). Mutual incorporation is akin to Merleau-Ponty's (1962) pre-reflective sphere of "intercorporeality," or "carnal intersubjectivity," which he regarded as the basis of social understanding (De Jaegher, 2009, p. 475).

> The communication or comprehension of gestures comes about through the reciprocity of my intentions and the gestures of others, of my gestures and the intentions discernible in the conduct of other people. *It is as if the other person's intentions inhabited my body and mine his.* (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 185) (emphasis mine)

Rabinowitch et al. (2011) hypothesize the notion of pre-reflective intercorporeality in group music-making, terming it "merged subjectivity…where one subject may regard another participating subject almost as himself, to the point that one may experience another's sensations as one's own" (p. 111). Imitation alone, a key aspect of Mirror, can add to the feeling of "becoming" another:

> Psychological studies have emphasized the critical role of imitation (or pretend play in literature on children) in the process of understanding) … The act of imitation helps to assimilate the imitated action within the imitating person, almost as if the act were done by oneself. This self-enactment brings one closer to that which is being imitated, giving a personal impression of what it is like to 'be someone else' and enabling one to understand the other person's intentions and emotions. (p. 114)

Rabinowitch et al. observe that movement, emotion, imitation, and synchronization, phenomena identified as aspects of partnering in the present study, support merged intersubjectivity in musical group interaction. Positing that in most intersubjective encounters between people, subjective boundaries of participating individuals remain intact, they propose that merged subjectivity is a hypothetical possibility where the blurring of boundaries between people can occur.

In the Hampshire student data, Rabinowitch et al.'s hypothetical and Merleau-Ponty's (1962) description, "as if the other person's intentions inhabited my body and mine his" (p. 185), are grounded in a *felt* blurring of boundaries and another's sensation as their own: "It was a warm, curious, unfamiliar experience that dissolved the typically felt boundaries of ordinary classmates." Beyond a hypothetical blurring of boundaries, one might *feel* the boundaries between self and other dissolving.

Whereas in Csordas's (2008) intersubjectivity in which self and other are not "participants in the same shared subjective substance" (p. 113), some Hampshire students experienced blurring of boundaries and even a sense of merging—as if they were inhabited by their partner, as if their body was their partner's, becoming their partner, or their partner was at that moment moving inside of them, guiding them:

> I wasn't looking at my body to make sure I replicated my partner's movements—it was as if I was just doing them myself.
>
> My partner's body was an extension of my own, I let their movements guide mine, even though the exercise called for me to lead.
>
> I took on an embodied shape that wasn't mine.

Poetic and metaphoric, yet still felt and palpable, students described *connection* with partners through osmotic interpenetration: "I absorbed my partner's smile;" "I felt as if I

was breathing in my partner's energy." Neither the bodily boundary of skin, nor the cultural, racial, ethnic or other socially-constructed boundaries were obstacles to an intimacy, albeit short-lived, of "shared substance" (Csordas, 2008).

In *Encounters with Contact: Dancing Contact Improvisation in College* (Albright, 2010), a student, Corey Spiro, speaks to the idea of porousness between people through skin contact. The opening of pores in a dance class becomes a metaphor for opening the world to us and us to the world.

> We live in a world where the boundary between self and "other" is constantly being defined, labeled and monitored…It's all too easy to convince oneself that the skin represents the ultimate energetic boundary between self and other… I would expect then, that opening the pores of my skin wide enough to let the world in would be a frightening experience…I was surprised to find out it was actually extremely refreshing…I felt that by opening myself up I was able to simultaneously expand outward into the energy of Wild Main Space and also feel more acutely the electromagnetic fields of everyone else standing around me. In short, opening my pores did more than just 'let the world in' it also let me out. The feeling was one of freedom and relief, as I was no longer alone within the prison-like confines of my injured and fatigued frame. (as cited in Albright, p. 40)

No longer alone, sharing the substance of "electromagnetic fields" (another science metaphor, adding to Hampshire students' chemistry and electricity metaphors), both the above student and Hampshire students felt the interplay of "letting the world in" at the same time as being "let out." Similarly, receiving other or surrendering was "freeing and relieving" for some Hampshire students: "Being led by my partner felt exhilarating, giving in completely and thinking only of following his directions – making shapes just for him." Albright (2013b) maintains that this "opening" creates a greater sense of responsibility, as,

> the separation between internal and external—self and other—becomes much less distinct. The skin is no longer the boundary between the world

> and myself, but rather the sensing organ that brings the world into my awareness. (p. 240)

Focusing on what might blur boundaries between self and other, Decety and Sommerville (2003) cull studies from developmental science, social psychology, and neuroscience that point to a common representation network—shared representations of self and other might happen at the neural level (p. 257). Yet, as the researchers warn, "shared" doesn't mean "identical." Studies reveal that familiarity between people can increase neural sharing and promote blurring of self and other (Beckes, Coan, & Morris, 2013). This might be a factor in students' experiences of blurring or merging of self and other while experiencing embodied connection. Student writings on merging occurred after Mirror at both Hampshire and Treehouse. The students had known each other and Treehouse members only briefly, for one other evening the week prior, before dancing the Mirror together, so there was a small degree of familiarity.

As discussed later in this chapter when discussing the Mirror exercise specifically, mirror neuron theory is also based on the premise of shared neural pathways between intention and movement, which is possibly pertinent to understanding the student who wrote: "We are one intent." Shared intention is often described as an aesthetic value in partner and group dance. Earlier, I cited Hickey-Moody's (2013) premise that aesthetic perception can change bodily capacity; in this study, the aesthetic of partner dancing seemed to change bodily capacity and perception of body cavity. Students didn't just dance with partners as distinct separate subjects; they breathed them in, absorbed their smiles, and felt them inhabit their own bodies: "It was almost like I couldn't tell who was supposed to be the person and who was the mirror"; "Wow! I felt merged with my partner…who is who I do not know."

Students' written descriptions of blurring, feeling one with another, and being inhabited by another suggest that even during brief episodes of partner dancing, there is a possibility of blending or merging with other/s. Muñoz (2009) writes about the shift in one's sense of self and other that can occur while dancing:

> The dance floor increases our tolerance for embodied practices. It may do so because it demands, in the openness and closeness of relations to others, an exchange and alteration of kinesthetic experience through which we become, in a sense, less like ourselves and more like each other. (p. 66)

Merging, or "becoming more like each other," has been explored by some researchers as a positive experience. For dancer and researcher Louise Douse (2017), incorporating Finlay's (2006a) approach to using "reflexive embodied empathy" in understanding flow in in her study researching the felt concept of flow with 2 different improvising dancers, an approach in which one engages in somatically feeling what another is experiencing through one's own body, merging can be and was a positive experience. Merging can be a kind of "consummate reciprocity" (p. 288) where a more positive sense of self emerges. Communications professor Jurgen Streeck (2015), in looking at embodiment in human communication, finds that dance and sports lend themselves to the heightened sense of intercorporeality: "dancing and sporting bodies are constituted by their heightened and practiced abilities for tacit intercorporeal coordination and action" (p. 425). As an example, he uses the Argentine tango, stating that tango dancers "seek to reach…the exalted moment when two bodies move as one 'four-legged animal,'" which is made possible through haptic [relating to touch and proprioception] communication (p. 425). Tango dancers felt merged into one, in an "exalted" moment. Merging can also be a vitalizing experience between self and group while dancing. Dissanayake (1992/2001) writes:

> Dance can then be a means of transfiguration to an altered state, either by gaining a sharpened sense of one's individual human presence or by transcending one's individuality and merging with a group. (2001, p. 124)

Finally, the merged intersubjective connection can afford bodily-affective communication in an intersubjectively created "in-between" space where a student can experience interaction not as two subjects, not as a subject merged with another subject, but in a third, relational space: "I felt a communication happening between bodies—beyond selves."

The next section discusses a form of partnered connection that privileges one member (partner) over the other (student), revealing an "other-focus" (see *partner first*, and *other first,* chapter 5) in some students' writings. In this study, other-focus emerged as a form of two-person intersubjectivity that can arise when a voluntary (and temporary) asymmetry of positionality is present. For example, some students found that partnering while facilitating made being "in" the dance more difficult. In this form of two-person intersubjectivity, a student feels an obligation towards a community partner or values a partner's engagement and even happiness over their own—an ethical intersubjectivity.

Student writings about partnered, face-to-face (literally in mirroring) and body-to-body experiences that foreground the "other" align with Levinas's (1969) emphasis on facing other as an ethical responsibility. The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Bergo, 2017) annotates Levinas's affective, intersubjective philosophy:

> It is an interpretive, phenomenological description of the rise and repetition of the face-to-face encounter, or the intersubjective relation at its precognitive core; viz., being called by another and responding to that other. If precognitive experience, that is, human sensibility, can be characterized conceptually, then it must be described in what is most characteristic to it: a continuum of sensibility and affectivity, in other words, sentience and emotion in their interconnection. (www.plato.stanford.edu/entries/levinas)

Other First: Obligated Intersubjective Connection

Both partner and group data relating to *connection* reveal "other focus," or an "other-first" focus that reflects an unbalanced two-subject intersubjectivity, where a student's focus on their partner while dancing is the *sole* intention of the partnership: "I was so engaged with my partner. I was not the focus. My attention was solely on my partner's movement and repetition of those gestures and motions." Here the partner's dancing is the focus—their movement and gestures. Another student highlighted a partner's "ability," desiring to "make" it feel "important" to the partner, perhaps to counteract an ableist stereotype that the ability of a person in a wheelchair wouldn't be perceived as valuable, or beautiful: "I performed the mirror with a woman in a wheelchair. Both sitting, we saw eye to eye. I wanted to make her ability feel important and beautiful." In a different exercise, the same student wanted again to create a space where their partner was the focus:

> I don't know if my partner knew how great she was at the activity. How do I express to this person that they are doing a perfect job, that they already are creative, and that I love working with them? This shouldn't be difficult, but it was. Work on it.

Students can feel accountable for their partner's engagement. At times, this obligation is challenging: "A challenge was convincing my partner that it was ok to be unsure"; "It was hard…to keep my partner excited and interested"; "Maybe I didn't have to keep her entertained, but I felt like I did." Upon entering a community, students might experience a kind of contractual obligation to engage the attention of its members and fear the loss of a partner's attention. One student wrote:

> It was difficult when the workshop lagged or dragged. I could feel attention wander and it made me think about what it means to be a guest in someone's house—of the compact made between us, that when you ask

> for somebody's attention it's your duty to hold it as long as they continue to give you that attention. It's the same as performing, a lesser terror but a terror nonetheless.

Obligation can involve keeping oneself accountable to the "compact" of asking for attention, for relationship, by the "duty" of holding the other's attention. Accountability towards other grounded some students in a kind of dutiful connection, where the other, the partner, taught something to the student about what it means to be a "guest in someone's house."

