

The Stage and the Dance *in Medias Res*: An Ethnographic Study of Ideologies Associated with Tradition
and Continuity in a French Ballet Academy in the United States

Stephanie J. Phillips

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
under the Executive Committee
of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
2014

© 2014

Stephanie J Phillips

All rights reserved.

ABSTRACT

The Stage and the Dance *in Medias Res*: An Ethnographic Study of Ideologies Associated with Tradition and Continuity in a French Ballet Academy in the United States

Stephanie J Phillips

The anthropological study of dance is particularly relevant to scholars who work on theories of embodiment and social practice, as well as those concerned with the production of history and ideologies, for dance concerns the deliberate movement of the body across space and in time, and within a particular socio-cultural context. Based on a year and a half of ethnographic research at a pre-professional ballet school in New York City that specializes in teaching the “classical French” form, this study applies an anthropological understanding of ideologies and processes in education to classical forms of ballet. Its analysis of how the ideological system associated with the aesthetics of ballet is created and recreated, in relation to shifting concepts of tradition, suggests that the process of establishing and maintaining institutional boundaries and “sculpting” the bodies of students in the classroom frames the ways that students are related to, and develop relationships with, the ideologies that they encounter. Both the school, as an institution, and individual students are able to navigate and position themselves within the landscape formulated by these ideologies through the development of social networks, the formulation of individual institutional genealogies, and the development and presentation of choreography in selected venues. These processes illustrate the ways in which ideological systems are articulated, developed, and altered in relation to understandings of the human body.

Contents

Introduction	1
Methodology.....	2
Outline of the Dissertation.....	4
Chapter 1: The Landscape of Ballet	6
Perspectives on Cultural Change and Ideologies in Ballet	6
The Development and Specialization of Ballet Technique from Europe to the New World	10
Nationalism, Modernism, and Ballet	14
Theory of Social Organization in Relation to Dance History and Politics.....	18
The Structure and Organization of Training and Traditions within the United States	19
The Structure and Organization of the French Ballet Academy	27
Chapter Two: The Recruitment of Students	36
Audition.....	40
Genealogy and Lineage as a basis for Recruitment	60
Social Bases of School Recruitment	63
Demographic Trends during Year One and Year Two.....	65
Family of Origin and Pursuit of Ballet Training	72
Chapter Three: Defining Social Positions	87
Talking about Auditioning.....	88
Institutions and Insider Knowledge	92
Excerpt 1: Briana	103
Excerpt 2: Mirella	104
Excerpt 3: Ben	105

Excerpt 4: Angel	106
Excerpt 5: Sabrina	106
Ideals and Inclusion/Exclusion	107
Chapter Four: Education and Aesthetics	122
Tradition and the Student Body.....	122
Repetition and Deviation in Teaching and Learning	127
Language in the Classroom	130
The Disciplining of the Body and the Embodiment of Tradition.....	132
Categories and the “Joking Relationship “	142
Chapter Five: Classroom Interactions	159
Patterns of Interaction in the Classroom Setting.....	159
Student Reflections on Classroom Interactions.....	177
Classroom Corrections and Ballet Ideologies.....	182
Chapter Six: Experiential Exercises	193
Between Classroom and Stage.....	194
Precision, Artistry, and Employment	197
Localizing the Collective Repertoire: History and Digital Media.....	204
Process in Teaching New Choreography.....	210
Between Audience and Dancers: Meaning-Making in Performance.....	213
Chapter Seven: Discussion	224
Encompassing Ideologies	224
Curriculum and the Collective.....	225
Legitimacy, Tradition, and Landscape.....	228

The Body as a Site	229
Discipline and Sculptures	232
Institutional Choreography	235
Concluding Remarks.....	236
Works Cited.....	239
Appendix I: Class Schedules	248

List of Figures

Figure 1: Labeled <i>Tendu Derrière</i>	48
Figure 2: Acceptance Letter	58
Figure 3: Acceptance Letter with Scholarship Offer	59
Figure 4: Rejection Letter.....	59
Figure 5: The typical admitted student genealogical pattern.....	62
Figure 6: The typical non-admitted student genealogy.....	63
Figure 7: Visualization of Word Frequency from the ABT program description.....	94
Figure 8: Visualization of word frequency from SAB website.....	95
Figure 9: Combined visualization of word frequency from ABT/SAB website.....	96
Figure 10: Sabrina’s Genealogy.....	119
Figure 11: Patterns of correction in intermediate-level class.....	163
Figure 12: Correction/Response Pattern Advanced Level	164
Figure 13: Box plot demonstrating outliers	165
Figure 14: Percentage distribution of types of comments/corrections.....	170
Figure 15: Number of corrections by body divisions	172
Figure 16: Elementary/intermediate-level student’s class notes	179
Figure 17: Advanced-level student’s class notes	181
Figure 18: Student's illustration of a female ballet dancer.....	186
Figure 19: Selected student responses to questions about favorite dancers	190
Figure 20: Shifting Roles in the <i>Nutcracker</i>	203

List of Tables

Table 1: Faculty’s Alumni Company Placement	34
Table 2: School Alumni Company Placement	34
Table 3: Patterns of Admission from Audition Session.....	61
Table 4: Demographic Trends: First Year in Operation.....	68
Table 5: Demographic Trends: Second Year in Operation.....	68
Table 6: Demographic Characteristics	72
Table 7:Socio-Economic Data.....	77
Table 8: Academic School Enrollment by Type of Institution	80
Table 9: Summer-Intensive Program List.....	91
Table 10: Estimated Cost of Attending a Summer-intensive (2013).....	99
Table 11: Verbal Responses: Elementary/Intermediate Level.....	166
Table 12: Corrections Given in the Advanced-Level Class	169
Table 13: Number of Comments in Relation to Gender	174
Table 14: Enrollment Type and Number of Comments	175
Table 15: Corrections and Body Types.....	176
Table 16: Race and Comments Cross-tabulation	177

Dedications and Acknowledgements

The writing of this dissertation extends beyond my efforts to put words on paper; it also is the product of the generosity and kindness of others who believed in me and in the validity of my research: faculty, mentors, and friends at Teachers College, my family, and the amazing students and teachers who allowed me to follow them around over the course of this two-year study. I felt inspired by the dedication, open-heartedness, and determination of the students, parents, and teachers I met and interacted with at the “French Ballet Academy.” I hope that my reader catches a bit of that inspiration, just as I hope I have conveyed some sense of the hard work and sense of artistry that shapes the lives of the students and teachers; I am certain they will go to places far and brilliant, from the few moments written about here.

I would like to thank:

The members of my committee, including Dr. Lambros Comitas (Sponsor); Dr. George Bond (Chair); Dr. Steven Dubin; Dr. Jennifer Lena; and Dr. Laura Azzarito. My devoted appreciation extends to: Dr. Lambros Comitas, a steadfast academic mentor and life-advisor throughout my stay at Teachers College; his always open office door has admitted me to a place of respite and intellectual engagement, and his fieldwork stories have reminded me that, whatever harrowing adventure may unfold in life, there are also moments of serendipity, humor, and peace. Dr. George Bond, whose questions in the classroom inspire me to think and question more, and whose work as an anthropologist inspires me to be, and do, more.

The members of my cohort and program at Teachers College, as well as my good friends: Lauren Bae, Jennifer VanTiem, Sinan Celiksu, Myrtle Jones, Lhamodrolma , Marilu Cardenas, Shana Sun Roberts, Janny Chang, Lisa LeFevre, and Ariela Zycherman. My beloved friend ThienVinh Nguyen.

The other people without whose aid and inspiration I never would have completed a draft of a dissertation: Dr. Aoife Villafranca-West, for more than I can possibly explain; Dr. Sheila Dauer, for being a mentor and for going to my first conference presentation at the AAA meetings; Diane Katanik, for bringing me into the Department of Human Development; and my cat, Kiki, for holding down the pages of my books while I read.

Introduction

The anthropological study of dance is particularly relevant to scholars who work on theories of embodiment and social practice, as well as those concerned with the production of history and ideologies, for dance concerns the deliberate movement of the body across space and in time, and within a socio-cultural context. Ideologies are those ideas that exist in any given society underlying the processes of everyday human life and shaping the arrangement of people and institutions within a landscape. When ideology is defined as the system of beliefs and values that shape the processes of a society, these facets are positioned in several places throughout: they are held by individuals and institutions, found in actions and interactions, and passed between generations via processes of socialization and education. Often ideologies are forms of collective memory; they exist both outside and inside of the individual. They can be organic, falling within the tradition/heritage of an individual, or imposed on individuals who fall outside the framework where these ideologies are organically in play (Hoare and Smith 1971; Bond 2003).

Gramsci described the different relationships that individuals in a society have to ideologies based on their own positionalities, which he understood to be formulated in relation to hegemony, or the dominance of a particular ideological grouping within society. These relationships can be described as organic for those individuals who originate within a hegemonic tradition, though this understanding does not preclude the existence of many alternative and competing ideologies among sections found within the same space (Hoare and Smith 1971; Bond 2003). Ideologies are continually shifting; they are not static entities, as the individuals who operate within them are constantly working with and against them, and developing alternatives, as they enter into negotiations for position and status within the existing arrangements of institutions and individuals that comprise the social landscapes in which they operate. M. G. Smith explained:

...symbols, ideas, values, idioms of thought and dispositions constitute the culture shared by the members of each society, however unequally and imperfectly. ...In our social interactions, beliefs and ideas about the world, society, individuals and interests are continuously invoked, applied, tested, and confirmed or modified by experience that maintains or changes the character and content of those relations.... (1998:53).

This study applies these anthropological understanding of ideologies and of processes in education to classical forms of ballet. Based on a year and a half of ethnographic research at a French classical ballet school in New York City that specializes in teaching the “classical French” form, this dissertation seek to answer the following questions: 1) How are ideologies associated with aesthetics developed within specific educational settings? 2) How do students learn to navigate the boundaries between the physical body and aesthetic ideologies? 3) How are ideologies created and contested through the choreographic process and related performance? These ideas will be explored in relation both to data gathered within the field and to the theorists commonly cited within literature, such as Gramsci, Foucault, and Bourdieu. These theorists will be drawn upon to discuss such concepts as ideology, the disciplining of bodies in relation to ideologies, and the work of the school as an institution in the ideological landscape. The study also will try to suggest what they offer in terms of the material presented and the possibilities for developing further insights into the data.

Methodology

The methodologies employed by this study are those grounded within the ethnographic tradition. The study includes approximately 80 total participants, including at least 50 students, ages 11 to 29, of varying races, ethnicities and genders; 30 parents of students; and teachers. It should be noted, however, that not all of these individuals participated in all aspects of the study or were in continuous enrollment at the school during the period of research, between the years 2011 and 2013. While in the field, I retained full disclosure of my role as an anthropologist and of the nature of my research; no observation was conducted without the consent of all relevant parties as required by the guidelines of the Institutional Review Board at Teachers College, Columbia University. Maintaining the confidentiality

of the participants was of the utmost concern while writing the dissertation, particularly given that many of the participants operate within the public sphere, as is the nature of dance and art. The names of certain people and places have been changed in order to disguise identities, and masking, such as providing an analogous occupational title in place of one that would reveal someone's identity, is used, in the hope of retaining the original sentiments and reputations of the individuals who participated in the study while still maintaining their privacy.

Data often are grouped or arranged in such a way that individuals cannot be identified via their association with or presence in particular analytic categories. Pseudonyms are used in the transcription of any recorded interviews and in data gathered via note-taking during participant observation. The bulk of the dataset consists of observationally gathered field notes and interviews, as well as occasional video recordings and photographs produced by informants and shared with me for research purposes. When included, the later items are reproduced with permission and the faces of students are blurred to protect the identities of informants. Survey-style data were collected largely through an online survey as well as compiled through the collection of informal interviews.

The presentation of much of the data occurs through excerpts taken from field notes, which provide my own view of activities. Though they may lack precision when it comes to recording verbal exchanges and to capturing the totality of the events and movements occurring in a particular space, they do, in a way, capture the essence of "being" there, situated in time and space, albeit heavily shaped by my own set of subjectivities in terms of the details I attended to in my notes. Data within quotation marks are not exact quotes, but rather paraphrased versions of things jotted down. The impetus for this dissertation initially manifested itself in a roundabout way through my own interest in studying ballet, and my academic concern about the forces that operate to structure educational opportunities. My objective is to illustrate the landscape that students and teachers navigate to elucidate those social processes that are so heavily shaped by ideologies and traditions, and to gain insight into how these

individuals understand those processes. I hope to do so in a way that conveys how honored I felt to be a part of that environment, to have gotten to know so many of the student-dancers and their parents, and to have learned through the process of conducting research at the school.

Outline of the Dissertation

The first chapter provides the relevant theoretical and background information that the reader will require in order to position this dissertation's concerns within the context of ballet. So as to contextualize the settings, both chronological and spatial information is used to place the current research site in perspective and trace the development of the landscape in which the site is situated. Chapter One depicts the way in which the school emerged from and in relation to its socio-cultural context. It is this information that lays down the basis for later chapters, contextualizing the students' engagement with ideologies within the school and within ballet in general.

Chapter Two looks at how students are recruited into the school, focusing on the issue of how the local boundaries associated with both aesthetics and the educational processes, are socially created and reified through the audition process. Chapter Two also examines the demographics of the admitted student population. Chapter Three explores the aforementioned boundaries in a broader context, looking at how students are instructed by moving between institutions in the process of securing placement at a summer-intensive; how aesthetic ideologies are situated in relation to other institutions; and how students position themselves in this landscape. This chapter also examines, from a case-study perspective, how one student and her parent approached the boundaries that arose in the course of their attempts to move upward through increasingly more selective institutions.

Chapters Four and Five explore the ideals that are expressed about ballet and the criteria that are verbalized in class in terms of learning the discipline. The establishment of tradition translates into the development of distinctions among the various national forms of ballet, in terms of both movement and understandings of national character. It also entails the communication of what ballet "should be"

to students and parents. This chapters' analysis of the discourse and interactions between students and instructors in elementary and advanced classes illustrates how understandings of the physical body are developed over time through corrections, praise, and critique, as well as through frank discussion of the students' physical characteristics in relation to the landscape of institutions. Students are taught to address the structural ordering of ballet and sense of aesthetics in relation to the self.

Chapter Six focuses on the processes of rehearsal and of performance, using observational data and interview data to suggest how locally generated aesthetic ideals both conform to and contradict normative practices, within the landscape of ballet. It addresses the way in which choreographed movements emerged in interactions between students and instructors, as relationships shift from student and teacher to dancer and choreographer, and shows that technical mastery is framed by the exchange of ideas about the taking of a role in performances.

Chapter Seven concludes the dissertation, by providing a review of the insights that the data contributes to the central problematic and by returning the reader to the relevant literature to discuss the implications of this study. The overarching goal is to show that the study is in the tradition of literature that looks at the relationship between dance and social movements, by focusing on those processes, in and out of the classroom, where meanings are made and political agendas are set through the work of instructors and students within the school, thereby reifying and transforming local and global ideologies.

Chapter 1: The Landscape of Ballet

This chapter outlines the landscape of ballet, tracing the development of the art by taking a historical perspective and looking at the arrangements of people and institutions that define the contemporary landscape. The focus is on purveying the information that is relevant to understanding the broader context in which students, parents, and instructors engage with the aesthetic ideologies of ballet, while describing the narrower context within which the school was established as an institution.

Perspectives on Cultural Change and Ideologies in Ballet

Ballet as it is practiced in the United States and in France is marked by stylistic differences that developed as a result of cultural diffusion and isolation. These include the importation and exportation of dancers and dances produced in different geographic regions and the innovations of choreographers and dancers alike. It can be assented by taking Kroeber (1963) as a model, that processes of cultural change are accompanied by ideological shifts in aesthetic ideals within the particular pockets where ballet is practiced. Additionally, these effects are accompanied by the development and expression of a historicity that appears across multiple domains of cultural production, but that typically have been broken down into distinct units for the purpose of ethnographic study: discourse, written records, historical narratives, non-verbal communication, and artifact- and image-production. Within the genre of dance, we are talking specifically about the creation and recreation of movements and narrative ballets, the training of young dancers in forms of ballet associated with specific, historically situated institutions, and discourse regarding ballet technique itself, with all of these factors being intertwined with the politics of race, nation, and identity.

Empirical complexities are inherent to the ballet tradition, given the historical origins of the art, nationalistic influences and trends, and processes of cultural importation and exportation. There are ballet forms that are “American” and “French,” and although both emerged, via a complex series of cultural processes, from the same historical point of origin in 17th-century French court dance, they

remain dependent upon the association of particular forms with “national culture” through a dialectical process that involves social and governmental financial support, the invocation of sources of authority (transcendental, traditional, charismatic, and rational)¹ in the maintenance of the ‘classical’ tradition, and the establishment and maintenance of cultural boundaries, class distinctions, and ideologies associated with art and beauty. Bateson (1972) in “Cultural Contact and Schismogenesis,” and Kroeber (1963) in “Cultural Processes” note that many aspects of culture are practiced within the present and hold some degree of continuity with the past as even they are passed down to future generations through processes of education and socialization. As Handler and Linnekin (1984) said, the concept of “tradition,” when it is viewed from an anthropological perspective includes those characteristics and practices believed, in the present, to have been inherited from the past. It is thus that tradition functions as an ideology. In other words, the weight of this belief in “tradition” is immense with power, as when invoked, the concept conjures up a sense of authority and legitimacy.

A discussion of the French “classical” ballet style, such as that we heard from Beaujour (2011) a moment ago, has as much to do with understanding the origins of the form, and thereby with *inventing* tradition and continuity, as it does with the actual history of ballet and the reign of Louis XIV, who first sanctioned its production. Weber (1958) identified tradition as one of the major sources of authority, noting that “legitimacy is claimed . . . and believed in on the basis of the sanctity of the order and the attendant powers of control as they have been handed down from the past” (341). Bond and Gilliam note that the ability to narrate the past is in and of itself a source of power, for it frames, and is framed by the interests and controlling of particular groups and bodies and intertwined with systems of ideology (1997). In the United States, historically, ballet has tended to “borrow” legitimacy and authority through the exchange of individual dancers and choreographers who have obtained recognition abroad, such as Balanchine, and through the provision of funding by individuals (Kirstein, The Rockefellers), who

¹ The terms used by Weber (1958) in “Three Types of Legitimate Rule.”

were, in a sense, inventing national culture through their investments even while capitalizing on the authority and legitimacy already granted to ballet elsewhere (Garafola, 2002).

Within the body of literature related to dance, much of what has been produced within the United States has been written within the discipline of dance history. These narratives about the history of ballet often refer to ballet as marker of tradition and a hegemonic art form. For example, ballet often is used as a point of contrast in narratives describing the emergence of the modern-dance movement: these tend to center on the ways in which modern dance contradicts those ideologies of race and class assumed to be inherent aspects of ballet. Generally these works also tend to emphasize the relationship between dance and counter-hegemonic social movements in the early 20th century in the United States and Europe. Noteworthy in this regard are Franko's (2002) examination of the relationship among dance, the labor movement, and identity in the 1930s, and Graff's (1997) study of the relationship between dance and politics in the same period. Other studies, such as that of Atencio and Wright (2009), examine how the ideological discourse generated about ballet in a classroom affects students' participation in a school dance program. The work of Connerton (2012) on tradition and collective memory situates these ideas about hegemony, history, tradition, and ideologies, in relation to social memories of the past. Connerton notes that these social memories, which often provide the vital context within which particular ideologies are legitimated, often manifest themselves in the commemorative rites of a society and/or group and de facto performances that incorporate references to, and/or portrayals of, the past. They also are incorporated into bodily practices and particular techniques associated with the body, such as ways of moving, gestures, and facial expressions (2012).

Implicit within the discourse on ideologies is the notion that existing ideologies have to be maintained both through the process of negotiation and their continued use in social phenomena, such as commemorative rites and bodily practices (Connerton 2012). They are continually created and recreated through a variety of social processes. The negotiation of ideologies may result in the

acceptance of an existing ideological system in that an individual falls in line with a particular outlook, but then again, it may lead a person to changes their current understandings and adopt an entirely new worldview. A negotiation may also effect the transformation, or at least the subtle shifting, of an ideological system if individuals who are within the system push against it, either intentionally or unintentionally, by not accepting its processes of maintenance, and if others who operate strictly within the system subsequently adopt their outsider comrades' alterations.

This understanding of the role of the individual in relation to ideological systems is drawn from the work of Wallace (2003), who suggests that the individual holds a "mental image of the society and its culture, as well as of one's own body and its behavioral regularities" which he calls a mazeway (12).

A mazeway comprises

. . . the cell-body-personality-nature-culture-society system or field, organized by the individual's experience; it includes perceptions of both the maze of physical objects of the environment (internal and external, human and nonhuman) and also of the ways in which this maze can be manipulated by the self and others in order to minimize stress. The mazeway is nature, society, culture, personality and body image, as seen by one person. (Wallace 2003:12).

Every individual mazeway is informed through education, defined in broad terms as socialization; thus the relationship between an individual and an ideological system is both personal /internal, and social/ external. Utilizing this framework allows theorists to assent that individuals construct their own understandings of the world in which they operate, and that these understandings, as they are made manifest through one's actions and one's interactions with others, are part of the processes through which cultures, and their associated ideologies, structures, and processes, change or retain consistency over time.

Wallace (1973) also developed a system of categorization in order to relate the type of educational emphasis in schooling to a society's stage with a cycle of cultural change. According to its schema, based upon the three broad categories of morality, technic and intellect, in a revolutionary society, the educational focus is on transformation; in a conservative society, on maintenance and

reproduction; and in a reactionary society, on minimizing challenges to the system. This model strives to map the relationship between education and the maintenance and/or transformation of social systems, and succeeds to a remarkable degree via the attention it pays to all of the mechanisms through which a society changes or maintains consistency over time. Firth (1981) likewise noted that studying how a society is organized, or structured, entails a study of the “society in motion—” hence his advocacy of a dynamic social theory. A society cannot be accurately represented as a static entity and any model of society must account for all possible types of change, even of reaction and stasis.

Examining the organizational attributes of a society, group, or landscape involves looking at the processes of maintenance and change. In the present case this means ways in which Academy’s dancers and instructors engage with the concept of tradition, attempt to adhere to or to alter ideologies, develop cohesion and conflict, and educate one another. These theoretical underpinnings, when they are joined with to narrative content provided by and speaking about history and tradition, offer a framework within which understanding can be shaped of dancers attempts to negotiate dance’s ideologies and traditions. Subjecting the historical context to careful scrutiny also provides evidence as to the ways in which ideologies are continually negotiated, for as those are contested or legitimated, this serves to prolong those processes that are at times, invoked as “tradition,” and at other times, incorporated within dancers actual technique.

The Development and Specialization of Ballet Technique from Europe to the New World

In Homens’ (2010) history of ballet, she indicates the politics of race, class, and nation have been intertwined even since its recognition as an art form in the court of Louis XIV, where choreography entailed combining folk steps with court dance, pantomime, and symbolic imagery that reified the position of the monarchy and his divine right to rule. It was introduced in France through the courts of Catherine de’ Medici, an Italian and French woman who was the wife of King Henry II of France, via the development of art and dance during the Italian Renaissance. As ballet became increasingly popular

among the elite, national styles developed as choreographers and dancers incorporated local stylistic elements such as: folk dance, the development of ballets surrounding local mythologies, variations in pantomime, and commentary on specific political events; these were intended to reflect and comment on national institutions and national character as well as entertain via spectacle (Homens 2010).

In *The Styles of the Eighteenth-Century Ballet*, Fairfax (2003) used archival data, including images, written documents, and period accounts, to illustrate the processes by which ballet techniques developed. He noted that such changes, as the introduction of the five positions of the feet under Beauchamps (1631-1705), the first director of the *Académie* under King Louis XIV, would set ballet on a course that it would later adhere to quite closely. With respect to emotion, early choreography was designed to express the affect associated with music composed by Lully, who was employed by the king as both musician and court dancer. The new forms brought with them increased speed of footwork, a trend later fueled by choreographers who added many new types of jumps and positions of the arms.

Through her use of archival data, Johnson (2002) was able to illuminate the circumstances that shaped the relationship between the Paris Opera and the monarchy. The Paris Opera, originally founded as the *Académie d'Opéra* and later renamed the *Académie Royale de Musique*, has its own special history as an institution, one that entails an unending negotiation for status amid the struggle on the part of its directors to maintain its monopoly over opera and ballet productions through legislation and careful setting of the price of admission to performances, so as to deny access to the non-elite sectors of society. The monopoly on production remained intact following the French Revolution, though the locus of power shifted from the court (where, through assiduous letter-writing and networking, the Paris Opera reflected the interests of the monarch) to an “inner circle” of patrons who symbolically constituted the “public.” Everist (2010) explains:

The *divertissement* within *grand opéra* itself defined the genre throughout the nineteenth century, and ballet-pantomime was recognized as equal in importance to *grand opéra* in the licensing system that governed all Parisian and provincial theaters from 1806/7 until 1864. The repertoire of the Opéra, encompassing both opera and ballet, was enshrined in law. It was made

up of all the works, operas as much as ballets, that have appeared since its establishment in 1646. (Everist 2010:195)

The restrictions imposed upon the production/reproduction of operas (and consequently, ballets) throughout France meant that ideological control over the content and techniques of performance remained within the hands of the social elite for many years, even as “public” venues found creative ways to circumvent the monopoly (as by having someone off-stage sing, or preceding the performance with a vernacular marionette act) (Johnson 2002).

In the 18th century there was some question at the outset as to whether a French language production could be regarded as having the same artistic value as the Italian Opera; although France was the birthplace of ballet, the production of French operas that included balletic performances was inspired by performances of Italian Opera. This question was resolved via the emergence of a strong sense of nationalism associated with ballet; “Frenchness” soon came to be deemed one chief criteria qualifying dancers to dance. Dancers came to France to study under masters, and members of the European nobility outside of France would employ a French master within their household to oversee the teaching and production of dance. Ballet spread through its unanimous adoption by “fashionable Europe,” which accounts for the relatively homogenous form it assumed across nations (Fairfax 2003).² Thus, one can see why Fairfax calls ballet an international form of art; in its formative years before it existed across geographic boundaries, albeit within a relatively confined space where nationality held less social significance than class.

In the ensuing years, distinctions developed between the techniques of dance for courts and ballrooms as opposed to for theater and stage. Although “the business of dancing [was] to display beauty,”³ dance in the ballroom was deemed a social recreation for use on other particular occasions, whereas theatrical dance was considered a profession (Fairfax 2003:18). Luckily for the development of

² Fairfax (2003:11) quotes Prince Charles of Sweden (1770) from an 1890’s publication: “one dines and dances just about the same in all civilized countries.”

³ Quoted in Fairfax (2003:18), from *The Spectator*, Aug. 25, 1712.

dance, the space of the stage required the development of characterizations and dramatic movements more perceptible to an audience, such as higher arms, faster movements, and more jumps than permitted in court dance (Fairfax 2003).

Along with the differentiation of court and theater dance there also emerged several 'styles' of balletic movements. These were associated with characters in the narrative ballets and operas, as well as the more comedic/satiric performances that emerged in the latter half of the 18th century. All such of these characterizations was associated with body-types and particular styles of movement. The noble/serious characters (kings, queens, gods) needed strength, a light step, and precise movements. In addition to having noble features, they needed to be tall and thin, and to have a well-formed, muscular body. The demi-characters (satyrs, nymphs) could be of middle height, but they must have body-types enabling quick jumps and the use of pantomime. The comic and grotesque characters could be short, but had to be masters at dance, for they often invoked pantomime and non-ballet movements to portray commoners, while the trivial characters could be short, thick, and strong in form (Fairfax 2003). Fairfax (2003) notes that the body-types required by each characterization also shaped the forms of movement; for example, those of the noble or serious characterization were often less strong at jumps owing to hyperextension of the legs.

The incorporation of various national and local folk dances into ballet often occurred at the level of the comic/grotesque and trivial characters, particularly in the characterizations of peasants. Fairfax (2003) cites an 18th-century critic:

In Italy, we have dances that are called grotesque, and the dancers who perform them are the *grotteschetti*. . . . Their dances commonly revolve around the adventures of peasants, rustic shepherds, and other sorts from the dregs of the common people. To avoid doing the same all the time, they dress themselves as Germans, Englishmen, Spaniards, Turks, fancying they represent the true character of the nation whose garb they have donned. [Angiolini, 1765, quoted in Fairfax 2003:126]

As ballet moved into the 19th century and the conception of beauty shifted, roles and characters continued to be developed and altered. Vincent (1989) examined the social construction of beauty

through the characterization of the Sylph, a type of spirit that appears in many Romantic ballets and bespeaks the prevalence of romantic attitudes about youthful lives cut short by consumption and other wasting illnesses. Oddly enough, those physical attributes of the nobles that could be attributed to health problems stemming from the upper-class life-style of the period, one notably deficient in both sunlight and nutrition, largely set the standard of beauty. Ideas about the religion, purity, and fragility of women also influenced the concept of beauty purveyed by Romantic ballets.

Nationalism, Modernism, and Ballet

The rise of national forms of ballet in Italy, Russia, France, Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States was concurrent with the decline of the nobility in Europe in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Ballet continued to evolve through the innovations introduced by choreographers and dancers within these national contexts, as well as through exchanges across national borders. An example of such exchange is provided to us by Ballet Russes and Sergei Diaghilev, a movement that marked the migration of Russian ballet to France (Anderson 1981).

Companies such as the Ballet Russes, situated within the context of the Industrial Revolution, choreographed in relation to both their knowledge of ballet tradition and the emergence of the concept of “modernity.” The continued choreographic innovations of the Ballet Russes in France and their excursions to the United States “promoted symphonic ballet, championed neo-classical abstraction, and made excursions into Americana and modern dance. There was even a time when John Martin of the *New York Times* . . . was able to call the Ballet Russe ‘America’s most experimental company’” (Anderson 1981:xv). Radical new works pushed the limits of what was considered ballet. For example the Ballet Russes performed Nijinsky’s *The Rite of Spring* in 1913, after its initial migration to France and in the context of that Industrial Revolution which was altering the relationship of the human body to modes of production. The dissonant, irregularly accented music composed by Stravinsky, the dark subject matter focusing on war and sacrifice, and movements of the dancers pushed the limits of what was considered

ballet and led the audience, who had expected to see something more traditional, to riot. (Carolina Performing Arts 2013).

Foremost, perhaps, among the experimental dancers and choreographers, who emerged in the early 20th-century George Balanchine (1904-1983) emerged. Russian by birth and trained as a dancer and choreographer at the Imperial Ballet in Russia, Balanchine joined the Ballet Russes de Monte Carlo, a company created by former members of the Ballet Russes. He also choreographed for the Paris Opera Ballet and Le Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas, before his eventual migration to the United States (Taper 1994). Balanchine's penchant for choreographing with longer, leaner bodies altered the concept of beauty in ballet. His choreographic and technical contributions were influenced by the emergence of the modern-dance movement and by other dance genres typically distanced by race and class from the elite production of ballet. Gottschild (2005) and Manning (2004) discuss the ways in which "borrowing" often occurred across dance genres formulated along racial lines, as between jazz and Balanchine's version of ballet, and also the ways in which a wide variety of movements were incorporated into hegemonic forms of dance, often with no acknowledgment being made of their source.

"Classical" ballet became the point of departure for those working within the framework of modern dance in the 1920s and 1930s, for it was viewed as the vessel of tradition, of hegemonic forms and elite control, and particularly as a form of "national culture" supported by the governments and their institutional arrangements, as was the case in France. Modern dance emerged not as one cohesive movement-system, but rather through the innovations of choreographers positioned within German art and dance scenes such as Isadora Duncan, Mary Wigman, and Rudolf von Laban, each of whom had a highly individualized philosophical understanding driving his/her artistic productions. "According to Mary Wigman and her circle, dance had to be 'absolute,' and thus an art free of the impurities of the world. Where left-wing critics and trade unionists asserted that art expressed the relationship of the artists to the means of production, 'absolute dance,' Wigman believed, expressed timeless truths about

the human condition” (Karina and Kant 2003:76). These beliefs, and their position in relation to ballet, meant that modern dance easily lent itself to agendas that ran counter to “traditional” social structures and forms of governance, as various insurgent parties rose to power and attempted to gain their place within socio-political sphere.

The Weimar Republic is one such example of a government that used modern dance in an effort to define a new “national culture” and even to represent the idea of a thoroughly modern society. More specifically, “the explicitly German aspect of *Ausdruckstanz* became one of the central aesthetic objectives of the creative dancer and was accompanied by a rejection of ‘other,’ alien influences” (Karina and Kant 2003:77). The forms of modern dance developed by those individuals who came to work under the Nazi Regime such as Mary Wigman, influenced the form and trajectory that modern dance would take (Kogler 1994, Rossen 2007).

Within the same time-frame, modern choreographers, many of whom had backgrounds in classical ballet, utilized dance performances to illustrate social problems, such as racism and the oppression of workers, and to convey their visions of an ideal society in the United States. Often their objectives often were intertwined with the agendas of other social and political movements (Graff 1997, Foulkes 2002). In New York City, in the early 20th century, movements associated with the socialist and communist parties employed modern dance as a political statement, in terms both of who was permitted to dance in performance works and of the choreography itself. For example bodies that were marked as “workers,” particularly women of Jewish or Eastern European descent, employed in factories, were featured in choreographic works to illustrate the untapped power of the proletariat (Franko 1995, 2002; Graff 1997). The Leftists movement, advocating a uniting of all laborers within a Marxist ideology, also embraced the incorporation of performances by both white and black dancers (though only insofar as this furthered the political agenda of the movement), which also tended to be a point of contrast with ballet. Choreographers started to pay close attention to the historically situated nature of the dance

genre from a more critical perspective, looking critically but also enthusiastically, given the many potential storylines, at all representations of the past, particularly those that had not emerged from the dominant class.

By the 1960s, thanks to a great extent to Cold War tensions and the Red Scare, the idea of “intercultural historiography,” was being developed by second- and third-generation modern choreographers and dancers, particularly Alvin Ailey and Martha Graham. Ailey and Graham developed choreography that attended to “blood memories,” or alternative historical narratives that drew upon non-European forms of movement. Manning (2006) points in this regard to Graham’s interpretation of the Greek roots of “Western culture,” well as Ailey’s interpretation of the “cultural memories of all African-Americans” (179).⁴

In the United States, ballet arrived amid the modern-dance movement; in other words, it had little presence here prior to the development of modern dance. Ballet did not have a stronghold until after the 1940s, in part because the US lacked that structure of the court in which ballet as an art form has so long been supported and maintained. Nonetheless, it still was considered an elite form among those who patronized European art within the United States and was practiced on a small scale, primarily in immigrant enclaves. It was the arrival of Balanchine on these shores, along with the efforts of Lincoln Kirstein and the Rockefellers, that brought ballet an achieved status in the United States, similar to that which it had been ascribed via the monarchy in Europe. The securing of patronage, largely indeed the support of Kirstein and the Rockefellers, led to the establishment of the New York City Ballet in 1934 and the creation of The School of American Ballet to train dancers in the particular styles and techniques that would be needed in order to realize Balanchine’s artistic vision (Garafola 2002).

In much the same way that modern dance was used to make political statements in the early part of the 20th century, the United States’ policies of cultural diplomacy during the Cold War included

⁴ This paragraph derived from proposal.

the exportation of dance, both ballet and modern, as one modality of accomplishing its formal diplomatic agenda. Ballet dancers in particular, were sent to areas of the world “important to American foreign policy and would benefit from an American cultural presence” (Prevots 1998:41). This especially meant the Soviet Union. Debates about whether to send “contemporary work” or the “traditional repertory” to represent America led to the decision to include Robbins’ *Fancy Free* (a more contemporary piece) alongside Fokine’s *Les Sylphides* (a classical ballet), among others, to illustrate ties to both tradition and modernity (Prevots 1998:75-78).

Theory of Social Organization in Relation to Dance History and Politics

Within the historically situated domain of ballet and modern dance, institutions, at the local, national, and international levels play a role in terms of the ways in which dance can be appropriated for political agendas. Like language and speech, movement is a part of a symbolic system that is maintained through practices that both reifies and alters it. Within the broad, combined history of ballet and modern forms of dance, arrangements of institutional structures at both the local and global level define the relationship between the past and contemporary practices.

Novack (1990) remarks upon the importance of institutions and structures, and especially notes the ways they are socially organized in relation to politics and economics.

The United States clearly encompasses a plural cultural reality . . . Dominant national economic, political, and cultural institutions impose restrictions . . . For an alternative art movement, the structures of the culturally dominant art institutions— the systems of legal incorporation, the operations of theaters and presenting organizations, the processes of funding and grant giving— exert a powerful influence (16).⁵

Novack’s understanding relates to Firth’s theories on social organization and social change, for she too is telling us that actions and interactions shape the organization and structure of society and the nature of its cultural productions.

⁵ Novack (1990) looked to the emergence of contact improvisation within dance/theater genres. She views any group of people who practice contact-improvisation as being a community, defined by a single leader and “shared common artistic ideas, and often social ideas which in many ways have paralleled the ethos of their dancing” (16)

Firth (1954), who looked for ways to understand society that go beyond structural-functionalist paradigms, argued that the structure of a society can be uncovered by empirically studying the patterns of action and relationships within it. He suggested that such patterns act:

to regulate further action along the same lines. These structures may be formal, given explicit recognition; or they may be informal, acted upon implicitly though not part of the overtly admitted patterning. . . . Circumstances provide always new combinations of factors. Fresh choices open, fresh decisions have to be made, and the results affect the social actions of other people in a ripple movement which may go far before it is spent. Usually this takes place within the structural framework, but it may carry action right outside it. If such departure from the structure tends to be permanent, we have one form of social change. (1954:4)

Firth insights also apply to the arrangement of institutions within the US. Whereas Novack (1990) notes, although oppositional sub-cultures may develop, “the forces of institutionalization begin to exercise constraint.” These forces can be seen as new institutions and styles emerge and “proclaim . . . uniqueness and freedom from the limitations of prior movements,” only to find themselves entangled within the existing arrangement (16). This dissertation, focusing on the ways in which students and instructors within a newly established school operate in relation to the existing arrangement of structures that concerns the practice of ballet in the United States and France, is centered within this understanding of social organization, one that sees human actions and interactions as mechanisms of both maintenance and change within a social system. The idea of the other theorists drawn upon throughout the dissertation to analyze actions localized among the participants of this study— Foucault, Bourdieu, Gramsci— are all concerned with the ways in which human actions and interactions operate within relationships of power that alter and maintain social organization at various levels.

The Structure and Organization of Training and Traditions within the United States

The school where the research took place is situated within the broader social field comprised of hierarchically ranked institutions that organize and structure actions and interactions associated with the practice of ballet as well as the various “national” forms of ballet that are taught within specific schools. Within the US, a number of different forms are practiced: Russian (Vaganova), French, Italian

(Cechetti), Danish (Bournonville), and American (Balanchine). Although each has its unique points of departure from the others, stylistically there is a great deal of overlap. For example, Balanchine's own training and background inspired many of the qualities seen in the Balanchine technique, as it comprises both a combination of various movements thought of as distinctly belonging to the French and Russian styles, and other movements "borrowed" from different dance genres. Particular schools with their associated companies— the School of American Ballet, which is the official school of New York City Ballet; the Jacquelyn Kennedy Onassis School, which is the official school of the American Ballet Theater; and Miami City Ballet School— are a few of the many institutions influenced by the differing national styles of ballet. Schools and other institutions can be grouped into a number of loosely organized, hierarchically ranked categories for the purpose of social and organizational analysis. These categories exist within the landscape of ballet, where schools and companies often are identified by "types" of students and dancers that have themselves been shaped by these schools' admissions criteria, the quality of the dancers they produce, the ability of their dancers to move between institutions, the amount of time students study, the quality of the instruction, and the reputations of the instructors.

Some boundaries between institutions are shaped not just by criteria of membership but also by the difficulties that individuals encounter when attempting to move between these institutions. Training programs fall into several different categories identified by informants as distinct: pre-professional schools, which can further be differentiated between those associated with a well-known company and those that do not have an affiliated company but still may provide opportunities for students to perform; competition schools, where students may compete against dancers from other competition schools and in regional, national, or international competitions; schools that operate on a business model; school programs (public and private); conservatories; and university education programs.

With the exception being programs in public schools and public universities, most training programs are coordinated by private institutions that charge tuition in order to fund operations and that

offer a limited number of scholarships. The fees can vary greatly between institutions. The charging of tuition in and of itself functions as a boundary, and those schools that do offer graduated tuition payments rarely offer those connections that allow a young dancer to become affiliated with a “professional” school. The general characteristics of each of the types are as follows.

- Pre-professional school. Admission by audition. In a school with a company, students may be funneled into the company after completion of the training program. In a school without a company, other avenues of student performance are sought. Students often have opportunities to apprentice with professional dancers; instructors are former dancers with well-known companies, and they may have completed instructor training in the method the school uses to teach. Generally the school adheres to the methods of a single stylistic tradition, such as French or Russian. Students may train for upwards of 25 hours per week, or in a full-day program that includes academic subjects.
- Competition school. No admission audition required. Students focus on learning routines to perform in competition against other schools in this category. Instructors may or may not be former professional dancers. Training generally crosses stylistic traditions and may use a combination of methods, and students train for fewer hours per week than do those in pre-professional schools.
- Business-model school. No admission audition. Instructors may or may not have received formal training or have danced professionally, and may have progressed through the school to become an instructor. Limited performance opportunities. Typically these are found in suburban and rural areas and in greater numbers the farther one goes from urban centers. Students may only have one or two classes per week.
- Conservatories. Admission by audition. Typically offers a full-day program but a limited number of academic classes, with some of the latter being unrelated to dance. Some do offer college degree programs. In general, they are private.
- School programs. A few academic school programs offer classical ballet training to students. Usually one finds them at the secondary-school level. They may be located in private or in public schools, and have a variety of admission practices including applications, auditions, and/or school lotteries. Programs may be offered in conjunction with art and theater specializations through other places where dance is taught, or through education outreach programs.
- University training. A number of universities have dance training programs; the university generally sets the criteria for admission. A department of dance may or may not have additional criteria for admission to a major. The students admitted typically have received prior training elsewhere.

