

Extracurricular Dance Organizations: Body Image, Identity & Wellbeing

By

Nicolette Zuzanna Pawlowski

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

(Educational Policy Studies)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2017

Date of final oral examination: 05/08/2017

The dissertation is approved by the following members of the Final Oral Committee:

Nancy Kendall, Associate Professor, Educational Policy Studies

Stacey Lee, Professor, Educational Policy Studies

Leslie Bartlett, Professor, Educational Policy Studies

John DeLamater, Professor, Sociology

Araceli Alonso, Associate Faculty, Gender & Women's Studies

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
The Study	5
Research on Extra-Curricular Participation	7
Research on College Students and Stress Effects.....	11
Body Image, Self-Esteem, and Extracurricular Organizations	13
Research on Participation in Dance Organizations.....	14
Research Design	15
The University	16
The Initial Process	18
The Organizations	20
Observations	23
Survey Participants	23
Interview Participants	24
Limitations	25
Analysis	28
Overview.....	29
CHAPTER TWO: DANCE HIP-HOP	33
History	37
Translating Hip-Hop Within White College Extracurriculars.....	39

Authenticity and “Real” Hip-Hop Movement	40
Hip-Hop as Performative Entertainment.....	45
Gender and Sexuality: Athletics and Aesthetics	48
Perceived Sexuality / “He Dances Gay”	51
Hip-Hop and Adolescence	53
A Reprieve Before “Real” Life, Life After College	57
Hyphens and Lyrics: Dancer-Entertainer	61
Conclusion	70
CHAPTER THREE: DANCE BALLROOM.....	74
Ballroom History- The Standardization of Whiteness & Upper-Class Dance	76
“Appropriate” Expressions.....	78
Relationships/Connections.....	81
Group Dynamics	88
The Future.....	89
Playing Out.....	90
Gender Roles	93
Access vs Reality	95
Conclusion	98
CHAPTER FOUR: DANCE SALSA.....	100
The Melting Pot	103
Limitations of the Melting Pot.....	108
Purpose of Salsa Dancing.....	109

Applications Beyond Student Life.....	110
Inclusion within Diversity	112
True Expressions	118
Connection: Sexuality & Gender Roles	122
Expressions of Gender.....	124
Conclusion	127
CHAPTER FIVE: IDENTITIES	130
Dancing and Being a Professional.....	133
Student Identities & Dancer Identities	136
Partner/Group/Solo	140
Dance Forms and Intersecting Identities.....	142
Media Influences on the Identity of Dancers	143
Sexual Expressions & Identity.....	146
Dancing and the Gay Guy.....	148
Gender Identity within the Dance	150
Conclusion	153
CHAPTER SIX: WELLBEING	155
Academic Wellbeing	159
Physical & Mental Wellbeing	160
Social Wellbeing.....	163
Conclusion	165

CHAPTER SEVEN: BODY IMAGE.....	167
Sweatpants & Body Image.....	167
Body Image: Clubbing versus Performing Norms	170
Classical Dance Pressures	175
Male versus Female Body Image.....	179
Dancing, Clothing, and the Body	184
Self-Expression, Creativity, & Connection with One's Own Body	186
Conclusion	190
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS	193
Future Directions	199
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	201
APPENDIX: GRAPHS FROM BODY IMAGE/SELF ESTEEM.....	232

Abstract

I explored the socialization and experiences of older adolescents and young adults who were involved in three extracurricular dance organizations at a large Midwestern university. I conducted a six-month, comparative ethnographic study using observations, interviews and a survey. I identified three key themes through which I explored the meanings of the organizations and the dances to their members, and how the structures of the organizations and dances perpetuated or dismantled hegemonic ideas of gender, sexuality, and race. I found distinct differences in the ways that students used, connected with, and experienced thematically similar extracurricular dance organizations. I found that the compositions of the organizations, along with the diverse intentions these students brought to their participation, created institutional and social spaces that resulted in great differentiation in the students' and groups' associations with body image, social connections, identities, as well as academic, social and physical wellbeing. I also found that these organizations reinforced hegemonic norms regarding gender and sexuality, and some maintained white spaces through their methods of acquiring new members. I conclude the dissertation with suggestions for future directions that could be used to acquire a better sense of the different benefits that extracurricular organizations have on college students' lives.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not be possible without the incredible support of my advisor Nancy Kendall and my mentor John DeLamater. Thank you for putting up with my multiple passions. And sharing so much of your time, work, and advice with me. And to John for not cutting off my toes. Enormous thanks to Stacey Lee for always being so positive and supporting with both the Masters and PhD process, and huge thanks to Leslie Bartlett for fitting in my defense in a crazy schedule. To Araceli Alonso, who has been my inspiration throughout all the work and passions that she takes part in. Enormous thanks to Mary Jo for always answering every question and helping me out in every process. And to my family and loved ones who have been there throughout, on the good and bad days. To Tata (Cezar) and Mama (Krystyna) for always being behind all of my work and passions (emotionally, financially, even physically moving me). To Timuś who I could count on to say things bluntly and with laughter. To Aluś, and Babcia, for pushing and supporting me. To Richard and Ania for understanding and taking it easy on me. To Kelsey Lamm for reviewing my work and taking my late night calls. To Agustin Garcia for working extra hours and teaching without me so I could focus on the research and writing. To Joanna Simpson, Nicole Gallagher, Megan Kniepkamp, Lily Russo, Stevie Ozier Morrison, Alexia Lawson, Jorge Jardinez, Larissa Stephan, Maxine and Ted Farbis, and Regina Figueiredo-Brown for your check-ins and constant actions of support, no matter where I was in the process. To every acquaintance and friend who asked how I was doing and gave me little supplements of advice and encouragement.

THANK YOU SOOOOOO MUCH!

Chapter One: Introduction to the Study

College is a stressful time for many students. Student-led extracurricular organizations are often an important part of students' daily experiences in college, and administrators, students, and policymakers often express the opinion that extracurriculars play an important role in improving many students' wellbeing (Ewing, Bruce, & Ricketts, 2009; Foreman & Retallick, 2012; Foubert & Grainger, 2006; Stuart, Lido, Morgan, Solomon, & May, 2011). These assumptions are based almost entirely on correlational data, however. There is little research on if, how, or why these experiences differ across students or across organizations. This study provides an in-depth examination of three dance-based student-led extracurricular organizations, and the experiences and meanings made by students about these organizations. It examines the effects of participating in each organization on students' senses of dancer identity, body image, and wellbeing. In so doing, the study aims to add to our understanding of extracurricular organizations' daily practices, their roles in students' social and academic lives, and the short- and longer-term effects of extracurricular activities on students' social, physical, and academic wellbeing. This study explores how different structures and norms within the dance extracurricular organizations, whether focused on performance, relational belonging, or skill building, affected students' connections to dance and their academic lives.

Fifty-three percent of college students spend at least one hour each week participating in university extracurricular organizations (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2010). This number includes Greek system organizations (fraternities and sororities), service organizations, religious organizations, sports organizations, and cultural organizations. Extracurricular participation is thus a component of more than half of students' college experiences. As

researchers, policymakers, and administrators have recognized the role that extracurricular participation plays in students' lives during college, they have encouraged research on its effects.

Much of the research on extracurricular organizations is shaped by the assumption that college extracurricular activities should be judged in relation to their capacity to improve academic and college outcomes (grades, graduation rates, employment outcomes, etc.). This is a similar framing to widespread public relations efforts and research that argues that art, music, and physical education in K-12 is valuable because it improves academic outcomes such as core literacy and numeracy goals (Mahoney, Lord, & Carryl, 2005; Morgan, 2005; Piazza, 1999; Shernoff, 2010; Videon, 2002). Within this framework, there is nothing intrinsically valuable about artistic forms of expression, skill, and knowledge.

Other extracurricular studies emphasize the potential benefits of participation on individual college students who may be isolated, struggling socially or academically, or otherwise stressed in college. Recent research has begun to dispel the myth that college is “the best years of your life” for all students by showing that these years have actually been attributed as some of the most stressful and anxiety-ridden in a person's life (Welle & Graf, 2011; VanKim & Nelson, 2013). Concomitantly, research has shown that participation in extracurricular organizations may have beneficial socio-emotional effects for students. For example, researchers have found that extracurricular participation has a protective effect against stress (Adilogullari, 2014; Bland, Melton, Bigham, Welle, 2014; Hicks & Heastlie, 2008; Welle & Graf, 2011).

The vast majority of research on extracurricular participation finds positive impacts on a range of additional social, physical, and academic outcomes, including: social and cognitive development (Pascarella, & Terenzini, 2005), leadership and teamwork skills (Foreman &

Retallick, 2012), and self-esteem (Kort-Butler & Hageman, 2011). Participation in extracurricular organizations has also been associated with academic performance, positive graduation outcomes and greater employment opportunities (Muñoz-Bullón, Sanchez-Bueno, & Vos-Saz, 2017; Jones, Rush, Elmore, & White, 2014; Nikkar-Esfahani, Jamjoom, & Fitzgerald, 2012; Stuart, et al., 2011).

The majority of the research on extracurricular effects describes a general (often correlational) positive relationship between participation and post-graduation outcomes. Some of this research examines differential extracurricular involvement outcomes by type of student (Hicks, & Heastie, 2008; Maggs, Williams, & Lee, 2011). Most studies, however, do not examine whether the effects of involvement in extracurricular organizations differ by the kind of organization in which students choose to participate.¹ The majority of the research bundles college students' participation into broad categories and asks whether they engage in, for example, "extracurricular sports" or "extracurricular organizations". Much of the current research is also based on quantitative data, with few in-depth qualitative analyses of students' experiences in extracurricular activities and organizations.

It is my opinion that such broad categorizations overlook meaningful distinctions between college students' experiences in extracurricular activities, particularly as they relate to issues of gender, sexuality, race, class, and identity. Through their categorizations of organizational types and through their methodologies, these studies obscure significant potential variation in students' motivations, experiences, and outcomes; and significant variations in

¹ While there is some research that shows particular organizations, specifically Greek organizations, result in different outcomes for students of color versus White students, there is little research on comparing other types of extracurricular organizations to one another (Hevel, Martin, Weeden, & Pascarella, 2015)

institutional norms and practices. For example, organizations within the same extracurricular category, such as dance organizations, can be structured entirely differently from one another or be utilized by students in different ways. Thematically similar organizations can thus differentially foster or inhibit particular goals, networks, experiences, and outcomes, from leadership and performance opportunities, to norms around body image and gender. The peer networks established through these organizations can be based around tight-knit teams or loose, ever-changing groups of students who randomly drop in. They may be homogenous or heterogeneous social groups. The different cultures and histories that are embodied in different dance traditions and organizational norms can also foster different connections among students' bodies, relationships, and identities. A comparative, qualitative examination of a set of organizations that are normally grouped together—in this case, dance-related extracurricular organizations—can therefore potentially reveal the very different influences that categorically similar extracurricular organizations can have on college students. Such an examination can also deepen our understanding of the differential effects of extracurricular involvement on students, by revealing the pathways through which student experiences in the same group may result in quite distinct outcomes. Variation between and across participants in different dance groups reveals the complexity of student, institutional, and student-institutional interaction variables in shaping the outcomes of extracurricular activities on students. It can also therefore help us begin to think about and map the kinds of institutional arrangements, goals and qualities, and practices that can support desired outcomes, such as improved self-esteem, body image, identity formation and protective factors in regards to stress and anxiety.

Lastly, such studies can reveal a great deal about individual and group social outcomes fostered by different extracurricular organizations. While most research on extracurricular involvement focuses on individual (psychological, physical, academic) effects, there is reason to believe that organizational norms and practices may result in quite different social effects at the individual and group levels in extracurricular organizations. For example, organizations may foster racially or economically homogeneous social groupings, or they might foster “informal interactional diversity” (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002), —a stated goal of many universities.

All of these considerations lead me to the major questions that I will reflect back on throughout this dissertation:

1. What were the meanings of the organizations and the dances to their members/students?
2. How did the structures of the organizations perpetuate or dismantle hegemonic ideas of gender, sexuality, and race?
3. Did the organization structures and dances shape the experiences and outcomes of the students differently? If so, how?

The Study

This dissertation describes a six-month, comparative ethnographic study of three dance extracurricular organizations at one large, Midwestern university, which I refer to as UM. I decided to study the organizations that taught hip-hop, ballroom, and salsa because they had common official goals (to serve as non-professional dance organizations within the university environment), but distinct specializations and organizational structures that could be easily

compared with one another. I spent one semester attending meetings of the three groups and conducting interviews with and a survey of their members. I began by contacting each organization with a request to send out an online survey to the members, along with permission to observe the lessons and rehearsals of each organization. The directors and presidents of all three organizations agreed to these requests. During my observations, I approached students and asked them for a time outside of classes/rehearsals when I could interview them at a time and place of their choosing. About half of the students that I interviewed also granted me a second interview, which allowed me to deepen my understanding of their experiences and of my later observations of their groups.

The study aimed to explore the socialization and engagement of older adolescents and young adults in college who were involved in extracurricular dance organizations. Specifically, I was interested in examining the ways that participation in different extracurricular dance organizations, based in salsa, ballroom, and hip-hop traditions, influenced the identity, body image and college experiences of these young people. The study also focused on how college students conceived of and connected their extracurricular activities with their academic pursuits. I wanted to examine their experiences, motivations, and relations as they engaged with each other and with their university through extracurricular dance organizations in order to develop a more holistic understanding of the differential effects of extracurricular participation on students, and of the impact of organizational structures, norms, and practices on students' experiences.

In the following literature review, I will examine a group of studies, each of which has some components that will help explicate the study, and that will help map out the existing research that influenced this study. Each of these related, but different, literatures, speaks to a

different component. I will review these particular literatures because of my particular analytic and applicatory interests, starting from a broad overview of the literature and expanding into the different components below.

Research on Extracurricular Participation

A great portion of the current research on the benefits of extracurricular activities centers on younger children and high school students (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; Fredricks, & Eccles, 2006; Kort-Butler, & Hageman, 2011). Most of this research finds correlations between extracurricular involvement and desired individual outcomes (e.g., self-esteem), and therefore argues for the need to increase organized extracurricular activities in order to further support the development of physical, intellectual and social skills, especially for youth from low-income backgrounds (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; Mahoney, Larson, & Eccles, 2005). The smaller number of studies that focus on college students' experiences in extracurricular activities center their analyses on specific individual behaviors that are thought to be positively influenced by their involvement in extracurricular activities, such as reductions in drinking alcohol (Capone, Wood, Borsari, & Laird, 2007; Theall et al, 2009; Weitzman, Chen, 2005).

Other studies focus on specific groups of college students, such as first year students, and the effects of involvement in extracurriculars (Hicks & Heastie, 2008). For example, Maggs, Williams, & Lee (2011) studied first year college students' drinking habits based on early alcohol exposure (prior to tenth grade), Greek organization membership, motivations to drink, and use (2011). The study used survey and interview methods to examine the correlations among motivations for alcohol consumption, Greek organization affiliation, and fluctuations in alcohol consumption during the week. While the researchers did find variations in the ways that Greek-

affiliated students versus non-Greek affiliated students drank throughout the week, the study did not examine differences among Greek organizations, nor did it explore if and how different groups attempted to foster norms that could encourage or detract from a drinking culture. For example, the study did not explore what activities or social situations led to greater drinking, such as peer affiliations to organizations that were connected to the drinking episodes, or campus events that were associated with a drinking culture.

Weitzman & Chen (2005) also studied alcohol consumption in relation to Greek affiliation across multiple universities and multiple college years (ages 18 to 24). They found a protective effect against risky drinking behavior (binge drinking and alcohol abuse) when college students were found to have high levels of social capital, as measured by their levels of volunteering and community service. The study found the effect to be especially protective on campuses that had high levels of volunteerism. The study did not examine if the protective effects due to volunteering were connected to the Greek organizations, or if they were a separate activity in which these students participated.

In contrast to Weitzman & Chen, Theall et al, (2009) conducted a study across 32 universities in the U.S., also measuring social capital through campus and individual rates of volunteerism. Measuring social capital and volunteering were two types of research that were often conducted with some frequency. They found that a high volunteer environment on campuses was not significantly correlated with more protective campus-wide behaviors, but individual rates of volunteerism were correlated with lower individual rates of drinking. The study also inquired about the types of extracurricular organizations in which students participated, but they only grouped them into five categories: community service work, Greek

organization, religious organization, varsity athletic team, and media organization (which they defined as newspaper, radio or magazine organization). There were no distinctions within those broad groups about the purpose, structure, environment or norms within those groups, nor were other “cultural”, social, or professional groups included.

Few studies have been based on longitudinal data that spanned multiple phases in youth’s lives in order to examine effects over a greater period of time. Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt (2003) used the Michigan Study of Adolescent Life Transitions (MSALT), which followed 1259 respondents from sixth grade until the age of 25 or 26. These respondents had reported in tenth grade on their involvement level and type of extracurricular activity. The study found that participation in extracurricular activities provided a protective effect against risky behaviors, such as drinking, especially when students participated in performing arts, religious, or service-oriented organizations. Yet again, such findings are based on general organizational types. There were no specific results reported about differences among organizational outcomes, or what might have made the outcomes of one extracurricular activity better than another.

Christina Baker (2008) conducted one of the few studies that I could find that explored involvement in different types of extracurricular organizations, in addition to specifically effecting under-represented college students. She examined the effects of involvement in six different types of student extracurricular organizations, which included athletic organizations, Greek organizations, religious organizations, political organizations, arts organizations, and involvement in a co-ethnic student organization, on the academic performance. The data was drawn from the National Longitudinal Survey of Freshmen, consisting of 1,907 students (991 Black students and 916 Latin@ students) attending 27 different colleges across the United States.

She found that academic performance was differentially affected by the type of organization and the race and gender of the students. For example, except for Latinas, Greek organization involvement negatively influenced the academic performance of all other students (Black males and females and Latinos). Involvement in an arts based extracurricular organizations improved the academic performance of Black males and females, while having no effect on the academic performance of Latin@ males and females. The results of this study indicate that Black and Latin@ college students benefit academically from organizational involvement, however it is necessary to consider the compositions of the university and organizations that they take part in. In addition, the study did not explore motivations of the students or the norms within the different organizations that could potentially lead to differential effects on the academic performance or other outcomes.

Indeed, none of these studies explored the specific ways that organizations (Greek or otherwise) were structured, nor did they examine the motivations or connections that college students had to the organizations in which they participated. Such explorations might have provided a deeper understanding of how youth connected with specific structures and norms, how they understood the goals or impact of their participation in extracurricular organizations, and how participation translated into protective effects against risky behaviors. In other words, most research uses broad survey data to report on positive correlations between participation in extracurriculars and the outcomes of schooling. There are few studies that attempt to understand the particulars of different forms of student involvement and different types of extracurricular groups, and even fewer in which qualitative data are collected that can help illuminate the pathways to changes in behaviors and outcomes.

A great deal of research on participation in extracurricular activities touts the positive effects of such experiences. Yet there are also studies that point to some of the risks that may be connected to extracurricular participation, including sexual harassment (Mcginley, Rospenda, Liu, Richman, 2016) and heavy drinking (Theall et al, 2009). The majority of the research that highlights these risks finds greater correlations between these outcomes and participation in Greek and sports-based organizations (Hevel, & Martin, & Weeden, & Pascarella, 2015; Pike, 2000, Theall et al, 2009) and first year experiences (Griffin, Wardell, & Read, 2013; Maggs, Williams, & Lee, 2011). Further examination into the cultures and structures of extracurricular organizations could explicate what makes some organizations more successful at protecting, or benefitting, particular students.

Research on College Students and Stress Effects

The transition from high school to college is a particularly stressful time, as youth learn to navigate a less-structured and more autonomous environment with a much heavier academic workload (Hicks & Heastlie, 2008). The ACHA-National College Health Assessment II (ACHA-NCHA II) reported that more than half of college students reported experiencing more than an average amount of stress (43.3%) or a tremendous amount of stress (11.4%) (2016). The same survey also cited stress, anxiety and sleep difficulties as the three largest factors negatively affecting college students' academic performance. These three factors have also been associated with negative health and wellbeing outcomes, including lower self-esteem and poorer body image (Grant et al., 2003; Hampel & Petermann, 2006; Murray & Rieger, 2011).

A lack of physical activity has also been found to negatively affect the health of college students. While there is a general drop in levels of physical activity for youth as they reach

adulthood (Troiano, et al., 2008), levels of physical activity reach some of their lowest rates during college years (Egli, Bland, Melton, & Czech, 2011; Nelson, Gortmaker, Subramanian, Wechsler, 2007; Sweeney, 2011). The ACHA-NCHA II reported that less than half (47.2%) of students surveyed met the recommendations for physical activity from the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Heart Association (2016). Since a lack of physical activity has also been correlated with decreased stress tolerance and lower resiliency (Bland, Melton, Bigham, Welle, 2014), there are good reasons for researchers to take a closer look at choices that college students make that align with or move them further from these recommendations.

Several studies have focused on the moderating effects of physical activity on stress and anxiety (Hampel, & Petermann, 2006; VanKim, & Nelson, 2013; Welle, & Graf, 2011); however, few of these have examined extracurricular engagements that include physical activity. For example, Hicks & Heastie (2008) included self-reports on psychological, physical and overall health, but did not ask about extracurricular organization involvement. The university that they studied had a large number of commuter students. The study found significant differences in stress between students who lived on campus versus off campus, specifically effected by access to housing, roommates and illnesses.

These studies generally clump all physical activity together, without delineation of different extracurricular or leisure activities. Since peer relations are critical for college adjustment (Hirsch, 1980), participation in extracurriculars that encourage physical movement, such as dance extracurriculars, might therefore be expected to have different effects on students' stress and resilience than some other sorts of activities, though this might be expected to differ depending on the level, regularity and structure of physical activities in the different groups.

Body Image, Self-Esteem, and Extracurricular Organizations

There is very little research on body image or self-esteem and involvement in extracurricular organizations. This is particularly true for studies of student participation in dance- or sports-based extracurricular organizations, though the physical activity undertaken in these groups might be expected to have an impact on both outcomes. Much of the research on body image and self-esteem during the college years centers on females in Greek organizations (Cashel, et al, 2003; Raines, Moore, Kluess, 2011; Rolnik, Engeln-Maddox, & Miller, 2010) and the persistent effects that mass media have on women's and men's conceptions of ideal female and male bodies (Blood, 2005; DeBraganza, & Hausenblas, 2010; Hardin, & Greer, 2009; Park, 2005). Very few of these studies investigate the correlations between these outcomes and involvement in different extracurricular organizations, or the connections between participation in an extracurricular organization and other factors.

Paap & Gardner (2011) studied college students' perceptions of their bodies and their relationship satisfaction. Women were found to have higher levels of dissatisfaction with their bodies and more frequent thoughts of weight loss, reflecting a common finding. Partners who had greater body distortion (meaning that they chose an image of their "actual" body type that was much larger than their present BMI) were more likely to feel that their significant other was dissatisfied with the relationship. While other research on extracurricular activities indicates that body image issues may be correlated in complex ways with extracurricular participation, Paap & Gardner's study, like the majority of research on college students' body images, did not collect data on extracurricular organizations.

Similarly, there is research on dance majors that focuses on body image and self-esteem, but this research only focuses on majors and does not explore these effects on college students that participate in dance as a leisure or extracurricular activity (Radell, Adame, Cole, 2002; Radell, Keneman, Adame, & Cole, 2014).

Outside of the college setting, there are studies that look at adult involvement in dance as a leisure activity. Swami & Harris (2012) differentiated between people who take dance as a leisure activity and those who choose to do it more seriously, on a professional level, and found that there was a significant difference in body weight discrepancies. The advanced, more committed dancers were already thin and wanted to be even thinner than their beginner, more casual counterparts. The study did not focus on college students and was a mixed pool of ages in a dance studio.

Research on Participation in Dance Organizations

Dance is purposeful, intentionally rhythmical, culturally patterned, nonverbal body movement communication in time and space, with effort, and each genre having its own criteria for excellence. (Hanna, 2010, p. 213)

There is a great deal of research on the effects of dance on body image and self-esteem, but as noted previously, this research centers on dance majors or people that have made careers out of dance (Heiland, Murray, & Edley, 2008; Oliver, 2008; Langdon, & Petracca, 2010; Van Zelst, Clabaugh, & Morling, 2004). There is a smaller body of research on people who take dance lessons in dance studios as a leisure activity, and even a handful of studies that compare them to university students (Pellizzer, Tiggemann, & Clark, 2016).

Generally, however, and as indicated in this review of related literatures, research on women's and men's involvement and experiences in dance-based extracurricular college activities is quite limited. There is a particular dearth of research on first year, non-traditional, and minority college students who partake in dance-related extracurricular activities. There are a number of reasons to believe that such studies could yield important insights into student wellbeing in college, and into social/group formation and relations in college institutions and continuance beyond the university environment. Such studies could shed insights on belonging and integration for such students, on experiences of diversity, as well as any association with participation within such organizations and academic persistence.

As explicated above, for a study to yield the richest possible insights, it would need to be comparative across dance groups and students, include qualitative as well as quantitative data, and systematically focus on the interactions among individual, group, and institutional norms, practices, and outcomes, and how these appeared to shape student experiences, social networks, body image and identities. For these reasons, I proposed the following study, expounded on in the following section.

Research Design

I have a penchant for becoming absorbed with multiple, disparate projects. It was an inclination that my advisor, Nancy Kendall, tried to harness by suggesting that I take my two main areas of interest, sexuality and salsa dancing, and combine them into a proposal for dissertation research. The study aimed to explore the engagement of college youth who were involved in extracurricular dance organizations and how their participation influenced the identity, body image and social networks of these young people. I first proposed this study in the

spring of 2011, for which I received the Virginia Horne Henry Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship for the 2012-2013 year.

My multi-method study had three prongs: an online questionnaire, classroom observations, and two waves of interviews. I used these methods to study college students in three university-based dance organizations. I chose this mixed-methods approach because it allowed me to probe more deeply into themes that came up in the surveys, and both observe first hand what the students were experiencing within the organizations and hear from them about how they made sense of their experiences in these organizational spaces.

The three-organization comparative framework allowed me to analyze a constellation of themes that emerged as I conducted research across the three organizations and the groups of college students who participated in each. The comparative frame allowed me to explore how themes developed in very different directions across the organizations. I initially thought that the histories and cultures of the three dances were so distinct that I would mostly likely identify very different analytic themes in my analysis of each group. It came as some surprise to see how, instead, key themes ran across the groups, though of course they were articulated in different ways. The diversity of articulations within thematic areas in turn provided me with analytic leverage to move beyond the particulars of one group and think instead about how similarities and differences across groups actually pointed to broader analytic or theoretical threads. This is discussed further in chapters five on identities, six on academics, and seven on body image.

The University

UM, the setting of the research, is a large, public, Midwestern, research university. Over 75% of the undergraduate student body is White, followed by approximately 8% international

students (with China, India and South Korea having the largest representation), a little over 5% Asian students, almost 5% Latin@/Hispanic students, and a little over 2% Black students. Over 60% of the students come from the state that the university resides in. The demographics of that state are similar to the student body of UM, with almost 90% White population and almost 6% Black population (United States Census Bureau). The city that UM resides in has a racial makeup of nearly 79% White, a little more than 7% Black and Asian respectively, and Latin@/Hispanic at nearly 7% of the population. The student body of UM is nearly 50/50 split between men and women (with women being of slightly higher percentage), similar to that of the gender percentages of the state and city.

I chose this university because it was the only institution (within two large metropolitan areas) that contained several distinct student dance organizations that specialized in different popular dance forms. I decided to study the organizations that taught hip-hop, ballroom, and salsa because these three forms are all popular dance forms that are commonly taught around the country (or the world), in which UM students had choices among multiple venues and organizational types, and that have quite distinct histories, traditions, and organizational norms.

There are over 1023 student organizations at UM. Groups need at least four UM student members to register as a formal university organization. Groups span from an Adopt a Senior organization to a Zoological organization. There is a student organization center that sets the guidelines and requirements for all the different university students organizations. The regulations include being a not-for-profit group related to student life on campus, being composed of at least 75% of UM students and directed by UM students, abiding by Federal, State and local laws, as well as all university policies, including a nondiscrimination policy. This

policy prohibits any UM extracurricular student organization from excluding someone based on their race, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, creed other than commitment to the beliefs of the organization and several more traits. By forming a student extracurricular organization, students have access to free rentals of university classrooms, conference rooms, studios and performance venues. Student organizations can also apply for funding from the student organization board if they can show that they provide services that are vital for the student body. The majority of the organizations operate on shoe-string budgets supported through pizza and bake sales.

The Initial Process

I had contacts with leaders of two of the three organizations due to my previous associations with some of their dancers. These contacts with leadership and members helped establish trust for my research within the organization's members. Primary approval was given by the University of Wisconsin Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board, and the IRB of the research setting.

I initially solicited participants by emailing the heads of the three university dance organizations, who were all students, to obtain permission to survey and observe the groups' dance events and lessons. The hip-hop and ballroom organizations responded in the affirmative, and after requesting permission from their members, they forwarded my survey request to their respective member email listserves. Due to the amorphous nature of the salsa organization, with hundreds of emails on their listserve and hundreds of students dropping into classes each semester without need for formal registration, I was given permission to observe the group and then send out the online survey after consideration by their two co-presidents.

I began the research by observing the members of the three organizations during their scheduled lesson times. The salsa and ballroom classes rotated among several university campus rooms, depending on availability and access to hardwood floors. The hip-hop group used a private studio for their classes and practices; all members chipped in to pay for this. In the previous years, the hip-hop group had access to university space, but due to a lack of communication during a change in leadership the year prior, the hip-hop group had lost the use of regular University space during the year in which I conducted research.

While the surveys were connected to requests with an interview, to maintain anonymity, I did not link interviews with surveys. In addition, I asked those who agreed to be interviewed outside of the survey request to complete the survey before being interviewed. While I again could not link the interview and survey data, I did ask each student during the interview if they had completed the questionnaire. The majority of students responded in the affirmative and the rest assured me that they would finish the questionnaire at a later date. This means that the majority of interviewees also completed the survey, but some of the survey respondents were not interviewed.

I let the students choose the time and place of the interview. Many agreed to be interviewed before or after dance practices, in the hallways of the University or studio, while others chose cafes and university dining rooms. Due to these interviewing conditions, the environments were comfortable and mostly indoors, albeit noisy at times. As many of the interviews were linked to observations, the students and I were able to discuss with more pointed detail many of the themes that were being played out and acted upon during those practice sessions. I tape recorded all of the interviews, after receiving informed consent to do so. The

interviews ranged from one hour to over three hours, but the majority were about an hour. After the interview concluded, I would download the interviews to a secure server and used the transcription program ExpressScribe to transcribe each of them.

The Organizations

Organization	Membership Criteria	Administration	Teaching
Dance Hip-Hop	Auditions to join the team	Veteran students voted into positions of administration	Typically veteran members; Juniors and Seniors who volunteer to choreograph
Dance Ballroom	1. Auditions to join the team; also romantic male partners asked to join due to gender imbalance 2. Open Classes, anyone can attend	Veteran students volunteer into positions of administration	Any team member who volunteers to choreograph
Dance Salsa	Open Classes, anyone can attend	Any student attendees can volunteer for positions of administration	Typically veteran members who volunteer to teach

The three dance organizations were organized quite differently from one another. Dance Hip-Hop was the most formally organized group. It consisted of a team of 19 university students whose members had all auditioned to join. Four veteran members were chosen at the end of the previous year to be judges in the selection process and were automatically grandfathered onto the new team. The group that I studied was established at the beginning of the school year and did not accept any new members until the following year. The team had 16 women and 1 man by the time that I began observing the group. One female member had left to study abroad. One male member had left the organization completely. Team members mentioned that he had not been able to commit to the vigorous schedule that they kept each week. I also interviewed a male

member who had been one of the founding members of the group, but who was no longer involved. All hip-hop participants were university students; however at least two were not all from the same university, as the organization allowed students from other colleges or universities in the area to audition for the group.

Dance Hip-Hop had five hours of dance class/practice each week. This was broken down into a two-hour session on a weekday evening, and a three hour session during a weekend evening. At the beginning of the year, everyone was required to attend all practices, as a team-member had created a choreography that included the entire group. Later in the year, as the group began to practice new choreographies that did not include all members, some students did not have to attend all practices.

The majority of the dances were choreographed by veteran members who had at least one year of experience on the team. However, new members were encouraged to create dances of their own. Indeed, one first-year member created a dance by the end of the year. Each choreographer had full control in the design of their dance, from the music and style, to the number of team members included. Most choreographers would show a snippet of their dance before they began, in order to gauge interest and see how many members wanted to join. Nearly every choreography was designed with large numbers in mind. Yet not every dance had every member in it. For example, one of the dances had only seven members in it. Team members could choose in which dances they wanted to participate. These decisions were often based on several factors, such as homework schedules. Some members said in the interviews that they would choose to participate in a dance based on the choreographer's style. Once committed to a dance, the members were required to attend all practices for each of the choreographies in which

they chose or were asked to be a part. Since there were multiple dances being taught every couple of weeks, the majority of the members were at nearly every practice. The entire year culminated in a publicly-performed showcase in which all the students participated.

Dance Ballroom was organized around two different groupings. The first was a team of 16 members who auditioned each year to perform choreographed pieces of dance. The team consisted of six men and nine women. The senior members judged the auditions, but many of the men joined without auditioning, because very few men auditioned, and the members felt it was necessary to have as many males as females on the team.

The second role of the organization was to offer beginner classes that rotated different ballroom dances (e.g., waltz, cha-cha, and swing) once a week and were free and open to the university body. A couple of the team members rotated teaching those beginner classes, volunteering to attend and help out if they were available and interested. Between five and fifteen students usually participated in these classes, which also served as a “feeder” mechanism for getting people interested in ballroom and the team.

Dance Salsa was an amorphous group; its sole purpose was to teach and expose the university body to salsa dancing. They taught open lessons and hosted one or two socials a semester—they did not hold closed practices. There were eleven members that were very consistent attendees in the group, nine of whom were current university students. Five of those members were male, six were female. Six of those members were part of a core group, that taught and/or administered to the organization. To become a part of the core group, a student would simply tell the president what they would do to actively support the organization, such as

teaching or helping with events. The senior members taught the younger members how to teach the materials, based on a loose syllabus put together by their founding members.

Observations

I observed nearly every class and rehearsal of each of the three organizations over the three months. The observations lasted an hour to a little over two hours, depending on the length of time that the class or rehearsal would last. Quite often I would sit against the wall and observe the ways that the students interacted with one another. I would write down notes on who would attend and what they would wear. If comments were made that stood out or were tied to body image, identity or relationships or sexuality, I would note them down. Occasionally I took part in the classes, a couple of times in the Dance Ballroom classes when they asked for my input into a move, and more often for the Dance Salsa classes.

Survey Participants

The survey was created based on existing literature and my own interests in the relationships among dance, self-esteem, body image, etc. The survey data are really for the most part complementary to the interviews. I administered the survey through Quatrics. It collected data on demographics such as gender, age, & college year, amount of hours spent dancing in classes and social dancing in college and length of time spent dancing over their lifespan. A total of 46 dancers completed the entire survey. 14 of them were male, 31 of them were female. No one identified as intersex.

The respondents identified themselves belonging to:

Hip-Hop organization: 12 respondents/20 total in group

Ballroom organization: 11 respondents /16 total in group

Salsa organization: 17 respondents/unknown total in group

Other: 10

The Other category was chosen by participants who identified with either a different organization (such as another ballroom organization, as there were three on campus), or who did not affiliate themselves with any organization. I was a bit surprised that so many respondents chose the Other category, since the survey link was administered through the organization's email lists. Two factors may explain this choice: first, the Ballroom organization, while more formally structured with team members, was a bit flexible in their scheduled practices. This allowed a couple of their students to take part in a second ballroom organization as well; some of them identified as belonging to this second (more formal) organization in their interviews and surveys. Second, the salsa organization had a listserv of emails of people who had either taken part in lessons or expressed an interest in taking salsa lessons. This listserv included people who were no longer college students or who were community members, since the salsa organization allowed non-college students to take part in their activities. There was a coherent core of about 25 people who attended salsa lessons every week; most other members of the listserv would not necessarily consider themselves members of the group.

Interview Participants

Once I had observed each group for at least three weeks, I began to approach students in the groups to ask them if I could interview them. I approached students who represented as diverse a range as possible of participants in the group, as measured by gender, age/year in college, major, frequency of participation in the lessons, and dedication to the organization. In addition, the heads of each organization emailed all of their members with the online

questionnaire link, which included a request for interview upon completion of the survey. Students who agreed to be interviewed through the survey submitted their emails on the questionnaire form, and I subsequently emailed them to set up a time for the interview. All the quotes that I will use in this dissertation come from students that identify with only one organization. I did, however, include a few quotes from members of the organizations that were alums, and in one case a community member. I included their voices because I felt they added depth in understanding membership within these groups. A total of 37 participants responded and completed at least one interview. 13 members agreed to be interviewed a second time.

Organization	Breakdown of Interviews	Demographics (interviewee-identified)	Second Interviews
Dance Hip-Hop	10 females, 2 males (12 interviewed/17 total in group)	Two were African American members, two were Latin@, and thirteen were white.	5
Dance Ballroom	9 females, 4 males (13 interviewed/ 16 total in group (missing three males))	All interviewed members were white.	4
Dance Salsa	5 females, 7 males (12 interviewed/ number unknown)	Eight white, three Latin@, one Middle Eastern	4
Totals	37 first interviews		13 second interviews

Limitations

The study's findings are bounded by my many of the usual limitations to any study: time, resources, and access to my participants. The opportunities I was given to explore themes of

body image, sexuality, relationships, college/work/life balance, and so forth were limited by the organizations, individuals and gatherings to which I was given access, and by the time I had available to conduct research. My understandings of more private or sensitive issues was also significantly shaped by the types of interactions and the formality of the spaces in which I spent time with each group. For example, while my participation in many of the dance gatherings granted me some exposure to informal conversations regarding these themes, particularly in the salsa and ballroom groups, this access wasn't as prominent in classes where I simply observed the gatherings, as in the hip-hop class. Lastly, my relationship with the groups, and thus participants' understanding of who I was and what I was trying to do, was shaped by my own previous involvement with members of the group. I knew several of the members of Dance Ballroom and Dance Salsa. All of the groups knew that I danced and that I ran a dance studio. I am also White woman, raised in a middle class family. All of these positions afforded me certain access and privilege within each of these groups.

Participants in these three dance groups are not necessary a representative sample of college students who take part in extracurricular dance activities, let alone college students across the nation. The majority of these students would be identified as white, privileged, middle-class young adults/late adolescents. UM was located in a city that was considered politically liberal, but that had extremely large achievement and incarceration gaps between white and black residents. UM's female students report a 25% sexual assault rate over the course of their UM careers. These and many more aspects of UM's particular location, size, and culture shaped students' experiences and outcomes—in and out of the dance organization settings.