One student expressed that putting the other first validated the purpose of our course: "Everybody who added to our puzzle was like another affirmation of the project." Here a student maintains accountability through the actions and responses of community partners. van Manen's (2011) "convocative turn" describes accountability in terms of finding meaning in another:

> This sense of life meaning is not necessarily found by looking more deeply into the innerness of our "selves." Meaningfulness is more likely found in the space that lies outside the self, in the communal realm of the "other." The term "convoke" derives from convocare, to call together, to assemble, to summon; a convocation, a convoking …"a call together" (to remind us of what we share as humans). To convoke is to create conversational space in which the other can be encountered. (n.p.)

It is perhaps unsurprising that student writings would emphasize greater accountability towards a community partner member(s)—as either facilitator or dance partner—than for a peer dance partner. However, one facilitator's writings after Approach/Avoid did not emphasize other-first, but rather their own body sensations: "loose and flexible…limber and movable." The other two facilitators described a mixture of body sensations and other-first intersubjective connectivity. One wrote about a kind of entrainment, feeling "the group as one unit." Overall, the data on inter-subjectivity are

complex and clearly do not support the notion that other-first is an inevitable experience for a student facilitator.

For art critic Bourriaud (2007), seeing "eye to eye" and focusing on the other brings up the concern of whether other-focus turns intersubjectivity to "inter-servility" (p. 108). Yet, placing other above self not only seems to establish accountability for another's needs and concerns, but also for self. Philosophers such as theologian Buber (Buber & Smith, R. G., 2000) and feminists Gilligan (1982) and Minh-ha (1989, 1991) suggest that focusing on another is the way to knowing self. Minh-ha (1991) asks, "If you can't locate the other, how are you to locate your-self?" (p. 73). From this perspective, obligation towards other is interwoven with knowledge of other as fundamental self-knowledge. Some who feel obligated to entertain or engage their partner are perhaps learning about how they entertain or engage *themselves*.

Eeva Anttila (2008) paraphrasing of Buber's premise that "humans become persons through their relationships with others and with the world" (p. 160) is affirmed by students in this study who described being moved emotionally and at times transformed while dancing with partners or with the group. For Buber (1970), a person "becomes an I through a You" (p. 80) and, as Anttila (2008) paraphrases, "Becoming a person happens through relating and associating with others; in contrast, becoming an ego happens through separating from others" (p. 160). Findings of the present study suggest that "becoming a person rather than an ego" can be advanced through partnering in community-engaged dance education. Student writings on other-focus perhaps sheds light on how one can enhance or clarify a sense of personhood through dancing in

partnership. Rhoads (1997) avers that the other-focus of a caring community, a form of *agape*, is less about selfless love than about the nature of self:

> The self is not lost as a result of service to the other; instead the self is intimately connected to the other…we do not sacrifice for others at the expense of the self, but we give to others because love and compassion are essential to the self. (p. 87)

Students' writings on connection were grounded in felt intersubjectivities that ranged from two-person intersubjectivity to merged intersubjectivity, to other-first intersubjectivity. Phenomena of connection described as bodily-affective constituents of intersubjectivity were direct student responses to the three selected dance improvisations. In the next section, I focus in on the central roles of mirroring, touch, and kinesthesia in students' experiences of connection and intersubjectivity.

Mirror, Touch, and Affective Bodies in Connection and Intersubjectivity

The three student-selected dance improvisations examined in this study—Human Puzzle, Mirror and Approach/Avoid—have been illuminated as vehicles for embodied intersubjective *connection* between human beings, across difference. Kinesthetic sensing, mirroring, and touch occurred across the improvisations; at the same time, each improvisation seemed to afford a distinctive kind of bodily engagement. The first improvisation, Human Puzzle, highlights bodily shaping-in-relation, establishing a focus on *feeling bodies (self and other).* Mirror writings highlighted how bodily-reflective practices can foster human connection. Finally, Approach/Avoid, as described by students, foregrounds the role of touch in human intersubjective connecting. This section places these phenomena in dialogue with relevant literature.

Practices of kinesthetic awareness (kinesthesia), mirroring, and touching another can be traced back to our earliest duets, mother/infant and infant/significant others, where

interrelating through rhythmic play of body parts, mirroring, sounds, and touch create specialized brain pathways that scaffold human development in a sense of self as well as a sense of mutuality and interdependence (Aitken & Trevarthen, 1997; Schore, 2001; Trevarthen et al., 1999). These bodily-expressive processes, as noted earlier, can enact and foster inherent artistic capacities (Dissanayake, 2000, 2017).

Kinesthetic and Aesthetic Bodies

Particularly in Human Puzzle, students wrote about experiences of proximity with others' bodies as awakening and freeing: "waking me up when bodies came closer," "feeling silly and open," "free," "wild, like noodles." Sensing others through body shaping-in-relation supported students in "bonding," or feeling they "belonged." Students wrote about resonance and relational feelings, as well as feeling-for-others and putting others' needs first. These affective and social encounters held aesthetic meaning: "helping to complete something, contribute," and "like Sudoku."

Data suggest that the kinesthetic sensations arising from body-shaping in relationship to others engaged students' felt sense of connection, belonging, empathy and social-emotional understandings. Their own multi-sensory aisthesia, intermixed with social interactions, such as body proximity, while dancing, supported both affective and aesthetic meanings. Philosopher Richard Shusterman (2000) defines aisthesis as bodily-felt "sensory-aesthetic appreciation," connecting sensation to aesthetics in his concept of somaesthetics, an ameliorative study of bodily experience (p. 138). Linda Finlay (2005, 2006a, 2006b), a U. K. psychology researcher, describes the sensation of belonging when connected with other bodies (as in "waking up when bodies came closer") as bodily self-consciousness, where the "body is constituted by being with another. This body comes

into being when the person becomes aware of the regard of another… as we become aware of the regard of another, we begin to exist in a new bodily self-conscious way" (2006a, p. 21).

Dance writers Albright (2013b), Bond (2008), Foster (2011), Maletic (1980), Montero (2006), and Sklar (1991) focus on the relationship of pre-linguistic inner bodily experience, such as proprioception (Montero), kinesthesia (Bond, Foster, Sklar), interoception (Albright) and aisthesis (Bond, Maletic) to empathy (Bond, Foster, Montero, Sklar) and aesthetic behavior and community (Albright, Bond). In general, these writers attribute the capacity to feel and sense inside the body, and to sense body's movement, to the ability to create, imitate, and appreciate moving in partnership with others, making knowledge, including social knowledge, palpable and felt. Sociologist Mark Paterson (2012) traces the historical roots of the terms *aisthesis*, *kinesthesis*, and *proprioception* and tries to tease out the differences between them, resting on a body-based thesis about the relationship of sensation to aesthetic behavior: that aesthetic valuation needs to consider bodily sensate origins as well as more traditional visual perception:

> This [reliance on multi-modal experiential encounters] suggests that the often hidden, underlying kinaesthetic orientation to aesthetic objects discussed in this paper through aisthesis and kinaesthesia has multiple historical points of entry, each entreating us to expand our criteria for aesthetic evaluation into richer, less predictable sensory-motor areas. (p. 493)

Philosopher Mark Johnson (2007) theorizes that "deep visceral origins of meaning" (p. x) are themselves the purview of aesthetic knowing. The kinesthetically charged categories of *feeling-self* and *feeling-other* in Human Puzzle data embody aesthetic knowing, if, as Johnson suggests, aesthetics becomes "the study of everything

that goes into the human capacity to make and experience meaning" (p. x)—where "meaning" is making sense of experience. Aisthesis gives experience its character and significance (p. xii). Affective knowing, the pre-inter-personal and social visceral sensations students describe vividly in this study, is the foundation of aesthetic knowing.

Body-shaping in relationship to another person or people, as in Human Puzzle, offers immediacy of embodied decisions—changes in shape, shifts in space, and changes in qualities of movement while relating to others. As mentioned in chapter 3, Sheets-Johnstone's (2009a/2017) "Thinking in Movement," details the nature of movement knowledge unfolding as dancing; dancing itself is its own lexicon and intelligence, a "kinetic bodily logos" (2009a, p. 33). Dance intelligence in improvisation is an unfolding aesthetic process: "a dance improvisation is the incarnation of creativity as process" (p. 30). In this "non-separation of thinking and doing" (p. 30) students in this study thought *in* movement; their movements in and around each other are the "kinesthetically felt world" (p. 32).

This felt world of kinesthesia, the *feeling-self*, and *feeling-others* categories of Human Puzzle writings, is a

> dynamic density […] that stretches out the present moment, transfiguring it from a mere momentary bodily happening into a qualitative kinetic fullness or plenitude that radiates outward…the work of an existentially resonant body. (2009a, p. 35)

In this study, the students' "qualitative kinetic fullness" radiated both outward and back inward, resonating in an intersubjective dance of affective perceptions and aesthetic meanings. It is apparent from the students' writings, and from Sheets-Johnstone's writing, that this "existentially resonant body" is foundational to feeling as well as thinking, and as Sheets-Johnstone proposes, might lead us to perceive that "insights

gleaned from a descriptive account of improvisational dance have consequences for epistemology…as well as for aesthetics" (p. 10). Students' writings in this study offer the possibility of such insights.

Mirroring

Mirroring is practiced widely in dance education and therapy and used in verbal psychotherapy to connect with clients nonverbally (Wittig, 2010, p. 56). Mirroring (and the bodily-affective synchrony afforded) in dance therapy specifically has been cited as helpful for people with autism (Koch et al., 2015; Ramachandran & Seckel, 2011) and in general to enhance and encourage empathy between therapist and client (Berrol, 2006; Federman, 2011; Karkou, et al., 2017; Mcgarry & Russo, 2011). Researchers have studied empathy-fostering interventions connected to specific dance interactions (Behrends et al., 2012; Bond, 2008). Schwartz-Salant (as cited in Wittig, 2010) explains,

> To be mirrored is to be understood, to feel that someone empathically follows our thoughts, feelings, experiences, etc. . . . The need for mirroring from another is lifelong and represents the inevitable incompleteness that accompanies growth. (pp. 45-46)

For Schwartz-Salant, the lifelong need for mirroring, perhaps a part of the dance of mutuality and artistry from infancy that Dissanayake (2000) theorizes, represents an incompleteness, a lack leading to desire for connection. The attachment to connection that students wrote about might be partially explained by this "inevitable incompleteness" and the desire for completion, socially and emotionally. Mirror affords sameness or similitude in body, quality, shape, timing, and feeling states. Students wrote about fusion or merging with partners, somatically understanding partners, and feeling a partner's emotions while engaged in conscious mirroring, some using the term "empathy" to describe their feeling state.