There is not a great deal of mobility between the types of schools. For example, a student in a school that operates solely as a business may not gain the technical skill needed for admission to a

professional school, should he or she elect to audition. Then too, students may have different objectives in studying ballet, other than the plan to pursue it as a career. This particular study focuses chiefly on those students who are pursuing professional training in ballet, and hence its concern with institutional boundaries and with the avert to gain entrance into institutions that provide pre-professional training. Not only does the instruction offered at the different schools vary widely, but the time the students devote to studying dance also sets them apart, as it results in differing levels of fitness and differences in how the body uses energy in dance (Guidetti, et al. 2008). Another study by Redding and Wyon (2003) added detail to these observations:

The better aerobic fitness of high technical level dancers would not be related to their class work, but to the duration and frequency of their performances as previously reported by Kirkendall and Calabrese (1983). In fact, dancers in group A were training an average of 4 h per week, while dancers in group B were training on the average 10–12 h per week over a period of at least 4 years. Dance consists of human movements involving qualities such as grace and style. However, current choreography places physical demands on dancers that make their physiologic and fitness development just as important as skill development (Redding and Wyon 2003).

As one of the French Ballet Academy instructors noted, something as seemingly simple as number of hours per week spent in class and rehearsals impacts the development of student abilities and consequently, the way that others perceive the school's quality. One student whose attendance was less-than stellar, was told coming only twice a week to class was disrespectful to the other students, as one, as it is the group, not the individual, that gives the overall quality to a school. The group shows how good, or not good, the school is.

The process of participating in summer-intensives is also a critical aspect of the dance-education process. While the majority of schools have academic-year programs, pre-professional schools often operate summer-intensives where young dancers typically spend upwards of 30 hours per week studying under the guidance of instructors and professional dancers. Most of the "reputable" intensive programs offer admission by audition only, while other summer intensives take the form of a summer camp and offer open admission.

Schools that function primarily on the business model⁶ often are subject to derision by outsiders via references to “dolly-dinkle” or “the joy of dance,” terms implying a lack of quality both in the school and in the technical instruction offered. Students and instructors outside of these institutions may loosely use these belittling terms to beneath their own school’s positions within the landscape. Intersections among type of schools, nationality, language, and personal situation affect where someone is situated within the hierarchy. When a student identified another school as a “dolly-dinkle,” the student’s fears about her position within the company and possible relocation to a different geographic region came into play.

A short girl with brown hair was back from a tour with a small state-level ballet company in the south. Other students asked her what working for the company was like, and she said she didn’t like the company. She said the ballet mistress was not well trained; just because she happened to get into the company 20 years ago after training at a dolly dinkle— one of those tap jazz ballet, hip-hop places— doesn’t mean she should be the director. She also said that she hated the accents; the director said *on de-dan’t* [for *en dedans*] and *pas de bAsk* [for *pas de basque*]. She said she hated the Southern accents. The students laughed at her pronunciation and another student, who was a native French speaker, agreed that Americans pronounce the French all wrong, saying the ‘t’s and the ‘r’s. He describes it as “*au revo’r*” [for *au revoir*]” [Field Notes]

This highlights the way in which, geographically, language is a factor that impinges upon the categorization of schools; ballet emerged from a French tradition, and native pronunciations of ballet terminology are privileged. In schools where, genealogically, the connection between the French origins of ballet and its current practice is generations removed, the words themselves become subject to local rules of grammar and pronunciation, and fall prey to the vicissitude of language, position, and power. Geography also plays a role in shaping the categories of training programs available to students; pre-professional and school-training programs tend to be found in the larger urban centers such as New York, while competition schools and schools that operate as businesses in suburban and rural areas. Within such urban areas such as the Metropolitan New York City, there also are a number of ballet

⁶ Although all schools necessarily have a financial dimension, these are differentiated by their operational use of as opposed to educational models.

training programs to be found within immigrant enclaves; these tend to teach both classical ballet and such “traditional” forms of dance, as the Korean and Chinese.

In an online ballet forum where articles covering a range of topics about ballet are posted, some commenters have cited the lack of regulation into dance education as an issue related to the categorization of schools (Nichelle 2010). Since most schools fall in the category of privately owned businesses or non-profits they fall outside of state and federal legislation governing schools, and of the jurisdiction of other regulatory bodies. Although many schools model their curricula on a certain tradition such as that of the Royal Academy of Dance or the American Ballet Theater, many institutions retain responsibility for setting their own curricula and standards, decide which qualifications to accept with respect to teacher-training, and select educational outcomes and objectives for their students. Thus, the criteria for evaluating student performance, in schools of ballet, range widely from passing rigorous examinations, and expecting students have to the ability to compete for entrance to professional dance environments, to having no clear educational outcomes established (Nichelle 2010). Some institutions that adhere to specific techniques have established teacher-training criteria in conjunction with other institutions or with colleges and universities, and this enables an individual to receive certification in ballet pedagogy New York University, for example, has a M.A. program in ABT Ballet Pedagogy, established just within the last ten years (New York University 2013), and the Royal Ballet has a certificate program in Ballet Teaching Studies.

The push for programs and certifications is likely situated within growing concerns about teacher qualification in the US, as evidenced by federal legislation such as No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top mandating that teachers be “highly qualified.” Another difficulty in regulating the training of teachers/instructors relates to the local availability of dancers/teachers having the desired qualifications; in a rural area in the Midwest, for example, the most desirable teacher may be someone who progressed through all levels of education at a particular school and then took up teaching as he or

she left the program. In New York City the best-trained instructors may be those who had a professional dance careers and retired from major companies, or those with college degrees in ballet pedagogy.

Typically students are drawn to classes and schools by both the personal reputation of the instructor as a dancer, and the pedagogical skills he or she is said to have.

Instructors tend to follow an oral tradition, and often teach using the methods they have learned, as well as the personal knowledge they have acquired throughout their studies and professional careers. The instructor who graduates from a college or university program with specific training in dance education is a rarity, because dance is one of the few occupations where college is not the most frequently used avenue for education and occupational training. Most dancers embark on their careers as teenagers and young adults, often between ages 16 and 24, which typically is the age-range within which non-dancers pursue post-secondary education. Some colleges offer programs specifically for those who are dancing professionally, often “virtually,” so that a student can uphold career demands while pursuing a degree, or for the transition period following a career. It is quite common for dancers to formally study subjects outside of dance in these programs.

Progression through and promotion between levels varies in terms both of the system under which students study and the decisions made by individual schools and instructors. For students studying under the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) system, for example, promotion occurs via grade-levels by examination and through completion of the syllabus. This method tends to be more common in Europe, though it can be found in some US schools. The Cecchetti method is a similar system of graded levels with examinations. Promotions between levels in these systems are examination-based, which means that students of varying ages may be in the same class depending on the age at which they began their training. In the Paris Opera School promotion generally is achieved through a series of formal examinations (Operá National de Paris 2013). In contrast, schools outside of these systems devise their own methods of organizing students into levels, and determining the nature of promotion between

them. Promotion within the US system tends to be largely social and based on age-grade, as well as on an assessment carried out by individual instructors and administrators.

A commonly associated practice is the wearing of leotards of a specific color to signify levels within schools, as part of a school's uniform requirements. For example the youngest students in a school might wear lighter colors such as light blue or pink. Intermediate-level students are likely to wear such colors as dark green, navy, and burgundy, while advanced-level students typically wear black, as it is associated with a professional appearance. Little wonder, then, that students often look forward to opportunities to choose their own colors, be these special occasions within schools, or in their ensuing career. Students, and dancers in general, also tend to wear "warm-ups" of varying sorts in hallways, though schools typically require that they be removed during class. This tradition of wearing warm-ups is said to derive from the early national dance schools in France and Russia, where buildings are said to have rarely had adequate heat in winter.

To some degree, variations in the physical body are also salient features in the organization of ballet training and performance. These include such aspects as race, height, bone structure, and physical development. This aspect stems from the early development of character roles in ballet, from the physical constraints exerted by body shape upon the type and speed of movements that can be performed, and from contemporary aesthetics and concepts of beauty. It currently extends all the way across the landscape of ballet, from schools to companies, even encompassing those individuals who fill the ranks of the *corps de ballet*. For while the *corps* are used to convey intention and energy and to provide for the audience visualization of the music, a dancer must always move in relation to others and become one element in a work of art (Carman 2013). Creating this visual imagery is sometimes a challenge for choreographers given differences training backgrounds and physical characteristics such as body-type, age, race/ethnicity and height, which impact the image they are painting. The debate about whether artistic freedom, as a manner of expression, is subject to laws and civil morals pertaining to

equality, is at the heart of discussions of race, class, and equality in ballet within the US, though typically it is only discussed in “black-white” terms (Thomas 2003). Thomas points out that it has been argued that “same-ness” and “difference” have aesthetic meanings within ballet, leading one to deduce that the exclusion of racially marked bodies to create a particular image is simply a form of artistic license, akin to painting in just one color (2003). Sameness and difference, however, are social constructs, dependent upon categories within a society that views some variations of skin color as difference, and other variations as sameness.⁷

Ideas about the desirability of a particular physical form, which extend to embrace ideas about race, ethnicity, and national origin, shape the boundaries between institutions. It certainly cannot be denied that both companies and schools demonstrate preferences in terms of the body-types of their dancers— this is a topic that students frequently are told to think about when preparing for an audition. For example, informants stated the Pacific Northwest Ballet is known for preferring dancers who are tall and thin, whereas the Orlando and Miami City ballet companies go for dancers having a more Latino look. These categories have very real implications for students of dance and moving between institutions.

The Structure and Organization of the French Ballet Academy

The French Ballet Academy⁸ is located in midtown Manhattan and was established in 2011 by Jean-Pierre, who is the school’s artistic director. Currently it is privately owned and run as a nonprofit organization. The faculty consists of two full-time instructors, Jean-Pierre and Noémie, both of whom teach ballet, and one part-time faculty member, Kevin, who teaches modern. Recently added was an administrative assistant, Lauren, whose position was made official during the school’s second year of operation. Lauren also is the mother of a student, Jocelyn, who spent many years under Jean-Pierre’s

⁷ This sentence is from the proposal.

⁸ The name of the institution, and all names of participants, have been replaced by pseudonyms.

instruction before he started the French Ballet Academy. The school's total enrollment ranges from 30 to 50 students during the academic year and from 40 to 60 students during the summer-intensive programs.

The educational objectives of the school can be defined in relation to the ideologies of ballet, to local and individual understandings of tradition and classicism, and to distinctions associated with nationalism.

Our mission [at the French Ballet Academy] is to introduce the beauty of movement that exists in the French ballet and instill the tradition of classical ballet in our dancers. Our vision is to train our dancers with the curriculum of the French School of Classical technique, promoting ballet in its purest form by placing an emphasis on cleanness and elegance. The [French Ballet Academy] is a unique pre-professional program that does not currently exist in the United States. Students selected to participate in our program are expected to work to their fullest potential to meet the high demands of the [French Ballet Academy]'s curriculum. Our goal is to create an honest environment for both students and artistic faculty that will foster respect and continuous growth and learning.⁹

The idea that tradition and culture can be learned is a significant subtext underlying the school's mission statement, which contains references to characteristics assumed to be innate on the basis of national identity or heritage. The school undertakes the task of educating students, who originate outside of France and French culture, in the techniques of classical ballet that are marked as originating from the French tradition.

I initiated an email correspondence with Laruen to arrange a meeting with Jean-Pierre less than a month after the establishment of the school. This began a period of research, from preliminary study to dissertation research covering a two-year span that includes: interviews with students, parents, and teachers; observation of classes, rehearsals, and performances; and the collection of publicly available archival data. The time period-referred to as "Year One" in this dissertation ranges from when the school first opened its doors in 2011 to the subsequent beginning of the first full academic year in the fall (2011-2012), which is referred to as "Year Two." Data-collection also covers a portion of the

⁹ School website.

following academic year (2012-2013), though most of the data were collected during Year One and Year Two. Both the preliminary research and the dissertation research were conducted under the approval of the Institutional Review Board of Teachers College, Columbia University.

I first met Jean-Pierre at:

. . . a small sandwich shop at 39th and 9th; Jean-Pierre recognized me, before I recognize him even though we had never before met. There was an awkward moment in which I shuffled umbrellas to offer him a handshake. He is an elegant man, with strong lines in his countenance; he is in his mid-40's. Lauren, who was with him, is about the same age, with reddish brown hair. Lauren coordinates all of Jean-Pierre's meetings and is handling the business and financial aspects of the school. I thanked them and sat down at a small table. After a few pleasantries and comments on the weather, and a few minutes of explaining that I wasn't a dancer—he thought that I looked like one— but rather an anthropologist, albeit who perhaps is going to study dance, I explained my research project, saying that I'd read about the school on [name removed] message board where participants had posted about it. He said he was not on the message board, but that it was a good forum for advertising. He thought the project seemed interesting, and told me about his own educational background— [he sounded] a bit apologetic that he wasn't a scholar. He said that he couldn't imagine studying that much; studying is a solitary act, and he prefers to be surrounded by people. Even when not talking, when he danced he never felt alone, he was always interacting with others. [Field Notes]

When Jean-Pierre, Lauren, and I walked from the diner to the studio where he would hold class, he looked up at the former warehouses with their tall ceilings, commenting on which of them might make a good studio space if he was able to get his own soon; it had to have high ceilings for jumps, decent lighting, and enough open space for the students to run across the floor. Up there would be enough room for an office and two or three studios. The French Ballet Academy was at the time housed in a dance studio that was home to a number of small modern/contemporary dance companies that rented out rehearsal space. The entrance to the space is modern and industrial. Staircases are made of concrete and glass, though the studio spaces are lined with mirrors and have special flooring. The school was lucky to be granted a semi-permanent home in the studio, thanks largely to the reputation and networking abilities of Jean-Pierre. The cost of studio rental is approximately \$8000 per month. In this particular space children are rare visitors so Jean-Pierre intermittently reminds the students that they

are guests, and must respect the rules for signing-in when they arrive, stay out of the center of the hallways when waiting for class to start, and keep the noise-level low.

Jean-Pierre noted that it was beneficial for students to be in an environment where they were around professional dancers. He had a friend, who directed a dance company, and they were thinking of working out something together; of building permanent and economical spaces for them both, where she could rehearse in the morning and his school could hold classes in the evening, though these plans never came to fruition. As a matter of training, Jean-Pierre noted once that students in the Paris Opera School, where he was trained, were surrounded by a professional atmosphere, watching ballets from the school's box in the theater, learning the repertory, and always being around professional dancers. Thus they were more likely to respect space and facilities and to adapt to the professional culture, whereas in the US, students tend to have only limited contact with professionals until they embark on their own careers. Jean-Pierre's background had taken him from his training at the Paris Opera School, to a multi-national career with companies throughout Europe and the US, the Northern Ballet Theater of England, New York City Ballet, and the American Ballet Theater, before he accepted a faculty position and began teaching full time.

Jean-Pierre explained that

He had not planned on starting a school so soon because he could still get jobs as a professional dancer, and almost wanted to wait, but Lauren encouraged him to go ahead and pursue his vision. He loves teaching, and his students, and wants to see them through their development as dancers. The majority of his students intend to be professionals, and students he has trained in the past do dance professionally. He has one student who took on [a major role for] an upcoming performance at ABT. Even though he anticipates that both he and Lauren will have to make many sacrifices in the coming year, until the school gets off the ground, he thinks it will lead to more security in the long term. Both he and Lauren have to learn a lot about running a business. They do not have any start-up capital; Jean-Pierre is using his own funds when necessary, though by running a summer-intensive, he hopes that the tuition will be enough to cover expenses. He wants to secure a couple of wealthy patrons; he thinks that perhaps the French government may also be able to invest in their school; without patrons, the school is not likely to survive over the long haul. By getting the non-profit status, patrons will be able to invest in their school and write it off on their taxes. He wants to apply for art grants as well.

[Field Notes]

Lauren was also something of a cultural-broker,¹⁰ explaining the working of American bureaucratic processes to Jean-Pierre, and thereby taking a role that was undeniably critical as the school got its footing as a business. She was instrumental in the process of filing paperwork and applying for nonprofit status, explaining to him at one point in the meeting the criteria that were used to evaluate non-profit applications. As the parent of a student she also did much of the initial networking with parents.

Without grant funding, in order to meet the rental costs as well as provide salaries for instructors, tuition for the academic year was set at \$5000 a semester; this is double or even triple the amount charged by other local ballet schools who hold their programs in the after-school hours, with students and parents making their own arrangements for academic schooling during the day, but not unheard of within the framework of private education in New York City. After a year-long search—appropriate studio spaces in New York City tended to run from \$10000 to 15000 a month— and one bid that fell through during negotiations held at the beginning of its second year in operation, the school remained housed in the rental studio. They were given an office space during the second year, a marker of becoming a semi-permanent part of the studio landscape. The space houses a small desk, and is lined by tutus hanging overhead and boxes of costumes along the back wall.

Jean-Pierre's school offers, as originally planned, seven levels of pre-professional classes divided into elementary, intermediate, and advanced divisions. Many of the students with whom he started the school followed him from his old school, the New York Children's Ballet. At the time of our first meeting, he said that he currently had 12 students from there. Some of the students had been training with him for six years, since they were 11 or 12, with the latter being the age of his youngest student. He said he typically doesn't undertake the training of students so young, but this student, the child of a professional dancer, is something of a prodigy who has studied with him since she was eight. Jean-Pierre felt honored

¹⁰ Safa (1971) uses the concept of cultural-broker to refer to those individuals who often mediate between two distinct cultural groups; they serve the role of facilitating cultural and economic exchange.

that the students followed him, especially since many had left more intensive training programs where they had six or seven hours of classes per day, versus what he planned to offer in his two-hour-per-day program. He said that in one sense what he is doing is more effective, because students do not necessarily get more out of training for longer periods of time; their bodies become fatigued.

Jean-Pierre has written a syllabus for each of the levels in the program one that quite closely follows the “pure” French style of ballet. During the school’s second year of operation, some shifting occurred in the nomenclature and division of the levels. Originally the elementary category had only one student, who took classes with the intermediate-level students. The intermediate-level students were divided into sub-levels A, B, C, and D, but all took class together. The upper-level intermediate students (sub-level D) often also took class with the advanced students. In the second year of operation the levels were given color codes (green, orange, and red), and a separate class was conducted for elementary-level (green) students. (Please to Appendix I and II for Year One and Year Two sample student schedules). Students, particularly those on the red level, typically also had private lessons with one of the school’s two full-time instructors, either earlier in the day prior to regularly scheduled classes or on the weekends.

Class periods were divided into sets of structured segments, typically barre and floor work, which was followed by pointe for girls. Regular attendance is expected of students, and penalties for poor attendance range from a general “talking-to” to exclusion from performance opportunities. Some variations occurred in scheduling to accommodate rehearsals and performances, groups scheduled at the same time and in the same studio space, held class together. Typical classes in technique, pointe and variations, and “men’s” range from one and a half to two hours and are held between 4 and 8 p.m. on weekdays and from 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturdays, with some extended hours for rehearsals. Usually they are held in the larger studios in the building, with windows facing south; both the southern and eastern walls contain large windows that can be concealed by heavy black curtains. In early-

Saturday morning classes, sunlight floods the studio and reflects from the mirror-lined wall. In winter the heat is unreliable, at best. The studio rooms along this wall are separated by a partition. One of the studios has bleacher seating that can be pulled out for a performance, and curtains that can be drawn across the room to form a stage.

The second full-time instructor, who also was trained in France, decided to leave her position at New York Children's Ballet, where she and Jean-Pierre taught together, so as to accompany him to his exciting new endeavor. Noémie was trained at the National Conservatory in France and studied with a well-known dancer of the Paris Opera tradition in Cannes and with another in Brussels. In Switzerland was invited to dance with the Bonn Opera in Germany. She also has done work in musical theater and film productions, and at the time of my research was choreographing a new musical.¹¹ Noémie brings an incredible precision to her teaching. She is as detailed as Jean-Pierre is lyrical, and emphasizes the need to understand the body's movement mechanisms; that is she focuses on teaching students the kinesthetic of the muscles activated in the body by any given movement. These differing styles occasionally led to contention, but together they laid down an extremely strong basis for students learning to dance. Both instructors have placed students, both individually and jointly trained, in top companies in the United States; this indicates the high quality of the training that their students receive from them and where they, and consequently the school, are positioned in relation to these companies, in terms of both landscape and social network. Quite simply, the instructors' statuses, and the status of the school, are of the essence when it comes to placing students in highly regarded, selective companies and contributes a great deal to the legitimacy of the school. The tables below list the placements.

¹¹ Source: Interview data, biography on school's website.

Table 1: Faculty's Alumni Company Placement

American Ballet Theatre
Ballet Memphis (trainee)
Carolina Ballet
Carolina Ballet (trainee)
Corella Ballet
Los Angeles Ballet (trainee)
Metropolitan Opera
Milwaukee Ballet (second company)
Momix
National Ballet of Canada
Nederlands Dans Theater
North Carolina Dance Theatre
Oregon Ballet
Orlando Ballet (second company)
Pacific Northwest Professional Division
Pennsylvania Ballet (second company)
San Francisco Ballet
Sarasota Ballet

Source: School email newsletter.

Table 2: School Alumni Company Placement

Nederlands Dans Theater
North Carolina Dance Theatre
Pacific Northwest Professional Division

Source: School Email Newsletter

Students also often have their choice of placements after they have completed their training with Jean-Pierre and Noémie. For example one student had offers from Cincinnati Ballet, Houston Ballet (Second Company), Los Angeles Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, North Carolina Dance Theatre (second company), and Pennsylvania Ballet (second company).¹² Another student had offers from Cincinnati Ballet, Houston Ballet (second company), Los Angeles Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, North Carolina Dance Theatre (second company), and Pennsylvania Ballet (second company). A number of students decided to pursue college and/or additional training at such places as Fordham University and North Carolina School of the Arts.

Jean-Pierre endeavors to bring in guest instructors, often former students or colleagues who currently are professional dancers, to increase students' familiarity with the professional environment of dance and to provide them with opportunities to cross-train in modern and jazz dance. Several regular guest instructors include a modern dance instructor during the academic year and a jazz instructor

¹² Source: School email newsletter.

during summer-intensives, in addition to several current company members from American Ballet Theater and Complexions. At various times both Jean-Pierre and Noémie noted to students the importance of versatility of training to anyone pursuing dance as an occupation, and thereby of exposing students to professional environments. Their view was clearly reflected in the classes offered, and the guest faculty members selected to teach at the school.

Jean Pierre has someone coming from the Paris Opera that he is excited about; he says that "they speak the same language— not French, but in ballet." They also have a jazz instructor coming, because he thinks that students need to cross-train a bit. Before he came to the US he thought all American students would know ballet, tap, and jazz, but he found that as in Paris, the ballet students know only ballet, and so on and so forth. Even the Broadway dancers might only know a bit of ballet; they would know Broadway dance and nothing else. He wants to train his students in a bit of jazz, so that if they don't wind up with professional ballet careers, or have difficulty getting a job, they can go and work on Broadway with no problem. He said that ballet dancers tend to have this stiff carriage— he held his hands to the side of his face— and that they need to learn to move in order to do Broadway dance. [Field Notes]

This awareness was situated in the often harsh realities the students face as they transition into becoming professional dancers. It is important to note that by all means all students will land positions within professional or classical companies, and thus they will perhaps decide to seek their fortunes on Broadway. This enforces Jean-Pierre's understanding of the school as a place for occupational training; as for the French Classical technique the hope is that it will bring something novel and marketable to the American stage, affording students more opportunities than they otherwise would have had. Though all of the students at the school wanted to become professionals, both Jean-Pierre and Noémie recognized that many of the students would go on to college, even though they aimed to provide them with a skill-set they could use to obtain jobs and embark on careers as professional dancers.

In the ensuing chapter, data are presented that show how the students and parents who participated in the study came to be a part of the school and describe their relationship to the ideologies that exist within the landscape of ballet.

Chapter Two: The Recruitment of Students

This chapter explores the processes by which students are brought into the institutional framework of the school, the relationship between students and the school, and how the boundaries of the school are established and maintained in relation to ideologies associated with aesthetics. This relates back to Firth's theory of social organization and social structure, as the continued existence of any institution is dependent upon its ability to maintain itself over time, with the actions and interactions of individuals working to maintain structures within a society. In societies, for example, new members may be incorporated through marriage or recruited by virtue of birth within a particular lineage, where as in corporations, religion, political affiliation, and occupation may provide a basis for membership. The establishment of the criteria for membership and the bases upon which members can be recruited, set the boundaries of an institution and provide a basis for the inclusion and exclusion of individuals in relation to the concerns and objectives of the institution. Institutional boundaries are also dependent on the relationship of the particular institution to other institutions and the social contexts within which it operates (Smith 1998).

In this case the French Ballet Academy exists in relation to the landscape of ballet, which consists of institutions in the arrangement illustrated in Chapter One, ideologies, mythologies, a sense of collective memory/history, and people. The school also exists outside of, and in relation to national entities, even while embedded within the local social contexts framed by geography and the arrangement of social categories. Thus, this chapter looks at how students learned about the school and examines the factors that influenced their decisions to enroll, while examining the audition process through which students gain admittance to the school as an act of boundary maintenance, in relation to the demographic profile of the student population.

During my two-year observation period, there were two primary avenues by which students came to the French Ballet Academy for study: one, through prior affiliation with the school's founding

director, and two, through such outside recruitment means as word of mouth, social media/print media advertising, and social networking. Fliers advertising the summer program and year-round programs were placed in dancewear shops, boutiques, academic schools, and other studios. The school developed social-media outlets such as Facebook, built a strong web presence, received recognition in several print magazines such as *Dance Magazine* and *Pointe*, and generated discussion in online forums. These forms of marketing contributed to growth in the number of students between the first and second years.

The development of a strong web presence was enhanced during the second year of operation, when a professional photographer and artist selected the French Ballet Academy for his next study. He created high-quality images of the students in class and during performances for use in Facebook and the school website, thereby enhancing the professional image of the school. The attention that the school received in print media was derived from both articles focusing on Jean-Pierre and the school's programs, and from advertisements for dancewear featuring students affiliated with the school in dance magazines that have a wide circulation. The context within which the school gained recognition also had a significant impact in broadening the population base from which the school could recruit new students. For example, one magazine feature about summer-intensive programs provided descriptions of the French Ballet Academy and of Jean-Pierre's instructional style alongside descriptions of other established, reputable programs.

The majority of students who attended the school during the first year were drawn to Jean-Pierre and Noémie's instruction, and already had established a close personal relationship with the two through the previous institutions where they had taught; these include the initial 12 students who moved with Jean-Pierre when he created the French Ballet Academy. When I asked students and parents why they decided to attend the French Ballet Academy, most simply replied, "Jean-Pierre." By

this they meant either their personal relationship with him, or his reputation as an instructor and a dancer.

Gathering the names of training programs where students had previously studied revealed that 50 percent had prior affiliation with locations where Jean-Pierre had previously taught. Only 25 percent came from institutions where there was no direct connection to the school or to Jean-Pierre, though some of these students were friends of other parents/students and knew of him through their social networks. As Weber (1958) suggested, under traditional forms of authority, the majority of staff (students, parents, instructors) come under the leadership of an individual/institution due to “personal loyalty.” Clearly, this is the case for the school. Most of the students who followed Jean-Pierre through the establishment of a new school cited their personal relationship with him as the reason for making the shift from their previous institution. Students and parents also frequently expressed a desire to learn the tradition he was teaching as yet another reason for making the move.

The connections among individuals, such as students, parents, teachers, along with their institutional affiliations, form a series of linkages that often are based on perceived membership in the social group formed by those who dance and their supporters. These linkages, as Mayer (1966) described, can be mobilized by an individual to accomplish a specific purpose. In the case of these students at the French Ballet Academy, these linkages were related to gaining admission to the school. Personal connections and linkages aid individuals in crossing institutional boundaries and provide a basis for recruitment. Parents, student dancers, and professional dancers become adept at utilizing these linkages, whether the linkage reflects a personal connection or one marked by several degrees of separation (such as training with the former student of a well-known dancer). To no small degrees, they cultivate connections because the reputation, status, and network resources of the other individual enhance their own ability to access institutions. For example, one parent said of her daughter: “She spent a week in August [at the summer-intensive program at the French Ballet Academy], and a friend

and former administrator at a conservatory felt it would be a good fit for her. Also, [Jean-Pierre] has a reputation as one of the best ballet instructors in the city.”

New students who entered in the second year again cited both the reputation of Jean-Pierre and Noémie and an interest in learning the French classical technique as their chief reasons for enrolling. For example: “We could see that the level of teaching by [Jean-Pierre] and [Noémie] was beyond compare. We also wanted the French classical style.” There were a few exceptions. For example, one parent whose daughter previously attended an extremely reputable institution to study ballet transferred to the French Ballet Academy because the time requirement for study at the upper levels of her previous dance school had conflicted with public-school enrollment, making it impossible for her daughter to both continue her public schooling and pursue dance training. Jean-Pierre’s reputation of being able to retain boys in the ballet classroom also drew students to the school.

Admission policies and procedures were formalized between the first and second year that the school was in operation. The initial existence of the institution depended on its ability to draw in enough students to operate as a school, both economically and instructionally. Thus, the criteria solidified as the enrollment, and demand for space in the school as a student, increased. The school adopted the same formal and informal admissions requirements as most other professional schools in the area. The admission process requires applicants to submit a paper application, formal audition photographs (a headshot and arabesque position), and to attend an audition class modeled after a standard class at the school. The paper application requests the following information from students:

- Student Name, Home Address, Home Phone, Cell Phone
- Birth Date, Age, Gender, Height, Student Email
- Primary Family Phone, Primary Family Email
- Year-Round Training School, Dates, Teachers, Classes per Week
- Previous Summer-intensives: Summer-intensive, Level, Dates
- Checkbox: I would like to audition for Summer Programs; I would like to audition for...
Fall Semester

This information established the most basic eligibility requirements for potential students: they needed to be located geographically (or to be willing to be located geographically) in a place where they would be able to regularly attend class. They had to fall within the appropriate age range in relation to their ability level; otherwise the school would not be able to produce graduates capable of pursuing professional careers, and the objective of the school is to produce professional dancers. The heights and (observed) weights of students were also used loosely as a basis for selection, though particular height and weight combinations did not preclude admission. The list of previous institutions that students attended in both year-round and summer training programs also established basic eligibility requirements in that, for admission to a pre-professional school, prior training was required. A student's genealogy and lineage, formulated from the lists of institutions that she or he previously had attended, was informally used as a criterion for admission. The student's home address, previous summer-intensive experiences, and year-round training experiences also provided a basis for a loose estimation of the potential student's social class and financial status when the applications were reviewed. These eligibility requirements created set boundaries for institutional membership, in relation to the evaluation of students' performances during the audition class.

Audition

The audition process is fairly uniform; there are some universalities in ballet that make it possible for students to be able to go from one audition to another and to expect to find a similarly administered audition class and common behavioral expectations. An audition class generally follows the same structure as a regular ballet class, with a barre and a center segment. Various combinations are given in a set order, starting with *plié* exercises and ending with a *grand allegro* and/or a pointe segment, though the content and the difficulty of the combinations given may vary widely. Behavior norms governing student conduct, and interactions with instructors, generally are applicable across auditions. For example, students are not expected to enter a classroom space without first receiving

some acknowledgement or permission from an instructor. If a student is coming in late, they must wait until the instructor grants him or her leave to join the class, typically after an exercise is finished or the music has been paused, so as not to interrupt the other students or the music.

During class, students are supposed to maintain a neutral facial expression that can be considered 'pleasant;' they also are expected to follow formal ballet-school dress (leotard, tights, hair pulled back in a tight, flat bun with no wisps) and they are not expected to speak during class, unless answering a question asked them by the instructor. Acknowledgement and appreciation of corrections given by instructors is generally non-verbal and is shown by making adjustments with the body. The arrangement of students in any given class will be similar; students stand at the barre or in center, keeping an approximately equal distance between themselves and the next person, and efforts are made not to block another persons' view of themselves in the mirror or to come between them and the instructor. At the class's end, students typically are expected to individually thank the instructor before exiting, often accompanied by a bow or a curtsy.

Admission to the programs offered by the French Ballet Academy occurred at regular intervals, with two formal auditions being held: one in the spring for the Summer-intensive program and another during the late spring for the academic-year programs. Students who could not attend the auditions were permitted to attend a regular class session as an audition. While conducting research I observed two auditions for the school and "listened-in" on the decision-making process, as well as observed the process when students auditioned within the context of regular class sessions. The first open audition the school held took place in June of 2011, at the rental studio. Jean-Pierre had asked his regular students to attend to fill out the class, as he was not sure how many students would come to audition because the school was new and had yet to build a reputation as the type of institution he hoped to create.

The audition schedule was divided into two parts: one for ages 12 to 15, and another for ages 16+. Students aged 12 to 15 were expected to arrive for registration from 12 to 12:30 and attend the 12:30-2:00 audition class, while students aged 16+ were expected to register between 2:00-2:30 and attend the audition class from 2:30 to 4:00. Subsequent auditions followed a similar format, though with a much larger number of attendees required the auditions to be held in a larger rental space. It is common practice for selective ballet schools to hold auditions during the process of recruitment in large urban centers around the country in affiliated or “sister” institutions or in rental studio spaces, as well as at their ‘home’ locations. Students from outside these regions tend to travel to their closest urban center to attend auditions. According to informants, smaller reputable schools generally arrange to hold auditions at large well-known institutions, in hopes of recruiting the talent of the students who attend there. Students already admitted to one of the larger institutions have been filtered through recruitment processes and selected for specific body-types; a smaller school can potentially capitalize on these processes when recruiting a student population. For example, in the New York Metropolitan area, San Francisco Ballet holds auditions at School of American Ballet, while Washington Ballet auditions at the Ailey Studios.

Students who planned to audition and their parents, typically mothers, arrived early and sat in the common area of the studio. All were dressed in formal ballet attire under layers of warm-ups: black leotard and pink tights for the girls, black tights and white shirt for the one boy. The number of potential students that attended this particular audition was 12. Students were encouraged via an e-mail announcement to dress “as they would for any ballet class. Solid leotard, tights, hair off of the face, etc. Men should be in tights and a T-shirt. No baggy or loose clothes, including skirts,” and girls were instructed to bring their pointe *shoes*. The majority of those who came were students/former students at the studio where he previously taught, though there were some students that were unknown to either Lauren or Jean-Pierre. One student traveled from California to audition- her parents were thinking

of renting her an apartment in the city so she could stay and study- but once they started looking into it, they found it cost-prohibitive.

The students were quiet, whispering occasionally with their accompanying parent, stretching their legs and feet, and eying one another. Students often have a quick way of sizing up other students, that includes analyzing patterns of musculature, size, weight, turnout, and flexibility in a matter of seconds; they typically have evaluated whether someone will be a 'good dancer' and 'competition' before they enter a studio. The mothers also sized one another up, asking each other about the ages of their daughters and the other places where they had studied, as, the places where students can gain admission are markers of a student's level of ability, potential, and physique. The process that parents and students use to decide what schools to attend is, in many ways, similar to the process that the schools use to select students. It involves a process of attending auditions, classes, summer-intensives, and developing network connections with the schools' instructors and dancers within the ballet landscape that might serve as potential teachers or mentors. These connections later facilitate a young student's access to professional companies.

Lauren, Jean-Pierre's assistant whom I had first met in the diner, and her daughter Jocelyn had arrived to help with the audition. Robert, another instructor who taught during the summer-intensive, also arrived to help Jean-Pierre with the audition process. When it was time to start, Lauren, Jocelyn, Robert, Jean-Pierre, and I went into the room with the students and set up on a folding table. They handed out applications to anyone who had not already requested one by email and filled it out. The parents submitted the application, headshot, and first arabesque photo to Lauren, along with the \$20 audition fee. Students were given a number which they pinned to the front of their leotards, typically on the stomach area where it would not interfere with any arm movements; the corresponding number also was written at the top of their applications. Current students also received numbers, though they

were not auditioning, per se; Jean-Pierre told one student that she might use the audition for placement the following school year.

Additional bits of information were offered by the parents of auditioning students in an attempt to build personal relationships and connections with the school and to create a sense of social belonging, the technical aspect of the audition aside. For example, the parent of a current student introduced a friend, the mother of an auditioning student, to Lauren, and pointed out the daughter who was taking her place at the barre, explaining that she was auditioning for the September program. The mother had another daughter who was eight or so, who she would like to have audition; they might be interested in also having her in the program. Lauren explained that she was too young and that she would need to wait until she was at least 10 before being considered. Another parent wanted to add on the application that she'd been referred by another parent already in the school; her daughter was friends with a current student. Another mother, one of the last to come in, whispered to Lauren that her daughter tended to be very anxious and thus mess up the combinations for the first five minutes or so; she requested that no snap decisions be made. Her daughter needed patience. She said that after about five minutes or so, she would be fine. As the parents left and the door closed, the audition class began.

The students arranged themselves at the barre underneath the windows overlooking the skyline. Jean-Pierre introduced himself and all of us who were in the room. He began the barre sequence with the *plié* combination that he gives, without fail, at the start of each class, moving through each of the commonly used positions of the feet.¹³ Starting in first position: *demi plié*, *demi plié*, *grand plié*,¹⁴ *chambre*¹⁵ forward and back. The same plies are repeated in second, with a *chambre* towards the barre and away, two *demi pliés* in fourth, *rond de jambe*¹⁶ to switch feet, two *demi pliés*, *rond de jambe* to return, then circular *port de bras* to the barre. In fifth, two

¹³ There are in general, six positions of the feet, four of which are commonly used: first, second, fourth, and fifth, each of which have corresponding positions of the arms. Both the French and English names are noted, as follows: First position (*Premiere* position); Second position (*Seconde* position); Third position (*Troisieme* position); Fourth position (*Quatrieme* position); Fifth position (*Cinquieme* position), with arms in fifth and arms *en bas*, as in Prudhommeau and Guillot (1976).

¹⁴ *Plié*: a bending of the knees that stretches the calf muscles and Achilles tendons. In *demi plié*, both heels are on the floor; in *grand plié*, the heels raise, except in second position.

¹⁵ *Chambre*: a bending of the torso from the waist up, to the front, side, or back.

¹⁶ *Rond de Jambe*: a circular movement of the foot on the floor (*à terre*), that passes through first position and extends to the *tendu*.

demi pliés, one *grand plié* and circular *port de bras* away from the barre, finishing with a balance in *sous sus*.¹⁷ This combination is ubiquitous. It is found, although with some variations, in most places where ballet is practiced. Jean-Pierre told the students the combination verbally, then marked it once through, demonstrating, while calling out the sequence slowly. The students marked it with arms and smaller movements of their legs, their eyes on him.

Jean-Pierre said, “Ballerinas ready on stage,” modeling the position *de depart*: fifth position, body, pulled-up, with arms *en bas*, the fingers nearly touching. “Pulled-up” refers to a position of the body with the stomach held in, supporting the spine, shoulders down, backside down and slightly under so that the pelvis rests directly on top of the hips, the knees straight with the thigh-muscles pulled up, and arches of the feet lifted. His regular students already knew the combination; their prior knowledge and experience provided a model for the younger ones and those auditioning to follow if they got lost. [Field Notes]

Halfway through the first combination, a late student was admitted to the audition and, rather than waiting for the end of the combination, she took an open space at the end of the barre. Standing with her left hand on the barre, she faced the wall, and realized after she had occupied the empty space, that she couldn’t see anyone to follow the combination there. She looked back and forth anxiously until the combination was over. This illustrates the importance of spatial awareness and positioning, and her violation of the normative conventions of classroom behavior enforced their presence. If someone is late, it is more typical that they wait until the end of the combination and the music stops before going to the barre, and if they do not know a combination, it is typical that they attempt to position themselves between or behind someone who appears to know it. Jean-Pierre acknowledged her and the dilemma she had found herself in with a look, and when they turned to the other side, she was able to follow.

Before the end of the first set of *pliés*, the applications were sorted into piles. Lauren picked out numbers 2 and 3 and separated number 12 from the stack of applications, while Jean-Pierre demonstrated the second combination: *tendus*¹⁸ *en croix*¹⁹ with *pliés*. Students used a variety of positions for the head and arms, other than the ones demonstrated. Some of the positions reflected the

¹⁷ *Sous sus*: a position with the feet tight together in fifth on *demi relevé* or *pointe*; both heels should be visible in front.

¹⁸ *Tendu*: A movement of the foot along the floor through the heel, *demi pointe*, to a pointed position.

¹⁹ *En croix*: A directional term that indicates a movement is to be done to the front, side, and back of the body.

technical and stylistic backgrounds of the students, while others reflected both the skill level of the student and/or the quality of the training that she or he had previously had. Also a wide variety of patterns in musculature were present among the students who were auditioning. The patterns of musculature characteristic of ballet, built through the years by repeating the movements in class, all serve to create the “line” of the body. Ideally, the dancers are thin and muscular enough for the patterns to be visible to an audience. Some characteristic muscle patterns include strong outer and inner thigh muscles, well-shaped calf muscles, and strong feet, as well as visibly strong stomach muscles and “wings” (muscles at the base of the scapula).²⁰ When a dancer does movements “correctly,” the patterns of muscles develop in a particular way. When a dancer is performing movements “incorrectly,” the resulting configuration is visible and can be read by other students, instructors, and to some degree, an audience. These also are the same criteria by which students evaluate one another as “good” dancers before they even enter into the audition space. For example, the appearance of over-developed thigh muscles or “shortened” thigh muscles that seem to stop at the top of the leg rather as opposed to extending the length of the hips, are markers of “incorrect” technique.