My research methods were also limited. I did not use a random sample of the organizations' members, nor did I survey every member of each dance organization. While I came close to having nearly every member of the hip-hop group and ballroom group respond to the questionnaire, this was almost impossible with the salsa group, as their membership rolls were constantly in flux and their email listserv contained hundreds of names, many of whom perhaps did not view themselves as being actively involved with the group and so declined to respond (let alone open and read the email).

Using a multi-method approach, this study tries to bridge some of the gaps created by using any one research method. My methods allowed me to see what participants did in the organizational meetings as well as what they said about the organizations. It allowed me to ask the same survey questions to students involved in all three groups, and allowed me to dig in and explore new questions with each interview participants. The survey helped me compare particular constructs (such as levels of investment) across the groups, while the interviews let me tease apart differences in how participants understood the notion of "investment" in the organization. When certain themes arose in the observations, I tried to tease them out in the subsequent interviews. The second wave of interviews elaborated on the first wave, in order to elucidate even further the issues and themes that arose from all three prongs of study.

While some of the direction that the interviews took was based on themes that arose from my observations and questionnaire responses, the interviews also reflected new themes and directions that were raised by the participants. Their experiences, their years of dance training, and their reports of previous behavior were embedded in their own embodied experiences of being part of these organizations. Interview data provide important information about what

people remember, and/or what they would like the researcher or themselves to believe about their experiences and approaches. However, recollections are not the most reliable method in reporting experiences. Some of the participants said they were dancers from the time they were young children; these memories of exact circumstances and experiences could have altered over time. Similarly, these student's sense of the type of dancer and/or college student that they wanted to be, or the type of student that they felt that I (as the researcher) would want them to be, likely influenced their responses. In short, what people say is not always the same as how people act, which is why I supplemented this gap with observations of the students within their dance settings.

Analysis

The analysis focused on surfacing themes concerning student's voices, experiences and actions surrounding their participation with dance-based activities and connections to gender, sexuality, identity and body image. The interviews were coded using NVivo. Initial concepts for coding came from existing literatures on gender, identity and sexuality, but I developed additional codes to capture the themes that emerged from the observations and interviews. Factors that I found were common across the students in different organizations I analyzed to identify general themes. I also highlighted elements that were only applicable to students within a particular organization. Coding was first done using themes identified in the literature. In the second round, I identified themes that cropped up in the observations and interviews. A third round of coding dug in further to create analytic codes that concerned students' experiences and their sense of the key factors that influenced their dancing. I then coded across students within and across groups to examine differences that might be related to dancer characteristics (gender,

years of experience) or to organizational characteristics (Dance Hip-Hop vs. Dance Ballroom vs. Dance Salsa).

For survey analysis, I used the Appearance Evaluation Subscale of the Multidimensional Body Self Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ-AE). This measure consists of seven items that assess general attitudes toward appearance (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). This measure is perhaps the most-widely used and validated index of overall appearance evaluation. I also used the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), an established self-esteem scale, with answers ranged on a Likert scale. I analyzed the scales using the statistical program R.

Overview

The next three chapters each describe one of the three dance organizations: their practices and norms, the themes that arose in the research within each organization, and the comparative questions that the research raised about other organizational and dance forms.

The Dance Hip-Hop Chapter focuses on the performative ways that a primarily white, female dance team used the organization to bridge from their (largely popular, successful, and privileged) high school experiences into college. I explore the meanings and appropriation of hip-hop in and against another hip-hop organization on campus, and how the participants understood the role that hip-hop would play in their life after college. I argue that students in this group viewed it as an opportunity to continue to excel in and to learn more about a dance form that they viewed as oriented toward public performance, youth-based (and thus inappropriate to continue after college), and ahistorical/apolitical in nature.

The Dance Ballroom Chapter explores the social connections and sense of belonging that participants developed within a primarily white space of leisure in which they felt they could

nurture primary romantic and friend relationships and that gave them a “break” from academic stressors. I contrast the standardization and professionalization of traditional ballroom organizations and practices with this group’s use of the organizational space to nurture social relationships and connection and noncompetitive goals. While the space worked against some of the traditions associated with ballroom, it also encouraged comfortable, homogeneous social spaces, which is quite common in college spaces, especially those that are predominantly of a particular race (Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009).

The Dance Salsa Chapter explores the attraction that a diverse body of students and non-students had to salsa dancing and its perceived cosmopolitan and global identity. It describes how participants used the organization and dance as a tool to connect beyond the university and potentially into what they hoped would be globally-oriented careers and multicultural futures. Unlike participants in the other two groups, members of Dance Salsa described a future orientation toward salsa, which they expected to have be a part of their lives well after college.

The next three chapters of the dissertation explore three key themes identified across the three organizations. The Identity Chapter explores how participants from the three organizations identified as dancers and how they described their relationship to the organizational form in which they chose to take part. They saw their identity as a dancer as more of a sub-identity, which made up a part of their larger identities as students. The (un)importance of identifying as a dancer was reflected in their decisions to keep the dance as a either a hobby activity or as an activity that was bounded or not to the university social space. The section also explores sexuality and gender expressions within each of the groups. I also delve into the ways the organizations created certain kinds of social spaces for the students and how they identified with

them. Specifically I explore the ways that Dance Hip-Hop construct their identities as performers bridging their high school and university experiences, Dance Ballroom as a close social group that gives them a sense of belonging within the university, and Dance Salsa members as seeking out a wider and more diverse network of friends to connect with beyond the university.

The Wellbeing Chapter reviews the social, academic & physical wellbeing associations that the students had with being a college student participating in a dance extracurricular organization. All members of all three dance organizations expressed the feeling that being a part of the organization improved their academic performance, as well as their general well-being in college. While all agreed on the benefits of involvement, the metaphors and terms that they used to describe these benefits differed across groups. These varied from the dance space as a coping tool, as future social capital, and as fostering strong social networks. These responses mapped clearly onto the particular foci and strengths of each of the organizations, and point to the diversity of effects that extracurricular organizations can and are likely to have on different students. Some of them also point to the likely differences in outcomes that organizations with very different goals, memberships, and core activities can and will generate for diverse students.

The Body Image Chapter explores a surprising finding on self esteem and body image that was not associated with a particular dance or organization, but was in regards to whether or not a dancer focused on social dancing or performing. Bodies using the same clothing were found to sometimes reinforce and sometimes reject gender and sexual norms. I explore the ways that dance, especially classical dance, upholds certain body standards that contributed to some dancers to believing that they had unacceptable bodies for dance. I also explore the gender

difference across organizations in terms of how they viewed their bodies and others during and outside of dance.

The Conclusion Chapter sums up all the major findings across the three organizations and the three themes, and presents suggestions for future research and work concerning extracurricular dance organizations and students involvement in extracurriculars.

Chapter Two: Dance Hip-Hop

I slowly descended a set of stairs that led to a wall of windows. A large, empty room showed off gleaming wooden floors. I continued down the hall, to the left, and entered a smaller grayish, carpeted room, with several women sitting on the floor. I began to introduce myself, but the group already knew who I was, having read and agreed to the emailed description of my research, which I had sent earlier in the month. In the letter, I explained that I was conducting a study examining the experiences of university students who chose to participate in dance organizations. I asked permission to observe their classes and potentially survey and interview some of the members. This was my first observation session with a hip-hop student organization called Dance Hip-Hop (all names are fictitious).

One woman, Heidi, immediately folded me into the group with her friendliness. She came over to chat, while some of the girls began to warm up and practice dance moves in front of the mirrors that lined one wall. Amy, the only African-American² girl in the room, began to dance. She moved with confidence, exuding precision and sharpness. She was of average build, had her hair pulled back, and wore a tight top and loose-fitting pants. Most of the girls wore baggy exercise pants or sweats. This surprised me, coming from a ballet background, where tight fitting clothes were necessary to show the lines of the entire body. These pants seemed to accentuate the way their hips swayed back and forth and I couldn't really tell whether their legs were bent or straight.

The group in the room was small, about half of the total members from Dance Hip-Hop. I found out that this was a subgroup of girls who had gathered to learn a particular choreography

² All identity markers used in the dissertation (race, gender, sexual identity, etc.) represent students' descriptions of their identities.

created by the only male dancer in the Dance Hip-Hop group, Aaron. He was the last to walk in. He took off his coat to reveal a sleeveless jersey with very muscular arms. I noticed he spent quite a bit of time tucking and moving his clothes, even at one point sticking his hands down his pants. It struck me as very comfortable movements, as if he were at home rather than in a public class in front of several women. Aaron also stuck out his tongue a lot as he taught and danced. This was not lost on the women in the room. For example, at one point Heidi asked Aaron to repeat a particular. Aaron redid it, tongue sticking out. Heidi said that he had to redo it, because his tongue was distracting her. He smiled and stuck it out again. This banter was comfortable and common, peppering the class as the women learned the choreography in quick succession. The teasing felt pleasant and friendly, showing off the chummy relationships that team members had with each other.

What caught my attention the most during my first observation of Dance Hip-Hop was all the crotch grabbing. Aaron did a lot of it. I noticed that this gesture was also in some of the moves he choreographed. None of the girls seemed surprised by these gestures, or hesitant to do them. Indeed, they laughed along when Aaron showed a move where his hands jerked in long strokes from one side to the other, explaining that it looked like putting on a condom. No one cringed or hesitated, and though the rest of the group lacked the actual appendage, they mimicked putting on the condoms on their own phantom dicks. Though the practice was full of sexual movements, they lacked sexual energy. Dancers focused on the precision and performativity of the movements, not on their sexuality or on their interactions with one another.

The group learned the moves very quickly, transitioning from one movement to another without hesitation and few interruptions. During short breaks, the girls interacted with each other.

They were very affectionate with one another. One girl touched another's hair. Two girls hugged each other. Certain girls seem to subtly split into smaller groups of closer friends, but everyone participated in the whole group setting and everyone was friendly with one another. It felt like a very socially cohesive high school gym class, with all the chatter, sweat pants and sub-groupings common to those settings. I could feel the positive energy, and see the reasons that Marlana, one of the younger, newer members said to me in an interview, "I feel like home. This is what I do."

Yet this was not the only thing—or even a primary thing—that these dancers did. None of the group members had made dance their major or minor. Nearly all of them planned to go into occupations after college that had very little to do with dance, and many of them did not plan on dancing hip-hop after they left UM. Over several months, every week, I watched these members come in to the practice space with text books and talk about their majors and exams in courses that had nothing to do with dance, all the while exerting hours of effort to learn a total of nine choreographies, which they would perform at the end of the semester.

It felt like I caught these youth in a brief moment of their lives, and was watching them create meaningful connective tissue between the rhythms, routines, and successes of their high school days, the new demands they faced in college, and their expectations for post-college careers in which they would "put away childish things" like performing hip-hop. The group seemed like an enclave, a shelter where they could relax and enjoy some time away from what they described as their "real" lives, to focus on the art of the body. Dance, to these youth, was a communication, "grounded in the lived body" (Fraleigh, 1987, p. xv). The dance centered around youth, beauty and entertainment; they communicated their happiness and physical prowess through movement. In this sense, they had the opportunity to enjoy in their bodies' capacity to

showcase a certain art, something they did not have the chance to do in most of the rest of their college lives. For many of them, the meanings that they imputed to the dance form and to participating in dance performances did not change from high school to college. Dance Hip-Hop was a continuation of those experiences and movements, even as they viewed these experiences and movements as time- and place-bound—a part of their childhoods (both temporally and in terms of their own identities), not of their adulthood.

They used this group, many members explained, to “bridge” from their high school experiences into their college years. As a bridge, they were willing to and expected to discard hip-hop as they moved into what they described as the “real world” that they would enter after college. They also explained that hip-hop dancing, which had been part of their lives for so long, could not be part of the “real world” because of the style of the dance itself. Almost all of the members of the group were female and white. As I will explore further in this chapter, Dance Hip-Hop students largely described the dance form itself as “youthful” and “fun”, but inappropriate for “adults” or for “the real world”, when the dress, movements, and music were no longer viewed by interviewees as appropriate for them. This last point seemed clear in the interviews, but it was coded in the language of “growing older” and thus growing out of a phase in which they could experiment with what they deemed as more youthful, fun and performative.

Dance Hip-Hop members used this group to connect with their bodies, through extending their interpretations of the music with their bodies, making lines with their bodies, and intently focusing on the ways that their bodies moved in the mirror. But there was also a great deal of disconnection, specifically with the music and genre that they chose to dance to. Hip-hop: a sub-culture movement grounded in the social critique of power and inequality (Lamotte, 2014) grew

in such popularity that it became a part of pop culture. Hip-hop: a dance grounded in blackness and masculinity (Barnes, 2008). For a group of nearly all white women to devote over ten hours a week to a dance with very little regard to the lyrics and roots of hip-hop was a bit of an enigma. It was one I chose to further examine.

History

Hip-hop arose out of Blacks' desires to express their struggles against racism and inequality (Hess, 2005; Lamotte, 2014). The decline and relocation of industrial work in the late 1970s and early 1980s, along with the continued racist policies of local and federal government entities, exacerbated the disenfranchisement of poor Blacks and Latin@s in larger cities (Jeffries, 2014; Rose, 1994). Artists in the South Bronx created the genre to speak out against these conditions, using storytelling rhymes usually set to electronically-created music (Rose, 1994). The expression spread and began to encompass a culture of four elements: DJing, MCing, breakdancing and graffiti (Chang, 2006). Hip-hop artists today still use these forms to address the social and economic inequalities that continue to affect Blacks and Latin@s, from declining average household wealth (Kochhar, Fry, & Taylor, 2011), to mass incarceration (Rios, 2006), to the school to prison pipeline (Mallett, 2016).

Such work is usually embodied in underground hip-hop, not usually broadcast on cable TV or popular radio stations. The common topics of such work often center on personal stories that the artists have experienced, including struggles against poverty, gang violence, and critiques of power structures within society. Much of the material may sound fresh, but many of the subjects touch on themes that have been at the heart of hip-hop since its inception. As Jeffries

put it, “The original release dropped a quarter of a century ago, but we are living through the remix.” (2014, p. 708).

When hip-hop first started to spread, it was treated with great wariness by White audiences and mainstream media. “For many communities this new 'dangerous' music and 'culture' surging onto stage, screen, and radio, was an insidious form of 'ghetto' truculence and a harbinger of violence and chaos,” (Jackson, 2013, 83). Yet bawdiness and the romanticization of crime—two issues commonly highlighted in critiques of hip-hop—was nothing new in American music. From folk songs about the gangster John Dillinger to country songs named “Tom Cat and Pussy Blues”, music all over the country glamorized violence, sexuality, and their interrelations (Szwed, 1999). The difference with this genre of music was that it developed as an Black-American musical form. It broadcast a culture of Black speech. The music superimposed English sounds and words to beats that recreated those sounds into intonations that were distinctly “Afro-American” (Spady, 2013). It used a language that Edward Kamau Brathwaite defined as “Nation Language”:

...the language which is influenced very strongly by the African model, the African aspect of our New World/Caribbean heritage. English it may be in terms of some of its lexical features. But in its contours, its rhythm and timbre, its sound explosions, it is not English, even though the words, as you hear them, might be English to a greater or lesser degree... (1984, p. 13).

It was this distinctive mode of music that had many in mainstream media, predominantly White people, focusing on hip-hop with disdain. Yet despite the dissidents who tried to keep it in the margins, hip-hop began to grow in popularity over the 1990s, with *MTV* adding it to their

network of shows and hip-hop artist Lauren Hill receiving a Grammy for Album of the Year (MacLeod, 1999). The genre began to be absorbed into the mainstream of American music, culture, and dance.

Translating Hip-Hop Within White College Extracurriculars

Most scholars would term hip-hop music, like rap, as "black American music" (Perry, 2004). Even in reviews of French and Dutch hip-hop, researchers noted that Black-American hip-hop was seen as the "real" deal (Hess, 2005). Hip-hop is still usually identified as a male-focused genre, one that in many cases glorifies a hyper-masculinity that espouses violence and misogyny (Barnes, 2008). When I asked some of the members of the hip-hop group who they pictured when they thought of hip-hop dancers, they acknowledged that they automatically thought of Black males. The violence and hyper-masculinity was also noted by the dancers during practices, usually when a new song was introduced to be choreographed.

Yet the college group itself had only two Black members and only one male member. And the music that they chose to dance to was not reflective of hip-hop's roots as protest: the songs contained no critiques or sustained discussions about social/racial struggles or issues. They chose songs that were popular, commercialized songs; these generally talked about struggles in regards to sex, money, and violence.

Just as the music they chose represented the commercialized pop version of hip-hop, so too the choreographies and moves that they chose to put together represented MTV-like versions of hip-hop dance forms, emphasizing their performativity to an audience, the group formations on which they were based, and the high school dance or pom groups in which they are so often

popularized now. Some of the members themselves described their dance moves as more cheerleader-esque, rather than “truly” hip-hop based.

These observations would inevitably lead me to questions regarding the expressions of these dancers. What was their relationship to the dance form in which their time and energy was so heavily invested? What histories and current experiences were shaping the dance expressions that I was observing? Was hip-hop’s history of using music and dance to highlight and critique the struggles that they or others were experiencing evident or acknowledged by the group? Or was this group using hip-hop to other ends and for other purposes?

Authenticity and “Real” Hip-Hop Movement

Much of the literature on hip-hop discusses the theme of authenticity, especially when exploring expressions of popular and mass commercialized hip-hop (Barnes, 2008; Hess, 2005; McLeod, 1999; Rodriguez, 2006). The consensus among most researchers and hip-hop DJs is that hip-hop was not made inauthentic simply because it was mass produced, but that those who wanted to participate in mass production narrowed and limited the full range of topics and representations that hip-hop typically dealt with (Barnes, 2008). Commercialized, mass produced topics focused less on the struggles of poor Blacks and Latin@s and more on the glamorization of violence, sexuality and masculinity (Armstrong, 2004). The sharpness and power of hip-hop’s political economic critiques gave way to the more familiar swaggers of male music stars.

While this narrowing had consequences related to which groups could make a living as hip-hop artists, and for what kinds of social critiques could be more readily made through use of the genre, using the genre to explore other topics that the masses would find more palatable helped broaden the appeal of hip-hop (Jeffries, 2014). In addition, as hip-hop became more

commercialized and mass-produced, artists from outside of original hip-hop communities began to produce their own versions of hip-hop and adapt the style to their own messages. Many hip-hop artists began to feel the threat of this assimilation and began to debate what made for “authentic” or “real” hip-hop (Barnes, 2008). Since much of hip-hop focused on the social struggle of the artist, those who were seen as more privileged—typically white men—were subject to questions of credibility (Hess, 2005). Hip-hop critics asked: can hip-hop really be hip-hop if it is done without certain connections to the experiential and structural roots of hip-hop?

This discussion about authenticity was one that many of the team members brought up themselves in interviews. Yet, unlike artists and critics involved in debates about authenticity that focused on the personal experiences of the artists, the students’ discussions of authenticity were not centered on the meanings or intentions of hip-hop, but instead on the way the executions of the moves within a choreography were perceived by their audience. Authenticity was not rooted in the artist and their expression and critique of their experiences, but in the audience and their perceptions of the dancers’ moves.

This differentiation emerged when I asked the members why they chose to dance hip-hop. The majority of the dancers talked about their foremost exposure to hip-hop coming through music videos and television shows, such as America’s Best Dance Crew. They were further exposed through high school groups, such as cheerleader teams, which had adopted some hip-hop moves and music into their repertoires. Many of the members talked about being excited to join a dance organization that had the sole focus of hip-hop in their mission because they felt “in tune” with the genre. Yet several members also talked about their eventual disappointment with some of the dances and moves that the team exhibited. Aaron was the most vocal about this, due

to his exposure as a high schooler to hip-hop dancers who did fit more of the profile of what would be considered the "authentic" expression of hip-hop, having gone to school and out dancing with black male friends. Aaron said that he didn't want to discount or devalue the dances the team did, yet he did think that there was a clear distinction between what "real" hip-hop looked like and the way the team usually danced.

Aaron described many of the moves adopted by the group as "a lot of hard hitting, cheerleader-looking moves. And ripples. You know, that's all well and good. It just kind of got monotonous. And then it kind of got shake your ass and be pommie." He used the term "pommie" to describe many of the choreographies that the team did. Such moves were not really hip-hop, in his opinion. He described "pommie" moves and choreographies as more female-centric, with movements focused on the hips and arms. "Pommie" moves were sharper and higher up, more cheerleader-esque and flighty. Aaron demonstrated a "pommie" move in one interview, bringing his arms sharply up to his chest, parallel with the floor, and sending them sharply outward and inward, repeatedly.

This "pommie" expression in the hip-hop team felt and looked inauthentic to Aaron. It did not connect with the music or the way that "authentic" hip-hop artists danced to the music. The distinction he made here was not necessarily about the lyrics to which the group chose to dance, but to the impression of the moves and the translation of the music into moves. Having moved away from a harder, grungier, and more masculine expression, he viewed these "pommie" moves as just an entertaining feminine flirtation with hip-hop. This was distinctly not hip-hop, not real, according to him.

The pommie effect became more prominent as the founders of the team graduated and/or left. It was an appropriation of the movements, a “color-blind ideology” (Rodriquez, 2006) that these women used, which is why so few of them ever questioned the purpose and messages of their choreographies. This happened in part because nearly all newer members had a background in high school cheerleading or pom-pom squads. Aaron felt a connection with the team and spoke about the great experiences he had when he first joined, which was why he persisted with the group. In an effort to capture a bit more of his original experience, he also chose to choreograph many of the dances so that the group would project what he viewed as a more authentic hip-hop feel.

Several other members also talked about how the moves that the group did were pommie. The term came from the fact that the majority of the team members had participated in pom-poms and/or cheerleading in high school. Pommie moves were discussed as cultural appropriation, stripping the social justice messages from songs and the musical form and focusing on the entertainment factor of hip-hop. Their high school teams drew on mainstream expressions of hip-hop to give their choreographies a more “urban” feel. The choreographies were a little harder hitting than traditional cheerleading dances. They borrowed deeper, lower stances and more masculine expressions from hip-hop to stand out in competitions.

“Pommie” was the term that succinctly summed up white, cheerleader-esque movements, ones that did not fit into the roots of authentic hip-hop, according to Aaron and some others of the senior group members. Yet it was a background in pom and dance teams that led some, particularly more junior, members of the hip-hop group to branch into the hip-hop genre in full once they reached college. Lily, a first year, was especially inspired when her high school team

won at state and national competitions with hip-hop inspired routines. She recalled her pride and excitement at wanting to do even more with hip-hop groups. The pride came from a sense of belonging, the excitement came from being recognized for winning a competition within a dance that was different, that stood out.

Outside of video and media representations of hip-hop artists, the majority of younger members of the group drew on their own experiences in these cheerleading teams as their way of making sense of the hip-hop genre. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, the choreographies done by the college group were largely cheerleading-based. They still flirted with their audience using chest and butt motions and they still hit their arms out to the sides in cheerleader poses. The choreographies had a mix of influences, and in some cases hip-hop traditions took a backseat to pommie moves.

Many of the dance team members who participated in pom high school groups also didn't connect with the lyrics or with the meanings behind the songs to which they were dancing. Their focus was on the movement and the entertainment factor, and not necessarily on the social and critical messages. When these members headed to college, they were drawn to Dance Hip-Hop because the choreographies mimicked the ones they had experienced in high school, of mainstream hip-hop routines and expressions. Some of the girls even knew former team members, since they attended the same high schools and those former team members recommended that they join Dance Hip-Hop.

The high school pom-pom teams would use music and moves that were popular and currently trending, relevant to white high school culture. Marlana talked about doing poms in high school, and since their high school was "urban", the poms team danced hip-hop. When

Marlana went to college and saw this college hip-hop team, she said she felt at home. It was something familiar, an extension of her high school experience. Several women came from that same experience. Mainstream hip-hop was the music with which many youth personally connected, to, and it was what to these women felt familiar as a dance and performative genre—not a cultural or even musical genre. They were therefore drawn to the group when entering college and searching for extracurricular activities that mirrored their own experiences. This was, then, a continuation of an appropriation of a musical genre's commercialized trends that was uninformed by social critique or self-reflection. The majority of these women were financially privileged and White, mainly coming from middle class backgrounds, while much of the music that they danced to drew from a genre where racial identity was tied to class, race, and masculinity, namely Black and lower SES masculinity (Hess, 2005).

Hip-Hop as Performative Entertainment

The Dance Hip-Hop team, as a major performance group, was always talking about what the audience, specifically their audience of college students, liked. They joined the group, practiced, and performed for the major part because they liked to showcase their work for an audience. Their decisions about what to perform and how to choreograph were usually made in relation to their understandings of which moves would get a positive response from the audience. As Heidi said when talking about what moves she would include in her choreography, “I know that’s what people like”.

The main move that resulted from this audience focus, one that Lily mentioned that she disliked doing mainly because it was in literally every song that they danced, was highlighting the butt, whether through shaking it, pointing at it or turning around and wiggling it. Those

moves were also highlighted because many of the songs discussed ample backspace, which followed the current trend in pop culture of butts being a major attraction (Clark-Flory, 2014).

Sexualization of the butt, specifically female butts, has become a topic of the mainstream, from celebrity gossip to dance moves that are butt-focused, such as twerking (Schoppmeier, 2015). Some even suggest that this focus is correlated with an increased rate of butt augmentation surgeries, specifically among Black and Latina women (Ashley, 2015; Tate, 2015). According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (2015), buttock implants increased by 98 percent and buttock lifts by 44 percent from 2013 to 2014, and increased again by 36% for both buttock lifts and implants from 2014 to 2015. There was a 252% increase in buttock lift surgeries from 2000 to 2015.

The focus on the butt and desire to amplify it was quite prevalent in a lot of the songs to which the group danced. It was also a topic that the dancers brought up, worried about how the sexuality of hip and butt movements would be perceived by their audiences.

During classes, the dancers quite frequently negotiated the boundaries between moves that they were concerned could be taken as “too sexual” and those that would be tasteful yet entertaining. Again, their interpretation of “dirty” related to their pom experiences. Pommie moves were seen as more feminine and tastefully sexual or understatedly sexual because of their precision and sensuality, whereas in “real” hip-hop, a movement might be more direct in its interpretation. Openness in sexuality within hip-hop was even mentioned during one of the rehearsals when Heidi talked about African influences within the genre and how the gyrations of the hips with loose clothing made the impression of a large dick swinging between the legs. Yet the dancers worried occasionally that their interpretations of the music would almost be vulgar.

For example, during one observation, Heidi commented out loud that the back pop she had choreographed was giving her doubts. “It looks dirty,” she said, before stating that the move had to be done tastefully. One of the girls in the routine asked “How do you do it tastefully?” Heidi demonstrated the move, showing how the butt would come out with the movement, but choreographed precisely with the music. A conversation began, with some of the girls asking if the move was too sexual or too overdone. Another girl in the group commented, “Everything we do is sexual.” Another stated, “It's art.” Heidi wrapped up the discussion by stating that she would sleep on the conundrum.

This negotiation of what is appropriate or tasteful versus what is dirty or too sexual highlights the awareness with which the team chose certain moves with which their mainly white audience would be comfortable. It also juxtaposed the moves that were more palatable and identifiable as focused on female sexuality versus male sexuality. It was the women who shook their butts more and arched their backs. The team was aware that many of their moves were more female-oriented, more pommie and less masculine than what was generally performed by male dancers. Even though they were nearly all females, they understood that to be taken as a serious hip-hop team, their choreographies needed elements of male-ness in order to look more “authentic”. So they made certain moves more hard-hitting to appeal to masculine expressions. They also gave certain parts of the choreography to the only male in the team, Aaron, so that he would be able to show off certain aspects of the choreography that were viewed as more appropriate for a male dancer. This attentiveness to masculine versus feminine movement was brought up in all the interviews and folded into the performative norms of the group.

Gender and Sexuality: Athletics and Aesthetics

Dance Hip-Hop members created their own pieces of choreography. The majority of the time, the senior members on the team were asked or volunteered to choreograph a piece or more, but anyone on the team could create a piece and show it to the team to see if there was any interest in it. The team members would then state their interest to the choreographer or be asked to dance for a piece, depending if the choreographer wanted a small number of dancers, certain dancers, or if s/he was open to any and all members of the team. All the pieces that were created and adopted by team members were performed at the end of the year showcase. Nearly all the dancers took part in multiple choreographies. When there was a show requested at the university, the group chose pieces based on which dancers were available on that particular date. The captains also strove to choose pieces from different choreographers, as a few senior members would usually create multiple pieces. Most of the time, the choreographers made an effort to include the majority of the team in each performance, and also occasionally highlighted their one male member, Aaron. This was very apparent in several of the pieces, as normally all the dancers in the choreography would have to do the exact same moves and the exact same timing. Yet there were a couple of instances that Aaron would get to either free-style or dance in a different style in a small section of a choreography. There was even a piece where all the women turned their focus onto him and went to caress him during the dance.

When the subject of having one male on the team of nearly all women was brought up, Amy acknowledged that many of the choreographers usually specifically designed their choreographies or a piece of their choreography with Aaron in mind. More specifically, she said they were all aware that Aaron would tend to choose pieces that allowed him to exhibit his

masculinity. Most choreographers wanted Aaron to participate in their pieces. In fact, Heidi specifically mentioned her disappointment when Aaron didn't volunteer to be in one of her choreographies. Amy recounted a time when Aaron chose to participate in a choreography and later questioned why he was in it, due to the fact that it was very feminine or "sassy", as she put it. He wasn't comfortable or willing to fully undertake moves that were defined as female, such as popping the chest or swirling the butt and hips. Amy mentioned that Aaron would purposely not do choreographies by certain people because their style exhibited more feminine moves that he did not like to do himself. When describing Aaron's choreographies, many of the team members stated that they were more male-centric. There were no booty moves or chest pops. His choreographies involved greater athleticism. Heidi and Amy specifically mentioned that Aaron's choreographies differed by emanating a stronger, more grounded energy in ways that the other choreographies made by the various women did not.

Aaron himself viewed his choreographies as comparatively different from those made by the other team members, and he attributed those differences to the fact that he was male. These perceptions and productions of gender match much of the literature on the gendered nature of choreographies (Foster, 1998; Risner, 2007; Stinson, 2005; Yamanashi Leib, & Bulman, 2009). Being male inspired him to work to different music and incorporate different movements. Those movements tended to be more athletic and sharper, incorporating stunts, holds and jumps. Initially Aaron stated that since many of the girls couldn't do more athletic moves, they were not as "cool" of a team as one with all males. Some of this may have been due to his ideas of what "real" hip-hop should look like, being more masculine and male-centered. Aaron assumed that the ability to do various physical moves lined up with gender. Yet he admitted that he hadn't

been born with the ability to do such moves. He had been practicing and refining those movements for years, ever since he was a boy, when he played around with flips and holds.

Such comments and experiences stem from socialized gender roles, with boys playing in more aggressive, strength-focused play, and girls in more “refined”, social-based play (Adler, Kless, & Adler, 1992). This also stems from gendered expectations versus experiences. Aaron assumed the women couldn't do these moves because they were women, yet he did admit that some of them could pull off a handstand or complicated hold. He observed that many of the women, while not necessarily out of shape, were not very athletic and not able to do certain moves.

The team chose members at their auditions who were already exposed to and capable of many hip-hop moves. They had so many performances to do and choreographies to learn that the members didn't prioritize time to teach and rehearse movements that they were not socialized in earlier, such as in high school. Since many of the members learned their movements on women-only pommie teams, they didn't have exposure to more athletic, male-oriented moves. Because “authentic” hip-hop was more masculine-focused, how certain abilities and moves were valued also reflected gender norms. This is why Aaron tended to believe that an all-male, or more male-focused team would be a better or “cooler” team, as he put it. As Aaron said in one interview:

I think we would be regarded as cooler. For sure. And we'd be more athletic and we would be able to do more things. Not that the girls on our team aren't athletic, there are quite a few girls that are athletic, but a lot of girls are not. At all. So Dance Hip-Hop is limited to certain kinds of choreography.

In his opinion, being less athletic limited the team, so that they were not able to exhibit dances that tended to be more masculine. In a sense, Aaron was rephrasing the pommie problem, by coding gender in his critique.

Perceived Sexuality / “He Dances Gay”

Femaleness and maleness within a choreography also translated into assumptions about the sexual identity of the dancers. This was brought up by several members, when Aaron was mentioned, as it was team knowledge that many outside of their circle assumed any male on an all-female team had to be gay.

This led to interesting conversations regarding perceived/assumed sexuality of dancers both within and outside of their group. The moves in Dance Hip-Hop’s performances were seen as sexual by the audience, but depending on the gender of who was doing them, people also assumed that the moves revealed the sexual identity of the dancer. Doing "female moves" as a man meant that you were gay, while doing "female moves" as a woman assured the audience that the woman was heterosexual. If the expression of a move didn’t match the traditional gender norms of a person’s sex, the assumption was that that person’s sexuality also would not match traditional sexual identity norms. The saying: “He sounds gay”, could be exchanged for “He dances gay”.

Being the only guy on a woman’s team, in Amy’s opinion, meant that Aaron’s sexuality (and, at the same time, his maleness) received a great deal more attention than the female members’ sexual identities and femininity. In one case, an audience member, a woman, had been overheard saying how good-looking Aaron was, only to remark, “too bad he is gay”. Lily also mentioned that other audience members who saw Aaron on Dance Hip-Hop believed that he was

gay, due to the moves (butt shaking) and gender imbalance of the team. She stated that the comment by the audience member clearly made Aaron uncomfortable. It was a factor that the team had tried to address by trying to add more guys to the team, so that Aaron would feel less pressure of being the only male and singled out.

Despite the teams' own struggles to both make Aaron comfortable and rebuff the idea that dance in and of itself expressed sexual identity, almost all team members continued to make these assumptions about other dancers. Knowing that their male member was not gay gave Amy a different perspective on why it was "ridiculous" that others made assumptions about his sexuality. However, she proceeded to assume the same thing when talking about watching competition teams with only one man on the team. She claimed that moving a certain way during and after the routine made her feel certain that other men on hip-hop teams with mostly girls were without a doubt gay. Even Aaron claimed to be able to identify the sexuality of another dancer, especially of men, based on the ways they moved. He stated that his experiences being around two gay men who danced with him for years granted him the ability to pick up on signs of other dancers' sexual preferences, specifically other male dancers' preferences. Yet he also admitted that he couldn't tell the preferences of female dancers.

When asked about what moves indicated the male dancers were gay, he pointed to hip movements and body expressions. Yet when I countered his descriptions with comments that I heard other people had said in regards to his own sexuality, due to the way he danced, Aaron acknowledged that the notion that moving a certain way could be interpreted by others as a tell-tale sign was flawed. Given his assumptions regarding certain moves and his awareness of audience assumptions about sexuality, it was no surprise that Aaron was more likely to decline

choreographies that included more feminine moves. Aaron wanted to be seen as authentic, which also meant for him more gritty and masculine—and in this sense fitting in with the gender norm of gender matching sexual identity—the “straight” male. This would, of course, also seem less “gay”, which ties directly to longstanding concerns about homophobia in hip-hop (Penney, 2012). This may be also why Aaron chose to do certain moves that were more athletic and stayed away from the pommy, more feminine, hip-shaking moves.

Such assumptions of sexuality regarding dance movements links back to the gendered socialization of children and young adults. Females and males learn different social roles and those who step outside of those social roles are seen as different and other. A male dancing in a feminine way is seen as emasculated. Even the women on the team who did moves that were more masculine were aware that they were stepping outside of their female roles. They spoke about how their low, baggy pants gave the impression of large dicks hanging between their legs. Femaleness could not embody maleness, maleness could not embody femaleness. To this group and their audience, they were distinct expressions that cast shadows of doubt and questions of sexuality if blurred.

Hip-Hop and Adolescence

Woven into the themes of sexuality and gendered roles was a theme that kept repeating in nearly all the narratives that the Dance Hip-Hop members shared with me. The members kept referring to their high school dance experiences as a motivation for dancing hip-hop in college. Even the more senior members, who had several years’ distance from high school, still mentioned high school experiences in their stories of inspiration and challenges. They tended to

identify hip-hop extracurriculars as offering a form of familiarity and comfort: in joining and being a part of the hip-hop group, the members felt at home in the unfamiliar spaces of college.

Marlana spoke to this when asked why she had joined the group: “Because it felt like home.” She tried joining another team when she first came to college but the camaraderie wasn’t there. They were too serious for her. She missed the relaxed nature of the dance experiences that she had had before college and that she found in Dance Hip-Hop. Another member, Amy, was on a dance team in high school and one of her captains from the high school team who had joined Dance Hip-Hop encouraged her to try out. In Amy’s case, she was accepted on the team even though she was attending a community college for the first two years. She thought she would simply finish with an associate’s degree, but after being on UM’s Dance Hip-Hop team for the two years while at the community college, she decided to apply to UM. Amy said that her participation on the team gave her more confidence to apply to UM. It allowed her to feel like she belonged at UM, when she originally felt she didn’t quite belong.

Many of the members referred to Dance Hip-Hop as a social tool that bridged their high school experiences into their college experiences and made their experiences in college easier to deal with. The majority of the members decided to join the group the same year that they entered college. They all expected to be part of the group until they graduated, and admitted that they would not be continuing with the group, or, likely, hip-hop dancing, after college.

Heidi had this to say about whether or not she would continue to dance hip-hop after college: “I think it’s hard to continue to do it. I probably wouldn’t be doing it if I hadn’t found a job in it [she was working as a dance instructor]. You know, to do it just for funsies, there is not a lot of options for people in our age group, once we graduate.” She later continued, “I just think

it's hard to do. Hip-hop is not acceptable to do even for older people. It's a very youth-focused kind of dance.”

This theme of being youth-focused, representing an extension of adolescence or emerging adulthood as some have called it, was evident throughout students' interviews about why they had joined the group and when they planned to stop dancing hip-hop. The notion of emerging adulthood reflects a period of life that has arisen in the last couple of decades as economic changes, scientific advances, and social changes all made it easier for youth to access higher education and delay parenthood and marriage (Arnett, 2007; Neinstein, 2013; Reifman, Arnett, & Colwill, 2006). The originator of the term “adolescence”, G. Stanley Hall, identified the period between puberty and adulthood as something separate and distinct from the rest of childhood (1904). Late adolescence is now a period usually identified as stretching from age 18 to about 25 in the U.S.. This is a time marked by identity exploration and what Arnett terms the “age of possibilities” (2004, 2006a).

This notion of late adolescence translates what have historically been considered “the college years” into a continuation of adolescence, or stretching of adolescent experiences, through the college years. This sense of the end of college also representing the end of adolescence and the start of “adulthood” or “the real world”, as different students referred to this time, was reflected in nearly all the interviews in which the girls talked about why they joined Dance Hip-Hop. Dance Hip-Hop was an extension of their chummy cheerleading or pom-pom experiences in high school, and one that helped them bridge between high school, through college, and into the “real world” that would follow their graduation.