Mcgarry and Russo (2011) state that much of the dance therapy literature on mirroring and empathy (both likely related to intersubjectivity) focuses on imitation learning (Chaiklin & Wengrower, 2009) and the mirror neuron system (Jeannerod, 2006; Karkou et al., 2017). Mirror neuron theory proposes that the neuronal circuitry is activated to a "similar extent when an individual performs or simply observes an action…leading some researchers to believe that the same processes underlie movement production and perception…and [the neuronal system that is activated] appears to be sensitive to the intentionality of movement" (Mcgarry & Russo, 2011, p. 178). Researchers have suggested that this could perhaps mean that when we witness another's action, we automatically respond in our own body in the same way and can even identify the intention of another's movement by this inner response (Iacoboni, Molnar-Szakacs, Gallese, Buccino, Mazziotta, Rizzolatti, & Ashe, 2005). Mirror neuron theory is a relatively recent development in neurophysiology interpolated for humans from studies with macaque monkeys (Cattaneo & Rizzolatti, 2009; Rizzolati & Craighero, 2004).

Mirror neuron research and other advances in neurobiology enabled by advances in functional magnetic resonance imaging technology, or fMRI, strengthen the notion that human beings are "wired" to mirror and respond to each other, to find resonance and attunement, and to be empathetic, supporting earlier developmental theories of attachment and attunement (Keysers & Gazzola, 2010). Some fMRI studies have researched dancers' neurological responses to observing other dancers, finding more activation in mirror neuron circuits when dancers watched other dancers in their own style and within gender roles in their own style (Calvo-Merino, Glaser, Grezes, Passingham, & Haggard, 2005, 2006). This possibility is supported by Hampshire

students who felt connected to their partner and "liberated" when their partner moved in similar ways or in a similar cultural genre, also offering a biological basis for studies on homophily noted earlier. It is however, important to note that fMRI studies are still a contested methodology—Sheets-Johnstone (2011a) discusses Sanders (2009) opposition to it based on flawed correlations of oxygenated blood flow and neural activity (2011a, p. 155).

In addition, there is a continuing debate on the existence of a mirror neuron system in humans; critics call for significant further study (Churchland, 2011; Franks & Davis, 2012; Hickock, 2009, 2014; Kosonogov, 2012). The debate ranges from the singularity, or not, of mirror neurons in neuronal firing, associative systems such as learning theory and social mimicry not having to do with neuronal firings, and more, yet even among critics, Franks and Davis (2012) argue that the work on mirror neurons is a critical contribution of neuroscience to sociology in terms of finding connections, although incomplete and in need of further research, to language, empathy and imitation and for its potential to extend understandings of intersubjectivity and biologically driven connection with others (p. 109). Sheets-Johnstone (2012) acknowledges the existence of a human mirror neuron system but debates its postulated primary role in emotion and empathy. She posits that mirror neurons are the "neurological corollaries of corporeal-kinetic tactile-kinesthetic invariants" (p. 387) in animate life, and that movement itself plays a role in the formulation of inter-neuronal patterning; she situates movement as precursor to connection with others (inanimate and animate) through the mirror neuron system, rather than the mirror neuron system influencing connection.

In sum, according to Sheets-Johnstone: "it would seem incontrovertible that *the mirroring* capacity of certain neurons derives basically from *kinesthetic experiences of one's own moving body*, that is, from one's own movement experiences" (p. 389). I reason that the desires for and experiences of attunement and synchrony described in student reflections are likely to be grounded in movement experience, biology, and socio-cultural influences, and that the action of mirroring stimulates experiences of *synchrony* ("when we finally synchronized") and *attunement* ("in tune with"), as mentioned by some students, and *connection* as mentioned by many.

Touch

The sense of touch is obviously important to human survival and interaction (Montagu, 1971/1986) as well as being "fundamental" to dancing (Brandstetter, Egert & Zubarik, 2013). According to Brandstetter, Egert, and Zubarik (2013), many aspects of touch in dance create both aesthetic and affective meanings:

> Liberties and limits, options and taboos of touch give us insight into the aesthesis of different forms of dance, their dynamics and communicative structure, as well as into the production and regulation of affects. (p. 3)

Contact improvisation, a dance genre involving maintenance of a touch interface between partners, has drawn both "dancers" and "non-dancers" (Albright, 2010, 2013b; Kaltenbrunner, 1998/2004; Novack, 1990). The dance form emphasizes movement and interactions that are spontaneous and responsive (in contrast to balletic partnering where human themes are mimed and codes of behavior regulated) and has been associated with expression of individuality and freedom (Novack, 1990). Approach/Avoid is based on material I learned in contact improvisation classes, including with Nancy Stark Smith, one of the founders of the form.

Contact improvisation emphasizes a form of partnering in which dancers' body parts are points of contact, or what some refer to as a "third mind" (Albright, 2010, 2013b). This "third mind" of space and rhythm can lead partners to lose what Albright calls the "oppositional moorings" of leader and follower, without collapsing difference (2013b, p. 242). The third mind "marks an intersubjective space in which one is aware of both sensations internal and external without necessarily categorizing those feelings into socially recognizable roles" (p. 242). In an earlier essay, "Dancing Across Difference: Experience and Identity in the Classroom," Albright (1993/2013a) calls this space "intersubjective dancing," where there is a "physical connectedness based on both partners being equally present (but in different ways) in the duet" (2013a, p. 257). Albright's notion of "intersubjective dancing" informs my formulation of two-subject intersubjective connectedness discussed above.

Social or partner dancing in general often use touch as a physically codified bridge to movement between partners. A strong example is tango, a dance form that relies on improvisation between partners in close or open embrace. Erin Manning (2007) refers to the call and improvised response of leader and follower in tango as a dialogue that "is rich and complex, closer to the heart, perhaps, than many exchanges between strangers and lovers" (p. 4), within a typically three-minute dance duration. The embodied intimacy described by students in this study reflects this possibility of an emotionally close, not just physically close, exchange in improvised dance.

Across several genres, Brandstetter, et al. (2013) propose two key concepts that characterize touch and being touched in dance: kinesthesia and empathy. These authors suggest that, according to contemporary scholarship and research, "touch—the sense that

connects ‘sensing’ and the emotional ‘feeling’/being affected—is closely related to the processes of kinesthetic perception and empathy” (p. 7). In this study students associated touch with affective kinesthetic perceptions: “pleasant tingly sensations whenever I was approached and touched,” or “kinesthetic patience,” and the sense-feeling of care, empathy and emotional closeness: “I found myself always looking for the sensation and I felt very cared for,” a “comforting compression,” or “empathy.”

According to Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Jacques Derrida (2005), touch is automatically doubled—one touches and is touched at the same time. Touch cannot help but be intersubjective, yet Manning (2007) asserts that this intersubjectivity is still one of impenetrability. Foregrounding that bodies are relational rather than individual, touch “expands the contours” (p. 13) or surfaces of bodies; yet to touch the other, Manning asserts, is political: “the moment when I re-cognize that to touch an other is to touch the impenetrable” (p. 14). Touch lives in the intersubjective space of both connection and separation, as described by the student who felt “a unique sense of connection and individuality.”

Incorporating touch between people in any setting, and certainly in a setting such as RFK with vulnerable youth who have experienced trauma in their short lives, is a delicate decision. Student facilitators decided to introduce Approach/Avoid and other contact improvisation exercises throughout the five weeks, and RFK youth responded with positive engagement. After being introduced to Approach/Avoid in our second weekly session together, some of the youth brought some of the movements they discovered to the following week’s session where participants created a movement phrases together in small groups. RFK youth’s accumulation and repurposing of

movements from Approach/Avoid was exciting for the Hampshire students, who discussed this development animatedly in the van on the way home. Reminiscent of when a student wrote that community partners joining Human Puzzle was an "affirmation of our project," students reflected that RFK youths' reuse of some movement motifs they discovered in Approach/Avoid the week before gave our work at RFK an element of success, as that meant somehow that what some RFK youth discovered while dancing had influenced them enough to repeat and draw on as a source of inspiration for their own movement phrases. Equally students reflected that learning movement phrases created by RFK youth showed a reciprocity of learning and engagement that upheld course values.

Students' reflective writings about body shaping-in-relation, mirror, and touch describe distinct bodily possibilities that forged intersubjective dialogues foregrounding social and aesthetic awareness. Together, Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid enabled students to feel themselves and others and to describe instances of aesthetic meaning, kinesthetic empathy, social bonding, and care. The improvisations offered such possibilities by their very nature, while the distinctiveness of students' unique meanings amplified the nature of the improvisations into palpable, felt corporealities.

Bodily-Affective-Social-Aesthetic Learning in "Dance in the Community"

This study illustrates how working with relational body shaping, mirroring, touch, and other movement phenomena brought a group of Hampshire College students into close interaction with each other and with community partners in a community-engaged dance education setting. As vehicles of intersubjectivity, students described experiences of connection across three dance improvisations in detail. First, connection and aspects of feeling connected to a partner emerged—a dance of two that can evoke intimacy, a sense

of knowing another, empathy, understanding, or the desire for connection. A dance of merged selves or shared identity was also described—a felt inhabitation of self by other or becoming like the other. Finally, students recorded the dance of other-first—evidenced in experiences of accountability, responsibility, obligation, and the pleasure of surrendering to and privileging other.

The dance improvisations in this study created opportunities for students to experience and reflect on intersubjective connection. The philosophical underpinnings of these improvisations, as theorized in dance education and dance therapy literature, are vitalized and extended in students' writings. More broadly, an important finding of the study from an action research perspective is that through the dance modalities of relational shaping, mirroring, and touch, in both fluid and stable partnerings, students experienced and were able to articulate bodily, affective, social, and aesthetic knowledge, illuminating potentials and possibilities of community-engaged dance.

Overall, this study points to the possibility of holistic bodily-affective-social-aesthetic learning in community dance projects in higher education, learning that embodies experienced empathy, accountability, and connectivity for, to, and with others. Further, grounding theory in students' own descriptions of bodily-affective intersubjectivity with peers and community partners—the lived experience of actual participation—catalyzes tensions between practice and theory. For example, can students who feel connected, empathetic, and "merged" with community partners resist the "collapse of difference" that critics suggest can invisibilize and thereby keep in place oppressive systems and power differences (Deans, 2000; Welch, 2002; Wells, 1996)? Or perhaps is a sense or feeling of shared humanity an important but invisibilized concept in

post-modernity's obsession with difference and identity politics? (Bond, 2017). The Hampshire students offer much reflection on how we might feel connected to another despite difference. Bond (in press) articulates a discomfort with post-modernity's emphasis on difference over the commonalities we share with other humans and if not all animate beings (n.p.).