Some of the students were muscled in the ways one might expect of a student who has been dancing several years, whereas others were not. Some were able to activate specific muscle groups that others were not yet able to use, or had picked up particular aspects of technique that others had not. The *tendu derrière*²¹ is an example of a movement where a student’s training, knowledge, and understanding of his or her own body in relation to the principles of movement are easily seen. The “correct” motion of a *tendu derrière* leads with the toe back, has the heel forward, and maintains the “turn-out” rotation from the hip socket, while pressing the heel of the foot down and out. It also involves the “correct” positioning of the standing leg, with the thigh muscle pulled up at the kneecap and the front of the hip “pulled-up” in front, which is accomplished by tightening the gluteus maximus

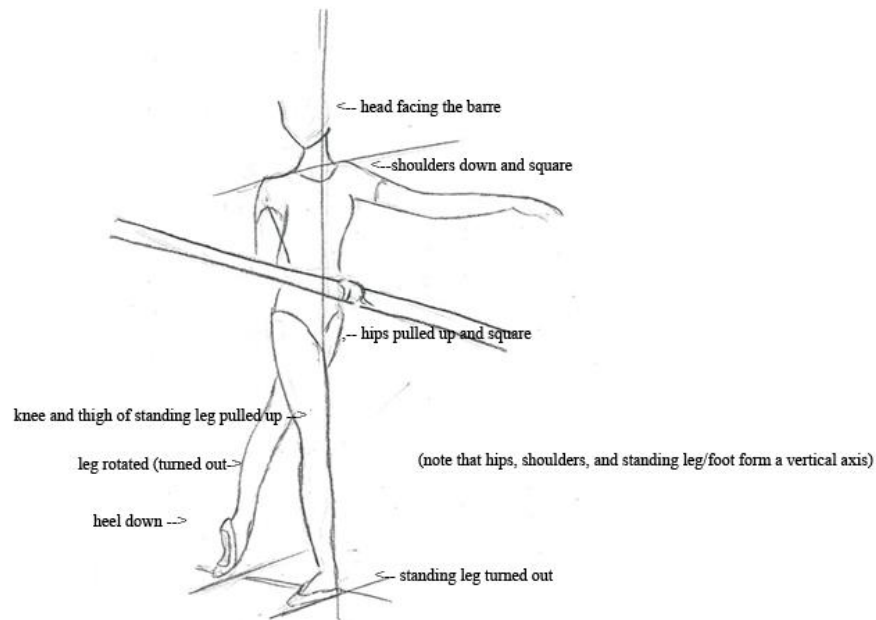
²⁰ Instructors refer to these as wings.

²¹ *Derrière*: A directional term; behind, or to the back.

muscles and using the abdominals. The foot and standing leg are rotated from the hip socket and the arch of the standing foot is lifted, so that the motion of the “working” leg does not cause any shifting in the torso or supporting leg. The shoulders stay square, and the elbows are lifted, with minimal twisting of the body. Common difficulties in this respect include: shifting the hips to accommodate the movement of the working leg; not crossing, or over-crossing the working leg in relation to the standing leg; tipping of the pelvis’ and leading the *tendu* with the heel instead of the toes, which typically leads to a “turned-in” leg to the back.

During regular class sessions, the “correct” way of doing the movement is taught to the French Ballet Academy students through verbal instruction. In one class session, Noémie asked: “When I go to the back [*tendu derrière*] what should I do?” “What do we do when opening- what are you thinking about?” The students replied that it is the big toe that they’re thinking about. The students practiced the movement, attempting to grow the standing leg by pulling up and turning out— the corrections they had just been given. Noémie stated that after some time they would think, “Big toe. . . inner thigh. . . Hips follow, but we don’t want to open the hips.”

Figure 1: Labeled *Tendu Derrière*



Tendu derrière, with notations indicating markers of a “correct” position. Note the vertical and horizontal lines showing the alignment of the back foot with the heel of the front and the arrangement of the head, shoulders, spine, and standing leg on a vertical and horizontal plane. The head is facing the barre, as is done in the French school. [Derivative image from Prudhommeau and Guillot, p.24, modified and labeled]

Both specific movements, such as *tendu derrière*, and patterns of musculature that result from years of practicing ballet illustrates the way that the body symbolizes the collective knowledge of a society through the ways in which it is sculpted via that society’s processes. The patterns of movements are within the students’ bodies, as they learned them from their instructors, who in turn learned them from their own teachers. The “correct” movement symbolizes a tradition, and an inheritance, and frames the possibilities of the body within particular social understandings. Bourdieu (1990) wrote about these ideas in relation to his concerns about the body in space and time:

Every social order systematically takes advantage of the disposition of the body and language to function as depositories of deferred thought that can be triggered off at a distance in space and time by the simple effect of re-placing the body in an overall posture which recalls the associated thoughts and feelings. . . . Symbolic power works partly through the control of other

people's bodies and belief that is given by the collectively recognized capacity to act in various ways on deep-rooted linguistic and muscular patterns of behavior. . .

One could endlessly enumerate the values given body, *made* body, by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy which can instill a whole cosmology, through injunctions as insignificant as 'sit up straight' . . . and inscribe the most fundamental principles of the arbitrary content of a culture in seemingly innocuous details of bearing or physical and verbal manners, so putting them beyond the reach of consciousness and explicit statement. The logic of the scheme transfer which makes each technique of the body a kind of *pars totalis*. . . and hence to recall the whole system to which it belongs (Bourdieu 1990 :71)

Bourdieu frequently is referenced within the body of literature focusing specifically on dance owing to his focus on art and aesthetics, and his concerns about discipline and how the body is situated within a field. For example Wainwright, Williams and Turner explore the Royal Ballet in relation to his concept of *habitus*, to suggest, from a social-practice standpoint, that distinctions between the individual, institutional, and choreographic habitus shape relationships among dancers, institutions, and choreography, as one type of habitus dominates over another (2006). Wainwright, Williams and Turner (2006) also suggest, through Bourdieu (1984), that the learned "techniques of the body," such as one's way of walking, are an inscribed form of capital, related to class, that reflects an individual's value, or lack thereof, in the eyes of a society.

Bourdieu assumes that the production of art is an economic endeavor, and thereby cultural, that the body functions as a symbol, and that its production is "contained within the field of power while possessing a relative autonomy with respect to it" (1993:37). As illustrated by the process of auditioning, however, the production of institutions via the creation and maintenance of boundaries in relation to ideologies also is related to legitimating practices. Both the concept of tradition and the acquisition of status have social ramifications that cannot always be translated into economic values in relation to production, and the same holds true of the emotional value of belonging.

Just as decisions are made about whether to incorporate individuals and bodies into the school on the basis of how they are already situated within traditions and practices, so too determinations are made as to how particular individuals— their bodies and movements— are related to the ideologies the

school aims to uphold and others it seeks to create. The audition class, was for some students, their first experience of taking class with Jean-Pierre, and as such, it was as important for the reputation of the school that they come away with a sense that the class had been a good experience, regardless of whether they were admitted. The student should feel that the experience is sufficiently challenging and rewarding for them to decide whether or not they sought knowledge that he has to share and thus would eagerly enroll in the school if the offer of admission extended. While the students were doing the combination, Jean-Pierre called out reminders just as he does in his regular classes.

Lower heels, *plié*,” Jean-Pierre stated, and as one of the girls bent her knees, he went up to her and adjusted the lift of her elbow, bringing her arm in front. “The arm is a little noisy,” he commented; it was moving when it should have been held still. He circled the room, then approached the table and asked Lauren for the application for student number 14. He wanted to know where she had been training. She had completed summer-intensives at a number of well-known institutions. Lauren put a large X on the top of her paper: a “no.” Jean-Pierre took a notecard with him as he circulated, and wrote down numbers 19, 16, and 20.

He then asked student to do a “hard” *dégagé* combination in order to evaluate how the applicants remembered patterns. This was followed a *fondue*²² combination. He stopped by number 16 and said, “hold [your] stomach, relax. What’s your name?” She told him and he corrected the position of her head, as she had been looking over and under. “Head to the barre when *en dehors*;²³ when *en dedans*,²⁴ look out.” [Field Notes]

The object of many of the exercises is to learn how to maintain the position of the torso and upper body while moving the feet and legs. The latter cannot move freely if the torso is improperly supported. The aforementioned use of the head (“Head to the barre when *en dehors*; when *en dedans*, look out”) is specific to the French technique; the Vaganova and the Cecchetti schools look “over and under” when in *tendu derrière*. Wearing anything other than a schooled expression of “pleasantness” is considered a marker of arrogance and hence unprofessional, for it is expressing discontent with what is being offered by the instructor; in this case the student who grimaced and made faces during the combination stood out from the rest. This connects to the idea of normative behavior in a classroom.

²² *Fondue*: A bending of the knee of the supporting leg; at the barre, this typically is done with by moving the working leg to a *coupe* (pointed foot at the ankle) position.

²³ *En dehors*: A directional term; toward the standing leg.

²⁴ *En dedans*: A directional term; away from the standing leg

Jean-Pierre marked the *frappé and fondu*²⁵ combination in full by demonstrating the movements to the front, side and back. He then told the students to reverse the combination. As they changed hands at the barre, he said, “We do: *Frappé, en croix, fondu*, balance in back *attitude*.”²⁶ He slowed down the music so that the *frappés* were not so fast. [Field Notes]

By this point, the application forms had been sorted into five separate stacks related to the ability level of the applicants. During the combination, Jean-Pierre walked to the boy who was at the barre near the window, and the boy glanced towards him immediately pulling up straighter on his standing hip, so that his *frappé* to the back was in better alignment. Jean-Pierre stopped and said, “You knew what I was going to correct.” Both smiled. He then stopped by number 17, adjusted her shoulder, and pulled her toes out so that her foot was fully pointed. Her application indicated that she previously had attended a well-known, national-level school. Before they had come to center, he also had them do an *adagio*²⁷ with *développés*²⁸ *devant*²⁹, *seconde*³⁰, and *arabesque*³¹, commenting that he wanted to see their extensions.

As soon as they had begun the *adagio* combination, Jean-Pierre came over to the table and looked through the applications. “I like the black girl,” he said, pulling her application. She had an ease of movement he found appealing, and long limbs in relation to her torso. Lauren thought she remembered seeing an article about her, searched her name on Google, and found she’d been featured in an article. Suddenly a decision had to be made about whether to offer her a scholarship, since Jean-Pierre wanted her to attend the school. He noted to Lauren that they couldn’t take on four scholarship students; currently they had three on full scholarship, and four would be too many to allow them to meet expenses with the expected level of enrollment. They decided to offer her a partial scholarship for the first semester. Jean-Pierre also commented that another student at the barre, one whom he felt an

²⁵ *Frappé*: A brushing of the foot along the floor to a *dégagé* position.

²⁶ *Attitude*: A position with the leg raised and bent at the knee.

²⁷ *Adagio*: Slow, lyrical movements that typically include *développés* and extensions.

²⁸ *Développé*: An extension of the leg that involves a lift from the thigh and an unfolding of the lower leg and foot. Can be done to the front, side, or back.

²⁹ *Devant*: Front.

³⁰ *Seconde*: Second, or side position.

³¹ *Arabesque*: A position with the extension of the leg behind the body.

obligation to admit, “can’t dance, but has nice feet.” This student was another from his old school.

Lauren noted that this student’s mom wanted to get her into a well-known institution; if she did, she would attend there instead, regardless of whether Jean-Pierre extended an offer of admission to her.

Class continued:

Jean-Pierre asked them to move to the center after they had done their *développés* at the barre. The students stayed loosely grouped at the back of the room as he demonstrated the first center combination: *tendus* in each direction that necessitated a shift in body-direction and arms to each position. He told them he wanted them to do *tendus* all together; they would move as one group. He explained that the feet have to be like hands as they move along the floor, and the toes have to stretch and the muscles have to be used. After the first time through, he asked them to redo it, to make it sharper, and to note the change of direction to *effacé*³² as they went to the side.

The second time was much sharper. The length of time the students took to arrive to the *tendu* and close back to fifth was shorter, and thus the position was held for a greater length of time. Next, Jean-Pierre gave a *pirouette* combination and demonstrated movements with the following words to accompany them: *tendu a la seconde*; *relevé*³³ *retiré*;³⁴ finish *coupe* back. *Relevé retiré* to fourth; *pirouette*; finish fifth. As opposed to demonstrating the *pirouettes* he pulled to *retiré* and held, then demonstrated a clean landing. He then added “and left,” to instruct students to repeat the combination to the other side. He broke them in two groups by numbers, with half in the first group. He told them to have eyes like a hawk, not eyes like a mole, demonstrating a sharp snap of his head to spot the *pirouettes*.³⁵ These sorts of allegories are a common feature of his regular classroom instruction. The second time, he had them repeat the *pirouette* combination in groups of three, and add double *pirouettes*.

He gave a second *pirouette* combination: *balancé*,³⁶ *balancé*, *soutenu*.³⁷ *Possé*, *pirouette*, *coupé*, *pas de bourrée*, *détournée*, *attitude* turns (the plural use here indicates a double turn, not two separate turns in *attitude*), arabesque. He noted that the “depth of your *plié*, the use of the *plié* is very important.” He explained that it is the difference between a Dodge and a Ferrari. He asked them, “a Dodge or a Ferrari: which has more suspension?” The students did not know. He offered them a hint: “Not the Ferrari. Not the one that looks like a million dollars.” He implied that looking beautiful is not enough; that their movements must have depth, substance, suspension, and buoyancy.

They all returned center in a group, for jumps. Jean-Pierre marked the steps with his feet, walking the jumps and adding the pertinent ballet terminology and describing the movement he wanted. “*Échappé*,” for example, was described as a jump to second and back to fifth, which

³² *Efface*: Direction position in relation to the audience.

³³ *Relevé*: Movement from flat to *demi-pointe* or *pointe*.

³⁴ *Retiré*: The pointed foot is placed at the knee.

³⁵ *Spot*: When turning, the head remains still as long as possible before switching quickly to the other side. This is referred to as a ‘spot’ or ‘spotting.’

³⁶ *Balancé*: A waltz step.

³⁷ *Soutenu*: A turn with the feet close together in 5th.

was followed with a *changement* and another *échappé*, with the added instruction to *fermé*.³⁸ “Jump and escape,” he said, illustrating how the jump goes up with the feet together, before landing in second. “*Jeté battu*” was described as a “*jeté* beat to front,” and followed by a “*glissade, entrechat quatre, [and] royale*.” He reminded them “always *croise*” for the landing of the *glissade*, as he watched the students struggle to mark the steps he had given them. He then had them arrange themselves in two lines, though the students stayed toward the back, behind the midpoint of the room. He told them to come forward. One girl took a visibly deep breath, and did so. Robert said under his breath, “Brava, she came forward— it’s harder!” He said to Lauren and me, “You can’t judge at the barre— it’s scary.”

“It’s good to see this,” Jean-Pierre noted in our direction, as he watched them jump. “In the French school we do a lot of intricate footwork. At first it’s like—” he made a muddled gesture with his arms. [Field Notes]

It was true of some students that they were proficient at barre work, but their technique fell apart when they came center; this is what Robert meant when he said that “you can’t judge at the barre.” The half jocular, half sardonic term used for this type of dancer is a “barr-erina;” Robert called them “barre-beauties.” Jean-Pierre commented that the dramatic— what he often called “projecting”— is hard to teach. Students tend to either have it, or not. He said that the girl who came forward had it: the ability to convey emotion and sentiment through movement, externalizing the internal and thereby communicating with an audience.

After the jumps the girls put on their pointe shoes and went to the barre, where they did a few *relevés* and *échappés*. Robert commented that one or two of the girls were going to break their feet and ankles. He said woefully, that he was worried about their feet, though what he was really commenting on their weights. Lauren gave him a look and told him that girls in this age-group, tend to put on weight, only to lose it when they get older; that what they weigh now is not an indication of how they will end up. [Field Notes]

After the audition class had ended, the applicants stopped by the table, bowing and thanking Jean-Pierre for the class. As the room emptied, Robert and Jean-Pierre began to reminisce about their own past audition experiences. Robert said he once had a five-hour audition for a theater production that involved both ballet and modern. He said the audition was judged chiefly on one’s ability to “work the schedule,” meaning the schedule of performances and rehearsals, that could last for 7 hours or so. Jean-Pierre said that he once had an audition that was over three hours long; they had two interviews

³⁸ *Fermé*: To close.

and were asked to dance the second act of *Giselle*. He commented that a lot of people attend professional auditions just for the breaks at which point they would go out and smoke, mingle, and network.

Only two students had come for the advanced audition. It was held much as a regular class, for some of the older students arriving to take it, as Jean-Pierre had requested. After this class Jean-Pierre, Robert, Lauren and I moved into the hallway, and sat down on benches in the common area. They went through the applications and made decisions. Lauren noted that the advanced level already had 15 students and they wanted to cap it at 20-25. Thus they really had room there only for 5-10 more students. The lower-levels were less full. The students who had just auditioned could be placed in lower levels, perhaps except for the one girl who was more advanced. They noted that number 22 “has no clue.” Lauren noted that one student who had auditioned was moving to Europe in the Fall. As she would be here just for the summer, they probably could take her now but not for the academic year. Number 21 was not admitted; she and 22 seemed to have known each other prior to the audition, and it was noted that “we have to have some standards,” even though they needed students. Lauren and Jean-Pierre discussed the possibility of limited scholarships— no fees for a month— for those who Robert described as having “Ganesh, the god of obstacles” standing in their path.

Robert again commented about the weight of the girls. Jean-Pierre said that he used to have a grapefruit-half and yogurt in the morning, but “you have to eat for my class.” He mentioned that some dancers, like Tallchief, had a reputation for living on an apple a day. Jean-Pierre said that in Russia they used to lay you out on a table and evaluate your physical form to decide whether you would be admitted; the French were the same way. Thus the Russian and French methods of student selection were more of a physiological process than the American one. Those approaches which measured turnout and flexibility, looked at general body proportions, and implicitly made the decision to train students to be dancers, as opposed to first training students who were interested in learning to dance,

then filtering and sorting them by body type through later processes. A documentary based on the life of one of the students, Oksana, at the Perm School in Russia, provides video footage detailing the process of evaluation. The instructors weighed and measured the children who came to audition, inspected their spines, and brought them before a panel. While the children held on to the barre, an examiner raised their legs to full extension in front, side, and back, and tested the flexibility of their spines; they also were asked to do some basic movements (Kinella, 2008). If their bodies constituted suitable raw materials for the school to work with, they were offered admission.

Not that the process of evaluation ended with admission to the school. To the contrary, at the beginning of the school year and several times throughout it, each of the girls at Oksana's school were measured carefully to monitor growth and weight-gain, with their continued enrollment contingent upon biological and physical factors related to growth and development. In an informal chat, Noémie explained to me how dance training and admission practices differed between the US and other places:

In Russia there were just the two national ballet companies, and people used to go scouting for kids who had the right body-type to invite into their schools. Parents and kids often wanted this, and would travel to the cities to try to be noticed. At the same time, those people from the Bolshoi and Kirov would also travel to distant cities, even to Siberia, to search for dancers. Everyone wanted to be a dancer with the companies because they, as cultural resources, received extra money and benefits that most people in Russia didn't get at the time. Of the students who went up through these schools, only one or two would make it into the company; only the best few. It was sort of the same at the Paris Opera, where only a few went into the company. Others went other places. It was the same at the major institutions in the US. The selection process is a little different here; anyone who wants to dance can learn to dance, even at the small schools, but some people you cannot teach how to dance regardless of how long they study. The others, the few, they just know. It is in their bodies, even someone who is coming out of one of the small places, if she or he is really talented, [he or she] just needs to be taught technique and there is the possibility that [she or he] will make it from there into one of the big companies.

I asked if she thought any of the students who were currently here would become dancers. She said she thought Laura, Jonassaint, and Mirella would. The others would go on and do other things, as was the case most of the time in most places. [Field Notes]

The emphasis, varying in intensity from place to place, on the selection of physical forms to train is akin to one's selection of materials when creating a work of art. With respect to the selection of

dancers, Paskeska (1992) explains that “a sculptor works carefully on the armature of his statue, for it will determine the shape of the sculpture. Similarly, the skeletal alignment of a person largely determines the shape of the muscles. The direction of growth can often be predicted by the bone structure of a child. Therefore, aptitude for dance and acceptance into a professional ballet school depend almost entirely on a child’s physique” (9). Paskeska explains that the examiners look for a particular skeletal arrangement of the back and legs, hip mobility, and the shape of the feet. The “ideal dancer’s body is long-limbed. The legs are straight. The feet boast a strong metatarsal arch. The setting of the legs in the hip joint is mobile, so that a 180-degree turn-out can eventually be achieved” (9).

Vincent (1989) points out that only a very small percentage of those individuals who dance in the US have, by virtue of genetics, the sort of body considered ideal in ballet; nonetheless, at the level of a pre-professional company school or a company, similarities in the bodies of dancers often are produced through long-term social practices that bring an actual biological change. He notes in this study he conducted among female students at the Joffrey Ballet School, that the average caloric intake was 1000 calories (400-1900 range), with those on the lower end of the scale consuming primarily carbohydrates. In a wider study covering other schools and companies, he found while the students not preoccupied with calories consumed approximately 2000-2200 (with some variation in relation to patterns of growth), the overwhelming majority consumed far less than the US Recommended Daily Allowance, and engaged in social practices that could be labeled disordered, such as induced vomiting, laxative use, and patterns of restriction and binging. These practices often are normative in these contexts given the dancers’ ongoing quest to maintain their desired weights, and modify the body to produce the desired physique. Vincent relates patterns of low caloric consumption to suppressed metabolic rates, which in turn suppresses the production of leptin and estrogen and alters growth-patterns among adolescent girls. This results in suppressed breast and hip development, delayed puberty, and longer limb-to-torso ratios than are found in the general, non-dancing population (Vincent

1989). These findings have been corroborated more recently across studies done in the areas of physiology and endocrinology (Kaufman, et al. 2002), demonstrating correlations between the suppressed leptin and estrogen levels that occur in conjunction with low metabolic rates and osteopenia, stress fractures, and other injuries/illnesses that tend to afflict dancers. Thus we see that social practices can and do result in modifications to the human form.

Physical form also was a factor in the selection of students at the auditions for the French Ballet Academy, though not the solely deciding one. Jean-Pierre had a preference for those who were tall and thin, noting, with respect to the fact that some of them were out of shape, that sometimes students just could not “see” themselves in the mirror. He noted, “Some of the schools do weigh-ins. If you are over or under, you get a warning. You have to have meat, not bones, to be able to dance. You need a little tone, with no fat.” Lauren shared with me that two of the students that they decided to admit had, or so the rumor went, been kicked out of a well-known, national-level school for their weights. One of the two who Lauren said had been kicked-out had not listed any schools on her application, but Lauren and Jean-Pierre knew her from previous auditions. Vincent (1989) quotes a young dancer, who explained the relationship between weight-reduction/maintenance practices and participation in dance: “If your structure is short and thick— muscular thick— then it has to be *down to the bone*, and if you can get it down to the bone without being ill, fine. If you can’t, then you’ve got to get out of it” (Vincent 1989). Vincent (1989) also quoted a student who observed that both talent and “the look” are needed for dance, and if you don’t have the look, then you have to have more talent, enough so as to make people forget your appearance.

Financial matters also were considered in the decision-making process. Jean-Pierre said that he didn’t have enough money to fund a large number of students. He did, however, decide to offer the boys who auditioned partial scholarships; this is one of the strategies that is used to retain boys in ballet programs across the board in ballet schools. Girls tended to evaluate these practices as unfair, as it

meant they were less likely to receive scholarships, but for schools, the retention of male dancers is frequently of paramount concern. As previously mentioned, Jean-Pierre also developed a specialization in teaching ballet to male students, and consequently has a reputation for the ability to recruit and keep them involved in dance. Letters of invitation were emailed out to the students they had accepted; rejection letters also were sent.

Figure 2: Acceptance Letter

Congratulations, based on your audition we are offering you acceptance into the [French Ballet Academy]'s 2012 Summer-intensive. You have been placed in the Intermediate level. Our 2012 Summer-intensive will be held at [New York] Studios from August 13 - August 31.

Many dancers attend our summer-intensive program to refine their technique before returning to their year-round programs. Our program is one that stresses precision in technique and elegance in artistry. One of the fundamental components of the [French Ballet Academy's] curriculum is consistency; consistency in faculty, consistency in teaching methodology and consistency in instruction.

The core faculty for our summer-intensive consists of our year-round faculty [names removed] carefully selects guest faculty in order to assure that consistency is maintained in every class throughout the program. Last summer's guest faculty included [names removed].

Our summer-intensive program consists of two programs. The first week (August 13 - August 17) is our "Ballet Technique Intensive" which includes two technique classes per day, variations, partnering, floor barre and men's class throughout the week. The next two weeks (August 20 - August 24 and August 27 - August 31) is our Summer-intensive classes. Students will have daily technique and pointe/variations classes and weekly supplemental classes in Pilates, contemporary, Jazz and partnering. Students have the option of enrolling for all three weeks, two weeks or one week. We do have a limited financial aid fund. Financial aid is offered based on financial need. You can find detailed program and enrollment information **HERE**. In order to guarantee your spot in our 2012 Summer-intensive, please complete the registration form, signed Rules & Regulations form and return them along with the required non-refundable deposit and registration fee no later than March 10, 2012.

After the March 10th deadline, applications will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis and enrollment will be contingent on space being available. As was the case last year, we expect our summer program to be filled to capacity and encourage you to return your registration materials by the March 10th deadline to avoid disappointment. We look forward to having the opportunity to work with you this summer.

Regards,

Figure 3: Acceptance Letter with Scholarship Offer

I hope your audition season is going well and that when you are deciding on your summer training you are considering attending the [French Ballet Academy]'s 2012 summer-intensive. ***I am inviting you to participate in the intensive on full scholarship.***

You can learn more about this year's summer-intensive program ***HERE***. In order to enroll in the summer-intensive, I will need you to return the Registration form, signed Rules & Regulations form (both can be found at the end of the information packet) and \$30 registration fee no later than March 10, 2012.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at [email] with any questions you may have. I hope that you will choose to train with me this summer. ***Enrollment in these exclusive programs is extremely limited, so if you are interested in participating I would appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience.***

Warm Regards,

Figure 4: Rejection Letter

Thank you for auditioning for the [French Ballet Academy's] 2012 Summer-intensive and year-round program.

This year we saw many more applicants than we can accommodate. Unfortunately, due to the limited number of spaces available in our summer-intensive and year-round program we are unable to accept you into the [French Ballet Academy].

We wish you well as you continue your ballet studies and good luck with your future endeavors.

Regards,

Out of those who were admitted from this particular set of auditions, approximately six accepted the offer of enrollment for the academic year and several others decided to accept invitations just to the Summer-intensive. All of the students who auditioned and were admitted had similarities in the genealogies of institutions previously attended, which included specific summer-intensives at reputable institutions including conservatories and professional schools. Those students who fell outside of this genealogical pattern were not admitted.

Genealogy and Lineage as a basis for Recruitment

Some dance students get their start at a local school that could be categorized as a business-model school or a competition school, particularly when they are located in a geographically isolated area where other schooling options are not immediately available. Such students have a trajectory of upward mobility, moving between institutional structures and types that have increasingly selective membership criteria. Usually the moves are associated with early attendance at a well-known summer-intensive, which precipitates a move to a more selective institution.

On some occasions, though not often for this particular set of students, specific competition events provide avenues for mobility. For example, one of the ideas behind the Prix de Lausanne was to provide the most talented students from around the world with entry into, and tuition for, one of the major ballet schools (Morris 2008). Morris also notes that the idea of competition, and hence, of competition schools raises important questions as to whether competition is compatible with the development of art and artistry, given the subjective nature of formulating comparative evaluations of dancers that goes beyond the scope of technique; for most students in pre-professional programs, the two are not viewed as compatible. Out of this idea springs much if not all of the derision directed toward competition and business-model schools. A pre-professional school, as a producer of “high art,” does not need to enter into competition in order to establish the validity of its artistic productions. It is legitimated in other ways such as through inherited status and lineage, which most broadly means through the concept of tradition.

Several times during the first year of my observation at the French Ballet Academy, it was noted that the instructors had at the outset accepted, for financial reasons, some students whom otherwise they would not have considered for admission. They needed to have and maintain high standards both in terms of the technical proficiency the students were expected to have on entry and the aesthetic desired within the school. The exceptions that were made tended to be in terms of age and body-type,

and included students who were older than expected in terms of the difficulty-level of the class they had been placed in given their ability, or who had a less-than-ideal body-type in the context of the instructors' vision for the school.

Table 3: Patterns of Admission from Audition Session

	Summer-intensive (% of Type out of Total Summer-intensives)	Year-Round (% of Type out of Total)	% Students with this category of institution admitted
Professional schools	25%	0%	100%
Classical training school	56.3%	18.8%	100%
Conservatory	18.8%	18.8%	100%
Competition school	0%	18.8%	66%
Business-Model school	0%	18.8%	50%
Public school	0%	12.5%	100%
University training	0%	0%	N/A
Other	0%	12.5%	0%

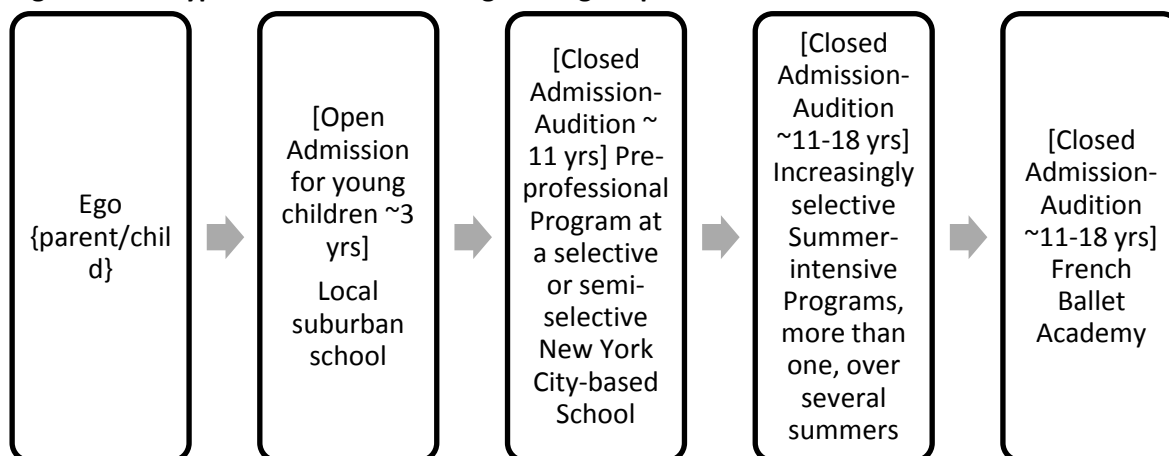
The arrangement of differing institutions into categories was based on a variety of sources, including the categories used by informants and public data gathered about the characteristics of the schools.

In the case of each individual student, the institutions where she or he received prior training constitute a genealogy comprised of institutions and individual network-connections, the nature of which can facilitate or inhibit mobility among the institutions where dance is studied and performed. Tracing the genealogies of each student through the institutions where they studied prior to admission, reveals a pattern of movement for those in suburban areas from local schools to pre-professional institutions, and from the least selective to the most selective type of institution. Movements tended to be facilitated by the development of networks inside and outside of these institutions, as students acquired mentors who are well connected to both institutions and prominent figures within dance. The development of mentoring relationships also tends to be associated with a student being able to achieve recognition in the media and to secure noteworthy performance opportunities, as well as access to prestigious training opportunities, such as invited participation in a summer-intensive program at a conservatory. For students, one of the attractions of a particular school or institution is that an instructor

has the ability to take on the role of mentor and thereby facilitate these linkages among institutions and companies.

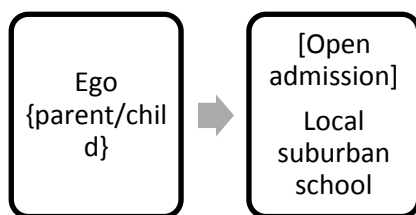
The tendency to move between institutions that were increasingly more selective in their admission policies included such “steps” as gaining admission to a selective summer-intensive program and transitioning from programs with open admission to pre-professional programs with closed admission. Summer-intensive programs tend to admit more students and to be less selective than the year-round programs at the same institutions, though students still are able to capitalize on the reputation of the school and to make use of the training they get at these programs. A fairly typical pattern in the present case is that after attending a local school in the early years (approximately ages 3 to 11), students audition for a pre-professional program in New York City and attend summer-intensive programs at increasingly more selective schools, before finally auditioning for the French Ballet Academy. Figure 5 reflects this pattern.

Figure 5: The typical admitted student genealogical pattern



As for the student who was not admitted, the pattern shown in Figure 7 was repeated across audition sessions among the students who were not admitted to the programs at the French Ballet Academy. It suggests that training at a local suburban school is not, in and of itself, sufficient to gain entry to the French Ballet Academy.

Figure 6: The typical non-admitted student genealogy



While talent and the technical quality of previous training can trump a student's genealogy, the presence of a strong genealogical background significantly boosts the likelihood that a student will gain access to a pre-professional school. It is also more likely that a student who has attempted to move through such a structure and organization, and failed, will not find themselves in a position to attend an audition at a pre-professional school. He or she probably either has continued to study at the first institution until he or she aged out of the program, or has pursued other interests.

Social Bases of School Recruitment

Students' willingness to be recruited into this cycle, and to undergo the process of auditioning, typically is based on a number of factors including their perception of the institutions where they might "fit," their faith in the strength of the training they have received in previous institutions, and their perceptions of their abilities in relation to those of their peers. Like most students who seek entry into a pre-professional program, the students at the French Ballet Academy plan to pursue professional careers in dance, although they recognize that the length of a dancer's career is comparatively short and commonly voice the need to find a post-retirement career.

Student 1: I want to be a professional dancer and, when I retire, a language instructor.

Student 2: The goal is to be a dancer. It just takes hours and hours of hard work and the chances are so limited. Hopefully I'll be able to make it.

Student 3: I want to be a dancer/actor.

Most students came to their decision study dance through an initial exposure to the art granted by a parent or sibling by viewing a performance:

Student 1: My oldest sister did it and loved it, so my mom just decided to enroll me and my other sister. I personally hated it, I thought it was so boring! But then when I was about 11, I guess something clicked, because I started to love going to class. From then on I've loved it.

Student 2: My friend started taking lessons at the local studio. However, after my first performance as Clara, I knew that this was something I wanted to do for the rest of my life.

Student 3: My sister is a dancer, and I used to love watching her dance as a little kid. I would copy her routines and just be thrilled. My mom decided to put me in dance, and I am so glad she did.

Student 4: I saw a performance when I was younger and just simply knew that was what I wanted to do

Within the students' stated motivations there lurk factors that begin to suggest a relationship between external social contexts and recruitment into the school. Most students operate within a social context where there are opportunities to see ballet performed and where ballet is valued both as a form of art and for its ability to cultivate a particular bodily aesthetic through the repetition of exercises and the development of certain patterns of musculature. Some students placed a value on the artistic aspects of ballet, seeing it as an avenue for emotional expression, while others emphasized its relationship to the achievement of a socially desirable bodily aesthetic.

Student 5: I am drawn to the athleticism and artistry.

Student 6: It's my passion and it's a great way to express myself. It combines two of my biggest passions, gymnastics and acting.

Student 7: Originally, I was put into ballet because I was overweight and needed the exercise. Since then, however, ballet has become a major and wonderful part of my life.

There is also an underlying belief in the suitability of the students' bodies and minds, musical ability, technical skills, or physical forms for the study of ballet. For example, it shows up in this student's belief that ballet is something she is good at.

Student 8: I took a ballet class at [name removed] as a makeup class and when I took the class I was good in it so I decided to stick with it.

Bourdieu (1984) suggests that the ability to appreciate an art form—in this case ballet— is a matter of taste and distinction that relates to forms of education that fall along the lines of social class. Individuals are socialized into the appreciation of works of art, which often are given recognition in formal systems of schooling and through other processes that legitimate the art, though their creation often is mystified through the attribution of production to the intrinsic ability of the creators. He argues that “aesthetic perception is necessarily historical, inasmuch as it is differential, relational, [and] attentive to the deviations that make styles. Like the so-called naïve painter who, operating outside the field and its specific traditions, remains external to the history of the art, the ‘naïve’ spectator cannot attain a specific grasp of works of art which only have meaning— or value— in relation to the specific history of an artistic tradition” (Bourdieu 1984:4). His argument is based upon the premise that education— both formal, such as which occurs in schooling, and informal, such which occurs within families, museums, and other locations— serves to reproduce and maintain stratified social structures and that such differences lead to different preferences in artistic taste. Such preferences also extend even to class-divisions among sports-participation, for economic costs and cultural and physical benefits affect participation, provide opportunities for upward mobility and for the cultivation of beauty and health, and bring “gains in distinction accruing from the effects on the body itself” such as muscle patterns, tans, and a trim figure (Bourdieu 1984:20). Bourdieu (1984) also notes that these ideas about taste and aesthetics work to maintain the distinctiveness of class, for individuals then are differentially able to gain access to specific institutions and occupations.

Demographic Trends during Year One and Year Two

An examination of the demographic information on the students of the school reveals that the most of its recruits not only conform to a geneological pattern in terms of the insitutions they have attended but also have similar backgrounds. These similiarities fall within the rubrics of parents’

occupations—predominantly finance and art-related industries— religious affiliations, and race/ethnicity. The demographic data, described in detail throughout this section,³⁹ place the students within those historical and class traditions that tend to value ballet as a form of art, which is very much in keeping with Bourdieu's (1984) thinking on the social reproduction of artistic taste. The students are operating within a social landscape where the ideologies associated with ballet tend to be organic, in the sense that Gramsci used the term to describe the relationship of individuals to ideological systems (Hoare and Smith 1971). They, and more particularly the girls, also conform to the pattern of having begun their dance training as early as two to three years of age in pre-ballet programs. They are also similar enough in terms of ability in relation to number of years studied to be grouped into the school's arrangement of levels.

During the first year of operation, the school had a total of 37 students enrolled. Of these students there were 14 advanced and 21 elementary/intermediate-level students. Toward the end of the year, three students originally in the upper-intermediate level shifted to taking classes primarily with the advanced-level students. There was a total of 11 boys and 26 girls— a ratio of approximately 1:2 for the school as a whole. All but two of the boys were advanced-level students, and in that level there were 8 boys and 8 girls, although two of the boys had irregular attendance. The process by which students exited the school was typically a very quiet one, in which the students' attendance slowly dropped off and for that reason they were not included in performance opportunities. Enrollment during the school's summer-intensive was much higher, with approximately 60 students attending a full-day program. Unlike most schools, which tend to place a cap on enrollment at around age 18 or 21, this school had many older students. The latter represented a significant portion of the school's advanced-level student population, as they tended to stay enrolled even after the completion of high

³⁹ Survey data were collected through both direct inquiry and written responses, prior to aggregation into numerical form for analysis. Data were aggregated for the school as a whole. Due to the small number of students within some categories, some were conflated to avoid personally identifying students.

school, while attending college or seeking professional dance work. Other students in the older age group, who had previously been taught by Jean-Pierre or Noémie, would spend intermittent periods at the school in the off-seasons of professional work, often on a summer or winter break.

Drawing a gender comparison with ballet as a whole, in ballet programs there tends to be a much larger number of girls than boys, and in the professional realm, male dancers tend to be in high demand due to their limited numbers. Generally, boys tended to have entered ballet training through different avenues than the girls, such as through a high-school dance program or sports-related affiliation, as opposed to a pre-ballet program at the age of 3 or 4. The second year in which the school was in operation reflects this trend, for the male students had studied an average of 5.5 years, and female students having studied an average of 9.9 years. The related demographic trend among students in the First Year is a bit of an exception, since the average number of years of study is longer for male students than female students (10.8 years compared to 7.1 years of study), though this average is largely reflective of the age-difference between male and female students who were at the same level of study. It also must be kept in mind that survey data gathered during the first year does not reflect the length of study of those students who were more transient attendees, as these students were not present for data collection. These students tended to be male, and to have completed fewer years of study. The data drawn from the second year more strongly reflect the general pattern for the school, in that male students at various levels were found to have comparatively fewer years of training than had the female students, particularly when age-differences were taken into consideration.

Table 4: Demographic Trends: First Year in Operation

		Students	Average Age (n=34)	Average number of years studying ballet (n=34)
Level 1/Level 2				
	Males	3	14.3	8
	Females	18	13.9	6.8
	<i>Total</i>	21	14 (Range 11-15)	7 (Range 2-12)
Level 3				
	Males	8	20.4	12.2
	Females	8	18.1	7.5
	<i>Total</i>	16	19.2 (Range 15-29)	9.8 (Range 5-21)
School				
	Males	11	18.5	10.8
	Females	26	15.23	7.1
	Total	37	15.9 (Range 11-29)	6.9 (Range 2-21)

Table 5: Demographic Trends: Second Year in Operation

		Students	Average Age (n=33)	Average number of years studying ballet (n=33)
Green				
	Males	3	15.0	3.3
	Females	6	14.7	8.0
	<i>Total</i>	9	14.7 (Range 12-16)	6.4 (Range 2-12)
Orange				
	Males	3	15.6	8.1
	Females	8	15.7	8.8
	<i>Total</i>	11	15.7 (Range 13-19)	8.1 Range (3-13)
Red				
	Males	2	24	9
	Females	13	18.2	11
	<i>Total</i>	15	18.8 (Range 15-30)	11.7 (Range 6-25)
School				
	Males	8	15.3	5.6
	Females	27	16.6	9.9
	Total	35	16.3 (Range 12-30)	9.0 (Range 2-25)

The intermediate level showed the greatest variability in skills. Students were divided among sub-levels in the class grouping. Although some of them reported having studied for long periods of time and from a very early age, others did not think of early exposure to dance, in a pre-ballet or creative movement, as constituting the formal study of ballet, and instead reporting the number of years they had been enrolled in pre-professional programs. Students also did not report any breaks in training. This ambiguity, which emerged in the course of my conversations with them about the length of time they had studied, also explains the trend in Year One. For example, one student stated, "I started dancing when I was four, but seriously training at eleven," and another noted that she started "professionally, about twelve. Before that I hated ballet!"