Even the male dancer, Aaron, who had not done poms during high school, nevertheless talked about wanting to join Dance Hip-Hop because of high school experience he had as a Junior and Senior. He described going out dancing and partying at clubs with his friends. Those social dance experiences, along with being exposed during high school to representations of organized dance groups via popular television programs like America's Best Dance Crew, motivated him to find a group that would allow him to have similar experiences in college.

The notion that dancing hip-hop represented an extension of adolescence also played a large role in the reasons that Aaron's interest in hip-hop waned as the group dynamics changed. As the founders from the previous years left and new members came on who all had a pom squad background, Aaron and three of the older female members described the group changing into a more structured, pommie dance team and less of a social, partying organization rooted in a different social sense of hip-hop. Tighter cliques began to form in Dance Hip-Hop, as many of the new members knew each other from pom teams in high school and continued their closer associations through the group.

This literal continuation of styles of group membership from high school made Aaron feel like he was back in high school, but surrounded by a group with whom he had little in common. As a Senior who was already planning his career and life after college, this high school feeling was no longer attractive to Aaron. He became less invested in Dance Hip-Hop over the last year, taking part in fewer choreographies and describing the majority of the members as acquaintances, instead of close friends. This was true for every senior, as they start feeling that the "bridge" was no longer needed; however, several, like Heidi and Amy, still focused on hip-hop because they taught it in studios or after-school programs.

A Reprieve Before “Real” Life, Life After College

““Life is about to get real...” This is what Aaron said when talking about why he won’t dance in organized hip-hop teams or almost any hip-hop venue after college. He talked about college being about fun and games, and as a college student, he could do those things. But after college, when he would enter medical school, his priorities would shift to value work and other interpersonal activities. This perception of college being in a sense a “time out” from the “real world” has been found in other research, in regards to heavy drinking during college (Colby, Colby, & Raymond, 2009). For Aaron, the shift away from hip-hop was about moving toward activities that aligned more clearly with career goals and a lifestyle in which neither “real” hip-hop nor pommie groups were reasonable parts. In the pommie sense, this might be “growing up” and out of particular sorts of activities really only conducted in formal educational institutions by students, but in the hip-hop sense, this was a move away from social recognition of the world that in high school Aaron began to explore with his Black, male friends.

Despite the hundreds, if not thousands of hours that these dancers put into the group, and despite acknowledging that their identity was tied to being a dancer, the majority of these youth viewed their Dance Hip-Hop experiences as having a built-in time limit. They were introduced to and inspired by this dance form in their early adolescence, and it helped them transition more comfortably into a new phase of their lives in college by providing a familiar format, venue, (and, often, team members). Yet perhaps because they were not invested in the music and dance form itself, but instead in the continuation of a particular kind of team experience and/or party scene, their reasons for dancing were described primarily in terms of self-interest (e.g., providing a familiar group of friends) and entertainment (e.g., focusing on the excitement of performing for

peers), rather than expressions of social critique regarding social, economic and political issues. Self-interest and entertainment would change, they explained, as they grew older. They would focus more on work and career and long-term relationships, and it would not be appropriate for them to continue to perform as they grew “out of” a dance form that they viewed as “youthful” and “sexual”. Not only would they be hard-pressed to find teams post-college, but many also appeared to feel that continuing to dance hip-hop would be inappropriate for a “full” adult. As Heidi said, she did not see herself dancing these moves in her forties with her kids. Hip-Hop was a dance of their youth, an adolescent dance. It was a useful tool for self-expression and connection to their bodies that would no longer be needed after these youth left to college. Their dancing could (and, some said, should) therefore come to a comfortable close as they transitioned out of the liminal space of college and into “full” adulthood.

This conceptualization of the hip-hop dance form and its purposes connects back to the type of hip-hop these dancers listened and danced to. Popular hip-hop, top 40 hip-hop tended to focus its themes on going to the club, having sex with lots of partners, shooting up, and crashing down. Heidi discussed this issue using a favored lyric from a hip-hop song describing Juicy J, a rapper, spending lots of money in a club. Sarcastically she joked:

I mean, how old is he? He is so old. Why is he even doing that?” She then responded to her own sarcasm with, “I’m like, he’s not even 40! That’s not old! like, What’s the big deal if he is still rapping? And people are like, really? To be 40 years old and still be rapping about spending 30 racks [money] in the club? Don’t you have kids? Don’t you have other things to do?

From these students' perspective, the kind of hip-hop music they listened to and the moves they did were youth-focused and inappropriate as they moved toward professional and marital/parental roles. But "real" hip-hop, underground hip-hop, less popular, less mainstream hip-hop deals with deeper issues. Even Heidi acknowledged that fact, adding that her boyfriend had recently introduced her to a mixtape of hip-hop music by Wyclef, who is a rapper and social activist. She said, "It's really, really good. And Wyclef is a super well-educated artist, and he ran for president in Haiti. And his lyrics are really fairly good and his beats are the shit... And I would feel less weird listening to that. Like if I'm 35 years old."

College life, in these students' estimation, was not "real" life. They were able to do this dance and have the time to perform because college afforded them that luxury. They had resources at their disposal to be able to spend 10 hours a week on unremunerated "hobbies", and to still have enough time to study. Dance Hip-Hop afforded them the ability to stretch out some of their high school experiences into college, and because they viewed college as a liminal time and space after which they would have to assume the full weight and mantle of being a "real adult", being in college also let them feel that it was appropriate to continue to engage in "adolescent" activities that would be inappropriate for "adults". After college, nearly all of the members interviewed, except for Heidi, intended to shed their identities as dancers, performers, hip-hop, and college students. As dancers to music that didn't reflect "adult" life but instead top 40 teen-hood, they felt that dancing their style of hip-hop would be seen less favorably when not situated in an environment that let them play at being youthful. The aspect of performance is important here. For many of these dancers, hip-hop was performative. Thus the performative aspect itself made it difficult to continue with this type of dance afterward— because

opportunities were more limited (and youth-focused), because performance itself was viewed as a youthful, “unreal” activity, and because outside of performance, they were not that interested in continuing.

These dancers were being realistic about the ease with which they were likely to be able to continue engaging with their particular form of hip-hop—there are few teams outside of organized educational spaces, and these are generally organized for students. They were not dance majors because they knew the difficulties in creating careers out of dance, and because most expected their careers to be white collar professional. They also knew the limitations of their bodies. Marlana had several injuries while dancing and she spoke quite eloquently about her limited timeframe for dancing the way that she wanted. She allowed for her dreams of dance to be grounded on the hope that one day she would be able to coach a high school team like Dance Hip-Hop, since she didn’t see the possibility of being physically able to dance into her later years.

While these dancers didn’t engage with expressions of “real” hip-hop, and focused on the music and expressions that were popular and entertaining to their largely white college audiences, they acknowledged that such expressions were appropriately limited to a certain environment and time. This approach to dancing dovetails directly with the roles and identities that the dancers crafted for themselves during their college years. These were largely White, middle-class kids who came to college expecting to become professionals, to marry other White professionals, and to have middle-class lives with families and careers. College was a time to have fun, hang out with friends, party, and continue their own period of “adolescence”, in which

appropriating a dance form that they viewed as “fun”, but fundamentally overly sexualized/youth-focused/racialized, was acceptable but time- and place-bound.

This understanding of hip-hop and its social role contrasted entirely with another hip-hop group that I saw perform at the same university and discuss in the next section.

Hyphens and Lyrics: Dancer-Entertainer

When I first approached Dance Hip-Hop to study them, I was made aware by a couple of members that there was another hip-hop group, Speak Hip-Hop, in the same university, but the two groups never collaborated. This was common for most of the college clubs. A member of one club might also belong to another club, but the clubs themselves usually didn’t interact or collaborate on projects together. Nonetheless, and as was also the case with the multiple ballroom clubs (there was only one salsa club), I wanted to see what this other group did that might be different than Dance Hip-Hop, so I attended one of their performances. What I saw there further illuminated some of the stark ways that Dance Hip-Hop drew away from the roots of hip-hop, specifically in terms of not engaging with the socially critical, raced and gendered lyrics and messages in the music.

Hip-hop lyrics often narrate an autobiography (Hess, 2005). Hip-hop artists typically tell stories of their own lives, from the struggles that they go through, to the celebration of attaining certain successes. Many rappers want the audience to understand their experiences and point of view by explaining it through the music. Dance is another way to juxtapose those messages with the music. Hip-hop dancers who are connected to the history and the traditions of the music itself use dance to illuminate the lyrics and accentuate the meanings behind their stories.

I saw this first-hand in a performance by Speak Hip-Hop, the other group of hip-hop dancers and artists at UM. There were three pieces performed that night, and they all shared a story of struggle based on the identities that the artists held, including Latino, bisexual, biracial, and immigrant. One piece that stood out to me was performed by a Latino dancer who incorporated a spoken word piece with dance. He spoke about the harsh definitions of success that he faced when trying to be a dancer and a spoken-word artist. Those career choices were not seen as meeting mainstream norms of success, and also did not meet his parents' expectations. He spoke about how his parents had struggled to succeed in the United States as Guatemalan immigrants and how their understanding of success, such as achieving higher socio-economic status and having a stable job, did not match all of his life choices.

His words and movements centered on a fixed spotlight, which he danced within, around and through. The spotlight was a physical representation of the stereotypes that he had to maneuver while trying to live fully within multiple identities and multiple meanings of success. He reflected on the "hyphen between Latino and American, Polish-American." His father would often say to him, "Look me straight in the eyes and say you honestly did your best" and yet the artist questioned what it meant to really do your best when your best was not judged the best by others. He highlighted these questions through body movements that popped in and out of the spotlight. The tension within his story was further punctuated with certain tense poses that he struck in his dance. The hyphens that he struggled with were the bridges between his dancing and his prose, his critique and his resolve as he continued pushing the boundaries that surrounded him.

I cried throughout the piece, as his words and expressions reflected some of my own struggles as a second generation American. The crowd, who were almost entirely Black and Latin@, was very appreciative of the piece. They were engaged, at times becoming so silent, I could hear the everyone breathing quickly with the lyrics.

This performance, and the crowd's responses, stood in great contrast to the audiences that Dance Hip-Hop entertained, which were almost entirely White. And here, I believe, was the distinction. Dance Hip-Hop was created to entertain the audience, like the cheerleaders of a game, showcasing moves and playing with music and dance forms popular in mass, White college media. Speak Hip-Hop was there to critique exactly these norms, to question the privileges and highlight the struggles of those who had a harder time, could not, or would never access the cheerleading squads in high school. Students in Dance Hip-Hop understood themselves to be Dancer-Entertainers. They oriented their choreographies and music toward what was popular, "fun", and "sexy" in college, for the majority of the college body.

Speak Hip-Hop performers, in contrast, frankly talked about their sub-identities and overlapping identities through the descriptions of hyphens. Those sub-identities linked to Dancer-Seeker, and Dancer-Critic. Their performances were oriented toward bridging their own experiences and those of others who found themselves marginalized by "popular" expectations, norms, and representations, and in so doing, by sharing these experiences with audience members. While Dance Hip-Hop audiences would regularly respond to individual (particularly "sexy") dance moves by cheering, Speak Hip-Hop audiences showed their appreciation for the dancers' embodied storytelling through engagement and silence throughout the performance, and heartfelt appreciation and connection with the stories told by the performers.

These two groups mainly drew their membership and their audiences from people who were similarly (within each group) positioned in terms of social/cultural/economic systems, but these systems were composed of almost fully non-overlapping members—those from majoritarian or more powerful social/cultural/economic groups, and those who were minoritized. These systems were evident, upfront, in each groups' approach to hip-hop.

Through the few pieces that I saw, Speak Hip-Hop's students recognized and expressed their privilege in that they were able to access college, but they told stories of struggle resulting from lower socio-economic status and coming from families that were more recently immigrants. Thus the "real world" in college was probably a much more "real" experience for the Speak Hip-Hop students. They accessed spoken word and hip-hop dance to explore these relationships and the hyphens in between their different identities and struggles to find balance within the hyphens.

Many of Dance Hip-Hop's students, in contrast, came from relatively wealthy suburbs and had access to multiple dance classes and after-school activities that White, higher socio-economic high school students normally have. These characterizations are based on data from the interviews and surveys I conducted. While a few of the Dance Hip-Hop's students were Black (Amy and Marlana) or immigrants (Heidi), the vast majority, including these three women, had exposure to after-school dance programs and/or cheerleading/pom teams, and had grown up in largely white neighborhoods and schools. Many of them were able to access additional resources that gave them an extra leg up in connecting with and being admitted to Dance Hip-Hop, whether through knowing the founders of the group or having previous members coach their cheerleading teams in high school. Hip-Hop as a form of performance was time-limited,

and had a particular role to play in these students' expected pathways to "adulthood", parenting, and careers.

Black dance is steeped in expressing experiences of social, economic and political issues (Roberts, 2013). Speak Hip-Hop was as well. Their pieces were woven seamlessly into and out of individuals' stories. This form of expression could no more be stopped abruptly one day than the dancer could stop experiencing the struggles with inequity, structural racism, and identity that they experienced every day, within college and beyond. Neither the struggles nor the form are time-bound or place-bound.

The majority of the dancers on Dance Hip-Hop stated that they never listened to the lyrics of the songs to which they danced, and they did not connect with them on a personal level. The beat was what stood out for nearly all the Dance Hip-Hop dancers. They connected with the pom-pom driven dance of beats and melodies. Marlana admitted that she didn't even know the lyrics to the music that she danced to for months. "Thinking about it, when I dance hip-hop, I never hear lyrics. Like I don't hear them. I literally hear that beat, like when I'm thinking, Work Hard [choreo] I'm thinking, Do Do Do Du Du, that's what I hear."

This contrasts starkly with the central role of spoken word in Speak Hip-Hop, where the dance itself could not be separated from and was intimately shaped by the lyrics. Indeed, the dancer could not be separated from the lyrics or the dance form; it would not be possible to layer pom moves on these pieces, nor could the pieces be appropriated by a group like Dance Hip-Hop because the dance was an integral part of the music, the lyrics and the message.

Amy, a woman in Dance Hip-Hop who created choreographies that were much more masculine and seen as more "authentic", also acknowledged disconnecting from the words in the

music, “With lyrics, I don't care. Usually it's all about the beats. Does it sound cool, can you do stuff with that beat. Otherwise the words to me don't matter.” Lily made an interesting distinction, one that many of the members brought up, that while the lyrics may be offensive, and especially demeaning to women, the majority of the members didn't really focus on the words. The importance was the beat of the music. So while the students occasionally commented during rehearsals about the fact that one rapper may say Bitch a lot, they would still go along and dance with the music. They would choose music due to its popularity—Hip-Hop pop, if you will. They chose the most contemporary and popular radio music because that was what their crowds were familiar with, and they were dancing to perform to those crowds. The songs these dancers chose did not mean anything personal to them. They did not represent them. Dance Hip-Hop students did not see a connection to the music beyond the potential to create pleasing movements with their bodies. They did not need to make deeper use of—or indeed to even attend to—the lyrics in the music in order to link the two sides of their hyphens as Dancer-Entertainers.

One of many possible reasons that Dance Hip-Hop members did not connect to the music qua music was that many of these women reported, during interviews and observations, that they had exposure to performance dance in their younger years, whether through ballet or cheerleading, and therefore had not come to dance through forms that emphasized social critique or, indeed, the musical forms or histories to which they danced. Similarly, their exposure to hip-hop music tended to be in environments in which mainstream hip-hop was played for performance (pom teams) or to party, and not necessarily at sit-ins or spoken word battles.

Students' own histories of not being very conscious of the music and its lyrics was evident during one practice, when there was a discussion with the team members over the lyrics of one

piece. One of the choreographies used the song Bugatti by Ace Hood. The choreographer showed sharp, punching moves set to these lyrics:

Niggas is blowing their checks on the gear

Fall on some pussy then hop on the leer

Shot with them choppers back of the rear

Popeye said them killers is here

Woke up early morning, mind is tellin me money

Paper, mula, pockets is fat as a tumor

Several of the women made comments about the lyrics, “We are already used to degrading women, but now tumors!” The absurdity of the subject matter hit them. It wasn’t bad enough that the song made light use of having sex with women that were only defined by their genitals, but now the students were dancing to cancer. It seemed at that moment the dancers had woken up to the importance of the lyrics and their meanings, and what this might imply about their decision to perform to this music. This could have become a moment in which they came to view the music as denigrating, or it could have been a moment in which they wondered what led the rapper to explain his life as he did, or what led top 40 hip-hop stars to emphasize certain forms of success in their songs. But the moment didn’t last. Beyond briefly expressing their indignation, all the dancers learned the choreographed movement to “pockets is fat as a tumor” and moved on to the next verse.

Aaron was one of the few members in Dance Hip-Hop who was more aware of the lyrics. He knew all the lyrics to the songs that he choreographed and he directly played with the words of the song (such as the lyrics that described a stripper dancing in the song *Pyramid*, where he

had the dancer's body roll off an imaginary pole). He thought the words were important to highlight in the dance and he created his choreographies to connect with the dialog in the songs. Nevertheless, he chose very mainstream songs with similar themes to Bugatti, and though he tried through his choreography to link movement to lyrics, he did not try to select lyrics that spoke to critical themes. He chose to listen and connected to the lyrics of other hip-hop artists who were more underground on his personal time, but he stated that such songs were not the ones he chose to choreograph because he didn't feel moved to dance to them. The underground music served other purposes, but Aaron did not view it as the basis for mass entertainment, like the more well known hip-hop that was played on the radio or at sports events.

I saw some of this reasoning when I observed Aaron teach a choreography to the song he chose, Pyramids by Frank Ocean. The lyrics in the song were very sexual. They centered on a man having sex with a woman who worked at a strip club. Aaron taught a move where the legs of the dancers were spread out wide and they moved their right hand in front of their crotches, up and down, from one side to the next. He tells them that this move reminds him of putting on a condom. The movements emphasized the lyrics as the singer described the girl having sex with him. This awareness of the song's lyrics extended to the way the moves accentuated the stanzas in the song.

At a certain stanza the singer said the N word, referring to himself. Aaron was singing as he was showing the choreography but at that point, he broke from the rhyme, saying, "I'm not going to say the 'word'" in a singsongy voice, and then picked up with the next line of the song.

The songs Aaron wanted to dance to included sexist and violent imagery but he stated that he was almost never offended by the words. He said he didn't care about the literal lyrics and specifically that they didn't offend him when they spoke about violence.

There was only one theme that he was not willing to tolerate: lyrics about violence against women, such as rape or domestic abuse. He stated that he wouldn't even listen to such a song. In fact, if he knew that a rapper had a history of violence against women, such as Chris Brown, he would completely refuse to listen to any music by that artist, no matter the subject matter. Yet when I pointed out the violent lyrics in some songs that included drowning or shooting, he stated that those lyrics were not really meant to reflect actual violence and therefore he didn't take the songs seriously. The one exception, rape or beating of women, he had a personal relationship with and therefore could not stand those descriptions in music. The rest of the themes were, in his view, just part of the music and genre.

In terms of the majority of the lyrics and their meanings, he stated, "It's just a culture." It was a culture that he didn't take part in, but that he could draw on to entertain himself and an audience. Hip-hop is a culture that is highly denigrated by White, middle class people for the most part, outside of appropriating it to dance to the music at parties or to watch dance performances. Appropriating only this public musical component of the "culture" is just fine, according to the members of Dance Hip-Hop, but the rest of the culture is not. So when the party is over, typically at the end of college, the cultural appropriation is over—its time to move on to "serious" practices, which are White, middle class, and golf-like.

A few of the members in Dance Hip-Hop were aware the group's flirtation with hip-hop and wanted to move away from simply using it as an entertainment factor. Heidi talked about her final year at Dance Hip-Hop and how her perspective had changed now that she was leaving,

I think Dance Hip-Hop is not making statements about politics. And I think in that sense, I think other people who are into hip-hop would probably say Dance Hip-Hop is a very White-ish crew and we're just, we aren't making statements about our beliefs and about art, which is actually another thing that I am outgrowing Dance Hip-Hop in that sense. I want to make a statement with my choreography, I want to make a statement with the music, I don't want to just pick three songs that I like and throw them in. I want it to make some sort of sense. But there is a difference too of people who are just trying to send a message and people who are just trying to entertain.

Her reflection centers on the very difference between Dance Hip-Hop and Speak Hip-Hop, the evident centrality of the lyrics and meanings for the latter, and their focus not on entertainment, money or sexuality, but on identity and inequity. Heidi highlights the different hyphenated forms of hip-hop Dancer- in her comments, and points to the gaps within the Dance Hip-Hop group.

Conclusion

There is a hip-hop song by Yasiin Bey entitled *The Rape Over*:

MTV, is runnin this rap shit

Viacom is runnin this rap shit

AOL and Time Warner runnin this rap shit

Bey critiques mainstream rap, saying that white men and the entertainment industry own hip-hop. He blithely names the power-brokers that control the main consumption of hip-hop in the United States. His critique extends to the mass commercialization, commodification and assimilation of popular hip-hop music and dance. Easy to swallow, devoid of protest or acknowledgement of the social struggle, and in fact reshaping mainstream engagement with a powerful Black cultural practice to a denigration of Black masculinity and Black community.

Just as does mainstream rap music, Dance Hip-Hop catered to the White masses (university students) and focused on mass entertainment and easy listening/watching. They did not use the genre to protest or galvanize against the inequalities or social struggles that people, specifically people of color, struggled with on the campus and in the US. Instead, the group bought into the commodification of hip-hop for the purposes of entertainment and personal comfort. It was a genre that they were raised in, not as a social tool, but as an entertainment vehicle, and their experiences in college did nothing to destabilize this history.

Some of the members critiqued the “pommie-ness” of the group, but this critique was about the lack of perceived authenticity of the moves, not necessarily a critique of failing to use authenticity to address anything beyond entertaining the college audience at large. They saw to their audience and gave them what they wanted, which they assumed to be certain kinds of lyrics, moves, and shows. Some of the dancers were quite frank about this intention.

Heidi: “As a college hip-hop crew, I think we are just trying to entertain the crowd. Students aren't really trying to be in a club and trying to understand our message.” There were no underlying messages behind their performances because these messages were not thought to

provide “entertainment”. Heidi further described the adaptation of hip-hop into the mainstream, and how it was appropriated into middle class, White pop culture, like Dance Hip-Hop:

I think that hip-hop is becoming pop culture... It used to be that you would turn on a hit music station, whatever it is for your local area, and it used to be Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera, maybe, even though she started out as totally Latina-centered. And like Backstreet Boys, that used to be like pop music. Now you turn on the radio and you are going to hear hip-hop in the number one hits station. It's not just Black music anymore. You know what I mean? It's become mainstream culture. And so I think in that sense, what Dance Hip-Hop is doing, we are not going outside our individual cultural norm because that is just like the [White] college culture, is hip-hop, nowadays.

Pop culture has become hip-hop (Engel, 2011). And the majority of the Dance Hip-Hop members bought into a “cultural prejudice suffered by all of the fine arts, in which the visual and performing arts are perceived as purely performance and entertainment” (Koff, 2000). They bought into that prejudice, by pointedly and purposely aiming their dance to entertain the [White] masses. Their conversations during practices and their observations about the dance during interviews bespoke their intentions in dancing, namely entertaining the audience and themselves.

Because these members did not identify with hip-hop as a social commentary and integral part of their lives, nearly all of the members planned to stop dancing hip-hop after college. Even Heidi, who was considering making hip-hop a career by teaching at a dance studio, still admitted that she did not think she would dance hip-hop after a certain age.

This approach to hip-hop signals a fundamental marginalization of the core goals of hip-hop, as well as an intentional silencing of the social critiques that “real” hip-hop invites. Through the glorification of the dancer-entertainer identity, Dance Hip-Hop never allowed for their audiences to reflect on the inequities and power structures that exist within our societies, and indeed, may have encouraged such inequities. They used this tool, dance, solely as an expression of youth and simple enjoyment, without much pause or understanding of what dancing to “real” hip-hop might mean or do.

Their practice has important social implications. Their audiences were much larger than Speak Hip-Hop’s. *“At stake is a definition of what constitutes “real” and “true” Hip-Hop and also who will have the power to define what Hip-Hop is and what it should be.” (Barnes, 2008, p. 2).*

Chapter Three: Dance Ballroom

I entered the large, sun-filled room with five minutes to spare, but nearly the entire team was already milling about. This meeting was a team practice with ten of the members of Dance Ballroom, five couples, split evenly between women and men. All the men were wearing jeans and the women wore a mixture of stretchy pants or shorts. The choreographer for this piece, Rose, was one of the team members. She instructed the follows, all women, to put their hands on their partners' hips. The majority erupted in giggles, and one of the leads, a man, did a couple of short body rolls, laughing with his partner at the implied sexuality of it.

Rose was laid back, with specific instructions on feet and timing, but very familiar and friendly with the members. These were her teammates. Beyond this one choreography, which she volunteered to create, she is their equal, usually playing the role that they are playing in the practice sessions for other choreographies. Her team members listened intently and good-naturedly followed all of her instructions. Many of the moves were inspired and set to the lyrics in the song, which was a tango by Voltaire describing evil:

I'm a pin in every hip

I'm the thorn in your side

Makes you wriggle and writhe

And it's so easy when you're evil

This is the life, you see

The Devil tips his hat to me

I do it all because I'm evil

The team worked on the stanza ending with “wriggle and writhe” but Rose called it “wriggle and wrap”, as the follows swiveled their right leg back and forth then wrapped it around their partner’s leg. The leads were then told to place their hand possessively on top of the leg that had been wrapped.

Rose and her boyfriend, Luis, who was also in the choreography, each danced with different partners throughout the piece. Each time they proceeded to ‘kill’ their current partner, they moved on to another set of partners. Their movements and roles in the choreography were designed to embody the evil described in the song.

None of the other dance couples were partnered with their actual romantic partners (many of whom were also in the room and in the choreography); so when Rose asked the team to increase the sexuality in their dancing, by tweaking certain movements and making some positions closer, her instructions were met with nervous laughter. Intimate touch such as touches on the leg and close dips were executed gingerly. Hands around the neck barely touched, and hands on hips had a more platonic hold. It was a visible change from the affection that I would see displayed between the couples composed of romantic partners. Rose frequently laughed with her boyfriend Luis as they become dance partners at the end of the song, lightly chiding him as he didn’t fall down and “die” as he was meant to in the choreography. She was clearly more affectionate with him than the other men that she just danced with and ‘killed’.

What struck me as I watched this practice was the laid-back familiarity of the dancers with one another, coupled with a focus on attaining the general movement of the dance. Rose, the choreographer, wasn’t adamant about the technique and precision in the choreography itself. She was also clearly echoing her romantic feelings for her partner, Luis, and highlighting them within

the dance, something the other dancers couldn't do in that particular choreography, due to Rose's choices of who was partnered with whom. The members of Dance Ballroom were dancer-social connectors, gaining access and utilizing the organization through relationships with friends and romantic partners, and using them to maintain and strengthen key social relationships. The dancer-social connector aspect of this organization, coupled with its more laid-back approach to dance, resulted in people playing out their relationships in the dance more than I observed with the other dance organizations that I observed.

Every one of the members with whom I spoke explained that they chose Dance Ballroom because it was a more laid-back, socially-oriented organization that didn't impose the normally competitive standards of ballroom dance classes. They viewed the organization as serving as a separate space of leisure within the university, contrasted with what was often stressful academic spaces and activities. It also served as a tool to connect these students with their friends and romantic partners, while for the most part protecting them from what many of the members deemed were judgmental, stressful pressures of the regular ballroom world.

Ballroom History- The Standardization of Whiteness & Upper-Class Dance

In 1904, the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) was formed in London, England. This organization was created to set and protect the teaching interests of the entire ballroom world (Cresswell, 2006). ISTD wielded its influence to limit what they viewed as the "bastardization" of ballroom dances through increasingly popular music and dances with American and African origins, such as jazz.

In 1918 a popular dancer, Mrs. Vernon Castle, wrote:

It is difficult to define jazz... they slur the notes, they syncopate, and each instrument puts in a number of fancy bits of its own. In the States we dance to jazz music, but there are no fixed steps for it. We get our new dances from the Barbary Coast. They reach New York in a very primitive condition and have to be toned down before they can be used in the ballroom. (quoted in Richardson, 1948, p. 37-38).

ISTD and ballroom societies like it aimed to align standards of dancing to maintain the impression that ballroom was of a primarily White, upper-class, superior, elite dance. In its efforts to standardize ballroom dances, many of these societies and their members purposefully chose to desexualize and “purify” the social dances to exude only what they deemed to be acceptable ways of dancing and “correct” movement (Cresswell, 2006). This directive eliminated hip movements and focused the body on creating sharp lines. ISTD purposely maintained a style of dance that had to be taught through upper-class professional institutions, and denounced any influences in the dance that came from “street” or other cultural dances. Only those that had the means to afford such a dance education could do so, which is why ballroom was upheld as a white, privileged institution. This standardization bled into nearly all the ballroom schools around the world (Evans, 2006). It wasn’t until the 1960s, after a great drop in the popularity of ballroom in the United States, that some of these structures began to bend to popular culture and create greater flexibility and expression within the ballroom dances (Yamanashi Leib, & Bulman, 2009). Due to the popularity of *Dancing with the Stars* and *So You Think You Can Dance*, the United States has seen a revival in ballroom dances. With that revival comes adaptations and mutations of the structures that the ISTD set in place over a hundred years ago.

“Appropriate” Expressions

Dance Ballroom promoted the ISTD’s conception of the “correct” movement of the dances by hiring a professional ballroom instructor from a ballroom company in the city. He came in every two weeks to teach a choreography and give feedback to the students on their technique. It was within these class sessions that I saw the influence of the standardization practices that had been in use for over a hundred years. The instructor, while not always explicitly stating what was ‘correct’ and “appropriate”, regularly critiqued the dancers by telling them their technique was lacking.

The instructor’s feedback reified the gendered, classed, and racialized norms imposed by the ISTD. For example, he tended to refer to any styling by women as “pretty things” and certain movements were only given to the women, such as splits and leg crosses. Occasional comments about how the hands should be placed and how the frame should be maintained at a certain distance, how the follows (in this case the women), should tilt towards their partner, with elegance and implied femininity, followed the very gendered notions that ballroom elites created within the ballroom dances (Evans, 2006). When the instructor pointed out to the men that a kick out to the side was not a good look on them, the intimation was that the movement did not portray strong masculinity.

Thus, the messages that the instructor gave out followed the set standards of ballroom dance, while also emphasizing the embodied cultural practices of female submission and male domination (Yamanashi Leib, & Bulman, 2009). The women were curled protectively into the right shoulder of the lead in several moves. The leads engaged the movements first, leading with

their hands, chests coming forward, as the women, with their arms placed on top of the leads, were to delicately follow where the leads led.

This replication of traditional gender norms within ballroom was fully displayed within a choreography that I observed at the Dance Ballroom showcase: a solo routine with a couple who performed a Viennese waltz. This routine was performed by Alice and Joe, who were a romantic couple. The scene started with Alice on the floor in a long flowing skirt, reading letters, as her man, Joe, a soldier, waltzed onto the floor and took her by the chin into the dance. They did not break prescribed gender roles, with Joe lifting Alice into several tricks and twirling her around him. This was a traditional piece with a traditional message; the woman waiting for the man, as he served his country. “I won’t give up” was the title and the main chorus to the song.

The professional instructor regularly displayed irritation and impatience with the group. Toward the end of the class, he critiqued the group, saying they needed to be more serious with how they danced. He commented that while it was ok to teach “fun” things, it was not good enough if the technique was not there. The sharpness, the pre-determined structures of different ballroom movements that encompassed the masculine and feminine roles, were lacking in his eyes. While there was room for the team to have different genders switch roles in the dance, in the professional’s view “real” ballroom was one that confined the appearance of the lead to a one-sided masculinity and the follow to submissive femininity, regardless of the gender of the lead and follow. This was a role that all the women who chose to dance as leads played within all of the choreographies. If they were a lead in a dance, they attempted to give off certain cues that would indicate that they were a man.

The traditionalized gender norms on display every two weeks traveled into Dance Ballroom's less formal classroom spaces in various ways. For example, there was a common trend that I observed in many of Dance Ballroom's classes. Since there were more women than men in the class, one of the partnerships usually involved two women, while the rest of the class paired off with someone of the opposite sex. Every time partners switched, the resulting two women would choose the lead role based on who hesitated the least. The woman who led had to imitate the same movements as the men, so her gestures took on the appearance of more masculine movements and became more assertive. Her steps would become heavier, her gestures larger and more encompassing of her partner. This fluidity in changing the gendered roles in the dance by the women switching from a lead to a follow showed off the evolution of the traditional standards within ballroom dance. Indeed, Yamanashi Leib, & Bulman found in their study how normal and accepted it had become for women to switch roles on the dance floor (2009). This will be further explored in the Identity Chapter.

Yet the desire to connect with people was much stronger for these students than the desire for perfection or competitive form. Petunia later elucidated the conflict with the professional instructor: "That's our culture. Yeah, we do have to be a little more disciplined, but we don't want to be super... We want to be good but we don't want to be to the point where we are not having fun anymore."

Having fun and maintaining social relationships was what moved the students to participate and remain in Dance Ballroom for years. The professional instructor was there to add credibility to the organization, to certify that the organization was a ballroom organization. This was not a necessity for Dance Hip-Hop because hip-hop was rooted in more grassroots

movements that did not have certification bodies. Dance Salsa also didn't need to bring in a professional salsa instructor because their students were only looking to learn a style of dance that was night-club- (not competition)-based. The professionalization and standardization effects of ISTD extended to Dance Ballroom, even as the group was more focused on the leisure aspects of the dance than its “correctness”. This tension between professionalization/focus on performance and social connections within leisure will be further examined in the upcoming section.

Relationships/Connections

Often, when I walked into the sunny, window-filled room of the dance studio that Dance Ballroom reserved for their practices on campus, I was struck by how familiar and friendly the group members were to one another. It was not just the fact that the romantic partners of many of the dancers were in the group. There was an ease and openness among all the members, not just the couples, as if they had been friends for a very long time. This connection was acknowledged in the interviews I conducted, as the members discussed why they had joined the group and what made them continue their membership. Many of the dancers, like Laura, Alice, and Joe, were enticed to join because they attended some of the open dance socials that another campus ballroom group hosted. They befriended the dancers and observed the connections that the dancers in Dance Ballroom had with one another.

The decision to join Dance Ballroom was a conscious one, as other options were available for those students who wanted to become ballroom dancers. There was another large student organization for ballroom on campus, which focused on competitions. To be able to compete, the dancers had to perform at a certain level of technique and precision. The standards

of that organization were therefore consistent with the standards of traditional ballroom studios and dances. Dance Ballroom, in contrast, was known as a more laid back group, though they also performed. They didn't have rigid standards about what it took to be on the team, but they did collaborate, teach and share their dances and visions collectively, and place emphasis on the community within the organization. In this sense, their organizational model resembled a Community of Practice (English, 2015) more than it did a traditional ballroom group, with rigid rules and hierarchies. Throughout my interviews, one student after another shared that the largest factor drawing them to Dance Ballroom was the social dynamics within the group. These dancers didn't want to be graded or evaluated for their dances, as they already felt enough pressure from their academics. They viewed this dance endeavor as a great way to exercise and meet people at their university in a low-pressure environment. Joe, for example, talked about the vast difference between the strict structure of his university major, nuclear engineering, and the creative and social outlet that ballroom gave him: "Ballroom is my creativity outlet... And then social dancing. It's just a different way of going out there and having fun. It's a different interaction with people."

Many of the social events in which the ballroom dancers participated overlapped, so several of the Dance Ballroom members had the chance to meet a few dancers from the other ballroom groups prior to joining Dance Ballroom. When I asked Alice why she didn't join the other ballroom organization on campus, she responded that the pressure of competition made her feel as if the team dynamic would not be as welcoming or warm.

I liked the performance aspect of Dance Ballroom better [than competition] and I liked the people a lot better because they were so friendly and so open. And they were so

encouraging, and [Other Ballroom group] was competition so I felt they are very much kind of at each other a little bit just because they are competing against each other.

Dance Ballroom facilitated physical activity without making the students feel like they were doing work (to be further elaborated in the following chapter). They generally felt that their academics placed significant work demands on their times. They were looking for structured social and leisure activities that would help them distress from their “work”. The students’ interest in joining Dance Ballroom wasn’t, therefore, necessarily due to interest in ballroom dance. Alice admitted that even though she liked salsa and Latin dance more—“I think it's sexy... It's a little more fun to dance to”—and thus could have been a part of the Dance Salsa organization at UM, she committed to Dance Ballroom because she liked the people more and felt comfortable. She also met her boyfriend through Dance Ballroom, and would not have joined another group because her boyfriend didn’t prefer Latin dance. Dance Ballroom gave the students an environment of creative socialization that provided supported many relationships, romantic and platonic.

This dynamic was especially true for the leads (typically men). Since there tended to be more women than men interested in joining the ballroom team, some of the women would ask their male partners to join the team. These men often did not have a strong interest in the dance form, or even in dancing, but joined the group to spend time with their romantic partners in a fun and low-stress environment. Having romantic partners within the organization gave the students another reason to make Dance Ballroom a priority. Dance Ballroom was about socializing, having fun, and creating and maintaining those connections in a judgment-free environment.

This was their separate leisure space that they carved out within the university, and with university support.

The catalyst for many of these students on this team was a personal connection, a friend or romantic partner, who invited and encouraged them to join the group. These personal connections are what upheld the nearly all White, middle-class, and STEM-heavy homogeneity of the organization. It was a replication of the nearly all-white university campus that these students attended. The students never questioned the demographic make-up of their organization. There seemed to be at least two reasons for this lack of reflection: first, ballroom, its institutions, and its practices (as embodied in ISTD) were deliberately “White” institutions, and thus the dance form and its associated norms and institutions in no way encouraged such questioning. Second, the team’s focus remained strongly on social relations and connections, and this group drew on their own networks in college, which were largely segregated by race and class. This is of no surprise. Propinquity, the disposition to form relationships with those who share the same social environment, coupled with homophily, the tendency to form friendships based on shared dimensions, like race, has been extensively researched and found within college populations (Jones, Alexander, & Estell, 2010; Park, Rethemeyer, Bryce, Andersen, & Kim, 2011; Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009; Syed, & Juan, 2012; Yourgliche, 1966).

Reflecting their focus on the social relations that existed in the group, and not the dance itself, nearly all of the dancers in Dance Ballroom only danced during the fall and spring semesters. When Dance Ballroom did not meet (over breaks), very few members continued dancing in other venues. Their identities as ballroom dancers were tied to this particular organization and the social relations it entailed and provided. For example, Alice spent time

during the summer traveling, but even when she found a club that played salsa, she said she was too nervous to go by herself. The group's dancing experiences revolved around their connections as friends. Once their friends were away for the break, they had no reason to go out and dance. Joe stated that he never danced during the summer break, because "... usually all the people that I enjoy dancing with are gone..."