Further discussions of empathy and connection occur in the field of community-based arts and CBL through the lens of allyship and mutual recognition between college and community members. Novella Keith (2015), Professor Emerita of Urban Education at Temple University, relates allyship to interdependence and empathy, and what colleague William Yalowitz terms resonance. Keith states: "Resonance is freeing yourself from the bind of having to be either one or the other; it's about empathy and a deep sense of recognition, like an electric current joining negative and positive poles" (p. 173). The electric current appearing in Keith's metaphor reminds me of my student's description of an electric charge in their lived experience of partnering. The notion of a current, and its amplification, also arises in Yalowitz's (as cited in Keith, 2015) query into finding connection among college/community collaborators, as does the mirror metaphor: "How do we connect through a sort of attunement of emotional energies, where something I feel and see in you…mirrors and amplifies something in myself…?" (p. 174). Attunement and amplification of emotional energies is a goal in Yalowitz's work and that of others in the field of community-based arts. This study, focusing on student-chosen dance improvisations that potentiate "seeing in you and…in myself," illuminates the sharing of bodily-affective selves that afford connection in CEDE,

experiences that, according to students' written reflections, were sought after, desired, and "made something."

Conclusion

Students in the 2014 "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community" class performed dance improvisations with peer and community partners that facilitated the possibility of learning in and about partnering. In rich descriptive language, students wrote about bodily-affective experiences that I examine in relation to the theme of *connection*. Two-person, merged, and other-first emerged as constituents of intersubjectivity related to connection. Students' bodily-affective aesthetic language vitalizes intersubjectivity and related concepts, such as empathy and intimacy. Students in this CEDE class grounded meaning through a bodily-affective, social and aesthetic lens, focusing on *feeling-into-self-and-others-dancing*, and in this chapter's focus, focusing on lived experience of connection through feeling self/self, merged selves, and other-first, from which arose aspects of empathy, similitude, and responsibility towards other, while also creating "amazing dances" and challenging bodily-aesthetic capacity.

The three dance improvisations that ground this research—Human Puzzle, Mirror and Approach/Avoid—afforded experiences of *connection* and *intersubjectivity* in similar and discrete ways. Students responded through bodily-affective and aesthetic language. Dancing fostered relationships as well as opportunities to learn about dancing itself; students learned affectively and aesthetically. These findings suggest that bodily connections experienced in community-engaged dance can be highly nuanced, interactive encounters that are intimate, multi-sensory, aesthetic, and deeply visceral. Partnering even for a moment—perhaps a glance through eye contact or an emotional response in

mirroring another—can evoke strong affects associated with caring, feeling cared for, and understanding another. Partnering also offers the possibility of another being more important, manifesting a kind of ethical or altruistic version of self. Bond (in press) suggests that the lived experience of intersubjectivity in the dance classroom can be a developmental ground for student learning: "I wanted my teaching to emphasize what I later came to know as *intersubjectivity*, created through somatic engagement with and between other(s) in shared environments" (n.p.).

This study, which seeks to understand student meanings created in a community-engaged dance education course, corroborates much of what research on student learning and meaning in dance has elucidated to date: phenomena of freedom, bodily ease, flow, transcendence, and hard work (Albright, 2013b; Bond, 2008; Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001, 2007/2016; Frichtel, 2012; Green, 2001; Kronenburg, Guerra & Neal, 2016; Stinson et al., 1990); phenomena of community—togetherness, bonding, acceptance, belonging (Bond, 2008; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Frichtel, 2012), play (Anttila, 2008; Bond, 2008; Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001); agency and inclusion (Albright, 2013b; Anttila, 2007, 2008; Bond, 1994, 2017; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Marques, 1998, 2007; Morris, 2012).

Further, this research extends the concept of intercorporeal intersubjectivities emerging in dance literature (Douse, 2017), where dancers "become less like ourselves and more like another" (Muñoz, 2009). In particular, the lived experience of partnering is illuminated, supporting previous studies in contexts of deaf-blindness and visual impairment (Bond, 1994, 2008), contact improvisation (Albright, 2010, 2013b), and social dance (Riva, 2015; Ruper, 2016). In addition, this study holds some similar

findings to that of Giguere (in press), in which a cohort of college and private studio dancers engaged in community dance with youth in an urban community center and in a school for cerebral palsy. Students reported a feeling of increased connection with community participants—what Giguere called a shared humanity, shifting from seeing community participants as "other" to seeing them as individuals with whom they could build connections.

In the next and final chapter, I summarize the study, critique aspects of the research design, and identify some areas for further study.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION, CRITIQUE AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

I moved, and I was home again. (Student, in Mirror at Tree, 2014)

This final chapter begins with a summary of the study, including an overview of its purpose, background literature, methods and procedures, findings, discussion and themes. I then focus on a critique of the study, and what I learned as an artist/educator in the field of community-engaged dance education. Finally, I offer recommendations for further research in CEDE.

Purpose (Chapter 1)

The purpose of the study was to examine student and teacher meanings of embodied practice in an introductory course, "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community," at Hampshire College in western Massachusetts during fall semester, 2014. Drawing on students' reflective writing after specific dance improvisations on six different occasions at Hampshire and two community sites, and supplementing these writings with documented student discussions, video, questionnaires, and other writing samples, this inquiry seeks insight into student meanings and their importance to the emerging field of community-engaged dance education in higher education. This inquiry extends the student-centered literature in dance education that has emerged over the past few decades (Albright, 2010, 2013b; Alter, 1997; Anttila, 2007, 2008; Bond, 1994, 2001, 2008, 2017, in press; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Bond & Gerdes, 2012; Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001, 2007/2016; Frichtel, 2012; Dyer, 2010; Giguere, 2007, 2011, in press; Green,

2001; Huxley, 2012; Stinson, 1993/2016c, 1997/2016a; Stinson et al., 1990/2016e), and the literature on community arts practice, specifically community dance practice.

My original goal embarking on this project was twofold: to explore the range of what is defined and practiced as community-based learning (CBL) in higher education dance, and to examine student experiences while engaged in dance improvisation practices in my introductory service learning, or community-based learning in dance course, or CBLD, which was an elaboration on local Five College nomenclature, CBL. During data analysis for this study, I began to understand "Dance and the Community" as a form of community-*engaged* dance education (or CEDE). I found this to be a dynamic, interactive way to conceptualize a course that highlights lived experience and mutuality rather than measurable "learning" per se. This seemed particularly apt for the 2014 doctoral research site of Hampshire College, where students do not receive grades.

Regarding part one of my original goal, my intention was to survey higher education institutions and educators in the U. S. for extant working definitions of CBL definitions and practices in dance. The magnitude of the field study (part two), however, made a largescale survey unfeasible for the dissertation project. Instead I performed a comprehensive review of literature in community-based education and dance (chapter 2), establishing a context of philosophies and methods in the field and situating students' reflective writing in my "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community" class.

The dissertation project became solely one of examining students' lived experiences and my own pedagogical reflections on our time together in both campus and community settings. This phenomenological, practice-based methodology involved "steeping" in students' lived experience descriptions of being in the course, teasing out

meanings, and hermeneutic discovery of thematic arcs of what can possibly be embodied, felt, and understood by students in a community-oriented dance class. Ultimately, my intention is to further my own development as an educator in this field, to course-correct where needed—to make myself a better teacher.

Selected Background Literature (Chapter 2)

In chapter 2 I discuss selected literature from the areas of community-based learning (CBL) in higher education, critical pedagogy and embodied knowing, along with their relationship with dance education. The historical context of "Dance in the Community" is CBL, in the arts, and in dance in particular. I surveyed key writers who address the history and philosophy of CBL (Bloomgarden, 2006; Boyer, 1996; Boyte, 2015; Butin, 2010; Butin & Seider, 2012; Deans, 2000; Dolgon et al., 2017; Goldbard, 2008; Haft, 2012; Hoy & Johnson, 2013; Keith, 2015; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Reed & Koliba, 2003; Rhoads, 1997; Welch, 2002; Wells, 1996). Chapter 2 also holds examples of community-based dance and arts practitioners and authors (Amans, 2008/2017; Giguere, 2017, in press; Green, 2000b; Helguera, 2011; Jasper, 1995; Lerman, 2001; McGregor, 2013; Overby, 2016; Parrish, 2009; Thomson, 1994; Yalowitz, 1997; Zollar, n.d.).

I situate the philosophical foundations of "Dance in the Community" in critical or liberatory pedagogy, as well as in experiential and phenomenological pedagogy, which align with democratic classroom ideals, support student input and hands-on experience, respect the lived experiences of all students in both the classroom and contemporary life contexts, and allow education to be a collaborative process between all participants. Philosophical influences include Paulo Freire (1970/2014, 1998) and Ira Shor (1987a,

1992), as well as feminist critiques of Freire and Shor (Ellsworth, 1989; Orner, 1992; Weiler, 1991), John Dewey (1933, 1952) and Max van Manen (1990a, 2007, 2011, 2014). I also discuss dance education studies that align philosophically with the above pioneers (Anttila, 2007, 2008; Bond, 2008, 2017; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Cruz Banks, 2009; Green, 2000, 2001; Marques, 1998, 2007; Morris, 2012; Shapiro, 1997; Stinson, 1998/2016c), and connect their contributions to the ideals of CBL. The epistemological constructs of "knowing through dance" and "dance enaction" are important also, as students' reflective writings were based on their own dancing. Additional philosophical influences include James (1890), Johnson (2007), Lakoff and Johnson (1999), Merleau-Ponty (1962/2012), and Shusterman (2000a, 2000b, 2004, 2012).

Other sources include evolutionary anthropologist Dissanayake (1985, 1992, 2000), cognitive scientists (Legrand et al., 2009; Stewart et al., 2010; Varela et al., 1991), cognitive neuroscientist Jeannerod (2006), somatics founder Thomas Hanna (1988/2004), arts educators (Bresler, 2004) and dance educators and philosophers (Albright, 1997, 2010, 2013b; Bond, 2008, 2017, in press; Bond & Etwaroo, 2005; Bond & Gerdes, 2012; Bond & Stinson, 2000/2001; Frichtel, 2012, 2016, in press; Giguere, 2007, 2011; Noland, 2009; Sheets-Johnstone, 2009b, 1999/2011b; Stinson, 2004, 2016b; Warburton, 2011) whose works address learning and knowing through movement—how movement is *key* to cognition, and that movement *is* cognition.

The chapter comes full circle to focus on how dance philosophers and educators (Bond, 2008, 2017; Eddy, 2016; Marques, 2007; Rouhiainen, 2008; Stinson, 2016) address the dancing body as a vehicle for personal awareness and communal understanding, as well as for political meaning-making (Shapiro, 1998, 1999).