As illustrated by Tables 4 and 5, a number of the advanced-level boys moved out of the school, pursuing enrollment in colleges/universities and, in most cases, taking positions with companies, including entry-level and apprentice positions between Year One and Year Two. In other cases as aforementioned, their attendance tended to slowly become sporadic, at last nonexistent. This led to a decrease in the number of enrolled boys and a decrease in the ratio of boys to girls. The boys who were attending the school as newly admitted students tended to have less overall experience in dance, having started at a later age than the girls. There was a total of 15 new students between Year One and Year Two, and a number of students moved up from the intermediate to advanced levels. The total enrollment for the school during the second year was approximately 35, which does not include more transient attendees.

The difference in number of years male students had studied ballet prior to enrolling in the school, as well as the age-difference between male and female students placed in the same level, suggests that the recruitment criteria for male students and female students differ in that male students do not possess so extensive an institutional genealogy as do the female students, nor do they need to have the number of years of experience the female students have in order to be placed at the

equivalent level. All of which raises the possibility that the declining number of male students, and the difficulty of recruiting and maintaining a large number of them in ballet are related to the differing levels of exposure to, and socialization within, the ballet environment, as well as to the extent to which external pressures propel male as opposed to female students into, or out of, ballet. Although the ensuing observation has emerged from the observational rather than the survey data, it does seem that a number of the male students who became disaffiliated with the school were positioned outside of those class and occupational structures that cause ideologies associated with ballet to become organic, though there was a large degree of subsequent incorporation into those ideologies through their participation in dance-training programs.

A second significant shift I observed between the first and second years of operation was that in the racial, national, and ethnic composition of the school's students. In the first year 18 percent of students identified in racial categories other than white, the overwhelming majority of them male. In the second year, of the 8 percent who identified in categories other than white, all were female. The concurrent decreases in the number of boys enrolled and the percentage of students identifying at non-white is correlated for the population of boys also represents the largest percentage of non-white and non-US-born students. In both years— Year One, 75.7 and Year Two, 72.7 percent— the majority of students reported being born in New York City or its surrounding suburban communities. A small number of students had, however, relocated to New York specifically in order to gain training at the school.

In the second year the largest percentage of students, 38.8 percent reported being of Catholic affiliation, a percentage reflective of the general population in the New York diocese,⁴⁰ with the remaining percentages divided among Protestant Christian, Jewish, and Not Religious. In terms of understanding the populations from which students tend to originate, this suggests that they do not

⁴⁰ According to Catholic Hierarchy (2005), the figure is 40.3 percent.

come from populations where there are religious/ideological prohibitions related to dance. For example, within the Orthodox Jewish and Muslim traditions, there are restrictions on women's dress that would prevent compliance with the dress code of the school: leotard and tights for girls. One student confronted this dilemma when she chose to continue the study of dance. Her father, a Muslim, did not want her to participate in dance activities, and at one point her mother was ready to take him to court over this issue. The student was only able to start attending classes only the middle of the semester after a hiatus, once a familial resolution had been reached.

Table 6: Demographic Characteristics

	Racial Identification of Students (open responses)	Open responses of ethnic or national background, within self-ascribed racial-identification categories	Birthplace	Religious Affiliation
Year 1	82% (n=37) White / Caucasian (including Latin White)	Hispanic German Swiss English Irish Jewish Italian Greek	(n=27, non-responses excluded) Manhattan 14.8% NY Area 48.1% East Coast 3.7% Latin America 11.1% Midwest 7.4% West Coast 3.7%	—
	18% Black/non-white Latino / Middle-eastern	Haitian Jamaican American Black Mixed race		
Year 2	92% (n=34) White / Caucasian (including Latin White)	Hispanic-white Latino-white German Swiss English Irish Jewish Polish Western European Italian Greek American	(n=25, non-responses excluded) Manhattan 12.5% NY Area 58.3% East Coast 8.3% Latin America 4.1% Europe 4.1% Midwest 12.5%	(n=19; non-responses-excluded) Catholic 38.8% Jewish 16.7% Protestant Christian 22.2% Not religious 11.1% Evangelical Christian 5.6%
	8% Black/non-white Latino / Middle-Eastern	American Black Mixed race		

Family of Origin and Pursuit of Ballet Training

A parent supporting a child's pursuit of dance is one of the most influential factors when it comes to the latter's continued enrollment in this, or any, pre-professional school, particularly given the structure of ballet training in the US. This fact is in stark contrast to the ways in which children achieve enrollment in professional ballet programs in other countries, particularly when one takes the historical

perspective. For example, at the turn of the 20th century both in Russia and France, part of the attraction of studying ballet at one of the national schools was that a family could maintain its reputation and class status during times of financial hardship because the cost of the children's upbringing was assumed by the school (Homens 2010). The children selected for these programs, as Jean-Pierre mentioned when discussing the audition process in France, were chosen through an admission process that involved an analysis of their physical characteristics and potential for learning movements; the body was viewed as a raw material to be sculpted.

In her biography, Allegra Kent describes the role played by her mother, as she notes that a child's wanting to dance is not enough; a parent also has to want the child to be a dancer and must have as much investment as does the child— emotional or otherwise— in the production of art. "Mother, without a job or a career or husband, had made herself a partner in my aspirations. . . . She freed me of all chores and of anything that caused strain. She cooked while I did homework. She did all of the assignments that I didn't do. . . . Family sacrifices are often involved to subsidize a career" (35). Although her example is perhaps an extreme case, the colloquial term "dance mom" is used to refer to a mother who invests an extraordinary amount of energy in developing her child's ballet career. Some parents at the French Ballet Academy did note that they don't ask their dancing daughters to do household chores, such as laundry, thereby freeing them for other tasks. Such strong parental support for dancing children, investing in their careers, is reflected in the parents' responses to what they hoped for in terms of their children's futures:

Parent 1: To have her dream come true, like any mother who watches her daughter work hard and have a passion for dance. I wish for her an amazing future and for a great dance company to accept her.

Parent 2: I would love to see her dream of dancing with a ballet company come true, but more than that I want to see her happy and satisfied with her life. I want her to have the freedom to make her own choices and be satisfied with the choices she makes, whatever they may be.

Parent 3: [My daughter] hopes to dance professionally, so I hope she is able to find a career in some aspect of dance or the performing arts. She also hopes to eventually go to college, to obtain her physical-therapy certification. She also desires children and a family.

Parent 4: I would like for her to pursue classical ballet but also attend college.

Parent 5: I greatly support my child's interest in a ballet career. You only have one chance to chase a dream. I will do whatever I can to help her achieve anything she wants to do in life. Right now, it is ballet.

In the US, ballet was relatively late in arriving on the scene; it began to be practiced broadly only after Balanchine's arrival in the 1930s. Schools are largely privately owned and operated, and this means that the task of supporting the children's training in dance has, in the past and present, fallen upon the parents. Here, unlike in many other nations, ballet is not federally funded as a national art, though individual companies can and do receive some federal grant-related funding. Productions and companies largely are financed through patronage and private granters such as the Rockefellers, and schools typically stay in operation by charging tuition. One finds in, by and large, in biographies of American dancers who have achieved fame, by and large, a pattern where a parents support is instrumental in securing ballet training, establishing a mentorship, and garnering the media attention needed to develop a public persona.

Often this financial support takes the form of time and monetary investment in a child's education, as well as emotional support and advocacy. Parents within specific occupational and class categories tend to be able to mobilize these resources in quantity, and generally with less sacrifice, than is the case for families with fewer socio-economic resources. One parent noted that the role of a parent of a child who wants to dance is to "find the best training possible, and start young. Realize that to excel it requires years of training, money and patience. It is not always a kind and nurturing environment. Ballet is difficult." This reinforces the idea that the majority of students in pre-professional dance programs come from upper-middle-class families, in terms not only of Bourdieu's idea of class distinction (1990), as students come from a social background where a high value is placed on ballet as

an art form, but also in terms of the resources that parents and students are able to mobilize for the study of dance: tuition, transportation to/from school and performances, pointe *shoes*, dancewear and costumes, outside classes used supplement training, private classes, and dance-related medical expenses such as physical therapists.

During the first year the school was in operation, some of the male students tended to come from social backgrounds notably different from the females, and socio-economic factors and the difficulty of maintaining parental support for dance raised obstacles to their attendance.

One day, after class, all of the students came up to Jean-Pierre to thank him directly and a few of the boys shook his hand, as is common classroom practice. One of the boys who had come in late came up to Jean-Pierre. He said he was worried about missing class because his mother had been in the hospital so he would be staying with her. Jean-Pierre gave him a pat on the shoulder. Afterward he said that two of the boys were his “projects kids—” one lived in Jamaica, Queens. He said they were especially difficult to teach, in that they never arrived on time. He also noted that they had so many family difficulties, that he worried these would interfere with their ability to pursue dancing careers. One of the boys had no father, the other an absent father, and their lives had been filled with both familial and medical struggles. He said that he wished he could remove them from that environment so they could be successful; he knew their mothers loved them, but he wanted things to be different for them. He said he picked on them quite a bit in class in a joking way, because that is how kids feel cared about, and it was clear from their responses to his corrections and jokes that they both respected and admired him. [Field Notes]

Often expenses are barriers for students and parents, for even if a student receives a scholarship to cover tuition the resources may not be sufficient for the continued support of a child’s study of dance. There is also the matter of the child’s role in the family. In the case of several of the students whom Jean-Pierre referred to, the mentoring relationship was not enough to keep them in the classroom.

The majority of parents had some experience in dance themselves as children. For example one parent stated, “I danced as a child, so naturally I enrolled her in ballet as a little girl. When she no longer wanted to go I never forced her but she asked to return on her own after skipping a year.” Others, however, found themselves conducting research and building networks in order to learn how to navigate institutions and structures and thereby secure opportunities for their children. As Laureau (2003) suggested, through a description of the types of learning that occurred as a parent negotiated

with a child's gymnastics teacher, as parents navigate institutional structures and approach authority figures, students also learn how to navigate those structures.

I entered my daughter into the dance world without any knowledge of what was to come. Having never had the opportunity to dance, I have tried to educate myself as much as possible on the ballet world. I used the internet, magazines, books, ballet performances and have spoken with teachers and dancers to try and learn all I can about ballet. At first it was just a matter of getting her to and from classes and helping with her little recitals. Then it became something so much bigger, it became her dream. I try and support her as much as possible even when the dream seems unachievable. I cheer her on when she achieves improvement in her technique and encourage her to persevere no matter how difficult it may become.

Since occupation is a good indicator of social status and tends to be correlated with income, data gathered about the occupations of the parents of students who attend the school can be used as an indicator of the social class of the enrolled students. I constructed Table 5 by taking as my guide the categories established by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (2007) and by utilizing the student participants' information about their parents' occupations.

Table 7:Socio-Economic Data

General Categories	Occupation Types	Percentage
Professional (64%)	Engineering	2.3
	Business/Finance	16.3
	Computer Technology	2.3
	Law	4.7
	Medicine	9.3
	Creative Arts (writers, artists, dancers)	16.3
	Academia/Research (university-level)	5.8
	Education (K-12 teaching and administration)	7.0
	Nursing	5.8
Officials and Mangers (11.6%)	Utilities	1.2
	Business Owners	3.5
	Sales	3.5
	Management	3.5
	Government/Military	2.5
Technicians (3.5%)	Consultants	2.5
	Arts/ Television	1.2
Craft Workers (3.5%)	Construction	2.5
	Catering	1.2
Unemployed (7%)	Homemaker	7.0

One sees in the table a clear trend toward professional occupation among parents, with the majority of the occupations falling into those categories that require higher levels of education (6+ years of post-secondary education), the two largest categories being shared by business/finance and creative arts. A total of 61 percent of the 53 students who provided information about their parents' occupations lived in two-parent households. A number of the students also had professional occupations themselves as they worked in the theater, television, and modeling industries, with incomes that were largely managed by their parents. The relationship between occupation and class—64 percent of students had parents falling within the category of professionals—brings us back to Bourdieu (1984), who suggested that there are clear relationships among social class, educational level, and aesthetic taste of an

individual as a consumer of art. Although he saw types of knowledge as constituting cultural capital that can be utilized to negotiate relationships and provide confirmation of individual status, they also indicate the positioning of an individual in relation to ideological systems. In our present case, they bespeak the quantity of resources that can be mobilized to facilitate an education in ballet.

Such resources tend to be formulated in terms of the amount of capital, and the investment in time, that parents spend to support their students' participation in the school. For example, many parents reported that driving their student to and from class was the main way in which they supported their students' education; driving entailed not only the cost in time and in gasoline but also parking fees upward of \$25.00 per hour, as there was no street parking in the area of the school. As one parent put it: "I majored in finance— now I am chauffeur! I drive from Connecticut to New York every day." One parent noted that the commute was a three hour round trip from the family's home, and another said that her child had taken up residence with a grandparent who lives in the city; they lived about four hours from the school, too far to commute on a daily basis. Speaking of the many years of her daughter's training at a pre-professional school closer to her home, she said: "I drive!!!! Ballet is expensive, and the commitment of driving sometimes an hour a day each way to find adequate training is a great sacrifice. My daughter has also homeschooled her entire life in order to perform professionally and dance, and is now living with grandparents to study in the city." Parents of older children who lived some distance away helped them to secure an apartment-share in the city so as to reduce the amount of time their children spent commuting. Parents also tended to participate in the numerous fundraising efforts of the school, including raffles, special dinners, and "costume" trees, and were the main attendees at the ticketed winter and spring performances. A small group of parents also volunteered regularly on the parent committee, which organized many of the school's events and fundraisers.

Economic status manifested itself among the students in a variety of ways, from the number of private classes they took with instructors, to the leotards and other garments they wore to class. In the

eyes of the students, the students' leotards often serve as a visual marker of socio-economic status. Even though female students were required to wear black leotards (in other schools black is typically reserved for the uppermost levels) and pink tights during the week, with one "wear-what-you-want" day on Saturday, the majority of students had at least one, and typically several, designer leotards produced by custom order. In the case of the male students, the types of men's tights and shirts were markers; the male students also occasionally wore designer unitards on the weekends. Another way that status manifested itself was in the numbers of ballet performances the students were able to attend and the seats they procured for the performances they saw. One parent noted that she supported her daughter by providing her with access to information about ballet: "I will do whatever it takes for her. We watch movies together, go to shows, discuss and read up on famous ballet dancers and teachers."

Another marker of social class emerged from discussions I heard the students having in casual conversations in the hallways before class about the academic schools they attended; a number of them attended elite private schools with high tuition rates, while the rest attended public school. For example, when the intermediate students were discussing the process of applying to high schools and taking entrance exams before class, they evaluated which public and private schools were "good" and which were "hard to get into." They assessed the difficulty of the varying private schools' entrance exams and spoke about which schools they had been accepted to and which they had decided to attend. One student, Ben, told me he felt embarrassed because he attended public school. He had just moved to the city with his parents specifically to study dance and to escape the harassment he had been subject to in his old school due to his interest in ballet. His mother, a modern dancer, had been very supportive of his pursuit of dance, but his parents were familiar neither with the local educational system nor the rather unique processes of gaining admittance to the varying schools in New York City— hence the attending of his assigned public school. The other students who attended public school did so in the neighboring suburbs rather than the city because the schools there are held in higher regard, and

entering into the New York City private-school system was less socially significant in their eyes. Most of the other students were local to the New York region and thus already familiar with its schooling system. They were able to find other opportunities for schooling or to gain admittance to more selective public schools via the auditioning process. The table below reveals the breakdown in type of schools students attended:

Table 8: Academic School Enrollment by Type of Institution

	Public School	Private School	Elite Private School	Elite Public	Homeschool /Virtual School	Professional School or School for Arts (Music, Theatre, Dance)	College University	Not currently attending (Graduated, Dropped Out)
Year 1	9	7	1	3	2	5	1	4
Year 2	7	3		1	2	4	2	2

During the first year of operation, the number of students attending private institutions was comparable to the number of students enrolled in public institutions and several students attended institutions that could be localized within socially elite categories as defined by the tuition and fees, how easy or hard it is to gain access to the institution, and the schools' reputations. A large percentage of students sought options outside of traditional enrollment in a K-12 environment. These included homeschooling; attending a virtual/online school; attending a school designed for child professionals who work in the theater/television/music industry, which offers many virtual/correspondence options; and attending a school focusing on dance and music, which often enables students to take classes outside the school and make them a part of their formal schooling experience. One parent, an actress, described the challenges that her daughter was facing as she entered her senior year of high school.

They lived one and a half hours away, and Bridget still took a full course-schedule at school, in addition to coming in on the train for dance classes. A lot of the dancers at her school would take only one or two courses at a time. Bridget instead was taking advanced French, AP English, and other classes. Bridget herself was the one who had insisted on doing that, saying that it

didn't make sense to take a reduced load. Her mother said that if she and her husband didn't have the time and money to invest, what Bridget was doing wouldn't be possible. She said she did many more things for Bridget than she would normally want to do for a seventeen year-old, but in order for her to dance, she had to. [Field Notes]

Also a marker of the resources that could be mobilized on behalf of the student is the possession of the economic and social capital needed to navigate schooling options and to invest in alternative forms of schooling during the pursuit of occupational dance training. Several students had already graduated from high school at the time of the study, and several had entered college programs. A few also reported having dropped out of high school, with the intention of later pursuing a GED, so that now they could pursue a full-time dance career. These conflicts between dance training/careers and the academic schooling system, arise to no small extent simply because these two education systems are, in most cases, independent of one another, a fact characteristic of the arrangement of institutions in the US.

There is also the matter of the economic viability of taking up a career in ballet; it is, for example, more economically feasible in some parts of the country than others to subsist on an entry-level position salary. In 2011, the professional positions posted in the "jobs guide" section of *Dance Magazine*, showed salaries between 200 (apprentice level), and 300-700 (professional level) dollars a week, with a work-year ranging between 22 and 52 weeks (Smallridge 2011). I found that the students at the French Ballet Academy were both very much aware of, and concerned about, financial security and thus about their ability to gain positions in selective companies. At some point, most of them shared with me their concerns about being "good enough" in terms of both getting into schools and companies and gaining recognition for their abilities as dancers. Many, however, also recognized that their ability to study and pursue a career was largely dependent on their parents' ongoing financial stability.

Dakota commented that on Saturday he was flying to North Carolina, where he is dancing with a dance theater company. He gets paid \$600 a week to do so. He shares an apartment with three or four other boys. They pay around \$850 total for the apartment but split it three ways, so his rent is \$250 a month. Jocelyn's mouth fell open, and the girls exclaimed at how cheap this was. Renee and Jocelyn currently share an apartment in the city. They both are living away from their

families, though Jocelyn's mom lives relatively close by. Most other students live with their parents. Renee said she was from California, and basically she just bought a ticket and came to NYC to study with Jean-Pierre. Students noted that it is impossible to live in New York on Dakota's salary without receiving support from one's parents, but it was possible in NC. Dakota told us that he usually is so tired when he comes in that he crashes rather than going out, so life in NC doesn't seem that different from New York! [Field Notes]

The foregoing passage serves to underscore the fact that, when it comes to parents who are cultivating their children to become professional dancers, the financial support they provide will likely extend a good way into the child's professional career, until that moment when he or she moves up within a company, secures patronage and/or sponsorship, and develops those aspects of his or her career that will enable him or her to bring in enough income to be financially independent. Although a number of students do pursue professional careers after they graduate from high school, many also make plans to attend four-year colleges that have programs emphasizing dance. In the latter regard one thinks of the Ailey/Fordham program, and of the North Carolina School of the Arts.

It can be said in summarizing this chapter's findings that several patterns are visible with respect to the students' relationships to the school and to the aesthetic ballet. First one notes that the majority of students within the school fall within a tradition whereby ideologies organic to ballet are practiced and maintained. They are socialized into the tradition that places a high value on ballet as a form of high art and the "beauty" of ballet that likewise prizes the particular bodily aesthetic of ballet dancers. Thus from a young age, these students are instilled, both through their attendance at institutions where ballet is practiced and through the various aspects of the social landscapes in which they operate, with these ideologies.

Bond (2002), in *Ideology, Dominance, and Inequality*, looks at ideology in its relation to Gramsci's hegemony. He points out that Gramsci distinguishes between historically organic ideologies and those that are arbitrary, or non-organic, and notes that organic ideologies are "necessary to a given structure," are used to "'organize' human masses and create the terrain on which men move." Ideologies arise, become dominant, and become "part of the thick hegemonic mix from which new

ideological texts are fabricated” in particular historical contexts (Bond 231; Hoare and Smith 1971: 377, qtd. in Bond). In the case of ballet, the point of origin was amidst 16th-century French court life. While both styles of dance and aesthetic preferences have shifted with the global diffusion of dance, and local sectional variations have developed in relation to the dominant understanding of what ballet encompasses, hegemony has nonetheless been maintained through the work of national bodies and institutions. Thus, as new institutions such as the French Ballet Academy arise and seek to enter the well-trodden terrain, they must attempt to conform to the “ideational constructions that preserve the privileges and control of a single section,” but to do so without compromising their ability to exist financially as institutions (231).

Though there are individuals who originate within the historical tradition where the ideologies of ballet developed organically, there are many others who, morally and bodily, are incorporated into this ideological system through the long process of training their bodies to dance— a process that begins with the process of auditioning. They are selected according to their perceived congruence with existing ideals in institutions that have the status (authority, legitimacy) and the stable economic base upon which to operate. Auditioning, and applying for admission to one of the significant institutions within the hegemony, means accepting the ideologies of the terrain, even though there are spaces and institutions where local ideologies run counter to the dominant ideologies.

The majority of the French Ballet Academy’s students are white, middle- and upper- class girls. They have been socialized into these ideologies, many of which are coextensive with what can be deemed the hegemonic form of American culture, and this is particularly true where ideas about aesthetics are concerned. Students’ families, the media, and the world around them formulate this context, though it is mediated by a number of other institutions and social venues. The performances the students go to see, plus the newer forms of media such as YouTube that they use to view ballets and the performances of their favorite dancers, are also institutions whose practices and policies shape their

mental and even their physical worlds. Cremin (1975) noted that “these various institutions mediate the culture via different technologies for the recording, sharing, and distributing of symbols,” and that the study of any given school and its educative process is the study of the intersection between the various sites at which education occurs, which means not just schools, but also media and the family. This certainly rings true of the students within the French Ballet Academy, for they are informed about what they are learning through their academic education, their families, their peers, the media and internet, and the places where they study and practice ballet.

It also must be stressed that, even those individuals who do not operate within these ideological constraints and those who fall outside of the social field in which these ideologies are organic, inevitably do so in relation to it, given that upper- middle- class aesthetic values tend to function as a hegemony. Research done by Ritenburg (2001), on the idealized construct of the body of a female ballet dancer, indicates the degree to which the ideologies of ballet intersect with these multiple sites. It does so by using Foucault’s concept of genealogy to show the origins of the aesthetic traditions that are transmitted through discourse and print media. Ritenburg (2001) looked at images of Balanchine’s principal dancers from the New York City Ballet over a span of 23 years and also utilized such sources as interviews and published biographies. She found that body-shape affected not only who was selected for principal roles but also how the practices fostered in order to achieve the desired shape were formulated in relation to this aesthetic sense. She found that these practices and body-shape ideals have been widely disseminated in popular print media, with the implicit lesson they strive to teach being that the “everyday” woman can achieve the “look” of a ballerina. She also notes, however, that the workouts given indicate that they were modified for mass consumption and thus contends that the purveyed ideal body of a dancer— was associated with an elite class – and could not be achieved in totality by the “everyday” woman.

In this case, the discourse produces a truth about a preferred or an ideal female body shape suitable for ballet. The discourse also produces a truth about a body shape suitable for ballet

that invalidates other body shapes. The idealization or truth of a body shape as a “ballet dancer’s body” produces and reproduces an aesthetic in ballet in which, for example, pointe work, support systems, and weight deployment are divided between genders rather than shared among individuals (Daly 1987, 17). Consequently, the discourse producing and reproducing the ideal ballet dancer’s body simultaneously produces and reproduces a particular danced aesthetic as the truth— the norm— as ‘real’ ballet. (Ritenburg 2001:72)

This aesthetic sense, as Ritenburg suggests, and as this dissertation’s first chapter demonstrates when tracing the history of ballet, has emerged within the historical context of ballet. Stemming from its origins in the court dances of the 14th century, they then were diffused across the courts of Europe, where the vocabulary of movement was codified and where specific institutions developed for training and for performances. They developed not in isolation but in relation to the changing aesthetic values held by the elite and by the general public across ballet’s four hundred year history. This included major shifts with respect to who could participate in dance, what body-type was appropriate for which roles in which ballets, and which particular movements were aesthetically pleasing in both the choreographer’s and the audience’s eyes. For example, Fairfax (2008) relates the popularity of technical feats— many *pirouettes* and high jumps— to the inclusion of more and more of these steps in the choreography given to the male leads in ballets. Fairfax (2008) also notes the way that a noble leading character had to have a tall, balanced body and a “noble” face so as to conform to the aesthetic ideal how individuals of a particular social class and heritage are to look and comport themselves within the context of the performance.

When it comes to a school—any school, but in the present case the French Ballet Academy— the relationship between the criteria for membership and the establishment plus maintenance of institutional boundaries, and the social field within which the students reside is symbiotic. In other words, the school, its practices, and the maintenance of its boundaries through selective admission all are legitimated within the field where the majority of the student population originates, through the various bases, sites, and modalities that inform students. As Bourdieu (1984) suggested, the encounters we have with works of art and literature within systems of formal schooling tend to reify the position of

such works and to further legitimate their production. This insight also undoubtedly carries over to the various other modalities and sites that, as Cremin mentioned, inform ballet students about their own practices of the art. Rather remarkably, the selection of students at auditions tends to be a from among a group of self-selected potential participants, given how strongly both the institution and the social bases surrounding the students work to re-enforce practices, ideologies, and status.

Chapter Three: Defining Social Positions

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the presence or absence of a genealogical history, characterized by a pattern of movement through increasingly more selective institutions in both summer programs and year-round schools, was, along with a student's individual ability and person connection to the instructors, a significant determinant of whether student was able to access the French Ballet Academy for pre-professional training. This chapter seeks to assess the significance of the movement that occurs between the French Ballet Academy and other schools and companies, and to show how it creates individual genealogies for students. Ultimately these shape how the French Ballet Academy defines itself through its relationship to other institutions and to ballet in general. More broadly, it will be contended that through the process of auditioning for summer programs, ballet students interact with ideologies about the body. In this way we will see how the concepts of "classicism" and "French" are understood by students and instructors alike, as the hegemony in which they operate is represented across multiple sites.

In the case of individual students, the process of auditioning establishes their perceptions about the relationship between aesthetics and career opportunities within the professional landscape. One cannot underestimate the importance of the work of constructing a professional landscape, in which the students and instructors forge the network connections between institutions and people come to realize how similarities and differences in the aesthetic preferences among institutions affect the arrangement of people within the schema. This is critical in understanding the ways in which students navigate the landscape, throughout the school year and beyond. These navigations occur as students-in-training go forth during the summer to institutions other than their home school for summer-intensive programs, and older students start to audition for company programs. At the end of the fall semester, a summer-intensive information session articulated these connections and related ideas about aesthetics as the students prepared to go to auditions. These individual encounters with the ideologies of different

institutions and thereby aesthetics build over the course of a student's education, shaping how the student perceives "beauty," his or her own training, and his or her own position within the landscape of ballet. By looking at a case study of a student and parent narrating their experiences in moving between institutions we will see the ways in which these processes are approached on the individual level, as aesthetic ideologies are manifested across institutional boundaries. This case also demonstrates how social networks are used as resources, helping students to confront the ideological boundaries among the various institutions that formulate the landscape in which most students operate.

Talking about Auditioning

A normative part of any young dancers' training is that of spending the summers away from their year-round school; all of the students at the French Ballet Academy had attended some summer programs, which typically offer a full day of classes in technique, partnering, and variations. The instructors held an information session at the end of the winter session, just before the audition season (late Jan.-March) at the beginning of the spring semester, to provide students and parents with information that would aid them in making choices about the schools that were holding auditions. This information allowed them to choose which program or programs, out of those they were admitted to, to attend. These summer-intensive programs offer students an opportunity to study at institutions that sometimes are situated at geographically distant locations from their residences while their academic schools are on summer vacation, and give them opportunities to benefit from the training offered by instructors outside their home institutions. Thus students typically do not attend summer-intensive sessions at their home institutions. When and if they do, it normally is in conjunction with summer-intensives offered elsewhere.

The audition experience is framed by ideas about how students should represent both themselves and the French Ballet Academy, in terms both of appearance and of comportment in the audition class. During the information session, about half of the students, accompanied by a parent, gathered in a

classroom space. The students sat on the floor, facing the Jean-Pierre and Noémie ; some of them had come prepared with notebooks and questions, and when the instructors opened the session by asking if there were any specific questions, a parent asked about the best way to approach an audition. Jean-Pierre's explanation illustrated the conventions of the audition class that extends across institutions. These are the standards he also applied when holding auditions for the French Ballet Academy's year round and summer-intensive programs. To everyone present, Jean-Pierre said:

"They [the students] should look professional, first of all. They should have the hair done, no sprigs anywhere." "Black leo, clear [pink] tights, no holes. Pointe *shoes* should be broken in but not beat up. Look professional. They don't want sloppy." He told the students, "A smile doesn't hurt, and melts everyone's hearts at your age." He added, "Also, a little mascara, a little makeup, so that you don't look washed out." [Field Notes]

Students also were expected to comport themselves in particular ways, and told where to position themselves in relation to the other students in class if they were given the choice of where to stand at the barre or in the center; and if not, how to best position themselves after being placed in a disadvantageous space.

"Be clean and in front. Not in the back. Don't hide in back. Perform. Look judges in the eyes, but don't look like you buried a goldfish. Also, no leaning on the barre, and always face the teacher. If you have to watch, keep your eye on the teacher, or others. Even if you're in the back, face the teacher." [Field Notes]

Jean-Pierre also gave advice on how to handle in a professional manner making mistakes or not knowing a combination. He gave some comments regarding how teachers and judges perceive students who are auditioning who don't maintain the expected comportment.

"If you blank, do not look [at other people]. It's better to make up, invent steps for the exercises. If you mess up, don't..." He sighed loudly, making gestures and faces, mimicking what students sometimes do. He explained that the teachers would think, "What's wrong with that person? It's frustrating [to the teacher, when students do this]. You have to look like a pleasant person, else you don't look professional. If I give a correction, and someone-" he made a blank, staring face, unpleasant and emotionless, and told the students not to do that. Noémie, who also was present, added that "if you're not secure, go with the second group." Center-work combinations commonly divide students into groups so that they have enough space to move. Jean-Pierre said, "If they tell you to go in the first group, go in the front, not in the back. Be present." [Field Notes]

The idea of presenting oneself as a desirable potential student, of performing a particular self who embodies the characteristics of a good dancer (professional, disciplined, pleasant) throughout the audition process was conveyed in the analogy of packaging the “self” to sell, as though it were a commercial product. Jean-Pierre offered the ensuing example of a friend as a cautionary moral tale. He explained that representation of self is one aspect of how the school was creating a reputation and representing itself through students auditioning in other places.

“A friend of mine, she was always angry and found it hard to get a job, but at the auditions she was not putting on makeup, not projecting, and was always in the back. You are the product; they get to select a product. To sell a watch, put it in a beautiful box. If you’re selling yourself, it’s about marketing the self the right way. People think ‘it’s my dancing’ [that will get you hired or chosen]. No. It’s what you look like, then your technique. You are dancers, but you represent the school. You represent [Jean-Pierre] and [Noémie] - all of that- when you are there. You are ambassadors.” [Field Notes]

Following upon the idea of selling oneself as a dancer, there came the notion that there are individuals who try to intimidate or impress others by showing off the movements at which they are particularly skilled. Jean-Pierre encouraged students not to be intimidated; just because someone had a lot of flexibility didn’t mean they would be able to do the center work, or effectively market themselves as dancers. He also reminded them that even though auditions often were social networking events, they were not attending the events to socialize but rather to secure a place at a school or company.

He added, “Sometimes you go [to auditions], and see people at the barre. Their leg is in true *penché*, but then, in center, they are slow, then tripping.”

Lauren explained, “They [the people who are showing off their *penché*] do it to psych you out.”

Jean-Pierre confirmed, “They do, but it’s not a social event. You are there to get in a school— a company— not to see your friends. Don’t go wild. Take it easy.” [Field Notes]

Although Jean-Pierre’s name was well known, as was the name of the institution where he had previously taught, his own school had been in operation for less than a year. Thus sending students to auditions was one way of strengthening the professional reputation of the school, hence the emphasis on professionalism. When students go out into other locations, they serve as representatives of the

school and its instructors, in addition to acquiring new skills. The summer-intensive programs that students were accepted to were announced in the school's email newsletter. They are summarized in the table below.

Table 9: Summer-Intensive Program List

American Ballet Theater - New York City
American Ballet Theater - North Carolina
Bolshoi Ballet
Boston Ballet
Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet
Colorado Ballet
Kirov Ballet
Miami City Ballet
Movement Invention Project
Nederlands Dans Theater
New Jersey Dance Theater Ensemble
North Carolina Dance Theatre
Orlando Ballet
Pacific Northwest Ballet
Princeton Dance and Theater
Royal Danish Ballet
San Francisco Ballet
Washington Ballet

Source: School e-mail newsletter

The ways in which the French Ballet Academy strove to build its reputation adhered to the established norms of reputation-building within the broader ballet landscape. There are several common factors that schools utilize to build status: the social status of the instructors/faculty; the recognition its students receive, as they become professional dancers; the strength of the pedagogy; and the dissemination of a specialized style and technique. These normative aspects can be seen cropping up in the ways that other programs, particularly those operating at similar levels within the hierarchy, represent themselves to prospective applicants. These include everything from the presentation of the professionalism of the students on the website, to references to well-known dancers who matriculated from their institutions, and to the invocation of tradition and lineage. The dialectic among institutions shows us that norms are maintained through both the maintenance of institutional

boundaries and adherence to aesthetic ideologies. These were made relatively explicit by Jean-Pierre and Noémie in order to aid students in their attempt to navigate the institutions within their landscape as they auditioned for summer-intensives.

Institutions and Insider Knowledge

The schools and programs that were recommended to students tended to be highly regarded, situated in a similar status-range within the landscape of institutions that teach ballet. They were recommended on the basis of both instructors' insider knowledge, as they either had experience in teaching at the program in question, or knew other members of the faculty through their own social networks. In making their decisions about a particular program, students tended to use the advice of their current instructors in conjunction with information provided in brochures and on websites, as most all summer-intensive programs have websites replete with information about them. In particular students considered the reputation of the faculty and their training backgrounds, as listed on their biographical information pages. They also studied the images of other students to evaluate the quality of the program. They looked at both the "type" of students the program accepted and the quality of technique the students in the photographs displayed. The information that the instructors provide to students helps them pick their way through these arrangements and ideologies. We will get a glimpse into this process by examining the website narratives in relation to the arrangement of schools and companies, as well as the information provided to students.

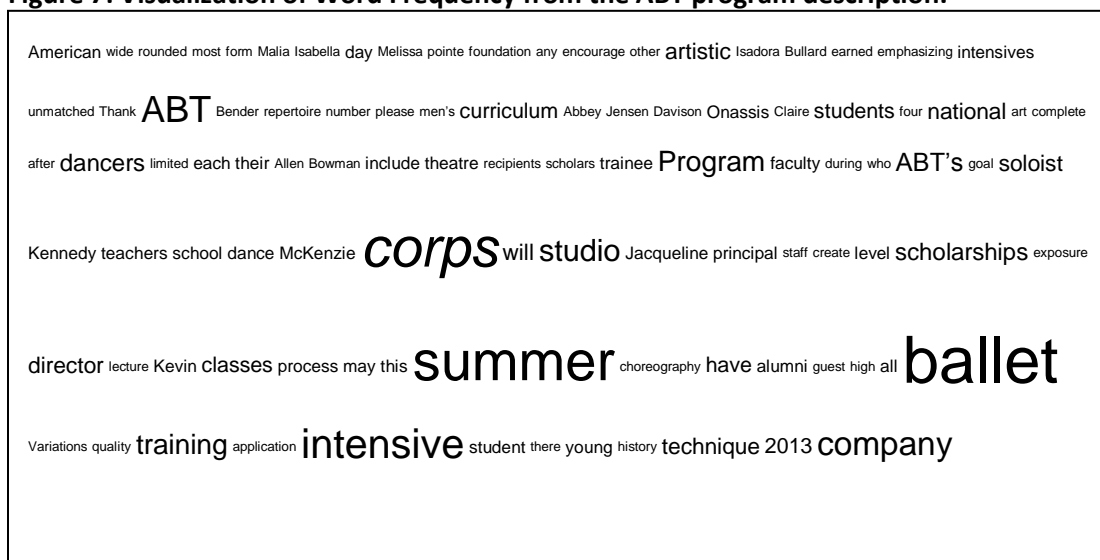
The program descriptions on most websites hold a remarkable similarity, emphasizing aspects that can be used to evaluate the reputation of the school and highlight the program's legitimacy, such as well-known professional faculty, small class sizes, and considerable amount of personal attention given to each student. They also focused on the ways in which the intensive curriculum can be expected to contribute to a potential student's personal growth and career development. These descriptions, in addition to positioning the school within the broader arrangement of people and institutions where

ballet is practiced, also tend to outline the relationship of the school to the aesthetic ideologies of ballet. There is also some distinction in the type of technical training that summer programs offer across different schools; difference largely stems from the traditions that are used by the school and affiliated company. To capitalize on the history of the institution and the reputation of the dancers that came out of their institutions to convey the school's position and status, as is common practice, the American Ballet Theater quotes the Artistic Director, Kevin McKenzie, to describe the program goals "to cultivate a universal understanding of the art form at its highest level, emphasizing not only the importance of high quality and brilliant technique, but also dance as an expressive vehicle to create art." They note that:

American Ballet Theatre's Summer-intensive has earned a reputation for being the most thorough and rewarding dance experience a student can have during the summer. Under the supervision of ABT's Artistic Director Kevin McKenzie and Artistic Director of Summer-intensives Melissa Allen Bowman, the program offers top quality teachers and master guest teachers that are dedicated to the learning process and growth of each individual student. Class size will be limited. Students participate in a minimum of four classes per day with ABT's renowned faculty, and enjoy a comprehensive curriculum that includes exposure to ABT artists, history and repertory. The ABT Summer-intensive focuses on developing well-rounded dancers by exposure to a wide variety of disciplines with an emphasis on classical ballet technique and key elements of ABT's National Training Curriculum. (American Ballet Theater 2013)

Conducting a word-frequency analysis on the descriptive data about the different programs on their websites serves to illustrate the similarities in how such programs are marketed, and also provides us with a basis for comparison in visualization.

Figure 7: Visualization of Word Frequency from the ABT program description.

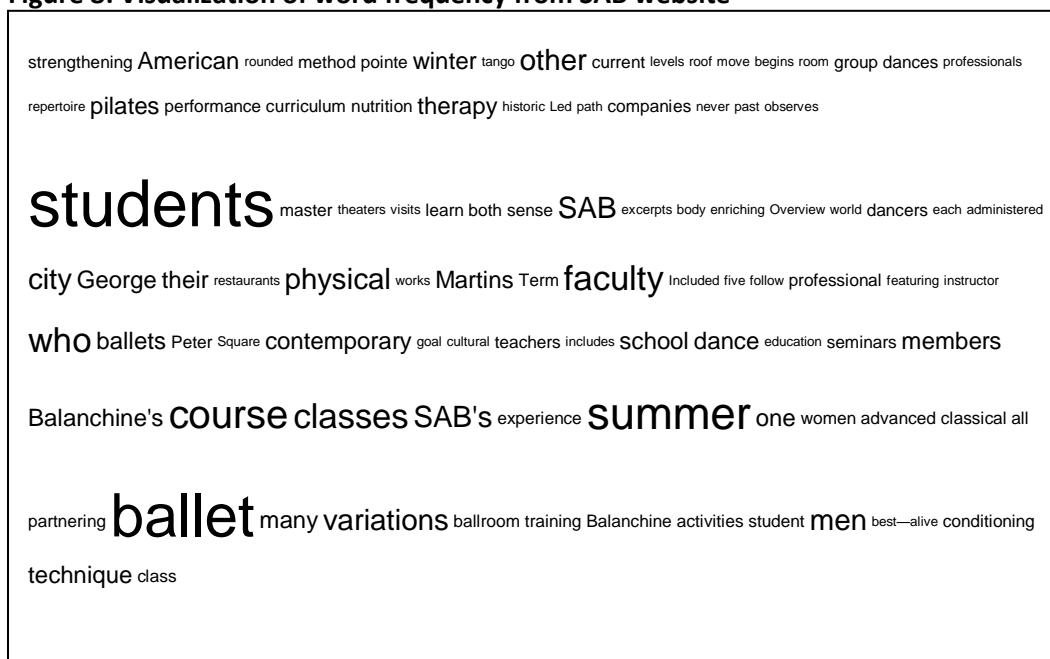


Note: The words that occur most often are represented by larger/bolder texts. By numbers of occurrences: 30: ballet; 24: summer, *corps*; 17: intensive; 14: ABT; 12: company; 11: studio; 9: program, training; 8: ABT's; 7: scholarships, dancers; 6: artistic, soloist, will, national, technique, director; 5: classes, have, 2013, curriculum, Students; 4: American, their, faculty; 3: Intensives, Onassis, each, include, Trainee, Principal, may, young, Kennedy, teachers, school, level, all, Kevin, day, this, student, McKenzie, Jacqueline, process, theater, alumni. All others had fewer than 2 occurrences.