Yet at the same time, because the connection within the team relied on the kinship of the people on the team, if those bonds were strained, the strength of the group relationship as a whole diminished. In addition, since relational connections were so highly valued, members placed a high priority on having similar interests and associations with one another. If members' interests or behaviors differed, some members felt uncomfortable or worried about the cohesion of the group. Alice discussed feeling disconnected with some of the members because of their differing, "nerdy", interests outside of dance. She pointed out that while many of the members were students in the STEM areas, some had interests outside of dance that were not shared by other members in the group. Therefore she felt disconnected from them. She worried that this disconnection would lead to new members not wanting to join and maintain a membership with Dance Ballroom in the future.

Dance Ballroom was viewed by its members primarily as a tool that dancers used to support their relationships. Ross recounted how one of his closest friends was on the ballroom team, and how he mainly saw her when they were at rehearsals together. The majority of the ballroom group members were dating someone within the group. The couples typically formed outside of the group and when the women joined they would convince their romantic partners to come along. Being in a relationship with someone who danced and who took part in the same

organization was big attraction for some of the students. When Alice recounted her ideal romantic partner, she said, “I always used to say I need to have a guy who can dance, who can take swing dancing together.”

This was very different than the interactional dynamics in Dance Hip-Hop, where members focused intently on their work together as dancers and performers, and very little interest was shown in each person’s interests outside of the group. The group cohered around the dance form and preparations for performances, and tensions in the group arose around these issues—around the music or moves chosen for a choreography—not around people’s outside interests. Similarly, in Dance Salsa, due to the loose structure of the organization, few students connected with each other outside of the lessons or social nights. They connected more for the three minutes in a dance. Some friendships were made, in particular between the core members of the group, but they were not the focus or the purpose of the organization.

Group belonging and group membership was a large motivator for the Dance Ballroom students, which is a similar finding in the literature on peer social networks (DeLamater, Myers, & Collett, 2014), and therefore the sense of cohesive social interests and expectations became central to people’s concerns about the strength and future existence of the group. While many friendships existed throughout the group, because many leads were brought into the group specifically by a romantic partner, there was a special emphasis on how the group could strengthen those relationships. Dancers said that partnered dancing gave them an additional boost of trust in their partner, offering a sense of connection and a mutual goal of bodily communication with one another. This was something that several people mentioned in dancing with a partner. Laura, for example, said:

... I feel dance involves a lot of trust. Because you have to trust that they aren't going to spin you into a wall, you have to trust that they are not going to lead you into another couple or something. It's an interesting level of trust. It's not like I will trust you with my life, but I will trust you with making sure I won't get hurt. There is something about that level of trust, and the fact that you have it with everyone in this little community. It just kind of feels like a safe place to be.

This trust in the dance bled into further trust with romantic partners, especially those that were on the team. Joe reflected on this advantage when he recounted how he met his partner, Alice:

I think we were a little lucky as far as that goes because from the get go you have a certain level of respect for people. When you ballroom dance with them, you just automatically, depending on how that experience went, I should say, it's not automatic, but depending on how that experience was, you are going to be more comfortable, you are going to have more respect for them, just in general. And physically you know boundaries, and I think being introduced to Alice that way was very beneficial as far as our relationship goes. It's not just some random party find kind of thing, not that I would look down on that... it just it can mean so much more to me, this way.

This description of the organization's activities again differs significantly from the other two groups studied. Discussions about the dance form and dance itself were translated into social terms—the physicality of the movements become a test of trust among team members, physical boundary maintenance was translated into respect for and comfort with others, and so forth. This focuses also explains why calls for non-romantic partners to be more “sexy” in their dancing in

order to improve the technical aspects of their dancing raised such nervous laughter and tepid responses.

Contrast this focus and its consequences on the dance form with Dance Hip-Hop, for example, where greater respect was given to members who created challenging choreographies. The dance itself was consistently viewed as a performative work, and members were happy to raise or lower certain components of their dance, including its “sexiness”, if they thought this would improve the performance. And while a few Dance Salsa members described the bodily connection within the dance as potentially building a sense of trust and respect between the two partners, that connection was usually as short-lived, three minutes on average, as the span of the song. Instead of viewing the dance form as nurturing relationships or nurturing performances, the dance itself was spoken of as a personal skill that could be nurtured and used to bridge communication between two people and/or to find common ground in the midst of diversity.

Group Dynamics

The comments regarding the make-up of the group, not in regards to the evident whiteness of it, but instead to a deracialized sense of the group dynamic and how much care these students put into the “problem” of having people in the group who did not identify themselves as STEM people who wanted to be social in particular ways stood in direct contrast with the comments and composition of the Dance Salsa members. Dance Salsa students greatly valued the diversity of ethnicity, backgrounds, careers, ages and different types of college students that came into the organization. The movement of diverse groups of people into and out of the Dance Salsa space was consistently described by the group’s core members as an added strength of the group, because it allowed them to be exposed to so many different people. The

heterogeneity of the organization mirrored the medley of people in salsa nightclubs around the country and world, which Dance Salsa students aspired to attend.

For the Dance Hip-Hop members, a few of the members of the group were aware of the nearly all-white representation of dancers in their organization. But they never voiced concern over it. They were more concerned about having greater gender parity within their group, or at least a few more men, so that they wouldn't be known as the female hip-hop group on campus. Dance Hip-Hop members' concerns for who joined the group were framed in terms of their performance focus: what team composition would look better to their college audiences, who also happened to reflect back the same white make-up of their organization?

The Future

Dance Ballroom gave members a space in which to explore their relationships and an outlet in which to relax and to express their joy, but it was not necessarily an environment or a dance form in which students expected to continue participating in the future, beyond college. Members who wanted to continue dancing after college reported that they would shift to nightclub dancing, which held some of the social dancing aspects that drew them to Dance Ballroom. To continue to dance in a ballroom organization most likely meant joining a dance studio that emphasized greater structure and competitiveness, which most of these dancers did not want.

For these students, Dance Ballroom fulfilled for them a sense of belonging, and appealed to them because they felt they had found “their group” in college (Pittman, & Richmond, 2008; Shaulskiy, 2016; Soria, Troisi, & Stebleton, 2012). Dance Hip-Hop didn't do that—they were continuing an activity that connected them to a sense of their physical and performative prowess

during high school, but though they spent the most time of any group in practice, they did not view each other as their closest social relations. Dance Salsa didn't do that either—it helped members develop skills they expected to use as “cosmopolitan”, urban citizens after college, but it in no way created lasting social relations. Dance Ballroom members seemed to be about finding belonging in the here and now, in the university.

Playing Out

Dance Ballroom members, more than the members of either other group, consistently described their time in the group as either “social” or “leisure” time. It was a time that they deliberately tried to construct and nurture as “low-key, low-stress”. Members’ avoidance of structured, formal, and competitive environments in dance (and social) experiences was also reflected in the student’s explanations of physical activity and working out. Dance was not just a way to socialize, it was socially-embedded exercise, which they chose willingly instead of gym workouts.

Nearly all the students identified dance as their chosen form of regular exercise. There is a great deal of research on dance as exercise (Bremer, 2007; Castillo, M., et al., 2015; O’Neill, J., Paschalis, et al, 2012; Pate, R., & Hooker, S., 2011; Rabbia, 2010; Huang, S., Hogg, J., Zandieh, S., & Bostwick, S., 2012). There is also an entire therapy based on dance movements that incorporates dance as exercise for the body and mind (Ginsburgs, V. & Goodill, S., 2009; Goodill, 2005; Lippin & Micozzi, 2006; Sandel et al., 2005; Serlin et al., 2000). Both areas of research point to the benefits of moderate to intense levels of dancing for the mind and body. All the students in Dance Ballroom mentioned these benefits of participation in the group without prompting.

Yet it was also clear that exercise was a secondary benefit to attending the club. Many of the students said that they probably wouldn't be going to the gym or running even if they never took part in the club. To work out for the sake of working out was not attractive to them. To them, dancing masked the workout and the workout was an unintended benefit. Dance Ballroom members wanted low key, low stress workouts focused on movement, feel-good energy, and socializing. Dancing, said Alice, "...it's a way to mask working out but still having fun".

Joe viewed dancing as his time to work out, in a social manner. It is what kept him in shape. It made him feel more confident with his body and gave him the motivation to keep up that positive body image. "... you know that people who start dancing say, Gosh that is such a good workout. And that is how I work out, for the most part. Most of my exercise comes from dancing."

Dance Ballroom was the antithesis of work, which was important to these students, who often felt that their academic work was intense if not sometimes overwhelming. They were willing to "work out" through dancing only because it didn't feel like work. Thus, we might think of working out in Dance Ballroom as "playing out". The students got to play and socialize while reaping the benefits of a workout. As Ross explained:

I kind of see going to the gym or going for a run as a chore. Something you have to do but you don't really like it but you do it anyway. But with dance it's more enjoyable. I am still getting my heart rate up and on my feet for two hours. But I am doing that with friends and I am doing it with music. It's just a lot more entertaining and makes the time go a lot faster.

This idea of playing out hinges on the unintended benefits of movement. None of these students went looking for a dance organization in order to lose weight or get into better shape. It was simply an added benefit that through participation in the dance organization, they were able to be more active than if they had chosen an organization that was more sedentary. However, despite the fact that it was an unintended consequence of joining the group, the literature indicates that it has evident physical and mental health benefits. Students' descriptions of their participation in Dance Ballroom elucidate research findings on the health benefits of regular workouts: playing out not only gave these students healthier bodies, it also gave a lot of them a healthier attitude towards their bodies and towards strangers.

First off, I can move in ways that I wouldn't think I would have been able to. I think I lucked out as far as that goes. You know that awkward stage in high school for guys, where you are kind of getting used to being in your skin, you have new skin. I got to do that while I was learning to ballroom dance so that it kind of skipped that whole awkward stage for me. I've always been really coordinated, I have really good reflexes because of wrestling, but at the same time what I feel about myself, I didn't have that awkward period of time, and that was because of ballroom. - Joe

Playing out through dance gave these students an opportunity to learn more about their bodies, expand their capabilities in flexibility and strength, and grow more comfortable in their own skin. Playing out also exposed students to new experiences that made them grow more comfortable with other people, especially when gender roles were switched in the dance.

Gender Roles

Gender roles are created and upheld through many practices in people's everyday lives (West and Zimmerman, 1987), including in leisure activities such as dance. Dance has long been studied as an embodied practice linked to normative ideals of gender "...bodily movement is a form of meaning-making that is crucial to the production of cultural and social norms, it is also clear that bodies express already existing normative ideals." (Crewswell, 2006, 58).

Yet some dance spaces renegotiate those roles and play with gender norms (Atencio, 2008; Sherlock, 1996; Yamanashi Leib, & Bulman, 2009). This was to some extent the case with Dance Ballroom, much to the chagrin and disgust of the instructor, as we saw earlier. Dance Ballroom pushed against some gender norms while conforming to others, from having women dance as a lead in some of the choreographies, to having men sexually appraise each other during the dance. This was best exemplified in two choreographies.

The first choreography had three couples performing a Charleston/Trick Swing dance to *Y-y-y-yup* by Jerry Lewis. One of the couples consisted of two females that danced together. The woman that was the lead, Mary, dressed like the other male leads, in a bowler hat with a white collared shirt and long black pants. The only thing that distinguished her from the other two men was a pair of black suspenders that she wore over her shirt, while the other two leads had them hanging down their pants. She danced as the other men did, pretending to bumble around and look up the women's skirts.

Then I saw her standing there she was a pretty sight. But when she turned to walk away,
I really the saw the light! And I went, YEP! Ain't she nice? YEP! Said it twice. I've never
seen a gal who looks so friendly in retreat." - lyrics to *Y-y-y-yup* by Jerry Lewis

Yet her role didn't negate the notion of sex-driven men. Instead, the dance role played into that gender role, with the leads following the women around and trying to trip them in order to see up their skirts. While the leads played the sex-driven male role, it was the women, as follows, who upended more traditional gender role dynamics by going after the men and pretending to punch them out. The scene ended with the leads sprawled out unconscious and the follows (all women) taking the leads' bowler hats and placing them on their own heads as they place their legs onto the leads' shoulders, claiming victory over them like a mountain they scaled. The shifting gender roles in this choreography counter the norms that we still currently see in most dances (and unfortunately still deal with from our presidential candidates). The choreography transformed the follows from submissive, tolerant women who ignored the sex-crazed men to assertive, not-taking-your-shit women. This transformation was diametrically opposed to the traditionally gender-normed dances choreographed by the instructor, who consistently called on women to stay within traditionalist gender roles.

Another choreography involved a samba routine with a tribute to bad workout videos. Two couples, each a man and woman, come out dancing in tight spandex for the women and shorts for the men. At one point in the choreography, the women dance to the back and the two men come to the front, dancing a short solo footwork. They turn to each other and push off each other's hands to turn and end up performing a body roll off of each other. They then proceed to turn back and dance with the women. Now, this may have been a commentary on the assumed "gayness" of men in workout videos, but it was a surprising choice within the dance, as samba is usually a partnered dance that is rooted in male and female coupledness and traditional masculinity and femininity. This was the only instance that I saw of men taking on a more

feminine or same-sex sexualized role within a dance. Otherwise, the gender-switching was almost always done by females within the group. The script of dance, the male being the lead, was adhered to, though they were less stringent with ballroom expectations in Dance Ballroom. It was not really an option that was even considered by the team. As Ross explained: “The thing is there are so few guys in dance, that if you are a guy, you are almost guaranteed to lead.”

While these students pushed against the standardization and professionalization of ballroom within Dance Ballroom, they did not feel the need to push against the gendered norms that still bound their ballroom dancing within their own organization. In fact, doing so would probably detract from the relational and romantic intentions that the students had within the group, since nearly all the students were in heterosexual partnerships.

Access vs Reality

Dance Ballroom was the only dance organization in my research that mixed three levels of dancing. They hosted open beginner lessons for any University student, they had a members-only team in which they created their own dances together, and they also trained with a ballroom professional from a dance studio every other week for one of their dances. The latter experience afforded the team members access to the “true” experience of ballroom dance, complete with the standards and competitiveness associated with professional ballroom. This gave many of the team members a greater sense of what they did and did not want to experience as they transitioned out of the team.

For the majority, the experiences with the dance professional, and specifically with the dance they would go on to showcase at a professional ballroom dance conference, made them very uneasy with the state of ballroom outside of their own group. Petunia talked about the

standards of thinness and tanning that they were expected to measure up to, Ross denounced the experiences of competitiveness and judgment that he felt existed in those arenas. All of the members were very cognizant that the things they did in Dance Ballroom were not traditional ballroom experiences. None of the team choreographers ever told anyone to work out to be thinner or more fit for their performances, and not one team member encouraged another team member to tan themselves. Students were not pressured to be something they were not. They only had to worry about finishing the choreographies and performing them to the best of their abilities.

Due to their exposure to the professional ballroom dance world through the professional instructor, nearly all the ballroom dancers interviewed did not expect to continue performing or pursuing ballroom after college at the same level as they did in college. While they invested much of their college lives as dancers in this group, they didn't value ballroom as a career choice or as a lasting hobby. Instead, these dancers utilized ballroom to connect with their significant others, have fun, and be active in a way that did not feel like work.

Many of the dancers also talked about the huge cost to their pocket books if they were to continue pursuing ballroom lessons and competitions outside of college. The university organization allowed the students to take part in a very expensive hobby at very low cost. This access would be cut short after they left the university campus, as would the particular social group that they had formed. Many of the ballroom dancers acknowledged that ballroom lessons were normally very expensive. Even if they wanted to engage in ballroom socials, they would have to typically attend ballroom studios, where the vast majority of ballroom dances are held.

This limited the accessibility of being able to dance on a random evening with their significant other.

However, these dancers didn't think they would quit dancing altogether. Many mentioned that they would continue to dance with their significant others, as this was an important connection and shared hobby that they had between them. A few (Alice, Rose, Joe) talked about going into sub-groups of ballroom dance, such as salsa, blues or swing. These dances are more social and more often available outside of ballroom studios. They tend to be dances that are more popular in nightclubs, and therefore more easily accessible. As Joe put it, "Dancing is not going anywhere." He talked about his plans to balance a work schedule and dance by dancing with his partner, Alice, in their living room or going out to a nightclub to dance swing or blues. Note that those options weren't formal ballroom dance. The ballroom club was a tool that they used to support their relationships, gave them an outlet to express their joy, but not necessarily an environment that they wanted to continue participating in the future.

The ballroom group valued their dance connections more than their individual dance experiences. Their identity as dancers was tied to a partner and to the group, so they had some trouble thinking about going out and dancing by themselves. This supported the focus of ballroom, that it was a partner dance, wherein solo work was not highly valued. They didn't want to add stress to their lives by competing or paying for more expensive lessons. They didn't want to go out dancing alone and have to navigate unknown relationships. They wanted to be comfortable and active with others with whom they had an affinity.

While they balanced academic life with a dance life, their dance life was enveloped within the purview of their social life. The majority of the dancers on the team would continue to

have that social life after they left college, specifically with their romantic partners, so they did not feel as great of a need to belong to a dance organization or a dance studio to maintain that priority.

Conclusion

The Dance Ballroom students joined and stayed in the club as a way to increase connections with friends and loved ones. The benefits of exercise and ballroom immersion were secondary to their sense of belonging and relationship-building. Dance Ballroom offered these students a way to exercise through playing out with each other, become more comfortable with their bodies, share extensive social space and interaction with a network of good friends, and enjoy an environment that was creative and laid back from their academic pursuits. They didn't question the dynamics of the group, and took for granted the white space that they continued to uphold as they brought in their close friends and romantic interests, who generally had very similar race, class, religious, and family backgrounds. They valorized the ease of the space, which in turn narrowed their interest in making it a space in which they felt challenged—by social difference, by demands for more precise dancing, or by the dance form itself.

Looking toward the future, many of these students didn't see themselves dancing or performing in ballroom. They saw themselves taking part in more social dances, such as blues, swing or salsa, where they could go out with their friends or partners. Their participation didn't hinge on the standardization of ballroom or the culture of competition. Dance Ballroom members' participation was linked to their present social relations, to romance and belonging, and as these dynamics and the pressures that they faced in their lives switched, they expected that their dance activities would as well. For example, Alice, one of the few graduates in Dance

Ballroom, talked about how limited her dancing had become, outside of the Ballroom Club. Due to her late night schedule at work, she rarely went out dancing, and mainly to a social that her boyfriend wanted to attend, so that they could both dance. But she conceded that they didn't go and dance as long as they used to, due to their demanding jobs, and would go home quite earlier than when she was in school.

The ways in which Dance Ballroom members viewed their relationship to the dance form and to their own dance practices during and after college differed from those of members of the other two groups. Dance Hip-Hop members linked their experiences as dancers and performers to their past high school lives and performances, and expected to stop dancing hip-hop—and perhaps to stop dancing—once the “real world” began post-college. Dance Salsa members linked their college dance experiences to their careers and their hopes for exploring the world after college. They thus expected to continue dancing throughout their lives in much the same format as they did during college. Each of these sets of expectations was tied to members' sense of the physical demands of their dance forms, of the social formations in which the dance could occur, of the goals and purposes of dancing, and of their own sense of self in college and after college.

Chapter Four: Dance Salsa

As a researcher, I had a different relationship with the Dance Salsa organization than I did with the other organizations. While I observed and worked with members of all three organizations for multiple months, I had previously spent years with Dance Salsa, as its founder. At the time that I returned to conduct research, I had stepped away and hadn't been involved with the group for a number of years; some of the students still remembered me, however. I also had a close relationship with several of the core members.

I grappled with some of the issues that other dance anthropologists have observed in shifting from outsider to insider within their observations (Browning, 1995; Ness, 1992; Thomas & Cooper, 2002). I became an insider at the beginning of my first observation when one of the instructors announced that I had founded Dance Salsa. Since I knew the dance, I joined in the circle with the other students as the class was led. Every couple of minutes the instructors requested a partner switch, so as I made my way around the room many of the men who were leading approached me as an instructor to ask me questions about their dancing. Some became a bit nervous when doing their moves, apologizing when they didn't do them correctly. I took part in many of the classes, along with the flashmob that Dance Salsa was teaching each week. I even taught one of the classes one week, when the instructors for that day were a bit unsure how to proceed with a class that was unexpectedly full of men. I volunteered to help out and teach, having had ample experience with uneven classes.

This privileged position of being an insider gave me access to areas of the organization (such as instruction) that I didn't have in the other organizations. It also had me questioning the effects of my participation in the group on the research that I conducted and the conclusions I felt

I was reaching. I was not overly concerned about the effects of my positionality in the interviews and observations with current members, because many of these students dropped into the classes irregularly. Many of the instructors and core members, however, knew me well and brought this previous knowledge with them to our conversations. In addition, since I had trained many of the teachers, I found myself mirroring the same lessons that I taught years ago in my instructional work with the group, echoing the same refrain, “dancing is like walking” and “it doesn’t matter what is between your legs, you can lead or you can follow” in ways that likely increased all of our sense of familiarity with one another, even as my own role in the organization and involvement in Salsa had changed significantly since my time as an instructor and founder of the group.

Dance Salsa was a much more loosely structured organization than the other two dance groups examined in the preceding chapters. While there were six members who taught the classes and/or held administrative positions, the majority of participants consisted of an amorphous group of college students and community members who would drop in to a lesson or three over the course of a semester. A few individuals would attend nearly all of the classes, but since the organization rotated through different levels and different styles of Latin dance, there would often be completely different people participating from month to month.

Aside from the consistency with which people participated in classes or meetings, there was also a vast difference between those who participated in the lessons for Dance Salsa and who participated in Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop lessons. Several of the Dance Salsa attendees weren’t students at the university. When I asked what major or work the members participated in, many mentioned very loose connections to the University or none at all. One man

was a postdoc from the UK, another worked at a computer company in town, another was a software programmer who worked from home, while a fourth was a retired philosophy professor whose partner worked at the university library archives. Middle class, young professionals were quite common attendees at the lessons. The students who participated in the group also differed from the other two groups, and included a large group of international students who hailed from many different countries, including Greece, Turkey, China and Germany. Very few were Latin@. Aliyah, one of the instructors at Dance Salsa, remarked that whenever Dance Salsa had a social, there would be at least twenty languages in the room.

While this organization was much more diverse (in terms of affiliation, age, and country of origin) than the other two extracurricular organizations, Dance Salsa was also much less cohesive. There was a core group of about six students, five of whom were current college students and one of whom was an alum. They had been in the group the longest and served as instructors and administrators for the organization. Besides this group, the rest of the participants floated in and out, attending occasional lessons or socials that Dance Salsa conducted. This meant that the relationships between the core group were very tight (three of the women had even been roommates), but the relationships among the other Dance Salsa participants outside of the core group were nearly non-existent.

Of the university students taking lessons, the vast majority were juniors, seniors, or graduate students. During one observation of a group of roughly 30 participants, only one person with whom I spoke with was a first year undergraduate. The older skew to this population reflected, as I describe below, a more strongly future-oriented rationale for engaging in the group than was the case in the other two groups.

Not surprisingly, since the makeup of the classes differed from the other two dance organizations, the motives and goals of these members also greatly differed. Many of the students had a loose but persistent attraction to salsa dancing. They not only danced during the semesters that the university and the organization were in session, but they usually danced even more during the winter and summer breaks, when they had more time or were in cities with greater access to salsa nightclubs. In Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop, members rarely danced outside of their classes and rehearsals.

Many members of Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop said that they joined or stayed in the student organizations because it allowed them to deepen practices they had begun in high school or their romantic relationships. While social relations were a benefit that some of the Dance Salsa students talked about, the majority joined Dance Salsa, and danced salsa outside of the group, because they felt a desire to connect with the diversity of people that the dance form itself attracted. The exposure to a dance that mixed many cultures and types of people, and that invited many expressions of dance, was a key motivator to these students. Thus, having 20 languages in a dance social, and having a rotating group of people attend the organization events, was not viewed as problematic by those who attended Dance Salsa events—for example, by making it harder to form a group of close friends. This was not what Dance Salsa participants were looking for. The exposure to a constantly-changing, diverse group of people was what drew them in.

The Melting Pot

Salsa music and salsa dance originated from an amalgamation of cultures. The music played in clubs and dance socials worldwide and was infused with Cuban, Afro-Cuban, Puerto

Rican, Colombian and Latin jazz musical influences (Hutchinson, 2004). The basic foundations of salsa dance are fundamentally the same all over the world. However, there are vastly different styles that grow out of particular regions and environments, in what Sydney Hutchinson terms “dance accents”. These “accents” typically distinguish where a dancer is from (2015).

One of the largest driving forces in the spread of Salsa dancing consists of the jumble of nightclubs in major cities all across the world that provide public venues for salsa dancing (Bosse, 2015). The largest and most well-known of these clubs was the Palladium Ballroom in New York, which exclusively showcased salsa in its halls (Hutchinson, 2015). It became the epicenter for mambo (another term for salsa), hosting salsa bands that reinvented the music by weaving jazz harmonies into the Cuban rhythms, all the while welcoming dancers from all backgrounds and allowing them great freedom to mix their dance styles into the dance. This freedom to mix—and indeed, the celebration of such mixing—was key to salsa’s spread and to the open culture deliberately fostered in nightclubs. As Angel Rodriguez (quoted in Hutchinson) said:

The most important thing about the Palladium was that’s where all the Jewish and the Puerto Ricans and the Blacks got together without issues—because of this wonderful music that’s a mix of everything that we’ve ever done! (Hutchinson, 2015, p. 30)

This eclectic mix of cultures and rhythms became the foundation of Salsa dancing throughout the world. The music and the dance traveled and intermingled with the flavors of different cities everywhere, taking root in the dance scenes from the United States to Japan (Iwanaga, 2015).

Such social scenes have been vital to spreading Salsa dance throughout the world, and the dance's global, public footprint was a large attraction for many of the dancers that were a part of Dance Salsa. Several students were spurred to take salsa lessons because they saw it in a club or appreciated the music that they heard in a bar. They wanted to take part in a social scene that was accessible to many different people and that was also affordable. Dance Salsa provided this venue. The organization provided nearly free lessons to the university population and locals in the area; the cost of classes was around \$5 for a month. They also hosted several free salsa socials each year. This approach to salsa stood in contrast to the commodification of salsa dancing by ballroom studios and formal dance companies, which have incorporated salsa in their lesson offerings (Renta, 2015), but often charge prices that many students and young professionals cannot afford.

Evan, an international student from Cyprus, talked about how as an international student, he able to access these spaces of common ground through dancing salsa at nightclubs in the city. He felt he had more common ground with Latin@s than Americans:

Before coming to the US, I had taken some salsa classes in my home country. I couldn't be dancing Greek dancing in the US, because there aren't many Greeks here in town. So what was the other type of dance that I was aware of? Salsa dancing. And that's how I started taking more classes. And then of course I noticed that there was a large community of Latinos in the city, and I found myself having more things in common with Latinos than with Americans. There are so few Europeans, it is very hard to meet them, so it was not just not dancing. It was also bonding with a culture that I felt I had things in

common. Like a sense of humor, like using your hands a lot. Touching, speaking using your hands. Having an accent. Being in a country that is not your home country.

Finding connections within and because of the diversity of people who were attracted to salsa, finding people who moved and expressed themselves in similar ways within that diversity, gave these students, particularly international students, a space to bond that they said they seldom found in UM's classrooms, cafeterias, or campus. Dance Salsa fostered an environment that was deliberately welcoming to different people, at different stages in their lives, and with a broad range of interests. Rosa really appreciated this aspect, "In Dance Salsa you can meet a lot of different kind of people, not only [college] students. I liked that environment." Rosa further remarked that Dance Salsa was very appealing because it was welcoming to all people, whether international students, graduate students, professors, or even community members from the city.

Aliyah cherished the diversity as well. It afforded her greater freedom in expressing herself in different ways. During her academic classes, she felt she couldn't truly express her sense of style, which included finding, in her words, experimental clothing in thrift stores:

I think it's really fun to wear colorful things, and shiny things. Things that I really wouldn't wear during my day-to-day life. There is a stack of clothes in my room that's like, in a separate pile. Because I know, when I get dressed in the morning... I cannot wear that. And then at night, I can ruffle through that pile and wear the stuff that I really want to wear. It's [the dance scene] very like, how do you say that, pluricentric? There are a lot of different people wearing a lot of different things. So I don't feel weird wearing something different there.

The eclectic mix of different tastes, colors, cultures and languages made for an environment that many of these dancers felt was inclusive and all-embracing. The feeling that they got from being part of Dance Salsa was quite different than the feelings students described experiencing on UM's broader campus, and was also quite different than the feelings described by members of the other two groups. Dance Hip-Hop members loved the feeling of performing for others, of impressing their audiences with movements and clothing that fit the commodified style that was popular in a university hip-hop organization. For the majority of their performances, the dancers all matched outfits, from wearing the same colors to the same style of pants. In Dance Ballroom, during classes, the members could wear any sort of comfortable clothing, there was no uniform that they needed. However, when the group performed, they all wore the same outfit, or clothing that fit the choreographer's idea of the dance. Diversity of clothing and even different expressions of movements were not encouraged. Dance Hip-Hop and Dance Ballroom were teams that needed to look nearly cohesive and nearly identical. In Dance Salsa, the organization did not celebrate homogenization or matching styles. Outside of learning the basic steps of a dance, I noticed in my observations that originality and personal style was encouraged. During one class that I observed, the instructors talked about adding hip or shoulder movements into the dance to accentuate different parts of the music, or to throw into the dance as occasional personal styling. The timing and placement was up to the dancer. By not emphasizing team dance or team competition, Dance Salsa was able to cater to individual expressions while teaching participants the basics of salsa dancing.

While this easy, affordable access to salsa dancing through Dance Salsa and social night clubs was a great attraction to many who took part in Dance Salsa, there was a lack of interest in

connecting with the different roots and cultures of salsa. Very few of these members, aside from a couple of the instructors and Evan, who started a separate Cuban Salsa organization, felt a need to explore the different cultural influences of salsa dancing. Learning the intricacies of different “dance accents” was not a priority. Dance Salsa taught a style of salsa that is termed On1 Salsa, which breaks on the first beat of the music. The influences stem from Los Angeles, California, and also from other Latin countries, like Colombia (known as Cali Style) and Cuba (through a salsa style called Rueda de Casino). Dance Salsa did not teach another popular form of salsa, known as On2 Salsa, which draws its roots from Puerto Rico, Nuyoricans and the Palladium era dances in New York (which is why it is also referred to as New York Style or Mambo) (Hutchinson, 2015b).

Limitations of the Melting Pot

Dance Salsa chose to teach On1 Salsa because it was the most common and popular salsa style in the Midwestern region. In a sense, the disinterest in learning about and connecting to the different cultural foundations that made up salsa dance was similar to the disconnection that Dance Hip-Hop members felt with the hip-hop form that they adopted. Differently than the different forms of hip-hop, however, the different forms of salsa are seldom in direct conflict with one another as to their purpose or their social goals.

Learning the backgrounds and cultural foundations of the different styles of salsa would give the Dance Salsa members greater depth and connection to the different expressions within the music. By learning the different roots of salsa, they would have been able to develop better tools to express the rhythms and styles that the music called for, so that they could connect more with dancers from different areas and styles. This deeper interest in the cultural backgrounds and

“dance accents” of salsa was “a history that those with the requisite cultural literacy can access by watching and doing but remains a closed book to those who learn salsa as simply a set of steps to be executed,” (Hutchinson, 2015b, p. 41).

Dance Salsa members didn't purposely choose one style of salsa over another. The music played for On1 and On2 Salsa was played at all the nightclubs. The members danced to the style that the rest of their partners danced, and what the community within the city danced, which was On1 Salsa. Because On1 Salsa dominated that particular social dance scene, and because most dancers thought of the dance form itself as a skill they were learning, many dancers did not recognize that they were dancing a particular language of salsa. I observed many members dancing on a different beat and/or switching beats and styles without discernment. To the vast majority of the dancers, the different styles and cultural backgrounds were not a necessary part of the dance, because they used salsa dancing for different, more shallower ends. Nancy Ehrenreich (2001) argues that attraction to salsa, viewed by the masses as a sort of commercialized “sexiness”, as something simply to consume in one form, misses the much more complex set of meanings of the music and the dance, and what Latin@s would call “sabor”, or the flavor of the dance (p. 802).

Purpose of Salsa Dancing

Many of the students felt that learning to dance salsa would be a benefit to their life choices in the future, including by expanding their potential romantic connections. Others, like Liam, also viewed salsa dancing as advantageous for future work endeavors. Since he was introduced to salsa dancing when he was traveling in China, he thought it would be a positive experience to bring a future boss to a salsa club, instead of a regular bar, for business meetings.

Other students, like Aliyah, Izabella and Evan, identified with the diverse, open nature of the salsa scene and used it to connect with their own creativity and to connect with people with whom they felt an affinity and a sense of comfort.

Applications Beyond Student Life

Many of the dancers at Dance Salsa reported benefits to participation that were similar to those of the members of the other two organizations, such as relieving stress they felt from their academics and employment, and letting them exercise in a way that was more fun than going to the gym. In addition, many of the core members whom I interviewed (whose time and energy dedicated to the organization was most parallel to the time spent by the members of the other two groups) spoke about the benefits of having the opportunity to teach several classes in Dance Salsa (this would be the parallel to other students' experiences creating choreographies for their groups).

Spending meaningful time in an extracurricular organization and holding an official position is correlated with higher leadership development outcomes (Ewing et al., 2009; Foreman & Retallick, 2012). Aliyah felt that having the dance experience on her resume was a unique quality, especially her teaching experience through Dance Salsa. She believed that it made the applications that she submitted for jobs stand out in comparison to other applicants. Multiple students mentioned how the experience of working with different people of different ages, races, and backgrounds afforded them better teaching skills and relational skills that they could utilize in their academic and work lives. Evan, a graduate student in Dance Salsa, spoke to these benefits:

Actually it has helped me a lot as a teaching assistant. One of the first negative comments that I was getting on the TA evaluations was that I wasn't speaking loud enough. So in the last years of my TA reviews, I don't get that at all. Why? Because when there is music and you are teaching, you need to speak louder. So that is one thing that has helped, teaching dancing. And also just teaching different people of different learning abilities and different ages, that required different learning methods and working around that.

Many of the students expected to have careers that would draw on these experiences—from traveling internationally to working with companies that hired a diverse range of people and provided services to diverse customers. Being a part of Dance Salsa offered the core members hands-on tools and experiences that could be taken into their classrooms and into their post-college occupations. The composition of the classes afforded members of the club with an opportunity to engage with a much more diverse group of people than they did in most classes, on campus, or in the community, and they recognized the benefits of this experience in making them more “global” in their orientation.

What I found interesting was that while many Dance Hip-Hop and Dance Ballroom members also taught and held levels of authority within their respective organizations, none of them referred to these experiences as a resource that they could draw on in their careers after college. The members from the other two groups referred to their leadership positions as extra responsibilities that helped them stay focused and committed to their organizations, but not specifically to anything they planned to do after college. Petunia, from Dance Ballroom, had this to say when I asked her about her dancing and leadership role: “I think it does help with time management. Being at practices and having to schedule that time in and still work around that

time to be doing class work. And work, whatever else. But also captaining again. It helps me be more organized.”

The students in Dance Hip-Hop and Dance Ballroom only saw the applications of leadership roles and their respective dances primarily to their university lives. Dance Salsa members applied their experiences beyond the university, as potential advantages that they could use in their careers. The temporal orientations underlying these different understandings of the applications of their dance experiences also mirrored the Dance Salsa students’ emphasis on the future role they expected salsa to play in their lives, while students in both other groups emphasized the time-bound nature of their involvement in the dance form itself, and its associated organization.

Inclusion within Diversity

The primary role of the Dance Salsa group was to get people ready to dance socially, in dance clubs and dance socials. All the dancers in the group went out salsa dancing in the city and beyond. Some did not go out regularly, but a majority went out several times a week. They would recount going out four to five times a week, on as many nights as the nightclubs had salsa dancing available. This was disproportionally more dancing outside of the organization than what Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop members reported, which made sense since outside of dance socials and a few nightclubs that played hip-hop, there weren’t many venues outside of the university to dance those two dances. As noted previously, there was much greater diversity in the salsa group compared to the other dance groups. There was also greater diversity in Dance Salsa’s events than there was in the make-up of the university. One of the instructors was Black and another was Latino. Indian students and Greek students each occasionally dropped into the

classes. Salsa was seen by many of the members in Dance Salsa as a down-to-earth, unifying dance that connected them to people and places throughout the city. It was accessible to nearly everyone, due to its popularity in nightclubs in almost every country (Hutchinson, 2015a). And while the members needed to feel some comfort level with dancing to participate in social dancing, they did not need to feel that they had been, were, or would be professional dancers in any sense. At the same time, the joy they took in the dance form itself, and its wide availability around the world, meant that participants often felt a long-term affiliation to the dance form.

When I asked the question, “Do you view yourself as a dancer?”, the majority of students in Dance Salsa responded in the affirmative, but some not immediately. They took time to decide on their answers, weighing the investment of time that they put into it and why they danced. Nearly every student intended to dance salsa after college and saw the dance as a way to connect with others when traveling or going to work in other places.

Just as they imagined the places and ways that they could dance salsa to be quite broad, peoples’ definitions of being a dancer were also a lot more inclusive than in the other two groups. Logan, a man who took lessons quite often in different organizations and studios, believed that anyone who liked to dance was a dancer. Sheer appreciation was enough. This open definition was shared by many others in Dance Salsa and it seemed to stem from an acknowledgement that many people learned to dance salsa not only in dance lessons, but also through informal social gatherings and nightclubs.

Salsa dancing was also a big part of some of these student’s familial or national cultures, which was not the case in either other dance group. Rosa, who was from Colombia, learned to love salsa at family parties. Roman had also been introduced to salsa music through family

gatherings. Because many members danced beyond the university organization, at salsa nights and in other cities when they traveled during school breaks, they highlighted the diversity of people and cultures who they discovered through the dance.

These students didn't see themselves as professional or extremely technical dancers. On the contrary, they viewed themselves as proficient enough in salsa dancing and Latin dancing that they could go out, socialize and make connections with other people. This was the primary goal and the primary joy of the dance. The majority of the Dance Salsa crew actually danced more during academic breaks than during the school year. They went out to nightclubs almost anywhere they found themselves over breaks, and attended live salsa band events. Several of the members talked about their participation in Dance Salsa as being motivated by its easy accessibility and low financial threshold. It provided a familiar, welcoming social space no matter where they went.

The Dance Salsa participants identified with a kind of Global Dancer ideal. They intended to dance all over the world, because many loved to travel or planned to travel for work after school. Izabella even imagined dancing in different places as she was dancing in a nightclub in her hometown: "I've always wanted to travel, and go to South America, Central America. Sometimes I close my eyes and pretend I am there, when I am dancing salsa."

Almost every one of the members intended to dance for the rest of their lives because they felt it was a way to connect with different people and find common ground with them. Almost anyone could be a Global Dancer with a little effort—it was less the technical mastery of the dance and more the mindset that marked salsa for Dance Salsa members. The Global Dancer

connects with literature on other salsa groups around the world, as cosmopolitan individuals who are open to different cultures and cultural experiences (Skinner, 2007).