Methodology and Procedures (Chapter 3)

Research Methodology

This study of student and teacher meanings in a community-engaged dance education course is situated in a post-positivist qualitative research paradigm grounded in phenomenological and constructivist epistemologies. Chapter 3 discusses these epistemologies in general and Max van Manen's (1990a, 2014) educational phenomenology in particular. Designed also as a vehicle for self-reflection on my own teaching and curriculum, the study also affiliates with the methodological domain of action research (Carson & Sumara, 1991; Kemmis, 1993; Norton, 2009) and specifically in spanning first-person/personal and second-person/professional approaches to action research (Giguere, 2014; Noffke & Somekh, 2009; Reason & Bradbury, 2008).

Throughout the compilation and phenomenological analysis of data, writing and rewriting, bracketing assumptions and theoretical interpretations was key, and difficult. I was surprised by the extent to which I wanted to make inferences about my students' reflections, rather than staying with "the words themselves." The entire process was a phenomenological enterprise: asking questions designed to elicit lived experience, the discipline of restraint from jumping quickly to conclusions and interpretations—while listening to students during class, reading their words after the class was over, and reviewing the data as I analyzed, reflected and wrote.

Data were gathered from 18 students and one teaching assistant (TA) in the form of six lived experience writings about dance improvisations in Hampshire and community settings, student questionnaires administered at the start and the finish of the course, and students' journal writings, including TA notes. Two students from this group

of 19 chose not to submit their prompt writings but did not opt out of the study. I also reflected on data generated through observation of video-taped movement and class discussions, and then journaling about my pedagogical process informed by what I observed. The focus of the study became six occasions of student lived experience writings from three dance improvisation exercises—Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid—across college and community contexts. Chapter 3 outlines the numerous rounds of data analysis, which identified categorical meanings and emergent themes of students' experiential participation and perspectives.

Pedagogical Methodology

This study of students' bodily lived experiences and meanings occurred within a course I came to think of as community-engaged dance education. This comprehensive, albeit introductory curriculum touched on personal, social, cultural, and political aspects of community engagement through dance. In keeping with community-based learning concerns of addressing community or mutual needs, reciprocal learning, and the equalizing or even subverting of power differential between college and communities (Butin & Seider, 2012; Goldfarb, 2006; 2008; Keith, 2015), students and I responded to community partners' expressed interests (interdependence, fun, moving) through thematic activities and improvisations. Importantly, we created opportunities for community partner members (Treehouse residents and RFK youth) to lead and teach us, facilitating a space for students and community partner members to learn about each other.

My overall emphasis as a teacher was on dance and movement as sources for self and communal meaning making, while focalizing students' awareness of the role of the

community-based artist and reflecting on issues of race, privilege, gender, class and power. Although I situated my approach to community engagement as "alternative" and "community-building" primarily, and somewhat "ameliorative" and "interventionist" (due to RFK administrators' goals), the more "radical" approach, emphasizing overcoming discrimination or oppression (Amans, 2008, p. 12) was touched on by class readings and discussions. A more developed radical approach, according to Yalowitz (2018) would offer a practice that *challenges* the roots of institutional power and norms, directly addressing structural and economic inequities between college and community (W. Yalowitz, personal communication, May 4, 2018).

Student Findings (Chapters 4 and 5)

Chapter 4 presented a qualitative analysis of the six sets of students' lived experience writings, by improvisation and site. Experiential meaning categories revealing students' embodied feeling states began to build the inquiry's hermeneutic analysis. Comparisons between students' campus and community experiences complete chapter 4, creating a descriptive portrayal of similarity and difference that includes context. Meaning categories and modes of participation presented in chapter 4 were discussed and thematized in chapter 5. The four modes of student experiential participation include *self, partner, group,* and *movement* (an aesthetic category), encapsulated in one student's writing: "I felt attached to myself, my movement, my partner, and the rest of the group." Inspired by the visceral, often poetic nature of students' lived experience writing, I named the modes dynamically, using gerunds: *selfing, partnering, grouping*, and *moving*. The descriptive content of students' language created a composite of embodied feeling states and projections, a bodily-affective-social-aesthetic framework for understanding

student meanings, or, in a more embodied way: *body-feeling-into-self-and-others-dancing*.

Some themes associated with the participation modes were distinct to a particular mode and others crossed over modes. For *Self*, emergent themes include *finding me* – highlighting the freedom to be oneself—and *body,* encompassing flow, ease, and dis-ease. *Partner* themes include *care, joy, play,* and *connection* (with sub-themes of eye contact, attunement, intimacy, bonding, merging, partner first, and resistance). *Group* themes include *body in group, connection* (with a sub-theme of emotional resonance), and *others first.* For the participation mode of *Moving*, built from aesthetic meanings across the improvisations, emergent themes include *qualities, creation, appreciation* and *culture*.

Themes are rich and multi-faceted, and the focus on partner, both as a category of meaning and a mode of experiential participation, as well as themes of *Partnering,* surfaced as important in students' descriptions of the three dance improvisations, in both volume and nuance. The theme of *connection* in *Partnering,* and the continuum of subjectivities that students described when writing about connecting to a partner, became the focus for discussion in chapter 6.

Discussion and Conclusion (Chapter 6)

Chapter 6 focuses on partnering, a major emphasis in students' writings about their experiences in selected dance improvisations across improvisations and sites during "Dance in the Community." I discovered that the phenomenon of partnering is seldom explored in the literatures of community dance and dance education in general, especially the bodily-affective aspect of partnering highlighted in students' writings. This study

illuminates partnering, not as a physical how-to or the artistic *pas de deux*, or "step of two" (although aesthetic meanings are found in students' descriptions of partnering), but as an interoceptive, affective, and psychological phenomenon of dancing with another. This relational *pas de deux* arose from experiences of *connection* between partners, inviting a felt sense of *entre les deux*, or "between the two," or "both."

In partnering, students might feel bodily-connected, mirrored, merged, taken over, separate, resistant or resisted. In the present study, student descriptions reveal a continuum of subject/subject (self/partner) relationships, or relational intersubjectivity; I discuss two-subject intersubjectivity, merged intersubjectivity, and other-first intersubjectivity as phenomena of *connection*, a term used frequently by students in their writing. The affective and aesthetic meanings found in student writings on connection with a partner, through a range of self/partner intersubjectivities, adds value to the literature on dance and community-engaged dance education.

Particular understandings gained from student data support the notion that dancing together can be strongly impactful—even a brief episode of interactive encounter can generate strong affects. Partnering can offer an intimate, visceral experience, and can sometimes evoke a sense of "knowing" another. Aesthetic and affective phenomena described in chapter 6 included the felt alteration of bodily capacities and awareness of body cavities. For instance, moving while mirroring might involve new sensations of body abilities or a sense of dissolving bodily boundaries. Further, differentiated intersubjective connection brought up affiliated constructs such as empathy and care that not widely represented in community dance or community-based arts literature.

Critical Reflections on the Research Design

One of the goals of this study was to inform my practice as an educator in community-based dance education. Several critical concerns arose as I contemplated the research methodology, the theme of *connection,* and the concept of relational intersubjectivity, as illuminated in the research.

Connection while Partnering

Connection implies "more than one." This study focused only on Hampshire students' partnering experience. While students narrated memories of mutuality, interdependence, and emotional connection to their partners, and some offered descriptions of partners and others from direct observation, these are one-sided perceptions, whether of other Hampshire students or members of a partner community. Since data were not gathered formally from community participants and specific pairings were not examined, this study can only address the continuum of relational dance that an individual student might experience in a community-engaged class of this kind.

A concern might be that this study further marginalizes already marginalized groups by its focus on college student meanings only; however, applying a phenomenological hermeneutic perspective, each subjective description points to the possibility that others might have a similar or even analogous experience. Through this lens, the absence of concrete data from community groups does not compromise a study's value as it might, for example, in a two group, pre-test, post-test experimental study.

The one unintentional piece of dual reflection was captured when a student's writing revealed their Hampshire partner's identity demonstrated how differently partners can experience a dance improvisation. This occurred in Mirror at Hampshire, when one

partner described a dissolution of boundaries and shared this information in a way that seemed positive: “The first mirror we performed made me feel connected with my partner…it was a warm, curious, unfamiliar experience that dissolved the typical felt boundaries of ordinary classmates.” Their partner, on the other hand, felt “pushed out of my comfort zone…self-conscious, but did have fun at times.” This lack of correspondence reminds me of how challenging it can be to achieve synchrony with others in dance and life; perhaps some don’t even desire it. Discussions with students after certain improvisations also indicated that some dyads held more inter-subjective affinity than others.

In sum, it is fair to say that a comprehensive study of partnering would access data from both partners’ experiences. Writing about a partner without their collaboration risks making assumptions about the other, a limitation of observational research generally (see Bond, 1991). In this study, the emphasis on first person descriptive writing appeared to moderate this limitation, and the bodily-affective states many students described while partnering show evidence of experienced connection, understanding, and desire for connection. Students described connection as two independent but interacting beings, as a sense of merged self/partner relationship, and through other-first intentionality, notably during community sessions where some college students explored a facilitator role while others were participants.

Overall, students wrote little about *disconnection*, raising the question of whether connection was possibly felt by students as an expectation. Even though there was no writing prompt oriented to partnering or connection, students might have thought that *connecting* was a goal of the class, hidden or otherwise, given the particular dance

improvisations I taught and that they chose to take to community sites. All three dance improvisations—Human Puzzle, Mirror, and Approach/Avoid—provide opportunities for human connection, and for one student, the joining of community members "affirmed" the project. This study provides empirical evidence that the "opportunities" offered in these improvisations can be fulfilled.

In reviewing the data systematically and exhaustively, it seems that connection as a theme, as a desire, as an actuality and lived experience of students was authentically written and felt. The improvisations provided the opportunity for connection to be felt across sites and with various partners. The poetic and bodily nature of the data on connection through various forms of intersubjective relationship allowed an empirically-grounded analysis of students' *body-feeling-into-self-and-others-dancing*.

Phenomenological Method

One of the foundational tools used in phenomenological data collection, analysis and writing is the epoché, or bracketing, described in detail in chapter 3. This strategy supports the rigor of staying focused on the data itself, suspending existing presumptions and theories about the phenomenon of interest. At each phase of the study I found bracketing a difficult process. My first impulse was to jump to interpretation (sometimes far away from the students' language), make links, and become invested in the material in ways that align with my own values, desires, and outlook. Levering (2007) states that "the phenomenologist must make sure that the data he or she analyses are lived interpretations and not interpretations of interpretations" (p. 451). I tried to make sure that my analysis of the data was not interpretations of interpretations. This slowed me down; for each draft of a chapter I had to review the data, keep focusing on the words,

and drop my own assumptions and beliefs. Akin to the student who wrote that they had to "drop their own demeanor" and "adopt" that of their partner to become present with them, I endeavored to let go of the inner monologue that the rich data incited to stay present to the data themselves.