On their website for their summer program, the School of American Ballet tells the reader that

The path to the future often begins with the Summer Course of the School of American Ballet, where students follow in the footsteps of countless professional dancers who have made SAB an essential destination on their way to joining America's top ballet companies. Only at the School of American Ballet are there so many teachers whose careers are intertwined with the legacy of renowned choreographer, teacher and ballet master George Balanchine. Led by Peter Martins and Kay Mazzo, the distinguished summer faculty includes many alumni and current members of the world-famous New York City Ballet, who share their knowledge and experience. Students learn to dance as never before—bigger, bolder, faster and with a heightened sense of musicality. . . . (School of American Ballet 2013)

Figure 8: Visualization of word frequency from SAB website

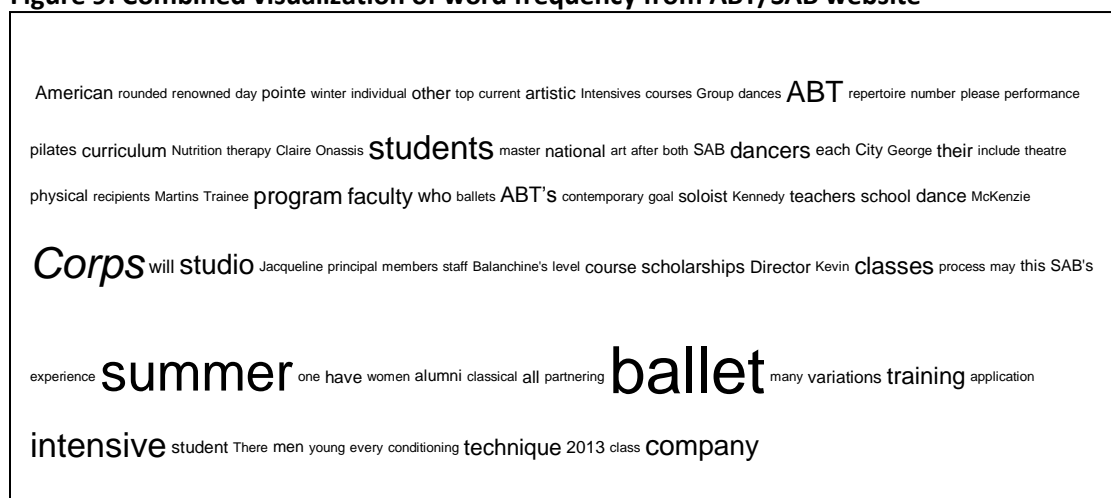


Note: The words that occur most often are represented by larger/bolder texts. By numbers of occurrences: 11: students; 10 ballet; 7 summer; 6 course; 5 faculty, classes, who, other; 4 SAB, physical, SAB's, variations, men, city, therapy; 3 ballets, George, school Balanchine, American, their, Martins, contemporary, members, one, many, technique, winter, pilates, dance, method. All others had fewer than 2 occurrences.

A combined pattern visualization of these texts (see Fig. 9), tells us that both of these programs utilize the names of well-known professional dancers who had extensive careers and matriculated through their programs or were affiliated with their companies or schools. Taken jointly, these texts represent what is often deemed the premier institution of American ballet, with SAB's history as the school founded by Balanchine and the associated New York City Ballet; and the American Ballet Theater's long history and reputation. There is a clear emphasis across both programs on training, technique, curriculum and courses, for aside from the frequency of these particular terms many of the less frequent ones such as partnering and pointe, are descriptors of the types of training and courses offered. Such terms exist alongside words associated with the occupational roles that the students who attend these programs aspire to hold: company, *corps*, soloist, and director. The way in which both programs use the vocabulary of "national" and "American," as well as list the names of notable faculty

and alumni, bespeaks the important role played by the language of aesthetics in the process of positioning instruction in relation to the ideologies dominant within the landscape of ballet.

Figure 9: Combined visualization of word frequency from ABT/SAB website



In this figure, the breakdown of word-frequency is as follows: 40: ballet; 31: summer; 24 *corps*; 20: ABT; 17: intensive; 16: students; 12: company, studio; 11: training; 10: Program, classes; 9: faculty, technique, dancers; 8: SAB; 7: will, scholarships, their, curriculum, who, dance, American; 6: course, artistic, soloist, variations, national, school, have, director; 5: other, teacher, student, all, 2013; 4: pointe, pilates, alumni, each, physical, men, this, City; 3: Onassis, master, include, trainee, ballets, goal, Balanchine's, level, Martins, many, there, winter, McKinzie, intensives, therapy, principal, may, young, both George, Kennedy, classical, art, contemporary, members, Kevin, one, day, performance, nutrition, theatre, process, experience, partnering, class. All others had fewer than 2 occurrences.

With some notable exceptions, NYCB company members have matriculated from the affiliated year-round school and many students attend summer programs hoping to be invited to stay for the year-round program, particularly if they aspire to eventually dance with the company. It was commonly stated by my informants, that students who are trained in these programs tend to also be sought after to fill the ranks of other ballet companies throughout the US, a fact that can be confirmed by consulting the available biographical information about the members of smaller companies. This also applies to other well-known programs, but there is a particular time and age at which students should strategically start to think about summer programs in relation to getting into a company. Students were also advised to consider smaller, less well-known programs based on what they hoped to learn by attending a summer program.

Directing his comments to the older/more advanced students, Jean-Pierre again noted that, “You want to get attention. If you go to a smaller program, there are smaller classes, and you get more attention. They’re also more concerned about the kids. I teach at [a dance program] during the summer. I hate to see the big classes, they are too packed, and it’s too much. Some just get lost completely. At this level,” he motioned around the room, “nobody here is looking for a job. Find a program with good training for what you’re paying. The attraction is towards a big program, but now this is not the student’s concern— the social status of the program is getting in your way. Wait until you’re 15 or 16, then you go to the bigger programs because you need to be seen, go to the ones that you want to dance for. That’s how to do it. There are a lot of summer programs— big ones— that are money makers.”[Field Notes]

This insider perspective that Jean-Pierre was able to offer students, drawn from both his experiences with dancing for companies and his teaching positions in various schools, could not have been garnered through the information various programs make publically available for potential applicants. The top-level institutions in the US are considered difficult to access, highly selective, and competitive for students who are considering admission to their programs. Furthermore, they structurally approximate the “national- level” institutions of ballet study that exist in other countries, though here they are funded through private means and grants, as opposed to inclusion in a national/federal budget. Each program has their own artistic agendas that they seek to accomplish through who is granted access to the program. The programs with higher status are able to be extremely selective about both the body-types and technical abilities of the students that they admit. Jean-Pierre encouraged students to think about this, the technique that would be taught in the program, and what it “produced” when deciding which to attend.

He elaborated, “You have to have the body. If you’re not good, but have the body, they’ll take you. If you are learning pure technique, you can do everything, even Balanchine style or contemporary style. If you learn Balanchine, you can only do contemporary; you are stylistically a Balanchine dancer. Mr. B, he hired all Russian teachers. The teacher is important. If you get in [one of the larger schools] when you are 12, 13, they use you for the *Nutcracker*, for *Coppélia*. When the students come in, they have good technique, good training, but what you see there is not what they produced. It’s terrible to talk like this. Unless you are 15, I wouldn’t recommend it. The dancers are beautiful, but they had previous affiliation with another school.” [Field Notes]

These comments provided students with a generalized understanding of how they could expect programs operate when selecting students to attend summer or year-round programs, and of when to

audition if their goal was to get into the company. Implicitly, however, Jean-Pierre also conveyed what he hoped to accomplish with his school through the directions that he wanted his students to take with their summer studies.

On a related note, students also expressed concern about the level placement within the programs that accepted them and how this might reflect on their abilities as dancers. Jean-Pierre explained how decisions about student placement are made in multi-level programs. In many schools students tend to be grouped by ability or by age and grade levels. Other programs, rather than arranging students hierarchically they tend to group students by their weaknesses. This means that students may spend the summer in both mixed-ability and age-related levels working on a specific area of focus. As Jean-Pierre explained to the students, the process of placing students into levels and groups within a program is often less than scientific.

“Do you know what [schools] do with the placement?” Jean-Pierre asked. He mentioned that students were often distraught when placed at levels they thought too low for them, and frustrated if having to work above their levels. [Field Notes]

“They all sit together with the pictures, and sort them. Five in that level, twenty-five in that one, so they shuffle them. Then the choreographers and the teachers say, no, I cannot [have that many in one class]— so they move them around. You end up in a level too high, or one gets through holes and is in a level too low for them.” [Field Notes]

All of the summer programs cited are privately operated and charge tuition. Typically there is just a limited number of scholarships available, often primarily distributed to male students. In an interview, one student told me that it wasn't fair that boys got so many scholarships, when she had been told that if she wasn't willing or able to pay, there were a hundred girls behind her that would be able to. Some programs have housing costs included and may include a dormitory stay; others require the students themselves to come up with local housing options. Some intensive programs provide housing for students, typically in a dormitory setting if the program is located in an existing school, conservatory, or on a college campus; other programs require students/parents attending the intensives either to stay in hotel accommodations, sometimes sharing rooms with other students, or to make other

housing arrangements. Parents often accompany younger students to the intensive sessions and spend the time vacationing and visiting with other dance parents. Older students typically sojourn to intensives alone, sometimes sharing rooms or apartments with other students from their same school who have chosen to attend. Extended summer travel plans sometimes pose logistical difficulties for parents who work full-time and can't take summers off, and the cost of tuition for summer programs (even without the cost of housing) can run quite high, typically upwards of several thousand dollars. The 'local' options were those in New York City for the students at the French Ballet Academy, where the cost of participating in the program was ameliorated by their already having a residence in the surrounding area. The table that follows provides an overview of various summer-intensive programs and their approximate costs.

Table 10: Estimated Cost of Attending a Summer-intensive (2013)

School Name	Location and Tuition	Total
American Ballet Theater	New York, NY, Offered at several sites (4 weeks) \$2750 + housing	\$5250
School of American Ballet	New York, NY \$2,485 (4 weeks) + \$2,635 (housing)	\$5120
Miami City Ballet School	Miami, FL (5 weeks) \$2,100 + housing	\$3600
Orlando Ballet School	Orlando, FL \$1,700 + \$2,500 (housing)	\$4200
Kirov Academy	Washington DC \$6,320 (6 weeks) (housing included)	\$6320
Bolshoi Ballet	New York, NY \$4,400 (6 weeks) + \$1,800 (housing)	\$6200
San Francisco Ballet	San Francisco, CA \$1,650- 2,225 (3 weeks) + housing	\$3875
Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet	Carlisle, PA (5 weeks) \$1,600 + \$3,250 (housings) (early registration)	\$4850

This table's data compiled from the programs websites as listed in works cited.

The recommendations made to students by the Academy's instructors came from a knowledge-base originating in the instructors' own experiences of teaching at various summer programs and in their awareness of the styles and techniques of other instructors, as well as their understandings of each

student's strengths and weaknesses. In the segments below, place names have been altered or removed to avoid personally identifying students.

Serena's mom had brought the faculty list for this program, one that they had discussed previously, and she took it out of the blue folder she had stored it in and showed it to him. Jean-Pierre looked it over, saying the names softly under his breath. He said that based on the faculty, it wasn't a bad program. Jean-Pierre then turned to Noémie and spoke to her in French, talking about the people teaching there. Such moments underscore these professionals' extensive knowledge of various programs acquired through personal contact and hence showing the extent of their social networks. Jean-Pierre added, in English, that [the program's former director] was great but now she is at [a different institution], so he didn't know who the director there was now. However, he stated that the program itself seems pretty good; it might be a good program for Serena. [Field Notes]

Other aspects of insider knowledge were derived from the instructors' experiences of dealing with the "product" of various intensives, as students returned to their home schools after the summer. For example, in the case of a student who was directed toward an intensive in the Russian-technique, the recommendation came on the basis of the instructors having seen a marked improvement in the technical strength of a student after attending the program. "I think that you should do [that program] too. I think it would be good for you. [Another male student] looked good when he came back— he had stronger technique— you need to work on the same things he needed to before he went."

Jean-Pierre's knowledge about how other schools operated their summer and year-round programs implicitly brings work of his school into the arena, to vie for status and positions in relation to other institutions. This process of formulating institutional status is part of the bigger picture of how institutions arrange themselves, and are arranged by others, into a hierarchy. Jean-Pierre's aim is to create a highly selective institution that is able to compete with other institutions, in terms of both the quality of training offered and the dancers produced. As we have seen, one way that others have of evaluating a school is by assessing the technical level of the students who come out of a program. Instructors and other students are able to, without ever having seen a student, just by looking at the list of institutions a student has reported having attended on their applications, to gauge the abilities of the student in relation to the level they studied at these institutions. They are also able to evaluate the

“type” of dancer a student will be (skilled at quick footwork or lyrical movements), and in general assess the bodily aesthetic or “look” of a student on the basis of the institutions that he or she has attended. The higher the institution’s status, the more selective it can be in cultivating a particular aesthetic. To put the matter another way, the physical body is appropriated as an artistic instrument by institutions that have differing preferences in their instruments. Bodies are categorized not only by race but also by height, and by such physical characteristics, as the ratio of limbs to torso, weight, coloring, and patterns of musculature. All such factors can be seen in the genealogies of the students admitted to the French Ballet Academy and also play a significant role in the recommendations they are given as to where they should audition for summer-intensives.

At the summer-intensive information session, Jean-Pierre explained to the students and parents that “if you don’t have the body type... They do these things right away in these schools, at the audition; they make a red mark right away. “ This is precisely what I had observed done at his audition session: place an ‘x’ at the top of one of the applications. “They might change it after the audition, but these are body-type casting places. Do the research. Look at the school dancers, pictures on the websites. Look at their bodies, and say, I wouldn’t fit here. If you look and don’t fit, you know already, with your body, if you do the audition you will get a red mark already.” The practice that Jean-Pierre purveys is one that is used to maintain the aesthetic ideals of particular institutions, and it cropped up again in the recommendations that were offered to students about summer programs. For example, Lucy, a serious student of about 5’3” who recently transitioned from the intermediate to the advanced level, had completed previous intensives at a school in the Northeast known for technique, and was now directed towards a school on the West Coast known for preferring the long, thin look of Balanchine’s dancers:

Jean-Pierre said, “For Lucy...”

Noémie replied right away with the name of a program on the West Coast.

Jean-Pierre nodded, and said, “[The program on the West Coast] for her. I know it’s on the coast...” He added that she had the look; she had the body for them. [Field Notes]

Jean-Pierre’s suggestion that she had the “look” and the “body for them” could be confirmed by looking at the images on the program’s website. She, and other students were often worried about whether or not they will be “good enough” to gain admission to a particular program, particularly one known for being selective.

The room became quiet, and Lucy said something softly... “Not sure...” she began hesitantly, then spoke quickly, letting out a breath of worry. “What if I don’t get in?” This is the worry and concern of most students.

Jean-Pierre chided her. “Do not think that way.” [Field Notes]

The stress of auditioning, which entails subjecting oneself to the critique of others, and the students’ fears of being rejected or at least found wanting, often are tempered by a framework in which the audition is seen as an opportunity to practice and gain experience in the audition process itself. Regardless of whether one is accepted, the experience will benefit the student by bringing her or him a competence in and familiarity with the process, so that they can perform at their best when it really counts. Older and more experienced students tend to audition only for those programs they deem likely to accept them.

The practical and strategic information Academy’s instructors provided underscores yet again the role that physical characteristics play in creating and maintaining institutional boundaries; it also points us toward the realities that are created by adhering to rules cultivated by geography, choreographic design, and the socio-historical context in which ballet developed. Granted, the bodily “laws” are created by practice, but verbalizing the effects of decisions made by individuals within institutions fosters an awareness that the body then factors into the creation of normative rules based on ideologies and ideal types. Also unusual as it may at first seem that the instructors made these boundaries and practices clear through verbalization, their doing so constitutes an explicit

acknowledgment of factors that structure opportunities within dance education, and an explanation of how the various processes work. Pollock (1995) notes that the frank acknowledgement of schools as places where “we rank, sort, order, and differentially equip our children,” provides us with an opportunity to investigate the ways in which these practices operate (3). This is entirely in keeping with Jean-Pierre’s advice about schooling, for the open discussion gives his young dancers a chance to consciously make decisions in relation to the politics of the body in the ideological system encompassing ballet. In the case excerpts that are presented below, the interplay between physical characteristics, the advice that students were given, and where they ultimately decided to attend for the summer is places is very telling.

Excerpt 1: Briana

Briana is a junior in high school, 5’2” in height and with a mesomorphic body type. She identifies herself as Caucasian, specifying that she is of “Greek, Puerto Rican, Macedonian, and Native American” ancestry. She is an only child whose mother identifies as Catholic. She studied at the advanced level at the French Ballet Academy and frequently took open classes at other studios. Before auditioning for the Academy, she attended a competition school in her local suburb, just outside of New York City, and participated in summer-intensives at a modern company and a national-level school. Her mother is heavily involved in the French Ballet Academy, attending parent meetings and helping with modifying costumes for the performances. Although very supportive of her daughter’s interest in dance, stressed that the interest was her daughter’s, not her own. When asked what advice she would give to other parents of children who wanted to dance, she said, “Make sure it's something your daughter loves, don't force it because the parent loves it; it also has to come from the child's heart to love and have a passion.”

Briana had a notebook where she’d written down questions, and opened it. Looking uncertain, she asked Jean-Pierre and Noémie, “Do you have suggestions for us?”

Jean-Pierre replied both to Briana and her mother. "I have to check," he said, "because for Briana, [a school in Florida] may be one, if it's the same teachers, but if it's changing... She needs to move more; they will make her move. [It] would be good. She is Latin, so it's a plus for her there."

Briana's mom asked, "How about [a large national-level school]— if you get in, what do you do with it?"

Jean-Pierre replied that if you wanted an intensive with a school that had a company, then you have to do [a national-level school]. He cautioned, "You're spending money, not actually getting correction or attention. There are 30 students in a class." He switched from addressing Briana to addressing all of the students and parents present. He told them to think hard about what they wanted to get out of it. One national-level program has two satellite campuses in different parts of the country that are completely different. He said the students should audition for a variety of programs, and they and their parents should decide which they want to attend. [Field Notes]

As it turned out, Briana attended the intensive in Florida over the summer.

Excerpt 2: Mirella

For Mirella, one of the younger students who had come with Jean-Pierre and Noémie from New York Children's Ballet, Noémie recommended to audition to a program that specialized in the Russian technique. Mirella was a petite and hyper-flexible 12 year-old, whose classroom shyness was replaced by a glowing smile as soon as she stood in front of an audience. She was one student that Noémie thought would become a professional dancer; her desire to dance, flexibility, and technical precision indicated a promising future. When watching the end of the elementary/intermediate class, some of the more advanced students frequently commented that she was very beautiful and that her resemblance to Noémie was uncanny. She had attended a local ballet school in New Jersey, before enrolling in classes with Jean-Pierre and Noémie. She had done several summer-intensives at different national-level schools in the US.

Mirella's mom asked: "It's Russian, right? I saw it advertised."

Jean-Pierre replied that it was Russian, "but it is good; it's very old-fashioned— Vaganova." He said they keep to the Vaganova syllabus but are bringing it up-to-date." It would be a good program for her. They work strong," he said, and Noémie agreed. Jean-Pierre said he thought [a

national-level program] would be too much for her. Whereas Russian training was in a different stylistic tradition, it has a reputation for building dancers with muscle strength and endurance.

Another student's mom chimed in to say that there are two [Vaganova-based] programs, one in June that overlaps with the end of the NYC school year, that is mostly technique based and another in July that is mostly performance based.

Mirella's mom commented that Mirella was graduating from the 8th grade this year on June 18th, and that she was worried about the timing, as the intensive would already have started the week before.

Jean-Pierre said they might make an exception for her, a provision for her to start later, so they should contact them and ask. Otherwise, no one from NYC would be able to go to their program. He also thought it likely that [the Vaganova-based intensive] would be good for her performance skills. [Field Notes]

At the end of the school year, when the students gathered to recap their summer plans, Mirella indicated that she planned to attend the Vaganova-based intensive.

Excerpt 3: Ben

Ben was the 5'4", 14-year-old son of a modern dancer, at the intermediate level. His family had recently moved to New York City, in part to accommodate Ben's study of dance but also to escape some of the bullying he had been subjected to in his regular school life. He had previous training at a state-level school and in national-level summer-intensive sessions. He often was given a leading position in the end-of-year performances.

Noémie glanced around the room, to ensure that they had covered all the students who had come to the session for advice. "Ben?"

Jean-Pierre looked at him for a moment. "[A Russian technique based program]. You'll be with other boys."

Noémie echoed the sentiment.

Jean-Pierre added that a former student who was now dancing professionally had gotten really strong there. "He did a summer-intensive, and when he came back, I like the way... They worked him really nicely. They are real [Russian technique-based] people; they don't speak English. They have a translator. That's a real program."

Ben's mom asked if they thought he would have any problems getting in.

Jean-Pierre shook his head and said, “They will take him. He has what he needs to get in. They will take him.” He added, “[It] is in New York.”

Ben’s mom said, “Fantastic.”

One of the other moms asked if there was more than one [of the programs he recommended]; she was probably thinking of the [Russian-based program] he’d recommended to one of the girls. Jean-Pierre said, “For a boy I prefer [this program]. For a girl I prefer the [other program]. I saw the classes, I got to go see the classes, and it is good training. The boys at the end of the summer... “His voice trailed off. A moment later he added that he would think about an alternative for Ben to audition for. [Field Notes]

Ben attended the intensive he was recommended.

Excerpt 4: Angel

Angel is a 15 year-old intermediate level student, whose previous study of dance and summer-intensives both occurred at a well-known company school in the city. Her mother was quite involved in the parent-committee, helping out with events.

To Angel, Noémie brought up [a program in the Northeast]. She said “You have the body and placement; you need to work on attack and everything.”

Jean-Pierre added, “They will probably place you...” Again he trailed off her, but his hand gestures indicated low. “How they place...The program is different, good.” He went on to say it is really slow, so some students complain there is no challenge, but that the instructors know what they are doing. It was a good program. “An alternate... “

Jean-Pierre said when Lauren suggested that [a program in Florida] might be a fit for her, “She needs something that is joy to dance instead of boot camp. He had assessed that Angel was very strong, particularly with technique, and worried a great deal about doing things correctly and thus she was tentative in her movements. [Field Notes]

Angel decided to the program that was recommended to her.

Excerpt 5: Sabrina

Sabrina is a 14-year-old advanced-level student who previously attended a program in Harlem, another smaller pre-professional program in New York City, and a national-level program, among others, and completed summer-intensives at the same state-level program that Jean-Pierre had mentioned earlier, a well-known conservatory, a national-level school, and a school in Harlem. Her mother is

African-American and her father is Puerto Rican.

Sabrina's mom, Denise, who was actively involved in the parent committee and in organizing events for the school, asked, "What do you know about [a program offered by a school started by a well-known dancer]?" Jean-Pierre said that it was a good program. He said that it was very "old-school." He added that if he had a kid, he would send them there. [Field Notes]

Denise asked about several other programs around the US, going down a list, but Jean-Pierre did not recommend any of those, as he was unfamiliar with the instructors currently teaching there. Sabrina ended up attending the program about which her mother had initially inquired.

Ideals and Inclusion/Exclusion

An educational-history interview with Sabrina's Ivy-League-educated mother, Denise, illustrated how this particular student and parent broached the process of moving between institutions for summer-intensives and professional training on an individual level, in relation to the differing status of institutions and the differences in institutional-level aesthetic preferences situated within broader ideologies about ballet. While she spoke, Denise's voice often was choked with tears, anger, and pride. Her frustration comes across clearly in the narrative structure of the interview, as she describes being forced to watch her daughter, whose talent had been acknowledged and appreciated by industry professionals through performance opportunities and invitations to attend special training programs before she even was of an age to be eligible, be systematically placed in the back of classrooms, ignored by instructors, and assigned to levels at summer programs far beneath those assigned to other classmates of a similar ability-level. In many ways Sabrina's experience is an exception to an experience that would be considered more normative, not because the events her mother narrates are uncommon but because students typically discontinue the study of dance when they encounter boundaries that prevent that upward mobility between institutions which leads to a career in ballet. Generally students operate within the normative rules of the structural arrangement of institutions as opposed to utilizing resources, such as network connections, to find ways around and across institutional lines.

Typically, parents attribute upward mobility between institutions— gaining access to a program with a stronger reputation than the one the student currently is attending, and the concurrent decision to move between institutions— to a teacher who recognized the talent of their dancing child. One parent cited a teacher who had told her she needed to seek more professional training for her daughter, as she had outgrown what the school had to offer. Other parents cite the strength of their dancing child’s skill; for example, an Academy parent said that “they” must have seen something in her that they liked, when her daughter gained admission to numerous prestigious summer-intensives; the mother was pleasantly surprised. My data suggests that the practice of attributing success to individual skill and framing decisions to leave institutions in terms of an acceptance of an upwardly mobile opportunity was common.

The emotional depth of this particular mother’s narrative of her daughter’s experiences led me to select it as a case study that shows the strategies that were available to her as she sought to confront the points at which upward movement within and between institutions ran up against those institutionalized practices that are used to uphold aesthetic ideas. The purpose of this case study is not to evaluate the accuracy of the mother’s report about what transpired in different institutions or her reliability as a source, but rather to convey the subjective experiences of both mother and daughter. In this case the mother felt that biological factors of skin color, and body type prevented her daughter’s mobility between levels and institutions, and that her experience intersected with underlying ideological assumptions about ballet and the aesthetics thereof. Rather than accept as deterministic of her daughter’s future, the institutional practices that were used to include and exclude students from programs, she made use of social networks, media publications, and mentorships to achieve mobility.

Sabrina started [studying ballet] when she was two and a half. I lived in New Jersey, which is over the George Washington Bridge. The school that she went to... I just wanted to see if it was something that she’d like. There was one day that she came out and said that she had spoken to some of her classmates and that they didn’t speak to her. It was an all-white school, and I used to sit in the waiting area every time I took her to dance, and no one really spoke to me, either. I didn’t want her to be turned off [from dance] because of that. So, I decided to take her over the

bridge to [a school in] Harlem. There was a Saturday program there, once a week. I noticed that she was doing very, very well, and had excellent turnout. I knew from when I was very young, and I danced myself.

The decision to make the shift from a local suburban school to a New-York-City based school was based on perceived racism at her previous institution, the practices of social exclusion wielded by the other parents and students at the school, and Denise's understandings of her daughter's physical abilities. This marks the first step in the typical genealogical pattern leading students toward getting access to the French Ballet Academy.

I was pretty much self-taught. My mother had no money, but I wanted to dance. I knew I had this ingrown talent, because I would read and study books. We didn't have videos in those days, and I really taught myself. I knew that when Sabrina danced, her turnout was really excellent. She would mimic things that I had taught in liturgical dance through our church. . . .

When we did the parent visitation, the teacher stood in front of me and showed me these *piqué* turns that she could do, and she was only four! I thought, she can do this. She really seemed to love it!

Sabrina's mother drew from her own past experiences in dance, and in teaching liturgical dance at her church, to evaluate her daughters' skill in dance from an early age. Thus cultural value placed on dance was present in the household where Sabrina was raised and her mother valued and cultivated this ability within her daughter.

They asked her to try out for the pre-professional program. She was very young. They started accepting students at age 8 and she had just turned 7. I told them, "just take a look at her." When they saw her turnout, they got very excited. From then on she became very excited too. After a year with the school, the director took her under his wing. She danced in Washington and he took her to the White House. That was such a big deal. There were only two girls that went with him.

The director is as strict as they come. He would be in her face [when] she was really little. She was six, and she said, "Mommy, I'm not going to cry!" I'm like "Okay. I know I want to cry." He would let me sit in and watch these rehearsals. Oh my god. *Intense*. I saw him before they went on tour to the White House. [He was] very soft, calm, and unbelievable—but could he be so scary!

That stage of the narrative marks Sabrina's first audition for a pre-professional program with closed admission, at an early age, though she had attended the open program at the same institution

and had experience of being recognized by others for her physical capacity for dance. This stage saw the formulation of a mentoring relationship, which led in its turn to an opportunity for performance at the Kennedy Center. These early successful experiences provided Denise with a basis for evaluating later experiences as negative.

After that, the older dancers suggested that I take her to get more/ better training. At the time there were a lot of things going on with [the school in Harlem]. He said that this was the age that you need to be very careful about how she is trained, and see that she gets proper technique. I mean it was risky for them to even tell me that... but I was grateful. I took her to [a small reputable pre-professional school in the city], and that's where she got most of her training.

At the time I really worried about: who am I to determine [what] her future should be? She's so young. There was a teacher who I used to talk to, and she opened up her own dance store. I used to always go to her to ask questions. I asked her that question, and she said to at least give her the chance to be able to tell you that she doesn't want to dance...

Others verified her daughter's abilities, advised her as to when it was time to move between institutions, and underscored the importance of choosing a more selective program, thereby generating critical steps and necessary linkages in the building of a career in dance. Yet again we see developing of a social network utilized to share knowledge and to provide support and information about opportunities in dance.

She was at [this school], for four years, maybe five, and each summer she went to [a state-level program in the Northeast]. It was also very intense. She danced from nine until five, and then they look for you to dance in the evenings too! You don't have to, but they like it when you do. She was nine the first time she went there.

The initial admission to a summer-intensive program was another significant genealogical step. Sabrina attended this summer-intensive program across multiple years.

Sabrina is unique because she is Black *and* she is Latina. In [the pre-professional school where she studied], there was no one else of her kind at that school, which is shocking, because we are in New York City. We have certain conversations about her body shape, and I would tell her "your body shape is beautiful, you know you don't have to be skinny." She's not fat, she's not heavy, and she's not thick. She has a very beautiful shape, and there are certain teachers that would tell her that she had beautiful dancer's body. Other teachers were looking for the lengthy New York City Ballet type dancer, but I know I was never going to take her there.

I got so frustrated with the director at [this school], she yelled at Sabrina. She had a rehearsal and [the director] didn't remember how far Sabrina travels back and forth. Sabrina was in 5th grade, and they had class and rehearsal till late. Not only did she have a lot of homework the evening before, but also she stayed up so she could make some hair berets to sell, so she was exhausted already. She gets up at 6 A.M. in the morning to go to school because she has to catch a bus. [The director] really did not know how tired this child was, and she humiliated her in front of her classmates. I was so upset because at this point you, [as a parent,] don't talk to the teachers, because she's in a pre-professional program.

I called Alonzo King, this is one of those shocking things that I did. I called his school, leaving my number. I left a message saying, what do you tell a woman, the black mother of a child who is the only child of color in her school- in a pre-professional ballet school in NYC- what do you tell her when she just doesn't know [what] else to say to her child about how to stick it out. I was shocked that he called me [back]. We talked for an hour, and what he had said was "What you have to tell her, and I know that she is young, is that it is not about being the teacher's favorite, it is not about having friends, it's about the dance. It is about what you are there to get in that classroom. And you have to go in there thinking about what you're going to get when you go in there and in the process-" this was the big thing he said- "and in the process don't lose the artist within."

One can hardly underestimate the importance of such truly conscious-raising moments as that one, for here we see a devoted, intellectual mother slowly becoming aware of the aesthetic ideals that exist within ballet about body types, and beginning to compare her daughter as a dancer to those ideals. Denise even articulated a dawning awareness of the formal and informal rules as to how to navigate these institutional structures when she noted, "You don't talk to the teachers." In order to confront some of the challenges related to her daughter's compatibility, or lack thereof, with the ideologies of ballet, she sought out others who have managed to confront and surpass such ideological restrictions, and asked them how they did it. In this way, an alliance was formed with an important figure.

Pretty powerful. [This is] what I believe. I believe, as an artist myself, that you cannot allow the people around you to determine what you are doing. Or to shape it, because then it's not yours anymore; that's what I try to impose upon her. It's been tough.

Here we see the development of a new way of thinking about a subject matter as Denise copes with the conflicts she and her daughter have confronted, she simultaneously formulates her own system of beliefs in relation to existing ideologies, both the dominant ones within ballet, and those ideologies held by others who have already challenged them. Bond (2002), building upon Gramsci, notes that

competing sectional ideologies operate in relation to a dominant ideology and within localized groups. In this case the dominant aesthetic ideology that shapes the desired aesthetic sense in ballet comes in the form of “the lengthy New York City Ballet type dancer” who is “flexible,” “white,” and “bone-thin.” It is challenged by an ideological system emergent out of local contexts at institutions, where “white” and “bone-thin” are not the locally dominant aesthetic preferences, and out of individuals, such as Alonzo King, who to Sabrina’s mother suggested some alternative interpretations of the purpose of training. “It’s about the dance. It is about what you are there to get in that classroom. And you have to go in there thinking about what you’re going to get when you go in there and in the process. . . don’t lose the artist within. “

The classrooms and levels she was in [at the summer program] had a lot of talent. Which was great, and those girls were so close. I was close to the moms, which was unusual, because there’s a lot of nonsense that goes on in these schools. What I did see also, is how it changes. Teachers are really playing favorite. Sabrina, she’s not only very gifted, she’s very flexible, which is what dancers desire to have: her technique and flexibility. But, she’s not white. Not white, and not bone-thin. She’s not these things. I noticed that they started placing her in the background, not because of her talent. That’s what was very sad about it. That’s where we, the parents, had to step in.

Here, a mother notes the ways in which her daughter fails to comport with the ideological ideal of a dancer— thin and white— and the ways in which she does, through her gifts, technical strengths, and flexibility. She thereby gains a sense of those hegemonic ideologies that tend to exclude anyone deemed incompatible with the existing aesthetic preferences. In this case such exclusion was all too literal— placing Sabrina in the back of the room. But, rather than supinely accepting such sanctions, Denise became her child’s advocate and pushed back.

She worked so hard. No matter what she does, you can say that this kid does what she’s supposed to do. At [her pre-professional school], this is an important point. They *loved* how [her friend] looked, her feet and everything, and she was a very good dancer, but not at Sabrina’s level, not as strong. When we [Denise, Sabrina, Sabrina’s friend, and Sabrina’s friend’s mother] went to [the summer-intensive program together the first year she was accepted], we went and met with [the director] and asked, they definitely aren’t going *en pointe* when they get there— right? She says right.

We get there, [renting a house to share together] and audition to be placed in class. At the time Sabrina was much stronger than [her friend], but they placed [her friend] two levels higher than Sabrina, and put her *en pointe*, insisted that she go *en pointe*. I told Sabrina that I was so proud of her because when you're asked to go *en pointe*— when it's time for you *en pointe*— it's such a big deal. She got through that. You can imagine it was so difficult for them to really stay friends. Her friend's mother, I love her mother. Her mother is a writer. We had a very honest conversation about what was going on with the girls. It was so blatant.

Sabrina and her mother faced the challenge of housing along with another student at her level in her pre-professional school who was placed at a higher level at the summer-intensive and in pointe classes, when she was not. A young child, in a low-level or an open program, does not challenge the ideologies of dance in the same way an older child progressing through a pre-professional program does, as he or she becomes a figure that can be used in choreography, or to reconstruct a classical ballet.

We took her to [the summer-intensive program] for the third year and she saw that she had been placed in a class that was wrong for her. This is when I started seeing that the way that they do things is not always what you see. How do I know? I was always around. I would talk to people, and they talk to me, not because I'm asking them; we were just talking. Sabrina said, "Mom," because some of the kids told her she was— what stood out was that her classmates from New York City were in a totally different class than her. Well, how could that be possible? She's better than a good number of students in the class. She was totally separated, and she was in a class where most of the students could not compare. Can you imagine? She said it to me first, and I was like, "okay."

She ended up being the person who demonstrated most of the class and all her teachers felt the same way [as we did about her placement]. "Why are you in this class?" One teacher in particular, [who was] actually in the *Corps de ballet* in a well-known company said, "You know she doesn't belong in this class." I said, "I know." "Well, did you tell the director that?" "I did." She said that she knew [the director] very well. She said "I wish [her] teachers had told me earlier." So we did everything we could, we spoke to the director, we told her how we felt, and she played like she did know what was going on. We knew then that she [couldn't] stay there.

[At this intensive program], they let you observe class whenever you want, so I did. So my husband and I went in, and I'll tell you it made me cry. I said, "Oh my God, why would they do this?" I contacted someone in the office and I asked. [Sabrina said] that two of her classmates were in the prodigy class. The person in charge just didn't want her in there. If we were able to get our money back [we would have left], but we couldn't so we just tried to empower her to stick it out.

The failure to promote students, and exclusion from classes/rehearsals/performances often are signals sent out to students and parents that their child is no longer welcome in a school and will not be

given the educational opportunities there to pursue a career. Although the placements and levels at this particular summer-intensive program are often elements that are critiqued by students and parents—according to the information that Jean-Pierre provided in the information session, students are grouped according to the ‘things that they need to work on,’ and so, any given class will have a wide range of ability-levels— the differential treatment of students in the same level of a program in their home school was stark. Denise spoke with the director of the program to find out why her daughter had been placed as she had and not allowed to attend the classes her classmates were allowed to attend, when even one of the instructors at the school—a well-known professional dancer— verified that she had not been placed correctly.

We left there and actually went to a [well-known conservatory]. The principal at [the conservatory] happened to be at a show that Sabrina had performed at, just by chance. He was in the audience. He was at the school in Harlem when we were there, years before, when [Sabrina] was much younger. He said, “Oh my God, is that Sabrina?” He couldn’t believe how much she had advanced in her technique, and he invited her to come as a prodigy [to the conservatory] because she was 12, and his program was for 14-21 year-olds. She went and it was unbelievable. It was perfect timing, because she was so downhearted about leaving the other school. I [wondered] if this kid has no talent, then why do all these teachers, famous people, see the talent in her?

After that experience with placement at the summer-intensive, a chance connection to the school in Harlem where she had previously attended led to an invitation to attend a summer-intensive at a highly selective conservatory. This led to invited performance opportunities that were related to other people’s assessment of her abilities, and recognition of her skills and talent, which in turn provided an opportunity for early success—with all of that standing in stark contrast to the environments in which she experienced so much struggle to obtain recognition. After this, Sabrina made the move to a more selective institution; in part because the challenges she had faced at her previous institution propelled her and her mother to seek other opportunities.

After [she left the pre-professional school she was attending], she went to [a national-level school] for a year. At the end [of the year, they] did not ask her back. That was shocking. During the year, [the program coordinator] never said anything about her technique. When we went in there [for a conference] and she got her evaluation, it was nothing but “very good,” “excellent.”

The teacher that wrote [the positive evaluation was not in the end-of-year meeting, and the person we were meeting with] was one of her teachers, but he refuted everything that was [written]. He said, "Oh she doesn't do that" [when he read the positive review.] My husband was there, too. [He] didn't say whether he would accept her [for the following year] or not. [The program coordinator] "we are going to wait till the end of the summer." What they did was come in [to the classroom] and give all her classmates a schedule for the upcoming year. They did not give Sabrina one. Can you imagine? Can you imagine, as a child, dealing with this nonsense?

She had held it in [until] she got in the car with us. She said, "I don't think that I should do this anymore. I don't think this is for me." It finally came out that he had done this [with the schedules]. I went in, and [it turns out that] the [coordinator] didn't [hand out the schedules to everyone but Sabrina]; he had sent his *assistant* to do it.

I went up there the next day and I said, how would you even think that's an okay thing to do to a child? If you can look at me and tell me this kid doesn't have talent then I'll shut my mouth. But I'm sorry..." It was so upsetting. I just let her convince me.

It is because I have to get her ready for the world and the world is not nice, not kind especially with what she wants to do. I've never told her [that] she can't do it. But the world is telling her she can't. It's difficult to negotiate, to teach her how to deal with... What I said was, that no way will you let this man tell you what you can and can't do. You can't. If you go to a program that you love and tell me then, "it's not what I want to do with my life," then that's different and it's up to me to hear you. But not when someone at [the intensive program] does it, or now when this does it— no! Not when I look at you, and other people see you, and they say, "Oh my god, this kid is so talented!"

After a year at a national-level school in which Sabrina received only positive evaluations, the program coordinator provided mother and daughter with no hint as to whether she would be invited to return the following year, so they waited until the end of the summer. When the students were given schedules for the following year and Sabrina was not given one, they had to cope not only with the exclusion from the school but also with the fact that other instructors' positive evaluations of her daughter's abilities bespoke no opportunity for continued enrollment.

After that incident happened with passing out the scheduled, I knew I had to go in and speak with [the program coordinator]. I was so afraid! I know my kid. I know what she can and can't do. I know what she needs. With dance, I know what she can do, but I didn't know *him*. We hadn't been there long enough.

I wanted my husband to go in with me because I was so afraid, but he could not get out of a meeting. I had to find the guts to go in there and speak for my kid. Sabrina had to go in with me, and he came in with his assistant. He already knew before we went in there what his decision

was going to be. I said to him, I'd like to know what the deal is and what's going to happen. I think it was very hard for him to say he was not going to ask her back.

He said, I don't see a change in her. I said, "What do you mean? I just observed that class, and I see a change. I see her turns are better, and I see a change. She's changing techniques, because at [the pre-professional school that she attended] they do strict Balanchine, and at [here] they do strict Vaganova." He said, "I don't see any change from the beginning to the end." I said, "she hasn't had much pointe and she missed a lot of classes because of rehearsals." [She was one of the students invited to perform in the associated company's *Nutcracker*.]

He said, "there is dance in the rehearsals, she moves in rehearsals." I said, "We both know that there's not a lot of movement. There's a lot of sitting— a lot of sitting— not a lot of movement, sitting and watching the company." He said "You know, there's not a lot, but it's very exciting." Well yes- participating in the *Nutcracker* was very exciting for Sabrina, but now she has to pay for the loss of not having class?

I said, "It's interesting that you're saying these things. Her other teachers don't seem to agree with you, and you have not seen her all summer. You have seen her in one class. How can you make a decision based on that?" He said, "What teacher? "So I listed four teachers, two of whom I had spoken to directly, and the others based on what Sabrina had said their reaction to her in class was. He throws his head back. He wanted me to just sit there and say nothing, and I'm fighting for my daughter. He said, "Well, I talked to them, and they agree with me."

Sabrina and I didn't talk until the next day about that conversation. She said— we both said— we know he was not telling the truth.