Extracurricular activities that make students feel connected and welcome add to their wellbeing and positive experiences in college (Foreman & Retallick, 2012). Students and other community members participating in Dance Salsa described feeling connected not to a small group of people or to the university or town, but instead to the world. They felt welcomed in this space when they sometimes didn't in the university or the town. Their accents, cultural norms, desire to meet people from around the world and to travel, were celebrated and created a welcoming mix for people who moved in and out of this space, even as the space maintained certain norms of openness and mixing that are common to salsa spaces around the world. While participants described the joy and comfort that they took in Dance Salsa—particularly students who felt that it was a consistently safer and more welcoming space than many others on campus—the organization itself was simply one of many venues in which they expected to dance salsa now and in the future. Thus, their participation in the organization was described as participation in the world of salsa, and thus the world. Students expected that their salsa skills would provide them access to a familiar and welcoming social venue around the world, which they expected to explore even further after graduation. From impressing their Chinese bosses, to finding friends and a romantic partner in a new city, to finding a space halfway around the world where they could fully express their clothing tastes, salsa served as a present and future. These motivations for global connection, to become in a sense cosmopolitan individuals, has been documented in literature in other salsa scenes and salsa dancing (Borland, 2009; Bosse, 2015; Chang, 2015;

Skinner, 2007). The dancers use the loose, interweaving connection of salsa as a bond to other people and cultures.

Through these experiences in nightclubs, the salsa dancers met many other people, from many different cultures and backgrounds. They began to grow social circles that evolved from the salsa scene. And these experiences, which were supported by but not constrained by the university-based organization, were described by students as greatly adding to their academic lives. As Evan explained:

So I wanted to meet people from all over the world and communicate with them. I couldn't achieve this in my schooling and my department because it was very competitive and in the first couple of years of grad school in my department it's your death, my life, kind of thing. I also found that we were segregating with nationalities within my department. Koreans with Koreans, Chinese with Chinese, Japanese with Japanese, Americans with Americans, no Europeans. ...I noticed that I failed to communicate with all these cultures. And it was one of the goals of coming to the USA, not just a degree but also broadening your horizons. What did it for me? It was dancing. That's where I met people from all over the world. That's where I met friends. Not within my department, but within the salsa world.

International students in particular described feeling more comfortable in Dance Salsa than on the campus, and felt a connection to other students that was unlike what they experienced in their classrooms at school. The salsa space—in and outside of campus boundaries—gave these students a sense of community and connection to their new host country, something

that they described (and the literature supports) as very important for successful adjustment to their new school (Hendrickson, Rosen, Aune, 2011; Williams, & Johnson, 2011).

Aliyah, one of the instructors in Dance Salsa, also commented on the diversity of the organization and how it was a strength when so many different people came together: “I like that it is so inclusive. We are here to get people involved and to bring dancers together.”

These answers were very different than the Dance Ballroom students. Many of them brought in their friends to the dance organization, so it became a tool to maintain their existing social associations. Dance Hip-Hop members, in contrast, often described the group as providing them a sense of comfort because it provided a familiar extension of high school activities. In contrast, the members in Dance Salsa expressed the sense of comfort that they experienced when they connected with the unique melting pot that the environment of salsa allowed them to experience, and cherished the Dance Salsa environment in particular because it fostered this feeling across meetings held at the university, but (like the salsa clubs) did not lead to the exact same group of people being present at each meeting.

To Rosa, Dance Salsa helped her feel connected to the life that she was missing from her motherland. An international student from Colombia, salsa was part of her everyday experience at home. Connecting with her culture through the dance organization fortified her well-being and afforded her a greater sense of personal and social congruity in a radically different environment. It gave her a sense of belonging, which is one critical factor for an international student to have a positive transition to a university setting (Moore & Popadiuk, 2011). She was also delighted that Dance Salsa had people from all over the world participating in the lessons. Rosa said this was

the one aspect she liked the most about Dance Salsa, “The variety of people. There are people from everywhere and every age!”

Nearly all of the students reported positive experiences in meeting people from different cultures and nationalities through the organization. Evan, for example, explained:

I think dancing involves interacting with people of different background, socio-economic backgrounds and also academic backgrounds, and different ages, and different nationalities. So it's the whole world, through dancing you meet the whole world. So forget about school, dancing is life. School is not, in my opinion. I think it is a bigger school, in other words. The dancing experience prepares you better for the interactions with the real world.

Dance Salsa members described the multifaceted benefits of involvement in Dance Salsa and the salsa scene more generally in clear terms: they met interesting new people from around the world; they spent time in an environment that they felt reflected their own inclusionary values; and they felt the skills they gained in Dance Salsa were helpful in the worlds that they currently inhabited (e.g., TAing) and the worlds that they hoped to inhabit (e.g., working for an international company where they could take their boss out salsa dancing).

True Expressions

Dancing is associated with numerous positive outcomes, from promoting healthy physical fitness (Angioi, Metsios, Koutedakis, Wyon, 2009; Bremer, 2007), to decreasing anxiety (Adilogullari, 2014; Lesté & Rust, 1990) and increasing self-esteem (Quiroga Murcia, Kreutz, Clift, & Bongard, 2010). In addition to reporting experiences that corresponded with these reported outcomes, the members in Dance Salsa also mentioned a positive effect that was not

mentioned by other groups. This centered on self-expression and honest communication through the dance. They recounted how social dancing through salsa afforded them the ability to express their true selves. Evan, for example, said:

I think I am being myself when I dance. Being myself means you are presenting yourself. Say you are talking about yourself. When you dance, it's as if you are talking about yourself. It's a way to communicate. It's a communication with eye contact, with hands. So it's a proper conversation if you ask me.

Similarly, Izabella discussed how certain environments in which she participated (at her work as a teacher, at the university as a student), hindered her self-expression due to having to dress and express herself within what she perceived as socially appropriate boundaries. But when she would go out social dancing, she could express everything and anything that she desired:

But then when I am at the club, I can be more self-expressive and not have to worry about being appropriate in front of kids. So I can shake my hips and I can shimmy. And I can wear a shorter skirt if I wanted to. In lessons, I worry more about being professional in the way I dance. So making sure that I am being accurate in my steps and telling everyone the appropriate things about dance. But when I am out, I can be more creative.

Self expression, creativity and being in touch with one's sensuality and sexuality were all mentioned as experiences that these university students had while on the salsa dance floor. These were different experiences than the ones they had while working or studying at the university. These students didn't feel that they could connect with their desires in their academic settings, yet their sexual expressions were an important part of their lives. This finding is similar to other studies on salsa communities (Gotfrit, 1988; Skinner, 2008). The salsa scene offered the students

a space to connect with their sensuality, as well as their desire to connect with the bodies and sensuality of others. Unlike the Dance Hip-Hop members, these desires were not externally-focused. Dance Salsa members were not focused on their audience, or the audience's perception of whether something was not enough or too sexual. Salsa dancing, along with ballroom dancing, is a tactile experience between two people. For Dance Salsa students, tactile connections were missing in other university spaces. Dancing socially combined improvisation, creativity, and bodily connection within the approximately three minutes these dancers had with a partner during one song. Dance Salsa members also spoke about how the body language and connections with different people changed the dance. Izabella explained this through the relational connections she had with the people she danced with:

When I dance with [boyfriend] it's more sensual and romantic. We really connect. I am always looking at him. But when I am dancing with my friends, it's more fun.... With a new person, it's playful, exploring. It depends on the person.

Some of these dancers believed that accommodating to the skills of a partner, and adjusting to the music and timing, would give the partner cues as to who the person was off of the dance floor. The interaction and communication between one body and another typically built a foundation of respect between the two people who were dancing together, as long as they adjusted to each other. This led to some of the dancers, like Steve, to report that salsa dancing was a great way to develop friendships:

Dancing is a good way to quickly develop a friendship. There is a lot of... Trust is a good word. Intimacy. That comes with dancing. You can pretty quickly get to know someone, if not intellectually, than that sort of raw emotional level.

Creatively connecting with another partner on the dance floor usually brought happiness to each of these dancers, but this varied depending on what would happen within the three minute span. Izabella spoke about how she was differentially affected by a dance depending on the expressions of her partners:

I feel different things with every person I dance with though. I always feel good usually, unless the partner is not making me feel good or being rude or hurting me in some way.

But usually I always feel happy when I am dancing. But my reaction and level of happiness definitely depends on the partner I am dancing with.

During the classes and socials that Dance Salsa directed, I observed the instructors pointedly instructing the students to respect people's boundaries through holding a frame with their arms at a certain distance. I also saw people who did not know each other stand a bit farther from one another, while those that danced quite often together, who were more comfortable with each other, danced a bit closer, while still maintaining a distance between each other's bodies. This respect towards the other person was also reflected in the movements of leaders and followers within the dance. The instructors made it clear that a lead should not force a partner into a movement. And the follow should not jump ahead into a movement based on an assumption about what their partners were going to do.

The respect for space and timing, along with giving room for tactile creativity within the structured boundaries of the salsa dance, allowed for both parties within a pairing to express themselves in ways that they could not in academic or professional settings. The members of Dance Salsa reported how important this outlet was for them. Aliyah, who had had a surgery on

her foot and couldn't dance for several months, stated this explicitly when discussing how she felt about salsa dancing:

Stress relief, happiness. These feelings are really strong right now because I was prohibited from dancing for the past four months, which was so hard! I would cry, and it really solidified how I feel when I dance because not being able to do that was really mind opening. I need dance to feel good about myself, to be able to unwind. To really feel like I am enjoying something. I would get so dance sick, when I heard music.

Connection: Sexuality & Gender Roles

Dance Salsa consistently had disproportionately more men showing up to the classes than women. During one observation, in the first hour of the beginner/intermediate salsa class, fourteen men and eight women took part in the class. In the second hour, for beginner/intermediate bachata, two more men showed up for a total of sixteen men and eight women.

These ratios were not unusual for the group, but they were quite striking in comparison to the male-to-female ratios in the other two groups, where men were much more scarce. Dance Ballroom had to go to great lengths to get enough men to be leads on their performance team, and the Dance Hip-Hop team had only one male dancer. One of the salsa instructors, Aliyah, gave a possible explanation of the phenomenon, “I think it's because salsa is very publicized as a guy-girl thing. It has guy roles and girl roles. Ballroom might feel a little like a fantasy world for guys. It might make guys feel uncomfortable like they are supposed to dance like something out of a Disney movie.”

Many of the heterosexual men who were taking salsa mentioned that meeting women and connecting with them on the dance floor was a big reason that they took part in the dance. Liam

talked about enjoying dancing swing, but the majority of attendees he saw in swing clubs were older people, so he had a harder time meeting women his age who he might be interested in. For others, salsa dancing was a great way to connect with a current romantic partner. Steve had a long-distance girlfriend who had a dance background and he looked forward to dancing with her when he would visit her.

Many people described how the connection made through dance seemed to amplify their feelings of attraction to the people they were interested in. For one student, Izabella, that connection almost became an addiction:

It just feels like nothing else. You don't think about the dance. It's so hard to describe. You just get so connected with the person and you are both on the same level... Typically when I am dancing with someone it's a guessing game. Ooo, I wonder what we are going to do next. It's playful, it's fun. But when you have that special connection with someone on the dance floor, I think, I am not doing that anymore. I am just on a whole different level. It sounds so corny, but you are one with the music, you are one with each other. It can be addicting. I've equated it to a drug. Because in my case, it was with someone who I was dating at the time, but was not good in other realms outside of dance. So it wasn't healthy for me relationship wise, but I loved the dancing so much that it was... It was hard to give up that connection and that dance. Like a drug would be. It was hard to quit. Because it just made you feel so good. You just wanted it, craved it.

The feelings of closeness and connection, physically and emotionally, as two people interpreted the music together and communicated with their bodies, enhanced their feelings of attraction to each other. The dance gave space to explore different body interpretations in public.

While in some respects this was similar to the feeling of connection and closeness described by members of Dance Ballroom, one key difference was that ballroom dancing was choreographed—the partners were neither interpreting nor creating movement together. The kinds of interactions that Dance Salsa members had while dancing together brought the physical movement together with constant, creative negotiations over how the unchoreographed movements would be negotiated and explored.

The salsa dance floor allowed for expressions of closeness and physical touch to be experienced within certain perimeters of the dance. As mentioned in the last section, the assumption that dance cues and connection on the dance floor represented the type of connection and communication that people might have off of the dance floor was very enticing for some people. Unfortunately what happened on the dance floor didn't always match what happened off of the dance floor.

I mainly observed these types of sexual connections among heterosexual couples. I didn't see any pairings of same-sex couples in any of the classes or socials. I did see a few women who led in the dances and the lessons, and I did observe one male instructor explain a move in a class by becoming a follow himself and dancing with many of the men. But romantic same-sex couples were not common in lessons or in the social dancing scene. While not that unusual in the global salsa dance scene (Hutchinson, 2015), same-sex dancing was not evident in this organization or in the city's dance scene.

Expressions of Gender

While many of the instructors started the classes with a saying that I had actually coined years ago, “It doesn't matter what's between your legs, you can lead or you can follow,” I

observed many of the men having a hard time dancing with other men in lessons where there were very few women. Men outnumbered women two to one and sometimes three to one in the majority of the lessons that Dance Salsa taught. No man typically volunteered to dance as a follow with another man. This hesitation to dance with someone of the same sex became such an issue in one of the classes that I was asked to teach that particular hour-long lesson. The gender discrepancy was large, with over 20 men in the class and only four women. The regular instructors were at a loss what to do for that class. I had to stress the importance of knowing both the roles of lead and follow in order to become a better dancer. I then requested that all the men take turns leading and following throughout the lesson. Upon being asked to do it, and seeing other men comply, every man somewhat reluctantly complied.

Very few members of Dance Salsa discussed the striking discrepancy in the gender breakdown in classes. Rosa mentioned it briefly when she said that it was the only negative thing that she found in the organization because she felt sorry for the men who didn't have a partner. Nearly all of the members thought it was natural to have men leading and women following. Instructors who taught the classes were aware that this norm—which existed both in Dance Salsa and more generally in many salsa clubs—created concerns for some club members. Aliyah brought up the expectations of gender in salsa dance:

I think that in class, there may very well be people who have homosexual tendencies, and they feel maybe confined by the roles set in place. You know this mindset of guy leads, girl follows. Guy-girl pair. This is culturally "the way" that it's done. So people want to fill those roles because they want to participate in the culture of this dance.

As with ballroom dancing, salsa dance partner roles are seen as gender-demarcated (Gainor, 2006). Because of the gender role scripts that underlie the salsa dancing culture, many of the men stayed farther away from their male partners, when I requested that they dance same gender, than they did from female partners. At issue was the assumed gay sexual identity that people associated with male follows (regardless of the dance). Many of the men danced with women because it was seen as normal to express a connection with a person of the opposite sex. Liam spoke to this was I asked him about men following:

I just think realistically, most guys aren't going to not be a lead because in past dances guys have always been leads, and they like to lead the lady. It makes them feel more dominant I guess. And I just guess it's a status thing, I feel. Cause dancing has a sexual aspect to it. Guys want to be a leader in it. So they naturally will want to be a lead.

Sex has been interwoven with dance, especially Latin dance, throughout time (Hanna, 2010). The standards of “past dances”, in salsa (and in ballroom too), along with sexuality and gender norms have set the standards for men, especially heterosexual men, to focus only on one role in dancing. To be a man, is to be a leader. The assumption on the naturalness is never questioned.

Multiple instructors within the classes tried to push against these dance and gender norms, as they believed that in to become a better dancer, a dancer should know both roles in salsa dancing. Aliyah discussed how the instructors tried to emphasize this in their classes:

Roy, the guy I instruct with sometimes, he'll walk right up to a guy and say, Ok, I'm your follow, lead me. And he'll really do the part. And so it shows, it's just ok. It's just class.

This doesn't mean you're gay. Girl to girl physical contact is just much more socially accepted than guy to guy physical contact, in any case.

The foundational steps are the same. The turns are the same. The movements are merely mirrored, as one partner steps forward the other partner steps back and vice versa. But by practicing both roles, one becomes a more skilled dancer, able to better “communicate” through the dance form itself with a range of partners. This understanding of how to improve their own dancing skills ran into conflict occasionally with dancers' own perceptions of gender and sexuality. This conflict at Dance Salsa in some ways mirrors a broader conflict in many salsa clubs, where gender and sexual identity norms have remained relatively intransigent.

This conflict was similar to tensions around gender and sexual expressions that were experienced within the other two organizations. Men were always the leads, and never became a follow in Dance Ballroom, while the women only stepped in to lead when there was a shortage of men. In Dance Hip-Hop, the only male dancer declined to do choreographies that would be seen as more feminine, so that he would not be perceived as a gay man. Regardless of the dance or group, all three organizations perpetuated the same traditional norms of sexuality and gender.

Conclusion

Dance Salsa was an organization that inhabited two worlds, one within the university and one in the social dance scene in nightclubs. Because this organization did not have a set team, beyond the few core members that taught classes, their focus in all of their lessons was on how to become better social dancers. The focus was on personal growth and building a connection with other people who were from vastly different backgrounds. Members described their goal in joining the group as becoming a more globally connected dancer. The majority of these

members danced often outside of the academic institution and planned to continue dancing long after they left university. These dancers connected with salsa in order to feel more socially comfortable, in a multicultural and multinational space that they felt mirrored their own backgrounds and social norms, and to explore greater creativity outside of their academic experiences. The members also used Dance Salsa as a way to address and bypass the cultural and racial segregation they experienced at UM. However, a majority of these dancers were themselves not interested in the cultural foundations of salsa dance itself, similar to the disinterest of dancers in the other two organizations.

While ethnic and national and affiliative and age diversity was encouraged in the Dance Salsa group (though not in the other two groups), different expressions of gender and sexual identity were not, which was a common finding across all three organizations. Men, in particular, did not feel comfortable or want to learn to follow. Many of the male dancers said that they used salsa to meet other women, so that they could become romantically involved. I did not observe any men who were romantic with other men in the salsa scene. Few women danced with each other, and only in cases where they either were good friends or there was no one else to dance with, when social dancing.

Studying this group had me questioning the effects of my participation in the group on the research I conducted and the conclusions I felt I was reaching. A few of these students knew me from my teaching years ago and several saw me as a figure of authority within the organization, especially when I was asked to teach something in class. But the effect of my own positionality, I believe, was minimal, or at least almost uniform across the three organizations, because the dancers in the other two organizations also viewed me as an authority figure. I had

introduced myself as a dancer. Many of the students across the three groups had heard that I ran a dance studio. Perhaps being viewed as an insider, as a dancer, allowed these students to open up more in regards to their experiences within each organization and in terms of their dancing, but it also certainly also impacted their sense of what I might understand about their lives as students at UM.

Chapter Five: Identities

Every interview that I conducted began with the question: would you describe yourself as a dancer? I asked this to each member of the three organizations in order to begin a conversation about how they viewed dance, and their experiences in UM's dance organizations, and if those experiences related to a dancer identity. Identity is deeply shaped by the meanings we attach to ourselves through activities and social roles that we hold within society, which are also affirmed by others (DeLamater, Myers, & Collett, 2014; Gecas, & Burke, 1995). It is within these dimensions that the members of the dance groups made sense of and linked their identities as dancers to their experiences with their roles within and outside of their respective extracurricular organizations.

The vast majority of the college students, across all three university dance organizations, enthusiastically replied that they identified as dancers. Some claimed to have formed their identities as dancers from childhood, through dancing on dance teams and children's dance classes. Others discovered their identities as dancers only recently, through their participation in the extracurricular organizations at UM. All of the students, especially the Dance Hip-Hop and Dance Ballroom students, linked their identities to the membership and roles that they held within their organizations. Dance Salsa was the one organization, through its structure and function for the students, whose membership was not tightly linked to the students' dancer identities.

These students' dancer identities were dependent on the environment they were in. Petunia, a student in Dance Ballroom described herself as a dancer but felt that it wasn't necessary to identify with that role unless it made sense within a particular context or setting: "If

they ask me just about a job, I wouldn't mention it, but if they said like what do you do on campus, or what do you like to do, I would for sure mention dancing. So it depends on the scope.”

To Petunia, and especially to many of the Dance Hip-Hop and Dance Ballroom students, their identities as dancers were tightly linked to the university (and in the case of Dance Hip-Hop, to high school), through the extracurricular dance organizations in which they took part. This was a large part of their lives and dance was particularly tied up in their self-image, but it did not stand apart from their identities as college students within dance organizations. For Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop students, their dancer identity did not extend beyond their membership with their respective organizations and dances. It was only within references to these activities that they felt defined by these roles. Their identities as dancers intersected with their identities as college students. This was especially true for the Dance Ballroom students, who experienced the organization as a space of social belonging within the university, a common finding in the literature, across extracurricular organizations, especially for minority students (Griffin & McIntosh, 2015; Shaulskiy, 2016; Sidanius, Van Laar, Levin, & Sinclair, 2004; Soria, Troisi, & Stebleton, 2012;).

To most of the students, previous and current time and investment in the dance were central and recurring components of what made them identify as dancers. The students mentioned the years that they had danced, the hours put in every week for classes and rehearsals, and named the many dances in which they had taken part. Marlana, from Dance Hip-Hop, said “...it's been my life. The majority of my life. So I mean, there is not a day when I am not dancing.”

Because of this focus on time and effort, the amount of dedication and effort they put forth in order to claim a dancer identity had to be at a certain level, akin to a professional undertaking, but without the clear goal of having dance as their career. Some members felt that they became dancers when they joined a performance team, because the work and effort made it a more serious endeavor. One woman, Alice, from Dance Ballroom said that she identified as a dancer when she began doing solo performances. The amount of effort and confidence in one's self had to be great in order to dance a solo on stage. The performative aspects of dancing were a part of what made up their dancer identity. Being able to be seen and affirmed by others doing dance solidified their roles as dancers.

Laura, also from Dance Ballroom, initially declined to claim dancer as her identity because she said, "My own personal definition just kind of arises from being involved in that more rigorous practice that is leading to something." But Laura went on to say that because of the time that she had committed, over the years in school and through more rigorous dedication to the dance organization, she could claim the word dancer as a part of her identity.

Others, like Heidi from Dance Hip-Hop and Logan from Dance Salsa, identified themselves as dancers because they loved the dance, instead of because of the amount of effort that they put into dance. The emotional connection and passion that they had for dancing made it an important part of their identity as dancers. Participation in dance and the organization gave them greater depth to their lives, and added an extra component of connection and joy that they otherwise did not feel in their academic pursuits. Many of these students participated in other student clubs and organizations, but described dance as fortifying their lives as college students in unique ways.

Some of the Dance Salsa students had a harder time at first describing themselves as dancers, but once they started talking about how much they danced and how important it was to their lives, they readily claimed dancer as part of their identity. Many of these students talked about how dance intersected with their student identities, each complementing and filling out the other. Their dancer identity intersected with their student identity because through the university, as student members of a college extracurricular organization, they were given the freedom to pursue their passion of dance without having to pay exorbitant amounts of money, and they could deeply explore the medium of dance without necessarily making a life commitment to it. As students, these dancers were allowed the space to explore and take on an identity without the pressures and expectations of professional training. This will be further examined in the following section.

Dancing and Being a Professional

While many of these students danced for hours each week, and up to twenty hours a week in some cases, none of these students chose dance as a major or minor in their academic studies. Dancing was not one of their professional goals, so many students were quick to point out the limitations and perimeters of their identities as dancers. I inquired about these academic and pre-professional choices, since their investment in dance was so high.

Nearly all echoed the same sentiment: dance as a career was undependable and usually short-lived. The body wears down much more quickly in a dancer who spends hours every day training for a role in a dance company. Marlana, from Dance Hip-Hop, had already begun feeling the effects of dancing after sustaining multiple injuries and developing tendonitis. Everyone

loved to dance, but they were realistic that it would not make a sustainable career. As Marlana argued, “Why invest my money into something that might not provide longevity?”

Perceived body limitations were a large factor in participants’ sense-making about their futures in dance. The expectations of the ideal dancer body (Langdon & Petracca, 2010), and the assumption that a “dancer is constantly striving for perfection” (Pickard, 2012) were not realistic and attainable goals for these students, who were already feeling the effects of injuries and illness at the young age of 20. As Petunia (Dance Ballroom) explained:

I feel like I am pretty in shape. I have scoliosis and asthma, and so that does affect my dancing. Especially scoliosis because my hips are super out of line. So doing a split move that we have to do is extremely painful and I have to navigate around that. So it's frustrating. My body is not letting me do what I want to do.

While a couple of the women in Dance Hip-Hop talked about channeling their love of dance into teaching careers, whether part-time or full time, they were the exceptions. Only two students from Dance Hip-Hop used dance as a part-time job, working in a dance studio with youth. It seemed that the members of the two groups that had formal dance teams (Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop) were more cautious and uninterested in continuing to dance in their chosen genres after they finished college.

These students had specifically chosen to dance as a side project that complemented their roles and activities as students. Their involvement in the organization helped them deepen their social and performative experiences in the university, but they neither wanted nor trained for a career in dance. They understood that the needs and expectations to become a professional dancer far exceeded the desires that they had in dancing. They chose to participate in

organizations that had very different expectations for the quality and quantity of time that they would spend training and performing, and they expected even this level of dedication to dance to decrease when they graduated. This demarcation of what they did versus the work that it took to become a professional dancer was the reason that many of these students hesitated to define themselves as dancers.

Some of the students at first declined identifying themselves as dancers because the first image that popped into their heads was of the classic image of dance: ballerinas (Heiland, Murray, & Edley, 2008). The identity of a ballerina, typically female, thin, highly structured and requiring years of professional study, was not a role that any of the students identified with.

Aaron at first claimed dancer as a part of his identity. Yet when I asked him to define what a dancer was, he amended his initial claim.

When I hear dancer in my mind, I hear ballerina. I don't view myself as dancer per se, in terms of the word dancer. I know I am a dancer, but I would never call myself one. So I am a dancer in the technical sense of the word. But I would never use, yeah I am a dancer, as a conversational word.

He viewed his dancing as something he excelled at and felt strongly about. But he hedged from labeling himself a dancer when it came to describing himself on a professional level and public level. The perceived work, dedication and sacrifice that made ballerinas dancers was not what he could claim for himself. Ballerinas were professional dancers. Aaron had no intention of dancing professionally and he didn't think his level of work amounted to the same work that a professional ballerina did.

Rosa, from Dance Salsa, was very clear about this distinction: “I am not a professional dancer but I am a dancer.”

To Rosa, salsa dancing was a part of her motherland (Colombia) and her culture. She had danced her whole life and thus identified with salsa dancing deeply. But she never planned to professionally dance salsa and only wanted to continue dancing on a social, casual level. The connection she felt with the dance, the amount of time that she had danced, over her lifetime, gave her the sense that the dance was a part of her, but not to the point of being able to be judged and critiqued as a professional.

And then there were the dancers who were very aware that their bodies did not conform to the ballet/classical dancer/professional dancer aesthetic. Willow, from Dance Ballroom, battled her own disappointment and hatred for her body, which did not match the thin, lithe bodies of the classical dancers around her as she was growing up. Societal norms of how a classical dancer should look kept her from pursuing ballet and made her extremely uncomfortable with the costumes and clothing that she was expected to wear when performing ballroom. Her identity as a dancer was constrained by her understanding of social norms for dancers’ bodies, and her own body’s lack of alignment with this norm both increased her upset with her body, and perhaps had hindered her from becoming a professional dancer.

Student Identities & Dancer Identities

Ross from Dance Ballroom was one of the few students who did not identify as a dancer at all throughout his interviews. When I asked him what qualified someone to identify as a dancer, he said that it was first a self-identification. Someone had to feel that they were a dancer. This feeling had to be based on the quality of time that the person put into dancing. Ross didn’t

feel that he put in that much time to dancing. He also stated that, “A dancer is someone who puts their heart and soul into it.” Ross didn’t feel that he fit that description.

Ross was one of the members of Dance Ballroom who did not plan on dancing after he graduated and left the university. His motivation to be a part of the organization was based on the social relations it provided while he was in college; he didn’t expect that it would be a necessary activity to find new friends after he left college. He joined Dance Ballroom because his friends at the time joined in and he wanted to continue spending time with them. Since he would be leaving his friends in the group when he graduated and would go on to an internship in Paris, he would no longer need Dance Ballroom. The dancing itself was secondary to the social space, and thus, it was a social identity, not a dancer identity, that he nurtured as part of the group.

Joe, from Dance Ballroom, called himself a dancer and viewed it as a large part of his identity. However it was a supplement, a sub-identity to his other identities as a student, scientist and nuclear engineer. His areas of expertise in academics were his first passion and dance was “a release, a side thing” that gave him great joy and kept him in shape. It was social dance, and not necessarily ballroom, that he claimed to be committed to for the rest of his life, as a social and connective tool to use with his girlfriend.

Many of the ballroom and hip-hop dancers did not dance during the summer. Work and travel took precedence. Their identities as dancers were tied to the accessibility of the dance groups and dance forms that they had adopted through the university. Several of these students also said they would stop dancing after college because they did not see viable outlets and organized groups outside of their college environment. To dance in the same capacity, they would have to join a dance studio, which they felt would require a lot more time and money.

Outside of the university, the dances they partook in would be weighed down with several expectations they did not expect to fulfill, such as performing in competitions and fitting into the mold of classical dancers. To commit to perform and dance ballroom or hip-hop after college would likely mean participating in dance spaces that viewed dance in a more professional manner, a more competitive environment, something that the majority of these students were not interested in doing. As Joe from Dance Ballroom put it, “I think that would fall into the work/business side of things. You have to do this right, you have to do this. You have to... Well now it's not something I am doing just for fun. It's something I have to do well.”

For Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop student, their roles as dancers were tied to a space of leisure, as opposed to the spaces that they had to work in. So their roles as dancers were tied to a “leisure identity”, which they expected to change when they move, grow older, etc. Dance for the majority of the students was an activity that they associated with fun, without many expectations, in a manner that was not linked to work and judgment. The university space, these extracurricular organizations, provided these looser, convivial spaces to dance. There were a couple of subgenres of ballroom dance, specifically blues or swing dancing, that were more social and accessible outside of the university that drew some of the Dance Ballroom students to consider dancing after college. These two subgenres of ballroom dances had a more laid back and open approach than classical ballroom dancing. Both of these forms of dance were also available at some nightclubs and pubs.

The Dance Salsa students all planned to continue dancing salsa throughout their lives, but not in a professional manner. They had more choices for where and how to dance during and after college. Because salsa was a dance that was available in a great number of nightclubs

within the city, country and world, the students felt they had ample choices in the places, times, and forms of dance at their disposal. They could join a formal studio and even take part in performance teams, but they could also continue to attend salsa nights at clubs. This was why nearly all of the Dance Salsa students identified as dancers in a manner that more fully separated their identity as dancers from their experience of college. They viewed their identity as constituted by feelings and practices that already moved beyond the boundaries of the university. Indeed, some students said they danced even more during breaks in the academic year, especially during the summers, when live salsa bands would play music in the city. Their connections to dance were not solely through the university, but instead through connections to home, culture, and multiple communities, which is why their identities as dancers would undoubtedly persevere after college.

Hip-Hop dancing could also be accessible outside of or after college, but largely within spaces that the Dance Hip-Hop students did not identify with. Clubs that catered to African-Americans and lounges that connected to spoken word and dance battles were not the spaces that these primarily White women connected with or felt comfortable in—indeed, many had never observed hip-hop in such a space, even while actively dancing. Due to their focus on hip hop as White, mainstream entertainment, perhaps they unknowingly acknowledged that there would be very few spaces that catered to their type of dancing after college. The majority of the Dance Hip-Hop students “slipped on” the identity of hip-hop dancers so they could build on their high school experiences and move more easily and smoothly through the university scene, which was primarily a white-dominated space. They talked about shedding their hip-hop identities and practices once they left college. The students acquired their dancer identities as they entered the

university through their membership in the dance organization. The social recognition they received through that membership would end once they would leave college. Since most did not plan to dance non-team dances, their identities as dancers would be relegated to their past college lives.

For the students that claimed dance as a more central part of their identity, the dance form that they adopted rarely aligned with dance forms traditional to their cultural or ethnic identity, as those were not very relevant for the majority of the students in these dance organizations. While the two African-American students in Dance Hip-Hop proudly proclaimed they were dancers, they didn't feel a connection with the roots and meanings of "real" hip-hop.

The one exception to this was a subgroup of Latin@ students and international students who took part in Dance Salsa and who remarked that their participation had to do with wanting to connect with their culture. Rosa, an international student from Colombia, mentioned that this was one of the reasons that she joined Dance Salsa: "... just trying to find a piece of my culture back here."

Other international students who were not Latin@ also mentioned that the dance culture was similar to their own home country in other ways, and they felt that the salsa spaces provided them with a closer connection to aspects of their culture. By connecting to dance through a cultural or ethnic identity, these students found a space where they could be comfortable and celebrate their backgrounds within the university.

Partner/Group/Solo

"The self cannot become itself, identify itself, without the other." (Parviainen, 1998, 71). Many of these dancers described their experiences and their dancer identities in relation to other

people, in addition to their associations with the extracurricular dance organizations. Perhaps due to the nature of the dance, Dance Ballroom and Dance Salsa members favored dancing with others and found greater meaning and expression through the communication of dance with someone else. This was most true for the Dance Ballroom members. The majority of the dancers admitted that they didn't prefer to dance on their own. They liked the support of having a partner. Their identity as dancers was not a solitary thing, it was dependent on and in relation to another person. Alice suggested the reason behind this was that she hadn't really learned to dance by herself. Indeed, the ballroom dancers never made any routines that were simply footwork or group solos, as the hip-hop dancers or salsa dancers did. They did practice footwork technique and bodywork technique, such as the samba walks, without partners at the beginning of classes. But these lessons were few and far between, and the lessons primarily focused on dance steps that could be transitioned onto the dance floor with a partner.

Dance Salsa students, while also focused on partner dancing, did practice footwork and solo choreography at the beginning of every lesson. A subgroup of the organization also used a solo-group choreography routine to perform a flashmob at the end of the year. Solo routines and pieces, while not a central part of salsa dancing, were acknowledged and encouraged in the classes. It was also a technique that was taught to the dancers if they felt uncomfortable dancing with a partner during a social dance. They could always break contact and do solo work while still facing their partner.

The Dance Hip-Hop students preferred solo dancing. Even Amy, who was taking ballroom lessons as an elective in school, admitted she wasn't comfortable dancing with another person. "I'm used to, I need to control this. And so, I'd just rather just by myself control

everything that I am doing.” The hip-hop dancers stressed personal control, or lack of control, as reasons that they preferred to dance on their own. Adding another person to the mix made them feel like they gave up their freedom and agency.

The relationships required by different dances or different organizations within a style, self or partnered, influenced students’ participation in the different groups. For the dancers who used dance as a way to connect with others, ballroom and salsa were their desired choices. For dancers who wanted to work solely on their own techniques and be able to control every aspect of a dance through their own bodies, hip-hop was their technique of choice.

Dance Forms and Intersecting Identities

In the three chapters on the individual dance organizations, I outlined how members of each group had other identities that intersected with their identities as dancers. These intersections were different within each of the groups that I studied. For the Dance Hip-Hop students, their intersecting identities were as performers. The social roles that they encompassed within dance were mainly focused on the performative aspects of the dance, in front of an audience of their peers.

Dance Salsa students were not interested in performing for a crowd and focused on connecting with cultures and diversifying their experiences through the salsa dance environment. Therefore, for Dance Salsa students, their intersecting identities were as global citizens. Their identity as dancers intersected with their cosmopolitan notions and being known as citizens that are open to new experiences around the world.

Dance Ballroom students straddled both spheres of dance as entertainment when they performed for audiences and dance as a personal social connector, when they used the group to

connect with their close relationships. For the majority of Dance Ballroom students, their intersecting identities were as romantic partners. Their roles as dancers revolved around being and connecting with their romantic partners in a space that afforded them the opportunity to entwine romance and dance.

Media Influences on the Identity of Dancers

Media influences, and particularly media-popularized forms of dance, played a role in some dancers' identities, and identification of dance forms. When I asked each of the members in the three dance organizations why they chose to dance, several students mentioned the impetus stemming from at least one television show that inspired them. Alice, from Dance Ballroom, specifically mentioned *Dancing with the Stars* as the show that pushed her to take up ballroom. Aaron, Lily, Tania and several of the Dance Hip-Hop members talked about how they were inspired to create their own hip-hop crews after watching *America's Best Dance Crew*.

The assorted mass media sources that propagate dance and music have been primarily driven by what the media deems profitable. As dance entered the mainstream through music videos and television shows and became a part of pop culture, the media began to expand the boundaries of the strict norms regarding dance, making it more accessible to the masses (Engel, 2011). Through popular shows such as *America's Best Dance Crew* and *So You Think You Can Dance*, the media showed the public, especially younger audiences, that various forms and experiences of dance can make one a dancer (Uba, 2007). This fed into the belief that to be a dancer, a person didn't have to choose a lifetime profession in dance. The strict boundaries surrounding dance expectations were loosened.

The mass media package dance and music around portrayals of sexuality and violence (Engel, 2011). This can be seen in the commodification of hip-hop, from a primarily African-American and Latin@ response to injustices in their communities, to the glamorization of sexual moves and violent images that the media marketed (Armstrong, 2004). These expressions bled into the dance movements that the Dance Hip-Hop students performed, from gyrating hips, pommy, hard hitting movements, and the mimicry of the sexualized lyrics in the music they chose. While many of the Dance Hip-Hop students never mentioned the debates in the hip-hop world regarding what was authentic or not (Barnes, 2008), a few students like Marlana, Heidi and Aaron were aware that the music and interpretations they chose reflected the genre's commercialization and mass consumption. Dance Hip-Hop was not a space to truly navigate and question the deeper meanings of the dance because the dance was used to mainly to entertain the white, mainstream audiences who had become accustomed to these forms through mainstream media.

This dilemma could also be seen in the delivery of highly popular shows such as *Dancing with the Stars*, where celebrities competed to learn and show off their newly acquired ballroom talents with a ballroom dance professional. The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) would have undoubtedly deemed these presentations as bastardizations of ballroom, given modern ballroom's wholehearted embrace of hip movements and sensuality, and a veering away from the strict lines and elitism that was the historical identity of ballroom dancers (Uba, 2007). In addition, while the judges on *Dancing with the Stars* did point out the failings of the celebrity dancers, the audience watching at home got a say in what was deemed as appropriate and dance-worthy by calling in to vote for their favorite couple. This mass participation allowed celebrities

who were not necessarily technically precise to be awarded for their efforts in dancing, thus expanding the norms for who is seen as the ballroom dancer, and what is perceived as “good” dancing. This process was seen in some eyes as the “dumbing down” of the standard (Warburton, 2011, p. 114).