Writing lived experience. Feminist author and educator Trinh Minh-ha (1989) alludes to the difficulty of suspension when reflecting on writing in what she describes as the "mirror writing box"; writing itself of any kind is self-referential, according to Minh-ha, due to an internalized gaze that happens when writing. I refer to myself being seen as myself writing…and this mirrored self/other/self is part of my subjective experience of writing. How do I bracket myself writing myself? Yet, I found that staying with the data while it steeped in my own consciousness was not impossible, when writing.

Students, it seemed, also experienced some difficulty in writing about bodily lived experience. After van Manen (1990a) I asked them to stay as close to their lived experience as possible through the practice of description. However, students' verbal descriptions of their lived experiences during class discussions seemed to move quickly into interpretation and theorizing; I kept reminding them, when writing, to write as if they were reliving their experiences. van Manen (1990a) and Levering (2007) acknowledge that in both writing and speaking, humans tend to interpretation and interpretive evaluation.

Dance writers have discussed the process of writing (Oliver, 2010; Sheets-Johnstone, 2009b), from writing dance criticism to teaching students how to write about dance to the difficulties of writing about a temporal, dynamic and ethereal experience. Sheets-Johnstone (2009b) notes that language and dancing do not correspond one-to-one,

and that language is “clumsy” when it comes to describing dynamics of movement (p. 363); to describe dynamics is itself challenging because it “does not simply take place in space and in time but creates its own distinctive time, space and force” (p. 367). Besides the conundrum of writing about dancing, a nonverbal behavior, language itself is questioned as a reliable conveyor of information. In asking students to write about their experiences, I ask them to put language to their dancing and rely on that language to reveal their unique meanings. In poststructuralist thought, no one is fully present, at least by themselves, in language; language entails using signs that are “half ours and half someone else’s” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345). Language is mediated, mirrored (per Minh-ha, 1989), and signifies intersubjectivity; the very nature of writing and reading the data in this study was an intersubjective act.

When I engaged in the discipline of bracketing, I felt a dance emerge between myself and the words; I was co-choreographing this dance of co-constructed meaning. The students’ words speak to the intersubjective connectedness they felt while dancing in partnership. Through a phenomenological hermeneutic lens, these linguistic gestures of intersubjectivity describing singular lived worlds might also describe others’ possible worlds.

The epistemology of phenomenology purports that there is meaning prior to mediation; in order to bracket there must be something there, a priori, to experience or know, pre-reflectively. This runs counter to post-structuralist epistemology where

> meanings do not exist prior to their articulation in language and language is not an abstract system, but is always socially and historically located in discourses. Discourses represent political interests and in consequence are constantly vying for status and power. (Weedon, 1997, p. 40)

A premise of this dissertation research is that there is meaning to motion, to experiencing,

and to pre-linguistic sensing. Sheets-Johnstone (2009a) describes language as "post-kinetic" (p. 50) to convey that language is not the primary mode of knowing and that movement is a precursor to language; language could be considered post-kinetic rather than movement considered pre-verbal. Did the youth at Treehouse think first about what meaning they would create when jumping into Human Puzzle, or did the meaning come through their bodies, calling them into action? Is pre-reflective knowing also situated culturally and historically, or does that come when language is attached? One gets pulled here into a duality between localized and innate meaning. Dance scholar Carrie Noland (2009) attributes the return to phenomenology in the humanities to post-structuralism's failure to account for subject agency.

Learning from the Data

One of my stated goals was in connection with participatory action research in the classroom: how do I learn from the data in order to become a better educator? How does the content as well as the nature of the study effect my growth in "tact" (van Manen, 1991, 2015) and my capacity to grow as a professional in the field? Student reflective writing and the affectivity students revealed before, during and after dancing and writing about their dancing, along with the discussions, questionnaires, and video, afforded me the opportunity to learn, reflect, and review my pedagogical purpose and possibilities.

Connection

Many of the themes analyzed in chapter 5 have been identified in prior research on student engagement in dance, as mentioned above, such as *play*, *care*, *finding me (or finding self)*, *body*, and *community*. The theme that emerged most significantly was is *connection*. As discussed in chapter 6, connection as a relational "soft-skill" (Riva, 2015)

construct is less represented in dance literature than the physical partnering skill. From the data in chapter 6, I see connection foregrounding a biological as well as social need, perhaps bio-social, even during disconnection—as students expressed the desire to connect even when not feeling connected.

Felt connection's intertwining of subjectivities—from two discreet, to merging, to valuing one above the other no matter how temporary—reveals intimate relational meanings. I propose that the dance improvisations embedded in this study afforded intersubjective connection, even in a short amount of time, and can focalize aspects of engaged pedagogy such as care, empathy, empowerment of individuals, prioritizing other/s, all observed in student writing and teacher observations. As mentioned above, empathy and care are not well theorized in the pedagogical literature of CBL.

The data also affirmed a lived relational understanding that infuses my own memories of dancing in community. The visceral-affective nature of the data reminds me that I too used to find "life lessons" (Stinson, 1995) while dancing, such as learning to trust while falling into someone's arms or discovering my own sense of humor while improvising. Dancing in partnership can reveal such relational meanings. van Manen (2011) suggests that relational meaning "is not necessarily found by looking more deeply into the innerness of our 'selves.' Meaningfulness is more likely found in the space that lies outside the self, in the communal realm of the 'other'" (n.p.).

Relational meaning is arguably important in a community-based course. New to me was the depth of students' affective and aesthetic responses, which seemed connected to their sense of self/other sociality. Reflecting on this phenomenon has prompted me to include more questions that might elicit affective responses when asking students to

reflect on their experiences in my class. When I teach students various improvisations that can be facilitated in campus/community partnerships, I continue to work with solo, partner, and group improvisations; however, I make sure to spend time on partnering and discuss affective and aesthetic meanings. I also attend to partnering improvisations in a more refined way, asking more focused questions about self/other. Even without asking such questions, I am more attuned to hearing self/other relational understandings when expressed.

Although I generally gather or ask students to gather reflections and feedback from community partner members and administration or leaders—during and at the end of each session, and at the end of our entire time together—I now spend more time with community partner members in reflection on their experiences while dancing in partnership with students. I strive to provide feedback in multiple modalities—orally, in writing, in visual or performing art. I also have visited community partners periodically post-collaboration, especially RFK youth, as the value of relational meaning discovered in this study and responses from some RFK youth foreground the importance of continued relationship, even with the transient nature of their lives as incarcerated youth. For instance, most recently a youth from RFK told me that she wanted to meet with me after she was released, in order to talk about college possibilities in her future.

Through this study, I have gained the recognition that play can be a valuable part of student experience, of dancing itself, and integrated into the college/community interaction. I now encourage play, whereas before I felt ambivalent about what seemed like too much play, in a sense, dichotomizing play and work. Bond and Stinson (2007/2016) comment on the work/play binary from a dance education perspective, and I

discovered a whole contemporary discourse on the subject across disciplines, including the phenomenology of play. Küpers (2017) suggests that "embodied and relational possibilities" of play as connected to the "nexus" of self and others, suggesting that phenomenologically, embodied play has existential significance (p. 994). Martha Nussbaum (2011) includes play as one of ten central human capabilities required for an existence worthy of human dignity. Overall, I also appreciate more fully the aesthetic nature of community-engaged work, finding that although I had originally prioritized "good experiences" over "good dancing," without direct prompting my students highlighted aesthetic meanings in their reflective writings about our embodied practices.

Lived Experience Writing

The affective, poetic nature of student writing and the focused engagement I observed while students were writing suggested to me that lived experience writing can itself be an aesthetic gateway to meaning. Students seemed interested and at times eager to write about their experiences—the room would grow quiet with concentration. Experiences came alive on paper, when written and again when read.

One explanation for such engagement could be that students knew they were writing for this study. However, since the study I have continued to engage students in van Manean (2014) phenomenological writing processes and observe the same focused engagement. For instance, when I want to emphasize the nature of an experience in class, beyond class reflective discussion, I invite students to write a lived experience description. My hope is that focusing on lived-experience will yield further meaning for students… such is the possibility of phenomenological reflection in educational settings.

Contribution to Field

The intersubjective connectivity described by students in this study brought up, as noted, phenomena of empathy and care. A question arising for community dance education is how experiences of empathy and care might interact with students' understanding of power difference, privilege, and structural aspects of systemic oppression—curricular and civic concerns of CBL, as discussed in chapter 2. How might empathy in partnering be balanced with attention to systemic concerns affecting community populations and partners—and how would this be assessed?

Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) outlined phases of development in a study of students entering poor communities: shock, normalization, engagement. In the engagement phase, they found that if students had developed an empathetic relationship with community members, they were more likely to see structural causes of poverty than if they did not develop such relationships. Without empathy, students were more likely to assume root causes, such as laziness or addiction, in community members themselves. Perhaps the intersubjective connections described by students in this study, instead of creating a "collapse of difference" (Herzberg, 1994; Welch, 2002) that denies systemic oppression, can promote a kind of empathy that allows for the consideration (and perhaps then a focus on intervention) of systemic oppression.

In chapter 2, I reference some identified categories of community dance, such as ameliorative, alternative, radical, community-building, and interventionist (Jasper, 1995; Lomas, 2009; Thomson, 1994). In chapter 3 I refer to my course as primarily alternative and community-building with aspects of ameliorative and interventionist (due to RFK's needs). On the basis of this research, I propose that simply privileging the body as a

source of self-knowledge and for abandoning assumptions about "other" can be a radical intervention. Perhaps facilitating spaces where college and community partners can be "in their bodies," subverting what has been "pressed into our flesh" (Shapiro, 1999, p. 79) and loving what might have been unloved or unattended, presences all the named categories (ameliorative, alternative, radical, community-building, and interventionist) while deepening relationships with self and other.

Since this course is the only community-engaged dance course at Hampshire, and we typically work with one or two communities in a short semester, the focus must be on short-term engagement with community partners rather than on building longer-term artistic projects or a relationship with communities that last beyond the semester. I acknowledge Yalowitz's critique of this limited kind of intervention as a workable model of university-based community arts/learning (W. Yalowitz, personal communication, May 4, 2018). At the same time, this small study in its own right suggests that even a brief "dance" between students and community partners can provide meaningful experiences of bodily-affective-social-aesthetic knowing, an understanding I have taken into subsequent iterations of "Dance in the Community." In addition, I hope that the complex meanings of partnership described by students will extend the student-centered, phenomenological literature of dance engagement within CBL and dance education more broadly.