Neither the positive reinforcement that she received from other teachers, nor her invitation to participate in performance was acknowledged by the program coordinator, who told them he'd received contradictory information, when not inviting her back. In the eyes of Sabrina and Denise, the contradictory information verified that the real reason behind the failure to keep/promote her daughter was unrelated to her daughter's ability. Denise's willingness to confront authority figures to negotiate with the leaders of in the institution rather than meekly accept their decisions stands as a potent example of the need for relatively disempowered young dancers and their parents to, when necessary, stand up to the hierarchy of an institution by insisting upon the dancer's earned the right to a certain status and position.

It was very upsetting. Sabrina was adjusting; she has never failed at anything, and she's never been asked out of anything. It would have been taken better if he could have given us some specific reason, but it was just general, so we knew. We knew that she did not fit in with that "look." The mother of one of the other girls that he had also asked to leave, verbatim, reported

the same meeting with him. Her daughter was a little older, but she's a white student, so that wasn't an issue, but her body. . . Her size is just taller and kind of bigger, so we had the same conversation.

She waited until I came out, then said, "Okay, what did he say?" I told her. I kid you not, [he'd said] the same thing. She tried all kinds of things— well if I take her to such-and-such kind of place [to get extra training] and bring her back- and he says, "no, no, no, that will not be." So she left and went to [another school]. Sabrina was very heart-broken, but she got the point when she said, "I am not going to go back there to audition."

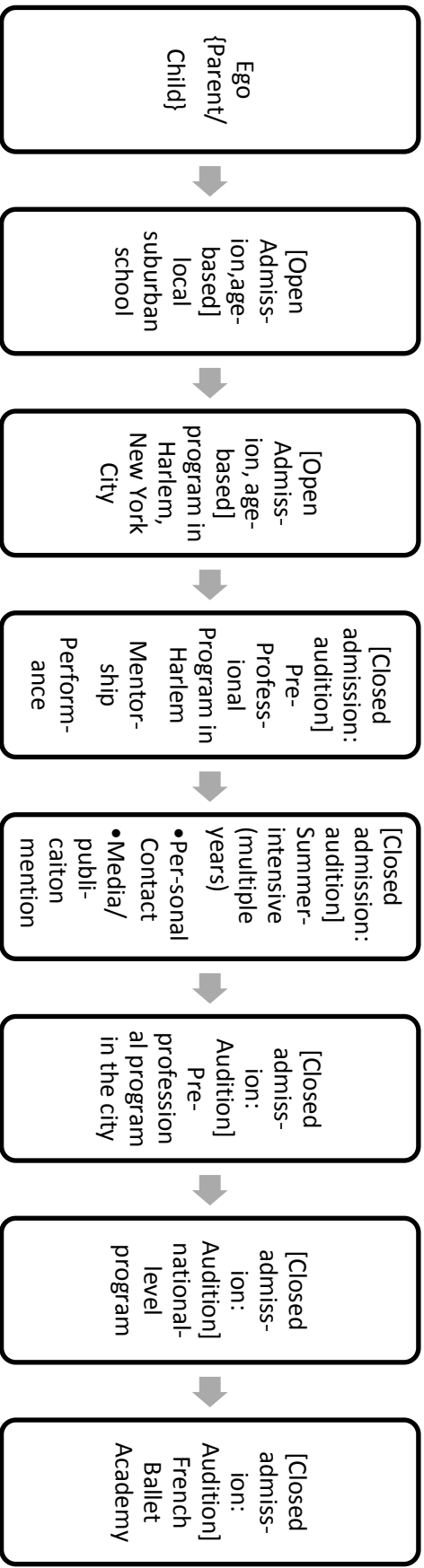
By communicating with another parent, Denise was able to verify that what had happened to her daughter was part of a routinized, exclusionary, boundary-maintenance process. This information also was gathered via her own evaluation of how Sabrina and the other student stood, or "more precisely," danced, in relation to those ideals.

We have to move on. Sabrina just wrote an essay because she was applying to high school, and they asked [her to write about] something in your life that was very trying. She wrote about deciding what dance school to go to after that experience. She chose [the French Ballet Academy]. She auditioned at a few places, and one school [the institution at which Jean-Pierre previously had taught] loved her. They offered her a scholarship. They said a few negative things. [Jean Pierre] didn't do that. Most of all, she chose Jean-Pierre because of the way he teaches. I see she has gotten stronger in the little time she's been here. She feels like they really pay attention to her. There was one day when she got in the back so someone else could be seen; usually she'll get in the front. Jean-Pierre saw her, and called her to the front to demonstrate. Jean-Pierre never had her demonstrate before. She feels comfortable; she's getting to know the kids. Which is very nice, but it's also about the technique and about the dance.

Finding herself placed outside one of the major institutions that produces professional dancers, had Sabrina find another path leading to professional dance training. The French Ballet Academy is working well for her for she was placed on an advanced level and has received the corrections and the attention in class that a student of recognized ability would expect to receive. Her experiences at her previous schools, although not always positive, formulated a genealogical pattern of movement through increasingly selective institutions. (See the figure below.) The resulting pattern is similar to those of other students who were admitted to the school, though in her case a significant difference occurred when she experienced practices intended to exclude her and thereby implicitly maintain aesthetic boundaries among institutions. Two factors helped her to navigate her way past these challenges: the

presence of significant public figures who served as mentors and the use of network connections to gain access to institutions, as in her invited attendance to a summer program at a conservatory.

Figure 10: Sabrina's Genealogy



This chapter focused on how relationships between institutions are developed in relation to their adherence to the set of ideologies focusing on the aesthetics of the body, and how individual students navigate within and between these ideas, as they move between institutions for training. This chapter relates to the question of how students can learn to navigate the boundaries between the physical body and aesthetic ideologies, through formal educative processes, and the informal education that occurs throughout various sites within the landscape about these ideologies. There are practices within the ballet landscape that are used to navigate boundaries, both when students are easily encompassed by those boundaries, and when they are excluded by them.

In the process of gaining admittance to the different institutions, such as with the summer-intensive audition, the majority are able to utilize the relationship between their body and institutionally adopted aspects of the aesthetic ideals that exist within the landscape of ballet, to gain access. The case study of Sabrina illustrates how some students, who are affected by exclusionary practices in the maintenance of boundaries, are able to utilize resources such as social networks and mentoring relationships, and access competing ideologies, such as those that privilege the ability to dance over 'whiteness' or 'thin-ness', in order to gain access and increase mobility across institutions.

Of the students who dance at the French Ballet Academy, the majority of students who are able to access selective institutions were situated within a certain demographic: girls come from upper-middle class or upper-class families with parents who are predominately in either finance or the arts, they are predominately white, and have a parent who is dedicated to helping them build a career in dance. For the most part, they also have similar body types, and are able to maintain a lean constitution. They are already positioned within the structure and terrain of American society, with the economic and social resources needed to access the more selective institutions within the ballet landscape. Harrington and Boardman suggest that family of origin, and education, both formal (though, not necessarily

performance in school, as other studies suggest *where* someone attends school may be just as influential as what they do in school) and informal, such as the presence of leadership opportunities and mentorships, are factors in the paths of individuals across structural boundaries of race, class, and gender that would otherwise limit mobility. Given Sabrina's background- an upper middle class Black/Latino family- she and her mother were able to navigate through those obstacles that were largely related to encounters with the aesthetic ideologies of ballet, wherein her daughter's body type and skin color were not considered ideal aesthetic qualities in the selective institutions where she sought training. Rather than electing to quit ballet, or to accept training in a less selective institution operating outside of the dominant aesthetic ideologies, she chose to find alternative ways to access the highly selective institutions, often by utilizing network connections and mentorships. Sabrina's mother was able to locate others who were confronting the same challenges related to access and dominant aesthetic ideologies, and were working to develop alternative ideologies related to participation in ballet.

Chapter Four: Education and Aesthetics

While the previous chapter looked at how ideologies, or at the system of beliefs and values which shapes the processes of a society, work to maintain external boundaries and impact movements between institutions, this chapter looks at how the ideologies associated with both aesthetics and educational processes are socially created, reified, and transmitted inside the classroom at the varying levels of instruction offered by the school. This is done by examining classroom practices and situating those practices within the broader cultural context. This includes the communication of what ballet “should be” to students and parents, via a broad range of instructional techniques and devices including discourse, movement, and parental observations of classes. These processes serve to formalize the status of the school in its relation to other institutions, such as schools and companies, while simultaneously fostering students’ understanding of these processes.

Bourdieu notes, “To be able to form discerning . . . opinions is again a result of the education received: Ability to throw off school constraints is the privilege of those who have sufficiently assimilated school education” (Bourdieu 1999:209). The processes of education reproduce the existing structural arrangement whereby, as Bourdieu noted, children from an early age are socialized into the practices, beliefs, and tastes of a social class; the ability to create art and to discern its value is a form of education, but for those for whom that education came early in life, it is thoroughly ingrained (Bourdieu 1990). It comes as no surprise then, given the privileged status of most of Academy’s students, that the Foucaultian concept of disciplining the body emerges as students are socialized into the traditions of French ballet and its associated aesthetic concepts, which operate in relation to the production and maintenance of social cohesion.

Tradition and the Student Body

The French tradition that Jean-Pierre and Noémie aim to teach is an oral one. As Jean-Pierre explained, it is passed down from the dancers of one generation to the next, all of whom leave their

own marks on the evolution of the tradition, as they make technical adaptations to new choreography and initiate new trends in technique-development. In this way, it remains a living tradition; one that is not static or canonized, but continually changing. There is a very strong sense of patrimony involved, since the movements being taught formulate an aspect of an “intangible cultural heritage.” One such change in tradition that Jean-Pierre noted in class, when correcting a student, was the height of the *passé*; it used to be lower, but now, there is a preference for a higher position. The dictionary that he both references and refers his students to is the one authored by Guillot and Prudhommeau (1969), which was used in the Paris Opera Ballet School when he was in training. Jean-Pierre emphasized that this dictionary is not a curriculum. As Ruggles and Silverman (2009) note, oral tradition and language, performing arts such as music and dance, and social practices such as rituals formulate a part of those intangible practices and knowledge-sets recognized by individuals as an indispensable aspect of their heritage. In this case, the human body not only is the site of cultural production, but also a site in which “social identity and political attitudes are expressed,” for the bodies of the students are the sites whereby the traditions being transmitted are expressed and stored (Ruggles and Silverman 2009:2).

During the second year the school was in operation, Jean-Pierre was contacted to preview an English-language publication, *The French School of Classical Ballet*, written by Vanina Wilson. A former dancer in the Paris Opera, Wilson had spent the later part of her career teaching in the United States. The book represents the first attempt to codify the French technique into the written form of a manual that sets out a curriculum for instruction. The overview on the publisher’s web site reads as follows:

This thirty-three-week training manual parallels the presentation of basic steps, positions, and alignment that first-year, pre-professional students are taught. It fills a gap in existing instructional literature for teachers and students of the French school of classical ballet. . . . Organized for ease of use with a syllabus, *The French School of Classical Ballet* presents poses and sequences in the order in which a ballet instructor would present them in a typical course—starting with the simplest positions and movements and building on them to gradually increase the level of difficulty. . . .

The French School of Classical Ballet serves as a blueprint for a complete beginning ballet curriculum or simply as a source of reference for certain steps, positions, or exercises that exemplify French ballet training. (University of Florida Press 2013)

Jean-Pierre noted that the book was accurate in terms of content but that its publication presents a fundamental challenge to the understanding of the nature of French technique. It also presents a challenge to the locales in which French technique can be taught, for this mass production has perhaps irrevocably altered privileged way in which the bodies that are to be the recipients of schooling in the French technique are carefully selected by those institutions and individuals who possess it. The extent of the book's impact remains to be seen, as there are very few schools in the United States that specifically train students in the French technique. The book is an English-language publication printed by an English-language publishing company, which means that it is not readily available in France, or to a French-speaking audience. The intended audience lies outside of a French context and also, as the synopsis indicates, outside of the French technique. The book contains the exercises, patterns, and repetitions that are commonly used in French-technique classes to train students along with explanations of the purpose of those exercises, which are largely consistent with the classroom practices I observed at the French Ballet Academy.

As Silverman (2008) suggests through her writings about the relationships among nationalism, identity, and the past, cultural-heritage sites such as bodies, archaeological sites, and artifacts often are involved in legitimating nations, institutions, and social practices in the present. As previously mentioned in relation to Weber's (1958) work, the type of authority most often invoked in the establishment of the school was that of tradition, whereby classroom practice, and the right of the instructors to teach the French classical form, were positioned in relation to institutions and practices within the tradition of ballet, and specifically the subset of French tradition. This type of authority also was linked to the instructors' achieved legitimacy as professionals and teachers, cultivated under the

umbrella of other instructions and companies, and derived, in part, from the traditions and status of these institutions. Discourses about these traditions are used to legitimize current practices.

During class time, the instructors provided information about the context of the education they were providing to students in terms of the tradition in which they operate, one that is both related to movement and history and includes distinguishing the French ballet tradition from the Russian and providing the historical context surrounding the development of movements within particular national styles. For example:

Pirouette combinations followed, with 32 counts. Students marked them together. Renee asked a question about the combination. Jean-Pierre then explained how the *tombe pas de bourrée* followed into the *fouetté*: in France, it's a half a *rond de jambe* from the front to second as you're pulling into *retiré*, but in Russia, you just pull into second from second. He then demonstrated illustrated the difference. [Field Notes]

We see there, technical clarifications were being given about a particular type of movement and its association with a particular national style. A similar clarification emerged in relation to using movement to develop the character of the swan, commonly associated with *Swan Lake* and to perform within a national style.

During the jumps during a variation class, the students were corrected for having slow *échappés*; he told them to work in the air; Skye was told to work the turn out for her hip. He said apropos of what she was doing now to indicate the character of the swans, "I don't know what you could be, because they are not from no country." Skye laughed and said "Australia?" Another student added, "Unknown country?" [Field Notes]

Later these movements were positioned by discourse in relation to the historical production of the French style and the appropriateness of using certain national styles for particular ballets, given the context of their development.

Students also were working on *brisé* forward and back. Jean-Pierre said that the French style was harder than the Russian because of the *rond de jambe* here, too. He said "You rarely see it here in America." The implication was that this was more valuable because it added a uniqueness to a student's dancing, to know the more difficult and rare way of doing the steps. He said that it was great when they did a French ballet from the 1840s here; he was disappointed, though, that they did it in the Russian style. The Russian style of doing the step didn't exist when it was choreographed, and he said that it was like using a synthesizer with Mozart's music; because it's symphony music, you didn't expect it. He said that even the

Goldberg Variations music they are using now— he pressed play on the CD— is wrong— did the students know why? They shrugged. He said that it was wrong because it was written before the piano existed, and even though it was played with a piano for this recording, it was originally on harpsichord. He asked the students if they knew what the difference was between a harpsichord and a piano. One student said that it sounded different. He said, “yes, but why?” They didn’t know, so he said that the piano forte strikes the strings, whereas the harpsichord pinches them. [Field Notes]

The concept of tradition in relation to legitimacy is critical, particularly when, as both Gramsci and Bourdieu suggest, education within particular traditions is used to establish and maintain status and distinction within a landscape. Handler and Linnekin (1984) approach tradition as a symbolic construction; one that is used to describe a perceived connection to the past, regardless of whether the practices of the current day are precisely those that existed in the past. The concept of tradition is related to the perception of continuity in a society but also is part of the very fabric that works to maintain cohesion among a group of individuals who are socialized into a particular set of customs and practices. Quite simply, it fosters a sense of belonging within a group. Anderson (1992) raises these concepts up to the national level and notes that this sense of shared tradition, in addition to operating in the form of ideological principles, also creates a sense of “imagined” belonging among the members of a group who may not know one another personally.

Across multiple domains, the ownership of cultural heritage is both contested and legitimated. Part of the work of the Academy as an institution was to create legitimacy for itself and the French technique taught in the US context, by doing so by building upon the French tradition from which it emerged. As instructors transmitted their knowledge of dance to students in the classroom, ideas about aesthetics and tradition become embodied and begin to represent both the creation of continuity with the past and the development of distinction from it. Traditions in ballet are accompanied by ideas about nation and national culture, and they likewise are appropriated by nations as representatives of their traditions and culture.

Repetition and Deviation in Teaching and Learning

As previously mentioned, although Jean-Pierre and Noémie have different instructional styles, they teach within the same technique, and their areas of focus complement one another. Jean-Pierre's classes focus on musicality and lyricism and thus are enhanced by Noémie's focus on detail and the correct use of musculature. In Noémie's classes exercises might involve more repetition to build muscle memory, and a slow explanation of the muscles involved in a particular movement; while the same sort of precision was expected in Jean-Pierre's class, his barre tended to be faster-paced and center work tended to emphasize the relationship of the body, in space and in time, to the experience of the audience. At the end of the day, though, they held a similar objective: to teach students to dance well. This means teaching students technical precision within a specific technique, as well as the versatility needed to perform an array of roles within different ballets by different choreographers.

Jean-Pierre explained to me that his goals in teaching became set during the time he spent in the school his mother taught in after she retired from a professional career. His mother, aunt, and uncle were all products of the Paris Opera Ballet School, and all had careers in dance. He said that teaching is an acquired taste but that "good" training is necessary for students, and there are so many schools and teachers that do not train their students well. There are classes in which well-known dancers will simply deliver combinations without teaching, and there are teachers who try to teach but really never convey technique to students; in both cases the end result is the production of dancers who are not technically proficient. The marker of "good" training, in this context, is the ability to produce dancers who can gain access to, and move between, top companies; dancers who can perform a wide assortment of ballets be they romantic or contemporary; and dancers who can move between roles within a ballet.

Although there are differences in terms of both instructional content and verbal interactions, each class period at the French Ballet Academy follows the same structured sequence, moving from barre to center exercises. Although exercises differ in complexity as they relate to the levels of the

students, the aspects of movement that the instructors focus on throughout the lessons are consistent. As mentioned previously students are grouped into one of two levels, advanced or intermediate, though there is a broad range of ability within each class. During the first year, the intermediate level was categorized into sub-groups, with the “Intermediate Group D” alternating between intermediate- and advanced-level classes. The same set of music was used throughout the sequence in both levels, with particular musical selections being used for exercises that call for a particular tempo. One CD that was used is of the music of Lisa Harris, who has earmarked selections with titles such as “Tendu 4/4,” “Adagio 3/4,” and “Port de bras 6/8.” The music is repeatedly played so that the students know each selection well enough to focus on the different ways in which movement can be timed in relation to the music and to help them develop musicality. Thus when even a student was off the music Jean-Pierre would stamp his foot on the accented counts, calling them out verbally—“and one and two” —to get him or her back onto the beat.

During one particular class period, Jean-Pierre told the students they needed to be more on the music when doing a combination in center that they had already done at the barre:

When the boys did the combination, to Jonassaint, he said—you’re off the music. He stopped in front of him, stamping his foot on the accented count—“and 1 and 2—” to get him back on the counts. Jean-Pierre told the class they needed to be more on the music and the students looked a bit puzzled, so Jean-Pierre marked it again: the temps lie fell on the one-count and the tendu was on the “and” counts. The timing of the movements was quite different from how the students did it at the barre, with everything on the whole counts. Jean-Pierre told students that playing with the counts was the only way that they could learn to be sharp and fast. Musicality, if it has to be defined, was the subtle thing that went beyond technique; understanding when you move and how you move, was characteristic of a personal relationship with the music. The students do the combination again, and Jean-Pierre told them—“good—well, not really—but better.” [Field Notes]

Jean-Pierre mentioned to me that until he had his own studio and the school was set up properly, there wasn’t enough money to pay a pianist, so they had to use CDs until then. A pianist would be able to emphasize different aspects of a piece and alter the tempo as students learned it, in a way

that an electronic sound system cannot; as students move into companies, however, they will be expected to move to music performed by an orchestra, invisible from the stage.

Most of the individual class sessions were two hours in length. The intermediate and advanced students alternated between having class earlier in the day and later in the day. As there was some overlap both between the ages of the intermediate and advanced students, and the lengths of time that they had spent studying ballet, the major difference between the two levels tended to be the technical proficiency of the students. By the time they entered the French Ballet Academy students already knew much of the “vocabulary” of ballet, though intermediate students often struggled to turn “words” into “sentences.” The advanced students could remember and execute longer combinations, and could “speak” more fluently with their bodies, than could the intermediate students. Generally the advanced-level students also could implement corrections more quickly, and they were more likely to be able to maintain the “correct” alignment and positioning of the body during various exercises. Student maturity also was a factor, as was the students’ devotion to working to improve their technique outside of class. In the curriculum of the French school, each level is designed to develop increasing technical proficiency; this means that over the course of study, the “vocabulary” is incorporated into increasingly longer and more complex combinations.

At the beginning of class, students position themselves at the barre. They often stand in favorite spots, and close to friends. The student who does not remember exercises well tends to position himself or herself between others who do. Typically each ballet-technique class starts with a standard plié sequence, the same across all levels and repeated in all class sessions. It is not uncommon, however, for Pilates-type exercises to be given to students before class begins to activate their core muscles, or abdominals. The exercises are started to the right, with the left hand on the barre, and repeated to the left, with the right hand on the barre. In this setting Noémie and Jean-Pierre, both of whom are native French speakers, used the French terminology for movements, but delivered most of the verbal

classroom instructions in English, which was the first language of all but three of the school's (who were Spanish, Italian, and French speakers).

Language in the Classroom

The language used to communicate in the classrooms of the French Ballet Academy can be organized into four categories, three of them verbal and one nonverbal. The three categories of verbal language are: 1) the full, standardized vocabulary and grammar which is specific to the ballet genre; 2) a "shorthand" version of the full language that is widely understood across classrooms and contexts; and 3) specific "nicknames" or verbal cues that are developed locally to represent longer segments of "language" or movement. The full, standardized verbal language of instruction within this school is comprised of a specialized vocabulary used to refer to movements and positions of the body. It is shared across the ballet genre and has been codified through repetition and transmission across generations of practitioners in institutions, as well as through the production of dictionaries. It makes sense, given the historical origins of ballet, that the terminology used is primarily French, and the movements labeled in the French language are rarely translated even though native French speakers employ these words in other contexts. There are some differences between national techniques, between the movements associated with the same words, though most of the vocabulary is shared. Jean-Pierre frequently switched between the U.S. and French descriptors of movements; he said this was not a strategy he had chosen for teaching, but rather something that originated out of his own confusion over which terms to use. He had been in the US, for 12 years and had adopted locally used terms, though his French training was thoroughly engrained and he found himself using both at various times.

The full, standardized-vocabulary word for a movement, such as *rond de jambe*, is frequently shortened in ballet classrooms to *rond*. This "short-hand" speech is commonly used in the classroom at the French Ballet Academy and is shared in much the same way as is the full, standardized language. The use of this shorthand speech equates to colloquial-language use in most cases and sometimes is

employed out of necessity, since it is not always possible when the instructors are providing verbal cues to the students to coordinate the length of time needed to say the full vocabulary term with the music's tempo. Students and instructors also develop short, abbreviated word-phrases for movements and nicknames for combinations and series of movements, all of which could be thought of as chapter titles or headings. For example, at all levels class begins with the familiar *pliés*: two *demi*, one *grand* in first, *chambre* forward and back, two *demi*, one *grand* in second, *chambre* to the barre and away, two *demi* in fourth, rond to fourth *effacé*, two *demi*, followed by two *demi*, one *grand plié* in fifth, with circular port de bras. This rather long verbal sequence frequently is shortened to the phrase "*demi-demi grand*."

Another example illustrating the ways in which names arise in relation to both the context and the figures involved is the nicknaming of segments for a variation the students were rehearsing for performance. The two figures in this *pas de deux* were Jonassaint and Jocelyn; it was an excerpt from a larger piece set to music from the Goldberg Variations. One segment was nicknamed "the minuet," and another segment, consisting of a partnering turn in double attitude, was dubbed "the swastika." The combined shape of the dancers' bodies formed the arms and legs of the symbol, and the students' own social and cultural upbringings led them to understand it as a swastika, rather than, for example, a Buddhist symbol or an ancient symbol of life.

Nonverbal language holds every bit as much significance, in terms of communication, as the verbal; the nonverbal aspect of dance instruction is comprised of half-formed movements of the feet and gestures of the body, arms, and hands, that are used to represent full movements. By marking the combinations rather than doing things full out, instructors are able to demonstrate for the students without putting undue stress on their bodies. This system of communication arises between teachers and students, and although it is also something that is understood across schools and institutions, local "inflections" develop in the ways the students and teachers use these movements, in much the same fashion as sign language can carry an accent.

The Disciplining of the Body and the Embodiment of Tradition

Class periods are marked by sequences and patterns, not only in the barre work and center combinations that are given, but also in terms of the interactions between students and teachers. At times the instructors deliver few corrections, at other times many. At times they deliver corrections to specific students, and at other times, they deliver them to the entire class. Within any given class period, some students inevitably garner more attention than others. If a student is working particularly well, he or she might be given additional corrections to work on so that he or she will continue to improve. Students typically acknowledge corrections by making eye contact with the instructor, and by trying to implement the correction via those repetitive movements that serve to commit the motion to body-memory. If a student seems tired, isn't working to full potential, or makes mistakes that already have been corrected, he or she also is likely to receive negative feedback. This is a normative aspect of the classroom environment, an essential part of the process whereby tradition is instilled and bodies sculpted in the ongoing attempt to adhere to a certain aesthetic.

Serena glanced in the mirror while Noémie was explaining that the shoulders should be even and square during a *chambre* back, and adjusted her leotard across her shoulders. "Serena!" Noémie exclaimed, "so disrespectful." Noémie continued. "Disrespectful to be—" Noémie mimed adjusting the leotard and looking at herself in the mirror—"when I'm trying to fix you. It's discipline, respect. That's the difference between you and the Kirov kids. You have no discipline. You're going to have to take directions from the coach and the director—you're like a sculpture in that moment. You *don't move*. You have to get used to that. You have already learned that you fly away from a company, and nobody cares—" Noémie looks at Serena—"nobody cares that you have good feet. When you work as a dancer, you need a strong personality, but you need to learn how to be a doll in the studio. Nobody moves in the Kirov School, in the Paris Opera School. I deserve some respect."

Noémie told them [that if they go to an audition, to a company], "there are other people who have good positions (5th, turned out) like you. In your job, the others are as beautiful as you are—with Cuban, Japanese, Chinese, Russian, there are a lot of beautiful people. They have to decide who they will take: the one who knows the combination, or the one who is in the clouds. Rachael—where should you be looking— in the mirror or the inside of your hand [during *épaulement*]?" Rachael responds, "the inside of your hand." Noémie states, "No, the mirror." She marked it again, watching herself in the mirror. This is an object lesson in being the one who knows the combination. It means paying attention to all aspects of the combination, not just the pattern of the feet [Field Notes]

The emphasis there was on the fact the bodies of the students were ideal raw material to work with, but only if the students were willing to engage with the process and show that they had the discipline needed to learn. The broader concept of discipline, as Foucault (1995) explains, emerged from within the very same social and historical context as the concept of discipline in ballet training: the Enlightenment period, during which concerns arose about the nature of the individual in relation to the mass, and the historical intersection of the Industrial Revolution in France with the need for specific types of training and schooling to achieve economic productivity. For almost two full centuries, conceptions of the nature of citizenship kept shifting, with the advent of each new revolutionary or reactionary regime. Foucault has this to say, about the way this concept of discipline intersects with pedagogical practice:

Specializing the time of training and detaching it from the adult time, from the time of mastery; arranging different stages, separated from one another by graded examinations...a whole analytical pedagogy was being formed, meticulous in its detail (it broke down the subject being taught into its simplest elements, it hierarchized each stage of development into small steps) and also very precocious in its history. (1995:159)

Foucault provides the example of the training in military techniques in the late 1700s provided by the *École Militaire* in Paris, an institution where children were “adopted by the nation and brought up in special schools” (Servan J. quoted in Foucault 1995:158). Those children were taught posture and gestures, from movements of fingers and arms to leg movements, in relation to the use of weaponry. Progression through these schools was contingent upon adhering to techniques for disciplining the body that were concerned with “the art of distributions” and “the control of activity” (Foucault 1995:141). The art of distributions concerned several aspects of the arrangement of individuals in space: their enclosure in schools, the partitioning of individuals into groups and spatial arrangements, thereby creating functional sets out of the arrangement of space and bodies, and ranking individuals in a hierarchy. The aspect of discipline that concerns the “control of activity” involves the formulation of timetables marked by cyclical repetitions; coordinating actions in time, so that many do the same action

at once; controlling the entire body so that it correctly implements gestures; articulating the body in relation to objects; and making full use of time, so that none is wasted (Foucault 1995). Ritenburg (2011) suggested all this applies to ballet:

Characterized by mass forms of training bodies and behaviors, there are a number of disciplinary techniques or principles that facilitate the operation of these mechanisms of power and which are recognizable in a world of ballet: (1) control of space including enclosure in a protected space such as a school or studio setting; (2) ranking or placement of individuals such as into grades or hierarchy for desired ability; (3) control of activity such as through a timetable; (4) exhaustive use of the body through exercises as tasks of increasing complexity marking the acquisition of knowledge such as through examinations; and (5) the individual body becomes a unit within a mass; the individual is “recognized” through his or her degree of membership within the group by tracing and establishing the norm. (Foucault 1979:141-67)

The idea of discipline as a mechanism of social positioning—as a characteristic having to do with the creation of a body *en masse*, of individuals with enough similarities of body and technical movement that they can be appropriated individually or as a group for artistic purposes tied into the idea of discipline—is connected with the ability of an individual to control his or her body. The instilling of discipline—is connected with the ability of an individual to control his or her body. The instilling of discipline, via the mirror-image pedagogical practices of breaking down smaller movements and of increasing complexity over time, was clear in the structural arrangement of the schedule of classes and in the way their content of classes was devoted to attention to specific movements. Students are expected to be disciplined—divested of all movements and behaviors alien to the classroom environment or unrelated to ballet—so that all of their attention can be focused on using the entirety of the bodies to form the correct gestures and movements.

At the Academy during the two years of my observation, compliments, and even the recognitions of particular movements as “correct,” were few and far between, but of course that just made them that much more meaningful, and appreciated, when delivered. Generally positive attention took the form of kindly delivered corrections, or easy jokes about mistakes that served to make an allegorical connection between dance and the outside world. Students took both positive and negative corrections to heart; often they discussed them after class in the lockerroom, a place where, after a

particularly rough day in class, tears were sometimes shed. Even students considered quite skilled as compared with others of their age group have their moments of despair, when they honestly believe they will never learn to do something as well as they need to, in order to dance professionally. The most negative of all possible instructional responses to a student is silence. This communicates that the instructor does not believe the student is capable of learning more, or of implementing a correction. And yet students may still learn from and study through the silence, finally reaching a point where they begin to receive recognition through corrections.

Throughout class time, the instructors framed these corrections— positive, negative, and neutral— as a part of the training process to become a professional dancer, with the body and mind being instruments to be sculpted by others. Noémie went on to indicate indicating that there is a vital distinction to be made between a student who is trying and learning, and one who is not paying attention or putting forth the visible effort when she consoled a student that struggled with learning a new movement:

“It’s okay. It’s like talking. You have to be clear, every letter pronounced, or well,” —she speaks in garbled words— “Painful singing. You can’t fake it; you must be precise with your movements. Each movement needs to be beautiful. Beauty is precise, not ugly. Beautiful. It’s between steps that make a good dancer. It’s before and after the pirouettes that’s important.”
[Field Notes]

Noémie frequently told the students to “sculpt themselves”; to stand in front of a mirror and practice positions, such as those of the arms and fingers, until they were beautiful; until they had achieved a beautiful shape, long and soft. Each had to learn how to find that position in his or her own body, but in relation to the Academy’s version of the aesthetic ideal of “beauty.” This balance between individual expression and the body as mere raw material to be sculpted was established during each class session, through the process of teaching and practicing movements. The constant repetition builds muscle strength, and constructs the patterns of the body. Disciplining the body to render it capable of achieving the desired shapes and movements begins with the normative rules of classroom behavior;

the way students are expected to walk into the room, take a position at the barre, and refrain from interacting verbally. The process of “sculpting” students occurs across multiple years. Many of the older students had already spent seven or eight years training with Jean-Pierre and Noémie. In the intermediate class, the students began with the same *plié* sequence as the advanced-level class, but Noémie provided additional verbal instruction and exercises to activate the muscle groups that were meant to be used to do the movements correctly, and sequences were often repeated more than once.

Noémie told the students to start with *demi-demi* and *grand plié*; forward in first, to the barre in second, *tendu* to fourth, all around, fifth, away. She told them that they had the wrong coordination of the arms. She had them redo the *grand plié*, moving the arm with different timing in relation to bending of the knees. She told Mirella that she was twisting her body in *chambre* back. She demonstrated reaching more up with her arm, so that the shoulders remained square. While they did the exercise to the other side, she told them to pull up their knees; to go to the *port de bras*, feeling the rotation. She told them to keep their heads up and the side arm long; that their fifth position needs to be *so* much tighter. She called out Hallie’s name. “Pull up tight in fifth! Serena, feel as though you’re growing in, then growing long. Hold your head and back.” After the exercise, she asked them to try it themselves, and pointed to one student’s ankles. “They’re rolling,” she stated, and the student tried to correct it. She had the students come away from the barre, and go to 4th position in the center, so that they could use the mirror to make sure they are centered and square. The students were then able to make the corrections. [Field Notes]

Students who are not actively participating in class are required to observe and take notes; one of the intermediate students whom was sitting out due to illness, wrote down some general observations of how he understood this process in class and consented to share them with me. He wrote:

Noémie would often describe how the muscles throughout the body need to feel like they are rotating. There is the sense when working with Noémie that everything has to be absolutely perfect before moving on to the next combination or the next thing to work on. The way that one part of the body is used affects everything else so much. There is, in a way, a communication between the students and the teacher when the teacher gives the students directions and when the students do the combination. It shows how easy it is to express the way you feel through dance. When I dance, it seems almost impossible to not communicate the way I feel through dancing.

He also wrote a comment that he later crossed out, to the effect that the younger students seemed to work much harder than the older ones. To some degree, this is true, in terms not only of the

level of motivation of newly admitted students but in terms of how hard younger students must struggle to activate the appropriate muscle groups, a process that becomes more automatic as the students age and develop the muscle memory they must call upon in order to properly execute certain movements. This has been corroborated in research about energy-expenditure during dance; the more practiced students become in particular movements, the less energy they need to expend to do them (Guidetti et al. 2008). The younger students also needed to work to turn themselves into dancers; to train their bodies, and to discipline other aspects of their lives so as to make their instructors feel their dedication. Younger students strive both to emulate the physical and social qualities that manifest in the older students as a result of their training and to capture the attention of the instructors, for close instructor–student relationships and mentorships are needed in order to build up the social networking-aspect critical to the development of a career. Often students are very competitive about garnering this attention from instructors, and for good reason; it not only translates into increased attention in the form of corrections and extra training during class, but also puts one first in line when parts are being allocated for a performance.

The barre sequences are designed to prepare students for center work; the exercises in the center are designed to prepare students for the range of movements that they would be expected to be able to do in a performance context. The sequential ordering of the classroom instruction fosters the development of the musculature needed for ballet: *pliés* are followed by *tendus*, *tendus* by *dégagés*, and *dégagés* by *fondus*, *rond de jambes*, and *frappés*. Occasionally a *pas de cheval* exercise was also given. Teachers often give a fast and slow version of exercises of each type, particularly for *tendus* and *dégagés*, as this helps students to develop strength, quick movement-responses, and a sense of musicality. An *adagio* combination follows, which practices the slow extension of the muscles to create an elongated line; often these movements later are repeated in center. These combinations are punctuated by corrections, that help the students understand what the instructor, as the artist sculpting

their bodies, wants to see; and in the process, through what is both is and is not stated, a sense of the desired aesthetics develops. This can be seen in the way Jean-Pierre corrects the students' movements in the following class session:

Jean-Pierre snapped his fingers to the beat of the music, and as he marked slow a *tendu* combination at the barre— *tendu* front, *temps lie*, close, reverse. This was followed by two *tendus en croix*, with *pliés*. The advanced-level students marked it with their hands and feet. He told them to hold their backs tighter, so that nothing would move but their legs. He corrected Elise's arm; it should be more to the front. The adjustment was made during the exercise by lifting her arm and putting it in the right place. Jean-Pierre told the whole class to remember cross the foot to the back: "Remember that you never can be crossed enough in back." After the combination, he instructed students to keep their toes in contact with the floor and not to sit in the supporting side as they did the exercise. He told them that their backs should be stronger; there was too much movement— and nothing should move but the leg. [Field Notes]

When students are in the center of the room they position themselves at regular intervals in lines, so that each student can see himself/herself in mirror. In center, students may do a *tendu* combination involving changes in the direction of the body, *pirouette* or waltz combinations, and an *adagio*. Center combinations frequently are repeated more than once, and if a class is large, students may be divided into groups that alternate completing a combination. *Adagio* typically is followed by *petit allegro* (a combination consisting of small jumps) and *grand allegro* (a combination consisting of large jumps); this sequence often moves the dancers diagonally across the studio space. One sees at such times that the students are not just acquiring and practicing movements, they are learning roles, positions, and the gendered nature of various movements in ballet.

The following excerpt depicts a moment when center work has been given to the advanced-level class. We see there the intentional curriculum of dance intersecting with the gendered incidental curriculum of the world in which they practice and perform.

In center, Jean-Pierre had them do the same *tendu* combination they did at the barre. *Tendu* front, *temps lie* . . . then to the side. The focus of the class was on weight-transfers. He wanted them to be involved with the rotation from the thigh as they *tendu* into *plié* fourth. Jean-Pierre demonstrated the combination, telling them that it was the same pattern that they had at the barre. Without being told, all of the girls came center to go together; the boys waited to be a second group.

For the *adagio*, the combination was 1 -2, *plié relevé*, 3-4, *rond*, *plie forte*, *arabesque*. *Penché*, *pas de bourrée*, *fondue*, *développé* (front, side, back), *rond en l'air*, *pirouette*, land fifth. Jean-Pierre ran through the words very quickly, and told them that if they didn't know the combination by now, as many times as they had done this one, something was wrong. The girls went first; the boys marked it in the background. Jean-Pierre went to stand beside Peter, who was marking it. Peter's movements became more restrained, tense in front of Jean-Pierre. Jean-Pierre said nothing, but he moved closer to another male student, Jack. "Nice, strong," he said. "Somewhat soft, but in a good way." When the boys come to center, he offered them the correction of "the upper back in *pirouette*, gentleman." He directs Jonassaint to "brace yourself." After they have finished, Jean-Pierre said, "No, it's not acted. Ladies again." Simon, who was still sitting out, had turned to watch himself and the class in the mirror, and was doing the head and arms for the combination, mirroring Jean-Pierre's positions of the arms. Jean-Pierre had them take a step back, and repeat the combination.

The students marked the *pirouette* combination once with the music. Jean-Pierre used a snap of his fingers and a circular motion with his hand to indicate a *pirouette*. He told them that one of the steps in the combination is actually a girls' step; it's a step for pointe class. He told the students they should "know that we may do it *en pointe* someday soon, but it's also very good for the boys." He explained that the *pirouette* that led to a *développé* back (*arabesque*) instead of landing. "To get the *développé*, go through it to the knee, then out." Laura repeats this step three times, with Jean-Pierre talking her through it each time, until finally he said, "voile." In two groups, they did the combination. He told them it needed to be more soft: "soft up, *plié* soft;" they were going "up-down, chopping it. Gentlemen, to make it soft you need to resist the *plié*." He instructed them to do it once more, and reminded Delia, as the girls group went, "don't go down on the *plié*."

He told the boys to control what they were doing. "You know your body." He says this in a low voice, then addresses Jonassaint in a sharper tone, exploding: "It's exactly what I don't want! Why do you stop in first position in a *pas de bourrée*? That's for the eight-year-old. Shorten it." Jonassaint does it again, but wrongly, and Jean-Pierre came center and demonstrated it, the steps slightly over-crossing to generate more speed. "Three calories," Jean-Pierre said. "You don't need to burn anymore," implying that the energy should be reserved for other steps.

Again, the boys' group did the combination; Jean-Pierre corrected Franklin. "Hold yourself," he said which means engaging core strength and abdominal muscles. "*Plié*. Your *plié* is your best friend." He demonstrated the quality of the movement he sought with words. "Up— I fall—up— I melt." He told Franklin. "For you, it's still, 'I fall.'" After they have finished going through the combination one more time, Jean-Pierre said, in a restrained voice. "I'm not going to say it was ugly— but it would have been beautiful if it was 1-2-3. I don't know why it's so hard to teach you that. We've been saying it forever." [Field Notes]

Here, we see that there are not only different types of movements expected from male and female students, but also that the quality of movement expected differs. Here "softness" and "melting" are technical qualities that refer to a fluidity of movement and proper use of the *plié*. There are also subtle, and likely unconscious, differences in instructional approach that are consistently marked by the

sex and gender of the students, both in the passage above and across classroom practices. Generally, the female students receive more patience and explanation from instructors, and are more often called upon to display femininity and sensuality, while male students receive more firm remarks, and have greater demand for strength, speed, and masculinity placed upon them. These gendered expectations are placed within the framework of categories informed by the various bases in all aspects of the students and instructors lives, as they intersect with classroom. These include the culturally normative gender roles, knowledge about gender and sex from a biological standpoint, and the roles and characterizations that students will be expected to perform if they become professional dancers. In the segments below, gendered expectations for behavior intersect with knowledge about differences between male and female brains, as well as with the degrees to which students assert themselves and conform to norms within these categories.

Jean-Pierre assigns students a combination of jumps- *glissade, jeté, glissade, jeté, assemblé, assemblé, entrechat quatre*- to be done traveling in a circle, then reversing in the opposite direction. Some students struggled a bit with the direction changes; there was an air of concentration; a silence of inward-directedness rather than an outward presentation of a movement or step. Bridget's circle was not quite a circle, so Jean-Pierre walked the circle, pointing out the circular direction for the jumps, and instructing her to turn more on the first one. He stepped and pointed *glissade* to here, *jeté* to there (the back wall) *glissade* again (to the back diagonal), *jeté* side, then *assemblé* (side) and *assemblé* (front).