Mass media also affected the personification of salsa dancing in the United States, specifically with the eroticization of salsa and Latin dance (Lundstrom, 2009). Even though salsa was a genre that had jazz influences from New York, and many of the big salsa bands were based in the United States, mass media and promoters have projected salsa and Latin music as something distinctly different and foreign. “By denying their ‘American’-ness, media representations of Latin artists emphasize their different-ness, keeping them at a distance by treating them as an exotic ‘other.’” (Ehrenreich, 2001, p. 4). This othering upheld the assumption that all Latino people could dance sensually and portrayed salsa dance as heteronormative and both romantic and sexual. Salsa-focused movies usually had Latinx cast members, a romance at the center of the movie, and “street” performances and competitions.

A recent yet incredibly important influence on the identity and norms regarding dancers has been Youtube and social media. Both have made all three genres of dance studied in this research ubiquitous and accessible to anyone with a computer or smartphone (Oliver, 2011). Social media and the Internet have made the normal route of acquiring dance knowledge through a studio or hands-on instructor seem unnecessary to people who simply want to learn the basics of a dance. Viral videos have also made certain moves and dances instantly recognizable and relatively attainable, like the duggie and twerking.

This instant on-demand accessibility and rapid fire screening and downloading has expanded the notions of what is appropriate, achievable and even ethical, as in people secretly videotaping and posting others dancing in situations that were never meant to be viewed publicly. In fact, perhaps the identities of these youth are what Susan Foster (2008) describes as an “uploadable/downloadable identity.” For many who learn through these social media mechanisms in which dance traditions and elitist notions are absent, their identification with a dance isn’t a fixed feature and changes depending on what is popular, current and more resonant within their social circles.

Sexual Expressions & Identity

A theme began to emerge, especially for the Dance Salsa and Dance Ballroom students, when discussing the associations and feelings that the students had while dancing. Many of the dancers described salsa and ballroom, particularly the Latin dances in ballroom, such as samba and cha-cha, as sexy and sensual. Petunia, from Dance Ballroom, described her journey learning to dance, “I never really got into the sexiness of what dancing, especially latin dancing, brings out. So that was part of my two-year learning curve, navigating facial expression and body, what you need to do to be able to look a certain way, to be able to look good.”

Many of the Dance Ballroom students talked about a preference for the Latin styles of ballroom: rumba, samba and mambo. They spoke about how the dances were more sensual, words that suggest a “sophisticated” kind of sexuality preferred among white, higher socio-economic status consumers of dance (Desmond, 1997, p. 40).

Many dancers also talked about the perception that dancing with someone else was linked to feelings of attraction: “Dance, as a discourse of the body, may in fact be especially vulnerable

to interpretations in terms of essentialized identities associated with biological difference. These identities include race and gender and the sexualized associations attached to bodies marked in these terms” (Desmond, 1997:36–37). This was especially true for many of the women in Dance Ballroom and a few of the Dance Salsa women who had boyfriends who did not appreciate partnered dancing. For those boyfriends who that were not dancers, they thought the dances were too sexual, or highlighted for encouraged sexual feelings between opposite-sex dance partners. For those who danced, particularly the women, they understood that what could appear as an expression of sexuality, such as dancing close to one’s partner, was not intended as a sexual act, and was in fact part of the dance. Yet it was difficult for some of the women to convince their (former) boyfriends of this. Both Aliyah from Dance Salsa and Laura from Dance Ballroom broke up with their boyfriends due in part to the tensions that arose around their dancing.

Assumptions about how dance forms and moves related to sexuality also differed depending on dance partners’ sexual identities. Petunia from Dance Ballroom made a point that when she was dancing with her gay, male friends, the way she danced didn’t differ from the way that she danced with her boyfriend. She said she could “act” sexual with her friends by “grinding” on her friends without having to be concerned about any sexual attraction. She could express herself through sexual moves that would normally entice someone who was attracted to her, like her boyfriend, and safely express them on people that she knew would not be attracted to her. Intentions and audience reaction was key to how and if these dancers would display certain moves.

For nearly all the dancers across the organizations, the students described dance in terms of “a symbol of pleasure” (Kent, 2014, 172). Dance allowed them to connect with their bodies

and their sexuality, both in terms of dress and expression on the dance floor, regardless of their attraction to a partner. The body connection and communication through the body allowed for expressions that were normally not acceptable between opposite sex partners who were strangers. Steve, from Dance Salsa, found that he preferred bachata dancing, which was another Latin dance that was normally danced during salsa socials. He felt, “It's a lot easier with a partner you don't know, it's a little more sexual, which is, there is a fun aspect to that.” Bachata dancing is often done with the partners closer to one another and there is a lot more hip movements in the style, which is associated with greater sexuality (Ehrenreich, 2001).

Dance also affected the students’ sense of their own sexuality and sexual skills. Lily had this to say in regards to the effects of dance on her body, “I just feel I am good at sex because I can dance and move my body.”

Dance was Lily’s “leisure [as] an embodied practice” (Crouch, 2006, p. 131) that linked her body to her sexuality. The dance allowed her to practice movements that were inherently more sensual, and gave her a space to grow more comfortable with moving her body in different ways. While none of the dancers were as specific in statements as Lily was about the ways that dance improved their sex lives, dance had affected several of these students’ body image (as explored in the previous chapter), which in turn affected their sexuality. Some of these effects even flowed into gender expressions.

Dancing and the Gay Guy

Historically, especially in Western culture, notions regarding the body and dance have been linked to femininity and feminine qualities (Risner, 2007, Yamanashi Leib, & Bulman, 2009). Thus men that were seen as eager to engross themselves in many forms of dance were

deemed more effeminate and assumed to be gay (Bailey & Oberschneider, 1997). While there is some credence to the stereotype that gay people have more of an affinity for the arts, especially when attending artistic events (Lewis & Seaman, 2004), to assume that the majority of dancers in a group identified as LGBTQ was a far stretch. Yet this was an assumption that was discussed by several of the dancers, particularly in Dance Hip-Hop, due to the fact that they had one male on an otherwise all-women team. The team would hear comments from the audience, particularly from women, expressing how attractive Aaron was and how disappointed they were that he was (and must be) gay. Many of the women in the audience would not even consider that a heterosexual man would want to dance hip-hop with a team of women.

In order to limit such assumptions, Amy conjectured that Aaron would not participate in choreographies that would be viewed as more feminine. Aaron would only participate in dances that would reinforce his masculinity, therefore limiting his dances to those that would confirm his sexual orientation to an audience, a common action by men in dance trying to avoid homosexual stigma (Peterson & Anderson, 2012).

This assumption of the homosexuality of men in dance was also expressed by Ross, the only gay-identified man in Dance Ballroom. Ross mentioned that he had believed that there would be at least several other gay men on the ballroom team, instead of all heterosexual couples. Ross bluntly stated, "I think that in society people equate dancing with more feminine energy and things like that. And there seems to be a lot more gay dancers than straight, at least male dancers. So I just was expecting to be in ballroom more gay dancers than straight dancers."

Sexual identity assumptions, coupled with the perceived expressions of sexuality within the dances, shaped the norms surrounding dancers and their identities. Aaron shied away from

hip-hop moves that were more feminine. Ross never danced with other males in the group or performed as a follow instead of a lead. The sexual and gender stereotypes abounded within these groups and were in some cases fuelled by organizational and social norms and practices.

Gender Identity within the Dance

Throughout the classes that I observed, the students would receive messages regarding how they were to express their roles within the dance, whether as a lead or follow or in a particular choreographed move. Throughout all of these directives and feedback regarding their dancing, normative gender behavior was usually reinforced. This is a quite common observation in studies on partnered dances; the reproduction of gender norms and the power between men and women were being expressed and reinforced within the dance (Cresswell, 2006). This was reinforced in Dance Ballroom when all the men were expected to lead. There were instances in which the females would step in as a lead, particularly when the group was short of men during a class. But the men never switched roles. And while the women would step in as leads, they would still reinforce the norm that leads should be men/masculine through comments that I would often hear, such as the one from Laura apologizing for her lack of knowledge in a particular choreography by saying, “I don’t know all the boy stuff”. Being a lead was assumed to be a masculine, manly role. This was why when Mary danced as a lead in the Charleston/Trick Swing dance to *Y-y-y-yup* by Jerry Lewis, she dressed the same as the other men, made her stance lower and wider as she walked to her partner, and pretended to ogle the other women as she danced by them, epitomizing the role of a lecherous male that she was supposed to embody within the dance.

Yamanashi Leib, & Bulman, (2009) point out that despite the changing identities of gender within ballroom dance, specifically through more women dancing as leads, ballroom still emphasizes traditional masculine identity and caters the role of the lead for men. This was very apparent in Dance Ballroom: no man ever took on the role of a follow within any of the partnered dances or partnered choreographies. This was also true in Dance Salsa. And while Ross explained that this was done because there were fewer men than women in the Dance Ballroom organization, even in rehearsals when the group had moments of goofiness and storytelling with each other, none of the men ever expressed an even playful exploration of what it would take to become a follow for a move or two. Even as a gay man, Ross danced as a lead with females as the follows. Sexual expression did not follow gender expression. The standards were clear: men, regardless of sexual identity, had to take on the lead role.

There was even a preference for masculine opinions in learning the dance. During one of my observations of the beginner ballroom classes, the male instructor was missing and the female instructor was showing how to do the hips in a particular move. A male dancer in the class voiced aloud his disappointment that the male instructor was missing, saying that he would have liked to see the male instructor show the hips. The student assigned greater authority to the male instructor, even for a movement that would be defined as more feminine.

Gender norms were also expressed through specific directions of “moving” as a male or female, such as in a Dance Hip-Hop class when the women were told to imagine having a penis and peeing out of it (holding their package in front, with legs spread wide), while they were doing a particular move to a choreography. Some choreographers in Dance Hip-Hop, wanting to emphasize a more masculine energy in particular choreographies, gave directives to the dancers,

such as Heidi's comments in one observation: "I'm telling you, if you get lower in your plié, your fake dick will bounce more."

Heidi attended hip-hop dance conferences and started teaching at a dance studio. She wanted to be taken more seriously as a hip-hop dancer, so she made an apparent effort for her choreographies to embody more masculine traits, since she would point out that the majority of the dances and music were male-oriented. When I asked Heidi if hip-hop dance could be gender neutral, her response was, "I think hip-hop can be but you have to think about that. You have to consciously think about making it unisex. Or not. I don't mind doing more masculine type dances."

A few members, specifically in the Dance Salsa classes, tried to normalize that both dance roles can be filled by women or men. The explanation was usually offered as a technique for both partners to be able to feel the give and take in the communication of the bodies, regardless of gender expression. One of the male instructors would quite often demonstrate a move with another man. But I never once observed a male dancing with another male in the dance socials that Dance Salsa conducted. The only time I saw men dancing with each other was in the class that I conducted, when the men to women ratio was five to one. I only saw a couple of the women, particularly the more advanced dancers and instructors from the core group, dancing with one another on any occasion, and switching lead and follow between them. The gendered stereotypes associated with Latin dance (Gainor, 2006) seemed to be confirmed by the men insisting on their gender and sexual identity by their sole focus on leading, so as not to be mistaken as effeminate (Thomas, 1996). This made it hard for the students who were gay to dance with the partners of their choosing, especially since the Dance Ballroom and Dance Salsa

groups were so focused on connections and relationships. But it was also hard for men to negotiate being viewed as “real men” when they took part in more feminine dance choreographies. In either case, the dance scenes of all three dance organizations did not provide much fluidity with sexual and gender expressions (Diamond, 2009).

Conclusion

The members in all three organizations identified as dancers through the performative aspects of doing dance as well as through their membership within the dance organizations. Their identities also intersected with other identities that affirmed their experiences within their respective organizations, as performers, romantic partners and global citizens. In some cases, these intersecting identities would outlast the students’ identities as dancers. The majority of Dance Ballroom students didn’t plan to dance ballroom after college, but they still planned on maintaining their romantic partnerships and identifying as romantic partners beyond the university. The Dance Salsa students identified as global citizens beyond their roles as college students, and even if they stopped dancing (which many didn’t plan to because they would use it as a skill to connect with others all over the world), they still planned on maintaining their roles as cosmopolitans into their careers. Dancer identities were dependent on the type of dance they did and the roles that they played within the organizations, whether as dancers focused on performance, socialization or global connection. Depending on what the identity was intersected with, whether the university and student role, or community and cultural expression, these students would either shed these dancers’ identities after they left college, or continue social dancing in spaces that they found outside of academia.

Yet these students were also limited in expressing their sexuality and connecting with their masculinity and femininity through the dances, which largely reinforced normative gender roles. While the groups occasionally pushing their boundaries, as in the case of the women in Dance Ballroom who became leads, these spaces of creative expression were extremely limited. Their gender roles and sexual identities remained within the traditional meanings and expressions within each of the dances and organizations that they took part in.

The students' felt that their experiences and identities as dancers aided their experiences within the university and outside of it. The following chapter discusses the associations between participation in the three organizations and students' social, physical and academic wellbeing.

Chapter Six: Wellbeing

Approximately 53% of college students spent at least one hour or more each week participating in a university extracurricular organization (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2010). Studies have shown that participation in extracurricular activities has a positive impact on social and cognitive development, from communication skills to teamwork and even self-esteem (Eccles, J., Barber, B., Stone, M., & Hunt, 2003; Foreman, E., & Retallick, M., 2012; Pascarella, E., & Terenzini, P., 2005). Yet a great number of these studies have been conducted in grammar and high schools, not in colleges.

There have been a number of studies on participation (including in leadership roles) in extracurricular organizations in universities, focusing on certain learning outcomes (Ewing, Bruce, & Ricketts, 2009; Foreman & Retallick, 2012; Kimbrough & Hutcheson, 1998).

Leadership development is one of the student learning outcomes identified as important by The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) (2006). While research has shown correlations between participation in extracurricular activities, including dance, and improved academic achievement, these studies are often critiqued on the grounds that subject pools are self-selecting. Few studies randomly assign students to extracurricular programs. Other studies are based on anecdotal findings and are touted in literature that clearly intends to promote extracurricular organizations (Eisner, 1999). A smaller group of studies, however, have tracked the progress of large numbers of students in extracurricular programs and have shown that participants in extracurricular arts programs, as compared to sports/academic and community involvement programs, had better academic outcomes, especially if they served

in positions of leadership or spent a significant amount of time (seven or more hours a week) (Foreman, & Retallick, 2012).

There is also some evidence that students who are involved in extracurricular arts programs may derive more satisfaction and are more dedicated to continuing their participation than students who study the arts as part of elective course activities. For example, college students who chose to participate in extracurricular dance activities were more satisfied and more invested in their chosen activity than those that chose dance as an elective (Chu & Wang, 2012).

I was curious to explore if the students in the three organizations perceived there to be any benefits or costs to their participation, as they balanced full academic course loads.³ I asked these questions in a straightforward manner during the interviews. I also made note of any comments regarding school and extracurricular participation balance or imbalance that the students made during my observation of their rehearsals and classes. The following is a summation of the most common remarks and beliefs that these students expressed regarding the ties between their academic pursuits and extracurricular participation. These data, which broadly support correlations identified in previous research concerning the benefits of extracurricular participation on academics, serve to deepen our understanding of students' experiences as they move between academic and extracurricular spaces (or incorporate them into one another), and to deepen our understanding of the pathways through which extracurricular participation might benefit students' academic performance.

³ Note again that few of these students had to work for long hours to cover college costs. As such, they were a relatively privileged group, who could dedicate many unpaid hours to the activities in the organizations. This barrier to participation likely excluded some students, and changed the calculus of costs and benefits for others.

None of the students chose dance as a major or minor but many of the dance members invested a large amount of time each week, both through organization practices and through additional time dancing outside of required practices. They volunteered for leadership positions in their organizations that required an extra amount of time and effort, and even signed up to participate in extra choreographies when they had to pay more for additional costumes or practice rentals.

Despite all of these extra pressures and additional costs, every student in all three of the dance organizations reported feeling very satisfied with their choice to participate in a student dance organization. While this doesn't show that they would have been less satisfied with other electives or organizations, many did argue that the particular structures and themes of these extracurricular organizations contributed to greater benefits, which I will explore below.

The responses of the students I studied differed from those reported by other research on extracurricular dance participation in some important ways, particularly as related to negative findings in the literature. Chu & Wang found that the retention rate of collegiate dance sport participants dropped when they became seniors (2012). I observed the opposite in these three groups, in particular the students in Dance Hip-Hop and Dance Ballroom, who had distinct teams in their organizations. Both of those teams had juniors and seniors who became even more invested, despite years on the team. In both organizations, more than half of all team members were upperclassmen. In Dance Hip-Hop and Dance Ballroom, dancers who had been affiliated with the organizations for a couple of years were more likely to choreograph the dance pieces, and they were also more likely to choreograph multiple pieces. They invested several hours in

rehearsals each week and created choreographies, spending time on their own to further explore and strengthen their techniques and choreographies.

For Dance Hip-Hop, getting the chance to choreograph was seen as a privilege and some of the older members were specifically invited to choreograph. While the organization didn't dissuade younger members from volunteering to choreograph, few first years or sophomores took on this responsibility. This translated into hours of extra time that several juniors and seniors volunteered to take on outside of rehearsals, to create the pieces, and then to teach them to those whom they asked or who chose to be a part of their piece.

Dance Ballroom showed the same trend, with many of their third and fourth-year members taking on extra roles in leadership and choreography. Petunia, one of the captains of Dance Ballroom, said she spent several hours of her week simply on administrative work, which was on top of the time she spent in rehearsals with the team. Penny, the other co-captain, volunteered to choreograph a cha-cha/hustle piece for a large group.

The core members in Dance Salsa tended to be third or fourth year students; while they did not have performances or a dance team, they spent several hours a week teaching classes. I also saw a trend with the juniors and seniors in the core group being some of the most active in the social salsa dance scene in the larger community.

Based on the organizational histories that I collected, it did not appear to be the case that students had been more likely to drop out during their senior year over the past few years. While some juniors and some seniors left every year, the same was true for first and second year students as well; certainly, however, when juniors and seniors left it tended to have a bigger impact on the group, because these students so often played key leadership roles.

Academic Wellbeing

Despite the significant number of hours that all students—and particularly juniors and seniors—put into the organizations, none of the students felt that dancing or being a part of their respective dance organizations impaired their academic pursuits. Many of the students in the study talked about the balancing act they performed to spend so much time on dance while juggling their academic work. Coordination and time management skills were key, and they were viewed as skills that students needed to actively nurture in college anyway. So was, as Roos put it, the sense of accountability that busy students had to develop to assure they could complete their work. He argued that participating in Dance Ballroom increased his accountability with his academics and goals: “I think it also helps me in my studies, to maintain that same attitude of just being accountable. Accountable to the team for ballroom and accountable to myself as a student.”

In terms on academic/life balance and extracurricular organizations effect on academic achievement, there has been a few studies that have found that decreasing the amount of time dedicated to an organization was correlated with a decrease in exam scores (Lumley, S., Ward, P., Roberts, Mann, 2015; Slade, & Kies, 2015). As long as the time spent on extracurricular activities was not in direct competition with academic work (in regards to schedules), there weren't any significant trade-offs or negative associations with college students' participation (Greene & Maggs, 2015). The students had to learn and practice effective balancing of their time and that is what I observed across the groups.

At many of the rehearsals for Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop, I saw students who were there to practice a specific choreography waiting on the sides of the room with their heads

buried in books or notes. Some even brought their laptops. Since many of these students spent five or more hours dancing (formally and informally) a week, they developed strategies to keep up on their schoolwork, whether studying during free time at rehearsals, having study groups with other dance members, or studying late at night after rehearsals.

Of course, this level of participation had short-term effects on academics, whether through a larger work load that led to less sleep, as Lily from Dance Hip-Hop mentioned, or through performances happening during academic class times, such as the showcase that happened during a class, for which the professor took off points for the absence. Such encumbrances didn't last long and were tolerated because the students felt that overall there were greater positive outcomes on their academic performance and general lifestyle because of extracurricular participation. These experiences and students' senses of the relationship between their participation in the dance groups and their physical and mental wellbeing at college are explored in the following sections.

Physical & Mental Wellbeing

In my interviews, I asked each student what they perceived to be the relationship between dance and their academic studies. The majority of the students talked about how dance supported their academics, whether by providing stress relief or as a creative outlet that enabled them to take a break from their academics and feel rejuvenated. Many students spoke of this outlet as necessary for being successful in their academic work. Joe, from Dance Ballroom, who was studying nuclear engineering, felt he needed dance as his creative outlet. "Nuclear engineering is pretty much by the books. There really isn't any room for creativity. And ballroom is my creativity outlet."

As noted in the literature review, these positive aspects of the organization and the activity were not normally discussed in the research on extracurricular organizations. Many of the members of the organizations also appreciated the social aspects of their groups, and viewed their participation in the groups as a healthy replacement for partying or drinking. Laura from Dance Ballroom talked about dancing as:

... an outlet. It gives me a way to get my mind off of school in a way that is less destructive than some. Like I could just go binge drink every weekend, but you know, and there were some weekends when I was living in the apartment with the bunch of roommates, sometimes we did that. And it usually ended kind of badly. Usually a problem. So dancing, I usually just get hungry [afterwards], and I eat something and I feel better. [I'm] like maybe a little tired, but it's good tired, it was awesome, that kind of endorphin high.

Studies have found mixed results of extracurricular participation and alcohol consumption among college students (Mcginley, Rospenda, Liu, Richman, 2016), depending on the particular type of university organization with which students are affiliated. For example, there are significant differences between volunteer-focused, sport, and Greek organizations. Participant responses indicated (as does the literature on volunteer-focused organizations) that involvement in diverse dance-based organizations may play a positive and protective role against binge drinking and other forms of “hard” partying, both because students did not report having the time to do this on top of dance, and because dance itself led them to be more concerned about the health of their body.

The participants in most of the dance groups also indicated that dance made them feel better—physically and emotionally—about themselves. Petunia from Dance Ballroom: “Yeah,

you can say my dancing has supported my academics, just because it is an outlet. And for any kind of stress I'm feeling. Once it just gets down to the dancing, that's when it's like, ok, this is why I do this.” Dancing gave Petunia a fresh perspective, a chance to step back and re-prioritize her efforts. Positive mood changes have been linked to dancing, in particular for recreational dancers (Zajenkowski, Jankowski, & Kołata, 2015).

Interestingly, the same study found that competitive ballroom dance participation was not associated with positive mood changes after dancing, a confirmation of the opinions of the Dance Ballroom students, who specifically didn't choose the competitive ballroom group at the university because they didn't feel that the competitive environment would provide them with the outlet from competition, “work”, and stress that they consistently said they expected and needed their ballroom dancing to be.

Many students in the study described participation in the dance organizations and in the dance itself as a sort of coping mechanism. The majority of all of the dancers, across hip-hop, ballroom and salsa, viewed their respective dances as stress relievers from their academic and other forms of work. Studies have supported these claims, especially for extracurricular activities that involve physical activity (Bland, Melton, Bigham, Welle, 2014). Evan from Dance Salsa felt that, “Dancing has helped me relieve school stress and they made schooling easier for me. So I couldn't imagine schooling without dancing. They [schooling and dance] are independent, but both are complements. I need both to get going.”

Marlana, from Dance Hip-Hop added:

I know if I wasn't dancing, for some reason it would be hard to focus in school. Because I feel with dance, it is a stress relief. If I am upset, I'm like, I'm going to practice, I'm gonna dance this all out. Plus I'm around people that I like being around, they're my friends. So

it's nice being in a group where everyone enjoys doing the same thing as you do. So if I didn't do that, I feel like I wouldn't be as motivated in school. School is important, it's just that, I feel having something fun on the side, or something that you love doing, helps it, more.

Dance allowed the students to handle their stress-laden academic workloads. Despite the hours put in, the students didn't view their extracurricular activities as work. On the contrary, dance was their pleasure outlet, a time to tap into creativity and let off steam, and a time to be with friends whose shared extracurricular interests were a source of pleasure. Lily (Dance Hip-Hop) explained : 'I think it's a really good stress reliever. If you have like all school, it's a huge burnout. A lot of times going to dance helps me get my stress out, hang out with my friends.'

Social Wellbeing

In the previous chapters on Dance Salsa, Dance Hip-Hop and Dance Ballroom, I cover in great detail all the social benefits that these students found within and through the organizations. These students saw the extracurricular organizations as spaces in which they and their goals belonged. It may be that students migrated to “flock together” in these groups (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001), and the university might be concerned about the implications of racial homophily (Syed, & Juan, 2012), but for the students themselves, these were safe social spaces that they deeply valued.

A few students felt that their dance activities nurtured skills that were applicable to and immediately facilitated students' academic or professional work. One of Alice's majors was theater, and she talked about the added strength that she and others perceived that she brought to her theater classes due to her participation in dance. She said that her program stressed that the

actors must know how to use their bodies, yet provided few opportunities for students to learn to do so. Dancing gave her an added tool in exploring her body. Other students in her department actually told her that they envied her experiences with dance because they did not feel as comfortable in using their own bodies to express themselves.

The dancers also built social capital through the organizations, particularly by getting to know students who were older and could provide resources and advice on navigating classes. This was especially valuable for first year students, who typically would not meet juniors, seniors, or graduate students in their academic classes. For example, Marlana, from Dance Hip-Hop, acknowledged the great benefit of knowing another student who was in a program that she wanted to attend:

Well it [dance] provides networking. Lily is in my major and the School of Ed is very competitive to getting in. And she is actually a first year in the program, so when I was applying, I was like, Lily, what should I do? And she is talking me through it. It was good to have someone in a place where I wanted to be.

Having a friend who could give her a breakdown of how to apply and with whom to talk gave Marlana a step up in the process.

Since many of the organizations accepted students from outside of the University (Dance Hip-Hop allowed other college students from community colleges in the area, Dance Ballroom accepted anyone into their lessons, and a few community members and alums onto their team, and Dance Salsa was welcoming to all people in the city through their lessons), these extracurricular organizations also helped the students build social capital by exposing them to other people from diverse backgrounds who introduced them to new ideas or different

viewpoints. This was particularly true in Dance Salsa, which had much greater community participation and a greater diversity of students involved in the group.

These two-way relationships also benefited non-student members of the groups. Amy credited Dance Hip-Hop as being the reason that she succeeded in transferring from a community college to a four-year university. Amy was inspired to do hip-hop because of the acceptance and support of peers. She was able to join Dance Hip-Hop when she was attending community college, as Dance Hip-Hop allowed local college students from other colleges to join their organization. As a first-generation college student, she spoke about her misgivings and doubts about even applying to the university. By gaining social capital and support through the network in the organization, Amy was able to apply and gain entry into the university.

Conclusion

Every single student in the study had examples of the positive effects that they felt they experienced through participating in dance and their dance organizations, from stress relief and a creative outlet, to networking and exposure to many different types of people. The question becomes, could these dancers have received the same benefits through participation in other extracurricular organizations within the university? My research is not able to answer that. It can, however, speak towards what might be some of the characteristics of involvement in dance organizations that remain consistent across these diverse organizational and dance forms. Furthermore, many of these students participated in other university organizations, and they specifically talked about their dance organizations as key structures that resulted in the aforementioned positive outcomes on their social, academic, and physical wellbeing. It may be that the environments that the organizations established, by involving a broad mixture of ages,

backgrounds, and majors, as well as creating collaborative projects that focused on team work and connections, gave these students unique experiences and advantages that they could not experience in other organizations.

Alice, from Dance Ballroom, would agree with that opinion:

I think it [participation in Dance Ballroom] helped me focus more, because I had a little bit of an outlet to be creative in. I've always been told, when I was in orchestra and band, for numbers of years, they always said, if you read music you typically do better in school. Your brain just knows how to function a little bit differently than other people. And I have no idea the research on this, but I feel dancing was something different and it helps me to think differently.

This outlet for creative was not a surprising response, as it was echoed in several other interviews, but it wasn't something discussed in the literature on extracurricular organizations. I did notice that very few students had any negative statements to make about their chosen organizations, and almost none about their chosen dance genre. The few that did have critiques, such as Aaron, Heidi and Evan, cast them at their fallible team members and fellow dancers, from being unhappy that people would use dance for romantic reasons, to feeling frustration at the style of dance that the organization's members primarily focused on. But these were all minor issues and paled in comparison to what these and other students felt were their positive experiences in these groups.

Chapter Seven: Body Image

Sweatpants & Body Image

As I observed and interviewed the students across the three dance organizations, a familiar theme around clothing and bodies became evident, specifically in regards to clothing and the ‘cult of slenderness’ (Heiland, Murray, & Edley, 2008). Members of all three organizations were well aware of the expectations for dancers, especially women, to be of a certain body type, thin and athletic. I observed that students’ clothing and actions in the dance organizations represented a simultaneous buying into and resistance against such expectations, which permeated the dance cultures in all three organizations despite their stated goals to not be professional groups.

My observations bear many similarities to the works of Leslie Gotfrit (1988) and Jonathan Skinner (2008) regarding cultures in the dance clubs, specifically, the resistance to and reproduction of norms surrounding bodies and clothing. One piece of clothing stood out as both reinforcement and rejection of dance body norms: sweatpants. For dancers in the Dance Hip-Hop group, sweatpants accentuated the dance movements and were identified as more masculine symbols of sexuality. The baggy pants were used to emphasize thrusting movements of the hips during the dances, giving the illusion, as one of the dancers pointed out in class, of a long appendage hanging beneath them. The sweatpants were also a representation of the activity that they took so much pride in. Heidi had this to say about why she wore sweatpants:

I have associated over time for so long that putting on those baggy sweats... that that is what I wear when I am doing a certain activity. ... But even the clothes that I wear to lounge around the house, sweats, are not the same sweats that I wear to hip-hop. ... Like

my Nappy Tabs [sweat pants that are marketed to hip-hop dancers] were sixty dollars. I know they are just sweat pants but they are freaking cool. And I am not going to wear them around the house just to lay around. They're cool pants.

Wearing particular sweatpants, sweatpants that were specifically used for movement and dance, gave Heidi a sense of pride and identity. As a result, she would wear them when she would go out to the club, or when she decided to dance around the house.

In public, outside of dance, sweatpants are a clothing type tied to leisure. They are used to loosely cover up the body and obscure the form of the body. In classical dance classes, sweats are used to warm up at the beginning of class but they are usually taken off after a period of time in order to fully see the body's movements. Clothing can either cloak or reveal movement, which can take on different meanings depending on the intentions of the wearer. Lily particularly enjoyed how her sweatpants accentuated her hip movements even when she was out walking in public. She expressed her pleasure in choosing such clothing when she felt particularly sexy and powerful:

Instead of people feeling like, "oh I am wearing sweat pants today, I look like shit", I feel cool when I wear my Dance Hip-Hop shoes and sweat pants. Sometimes when I dress like a guy, well not like a guy, but wear more baggy clothes, and I am projecting I am comfortable in my sweat pants I guess, I definitely do own that part.

The sway of the fabric made Lily's hips look bigger and the pants were a representation of the hip-hop dance in which she participated . Accentuating larger, bigger movements and bigger body parts was a part of the reason that the hip-hop dancers chose baggier clothing (Suddreth, 2009).

This emphasis by the hip-hop dancers on accentuation was not in line with much of the literature on the body image of dancers and college students, especially for women (Heiland, Murray, & Edley, 2008; Oliver, 2008; Paap & Gardner, 2011; Radell, Adame, Johnson, 1993). The classical dances, ballet and ballroom, were rife with body norms of slenderness and thinness. For Willow, a dancer in the Dance Ballroom group, sweatpants were an article of clothing that she explicitly chose to hide her body on a daily basis because she felt did not conform to the norms of dance. Aliyah, from Dance Salsa, expressed this explicit choice to hide herself (albeit for different reasons) when discussing how she felt about her body in regards to dance:

You walk into a grocery store. You are clunking around in your tennis shoes, sweatpants. That's at least what I wear 90% of the time. And you kind of think in the back of your mind: Ha. None of these people know that in two hours I am going to be busting it in high heels and short shorts on the dance floor. And it kind of gives you this secret confidence of like, I know I look like crap 90% of the time, but you should see me when I dance, seriously. So that perception, that auto perception of myself is always there.

For some, this swath of cloth reflected a choice that projected, or covered up “crap”. For others, sweatpants were an article of clothing that covered the feelings that they had about their own bodies and conformed to or negated the perceptions that they believed others might have about their bodies.

Hip-hop body norms aligned with more of a masculine identity, allowing for more athleticism and muscle. Salsa body norms also fell in with the hip-hop body norms, though they allowed for more curvaceousness and fuller sensuality. Yet the majority of dancers, across all three organizations, folded into the stereotypical classical dancer norm when they had to

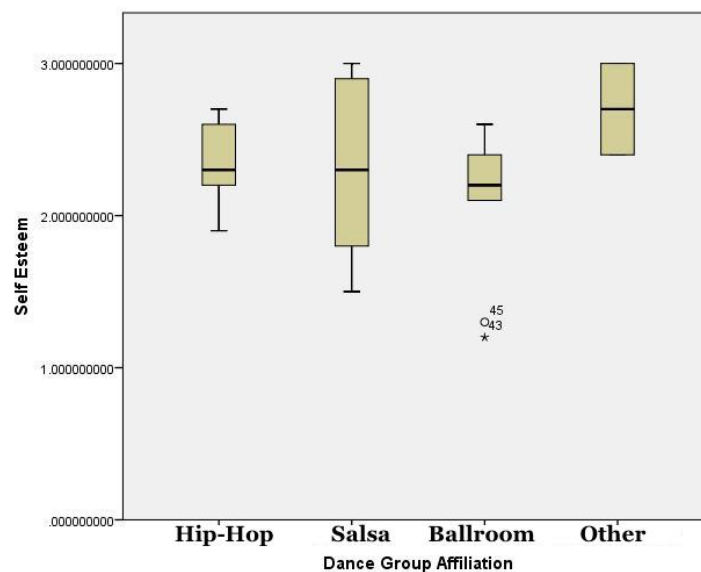
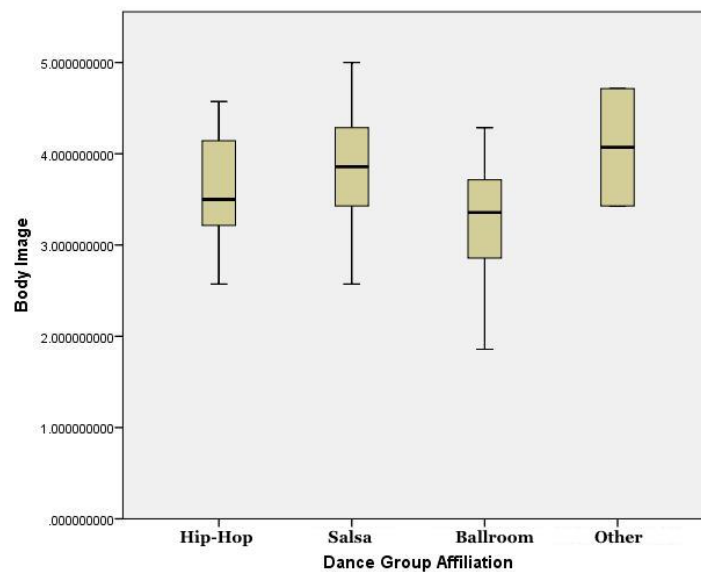
perform. Even Lily, the dancer who was so proud of her sweatpants, would quite often mention that she had to go on a diet and work out more when a performance was put on the schedule. This will be further explored in the discussion of the results of the survey that I administered to members of all three organizations.

Body Image: Clubbing versus Performing Norms

Body image satisfaction, a concept usually measured by finding the relative weight of negative feelings towards the body (Cash, Fleming, Alindogan, Steadman, & Whitehead, 2002) or by finding the difference between a person's current and ideal body shape (Garner, Garfinkel, & O'Shaughnessy, 1985), is also associated with self-esteem (Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990). I measured both in the surveys of the members of the dance organizations, using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) and the Appearance Evaluation Subscale of the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire (Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990). The surveys were voluntary and anonymous (and online), and I had no guarantee that the students who took the survey also were the same ones that agreed to be interviewed. That being said, I requested every interviewee to take the survey, if they had not already done so by the time of the interview. While more than half of the members in each organization completed the entire survey, I did not receive responses from all of the members in each group, so at best, the results can only loosely reflect the views of members of each of the organizations.

Overall, the dancers in Dance Ballroom had much less positive perceptions of their body image (mean 3.259; $n = 46$) than dancers in the other groups, and a few from that group had the lowest self-esteem scores. Dance Hip-Hop members had more positive perceptions of their body image, (mean 3.62; $n = 46$), while Dance Salsa members had the most positive body image

mean of 3.77. Dance Hip-Hop and Dance Salsa had closer averages for their self-esteem scores, with 2.35 and 2.22 respectively. Students that were not associated with a specific dance organization, after controlling for undergraduate status, had higher body-image ($p < 0.05$) and self-esteem ($p < 0.01$) than the student respondents in any of the three groups. Students that were not associated with a specific dance organization, after controlling for undergraduate status, also had a higher self-orientation ($p < 0.01$) but no significant difference in other-orientation ($p > 0.1$)



I also inserted a question asking the students to report if they primarily used their dancing for performing or for social dancing/clubbing. One statistically significant finding was that students that reported going clubbing had significantly higher body-image ($p < 0.05$) and self-esteem ($p < 0.05$), self-orientation ($p < 0.10$), and other-orientation ($p < 0.05$) than those that reported focusing on performing. Participants in the survey who reported performing had significantly lower body-image ($p < 0.05$) and self-esteem ($p < 0.05$) and self-orientation ($p < 0.10$) than those who didn't perform. This finding cut across all three dance organizations.

SEE APPENDIX

This was not a surprising finding. The literature on body image touches on the pressures to conform to the norms of thinness when dancers' bodies are under observation and spotlight, particularly on stage (Oliver, 2005). The clothing and costumes the dancers had to wear, particularly the Dance Ballroom members, contributed to the pressures of fitting into those expectations. Willow, from Dance Ballroom, had this to say about the pressures to perform, especially in regards to fitting into a particular piece of clothing:

You have a recital and you get costumes and you have to fit in that costume. And not all costumes are made for all types of bodies. But whatever costume they choose, you feel, ok I have to fit into that costume. I need to look good in that costume. So I think I based it all around dance. Dancing has a specific way that they think they should look, in general. Thin. Flexible. I have the flexibility part.

The norms of the stage, of performing, particularly with classical, standard dances like ballroom, accentuated the expectations for perfection, for thinness and control. This was very

apparent before the showcases and performances that these dancers took part in, regardless of the organization. My observations of Dance Hip-Hop students yielded multiple occasions where the dancers discussed dieting or changing the way that they looked in order to get ready for a performance. Since many of the dancers in Dance Hip-Hop took part in performances and showcases, it was a common occurrence that several dancers would comment on their appearance and the importance of looking “better” and “skinny” for the day of the performance.

Lily made several such comments in classes and in the interview. “I’m going to get skinny and really in shape for the showcase so I can wear a belly shirt...”