Finally, with each new iteration of this course, I continue to develop a pedagogy of supporting the cultural wisdom and cultural capital (Yosso, 2005) in the room. This focus can mean that the aspirations, wisdom, talents and abilities of community partner members lead the academic/community exchange even more than previously, and those

aspirations and talents are supported more strongly by the dance improvisations, creations, and even at times non-dance content we facilitate. This focus on self-determination and realization of the cultural capital of community partners is not only considered good practice (Daniels, 2017; Keith, 2015), but can also be seen as an organic extension of relational meaning examined in this study. As I open to intersubjective meaning between self and other in student/community interactions, I seek to create fuller potential for relational structures to support more in-depth intersubjective structures as well as content.

Recommendations for further research

This dissertation research has generated questions, reflections, and perspectives that I will be digesting and distilling for years to come. In general, research on students' lived experiences in higher education is rare (Hounsell, 2005), and I intend to persist in this line of inquiry post-doctorally, within my evolving pedagogical and scholarly practice of community-engaged dance. I did not study all movement we explored in the 2014 class nor the various power dynamics embedded in its facilitation: college students to community partner members, community partner members to college students, or a combination of both. This sharing of power and shifting of power dynamics is important in community/college interactions to embody reciprocity and equity in partnership and I intend to study these phenomena in more depth.

Research that focuses on the lived experience of both individuals in partnering, in both college/college and college/community settings, as well as in long-term college/community partnerships are needed. Partnership in dance in general deserves further study, to better understand its nature and processes in and between dancing

beings. Other dance relational forms could be studied through a phenomenological lens: for example, the lived experience of being in trio or quartet or the large group in dance.

In addition, while play, aesthetics, connection, care, and joy were some of the meanings students discovered while dancing three specific improvisations, other dance and movement experiences that we engaged in during the fall of 2014 also carried meanings and importance to students and to our process. I plan to examine these experiences from both student and community participant perspectives. Studying student and community partner members' meanings, especially when community members lead and teach college students, would be a logical extension of this dissertation research.

The place of affective pedagogy in higher education is a central question emerging from this dissertation. The arts are one avenue for affective education, and from the data, dance might be particularly suitable for students' affective meaning making. The study has shown that community-engaged dance can be a site for exploring empathy, care and connection in higher education. Further, dance can offer participants values of aesthetic learning and social engagement across difference. I hope this small study has made a contribution to the productive evolution of community-engaged dance education in higher education.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

A. Consent Form:

Title of Study: Community Dance Pedagogy: Teaching Engaged Dance

Examination of physical practices and philosophies within community-based learning in dance in the U.S. and within an introductory course in community dance at Hampshire College: Purpose, Practicalities, Philosophy

Name and Department of investigator/s: Jodi Falk, PhD candidate and Principal Investigator, Karen E. Bond, PhD

This study involves research. My research question at hand is to study the bodily lived experience of students and teacher inside of my introduction to community-based learning in dance course, entitled "Community Crossovers: Dance in the Community" at Hampshire College, Fall 2014, and to juxtapose students' lived experience with the scholarship and practice in the field of community-based learning in dance at the present time in the U.S. This study is a dissertation thesis for candidacy for the PhD in Dance at Temple University.

What you should know about a research study:

Someone will explain this research study to you.
You volunteer to be in a research study.
Whether you take part is up to you.
You can choose not to take part in the research study.
You can agree to take part now and later change your mind.
Whatever you decide, it will not be held against you.
Feel free to ask all the questions you want before and after you decide.
By signing this consent form, you are not waiving any of the legal rights that you otherwise would have as a participant in a research study.

The estimated duration of your study participation is Fall Semester, 2014.

The study procedures consist of writing descriptions of your experiences of some movement exercises and being videoed in studio workshops. These exercises are a part of the class's curriculum; however, you will not be graded or evaluated on these aspects of the class.

It is possible that the study procedures may yield incidental or secondary findings. These findings will be disclosed in the dissertation. If there are questions or you would like to discuss the findings and discoveries, I am available to discuss them after evaluations and grades are finalized and the semester is over.

The reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts are being videoed while moving, or perhaps if the writing prompts bring up anything uncomfortable. You can always ask not to have the video used for the study or decide not to write the prompt if you are uncomfortable about any particular prompt or video. You may also wonder if your

participation or your information will affect your grade or evaluation but I will be out of the room as you sign (or not) this consent form and will not know who is in the study, nor will I look at the data collected (via a third person and in a sealed envelope) until the evaluations and grades are completed and distributed.

The benefit you will obtain from the research is knowing that you have contributed to the understanding of this topic.

The alternative to participating is not to participate. As videos are still a part of the class, you can ask not to be videotaped if for any reason on that day you are not comfortable. The writing is part of class, but if you feel uncomfortable in any way you can opt out of the writing. If you decide not to participate in the study I will also not use your writing as part of the research. I will know not to use your writing if you do not sign this form, or if you decide at any time in the semester to withdraw from the study. If you decide later on to withdraw from the study, you can tell this to the t.a. in the class, and the t.a. will write this request, with your signature, on a confidential memo which I will open only after grades and evaluations are finalized and distributed.

Please contact the research team with questions, concerns, or complaints about the research and any research-related injuries by e-mailing Dr. Karen Bond at kbond003@temple.edu.

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Temple University Institutional Review Board. Please contact them at (215) 707-3390 or e-mail them at: irb@temple.edu for any of the following: questions, concerns, or complaints about the research; questions about your rights; to obtain information; or to offer input.

Video: The video-taping is a part of the class activity. However, if you choose not to be videotaped on any given day, this choice will be respected. If you consent to be videotaped for class, but do not want me to look at the tapes for research purposes, that choice also will be respected.

I agree to be videotaped and for the video footage to be used in the research ___.

I agree to be videotaped for class but I do not agree for the video footage to be used in the research. ____.

I do not want to be video-taped.___. (Please note that you will need to share this information with me also verbally in class - or via an email or other means, as I won't have access to this form until the grades and evaluations are finalized and distributed).

Confidentiality: Efforts will be made to limit the disclosure of your personal information, including research study records, to people who have a need to review this information. However, the study team cannot promise complete secrecy. For example, although the study team has put in safeguards to protect your information, there is always a potential risk of loss of confidentiality. There are several organizations that may inspect and copy your information to make sure that the study team is following the rules and regulations regarding research and the protection of human subjects. These organizations include the IRB, Temple University, its affiliates and agents, Temple University Health System, Inc., its affiliates and agents, the study sponsor and its agents, and the Office for Human Research Protections.

Specific provisions for confidentiality:

1. Only first and last names will be used on the forms - no other identifying information.

- The writing prompts will be sealed in an envelope and stored in a locked drawer in the dance department until all grades and evaluations are finalized and distributed.
- The video footage will be stored uploaded onto a computer, password secured, and after use will be stored in a secure location.
- Pseudonyms will be used in the actual study/dissertation.

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO STUDENTS

B: Letter to students

Dear Community Crossover: Dance in the Community HACU 253 students!

Welcome to the class! Very soon we will be meeting, and I look forward to dancing and learning with you, as well as sharing the concerns, creations, debates, and issues that constitute engaged academic/community learning in dance.

I am writing before we meet to share that on the first day, after we get acquainted and learn about the class's goals and objectives, you will have the opportunity to join, if you so wish, a research study I am conducting on community-based learning in dance practices. The study is strictly voluntary, and if you do or do not choose to join it will in no way affect your standing in the course. Participating in the study will not in any way add to the workload of the course itself, in terms of work, time, or any other commitment. I will share and explain fully the information about the research on our first meeting.

Enjoy the last few days of summer!!

Looking forward,

Jodi Falk, Dance Education and Outreach Visiting Lecturer for the 5 Colleges

APPENDIX C

STUDENT WRITING PROMPTS, GUIDELINES AND EXAMPLES

Appendix C:

Student writing prompts:

1.

Name: _____ Date: _____Subject or movement moment (e.g. mirror, puzzle, approach/avoid): _____

- Describe in detail what this movement exercise was like for you from the inside - the mood, sensations, emotions?
- What were your bodily feelings, sensory impressions?
- Can you recall a particular highlight? Describe? Can you recall a challenge, why?
-

2. Student writing prompt, given mid-semester to remind students about staying close to lived experience:

Name: _____ Date: _____Subject or movement moment (e.g. mirror, puzzle, approach/avoid): _____

Protocol questions based in researching lived experience guidelines, van Manen (1997):

Please write as if you are re-embodying the experience! Share detail so that you can re-enter and re-live and re-experience it, or someone else can feel like they were inside your body, experiencing what you experienced! Make it come alive again on paper!

Describe in detail what this movement exercise was like for you from the inside - the mood, sensations, emotions?
What were your bodily feelings, sensory impressions?
Can you recall a particular highlight? Describe. Can you recall a challenge? Describe.

3. Van Manen Lived-Experience writing guidelines (handed out any time writing prompt was given):

Guidelines for capturing lived experience / to get at our lived experience - kind of writing

In creating/facilitating lived experience description:

•Avoid causal explanations, generalizations, interpretations, theories
•Describe from the inside: feelings, the mood, emotions
•Focus on particular example/s, moments/s, happening/s during the session.
•Go for vivid example/s that stand/s out in your memory [of today's class].
•Attend to bodily feelings and sensory impressions

4. Examples given out of lived-experience writings (handed out mid-semester):

From Sheets-Johnstone's "Thinking in Movement":

The density or fluidity, like the sharpness and angularity, are not first registered as a perception (still less as stimuli, and certainly not as sense-data), a perception to which I then respond in some manner by doing something. Qualities and presences are enfolded into my own ongoing presence and quality. They are absorbed by my movement, as when I become part of the swirl of dancers sweeping by me or am propelled outward, away from their tumultuous energies, or when I quicken to the sharpness of their movement and accentuate its angularity or break out of its jaggedness by a sudden turn and stillness. In just such ways, the global dynamic world I am perceiving, including the ongoing kinesthetically felt world of my own movement, is inseparable from the kinetic world in which I am moving.

From Bond and Stinson's "I'm going to take off!":

children:

When dancing I feel hot and sweaty. And my feet are like motivated and they're in motion. My legs, my thighs, my knees are kind of motivated, like excited.

I feel like I'm going to take off. I'm just about to fly. I AM flying! I am flying and flapping and doing something very good. I fly and swoop over and over again. I am free. Shall we go for another fly? Yes!

From Fraleigh's "Consciousness Matters":

I discover a gateway to my inner self, peeling away the layers of outer skin and physical boundaries, but I do not feel naked. I become one with myself and the human soma, self-regulating as well as self-sensing. My perception of my outer body is quite different from my inward body. It seems as if my body is an unexplored, uninhabited island, and I am exploring it for the first time.

Alice was working with me. We were slowly walking around the room and she was watching me from behind. As she gently and silently entered my personal space, I began to feel a warm, enfolding sense of security and support. I instantly began to cry because this is the feeling that is constantly missing from my life. For the first time, I truly realized how much the physical can affect thought and feeling.