Jonassaint doesn't put a lot of effort into it; he does the steps, with little sense of presentation and without the inward concentration of those who were still learning the step. Jean-Pierre shook his head, as he looked at Jonassaint. "I have to say, more and more I teach, the more and more I want to go to med school and study the brain of the male. I don't understand it. The male brain doesn't function like the female brain. It's like two aliens from different planets were just dumped here. How can you be so overwhelmed by that step? Talk to someone who knows the brain—but not a male— he's not going to be objective." The students respond all at once. "Do you know...?" "Males?"

They do the jumps again after they have settled down. Bridget misses a step this time, but finishes the circle in the right position and on time. After Laura did the jumps, Jean-Pierre cautioned her about being back; he motions with his shoulders and changes of his posture. She shifted her shoulders self-consciously, one arm crossing over her chest and touching her shoulder to indicate she understood his correction. "I think you'd be more careful if you were aligned there," he said.

As an experiment, Jean-Pierre changed the music just to see if some of the boys could keep up with a faster tempo. Tate and Jonassaint tried it, and Jean-Pierre commented, “Tate— not too bad— Jonassaint— seizure in the middle of the floor.” Jean-Pierre mimicked wild arms at odd angles, and a jerking torso. The students chuckled, including Jonassaint, who nodded, accepting the correction. [Field Notes]

This process sculpts the students’ bodies in relation to ideas about gender and “beauty” through both spoken information and the repetition of movements under these particular teachers’ instruction; it is a true and vital aspect of the curriculum. Hanna (1988), who operates from a constructivist understanding of reality, notes that gendered body-language, deliberately chosen to convey meaning, is a key aspect of communication between dancers and the audience. She identifies six symbolic devices used in the context of theater and ballet that tend to emerge from within the shared, inherited set of cultural knowledge that exists about gender, including: 1) concretizations, which includes representation of courtship; 2) icons, such as an individual who represents an idea’ 3) stylizations, which include conventional gestures and movements; 4) metonyms, wherein one scene or action represents another, 5) metaphors, which have an analogy drawn on the basis of similarity; and 6) actualizations that reference real life in the context of a performance.

In categories such as stylization, movements include pointing to the heart for male dancers and shy glances from female dancers (Hanna 1988). The teaching of these movements, and of the gendered social roles that students take up on stage and in their private lives, often came across through personal relationships forged in the Academy classroom. Students also become particularly skilled at performing certain sets of movements; the marker of good instruction is that students gain the versatility to apply the movements learned in class to different contexts and to combine them in different ways, so that they are able to do whatever is asked of them in any context. Teachers make bodies build muscles in certain ways; the students under Jean-Pierre and Noémie’s instruction will carry with them these marks, for as long as they dance. As they become more technically proficient the emphasis shifts toward the development of performance and artistry. As demonstrated in the two excerpts above, there are also

clear gender distinctions drawn in the classroom, both between the technical execution of movements and the gendered nature of the performance given, since the roles that students are categorically eligible to fill differ on the basis of their gender.

Categories and the “Joking Relationship”

Communication between the instructors and students at the French Ballet Academy was often filled with jokes and mockeries; such as in the earlier passage, when Jean-Pierre commented about the differences between the male and female brain to convey his disappointment with how one of the male students was conducting himself in class. (“It’s like two aliens from different planets were just dumped here. How can you be so overwhelmed by that step?”) The classroom relationship is in many ways a “joking relationship” that serves to establish and teach normative expectations about ballet, and to provide students with the basis of inclusion in the institutions and groups comprised by those who dance. Although sometimes delivered in anger or frustration, sarcasm could also be used to convey affection, such as when Noémie quipped, “...Sell your leg on eBay—make people happy—then you have an excuse not to work in class.” Insults usually were tempered by positive reinforcement, held a hidden underlying compliment about the student’s body or ability, and were shaped by the nature of the personal relationship that each of the students had with the instructor. Some students were recipients of more direct comments than others, who were simply included in generalized comments about the class, and only the occasional student risked a counter-quip back at the instructor.

Radcliffe-Brown (1940), who elaborated on the work of Mauss, described a “joking relationship” as a “relation between two persons in which one is by custom permitted, and in some instances required, to tease or make fun of the other, who is in turn required to take no offence,” and noted that it occurs in widespread social circumstances (196). Radcliffe-Brown also noted that the relationship can be either symmetrical or asymmetrical, with unequal power-relations formulating the basis of asymmetrical interactions, can include verbal teasing, horseplay, and sometimes even obscenity.

Although it works to forestall conflict via “playful antagonism,” its “regular repetition is a constant expression of . . . social disjunction” (197). Firth (1981) noted that within anthropology, social conflicts are thought to be expressions of disjunction or, alternatively, expressions of unity that operate to maintain cohesion. Within the present context, both possibilities exist: the joking relationship reaffirms an existing hierarchy and solidifies the relationships between the individuals within it but it also marks moments in which the existing social arrangement is playfully called into question, as unspoken ideas surface and positions shift. On many occasions, personal insults arose, based on a student’s presumed membership in a category, be it related to gender, sexuality, or a presumed characteristic of a student’s background.

One student who frequently engaged in this type of interaction with instructors was Jonassaint, who had grown up speaking French in Haiti and learned English only five years before I met him, when he moved to Miami, where he began studying ballet formally in the Russian and Cuban techniques. Jonassaint explained: “In Miami there’s Russian, and then there is the Cuban, because there’s their own technique. They have their own; very Russian-based. When Cuba wanted to establish a ballet school during the Cold War, Russia and Cuba were very close, so of course they took a lot from the Russian syllabus.” He said he had studied folkloric dance—the Haitian national dance—when he was a child. Jonassaint had watched a ballet and was so inspired— he quipped that there were fairies in the ballet—and decided that he wanted to be one. He said the word with a bit of a double entendre, referencing his sexuality, and later elaborated: “I watched *Sleeping Beauty* and I saw the fairies. . . . I think, I was just completely fascinated, just like completely, the way the fairies just like were and how they moved.”

The fairies, sylphs, dyads, and Wilis of ballet, in addition to representing the supernatural and otherworldly, also represent expressions of gender and sexuality alternative to those that are deemed normative among human relationships. (Stoneley 2007). The otherworldly creatures of the ballet are not subject to the rules of life and death, nor to the norms and constraints of human relationship. The most

notable example is that of *Giselle* (Stoneley 2007). In the ballet, Giselle, a frail peasant girl with a weak heart, falls in love with a nobleman disguised as a peasant, Albrecht. When she learns of his deception she dies and joins the ranks of the Wilis, who in this case are the spirits of young women who died before their marriages were consummated. Under the control of Queen Myrtha, they capture and “dance to death” those young men who cross their paths (Stoneley 2007:30). No longer bound by human form, they are able to seek out their desires. Albrecht, unwilling to accept Giselle’s death, seeks her in the forest, where he encounters the Wilis and Queen Myrtha. Giselle slows the dance out of her lingering love for him, so that when dawn breaks the Wilis return to their graves, and Albrecht is set free (Stoneley 2007).

Burt (1995) proposes that the abundance of otherworldly characters in 19th-century ballet is situated within the changing relationship between the body and society brought about by the emergence of modernism. Fairies did not come to hold an association with homosexuality until the mid-19th century. At that time they began to be associated with the idea of a glamour or deception that hides an underlying self; only later did they come to include expressions of desire, that consorted ill with either religious piety or scientific rationalism (Stoneley 2007). Burt (1995) notes that “dancers aspire to the condition of disembodied spirits,” proposing through the work of Douglas that their implicit quest for an ethereal, disembodied presence represents an attempt to separate the spirit from the pressures and problems of quite literally having a human form.

It is these roles, in all of their complexity, in which Jonassiant expressed an interest. He said that because he wanted to dance, he came to Miami with his two brothers; they had moved with him so that he could train. One brother is an engineer and the other is in informatics; both are non-dancers with graduate degrees. He explained:

I actually came to New York, to audition for schools, and then afterward I looked for a really strong ballet school. And the [New York Children’s Ballet, the institution where Jean-Pierre previously taught], came up and that was the direction I wanted. Then I read from the Internet of how [Jean-Pierre] specialized in boys’ technique and the culture of the French, and the Opera

School. It was really fascinating to have a teacher speak the language I speak, and that he specialized and coaches [boy's technique]. I went to audition privately, and then I auditioned and got into the school. I did their summer-intensive, and after the summer-intensive I was accepted into their youth company and so I stayed there. After the [French Academy] was created and established, I decided to follow their leader [Jean-Pierre], and then . . . I'm here. I'm so excited to do another year at the [French Academy], because I believe that this is going to be really good for me, and it's going to be really well in the future. This year I'm going to be looking for places to audition, also. This is the year for me to actually get a job.

Jonassaint's tolerance of Jean-Pierre's acerbic wit often bespeaks his acknowledgement of Jean-Pierre's position in training him, but also of the fact that he has the capacity to become a serious dancer. Thus, balance in the classroom is maintained through the exchange of parted comments. These sorts of interchanges that function to maintain balance became clear at the moments when balance was lost, as when Jonassaint accepted a spot as a guest artist in a company for a week without telling Jean-Pierre; he told only Noémie. This interfered with the planned rehearsal for an upcoming performance in which he had been assigned one of the two lead male roles, at a venue that was significant in terms of building the reputation of the school. After Jonassaint returned from his guest spot and transitioned back into the classroom, the following exchange operated in terms of the "joking-relationship" to restore balance in the classroom.

Different jumps were given for the "ladies" and the "gents." "For the ladies: *glissade, jeté, jeté, jeté, piqué, grand jeté entourant, piqué, piqué, chaînés* away, *temps lie*." Jean-Pierre marked it with his arms floating away. "For the gents: *assemblé, glissade, jeté entourant, pas de bourrée, double assemblé, double tour en l'air*." He had them mark it with the music once, before going across the floor. "Last group," he said, "then I correct the boys." After the last group had done the combination, he said to Jonassaint, whom he had been watching closely. "Until you apply the corrections that I give you, you'll never be able to do a double *assemblé* or a *tour en l'air*." Jonassaint agreed, "Yeah."

"Ladies," Jean-Pierre said. "Push *grand battements* up into the jump." He motions kicking and bringing the arms up at once for the *jeté entourant*. He clarifies that it's not a *développé* out, it's a *grand jeté*.

The students went through marking the steps once more with the corrections he had just given, Jean-Pierre watching them in the mirror while facing forward. He suddenly exploded at Jonassaint: "You just marked it with a *rond de jambe*. You teach your body the wrong thing! It's step-step— *grand battement*. You forget corrections! You don't apply them! For me it's like you do something completely useless." [Field Notes]

In the ensuing passages these acerbic comments, directed largely toward Jonassaint, were an expression of anger and frustration and thereby a re-assertion of Jean-Pierre's role as director and choreographer and hence his right to evaluating the quality and usefulness of what Jonassaint brought to the classroom and stage.

Jean-Pierre sat down in the front of the class on a metal folding chair. He corrects Franklin as the class went in pairs on the diagonal again, doing steps across the floor. "No *développé*, that's a girls' thing." He commented to Franklin and Jonassaint, "You dance like girls. Boys don't do *jeté*." He marked a *développé jeté* with his hand. "Only the jester, the bouffant in *Swan Lake*, does *développé jeté*." [Field Notes]

The positionalities of the individual students intersect with the way in which the joking relationship manifests itself, as does the arrangement of the positionalities into categories that are spatial and temporal—such as grouping the boys together for a "men's class," having men's steps be performed in classes, and contrasting the way men are supposed to move with how women are supposed to move. These categories factor into assertions of power and play within the classroom, as students explore and assert their identification with specific genders and sexualities through particular ways of moving.

They practice brush *jetés* with double *tours*. Jack does the double *tour*, and lands on one knee with his arm out in the way a male dancer might land from a solo. This is a very showy gesture for a classroom, where the others are struggling to land cleanly from the double; another male student lands in an over-crossed fifth that's almost a fourth, and without his feet together, and typically rebounds backward. Franklin also does the backward bounce after landing. From the observer's perspective, they put a bit too much twist in their upper bodies, rather than using their feet to push; this is a correction that Jean-Pierre had given them before when working on the turns, when he'd had them try to jump and land in between two sneakers placed to form a box around their feet. Jean-Pierre asked Franklin to demonstrate the double *assemblée*—and he does. Jean-Pierre points out the *grand battement* straight out and up—and said he did the right thing with his leg. Franklin does the step again, but with the *développé*. "Franklin, it's a girl thing. I don't want to see it unless it's asked for." Jean-Pierre changes the music, and two of the boys' feet collided in the air. The boys apologized to one another, laughing. [Field Notes]

Membership in these categories related to gender and sexuality is enforced by the arrangement of student schedules and assignment to classes, as well as through such activities as partnering and learning *pas de deux*, where maleness is defined in relation to a female partner. Burt observed that

“representation in dance is contingent upon beliefs about the body, and . . . the gendered body is therefore an area in which the embodiment of socially produced norms is defined and contested” (1995:32). Students often are engaged in the process of learning the boundaries of gendered categories and exploring their relationship to ideas about gender, their bodies, and society, as well as ballet. Many of the male students at the school both recreate, and conform to their understandings of, these categories by adopting the gestures and movements stylistically labeled feminine, such as some curtseys and stylized positions of the arms; in this way they reify their positions in relation to a presentation of their sexual identity.

Sometimes students express confusion over the gendered nature of roles in ballet and the shifting norms associated with performance. For example, in costume for a *Nutcracker* rehearsal, one student, Ben, looked at himself in the mirror and commented, “I don't look like a guy.” The males and females in this segment wore similar costumes; Ben was positioning himself within his understanding of what a “guy” should look like. Nina put her own spin on his statement by suggesting, “like one of those in-betweens.” Ben responded, “Oh, like a he/she?” When ballet first developed, women were not allowed to perform, so men took the female roles in performances. Evolving social norms related to gender and ideas about masculinity, however very much linked to the vogue idea of rationality that emerged with the Enlightenment and scientific reason, included a shift in the way male expressiveness and emotion were viewed (Burt 1995). Burt notes, through Chodorow, that normalized “masculine” characteristics maintain dominance through institutionalization as a part of hegemony, while other characteristics are constructed as “feminine” or “other” (1995) Although the roles of males in ballet performances, particularly romantic ballets, have changed over time with the more strictly normalized roles of women forefront and center stage, local ideologies within the landscape of ballet still come into play and leave open the possibility of alternative expressions of male gender and sexuality.

In *The Queer History of Ballet*, Stoneley (2007) notes that the acting out of gender and sexuality is an integral part of ballet, in terms not only of the narrative structure of romantic narrative ballets, but of how concepts of masculinity, femininity, and sexuality are communicated through choreographed movement. Franko (2008), analyzing Stoneley's work, notes that "this means that ballet training retools the dancer's instrument to underplay assumed gender assignment based on sexual identity, which training precedes the regendering of that body in the service of narrative" (448). The experience of students in relation to the construction of gender and sexuality within both the ballet and non-ballet landscapes is often one of exploration, for they are recruited into roles that convey particular genders and sexualities in relation to their own physical forms, and asked to communicate these aspects of their characters through movement.

Stoneley (2007) also noted that ballet has long been a space for the expression of what he terms a "queer element," and not only in terms of the numbers of male dancers who identify as homosexual, which is roughly estimated at 60⁴¹ to 90 percent⁴², across various sources. The genre of ballet opens up space for myriad expressions of gender and sexuality, particularly for men; the arrangement of institutions and people reflects this, as does the content and the choreography. Les Ballets Trocadero de Monte Carlo, a company where men dress as women and dance the women's parts, is one such example. Their performances are done deliberately, in such a way that they create an artistic parody of "traditional" ballets; one that speaks both to their skill as dancers and intricate knowledge of narrative ballets, and plays with normative understandings of gender. One student expressed a desire to join this company "because it combines two of my biggest passions, gymnastics and acting."

Historically, prior the Cold War period in American history, ballet was considered a space where gay men and women could "garner support from like-minded individuals, and where, too, they could gain power," such as through dancing and choreographing; but concerns about male sexuality often

⁴¹ Carmen (2006) cited this figure in the November issue of *Dance Magazine*.

⁴² Anecdotal, based on informants' personal knowledge about sexual orientations in companies.

made parents hesitant to place their sons in dance (Morris 2006:34). Even though Balanchine advanced arguments as to the athleticism of ballet and cultivated a relationship between the idea of a soldier and the male dancer, the politics of the Cold War equated communism with homosexuality and homosexuality with perversion, while a mainstream religious revival emphasized the godlessness of both communism and homosexuality. As a result, local harassment of homosexual men by police grew during this period, with some men being jailed. They also were barred from taking roles in the civil service, the military, and academia. The federal government began to investigate homosexuality in its ranks, as a “perversion” that needed to be eliminated particularly given the association between homosexuality and communism (Morris 2006).

Given the public association between homosexuality and ballet, during the Red Scare male ballet dancers (as well as modern dancers, who tended to be involved in social critique) faced the very real danger of being jailed, or worse. This led to the concealment in ballet of sexualities that were considered “non-normative.” In practice this meant that “heterosexual norms were enforced on the stage, and heterosexuality was assumed off the stage in written accounts” (Morris 2006:33). These practices still remain in consistent practice in the classroom, where this translates to the teaching of male roles and movements for the stage, as well as to the assigning of movements as characteristic expressions of femininity and masculinity.

To illustrate a new part of the variation the students are learning, Jean-Pierre took out his netbook and pulled up a video. He told them, “It’s dark, but shows the choreography.” The students watched the scene. He told them to listen to their music to get the timing of the steps. As Jonassaint and Jocelyn practiced the steps, Jean-Pierre told Jonassaint that he could never partner a girl with his feet turned out that way, and to take less turnout. He said, “You will fall flat on your face if you are partnering. I know— I said [when I was told that also], I am a ballet *danseur*— I *must* be turned out.” He explained that the body is less stable with greater turn-out. As they rehearsed, Jonassaint was told, “If you are not solid on your feet, you are going to look like a beginner.” [5-3]

As they rehearsed, Jean-Pierre continued to offer directions: *effacé*; use your back; stay on the music. He told the girls to be elegant and more feminine. “What is that arm doing? I can’t teach you ladies to be feminine. Everything feminine, but not so much as Jonassaint.” This made Jonassaint smile. [Field Notes]

Although the focus in the classroom on male performances of feminine movements and gestures drew more attention as a result of to the other social implications of the performance of femininity by males and the greater frequency with which male students transgressed the norms of gender in comparison with female students, female students also occasionally pushed the boundaries of gender and performance. However, in general, the ways in which girls engaged with these categorical expressions of gender drew less critique from the instructors than did the boys. Some girls, for example, would mark the “men’s steps” in the background as they went across the floor, while others would join predominately male groupings of students for jumps during classroom activities. Overall, however, the female students’ expressions of sexuality and morality more often conflicted in relation to the presence of contradictory norms within their gender category. Though much of ballet draws upon an 18th-century sense of romanticism, as it was during this period that ballet developed as a genre, female students were, at times, called upon to convey other understandings of sexuality and sensuality. For students, these processes sometimes led to moments in which characterization of the self developed into a conflict with the characterization of a particular role. For example, at a time Bridget was learning the Arabian variation from *Nutcracker*, during rehearsal, she, Noémie, and several other students were waiting in the hallway waiting for the classroom to open up. A poster on the wall for the *Nutcracker: R Rated*, showed the position in the Arabian variation with the male dancer in second position, and the female dancer straddling his lap, her chest raised upward and arms extended, her legs behind his back, with feet pointed to the air. The position as depicted there was drawn more explicit and suggestive with scant costuming than it looked when the students performed it. Fisher (2003) noted that, ethnic stereotyping aside, the role of Coffee in the Arabian segment of the *Nutcracker* has undergone a number of changes over time with respect both to shifting concepts of female sensuality and changes in choreographers; originally choreographed to a lullaby, the dance has incorporated more backbends and sensual poses done with the male character, in an effort to draw in and appeal to the male audience

members. Bridget took a picture of herself beside of the poster and said she was going to tell her friends that was what she had performed, but later, in class, when Jean-Pierre told her to imagine her role in the partnering as being a “sex-goddess,” Bridget made a face. He apologized, though his description had originated within the shifting role of this character in relation to understandings of female sexuality. “Sorry that was gross. Go for it, the jump.” To her partner, he said, “don’t grab the boobs,” and added, “Press the shoulder down.”

These practices of maintaining and negotiating status, reifying categories such as gender, and the use of jokes and insults to maintain and build hierarchal relationships, did not solely occur behind closed doors; they also were highlighted as part of the normative classroom experience and a the way in which students negotiate their relationship with the ideologies of ballet. This was particularly evident at in an annual event where the parents and significant others of students came to observe class. Class sequences on Observation Day followed the typical Saturday program, which included at least one of all types and levels of ballet classes offered by the school. An advanced-level female student, for example would attend her normal Saturday class schedule, including Advanced Technique and Partnering and Variations.

In most cases the students’ mothers came to watch, though several of the older boys had invited their partners and some students had other family members attend. One male student’s partner, a neurosurgeon, came to the class, and two other students had fathers and siblings who came to observe. In addition to presenting the typical arrangement of classes and corrections, these observational experiences were used as a tool to educate parents about the norms and expectations of the classroom. For example, in the elementary class, Jean-Pierre reached down and caught one of the girls’ feet in *dégagé* back and commented on how big the shoes were for her feet— he pulled an inch and a half clear of her pointed toes— explaining that when they choose *demi* shoes for their children, they need to be closely fitted. Parents should see that the shoe fits a pointed foot, for unlike other

children's shoes, leaving "room to grow into" was dangerous for the work the students do in dance. In the advanced class depicted next, parents are walked through a typical class sequence.

The class began with *pliés*, *tendus* and *dégagés*; Jean-Pierre gave fast combinations that the students had practiced during the previous week. They were familiar enough with the combinations to do them even though many students showed signs of being nervous in front of their parents. Next Jean-Pierre gave a *fondue* combination; he watched the students as they marked the combination. He said, "every time we do a *fondue*," and demonstrated the bending of the knee and the slight shift of weight that kept the pelvis over the working leg and the body in alignment. [Field Notes]

Corel was one student in this level whose father, mother, and siblings came to observe. At age 16, he had been older than the other intermediate students when he first started attending the school. He quickly started attending both the intermediate and advanced-level classes, as he wanted to learn quickly and get caught up. The instructors frequently told him how much he had learned and how much he had improved, even though both they and he knew he had a long way to go to get caught up with the other students of his age.

As they moved to stretch towards the barre after the *fondue* exercise, Jean-Pierre came and stood beside of Corel. "This side more," he said and Corel looks into the mirror. Corel's brother and dad are watching; they had positioned themselves directly in front of his spot on the barre. Corel's father, when he first came into the room, had a look of discomfort on his face, as though he thought he didn't belong in this environment, but this expression had faded into one of interest. Jean-Pierre told Corel: "dance, don't admire yourself. It's all the calf work. Up, place heel. Heel forward. You've got to build the calf, you've got chicken calves. I would like to see more calves. Do lifts—" He pulls up Corel's belt. "Thirty five pounds. Think down, then up, use your *plié*. Do ten miles with a thirty-five pound backpack- three times around the reservoir—you are an athlete, eh?"⁴³ This emphasis on athleticism seemed to be for the benefit of Corel's father; dancers *are* athletes, but it is more typical that artistry is emphasized. Jean-Pierre adds, to the parents, then shifting his focus back to the students "They used to make us- I don't understand why ballet has to be like, ah... Close fifth and feel the rotation of your legs." He watches Corel. [Field Notes]

We see there Jean-Pierre taking much the same track that Balanchine reportedly used (Morris 2006): trying to show to parents that a ballet classroom is an appropriate environment for their sons,

⁴³ Note: Once around the reservoir is ~1.5 miles. Three times is perhaps close to 10K.

even though perhaps not typically hetero-normative. This emphasis was paralleled by Jean-Pierre's interactions with Jonassaint.

To Jonassaint, Jean-Pierre said, "that is not crossed. Forward, back, *effacé*." To the parents, he said, "they are like, 110 yes?" He turned and talked to Jonassaint in French, then said, in English, "I need to see a little... you're going to need it if your arabesque is 90 degrees— go to the count. Why do you not push down in the standing leg? I guess the cotton is not heavy enough." This, was in regards to his attire, a navy fashion t-shirt and loose pants; not the attire of a student in training. [Field Notes]

This interaction is one of those that we have spoken of that acknowledges the positionalities occupied by the students in the classroom and reinforced normative expectations through the use of the "joking relationship." In this case, the target of Jean-Pierre's wit is Jonassaint's resistance to wearing the garb of a professional male student—black tights and a white shirt—particularly in a class where parents were observing, offered up as an implicit assertion of his own emerging role as a professional dancer. Jean-Pierre's jocular remark had a serious point, however, for by indicating that the outfit was not appropriate for the classroom, he reinforced the school's dress code expectation.

Jean-Pierre's habit of peppering the students with comments seemed to make the parents feel they were witnessing authentic classroom practice; they sat up straighter, and a few chuckled. On Jean-Pierre's part here was no sense of showmanship or of modeling the ideal classroom, this was just one dancer training another, thereby purveying an image of typical classroom practices, and the good-natured jibes were reinforced by legitimating references, as when he told the girls in the advanced-level technique class, "No toes on the *sous sus*. All girl, or NYCB style. Almost the same thing. I was there for six years. I had to dance like that. I know what I'm talking about." As one parent later told me, this type of instructor-student relationship prepares students to deal with directors and choreographers in companies. The parents believed that they had to be supportive of both students and instructors, if the instructors were going to give their all in the course of teaching the students what they need to know to be professionals.

Glissade jeté bateau— side to side— trois de voile, ballotté, pas de bourrée— temps de cuise, sissonne, pas de bourrée. Jean-Pierre had Jonassaint mark and demonstrate before the class did the exercise in two groups. “Carry the leg further to the right,” he corrected. “Listen to music: tititit-ta-ta. Laura, the speed is correct— be lighter— it was a little heavy— a little down. UP and lighter.” Corel practices it that way but then Corel loses the patterns in the jumps. “It’s fast,” Jean-Pierre said to his parents, then to Corel, “He’ll get it. You’re already learning a lot- doing a lot of progress. Started in the lower level, even lower place. Speed is hard.” By the end of the technique class, Corel’s dad was smiling and no longer looked uncomfortable. [Field Notes]

Gaining the support of parents was an instrumental part of the legitimating practices of the school; I saw students not only learn the curriculum that encompasses ballet technique but also pass back and forth through roles associated with expressions of gender and sexuality. The instructors clearly needed the support of parents, for the later had to trusting the school and the instructor to educate their children in such a way that they could accomplish their own agendas of becoming dancers. Thus gaining legitimacy necessitates an ongoing negotiation with the parents of student dancers, members of an audience (in this case comprised of parents), and the socio-historical context of the ballet genre as historical productions arose and gained new meaning in the classroom.

Out of all of the more salient aspects such as expression, gender, at status and hierarchy in the classroom as an aspect of learning the roles of student, teacher, and dancer, and the ways in which one can shift positions both within the classroom and the broader landscape, the economic underpinnings come into clearer view. Students were not just learning technique; they were receiving vocational training as the first step toward joining a company and performing ballets and they had to do so in relation to that social and historical knowledge which constantly alters how students understand the past and their places in the present. They absorbed the the content of commonly performed ballets, learned the movements needed to fill roles and assume characters in narrative ballets in classes tailored to learning variations and partnering, and they inevitably placed an emphasis on the presentation of the self. Much of ballet is situated in relation to the ability of a dancer to secure a position with a large company with ample funding, or to secure the patronage of an audience and/or large donors. Little wonder, then, that high quality of presentation was so often stressed in class, via a distinction drawn

between “expensive” movements of high quality and “cheap” movements of poor quality. For example,

Noémie once told the students:

“You can go to audition— right away the director notices you can always *pirouette*. Pay attention to your presentation in finishing the *pirouette*- be an expensive dancer.” She demonstrates the wrong movement, falling over and with overly stiff torso and arms. “This is very cheap. Look straight, use *épaulement*.” [Field Notes]

Likewise on another occasion, Noémie said, “Fine if you make a mistake—don’t worry. This is natural.

But what was learned for *rond de jambe*? Forty-five degrees! You’re doing cheap business: no turnout.

Be elegant, *so slow*.” This emphasis upon the quality of their movements was related back to the

amount of money that could be charged for a performance:

The students marked the steps they were given a second time, and Noémie called out, “Iris and Nina if you go see a show and it’s all of you in this class, are you happy or do you want money back?” Noémie said, “I want my money back,” and mimicked an incorrectly executed *attitude* turn. Noémie explained that they should be feeling their backs for turns in *attitude*. She had everyone take fourth position to the right, and walked them through it. “You cannot bring *demi* too early up. Feel like holding heel as long as possible. Needles under popo. Have to go up. Feel *pirouette*. Hold your body— don’t drop—write this down in your notebooks.” She demonstrated holding the turnout of the standing and working leg while going up to *pirouette*. [Field Notes]

This emphasis on the quality of performance also was conveyed through an emphasis on the development of character through movement. Indeed, this is considered a critical factor in the production of dancers. Jean-Pierre demonstrated this in the partnering and variations class as he modeled going beyond a technical precision.

Jean-Pierre decided to have the female students do a variation from *Don Quixote*, with an entrance and exit, and hops *en pointe* across the floor. After the first run-through, he told the students that it was: “Not bad, but you’ve got to move all the way across the floor with the hops— get all the way to Don Quixote.” He pointed to a spot on the floor. “Stop there because that’s enough of those. Let me show you what you’ve got to do from there. *Piqué faili*. Fifth, *effacé*, *pirouettes*, *sissonne*, *sur le cou-de-pied* ...” He trailed off, and began to suggest how they should interpret what they are doing. “Look at him- say...” He uses the mirror to watch the students behind him.

“Mark it— one by one, as if it’s not a rehearsal. In that scene you are not real. You are a fragment of his imagination, a spirit. You are Dulcinea. He has mistaken you for Kitri.” As each student in turn went across the floor, the others marked it in the background, practicing the steps.” After the first girl went, Jean-Pierre said jokingly, “You are a dream—not a nightmare. Softness of *plié*, resistance of *plié*. When you get tired, loosen your back. Be ready, think about

your weaknesses, and be careful, breathe. Do breathe when you're tired. Go around. Calm down. Learn when you go breathe. No *plié failli*, there are two versions. If you get dizzy, step out further to finish. No reason to be heroic there."

"You interpret, in a variation. Do a little more personal work, bring your own interpretation to the role, then if the ballet master says no... If it looks good on you, [he'll say] yes— bring more of your personality. You should not do a variation same way—have a different personality, the technique is the same—bring more to the variation. Stop thinking about technique, forget the technique and *dance*. When you dance, there is a story. If you don't know it, make up one, Something happening that is not the steps, something in your dreams. The steps *mean* something. When you are ready, do the variation different."

Briana was the first student to redo the variation. Jean-Pierre coached her through it. "Shoulder. Briana, placement. Have more fun! You're on a mission, you have to tell the story. You could do it in studio 11 [a smaller studio that they were in before]. Use the whole floor. You can do everything nicely— work hard— but make it fun. You're afraid of doing it wrong, so you're holding back. Do it wrong— but do it all-out— at your level. Don't wait. That was good at level six. You're young adults now and not kids, have more intuition. Not be undisciplined, but show me who you are. If you're in a show, and someone says that you've got to strip necked, and you say no, you will be told to leave. If [the interpretation you add] doesn't look good you, try something else. Understanding of your own sensuality, sexuality. Be sensitive in dancing, not like . . . tin soldiers. Have fun, be noticed! Stay technical. It doesn't matter, but if we like what we see, we call. A beautiful dancer can make it without good technique, but you have to be a diva, shy breath, *port de bras*. In this year of school, bring it out in the top level. You're not in company yet, but you need it *now*. You've got to breathe!" [Field Notes]

Jean-Pierre's instruction there as to how to put nuances into a performance is all about encouraging students to access their knowledge of the content of this particular narrative ballet, their understandings of the narrative structures of ballet, and the emotional responses that a character would feel in the context of the story. Jean-Pierre positions the students' ability to develop characters and attain emotional expressiveness both within the constraints of choreography and in relation to their ability to secure a position at a company and a particular role within a ballet. All of which relates directly to the objective of the school, which is to produce dancers who hold "the beauty of movement that exists in the French ballet" (School website) and ultimately are able, through the knowledge held in their bodies, to assume positions as dancers, having been socialized into this tradition and become practicing members within the landscape.

Thus Jean-Pierre, through the creation of the school, is concerned with the maintenance of a social order and the perpetuation of a particular tradition within the classroom. Foucault's idea of discipline and his conceptions of punishment and correct training emerge here, through the ways in which the school reproduces tradition through its training and subsequent regulation of human bodies in space and time; this applies to both the internal aspect of an individual's having control over his or her own form, and to the external aspect of being a member of a collective. Thus ultimately the school's work, like Foucault's work, bespeaks the methods that a group of people as a collectivity, society, or institution must use if it is to retain cohesion and endure through time.

Foucault's concern as to the processes societies use to control the individuals within them hearkens back to Durkheim's ideas about mechanical and organic solidarity and the social forces—such as dependency on the labor of another in a differentiated society—that work to maintain social cohesion. All such ideas about social cohesion, and the individual or body of an individual in relation to forces making cohesion, emerge in the work of Mauss, a student of Durkheim, and Bourdieu who developed the concept of “habitus” to refer to that learned set of “dispositions which generates practices and perceptions” which encompasses everything from values to taste and aesthetics and which functions as a “structuring structure” by shaping the practices of daily life (Johnson 1999). Such a notion emerges in the present context, through the way the movements taught in the classroom are instilled into the bodies of students, movements that are situated within the national and technical tradition that the students study. Also very much relevant here are the possibilities for gendered expression that emerge in the Academy's classroom, as gendered roles are taught both as specific movements and as choreography, and as such roles, even the new and controversial ones, are legitimated in relation to traditional ballet as a form of artistic production.

Bourdieu said that “school instruction always fulfills a function of legitimation, if only by giving its blessings to works which it sets up as worthy of being admired, and thus helps to define the hierarchy

of cultural wealth valid in a particular society at a given time” (Bourdieu 1999:208). As students progress through the program, it is only after they have become well versed in the curriculum that they are able to move beyond the concept of the “disciplined” self— “Be more intuitive. Not be undisciplined, but show me who you are” — so as to occupy the social role of dancer and artist, a person who is able to operate in relation to the existing canon of the genre but also to push against it and thereby redefine it, even if thereby just, ultimately, further legitimizing the existing form (Bourdieu 1993).

Chapter Five: Classroom Interactions

This chapter expands on the previous chapter by exploring the ideals that are expressed about ballet and the criteria that are verbalized in the course of acquiring the discipline in everyday classroom interactions. Its goal is to point out for the reader, through both discourse and interactional analysis, some of the ways in which students gain understanding of the human body and its associated aesthetic values. The data provided in Chapter 4 are here expanded through the use of quantitative analysis, to demonstrate how student demographics, attention given to individual students in the classroom, and types of corrections given shape learning-outcomes and students' understandings of their relationship to ballet. Close attention is paid to how understandings of the physical body are developed over time through an emphasis on the relationship between symmetry and segmentation of the body, and through verbalizations about what it is that creates beauty. An analysis of the students' understandings of these concepts will be formulated by examining the students expressions about what they are learning in class, the qualities of professional dancers, and the critiques they offer each other within a class setting.

Patterns of Interaction in the Classroom Setting

In discourse about ballet, one often encounters the argument that the interaction that occurs in the classroom serves to legitimize the participation of some students while slowly excluding others in relation to the achievement of a desired aesthetic and the development of a "disciplined" body. Martin (1998), for example, notes that classroom interactions within the study of a particular technique act as a "juridical structuring of opportunity," for it is by conforming to techniques that bodies are subordinated to ideology and legitimated for performance participation (20). Martin argues that practices of the

body, in varying forms of dance, cross the divisions of disciplines; that the lines between “modern, post-modern, concert-popular, black-white, gay-straight dance” are blurred, though within the dance classroom, inequalities related to gender do manifest themselves in “all manner of special attentions from teachers and choreographers long after the initial access to dance is granted” (25).⁴⁴ He also notes the contradiction between the performance of a particular choreographic work and the way in which the art of dance is cultivated through the development and perpetuation of particular techniques. Although Martin delineates these practices in relation to the degree to which bodies conform to hegemonic aesthetic and ideological norms, he correlates these practices both to the classroom and to choreographic decisions by pointing to the “special attention” given to some students as a method of legitimating and encouraging a particular student’s participation, and to the lack thereof (silence) as attesting to exclusionary practices. This chapter uses empirical data to examine the relationship between legitimating practices within the classroom (such as receiving positive comments and helpful corrections), as one of the primary ways in which “special attention” is manifested, and the maintenance of ideological boundaries through allowing, or hindering, a students’ participation in dance.

Within the corpus of educational data-analysis, researchers indicate that using ethnography to examine the patterns of interaction within a classroom yields valuable findings as to the distribution over time of the attention and feedback given in a classroom. Such can also reveal how the nature of the feedback given relates to educational outcomes and the structuring of opportunities within education. These analyses, undertaken from the mid-1990’s onward, have been oriented toward evaluating the socio-cultural dynamics of classroom interaction by taking critical theory approaches to

⁴⁴ Sentences from proposal. Martin (1998) speaks from his own experience of having been granted access to dance owing to the demand for male dancers, in spite of what he thinks of as the physical limitations of his body, such as “inflexibility” in his pelvis.

education, in the hopes of revealing 'hidden' dynamics in classroom discourse that shapes learning outcomes (Sadeghi et al., 2012; Alister et al. 1994).

Rather than using an instrument already developed for classroom analysis, such as the Flanders system⁴⁵, the present analysis has been constructed by examining patterns that emerged via systematic data collection, as well as through informant-identified categories specific to the genre of dance. This approach is grounded within the ethnographic methods outlined by Smith (1998), who used patterns of action and interaction within a society to identify its underlying processual structure, in much the same way that Firth (1981) identified patterns of social organization. The result, it is hoped, is a new-found understanding of how opportunities in dance are structured, from the admissions process and classroom instruction to the search for company positions. My data on the French Ballet Academy were gathered through a long series of classroom observations, in conjunction with individual interviews and focus groups.

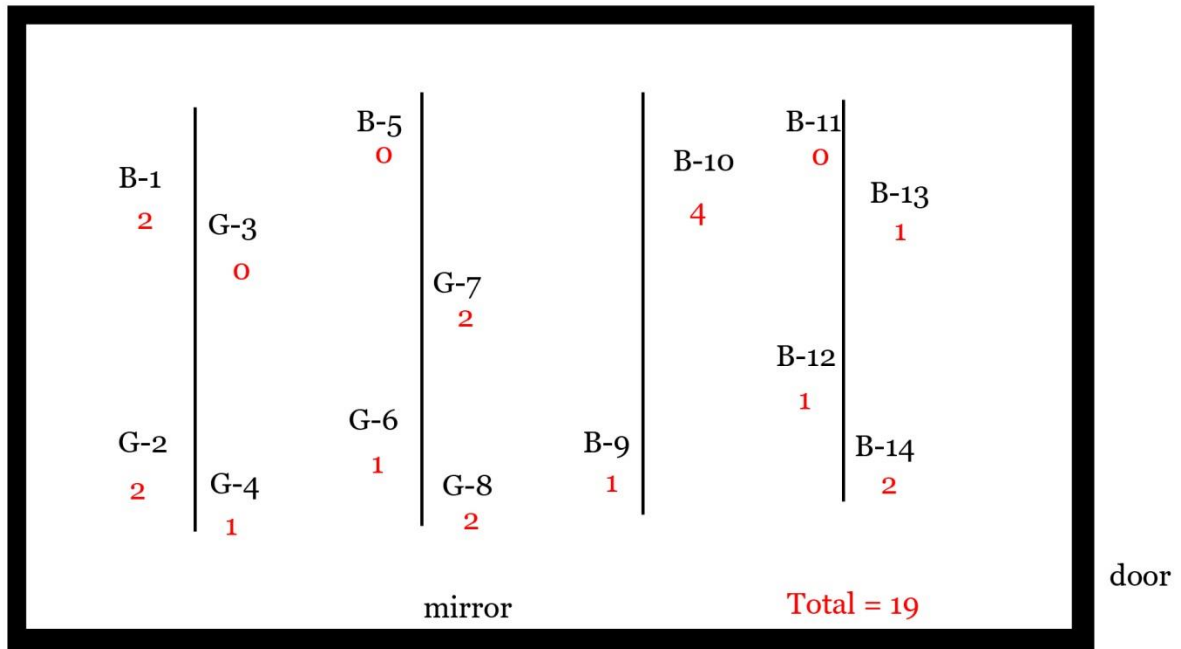
Given that the range of methods available for use in the classroom without disrupting the environment primarily included written field notes, the majority of the corrections recorded were verbal responses given to students, although I also took note of corrections delivered via the hands-on sculpting of a student's body-placement. Verbal responses given to a particular student were recorded and marked on a chart in relation to her or his position in the room. The notes made about type of comments and corrections given, were then coded in relation to affect as being positive, negative, or neutral. For the purpose of analysis two representative classroom data-sets were chosen, at different levels of instruction with the same instructor giving the class: an elementary/intermediate-level class with 10 female and 3 male students, and an advanced-level class with 6 female and 8 male students. The data then were aggregated with the observational and survey responses to determine if the variables

⁴⁵ This system, developed in the 1960s, is an instrument for measuring and analyzing verbal interaction patterns between students and between teachers and students in relation to affect. (Amidon 1966).

that tend to structure opportunities within ballet, as identified both in the literature and by informants, equated to differences in attention in the classroom.