On the one hand, Lily would say that she was very comfortable with her body, yet she spoke about dieting and working out in order to be skinnier and more in line with the standards of performance for the final showcase. She wanted her body to be tighter and more in control so that she could show it off.

She later added: “I do want to be skinny but I actually don’t think about it until the showcase is coming up. That’s the end all, be all of the year and I want look really good in the videos forever.”

The environment of a performance, which would be viewed by many and potentially videotaped, memorialized for years to come, increased the pressures of the body norms that surround dance performance.

Willow, one of the dancers who greatly disliked her body, spoke about her battles with her body since it didn’t conform to the ideal performer body:

We had a lot of skinny-minis in our class. I am not. And I felt that I should be like that.

And I just never was. And I’ve always tried. To lose weight, to make myself look better,

feel better. I've kind of had this constant battle, back and forth. Three times in my life maybe, I liked the way that I looked. Because I lost a lot of weight. The first time was my sophomore year of high school. Freshman? I was doing the Arabian dance in the Nutcracker and the costume had a sheer stomach open. There was still a portion that was open. And I was really scared about it. So I lost a ton of weight so I would look good.

Performances were the time for the dancers to show off their skills in front of other people. And the dancers believed that the audience would expect them to uphold the standards of their particular style of dance. They felt internal pressure to conform to those ideals.

On the other hand, since clubbing was an environment that many dancers used to socialize in, especially the Dance Salsa dancers, the pressures of stage, along with fitting into performance outfits, and conforming to those performance body norms was not a relevant factor to the dancers who chose not to perform.

Evan, from Dance Salsa, was very blunt about his views of body appearance in dance, saying: "Dancing for me should be casual. You shouldn't worry when you dance. And I think dressing up, trying to fix your appearance when you go dancing, is not about the dance."

On the one hand, Evan recognized the desire for people to focus on appearances when they go out to dance, but for him, as a social dancer, the desire for thinness or fitting into a particular body or beauty standard should not be relevant within a social dance setting. While female members from Dance Salsa were more likely to talk about changing the type of clothing they usually wore when they went out dancing, this was consistently described as something that was enjoyable and let them feel that they could fully express themselves on the dance floor. The

tightness or revealing nature of the clothing was under their control, so they could decide what to wear, when, and how it made them feel.

The following sections explore the reinforcement and rejection of the dominant norms regarding bodies in different types of dance, from the balance of owning and showing off one's body, to dealing with the pressures that college students and dancers deal with in conforming to certain body standards.

Classical Dance Pressures

Many of the students, when I asked them during the interviews if they would call themselves dancers, compared their notions of a dancer to a ballet dancer. Classical dances, such as ballroom and ballet, were for many years the dances that the media showcased. Ballet dance dominated the professional dance world. This perpetuated the standard for the type of body that choreographers and directors demanded, the 'ballet body', thin, with a focus on restraint and control of the body (Heiland, Murray, & Edley, 2008). Small breasts and petite hips were similar to the beauty ideal for women in U.S. culture (Banes, 1999; DeBraganza, & Hausenblas, 2010).

Even the majority of studies on dance focus on the performance norm of young, fit bodies, since they are concentrated on ballet professionals, who typically have shorter, younger careers than other professionals in the arts (Langdon & Petracca, 2010; Thomas & Cooper, 2002). The media also plays a great part, portraying young, lithe dancers as the ideal type, which which leads other dancers to self-scrutinize and control their bodies (Oliver, 2005).

It wasn't until YouTube and televised dance shows like *So You Think You Can Dance* that other dances, like hip-hop and salsa, that broke away from the ballet aesthetic and body standards, began to be widely disseminated and acknowledged, particularly in the United States

(Engel, 2011). The body norms around hip-hop and salsa focus less on thinness and more on muscularity and sensuality. Curvaceous bodies are not discouraged, and clothing can show off the body (Skinner, 2008). Of course, the thin-aesthetic was not completely eschewed; indeed, even hip-hop videos have been criticized as promoting thin-ideal imagery (Zhang, Dixon, & Conrad, 2009). But there was definitely more variety and acceptance for different body types within these two dance cultures. Aliyah acknowledged the difference in the norms and culture in salsa dance, which has a much more welcoming, body positive culture than classical dances “I think that being part of that, especially Latin dance, has showed, don't cover it! Who cares? We are all just having a good time!”

While nearly all of the students in all three organizations danced as a hobby and had no intention of becoming professional dancers, they were well aware of the body norm pressures, particularly in regards to performance, that existed within the dance world, through exposure to dance shows on television, comments from instructors, and previous dance experiences. I noticed a trend in how the groups tended to either reinforce or reject the appearance norms that surrounded dancing bodies. This was not a consistent affirmation or rejection, but a cycling back and forth between resistance to and reinforcement of those norms. There seemed to be more instances within Dance Ballroom when the dancers received messages regarding slimming down and having a particular body appearance within a pose. This happened specifically when they were coached by their professional ballroom instructors, as opposed to the days that the student captains or student choreographers were coaching the team. The students in leadership positions never made any comments to their teammates about meeting certain body expectations. But

occasionally, pressures and expectations would reach the team, as they did for the Dance Ballroom members when their former dance professional would teach them.

Petunia recounted some of those experiences:

I would say, there are certain pressures, like body image and, not really on our team, but in ballroom dance in general. So when we are going to the competition with our previous professional, there was a lot of pressure to go tan. You have to be super tan. And you have to be working out at the gym because you can't be flabby. I'm like, I am not going to do that. I don't want to get skin cancer. But there is a lot of pressure to do that, because they are tan and skinny, when you are professional ballroom dancer. And simply because we were going to be in that arena, they felt that we had to take that on. Even though we are a very non-competitive, fun focusing team. He said, 'you are going to look like ghosts, you will look terrible in the pictures.'

While many of the students in Dance Ballroom did not bend to the pressure and focus on losing weight, tanning, or going to the gym before their showcase, they were all well aware of the expectations to conform and fit in with the environments from which the dances stemmed. In fact, this is why many of the members chose to dance with Dance Ballroom instead of the other ballroom organization on campus that was competition-based. Competition-based ballroom organizations would be judged on how well dancers fit into those performance norms of thinness, tanning and fitness. Many of the students in Dance Ballroom specifically spoke to resisting those dance norms by purposely not choosing to join the competition-based ballroom organization. Joe from Dance Ballroom spoke directly to this: "I feel like that would fall into the

work/business side of things. You have to do this right, you have to... Well now it's not something I am doing just for fun.”

The standards of the body, of the particular movements and image, was rejected by these dancers. To try to meet them would make ballroom dance no longer welcoming and inviting to them. Petunia recounted very similar reasoning for why she didn't choose to join the other ballroom organization:

The other one is a competition team and that was way too intimidating for me. I did not want to do anything like that. I am not comfortable with that. I would feel insufficient all the time, because I am not at the level of a competition dancer. Dance Ballroom was like, we are really laid back. We are super nice. We just want to have fun.

The level that Petunia was referring to was the expectation in competition circles of meeting the norms and cultural practices that surrounded ballroom dance. Even beginners could take part in competitions, but they would still be expected to perform and showcase within the boundaries of the appropriate dance and image. And while a few students occasionally bought into it, since a few students did also participate in competitions with the other ballroom dance organization, at other times the same members would reject those norms. Some of the dancers flat out refused to buy into the standards of thinness and “appropriate” bodies, as in the case of Petunia. Evan flatly asked and responded to his own reflection, “Does it matter whether you are short or fat? No it doesn't.”

Some dancers went so far as to make the argument that dancing had nothing to do with the body at all. There were those who believed that the body was not pivotal to the dance experience. Evan from Dance Salsa explained,

Dancing to me is not about the body at all. Maybe it exercises the body, but not really, especially for guys, I don't think aerobic is building the body of the guy. I mean it keeps the heart and blood flowing but it doesn't really improve your body at all. So I am not dancing for the body or I am not exposing my body for dancing, no. To me dancing is just a communication with a person you are dancing with. It shouldn't be about your body.

This reflection was not echoed within any of the interviews that I conducted with the female dancers. In fact, the comments about bodies and self-image were very different when the men spoke about it, than the women. In the following section, I will explore those differing views.

Male versus Female Body Image

Much of the literature on body image underlines the discrepancies between men's and women's body image, with women typically having lower body image and self-esteem (Grogan, 2007; Milhausen et al., 2015), especially in college populations (Çatikkaş, 2011; Paap & Gardner, 2011). While there wasn't a large discrepancy in this study, based on the survey and in interviews, the men in all three dance groups seemed to be have more neutral attitudes towards their bodies, neither hating nor exalting in how their bodies were perceived by themselves or others. The survey also didn't show any outliers for the men of extreme satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

There is a common expectation within the ballet aesthetic that a dancer, in particular a performer, must take care of her/his body in such a way that creates and controls a fit and/or thin image (Heiland, Murray, & Edley, 2008; Pickard, 2012; Swami & Harris, 2012). Since this aesthetic permeates much of performance norms, I found that some of the women in the dance

organizations, particularly in the Dance Hip-Hop group, identified with those standards and claimed ownership of them. Lily had this to say, “I just think part of being a dancer is owning your body. And what also goes with it, I have to keep my body in shape, because I am a dancer. And dancing also helps keep your body in shape, so that's really nice too.”

For Lily, owning her body meant claiming one's body, controlling it, and molding it into the particular shape and size that fit the dominant image of a dancer. While none of the women in Dance Hip-Hop appeared overweight or obese, many made passing comments about staying fit and dieting. The group didn't necessarily emphasize a culture of fitness. Besides Aaron, no one talked about weight lifting or going to the gym. In fact, Heidi boasted during one of the observations that she was proud she didn't really work out and yet had arms with muscles. But there seemed to be a bit of a focus on staying a certain type of dancer within this performance-based organization: fit, skinny, lithe, but not necessarily strong or buff. This expectation fit the mold of U.S. female standards of beauty (Park, 2005). Women are already faced with those pressures in U.S. society, but it is further highlighted within the performing dance world in order to maintain a lithe and tightly controlled physique (Oliver, 2005).

The majority of the women across the three organizations seemed to be very aware of their bodies and expressed strong views in the surveys and interviews regarding their bodies, especially when discussing the norms surrounding body appearances before and during performances. I observed women across all the organizations criticizing their bodies and how they looked in class, in costumes and in comparison to one another. The men did not engage in these conversations. When asked about their bodies, the vast majority approved of their bodies, but only one expressed a strong view of appreciation for his body.

Ross, from Dance Ballroom, was ambivalent about his body. When I asked him how he felt about it, he had this to say:

I am up in the air about it. I have never been, at least I don't think I've been particularly vain, physically, or about my physique. I would say I am not very comfortable with it.

Either in, I mean, there are parts of my appearance that I like, yes, but I feel as though I am fairly awkward moving kind of person, which is why it's taken me so long to get a hold of ballroom dance.

Evan, from Dance Salsa, also wasn't highly critical about his body, but he also didn't favor it, "I think I am average looking in terms of body. And I'm glad I don't have excess weight. So that makes me feel good about my body."

Evan didn't feel connected to his body at all when he danced in the club saying, "...when I dance I don't think about my body. I think about my eyes looking at the partner I am dancing with. I think about the music and how I am following the music, but my attention is not to my body."

Aaron, from Dance Hip-Hop, held the most positive views of his body during the interview, saying, "I like it. I don't know. I don't want to sound conceited. I'm going to try to say this in a very modest way. I think that I, I enjoy working out, I enjoy being fit. It's always something I've liked. I love being muscular. I love having a body that I'm not afraid taking my shirt off."

Aaron's comments on muscularity and working out are a direct reference to male body norms, especially in regards to male bodies during performance. Aaron was never inhibited during classes when changing his shirts, removing them with the rest of the women in the room.

But he never took part in any commentary about losing weight or expressing his support for or against getting fit before a performance. This may have been because he already maintained a particular muscular body, or it may have been because he already had a positive body image in regards to himself. None of the other men in any of the other dance organizations spoke about their bodies outside of the interviews. It was only the women whom I observed talking about their bodies, and who told me in the interviews how they felt about their bodies.

Some women felt really positive toward their bodies. Heidi said on multiple occasions how good her body looked during performances and at rest. Amy, from Dance Hip-Hop repeatedly mentioned how much she loved her body, particularly when she was dancing:

I like my body. I've never been self-conscious about my body. I've always liked the way it moved, how it moved and grew. I think in high school it was different because I was never big in the chest area, so every time I saw them, man, why don't I have any of that. But now I think it's cool. It's easier to move. Chest ain't flying in my face. Yeah, I love my body.

For Amy, and several of the other women, she perceived her body through a lens of dancing. She appreciated how it looked when it was moving, when she could make it move the way she wanted it to.

Aliyah from Dance Salsa mentioned several times how much she liked her body, and how dance had helped her like her body even more, "I always like to be active. If I am not active, I don't feel good about my body. So dance has just been another one of those things that's active and has allowed me to feel good about it. And it makes me feel that I can move it in ways that I like."

For Aliyah, dance was a tool that helped her keep her body moving. Her appreciation of her body did not directly stem from the shape of the body, but from the use of it. If she was able to move and feel active, she felt good about her body.

A few women liked certain parts of their bodies but not others. Marlana liked the lines of her body when she danced but she greatly disliked her stomach. She attributed this negative view as arising from the disapproval by her first dance teacher, a ballet teacher. This negative view even affected what she wore:

I feel pretty all right. It's all right. You know, since I was little, I've always been small, but it's this little small pudge at the bottom of my belly. And my ballet teacher would always point it out. She'd always be like, suck it in, suck it in. And I'm like, it is in. The rest of my ribs are showing, it's only that one part. Honestly, my whole life, I don't wear fitted t-shirts. I don't do it because I don't want anyone to see it. And it's so small, it's really small, but I wear loose shirts. I don't wear fitted shirts.

Marlana used loose clothing to hide parts of the body that did not fit classical dance, which was similar to the tactic that Willow used sweatpants for.

Alice also talked about wearing loose clothing when she was in high school, to cover up her body. She admitted having an eating disorder in the past. It took her a while to come to terms with her body and become more accepting of her body. She had this to say about her body when I asked her how she felt about it:

In general? I've grown more comfortable with it over the years. When I was little, I hated my hips. I just have wider hips. It was something I was born with, not something I can change by working out. I remember a girl in high school, she said, "You have birthing

hips, you are going to be a great mother some day." Thank you? ... I gained the okness with my body, junior year.

Rosa, from Dance Salsa, also had an ambivalent response to the question of how she felt about her body, "I've lived with it all my life, so I am used to it."

There were also a few women who greatly disliked their bodies. Willow from Dance Ballroom had very negative views about her body: "I've always hated my body. I am being bluntly honest. Since probably second or third grade. Didn't like the way I looked. Probably because of ballet."

All the low scores on the body image survey were reported by women, and 50% of these women were in the ballroom club. Rarely, such as in the cases of Willow and Marlana, the standards of dance prompted a more negative body image, since the dancer did not fit the bodily norms for her classical dance form.

Dancing, Clothing, and the Body

The expectation of staying in shape and meeting certain body standards seemed to become more emphasized as the final showcase grew closer. In some of the pieces, the dancers would wear clothing that uncovered their arms or stomach. Having their bodies exposed created greater pressure to meet the standards that Dance Hip-Hop's audience would expect, since the performance would have them uncovering their "dance self".

Yet while some of the comments of these women dancers affirmed the dominant standard for performance, others rejected it. And in doing so, they were also more likely to claim ownership of their bodies' sensuality and sexuality. I observed this a lot more in the Dance Salsa

organization, which focused on social dancing. Aliyah, from Dance Salsa, greatly stressed the subversive meanings behind dressing in traditionally sexual ways in dance:

It's Latin dancing. It's very much about your body. For women that can sometimes be seen as sort of a negative thing. Like that stereotype of not wearing too much clothes, or your skirt comes up really high. Or wearing a belly shirt. But for me, those things, it's been really, really good to be around people that are ok with wearing that type of clothes and moving their body in that type of way without it being sexual and judgmental. Like judging your body in a physically attractive way or not. So I think that's been really beneficial.

When women took ownership and pride in expressing themselves in clothing that might be judged by an audience of peers (that did not dance) as sexual or inappropriate, they were able to resist the dominant trappings of submissive femininity, such as tight clothing or clothing that covered much of their bodies. When the Dance Hip-Hop members wore baggy sweatpants to accentuate the movements of their hips and show off their arms with cut-off tees, they were taking stake in offering alternative expressions of femininity and sexuality. Conversely, the explanation that the women gave me for why hip-hop pants were baggy, that they were meant to give the impression of a swinging penis in time to the music, the women were able to play with constructions of gender norms.

In this way, the women in Dance Hip-Hop played with “masculine” clothing that was very much feminized through their dance moves, including sexualized moves partly cloaked by the baggy pants. In Dance Salsa, the dancers, particularly the women, wore highly sexualized clothes that they reconstituted as clothing appropriate to show off, not their bodies, but their

ability to dance and to move well. And in Dance Ballroom, the dancers wore comfortable clothing during practices to focus on fun, unrestricted movement, while accepting more restrictive clothing during performances. This became very apparent during the first performance that I watched the Dance Ballroom students in, as the men had had to purchase ballroom pants, which were very tight-fitting black pants. One man joked that the pants were so tight that they would tear apart during the performance.

In the next section I explore the positive aspects that the members of all three dance organizations felt in regards to their bodies and dance.

Self-Expression, Creativity, & Connection with One's Own Body

Despite comments on the pressures of performing and not-so-positive attitudes towards their own bodies, the majority of the dancers, across all three dance organizations, recounted how dancing had boosted their feelings and thoughts about their body in positive ways. From learning to be more comfortable with showing more of their body, to becoming more comfortable with different body movements, to feeling bolder with moving in different ways, they began to appreciate their bodies in ways that they hadn't prior to dance. As Aliyah explained:

I became much more comfortable wearing things that show more skin. Not in like in clubby, slutty way, but it gets hot. And it's fun to be part of that culture that wears things like cool straps in the back, or a dress that flies up and oh my gosh, your underwear shows! Big deal, someone saw my buttcheek. I do not care. This may be really insensitive about others seeing my body, which I think that we train people... I don't know who we is, maybe like society, moms and dads, we train people to be ashamed of their body and covering it.

For Aliyah, dance was an outlet that let her explore and fully express her body without judgment. The practice of the dance, because it generated a lot of heat in a small space such as a nightclub, also reconstituted for her the meaning of dressing in a particular way. (She did, however, still keep the norms of what was “clubby or slutty” in place for others that didn’t have that motive or meaning). Salsa gave her an environment in which it was safe to push the boundaries that normally existed within the university or work setting.

For others, the ritual and culture around social dancing created a space to show one’s best self. Steve from Dance Salsa had this to say, “I am not sure if it’s the dancing or the whole kind of ritual that comes with dancing. Especially when you get ready to go out, you put on your finest and you go out. You always feel good about yourself.” David Grazian explores similar rituals in his book, *On the Make: The Hustle of Urban Nightlife*, with the “sporting rituals” and cultural scripts of getting ready that are enacted in the nightlife settings, and provide pleasurable feelings (2008, p. 94).

For these dancers, dance was an experience that included a certain way to dress, act, and move that became available to them through practice, socializing and going to nightclubs. They dressed in particular ways because dance expectations were different, and in so doing, they felt good about themselves because they would go and be a dancer.

For others, dance was a tool that they used to better themselves. Ross, from Dance Ballroom, had this to say about the effect dance had on his body:

Dance has brought me more awareness of my body. Not even specifically to dance. But just the way that I move in normal life. The way that I do things. So it’s made me more conscious of it, slightly more critical of it, but also just allowed me to change things that I

want to change about myself. So I do appreciate it for that. The way that I move, the way that I walk, how I sit down and stuff. It's just made me more aware of how I present myself. If nothing else, at least for my posture.

Heidi, from Dance Hip-Hop, believed that dance had “taught me how to use my body in a way that makes it look beautiful”. She felt that the dance transformed her body into an object that was beautiful, and that others would find beauty in.

And Petunia, from Dance Ballroom had this to say,

So I think dancing definitely helps with body image, being comfortable and getting used to your body moving. I never really got into the sexiness of what dancing, especially latin dancing, bring out. So that was part of my two year learning curve... I would go to the gym, yes, and do that. But that didn't make me feel really even better about my body because I didn't really notice too many changes when I went to the gym. But dancing, I could visually see my body moving differently than it normally did.

Joe, from Dance Ballroom, felt that dance had given him greater creativity and movement with what he could do with his body, “I would definitely credit ballroom with letting me be a little more free with how I view and use my body. I was a wrestler so I have always been very aware of my body.”

The dance allowed him greater movement, and through that movement, Joe was able to become more accepting and open to his body. Joe also spoke about how dance, specifically choreographing dance, offered him a chance to be creative: “These routine can get pretty elaborate and over the top. And you just sit there and look at it and go ‘Wow, I came up with that’”.

Lily, from Dance Hip-Hop, even felt that dance had affected her sex life: “I think it has an impact on my sex life for sure. It's just like the whole body image thing, like, I feel that I look really good naked and I know that I am sexy.”

For all of the dancers in these three organizations, dance, irrespective of the style they chose, opened them up to experiences with their bodies they didn't have access to through their school or work environments. The dance environment created a space in which they could safely explore their sexuality and proximity with other people in respectful manners. The pleasures of connecting with their own bodies and with others was a great benefit to many of these students. Aliyah, from Dance Salsa, shared an experience she had with one student that really emphasized the positive aspects that dancing yielded:

I guess I hadn't considered dance to be such a vessel for positive body image and positive relationships. But I recently met someone through classes who I taught and they came to me afterwards and totally blew me out of the water when they said, ‘You don't know how much this is doing for me. Dance is the only thing I can do for myself. I am in such a hard time. There is so many bad things in my life and dance is the absolute only thing that I do for myself to make myself happy.’ And that kind of opened a door for me. It's really making a difference in people's lives to teach them how to dance. And it really builds people's confidence and so maybe I have become sort of insensitive to that. And what it's done for me. But I think it really has done a lot to build my confidence a lot. Just seeing that in other people has really brought that into my eyes. Like, whoa, it can really change your life. It's pretty sweet.

For many of these dancers, dance was the tool that allowed them to connect with their body and grow their confidence, connect with self-expression and creativity, and allowed them to reconfigure and push against body standards that weren't serving them.

Conclusion

When I began this analysis, based on the literatures that exist on body image and dancing, I expected that the survey would reveal that women participants had on average lower self esteem and body image, and specifically that the ballroom dancers, whose dance form was most associated with traditional ballet body norms, would have the lowest scores. I was surprised to find that the dancers who had the lowest scores did not belong to one organization. The common denominator was whether or not the dancer focused on performance versus clubbing, and whether the dancer had danced as a younger woman. Performing dancers had decades-old body norms of the classical dance aesthetic placed on them, by media, their instructors and their dance. Dancers who chose to perform felt the pressures of fitting into a certain mold of the dance body, and this pressure increased as the time to perform drew nearer. As might be expected from the literature, the focus on thinness, working out, and dieting, was much more apparent among the women than the men, especially during the observations and interviews. The men were more neutral in their attitudes towards their bodies, while the women, especially those who chose to perform, swung from admiration for the movement that their bodies could do, to frustration at wanting to be thinner for the cameras at the showcase.

These shifting norms, for clubbing or performing, were also exhibited through the clothing that the dancers wore. On the one hand, certain clothing, such as sweatpants, was used by the Dance Hip-Hop dancers to accentuate the movements of their bodies, and highlight their

sexuality and movement. For others, particularly in Dance Ballroom, looser clothing was used to hide and obscure their bodies, especially when they were not dancing or while they were practicing. It meant comfort and relaxed standards, especially during practices. Yet when Dance Ballroom dancers had to perform, they chose clothing, as a team, that revealed more skin and form, giving some ballroom dancers, who did not love their bodies, greater anxiety and pressure to conform to a thin-aesthetic held up by the classical dances. The Dance Salsa dancers, focused more on social dancing and clubbing, reinterpreted short, form fitting dress-wear as clothing that allowed more movement and fuller expression on the dance floor. As they personally chose what they wanted to wear, there appeared to be greater enjoyment and fewer concerns about their comfort in the clothing.

The works of Leslie Gotfrit (1988) and Jonathan Skinner (2008) identify the oscillating acts of resistance to and reinforcement of dance norms that dancers, primarily women, dealt with while going out dancing, the same experience with which these college dancers dealt. Balancing self expression, creativity, and connection with one's own body—the three positive aspects of body image and dance that I identified across dance groups—while also dealing with the social norms that surrounded dancer's bodies, particularly around performing, was occasionally a tiresome burden. This was especially true for those students who were negatively affected by performance dance standards. While those dominant cultural practices potentially led a few of the students to make unhealthy decisions in trying to lose weight for a dance showcase, none of them became anorexic or chose to dance to the point of exhaustion in order to loose weight.

One reason for what appears to be a general buffering amongst these students of the more stringent bodily standards that run within the dance world is the structure of the organizations in

which they were part. Many of these members specifically chose these organizations because they weren't competition-focused. Quite a few of the Dance Salsa members mentioned how much they preferred having joined an organization that had a very loose schedule and no expectations of performances. Nearly every member of the Dance Ballroom group talked about making an explicit decision to join an organization whose focus was on fun and socialization through dance and not competition. And while many of the members of Dance Hip-Hop had at one moment or another mentioned certain pressures or standards that they would like to meet in dancing, nearly all of them chose to join the group because it felt like home. While they occasionally reinforced the bodily and gendered norms they were taught in high school pom-pom teams, the lack of focus on competition and the students' sense that they were not going to dance professionally appeared to limit the potentially negative effects that advanced-level dance performance could create (Swami, & Harris, 2012).

This is important because poor body image is a serious issue facing many dancers, professional and otherwise. College dance organizations appear, from my research, to offer many different benefits for students. Identifying the links between organizational norms and practices that are correlated with a more negative body image can, however, help extracurricular dance organizations further negate some of these negative potential influences and outcomes.

Chapter Eight: Conclusions

I began this study as an exploration of the experiences and connections that college students had to different types of extracurricular dance organizations. I wanted to develop a more holistic understanding of the differential effects of extracurricular participation on students, and of the impact of organizational structures, norms, and practices on students' experiences. I wanted to explore the potentially meaningful distinctions between college students' experiences in diverse dance extracurricular activities, particularly as they related to issues of gender, sexuality, race, class, and identity. I wanted to explore the relationships between the three organizations and the larger culture of the university and how they further perpetuated racial and cultural segregation, as well as hegemonic ideas about gender and sexuality. I was inspired to conduct this research by my own experiences within extracurricular dance organizations, and by the literature, which did not seem to be capturing the diversity of organizational and dance forms, and what I felt were likely to be consequential differences in their practical effects on students' wellbeing and college experiences.

Through these chapters, I delved into questions that centered on the meanings of the organizations and the dances to their members, the structures of the organizations and how they perpetuated or dismantled hegemonic ideas of gender, sexuality, and race and how the organization structures and dances shaped the experiences and outcomes of the students differently. What I found were distinct differences in the ways that students used, connected with, and experienced thematically similar extracurricular dance organizations. From social networks and performance opportunities, to norms around body image and sexual identity, students had very different daily experiences in and longer-term consequences from being part of

these organizations. Similar to Christina Baker's study (2008), I found that the compositions of the organizations—their structures, goals, purposes, and practices—interacted with the diverse intentions that these students brought to their participation in the organizations to create institutional and social spaces that resulted in great differentiation in students' and groups' associations with body image, academic wellbeing, social connections, and identities. I also found the perpetuation of white spaces and hegemonic norms regarding gender and sexuality through the organizational structures that existed within the student organizations and the university that they were centered in.

These three organizations were enfolded within a university that was primarily white and middle class. Through their auditions and social networks, these organizations, especially Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop tended to create homophily within their groups. White, middle-class students predominated within them and they maintained white spaces within each organization by electing more of the same students from an already white-washed pool of candidates. Dance Salsa was able to do something different because they had a much more open structure to their organization and allowed for more fluidity within their membership. Community members from outside of the university were able to join classes. Dance Salsa also advertised their lessons and social in spaces that were outside of the university, such as salsa clubs and bars that held salsa nights. By extending their reach to include non-university students, and attracting many international students, Dance Salsa was able to dismantle some of the hegemonic norms around race that other student organizations perpetuated and that the culture of the full institution upheld.

In regards to the norms associated with gender and sexuality, all three student organizations on the whole sustained traditional roles and expressions. While Dance Ballroom and Dance Salsa occasionally supported women taking the roles as leads within the dances, the role of men as follows were almost never shown or encouraged. Traditional masculine and feminine expression in dress were required for the full team performance for Dance Ballroom that was choreographed by the ballroom professional, with the women wearing knee-length dresses and the men wearing long pants and button-down shirts. While the clothing for the men and women in Dance Hip-Hop never consisted of dresses, keeping in line with the masculinization of the hip-hop genre, the women on the team did wear more revealing clothing for certain choreographies, showing their mid-drifts and wearing tighter tops that showed off their bras. Expressions of masculinity and femininity were also purposely chosen in the choreographies of Dance Hip-Hop, particularly when the members wanted to include their only male member. Particular movements that were associated with maleness and femaleness were accentuated in certain choreographies, depending on the gender make-up of the dancers within a particular choreography. Movements and choreographies were still associated with either female or male roles, never unisex. And while some women chose to dance within those roles, as leads in ballroom and salsa, or pretending to showcase their fake dicks during a particular lyric within a hip-hop choreography, they were still seen as imitating and borrowing the masculine roles within the dance for a short amount of time. Except for a couple of male instructors, none of the men in the three dance organizations willingly changed their dance roles to become follows or to exhibit feminine movements. In Dance Ballroom, there were more women than men, and to change the roles of the men to follow would alter the aims of the majority of the members, who

used the time to connect with their romantic partners of the opposite sex. In Dance Salsa, there were so many men in the classes that they were told that everyone had to try to be a follow. No man stayed as a follow outside of those lessons because this role again would limit one of the intentions of the majority of the male dancers, which was to meet women and socialize with the opposite sex. In Dance Hip-Hop, the only male on the team was specifically given roles that accentuated masculine, hard-hitting movements, in order to give a more “real” hip-hop feel. Despite some reflection and flexibility, particularly on the part of women, to bend the roles of gender within dance (specifically when the women would lead), traditional gender roles were still upheld within all three dances and organizations.

The students within these three organizations used the dance organizations for disparate reasons. Dance Hip-Hop students used the organization and hip-hop dance as a bridge from high school into university life. They connected with the dance as an expression of youth and entertainment, without much awareness of what dancing to “real” hip-hop might mean. Unlike their counterparts in Speak Hip-Hop, their expression within the dance was solely focused on performance for their largely white, middle-class audience, and thus extended only within the bounds of campus life, upholding the university’s white, youth-focused, middle-class culture. Once they graduated, nearly all of the Dance Hip-Hop students expected to disconnect from the dance and move onto what they referred to as “real life”, which did not include hip-hop or performative dance. The couple of students that wanted to dance hip-hop after college focused on the commodification aspects of hip-hop, by teaching at a youth studio that taught hip-hop to suburban children.

For Dance Ballroom students, the organization represented a space of comfortable belonging, leisure, and relationship-building. Exercise and the traditional ballroom dance form itself were supplementary benefits to their social interests. By inviting friends and romantic partners into the group, the students maintained a comforting, familiar, and very homogeneous group (in terms of race, age, academic interests, and class background) that they never questioned and, indeed, worked to uphold. The focus on Dance Ballroom was a social space that they recruited for and maintained through college.

Dance Salsa members described their goal in joining the organization as becoming a more connected, global citizen. Their dance space in the university was an extension of the many nightclub spaces that they concomitantly frequented. Dance Salsa offered a space in the university that felt more open, welcoming, and diverse than the rest of UM since it recruited and accepted students outside of the university, and many of its members noted this as a significant benefit of the organization. But this social network was not very deep. Students met many new students, but they did not form significant social bonds to one another. In addition, the majority of the students did not become deeply interested in the dance form itself. Salsa dance was a social tool to meet and engage in the world.

Despite the significant differences in organizational goals and structures, and despite the very different reasons that students participated in these three organizations, there were also important similarities across the organizations. None of the organizations appeared to foster a deep love for the dance form itself. This is not surprising, as the organizations represented a deliberate deprofessionalization of the dance experience. Dance Ballroom deliberately kept their distance from the highly structured and formalized expectations of international ballroom

organizations. Dance Hip-Hop members mainly ignored their dance's roots, preferring to connect to the beats rather than the lyrics and to showcase mainstream hip-hop versus exploring critical reflections of "real" hip-hop. The majority of Dance Salsa members had little interest, or even recognition, that they were learning one form of salsa, with particular historical and socio-cultural roots, and that there were other forms out there to learn and to learn about.

Nonetheless, these students also appeared to remain comfortably unaware of the racist heritage of the dance form in which they participated, if only negligibly. In the case of Dance Hip-Hop, the students appeared to remain largely unaware of the contested nature of the kind of hip-hop that they danced, and seemed largely unconcerned about the racial, class, and gendered implications of their engagement with commodified hip-hop forms. Dance Ballroom students appeared to potentially benefit from their disinterest in the dance form; those members who had dance backgrounds and who focused more fully on performance appeared to suffer from more significant negative body image. And the Dance Salsa students, who viewed salsa as a tool for becoming globally connected, did not understand the tool that they used. They could not place their own salsa practice within the broader history and current practices of salsa, and this limited their capacity to understand what allowed salsa as a dance and expressive form to move around the world as it did. Had the students been more aware of the roots of their dances, perhaps they would have been able to reflect on the norms and the roles that the dance forms preserved or weakened.

Nearly all of the students in all three organizations identified as dancers and used dance and their participation in the dance organizations as a social identity. They identified as dancers through the social and performative roles they had through the organizations and the roles that

they played within the dances, whether as dancers focused on entertainment, socialization or global citizenry. The students would either discard their dancer identities after they left college, as with the majority of Dance Ballroom and Dance Hip-Hop members, or continue dancing in spaces that they found outside of academia, as with the majority of Dance Salsa members. With so much of their time and efforts tied to these roles within and through these student organizations, I wanted to look at what could be done to better serve college students who would participate in extracurricular student organization in the future.

Future Directions

Extracurricular organizations are a large part of college student life. Yet they are treated in the majority of the literature as if one size fits all. There are many nuances in extracurricular organizations, even among thematically similar organizations. Despite being under the same thematic umbrella, these dance organizations served different purposes for these students. The variations of implications even within these dance organizations vary widely. Students organizations and universities should reflect on the different roles that organizations fill for students. They should identify ways that organizations can become more supportive and relevant to more students. While this university listed all of the student organizations through their university website, there was little information, besides a link to the organizations' websites if they had one, of the structures, purposes, and missions of all the different organizations. Adding more information might help attract different students to those organizations.

When students apply to form student organizations, the leaders of the organizations could be trained to identify the linkages between organizational practices and the perpetuation or dismantling of hegemonic norms regarding race, class, gender, and sexuality. They could be

encouraged to reflect on how their organizations could foster greater diversity and inclusivity. They could also reflect on how they can accentuate positive wellness aspects while curbing any potential harms, for example with Dance Ballroom taking input from their own members on how they felt about certain costumes for choreographies. Dance and fitness-oriented organizations should be encouraged to look at the connections, for instance, between balancing positive aspects of body image and dance such as self-expression, connection with one's own body and creativity, to dealing with the social norms that surround dancers' bodies, particularly in regards to performing, and how this may help negate some of the potential negative influences on college students. All of these suggestions could be used to acquire a better sense of the benefits that different organizations could have on college students' lives.

Bibliography

- Adilogullari, I. (2014). The examining the effects of 12-week latin dance exercise on social physique anxiety: The effects of 12-week latin dance. *Anthropologist*, 18(2), 421-425.
- Adler, P. A., Kless, S. J., & Adler, P. (1992). Socialization to gender roles: Popularity among elementary school boys and girls. *Sociology Of Education*, 65(3), 169-187.
- American College Health Association [ACHA]. (2016). American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment II: Reference Group Executive Summary Spring 2016. Hanover, MD: American College Health Association.
- American Society of Plastic Surgery. (2015). 2015 Statistics. Retrieved February 3, 2016, from <http://www.plasticsurgery.org/Documents/news-resources/statistics/2015-statistics/cosmetic-procedure-trends-2015.pdf>
- Angioi, M., Metsios, G., Koutedakis, Y., & Wyon, M. (2009). Fitness in contemporary dance: A systematic re- view. *International Journal of Sports Medicine*. 30(7), 475-484.
- Arkin, L. (1994). Dancing the body: Women and dance performance. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 65(2), 36-43.
- Armstrong, E. G. (2004). Eminem's construction of authenticity. *Popular Music & Society*, 27(3), 335-355.
- Arnett, J. (2007). Socialization in emerging adulthood: From the family to the wider world, from socialization to self-socialization. In *Handbook of socialization: Theory and research*. (pp. 208-231).

- Ashley, R. R. (2015). Cross cultural comparison of Black women's body image highlighting Saartjie Baartman and motivations to engage in body modification. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (1596825).
- Atencio, M. (2008). 'Freaky is just how I get down': Investigating the fluidity of minority ethnic feminine subjectivities in dance. *Leisure Studies*, 27(3), 311-327.
- Baker, C. (2008). Under-represented college students and extracurricular involvement: the effects of various student organizations on academic performance. *Social Psychology Of Education*, 11(3), 273-298.
- Bailey, J. M., and Oberschneider, M. (1997). Sexual orientation and professional dance. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 26(4), 427-438.
- Banes, S. (1999). *Dancing Women: Female bodies on Stage*. London: Routledge.
- Barnes, M. (2008). *Redefining the real: Race, gender and place in the construction of hip-hop authenticity*. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (3306059).
- Becker, H. S. (1958). Problems of inference and proof in participant observation. *American Sociological Review*, 23(6), 652-660.
- Bland, H., Melton, B., Bigam, L., Welle, P. (2014). Quantifying the impact of physical activity on stress tolerance in college students. *College Student Journal*, 48(4), 559-568.
- Blood, S. (2005). *Body work: The social construction of women's body image*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bock, S., & Borland, K. (2011). Exotic identities: Dance, difference, and self-fashioning. *Journal of Folklore Research*, 48(1), 1-36.

- Bonny, J., Lindberg, J., & Pacampara, M., (2017). Hip Hop dance experience linked to sociocognitive ability. *PLoS ONE*, 12(2), e0169947.
- Borland, K. (2009). Embracing difference: Salsa fever in New Jersey. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 122(486), 466-492.
- Bosse, J. (2007). Whiteness and the performance of race in american ballroom dance. *Journal of American Folklore*, 120(475), 19-34.
- Bosse, J. (2015). Small town cosmopolitans: Salsa dance in rural America. In S. Hutchinson (Ed). *Salsa World: A Global Dance in Local Contexts* (pp. 80-97). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Bremer, Z. (2007). Dance as a form of exercise. *British Journal of General Practice*, 57(535), 166 .
- Broh, B. A. (2002). Linking extracurricular programming to academic achievement: Who benefits and why? *Sociology of Education*, 75(1), 69–91.
- Browning, B. (1995). *Samba: Resistance in motion*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Brustad, R.J. (1996). Attraction to physical activity in urban schoolchildren: Parental socialization and gender influences. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 67(3), 316-323.
- Burt, R. (1995) *The male dancer: Bodies, spectacles, sexualities*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Cafri, G., Yamamiya, Y., Brannick, M., & Thompson, J. K. (2005). The influence of sociocultural factors on body image: A meta-analysis. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 12(4), 421-433.