APPENDIX D

ENTRY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name_____
Date_____

What is your dance background? (type of dance, years, venues, training)

What is your movement background - i.e., sports, yoga, any movement besides dance? (years, teams, etc.)

What is your current definition of dance? of dancers?

Why are you taking this course?

What is your interest in community based learning?

What do you hope to learn in working with communities?

What do you hope to learn in working with your body and movement/dance?

What has your body taught you in the past?

What has dancing and moving your body taught you in the past?

APPENDIX E

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND SYLLABUS

Hampshire Community Crossover - Syllabus / Moodle / HaCU 253 / FALL 2014

"Every human being is an artist and in the moment of creation, we are at our most sane, most healthy, and most fulfilled. When we share a piece of our vision of the world with others, we are better able to see ourselves, to interact with others, and to make our own choices." Robert Alexander / DC's Living Stage

This course is designed for students interested in merging social activism, art, and teaching. It teaches students to use movement, dance and theatre in settings such as senior centers, schools, prisons, and youth recreation centers. In studio sessions, students will learn how to identify, approach, and construct classes and dance exchanges or events for community sites. Much of the time will be spent together off-site in various locations throughout the Pioneer Valley, where students will create and lead movement/theatre experiences. Some outside-of-class lab time will be necessary to organize and develop the classes and possible performances. Assigned videos and readings will provide a context for discussion and assist in the development of individual research and teaching methods. No previous experience in the arts or in teaching is necessary. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a study conducted by the lecturer in community-based learning in dance (CBLD); this study is IRB approved.

Texts for course: Most of the readings will be articles or web pages, given each week in the resources section of Moodle. There is one text book required, and a few will be recommended for student interest. Students will volunteer each week to facilitate discussion on weekly readings or viewings.

Required textbook: (in bookstore)
Amans, D. (Ed.). (2008). *An introduction to community dance practice.* Hampshire, UK: Palgrave MacMillan.

Requested textbook: (in bookstore and will be on reserve in Hamp library)
Goldbard, A. (2006). *New creative community: The art of cultural development*. Oakland, CA: New Village Press.

Course goals:

• To acquaint students with methods for working with dance in various settings
• To provide experiences interfacing with various communities in the Pioneer Valley and engaging with local cultural resources
• To provide opportunities for students to lead, co-lead, and facilitate community interactions using movement, dance and theatre
• To support knowledge of community-based arts work and its relationship to issues of race, culture, and identity through readings, dvds, and more
• To encourage dance advocacy, community integration, and philosophical grounding in community arts
• To provide reflective experiences on movement practices in community-based learning in dance
To recognize privilege and difference and to challenge roots of institutional power and norms

Learning outcomes/ objectives:

- Demonstrate verbally and in writing the nature and role of community dance and its relationship to dance art as well as community-based pedagogy
- Demonstrate verbally and in writing an awareness of political, social and cultural contexts of community-based arts, dance in particular
- Demonstrate through facilitation and teaching an applied understanding of community-based learning in dance pedagogy and its relationship to cultural development
- Demonstrate engaged and consistent reflection of the process of the class and its relationship to personal growth as well as community-based learning goals
- Demonstrate ability to learn from and create space for community partner members to teach and lead

Expectations for students:

- Students will lead and/or co-lead dance exchanges with various communities in the Pioneer Valley.
- Students will create lesson plans for dance exchanges they lead or co-lead in written form.
- Students will respond to various readings, DVDs and other experiences through online submissions.
- Students will submit journal entries online and in class.
- Students will co-lead reading and resource discussions in class.
- Students will contribute to class discussions in class and online.

- Students will participate fully in class and in the community, verbally (orally and in written form), physically and virtually.
- Students will create a final presentation, details tbd.

Monday, 8 September (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 1:

Introduction, fun movement, course expectations, study and consent forms, writing protocol practice

Resources:
McGregor: "Dance and Civic Engagement"
Bond and Stinson: "I feel like I'm going to take off!"
Sheets-Johnstone: "Thinking in Movement" from *The Corporeal Turn*

Journal #1: Why are you interested in this course? What do you hope to achieve? What are you curious about in this work?

Monday, 15 September (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 2:

What is community? What is community dance and community arts? What are community partners' needs?
Tools, containers, writing prompt, "first" day questionnaire

Resources:
Readings: Amans, Diane. *An Introduction to Community Dance Practice*: chapters 1, 2, and 4
Croce, A. (1994, Dec. 26). Discussing the undiscussable. *The New Yorker*, 54-61.
Glossary of terms from *Beginner's Guide to Community Arts*
Watch: *Bill T. Jones: The Making of Still/Here* with Bill Moyers (DVD)

Journal #2: What are your personal assumptions about the university and its relationship to the communities we are dancing with? What are your assumptions based on - background, privilege, experience?

Monday, 22 September (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 3:

Building our own community, cultural sensitivity, resource discussion, discussion of community partners, finding cultural wisdom and assets. Choose teaching facilitators. Writing prompts.

Resources:
Fraleigh: "Consciousness Matters"
Dowling: Vimeo of Dance Generators
Treehouse website (https://refca.net)
Lerman Dance Exchange/Lab: online toolbox (http://danceexchange.org/toolbox/home.html)
Goldbard: *New Creative Community*, chs. 1 and 2

Journal #3: In daily life how do I create a safe environment for others? For myself? Or do I? Is there another value more relevant to our work than safety?

Monday, 29 September (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 4:

"Art for art's sake—we don't have time for that anymore. What we need now is 'art that saves lives'." Rhodessa Jones / Medea Project

Preparation for Treehouse, reflecting on Treehouse needs, giving up power/sharing power

Resources:
Kuppers: Performing Disability
Foster: Choreographies of Protest
View: *Arts and the Mind, The Art of Connection* (2nd hour) PBS
Attend Sean Dorsey Dance at Smith College for discussion

Monday, 6 October (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 5:
Treehouse work/play shop #1

Write Human Puzzle prompt, debrief, prepare for 2nd session and discuss resources

Resources:
Choose ONE out of the three to watch/respond: *Favella Rising* / *War Dance* / *Rize*
Lerman in *Animating Democracy*
RFK Children's Corps handbook for visitors – intro, safety, touch
Please create questions for RFK representative visiting on Oct 20 at 8:15 pm.
RFK: https://www.rfkchildren.org

Journal #4: Answer one of the two (or both if you wish): 1. How did our first Treehouse workshop go for you - what was most important that you learned, or the most important issue or issues that came up for you or made you think critically about this practice? 2. Please discuss your thoughts/concerns about our talk and decisions around introducing pronouns and relate your thoughts/concerns to the Sean Dorsey concert or talk.

Monday, 13 October (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 6:

- No class - holiday weekend

Monday, 20 October (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 7:

Treehouse work/play shop #2
Write Mirror prompt, debrief

RFK rep will visit us at Treehouse after the session.

Resources:
Read Amans text, Chapter 5 and 6
Goldbard, *New Creative Community*: read chapters 3 and 6
Houston (2005) on "transformation" in community dance

Journal #5: choose one (do both if you wish): 1. What did these workshops teach you? What issues, concerns, celebrations came up for you? What are gaps you would like to address in this work? or 2. Write about your responses or reactions to what RFK liaison brought up in her time with us. Several issues were raised in ways that warrant unpacking - what were your perceptions of what she was saying and where she was coming from?

Monday, 27 October (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 8:

Hampshire day: debrief, catch up, talk about final project and paper, and prepare – work with RFK themes
Discuss in class: race and incarceration, body in incarcerated sites

Resources:
Read in Amans, chapters 7 and 10
Houston: Contact improvisation / touch in prison
Alexander: article on The New Jim Crow
UBW – BOLD terminology, summer leadership, civic engagement (https://www.urbanbushwomen.org/bold-1/#bold-community-engagement)

Journal #6: this week is a bit different - It is the space to share feelings, thoughts, concerns, needs, desires, hopes - for the course, our class, yourself… in terms of this work, in terms of the class, in terms of RFK. I am curious as to where you are, and what *you* need. We are in a process together, and I want to be as responsive as I can. This entry is not graded or evaluated. If you feel you'd rather be in conversation than a submission, feel free to email me.

Monday, 3 November (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 9:

RFK #1
Debrief, more preparation, discussion group share thoughts to rest of class

Resources:
Excerpts from: Inside this Place, Not of It: Narratives from a women's prison
The Sentencing Project: https://www.sentencingproject.org

Journal #7: choose one: 1. If you were in or facilitated the workshop, please reflect on the workshop and give a self-evaluation if you were a facilitator, or a group and general workshop evaluation if you were present but not facilitating. Please respond to what was engaging, and why, and what you see as important lessons for future workshops. 2. If you were in the discussion group, please reflect on what was most salient for you and what that means for your ongoing practice in these workshops at RFK. Some of the issues that seem to arise were: issues of community, dynamic between communities, how to enter and exit a community project, asset mapping, and touch.

Monday, 10 November (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 10:

RFK #2
Write Approach/Avoid prompt, debrief, discuss resources and discussion group share thoughts to rest of class. Prepare for future RFK work.

Resources:
Dowling: vimeo – Well-Contested Sites / prison and dance
Well-Contested sites – high school curriculum guide
Shwartz: Well-Contested sites – Acting in Concert paper

Journal #8: 1. If you were in or facilitated the workshop, please reflect on the workshop and give a self-evaluation if you were a facilitator, or a group and general workshop evaluation if you were present but not facilitating. Please respond to what was engaging, and why, and what you see as important lessons for future workshops. 2. If you were in the discussion group, please reflect on what was most salient for you and what that means for your ongoing practice in these workshops at RFK. Issues that arose: language and body and their respective possibilities or limitations, how do we create change, the present embodied moment, stories of oppression, and where transformation comes from...

Monday, 17 November (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 11:

RFK #3
Debrief, and share ideas for your final projects – this will allow each other to suggest resources, comment, give ideas and input if so desired. Prepare for future RFK work.

Journal #9: If you were a facilitator in the workshop, please reflect on the workshop and give a self-evaluation, a group and general workshop evaluation. If you were present but not facilitating, please give a workshop evaluation. Please respond to what was engaging, and why, and what you see as important lessons for future workshops. Discussion group, reflect on salient issues discussed.

Monday, 24 November (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 12:

RFK #4
Debrief, and event creation! After our RFK workshop, we will meet back at Hampshire to plan our final event with community partners. Come with ideas and commitment.

Monday, 1 December (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 13:

RFK #5
Debrief, final day preparation, and presentation of your ideas for your final paper: grant proposal.

Monday, 8 December (06:00PM - 09:30PM) Week 14:

FINAL EVENT with RFK and Treehouse at Hampshire
Last hour: class final ritual and evaluation

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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