- Capone, C., Wood, M. D., Borsari, B., & Laird, R. D. (2007). Fraternity and sorority involvement, social influences, and alcohol use among college students: A prospective examination. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 21(3), 316-327.
- Carter, S. M., & Little, M. (2007). Justifying knowledge, justifying method, taking action: Epistemologies, methodologies, and methods in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 17 (10), 1316-1328.
- Cash, T., & Pruzinsky, T. (1990). Multidimensional body-self relations questionnaire. In T. Cash, T. Pruzinsky, & Pat Hartley (Eds.), *Body Images: Development, Deviance and Change* (pp. 378-381). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Cashel, M., Cunningham, D., Landeros, C., Cokley, K., Muhammad, G. (2003). Sociocultural attitudes and symptoms of bulimia: Evaluating the SATAQ with diverse college groups *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 50, 287-296.
- Castillo, M., Carlson, J., C., Bonilla, E., Chuang, E., et al. (2015). Dance class structure affects youth physical activity and sedentary behavior: A study of seven dance types. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 86(3), 225-232
- Çatikkaş, F. (2011). Physical correlates of college students' body image satisfaction levels. *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal*, 39(4), 497-502.
- Chalabaev, A., Sarrazin, P., Fontayne, P., Boiché, J., & Clément-Guillotin, C. (2013). The influence of sex stereotypes and gender roles on participation and performance in sport and exercise: Review and future directions. *Psychology of Sport & Exercise*, 14(2), 136-144.

- Chang, I. (2015). *Flirting with global citizenship: The construction of gender, class, and national identity in Taiwanese salsa practice*. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (1732168326)
- Chang, J. (2006). *Total chaos: The art and aesthetics of hip-hop*. New York: Basic/Civitas.
- Chu, A. Y., & Chien-Hsin, W. (2012). Differences in level of sport commitment among college dance sport competitors. *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal*, 40(5), 755-766.
- Colby, S. M., Colby, J. J., & Raymond, G. A. (2009). College versus the real world: Student perceptions and implications for understanding heavy drinking among college students. *Addictive Behaviors*, 34(1), 17-27.
- Compton, C. (2008). Thank you, Miss Katherine. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90(3), 182-185.
- Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. (2006). CAS professional standards for higher education (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Cresswell, T. (2006). 'You cannot shake that shimmie here': Producing mobility on the dance floor. *Cultural Geographies*, 13(1), 55-77.
- Crouch, D. (2006). Geographies of leisure. In C. Rojek, S. Shaw, & A.J. Veal (Eds.), *A handbook of leisure studies* (pp. 125-139). Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Crowell, C. (2013). Report: Family finances shrinking. *The Skanner*, 35(13), 4.
- DeBraganza, N., & Hausenblas, H. (2010). Media exposure of the ideal physique on women's body dissatisfaction and mood. *Journal of Black Studies*, 40(4), 700-716.
- DeLamater, J. D., Myers, D. J., & Collett, J. L. (2014). *Social Psychology*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

- Desmond, J. (1997). *Meaning in motion: New cultural studies of dance*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Desmond, J. (2001). *Dancing desires: Choreographing sexualities on and off the stage*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Diamond, L. (2009). *Sexual Fluidity: Understanding women's love and desire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Dumais, S. (2002). Cultural capital, gender, and school success: The role of habitus. *Sociology of education*, 75(1), 44-68.
- Eccles, J. S., Barber, B. L., Stone, M., & Hunt, J. (2003). Extracurricular activities and adolescent development. *Journal of Social Issues*, 59, 865-889.
- Egli, T., Bland, H., Melton, B., & Czech, D. (2011). Influence of age, sex, and race on college students' exercise motivation of physical activity. *Journal of American College Health*. 59(5), 399-406.
- Ehrenreich, N. (2001). Confessions of a White salsa dancer: Appropriation, identity and the "Latin music craze". *Denver University Law Review*, 78(4), 795-815.
- Eisner, E. (1999). Does experience in the arts boost academic achievement? *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 72(3), 143-149.
- Emerson, R., (2002). "Where my girls at?": Negotiating black womanhood in music videos. *Gender and Society*, 16(1), 115-135.
- Engel, M. (2011). Pop culture, the media, and dance: A boon/bane dichotomy. *Journal of Dance Education*, 11(4), 143-145.

- Engeln-Maddox, R. (2006). Buying a beauty standard or dreaming of a new life? Expectations associated with media ideals. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 30(3), 258-266.
- English, D. N. (2015). *Dance as a community of practice: Exploring dance groups in the Kansas city area through the lifespan*. (3717883) University of Missouri - Kansas City. Ann Arbor.
- Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. New York: Norton.
- Evans, D. H. (2006). *History of modern ballroom dancing*. Departmental Report TRS-96-008, Department of Mathematics and Computing, Central Queensland University, Bundaberg.
- Ewing, J. C., Bruce, J. A., & Ricketts, K. G. (2009). Effective leadership development for undergraduates: How important is active participation in collegiate organizations? *Journal of Leadership Education*, 7, 118-131.
- Fink, B., Weege, B., Flugge, J., Roder, S., Neave, N., & McCarty, K.(2012). Men's personality and women's perception of their dance quality. *Personality & Individual Differences*, 52(2), 232-235.
- Fiske, E., ed., (1999). *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*. Washington, D.C.: Arts Education Partnership and President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.
- Fonseca, C., Thurm, B., Vecchi, R., & Gama, E. (2014). Ballroom dance and body size perception. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 119(2), 495.
- Foreman, E., & Retallick, M. (2012). Undergraduate involvement in extracurricular activities and leadership development in college of agriculture and life sciences students. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 53 (3), 111–123.

- Foster, S. L. (1998). Choreographies of gender. *Signs: Journal Of Women In Culture & Society*, 24(1), 1-33.
- Fraleigh, S.H. (1987). *Dance and the lived body*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Fredricks, J. A., & Eccles, J. S. (2006). Extracurricular involvement and adolescent adjustment: Impact of duration, number of activities, and breadth of participation. *Applied Developmental Science*, 10(3), 132-146.
- Fredrickson B. L., & Roberts T. A. (1997). Objectification theory: toward understanding women's lived experiences and mental health risks. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21(2), 173-206.
- Foubert, J. D., & Grainger, L. U. (2006). Effects of involvement in clubs and organizations on the psychosocial development of first-year and senior college students. *NASPA Journal*, 43, 166-182.
- Gainor, J. (2006). Competitive ballroom dancing is back!. *The Gay & Lesbian Review Worldwide*, 13(6), 17-19.
- Garber, C. E., Blissmer, B., Deschenes, M. R., Franklin, B. A., Lamonte, M.J., Lee, I.M., ... Swain, D. (2011). Quantity and quality of exercise for developing and maintaining cardiorespiratory, musculoskeletal, and neuromotor fitness in apparently healthy adults: Guidance for prescribing exercise. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, 43(f), 1334-1357.
- Garrison, H., Stoll, S., Beller, J. (2014). Effect motivation has on exercise among active college students. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 85(S1), A64.

- Gecas, V., & Burke, P. J. (1995). Self and identity. In K. S. Cook, G. A. & Fine, J. S. House (Eds.), *Sociological perspectives on social psychology*, (pp. 41–67). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Gillen, M. M., & Markey, C. N. (2014). Body image and HIV risk among college students. *American Journal Of Health Behavior*, 38(6), 816-822.
- Ginsburgs, V. , & Goodill, S. (2009). A dance/movement therapy clinical model for women with gynecologic cancer undergoing high dose rate brachytherapy. *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 31(2), 136-158.
- Glenn, E. (2008). Yearning for lightness. *Gender & Society*, 22(3), 281-302.
- Gotfrit, L. (1988). Women dancing back: Disruption and the politics of pleasure. *The Journal of Education*, 170(3), 122-141.
- Gotfrit, L. (1992). *Dancing back in the jazz age: Discourses of danger and possibilities of pleasure*. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304038352).
- Goldberg, M. (1987). Ballerinas and ball passing. *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, 3(2), 7-31.
- Goldenberg, J. (2001). Dancing girls: The ups and downs of deciding to dance. *Women's Times*, 8(10), 6.
- Goodill, S. (2005). *An introduction to medical dance/movement therapy: Health care in motion*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

- Grant, K. E., Compas, B. E., Stuhlmacher, A. F., Thurm, A. E., McMahon, S. D., & Halpert, J. A. (2003). Stressor and child and adolescent psychopathology: moving from markers to mechanisms of risk. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129, 442-466.
- Grazian, D. (2008). *On the make: The hustle of urban nightlife*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Green, J. (2003). Foucault and the training of docile bodies in dance education. *Arts and Learning Research Journal*, 19(1), 99-125.
- Green, J. (2007), 'Student Bodies: Dance Pedagogy and the Soma,' in L. Bresler (Ed.), *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education*, (pp. 1119–1132). Netherlands: Springer International.
- Greene, K., & Maggs, J. (2015). Revisiting the time trade-off hypothesis: Work, organized activities, and academics during college. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 44(8), 1623-1637.
- Griffin, K. A., & McIntosh, K. L. (2015). Finding a fit: Understanding Black immigrant students' engagement in campus activities. *Journal of College Student Development*, 56(3), 243-260.
- Griffin, M. J., Wardell, J. D., & Read, J. P. (2013). Recent sexual victimization and drinking behavior in newly matriculated college students: A latent growth analysis. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 27(4), 966-973.
- Grogan, S. (2007). *Body image: Understanding body dissatisfaction in men, women, and children*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Gruber, K. (2008). Social support for exercise and dietary habits among college students. *Adolescence*, 43(171), 557-575.
- Gurin, P., Dey, E. L., Hurtado, S., & Gurin, G. (2002). Diversity and Higher education: Theory and impact on educational outcomes. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72(3), 330- 366.
- Hampel, P., & Petermann, G. (2006). Perceived stress, coping, and adjustment in adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 38, 409-415.
- Hanna, J. (1992). Connections: Arts, academics, and productive citizens. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 73(8), 601-607.
- Hanna, J. (2010). Dance and sexuality: Many moves. *Journal of Sex Research*, 47(2–3), 212-241.
- Hardin, M., & Greer, J. (2009). The influence of gender-role socialization, media use and sports participation on perceptions of gender-appropriate sports. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 32(2), 207-226.
- Harkness, G. (2012). True school: Situational authenticity in Chicago's hip-hop underground. *Cultural Sociology*, 6(3), 283-298.
- Heiland, T., Murray, D., & Edley, P. (2008). Body image of dancers in Los Angeles: the cult of slenderness and media influence among dance students. *Research In Dance Education*, 9(3), 257-275.
- Henderson, C. (2013). It's all in the name: Hip hop, sexuality, and black women's identity in breakin' In: *The Making of a Hip Hop Dancer. Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender and The Black International*, 2(1), 47-58
- Hendrickson, B., Rosen, D., & Aune, R. K. (2011). An analysis of friendship networks, social connectedness, homesickness, and satisfaction levels of international students.

- International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(3), 281-295.
- Hess, M. (2005). Hip-hop realness and the white performer. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 22(5), 372-389.
- Hevel, M. S., Martin, G. L., Weeden, D. D., & Pascarella, E. T. (2015). The effects of fraternity and sorority membership in the fourth year of college: A detrimental or value-added component of undergraduate education? *Journal of College Student Development*, 56(5), 456-470.
- Hicks, T., & Heastie, S. (2008). High school to college transition: a profile of the stressors, physical and psychological health issues that affect the first-year on-campus college student. *Journal Of Cultural Diversity*, 15(3), 143-147.
- Hirsch, B. (1980). Natural support systems and coping with major life changes. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 8, 159-172.
- Huang, S., Hogg, J., Zandieh, S., & Bostwick, S. (2012). A ballroom dance classroom program promotes moderate to vigorous physical activity in elementary school children. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 26, 160–165.
- Hutchinson, S. (2004). Mambo On 2: The birth of a new form of dance in New York City. *Centro Journal*, 16(2), 108-137.
- Hutchinson, S. (2015a). Dancing in place: An introduction. In S. Hutchinson (Ed). *Salsa World: A Global Dance in Local Contexts* (pp. 1-25). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Hutchinson, S. (2015b). What's in a number? In S. Hutchinson (Ed). *Salsa World: A Global Dance in Local Contexts* (pp. 1-25). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

- Hughes, W. (1994). In the empire of the beat: Discipline and disco. In T. Rose (Ed.), *Microphone fiends: Youth music and youth culture* (pp. 147-157). New York: Routledge.
- Hurtado, S., & Carter, D. F. (1997). Effects of college transition and perceptions of the campus racial climate on Latino college students' sense of belonging. *Sociology of Education*, 70(4), 324-345.
- Idle, T., Wood, E., & Desmarais, S. (1993). Gender role socialization in toy play situations: Mothers and fathers with their sons and daughters. *Sex Roles*, 28(11), 679-691.
- Imbimbo, P. (1995). Sex differences in the identity formation of college student. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24(6), 745-761.
- Iwanaga, K. (2015). Diffusion and change in salsa dance styles in Japan. In S. Hutchinson (Ed). *Salsa World: A Global Dance in Local Contexts* (pp. 200-212). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Jackson, L. (2013). Discourse methodology in service of narrative strategy: Nommo Seeking in a hip hop universe, James Spady's hip hop oeuvre. *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, 37(2), 80-93.
- James, K. J. (2000). "You can feel them looking at you": The experiences of adolescent girls at swimming pools. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32, 262-280.
- Jeffries, M. P. (2014). Hip-hop urbanism old and new. *International Journal Of Urban & Regional Research*, 38(2), 706-715.
- Jones, M. H., Alexander, J. M., & Estell, D. B. (2010). Homophily among peer groups members' perceived self-regulated learning. *Journal Of Experimental Education*, 78(3), 378-394.

- Jones, M. L., Rush, B. R., Elmore, R. G., & White, B. J. (2014). Level of and motivation for extracurricular activity are associated with academic performance in the veterinary curriculum. *Journal Of Veterinary Medical Education*, 41(3), 275-283.
- Jordan, S., & Thomas, H. (1994). Dance and gender: Formalism and semiotics reconsidered. *Dance Research*, 12(2), 3-14.
- Karam, J. (2010). Belly dancing and the (en)gendering of ethnic sexuality in the "mixed" Brazilian nation. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 6(2), 86-114.
- Kasperek, S., Johnson, A., Fotta, K., & Francis, C. (2007). Do a little dance: The impact on students when librarians get involved in extracurricular activities. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 33(1), 118-126.
- Kaufman, J., & Gabler, J. (2004). Cultural capital and the extracurricular activities of girls and boys in the college attainment process. *Poetics*, 32, 145–168.
- Kent, L. (2014). Breaking grahamstown; breakin' the dance: Exploring the role of break dancing in the construction of a break dancer's identity. *The Journal of Hip Hop Studies*, 1(2), 168-184.
- Kimbrough, W. M., & Hutcheson, P. A. (1998). The impact of membership in black greek-letter organizations on black students' involvement in collegiate activities and their development of leadership skills. *Journal of Negro Education*, 67(2), 96–105.
- Klomsten, A. T., Marsh, H. W., & Skaalvik, E. M. (2005). Adolescents' perceptions of masculine and feminine values in sport and physical education: A study of gender differences. *Sex Roles*, 52(9-10), 625-636.

- Kochhar, R., Fry, R., & Taylor, P. (2011). Wealth gaps rise to record highs between white, blacks and hispanics. Retrieved from Pew Research Center website: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/07/26/wealth-gaps-rise-to-record-highs-between-whites-blacks-hispanics>
- Koff, S. R. (2000). Toward a definition of dance education. *Childhood Education*, 77(1), 27-31.
- Kort-Butler, L., & Hagewen, K. J. (2011). School-based extracurricular activity involvement and adolescent self-esteem: A growth-curve analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 40(5), 568-581.
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2007). *The leadership challenge* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey– Bass.
- Kraus, R. (2010). They danced in the bible: Identity integration among Christian women who belly dance. *Sociology of Religion*, 71(4), 457-467.
- Lamotte, M. (2014). Rebels without a pause: Hip-hop and resistance in the city. *International Journal Of Urban & Regional Research*, 38(2), 686-694.
- Langdon, S., & Petracca, G. (2010). Tiny dancer: Body image and dancer identity in female modern dancers, *Body Image*, 7(4), 360-363.
- Langlois, J. H., & Downs, A. C. (1980). Mothers, fathers and peers as socialization agents of sex-typed play behaviours in young children. *Child Development*, 51, 1217-1247.
- Lemoyne, J., Valois, P., & Guay, F. (2015). Physical self-concept and participation in physical activity in college students, *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, 47(1), 142-150.
- Lesté, A., & Rust, J. (1990) Effects of dance on anxiety. *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 12(1), 19-25.

- Lewis, G. B., & Seaman, B. A. (2004). Sexual orientation and demand for the arts. *Social Science Quarterly*, 85(3), 523-538.
- Lewis, P. (2005) Identity development during the college years: Findings from the West Point longitudinal study. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(4), 357-373.
- Lippin, R. A., & Micozzi, M. S. (2006). Arts therapy. In M. S. Micozzi (Ed.), *Fundamentals of complementary and integrative medicine* (3rd ed., pp. 332-350). St. Louis, MO: Saunders.
- Lock, M. (1993). Cultivating the Body: Anthropology and epistemologies of bodily practice and knowledge. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 22, 133-155.
- Lumley, S., Ward, P., Roberts, L., & Mann, J. P. (2015). Self-reported extracurricular activity, academic success, and quality of life in UK medical students. *International Journal of Medical Education*, 6, 111-117.
- Lundstrom, C. (2009). 'People take for granted that you know how to dance salsa and merengue': Transnational diasporas, visual discourses and racialized knowledge in Sweden's contemporary latin music boom. *Social Identities*, 15(5), 707-723.
- Lytton, H., & Romney, D. M. (1991). Parents' differential socialization of boys and girls: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 109, 267-296.
- Maggs, J. L., Williams, L. R., & Lee, C. M. (2011). Ups and downs of alcohol use among first-year college students: Number of drinks, heavy drinking, and stumble and pass out drinking days. *Addictive Behaviors*, 36(3), 197-202.
- Mahoney, J. L., Larson, R. W., & Eccles, J. S. (Eds.). (2005). *Organized activities as contexts of*

- development: Extracurricular activities, after-school and community programs.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates.
- Mahoney, J. L., Lord, H., & Carryl, E. (2005). An ecological analysis of after-school program participation in the development of academic performance and motivational attributes for disadvantaged children. *Child Development, 76*, 811–825.
- Mallett, C. (2016) The school-to-prison pipeline: A critical review of the punitive paradigm shift. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 33*(1), 15-24.
- Malone, C., & Martinez, G. (2010). The organic globalizer: The political development of hip-hop and the prospects for global transformation. *New Political Science, 32*(4), 531-545.
- Maraz, A., Király, O., Urbán, R., Griffiths, M., & Demetrovics, Z. S., (2015). Why do you dance? Development of the dance motivation inventory (DMI) (Dance Motivation Inventory). *PLoS ONE, 10*(3), p.e0122866.
- Marsh, H. W., & Kleitman, S. (2003). School athletic participation: Mostly gain with little pain. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 25*, 205–228.
- Martin, A. J., Mansour, M., Anderson, M., Gibson, R., Liem, G. D., & Sudmalis, D. (2013). The role of arts participation in students' academic and nonacademic outcomes: A longitudinal study of school, home, and community factors. *Journal Of Educational Psychology, 105*(3), 709-727.
- Markus, H. (1977). Self-schemata and processing information about the self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 35*(2), 63-78.
- Markus, H., & Wurf, E. (1987). The dynamic self-concept - A social psychological perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology, 38*, 299-337.

- Matsunaga, P. S. (2008). Woman's social representations in the hip-hop movement. *Psicologia & Sociedade*, 20(1), 108-116.
- McClelland, S. I., & Fine, M. (2008) Rescuing a theory of adolescent sexual excess: Young women and wanting. In *Next Wave Cultures: Feminism, Subcultures, Activism*. Anita Harris, ed. London: Routledge. (pp. 83-102).
- Mcginley, M., Rospenda, K., Liu, L., & Richman, J. (2016). It isn't all just fun and games: Collegiate participation in extracurricular activities and risk for generalized and sexual harassment, psychological distress, and alcohol use. *Journal of Adolescence*, 53, 152-163.
- McHale, S., Crouter, A., & Tucker, C. (1999). Family context and gender role socialization in middle childhood: Comparing girls to boys and sisters to brothers. *Child Development*, 70(4), 990-1004.
- McLeod, K. (1999). Authenticity within hip-hop and other cultures threatened with assimilation. *Journal of Communication*, 49(4), 134-150.
- McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L., & Cook, J. (2001). Birds of a feather: Homophily in social networks. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27, 415-44.
- Mennesson, C. (2009). Being a man in dance: socialization modes and gender identities. *Sport in Society*, 12(2), 174-195.
- Milhausen, R., Buchholz, A., Opperman, E., Benson, L., Milhausen, R. R., Buchholz, A. C., ... Benson, L. E. (2015). Relationships between body Image, body composition, sexual functioning, and sexual satisfaction among heterosexual young adults. *Archives Of Sexual Behavior*, 44(6), 1621-1633.

- Miller, J., & Levy, G. (1996). Gender role conflict, gender-typed characteristics, self-concepts, and sport socialization in female athletes and nonathletes. *Sex Roles*, 35(1), 111-122.
- Mohn, K. (2004). Rocking the Curriculum: Dance and Academics at an A+ School. *Journal of Dance Education*, 4(4), 121-123.
- Montelongo, R. (2002). Student participation in college student organizations: A review of literature. *Journal of the Indiana University Personnel Association*, 2, 50-63.
- Moore, L. L. & Popadiuk, N. (2011). Positive aspects of international student transitions: A qualitative inquiry. *Journal of College Student Development*, 52(3), 291-306.
- Moore, L. L., Prescott, W. R., & Gardner, K. A. (2008). College or university student organizations: Which are more effective at developing leaders? *Proceedings of the 2008 Western Region American Association for Agricultural Education Research Conference*, 27, 177-186.
- Morgan, E. (2012). Not always a straight path: College students' narratives of heterosexual identity development. *Sex Roles*, 66(1/2), 79-93.
- Morgan, I. (2011). "Empowerment in this dance? You love this dance?": Instructor and student together online. *Journal of Dance Education*, 11(4), 119-123.
- Morgan, J. (2005). *Arts participation and academic achievement*. (Doctoral Dissertation) Texas Tech University.
- Moss, S. (2000). Learning from Latina students: Modern dance meets salsa and merengue. *The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 71(3), 39-42.

- Muñoz-Bullón, F., Sanchez-Bueno, M. J., & Vos-Saz, A. (2017). The influence of sports participation on academic performance among students in higher education, *Sport Management Review*, In Press.
- Muñoz-Laboy, M., Weinstein, H., & Parker, R. (2007). The hip-hop club scene: Gender, grinding and sex. *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, 9(6), 615-628.
- Murray, K., Rieger, E. (2011). Investigating adolescent stress and body image. *Journal of Adolescence*, 34(2), 269–278.
- National Survey of Student Engagement. (2010). *Major differences: Examining student engagement by field of study—Annual results 2010*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.
- Neinstein, L. (2013). *The New Adolescents: An Analysis of Health Conditions, Behaviors, Risks, and Access to Services in the United States compared to California, Among Adolescents (12–17), Emerging Young Adults (18–25) and Young Adults (26–34)*. White Paper.
- Nelson, T., Gortmaker, S., Subramanian, S., & Wechsler, H. (2007). Vigorous physical activity among college students in the United States. *Journal of Physical Activity & Health*. 4(4): 495-508.
- Ness, S. A. (1992). *Body, Movement and Culture: Kinesthetic and Visual Symbolism in a Philippine Community*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Newman, P., & Newman, B. (1978). Identity formation and the college experience. *Adolescence*, 13(50), 311-326.

- Nikkar-Esfahani, A., Jamjoom, A. A., & Fitzgerald, J. F. (2012). Extracurricular participation in research and audit by medical students: Opportunities, obstacles, motivation and outcomes. *Medical Teacher*, 34(5), e317-e324.
- Oliver, W. (2005). Reading the ballerina's body: Susan Bordo sheds light on Anastasia Volochkova and Heidi Guenther. *Dance Research Journal*, 37(2), 38–54.
- Oliver, W. (2008). Body image in the dance class. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 79(5), 18-41.
- Oliver, W. (2011). The influence of pop culture and mass media on dance education today. *Journal of Dance Education*, 11(4), 111-112.
- O'Neill, J., Pate, R., & Hooker, S. (2011). The contribution of dance to daily physical activity among adolescent girls. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 8, 87–95.
- Paap, C., & Gardner, R. (2011). Body image disturbance and relationship satisfaction among college students. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 51(6), 715–719.
- Park, H., Rethemeyer, R., Bryce, K., Andersen, D., & Kim, H. (2011). Making friends and influencing careers: Social integration, homophily, and cohort-wide MPA courses. *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 17(3), 417-445.
- Park, S.Y. (2005). The influence of presumed media influence on women's desire to be thin. *Communication Research*, 32(5), 594-614.
- Parviainen, J. (1998). *Bodies moving and moved: A phenomenological analysis of the dancing subject and the cognitive and ethical values of dance art*. Vammala: Tampere University Press.

- Pascarella, E., & Terenzini, P. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Paschalis, V., Nikolaidis, M., Jamurtas, A., Owolabi, E., Kitas, G., Wyon, M., & Koutedakis, Y. (2012). Dance as an eccentric form of exercise: Practical implications. *Medical Problems of Performing Artists*, 27(2), 102-106.
- Pellizzer, M., Tiggemann, M., Clark, L. (2016). Enjoyment of sexualisation and positive body image in recreational pole dancers and university students. *Sex Roles*, 74(1-2), 35-45.
- Penney, J. (2012). "We don't wear tight clothes": Gay panic and queer style in contemporary hip hop. *Popular Music and Society*, 35(3), 321-332.
- Perry, I. (2004). *Prophets of the hood: Politics and poetics in hip-hop*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Peterson, G. T., & Anderson, E. (2012). The performance of softer masculinities on the university dance floor. *Journal Of Men's Studies*, 20(1), 3-15.
- Peshkin, A. (1988). In search of subjectivity. One's own. *Educational Researcher*, 17(7), 17-21.
- Phillips-Fein, J. (2011). How we dance: Helping students unpack the impact of dance television shows. *Journal of Dance Education*, 11(4), 134-136.
- Piazza, C.L. (1999). *Multiple forms of literacy: Teaching literacy and the arts*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Pickard, A. (2012). Schooling the dancer: The evolution of an identity as a ballet dancer. *Research In Dance Education*, 13(1), 25-46.
- Pike, G. R. (2000). The influence of fraternity or sorority membership on students' college experiences and cognitive development. *Research In Higher Education*, 41(1), 117-139.

- Pillow, W. (2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(2), 175-196.
- Pittman, L. D., & Richmond, A. (2008). University belonging, friendship quality, and psychology adjustment during the transition to college. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 76(4), 343-361.
- Priyadharshini, E. (2003). Coming unstuck: Thinking otherwise about "studying up". *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 34(4), 420-437.
- Quiroga Murcia, C., Kreutz, G., Clift, S., & Bongard, S. (2010). Shall we dance? An exploration of the perceived benefits of dancing on well-being. *Arts & Health*, 2(2), 149-163.
- Rabbia, J. (2010). Dance as a community-based exercise in older adults. *Topics in Geriatric Rehabilitation*, 26(4), 353-360.
- Radell, S., Adame, D., Cole, S. (2002). Effect of teaching with mirrors on body image and locus of control in women college ballet dancers. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*. 95(3), 1239-1247.
- Radell, S., Adame, D., & Johnson, T. (1993). Dance experiences associated with body-image and personality among college students: a comparison of dancers and nondancers. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 77(2), 507-514.
- Radell, S., Adame, D., Cole, S., Melito, A., & Johnson, T. (1992). The effects of dance experiences on body image and personality among college students: A pre-post design study, *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 63(1), A20-A20.

- Radell, S., Keneman, M., Adame, D., & Cole, S. (2014). My body and its reflection: a case study of eight dance students and the mirror in the ballet classroom. *Research in Dance Education*, 15(2), 161-178.
- Raines, K., Moore, C., & Kluess, H. (2011). The relationship between body image and nutrition knowledge in college freshman sorority students. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 111(9), A69-A69.
- Renta, P. (2015). The global commercialization of salsa dancing and *Sabor* (Puerto Rico). In S. Hutchinson (Ed). *Salsa World: A Global Dance in Local Contexts* (pp. 117-139). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Reslan, S., Saules, K., & Serras, A. (2011). "Partier" self-concept mediates the relationship between college student binge drinking and related adverse consequences, *Addictive Behaviors*, 36(8), 855-860.
- Richardson, P. (Apr. 1920). 'Can we get together and raise the standard of ballroom dancing? A suggestion from Maurice.' *Dancing Times*, 526, 528.
- Richardson, P. J. S. (1948). *A history of English ballroom dancing (1910–1945): The story of the development of the English style*. London: Herbert Jenkins.
- Risner, D. (2002) Sexual orientation and male participation in dance education: Revisiting the open secret, *Journal of Dance Education*, 2(3), 84-92.
- Risner, D. (2007). Rehearsing masculinity: Challenging the 'boy code' in dance education, *Research in Dance Education*, 8(2), 139-153.

- Rios, V. (2006). The hyper-criminalization of Black and Latino male youth in the era of mass incarceration. *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society*, 8(2), 40-54.
- Roberts, R. (2013). Dancing with social ghosts: Performing embodiments, analyzing critically. *Transforming Anthropology*, 21(1), 4-14.
- Roche, J. (2011) Embodying multiplicity: The independent contemporary dancer's moving identity, *Research in Dance Education*, 12(2), 105-118.
- Rodriquez, (2006). Color-blind ideology and the cultural appropriation of hip-hop. *Journal of contemporary ethnography*. 35(6) 645-668.
- Rolnik, A., Engeln-Maddox, R., & Miller, S. (2010). Here's looking at you: Self-objectification, body image disturbance, and sorority rush. *Sex Roles*, 63(1-2), 6-17.
- Ronen, S. (2010). Grinding on the dance floor: Gendered scripts and sexualized dancing at college parties. *Gender and Society*, 24(3), 355-377.
- Rose, T. (1994) *Black noise: Rap music and black culture in contemporary America*. Wesleyan University Press, Hanover, NH.
- Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Sandel, S. L., Judge, J. O., Landry, N., Faria, L., Ouellette, R., & Majczak, M. (2005). Dance and movement program improves quality-of-life measures in breast cancer survivors. *Cancer Nursing*, 28(4), 301-309.
- Sanderson, P. (2001). Age and gender issues in adolescent attitudes to dance. *European Physical Education Review*, 7(2), 117-136.

- Saucier, P., & Woods, T. (2014). Hip hop studies in black. *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, 26(2-3), 268-294.
- Schoppmeier, S. (2015). 'Hottentot Barbie' as a multicultural Star: The commodification of race in Nicki Minaj's music videos. *Aspeers*, 8, 49-70.
- Serlin, I. A., Classen, C., Frances, B., & Angell, K. (2000). Symposium: Support groups for women with breast cancer: Traditional and alternative expressive approaches. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 27, 123-138.
- Shaulskiy, S. L. (2016). *Belonging beyond the classroom: Examining the importance of college students' sense of belonging to student organizations for student success*. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (10473937)
- Shaw, S. (2001). Conceptualizing resistance: Women's leisure as political practice. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 33(2), 186-201.
- Sheets, V., & Ajmere, K. (2005). Are romantic partners a source of college students' weight concern? *Eating Behaviors*, 6(1), 1-9.
- Sherlock, J. (1996). Dance and the culture of the body: Where is the grotesque? *Women's Studies International Forum*, 19(5), 525-533.
- Shernoff, D. J. (2010). Engagement in after-school programs as a predictor of social competence and academic performance. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 45, 325-337.
- Sidanius, J., Van Laar, C., Levin, S., & Sinclair, S. (2004). Ethnic enclaves and the dynamics of social identity on the college campus: The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87(1), 96-110.

Skinner, J. (2007). The Salsa class: A complexity of globalization, cosmopolitans and emotions.

Identities, 14(4), 485-506.

Skinner, J. (2008). Women dancing back--and forth: Resistance and self-regulation in Belfast

salsa. *Dance Research Journal*, 40(1), 65-77.

Slade, A. N., & Kies, S. M. (2015) The relationship between academic performance and

recreation use among first-year medical students, *Medical Education Online*, 20(1), 25105.

Slater, A., & Tiggemann, M. (2011). Gender differences in adolescent sport participation,

teasing, self-objectification and body image concerns. *Journal of Adolescence*, 34(3), 455-463.

Sommer, S. (2001). "C'mon to my House": Underground-house dancing. *Dance Research*

Journal, 33(2), 72-86.

Soria, K. M., Troisi, J. N., & Stebleton, M. J. (2012). Reaching out, connecting within:

Community service and sense of belonging among college students. *Higher Education in Review*, 9, 65-85.

Spady, J. (2013). Mapping and Re-Membering Hip Hop history, hiphopography and African

diasporic history. *Western Journal of Black Studies*, 37(2), 126-157.

Stearns, E., Buchmann, C., & Bonneau, K. (2009). Interracial friendships in the transition to

college: Do birds of a feather flock together once they leave the nest? *Sociology Of Education*, 82(2), 173-195.

Stensaker, B. (2015). Organizational identity as a concept for understanding university dynamics.

Higher Education, 69(1), 103-115.

- Stevens-Ratchford, R. G. (2016). Ballroom dance: Linking serious leisure to successful aging. *International Journal Of Aging & Human Development*, 83(3), 290-308.
- Stinson, S.W. (2005). The hidden curriculum of gender in dance education. *Journal of Dance Education*, 5(2), 51-57.
- Stuart, M., Lido, C., Morgan, J., Solomon, L., & May, S. (2011). The impact of engagement with extracurricular activities on the student experience and graduate outcomes for widening participation populations, *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 12(3), 203-215.
- Suddreth, C. (2009). Hip-hop dress and identity: A qualitative study of music, materialism, and meaning. *Masters Abstracts International*, 47(05), 3088.
- Swami, V., & Harris, A. (2012). Dancing toward positive body image? Examining body-related constructs with ballet and contemporary dancers at different levels. *American Journal Of Dance Therapy*, 34(1), 39-52.
- Sweeney, M. (2011). Initiating and strengthening college and university instructional physical activity programs. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 82(4), 17-21
- Szwed, J. F. (1999). The real old school. In A. Light (Ed.) *The vibe history of hip hop* (pp. 3-12). New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.
- Syed, M., & Juan, M. J. D. (2012). Birds of an ethnic feather? Ethnic identity homophily among college-age friends. *Journal of Adolescence*, 35(6), 1505-1514.
- Tedlock, B. (1991). From Participant observation to the observation of participation: The emergence of narrative ethnography. *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 47(1), 69-94.

- Theall, K., Dejong, W., Scribner, R., Mason, K., Schneider, S., & Simonsen, N. (2009). Social capital in the college setting: The impact of participation in campus activities on drinking and alcohol-related harms, *Journal of American College Health*, 58(1), 15-25.
- Thomas, H. (1996). *Dancing the difference*. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 19(5), 505-511.
- Thomas, H. (2003). *The body, dance and cultural theory*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Thomas, H., & Cooper, L. (2002). Dancing into the Third Age: Social dance as cultural text - Research in progress. *Dance Research*, 20(1), 54-80.
- Troiano, R., Berrigan, D., Dodd, K., et al. (2008). Physical activity in the United States measured by accelerometer. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*. 40(1), 181-188.
- Uba, G. (2007). From signifying to performance: International ballroom dance and the choreographies of transnationalism. *Journal of Asian American Studies*, 10(2), 141-167.
- United States Census Bureau (2010). Retrieved from <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>
- VanKim, N. A., & Nelson, T. F. (2013). Vigorous physical activity, mental health, perceived stress, and socializing among college students. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 28(1), 7-15.
- Van Ummersen, M. (1992). *Don't eat the strings on bananas... They will wrap around your heart and kill you: A choreographic thesis embodying feminist aesthetics*. Master's thesis, University of Oregon.
- Van Zelst, L., Clabaugh, & Morling, B. (2004). Dancers' body esteem, fitness esteem, and self-esteem in three contexts. *Journal of Dance Education*, 4(2), 48-57.

- Videon, T.M. (2002). Who plays and who benefits: Gender, interscholastic athletics, and academic outcomes. *Sociological Perspectives*, 45(4), 415-444.
- Warburton, E. C. (2006). Access to arts beyond high school: Issues of demand and availability in American higher education. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 107(6), 11-16.
- Warburton, E. C. (2011). Staying Alive: On popular culture, dance education and generation why. *Journal of Dance Education*, 11(4), 113-118.
- Weitzman, E., Chen, Y., (2005). Risk modifying effect of social capital on measures of heavy alcohol consumption, alcohol abuse, harms, and secondhand effects: National survey findings. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 59, 303-309.
- Welle, P., & Graf, H. (2011). Effective lifestyle habits and coping strategies for stress tolerance among college students, *American Journal of Health Education*, 42(2), 96-105.
- Williams, C., & Johnson, L. (2011). Why can't we be friends?: Multicultural attitudes and friendships with international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(1), 41-48.
- Williams, L., Lindsey, R., & Lyons, R. (2014). Athletic identity among division II African American college student-athletes. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 85, A-105.
- Yamanashi Leib, A., & Bulman, R. (2009). The choreography of gender: Masculinity, femininity, and the complex dance of identity in the ballroom. *Men and Masculinities*, 11(5), 602-621.
- Young, (2005). Profound Offense and Cultural Appropriation. *The Journal of aesthetics and art criticism*, 63(2), 135-46.

- Yourglic, A. (1966). A four-phase study of value homophily, friendship, social participation, and college Dropouts. *Sociological Analysis*, 27(1), 19-26.
- Zajenkowski, M, Jankowski, K., & Kołata, D. (2015) Let's dance – feel better! Mood changes following dancing in different situations, *European Journal of Sport Science*, 15(7), 640-646.
- Zhang, Y., Dixon, T. L., & Conrad, K. (2009). Rap music videos and African American women's body image: The moderating role of ethnic identity. *Journal of Communication*, 59(2), 262-278.
- Zimmerman, D. H. (1998). Identity, context and interaction. In C. Antaki & S. Widdicombe, (eds.), *Identities in talk* (pp. 87-106). London, Sage.

Appendix