Some interactions, such as eye-contact through the mirror, an instructors' slight nod toward a student, or an instructor's meeting a student's gaze and looking away, or looking down at the floor after the class does a combination, also were fairly common— and no doubt also significant, although it was not possible, using the methods employed in this study, to accurately capture the totality of these types of interactions within a single class session. That would have required the use of multiple-angle video recording and/or a team of observers, neither of which were within the scope of this project. However, based on my extended observation's of multiple class sessions over a year-and-a-half period, nonverbal interaction follows a interactional pattern similar to both verbal and the hands-on interactions. The verbal and the hands-on corrections are reflective of the totality of interactions directed toward a specific student. Notes were made about the verbal and hands-on types of comments and corrections given to students, which were then coded in relation as being positive, negative, or neutral.

Figure 12: Correction/Response Pattern Advanced Level

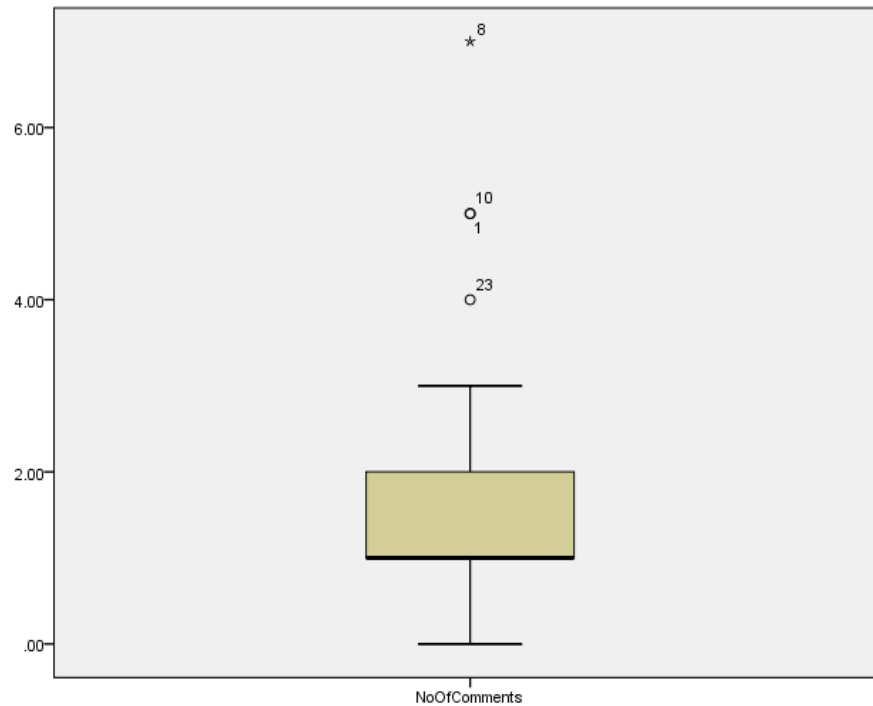


Note: In this image, G represents female and B represents male students.

By consulting the above figures, it can also be noted that in both the Intermediate and Advanced class sessions, some students received more verbal attention and more corrections than others. The nature of the corrections was often related to the instructional agenda and to the areas a student needed to focus on, though occasionally the responses also were shaped by factors such as where students were positioned in the space of the classroom and their personal relationships with the instructors. More often, when a student was the recipient of what might be termed “special attention,” they received a disproportionately large number of comments, corrections, and/or positive remarks. As can be seen in the figure below, the minimum number of comments given to a particular student was zero, while the maximum was seven. The mean number of comments was 1.85; most students fell

within the range of 0-3 comments/corrections, while the student who received 4 comments, the two who received 5 comments, and the student who received 7 comments were outliers.

Figure 13: Box plot demonstrating outliers



With respect to the students who garnered a large number of comments/corrections, there was no specific measured variable that distinguished such a student from the others in the class, though, it was apparent to me that these students tended to be ones that the instructors had a vested interest in training or recruiting for the school. Thus, a large number of comments/corrections did seem to denote markers of the instructors' acceptance of both the potential of each individual to dance, as well as the recognition of the seriousness with which he or she took their study of dance. For example one student an African-American male who had enrolled for the summer, was undecided about attending for the year. At one point, Jean-Pierre pulled him to the side and told him people will always tell him he has a beautiful body as he has lovely feet and legs almost twice as long as his torso. But while most people will tell him that he dances well and is beautiful, if he actually wants to be a dancer, he should attend a

school where he will be given corrections. He had been referred to the Academy by a high school dance teacher, and as a ninth-grader had been dancing for less than a year. Part of the attention paid to him in the classroom was related to the instructor’s interest in recruiting him as a student, part to his need for training given the limited number of years he had studied, part to his obvious potential.

In the course of a particular elementary and intermediate class session, the students who received the most corrections were a female who was undecided about attending in the fall, a male who had entered the Academy in the middle of the previous year as an intermediate student and was hoping to move up to the advanced level, and a female who was one of the few whom Noémie had said would likely become a professional dancer (Students G1, G10 and B8). For the most part, the type of correction given was technical. The most inexperienced students, plus a student who was just returning after an injury, received the least number of corrections (0); this relates to the concept of silence addressed in Chapter 3, since a lack of comments/corrections also tends to be a strong form of negative communication. The table below displays the comments and corrections that individual students received verbally in this elementary and intermediate-level class.

Table 11: Verbal Responses: Elementary/Intermediate Level

Student No.	Gender	Number of Comments/ Corrections	Description of Corrections/Comments [Field Notes]
1	F	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By name, 1 and 10 were told that they spend a lot of time watching themselves in the mirror. • “It’s gorgeous.” [The quality of her movement.] • “You must feel only the supporting leg- this is what I saw.” She demonstrates sitting in the hip. “You must— the other day—” She shakes her head. She has the student go to <i>sous sus</i>, bring the foot to the front of the ankle, then go back to flat to attempt another <i>frappé</i>. “Do you see what just happened? Why? You didn’t brush— brush more brush. Just the— now push yourself even more. There is a lot of using toes— in the fall you’re going to have fun. Elbows, point to the back, or side- to the side.” • “Back— no chair.” • “Ribs back.”

2	F	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Same every day, yeah?” Noémie makes the gesture of drooping arms. • Holds arm up while the student is closing 5th. • Adjusts hips— shows again that the hips feel as though they are pushing down.
3	F	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Be careful.” Picks up her arm
4	F	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusts arm position to the side and stretching in front of hip by pulling her up through the front of her hip. • “You all see a huge difference. You have 2 days to fix the wobbly ankle in the supporting leg.”
5	M	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<i>Plié</i> 4th, <i>tendu</i>, <i>demi</i>— bring the heel toward you.” She demonstrates bringing the back heel forward when going to 4th through <i>tendu</i> back. • “Finish like—” (she demonstrates being pulled up, turned-out feet, round arms first position <i>en bas</i>). The student copies her and grins at Noémie. She goes to him and adjusts his leg. “Feel that?”
6	F	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grabs leg and stretches it behind her head.
7	F	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touches on sleeve and motions where to hold the hands. “Whole, sharp, sharp, <i>plié</i>, and up.”
8	M	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Push!” • “Open, open— what are you doing? They’re offering something. 5th <i>plié</i>.” • “Can you do arms again so I can see them? Shoulder to the side— there is a huge twist in shoulder and elbow to the front. Twist harder. It’s exactly like turnout. Hold inner arch— hands in front— do you feel huge? Feel like you fill up a room— just grow— go how it looks good— we all have different arms and different structure. Go home and sculpt yourself. Spend time in front of the mirror. No arms, only foot— we’re strong. Feel the brush from 5th— end of <i>tendu</i>— not beginning. There— working leg down.” • Adjusts standing leg. • “No.” Shows. • Fixes the <i>tendu</i> back and trains his leg by moving it through <i>rond de jambe</i>. “Feel turn-out when go to side- you don’t need to bend, <i>monsieur</i>.” • “<i>Tendu</i> back, arabesque. Arabesque is around, and then your hips have to be front— a little feeling forward— and you’re in the arabesque.” • Shows sitting and stretching out. “Feel like sitting on top of a stool. Spring!” She has him adjust to straight and lift. “Even if we did the exercise and something didn’t work, we finish that. We are inside a dancer and outside a dancer. Come in as a hooligan from the street, you’re a problem.”

9	M	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Here, darling, this is relaxed.” She fixes his arm.
10	F	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusts roll-up during a <i>plié</i>, roll-up, push over on <i>demi pointe</i> exercise. • By name, 1 and 10 are told that they spend a lot of time watching themselves in the mirror. • Adjusts legs. • Corrects 10—she is turning working leg in. Noémie said the working leg doesn’t notice— so the correction goes to the supporting leg. Pushing down with hips. She asks students to repeat what direction, and they say “down.” • Comments on the lift on the hips— Noémie has her do the <i>attitude</i> back up and stretches it for her.
11	F	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Yes! In 5th, when pushing over in <i>plié</i>, feet come together before pushing the floor.” This student tried the general correction and receives positive affirmation. • Adjust arms. • Adjusts hips in <i>tendu</i> back.
12	F	0	
13	F	0	

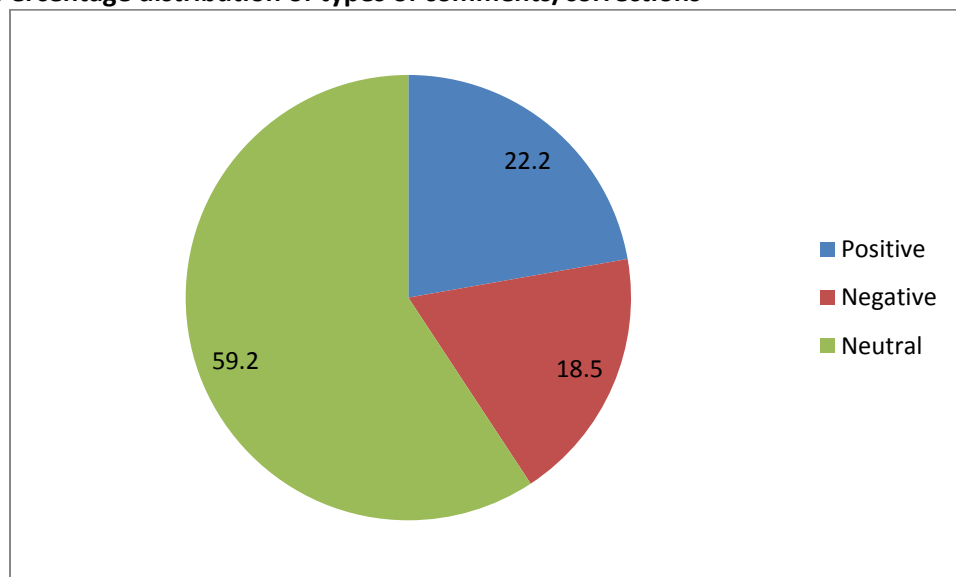
In the advanced level class, there were fewer specific comments directed toward individual students and more comments directed towards the class in general. The student who received the most comments was B-10, a new 17-year-old male student. He had just started his studies during the summer and often took the elementary/intermediate class in order to try to progress quickly and move up to the advanced-level class. Below is a table that displays the individual corrections given to specific students.

Table 12: Corrections Given in the Advanced-Level Class

Student No.	Gender	Number of Comments/ Corrections	Description of Corrections/Comments [Field Notes]
1	M	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Pull down— feel that you are sitting on a chair.” • “Feel the turnout.”
2	F	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Demi—“She rotates the student’s thigh. “Feel that?” Has the student do the exercise: “2nd, demi, pointe. <i>Plié</i>, roll, and balance.” • Fixes legs. “Be under yourself.”
3	F	0	
4	F	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<i>Balançoire</i>, side to back—hips— makes a beautiful step.”
5	M	0	
6	F	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goes to her and adjusts her hips.
7	F	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusts turnout for her. • “Yes nice.” Putting an arm over her head to mark the combination.
8	F	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Beautiful, this is beautiful.” • “Not forcing to jump— consider the jump in your body.”
9	M	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Don’t hold back- back is not staying, it’s too...”
10	M	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When you go to the back in <i>tendu</i> feel like someone is pulling you.” • “Be careful— feel your shoulder from the back.” • Adjusts hip; he pulls his pants to push the hip into place. • “Arms are too complicated for the French way.”
11	M	0	
12	M	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “You have to push— smaller and cleaner.”
13	M	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Wait, because only [name removed] was ready.”
14	M	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “You have to work your feet—point— back— point— back.” • “Your feet are not that bad of an arch, but that’s easier to fix with arabesque— then lovely— bad.” Student motions to self, unsure if she was talking to him. (Me?). “Yes, you!”

As noted, verbal and hands-on corrections/comments given in the elementary/intermediate class and the advanced class were coded using the scheme of positive, neutral, and negative. Comments that included some manner of praise were coded as positive; for example, the phrase “yes, nice,” or “Beautiful, this is beautiful,” while comments such as “[If you] come in as a hooligan from the street—you’re a problem,” were coded as negative. The majority of comments were coded as neutral, as they were largely delivered as technical corrections. Across both classes, and as may be seen in the figure below, positive and negative comments were equally distributed between 22.2 and 18.5 percent respectively, while neutral comments comprised 59.2 percent of the total (n=27).

Figure 14: Percentage distribution of types of comments/corrections



Clearly with respect to verbal and hands-on type corrections the bulk of the content of classroom corrections, particularly at the intermediate-level, concerned technical details: the appropriate use of the arms, the upper back, and the hips and legs. The instruction focused on activating particular muscle groups in order to achieve the desired alignment that would facilitate the movements utilized within ballet. The body is constructed as segmented into what theorists such as Kealiinohomoku (1983), who investigated ballet as an ethnic form of dance, described as the Western understanding of the divisions of the body into torso and limbs; this understanding often is incorporated into how people

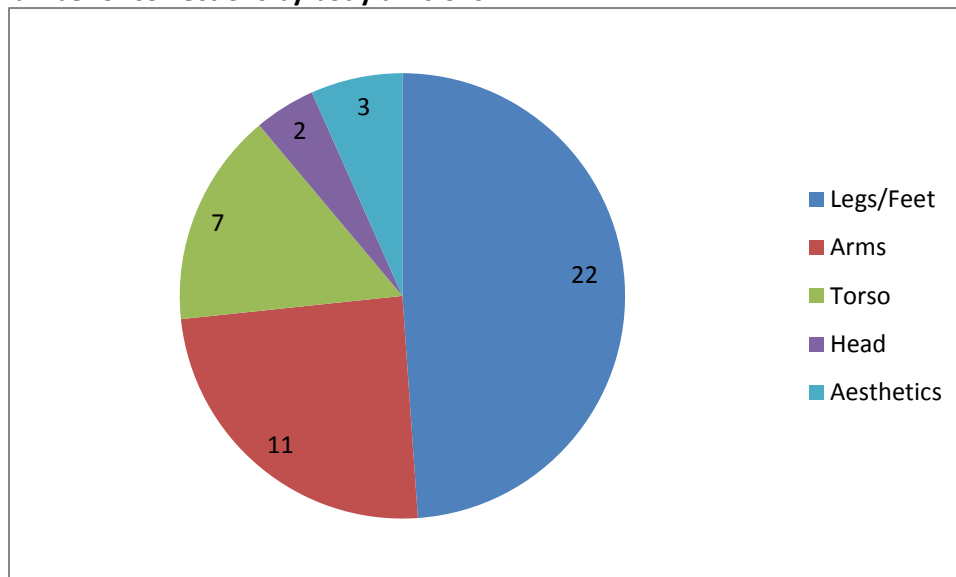
from a Western context interpret the dance movements of other societies, societies that may or may not adapt these divisions of the body into their own understandings of movement. Bateson (2008) noted that Cartesian mechanics, often borrowed from “Western” medical understandings, tend to be utilized in dance instruction to show how to move and articulate parts of the body when they are taken along with the idea of alignment and symmetry they constitute vital components of the aesthetic of ballet. This in turn means that then translates into the construction of an “ideal” ballet dancer, one has an ectomorphic body type, “with a low percentage of body fat, well-balanced proportions, long, slender straight limbs, narrow hips, and well-developed arches;” this particular body-type facilitates alignment in relation to the divisions of the body, and along Cartesian planes (Bateson 2008:144). All of which is very much in keeping with this comment that an Academy student shared: “...the majority of the movement in ballet is in the limbs while the core stays in place. Even the limbs will only ever move in certain ways. Even though ballet is dance and it is about movement, a lot of the movement is minimal and conservative.” During class sessions, the aforementioned body-divisions frequently emerged out of Jean-Pierre’s explications of ways to move the body.

“You don't get on your leg Simon. Go straight up, don't be arched in back and torso... you look, like you're having a seizure! [The arms are] too busy. You have to do something with the legs fast, but with the top part look like [you're having] a conversation with British china. Now you'll have to hold Tupperware, or you'll destroy it. We're dancers, not wrestlers.” After the jumps, Jean-Pierre told him, “Not too bad, eh? But you have to think about it. When you didn't think, you didn't do it. You have to think about more than one thing, we cannot focus only on one thing.” [Field Notes]

The technical corrections/comments given to students during the class session analyzed above were coded and grouped into the categories of legs/feet, arms, torso, and head, because those categories emerged from the data. A fifth category, labeled “aesthetic,” was used to group the coded corrections/comments that related to beauty, quality of movement, or presentation. The largest category was that of Legs/Feet, with 48.9 percent of corrections given pertaining to this region of the

body. The second largest category was Arms, with 24.4 percent; comments related to the head and to aesthetics received less than a total of 1 percent of given comments.

Figure 15: Number of corrections by body divisions



Corrections that relate to this segmentation of the body focus on maintaining a still torso, and on the movement of the limbs in relation to the torso, such as the arrangement of the arms. In the class session detailed above, for example, the image of swimming and of having floaters on the arms, was frequently used to explain a general correction given during class about the arms. This conveyed not only the proper position of the arms to the side of the body and the muscle groups that were to be used, but and the importance of the arms' positioning in relation to technique and to the stage as a whole.

“Like a spoon,” Noémie said, “from underneath. Everything is in a swimming pool. Feel water, pushing water, makes you grow. Push yourself up on the barre.” The students do so, using their arms to let their feet dangle. “Do you feel what you do when you go up?” she asked. “Here, it’s the same, push to the back. Follow the line of the arm and hand with your eyes — it’s your presentation on stage. Do one hundred *pirouettes*, she said, finish like:” she demonstrated drooping arms and bent legs. “Nobody cares. Finish like—” she demonstrates being pulled up, with turned-out feet, and round arms first position *en bas*, strong. This clean finish would garner the appreciation of the audience. [Field Notes]

This particular correction was frequently reiterated in both verbal and nonverbal ways, and to various students across all levels of instruction. Most such corrections are simplified to such statements as “arms,” “the arms are not heavy, they are shapes,” and “arms in *chaînés*” but in this particular class,

where some students were familiar with the analogies and some were not, a detailed explanation was often given to provide additional clarity. Comments and corrections delivered to specific students were often reminders or reiterations of comments previously explained in class sessions, and they often entailed the instructor making a physical adjustment to the student's body-position. For example, in the case of one student the instructor adjusted the position of his *tendu* back, pushing the heel down and rotating the foot up. Then, while holding the foot in position, the instructor marked the circle of a *rond de jambe* on the floor, while maintaining the rotation of the leg. She provided the verbal cues along with the movements: "feel turn-out when go to side— you don't need to bend, *monsieur*."

The understandings of the bodily divisions also were reflected in the students' reflections on what they were learning in class.

Student 1: Personally, my upper body. I get pretty stiff, and I got to just learn how to let loose and not be too tense when I'm concentrating. Also, my arms— I would like to use them better and make them more fluid.

Student 2: I'm learning how to control my *plié*, coordinate my arms and legs, etc. I'm learning a lot at a time....

Student 3: I am beginning to understand the way my body works - turnout, *plié*, balance. I am also working on discovering how to hold myself and be able to isolate parts of my body to perform better, such as turning out my standing leg at my gluteus when doing *pirouette*.

The more general corrections issued to the class also were technical in nature, relating to the orientation of the body, and were similar in type to those issued to specific individuals. These corrections often functioned as technical reminders to the class, when the instructor noted many students making similar mistakes. Some typical examples from my field notes that were offered by Noémie include:

- "The toes should always be sliding on the floor when doing *tendu*."
- "In 4th position, stay linear—stay even between the legs."
- "*Tendu*— close— use your inner thigh— don't pull your shoulder."
- "The supporting leg should not be moving— *sous sus*. Be strong. Feel your back to the other side." The instructor demonstrates on her own body how some students stick out their stomachs as they pull in— and tells them to pull up when they close—they should not be relaxing.

- “You’re rolling in 5th. Go to *demi pointe* because the back of leg is pulling down so hard. Then— the accent is to the side.”
- “Supporting leg strong— be extremely careful of arms and neck, be careful not to—”
Noémie demonstrates overcrossing the arms in front.

As may be seen in the following table, some patterns emerged within the response analysis when I did cross-tabulations. For example, a cross-tabulation for gender and the number of comments shows that number of students who received comments are fairly evenly distributed across genders.

Table 13: Number of Comments in Relation to Gender

No. of Comments / Gender Cross-tabulation

Count	Gender		Total	
	Female	Male		
No. of	.00	3	2	5
Comments	1.00	5	4	9
	2.00	4	3	7
	3.00	2	0	2
	4.00	0	1	1
	5.00	2	0	2
	7.00	0	1	1
Total		16	11	27

When evaluated by class level, it was found that of the 13 students present in the elementary/intermediate level, 3 were male and 10 were female. Boys received 10 out of the 31 total corrections and comments documented throughout the barre sequence— one-third of the total comments and corrections given. The 10 girls received a total of 21 comments and corrections. Patterns of corrections for the advanced-level students given during the barre segment of class, are similar that for the intermediate level classes. In this particular 10 a.m. technique class taught by Noémie, there were 14 students— 8 male and 6 female. All but one of the students attending the summer program were year-rounders as well; most had studied with Jean-Pierre and Noémie for more than five years and attended summer-intensive sessions in other locations during the earlier part of the summer. Here, out

of the 19 recorded comments/corrections issued to individual students 8 were issued to female students, and 11 to male students; the gender ratio was approximately fifty percent.

Other patterns that emerged from the classroom data were those relating to level of study and type of enrollment (year-round or summer only). As may be seen in the table below, there were more students enrolled in the Year-Round program (21) as opposed to enrolled for the Summer Program (6) only, that attended these particular classes. Proportionately, this means that students of both types of enrollment receive approximately the same number of corrections and comments in a class. Year-round students received an average of 1.8 comments in the class session observed, while summer students received an average of 2 comments. The difference was not statistically significant.

Table 14: Enrollment Type and Number of Comments

No. of Comments / Enrollment Type Cross-tabulation

Count	Enrollment Type		Total	
	Year-Round	Summer Only		
No. of	.00	4	1	5
Comments	1.00	7	2	9
	2.00	6	1	7
	3.00	1	1	2
	4.00	1	0	1
	5.00	1	1	2
	7.00	1	0	1
Total		21	6	27

Given the intense focus on the human body within the classroom the body's intimate relationship to the achievement of the desired aesthetic within ballet and the aesthetic preference for a body that is long and thin, it might be expected that body types would be closely associated with the number of comments and corrections that a student receives in class. For the purpose of discussion, the endomorphic, ectomorphic, and mesomorphic body-type classification system is used. This system of categorization was developed by the psychologist William Sheldon, originally to examine the

relationship between body-type and temperament. It has been appropriated and popularized by those concerned with musculature and body-building both because it permits a general assessment of stature and skeletal structure and because it facilitates the development of particular muscle-patterns all across levels of fitness (Bernard 2008). In the present case, however, due to admissions policies and procedures at various institutions and levels of study, as well as at the present location, students that do not fit well within the preference for ectomorphic and mesomorphic body-types were already filtered out. The majority of students who attended the Academy chiefly fell within the same body-type categories (either ectomorphic or mesomorphic). The bodies within the classroom are those that conformed to the ballet sense of aesthetics closely enough to have passed through the boundaries posed by the admission process of the institutions they crossed in building the genealogy needed to gain admission to the French Ballet Academy.

Table 15: Corrections and Body Types
No. of Comments / Body-Type Crosstabulation

Count	Body-Type			Total	
	Ectomorphic	Mesomorphic	Endomorphic		
No. of	.00	2	3	0	5
Comments	1.00	4	5	0	9
	2.00	2	5	0	7
	3.00	0	1	1	2
	4.00	0	1	0	1
	5.00	1	1	0	2
	7.00	0	0	1	1
Total		9	16	2	27

The racial categories that the students identified themselves falling into (see the table below) also were not significant in relation to the number of comments that students received; during the two class sessions used for my analysis, the students represented just the two categories of “White” and “African-American.” The White students received a higher number of comments and corrections, with the

students who were statistical outliers in terms of the total number of comments received falling into this category, however, the number that African-American students received fell within the distribution range (0-3) identified for the overall student population.

Table 16: Race and Comments Cross-tabulation

No. of Comments / Race Cross-tabulation

Count		Race		Total
		White	African-American	
No. of	.00	4	1	5
Comments	1.00	7	2	9
	2.00	6	1	7
	3.00	1	1	2
	4.00	1	0	1
	5.00	2	0	2
	7.00	1	0	1
Total		22	5	27

Student Reflections on Classroom Interactions

Students typically keep a notebook into which they jot down the corrections that they are given in class. Each is frequently referred to as a “bible;” by the instructors. Students at the younger levels are expected to keep their notebooks beside them during class and to take note of their corrections, plus write down any information taught in class that they will need to recall. Thus almost all of the students had an index of corrections that were specific to them and to their class; students rarely write down positive remarks or comments. Noémie also kept a notebook; she took notes about things she noticed the students doing incorrectly and wanted to address with them in the future, as well as about the choreography during rehearsals. She modeled this practice for the students when she wanted them to write in their notebooks, commentating that she had been dancing for almost 30 years, but still had a notebook. This type of production in the classroom tends to underscore the importance of verbal and

visual articulation of comments and corrections, given about both the body and types of movements. Often students will enter these notes in the form of the same words the instructors used to explain the correction; at other times they will draw illustrations to show the arrangement of limbs that was demonstrated. Both of these practices can be seen in figure below, a replication of the notebook produced by one of the elementary first-year students.

Figure 16: Elementary/intermediate-level student's class notes.

5/14/12

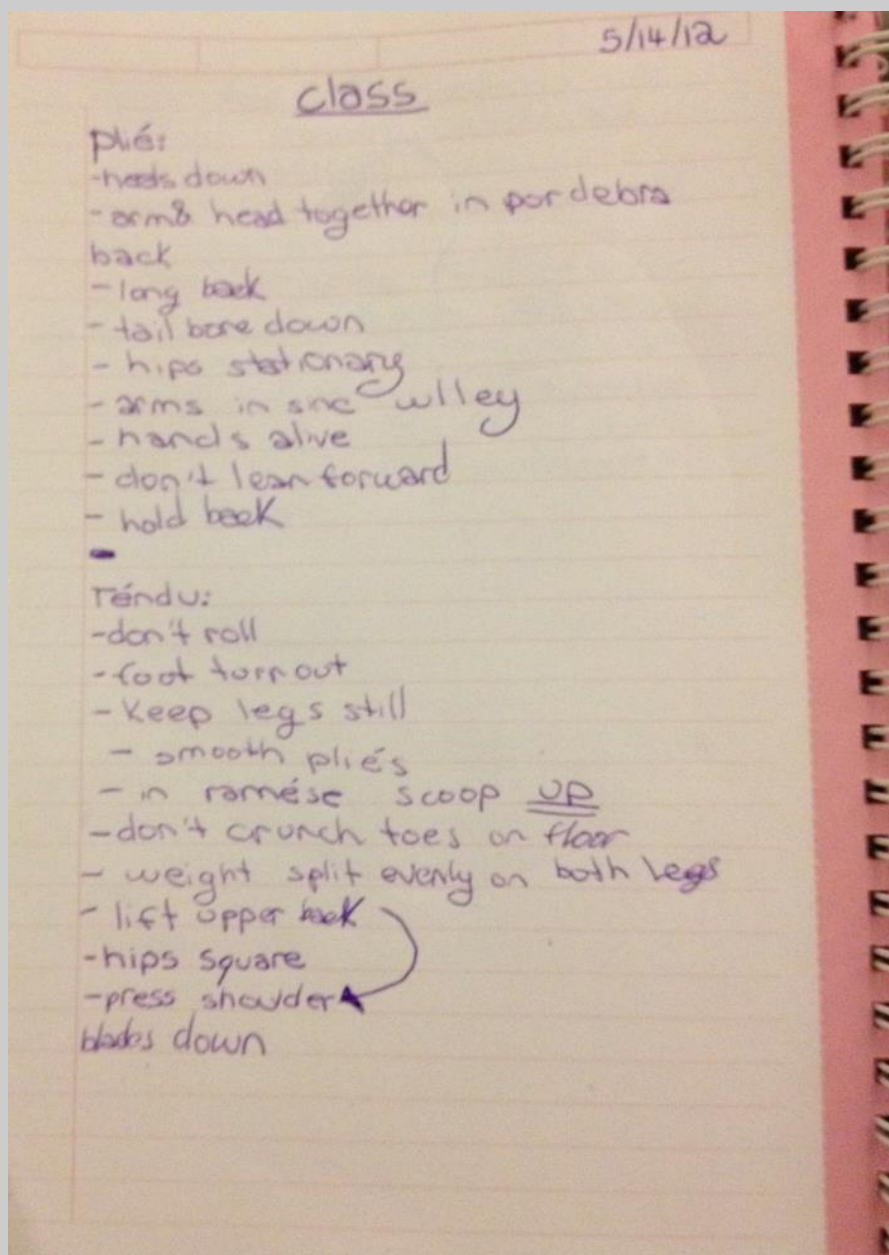
Class

Plié:

- heels down
- arms and head together in *port de bras* back
- long back
- tailbone down
- hips stationary
- arms in sync w/ leg
- hands alive
- don't lead backwards
- hold back

Tendu:

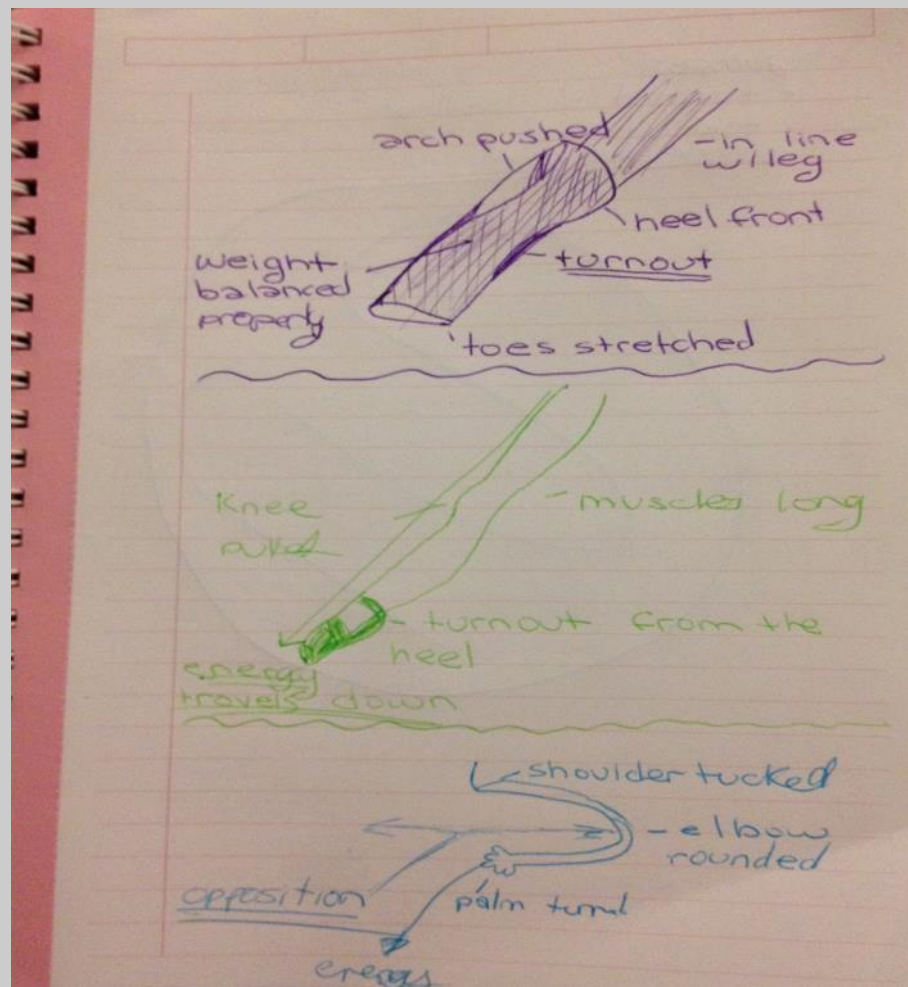
- don't roll
- foot turn out
- keep legs still
- smooth plies
- in ramese(?) scoop up
- don't crunch toes on floor
- weight split evenly on both legs
- lift upper back
- hips square
- press shoulder blades down



- arch pushed
- in line w/ leg
- heel front
- turnout
- toes stretched
- weight balanced properly

- knee pulled
- muscles long
- turnout from the heel
- energy travels down

- shoulder tucked
- elbow rounded
- palm turned
- energy
- opposition



The corrections that this student found important to record were emphasized verbally during the class. Her notes also detail information about the carriage of the body and movements that would later become automatic; these movements are not as emphasized in the notes of the advanced-level students. When one of the older male students was sitting out due to illness, he took notes throughout the class in his notebook, and later he shared them. His notes are a mix of general observations about the class and corrections about specific steps and movements that were given in class, which he felt applicable to himself and wanted to remember.

Figure 17: Advanced-level student's class notes

May 3, 2012 Class

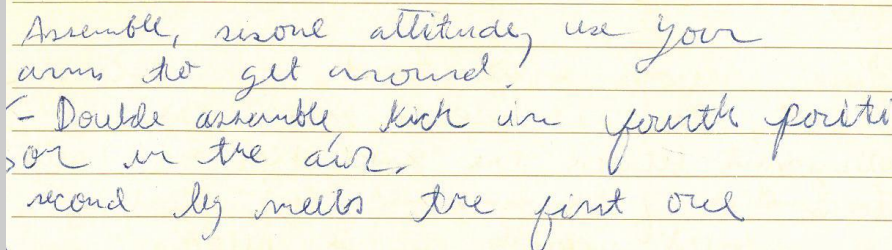
Notes

- Overall, everyone's ankles tend to roll in a lot. One must keep in mind the alignment between the knees, hips, and ankles.
- Coordination of the arms and legs must not be neglected, especially in plies.
- Temps lie*, weight must be right in the middle of the two legs while transferring.
- Femur goes in during *fondus*. This stabilizes the hip and lengthens the leg.
- Femur must also stay into the socket for *frappé*.
- Tendus*. See the music.
- Hold fifth for as long as possible. This will allow you to be sharp.
- In *relevé*- the back, not the working leg; it is the one that goes out.
- Upper body should always be in front of the legs in *adagio*.
- Pirouette* fourth, bring *posse* from underneath.
- Tour jeté*,

May 3, 2012 Class Notes.

- Overall, everyone's ankles tend to roll in a lot. One must keep in mind the alignment between the knees, hips and ankles.
- Coordination of the arms and legs must not be neglected, especially in plies.
- Temps lie*, weight must be right in the middle of the two legs while transferring.
- Femur goes in during *fondus*. This stabilizes the hip and lengthens the leg.
- Femur must also stay into the socket for *frappé*.
- Tendus* = See the music.
- Hold fifth as long as possible. This will allow you to be sharp.
- In *relevé*, the back, not the working leg, is the one that goes out.
- Upper body always should be in front of the legs. esp. *adagio*.
- Pirouette* fourth; bring *posse* from underneath.
- Tour Jeté* =

Assemblé, sissonne attitude, use your arms to get around.
 -Double *assemblé*, kick in forth position or in the air. Second leg meets the first one.



Assemble, sissonne attitude, use your arms to get around.
 - Double assemble kick in fourth position or in the air.
 second leg meets the first one

Throughout the process of taking the class, students learn the technical specifications of movements and how to evaluate others who are dancing by the ideal of what “should be.” That the students were developing a sense of the relationship among an aesthetic sense, their own bodies, and the bodies of their classmates was attested to in many ways both verbal and nonverbal, but most noticeably when students took notes on a class session that they were observing instead of participating in due to illness or injury.

Classroom Corrections and Ballet Ideologies

This dawning awareness of the relationship between corrections and comments given in the classroom and the slow shaping of both a bodily form and movements situated within the tradition and ideologies of ballet also manifested itself in those classroom activities wherein the processes by which dancers are made were emphasized. Noémie, asked the elementary and intermediate students to give each other corrections, as she wanted to see whether they understood at least the corrections they had been given, if not how to quite implement them in their own bodies. During each of the exercises given at the barre and in center, two students were selected to observe their classmates doing the activity and to then offer feedback and correction to their peers. The students were advised to make the other students aware of things that needed “fixing” and to correct things that were done “badly.” At first the

chosen to students were hesitant to provide corrections or to single anyone out. They stood quietly, hands clasped in front of their leotards, when given the opportunity to speak.

The two girls hesitated to offer corrections and Noémie added an additional explanation. Most of the students were looking down and away from one another, shy and embarrassed. Noémie explained, “When there are critics in class, if you did something wrong, and they say what it was, then they want to help you. If they say ‘good,’ then they don’t.” Noémie shows dropped arms and contracted hands, then corrects them. “Feet and hands, like that. Alive— can you imagine. Listen to the corrections for everyone, not just the ones that are directed to you, because you can learn from them.”

“What else [needs correcting]?” she asked the students, and one spoke up, saying that they were not “on the music,” and there was, in general, no resistance in arms. “There isn’t,” Noémie agreed, addressing the class. “It’s not like you don’t know— you have to push against the floaters.” She asked them to be more specific, to give corrections to individuals. One of the girls added that Odette was rolling.⁴⁶ Noémie told another student that she was not the number-one offender with her arms but also was rolling badly. [Field Notes]

This process of learning to provide constructive feedback to peers was not an easy one for many of the students to get the hang of. To the contrary, their discomfort at being asked to critique their peers was plain to see. Nonetheless the students used the model of corrections provided throughout the regularly structured class sessions to provide verbal feedback. Throughout this segment, students were taught what to attend to when providing feedback; if a student says “*port de bras*” for the correction this is general enough to suggest an understanding of the movement, and direct the attention of others to the arms, but it fails to include any technical specifications for improving the incorrect movement that was perceived.

Noémie gave the class a *dégagé* combination. After the class had finished the exercise, Noémie asked the two girls selected next to offer their corrections. One of them noted that not everyone was holding his or her turnout, and Noémie affirmed this correction but chastised the class, for they should already have known that they needed to hold their turn-out; clearly they weren’t retaining the information between classes. “You learn two plus two is four, but you come in here and forget!” She told them that they were not talking themselves through the exercises, going through the internal dialogue about how to do the movements properly and to have good energy during them. She told them that if they did so, they soon would be able to do the exercises properly.

⁴⁶ “Rolling” refers to over-pronation or over-supination of the foot and ankle.

Noémie asked, “Who remembers all their mistakes from the day before?” One boy, Jaden, made a “sort-of” motion with his hands, and she said, “It’s yes or no, not ‘eh.’ Why are you good sometimes?” She looked around the room. “Only one person is writing these corrections in your notebook,” she commented. She told them that they should all be writing down the corrections, so that they could remember and fix the things they do wrong.

The students ran to their bags to get their notebooks, and while they got them out, Noémie asked for any other corrections. Iris said “rotation,” and Noémie asked, “Who feels this is a problem?” Mirella said, “Me,” and raised her hand; Nina copied her. In the meantime, Jaden came away from his bag with a pack of sticky notes instead of a notebook. Noémie laughed gently and said, “Little yellow papers— 100 pieces— everyone else getting notebooks. You’re always losing your little posts.” Jaden explained that the other sticky notes were at school, but not in the garbage, or— he mimics them as crumpled with his hands.

After a minute of busy scribbling, two other students came forward, and they went through another *tendu* combination. Hallie is told by Odette that she needs to be pulling the standing leg more. Hallie asked, “Every time I lose the turnout, what do I do with the supporting leg?” Noémie asked the class who can answer, and Jaden said, “Grow and turn-out in the thigh more.” Noémie affirmed his response. “Do you feel, the pulling of arch? When you close, what do you have to do with your feet?” Odette said, “Pull the arch, feel rotation on the inner thigh.” “What do you think about *épaulement*?” Noémie prompted. Odette replied that some people need to work on it.

Noémie said, “Be careful with art. You have to *do it, feeling* it. Dramatic! People tell a story by acting. But sometimes people laugh because they are bad actors.” She explained how this translates to dance. “Some people have legs that aren’t stretched.” She looked around the room and called out names. “This equates to bad acting, rather than acting in a way that is deliberate and dramatic.” [Field Notes]

It seems we have come back to the recurring emphasis on performing a movement and on distinguishing between having technique and achieving the artistry of performing a role. Here the students are being informed about how to distinguish between the two, and about how the technique of dance becomes an art. Next we shall see, Noémie underscoring the vital role played by corrections in preparing students for the occupation of a professional dancer, and thereby economic value of what they are learning. She also elaborates on the personal characteristics needed for a career in dance: the ability to think critically about movements in relation to one’s body, the physical ability to perform the movements correctly, with both of these aspects allowing dancers to apply corrections to their own bodies and thereby achieve aesthetically “correct” position.

She called Hope and Jaden up next, and Jaden gave the same correction that many of the other had given previously: that they didn't grow on their supporting legs. Noémie asked him to think about an [imagined] audience in relation to what the students just did, as if they were performing. "Do they look like they're trying?" He made a shrugging motion and she explained, "If you're a professional, it's your job. It's my money. It's something so precious, if it's giving me a job. It's all my life. It's not just me who thinks this way. You are preparing your future and living money. Not just for the fun."

She told the class to do the exercise again with this in mind, and afterwards, she said, "We saw people being thinking. I did see a difference."

Towards the end of class Jaden was asked to repeat a movement that Noémie thought he did well, but he suddenly found himself shy. She told them that *corps de ballet* and your parents are the worst people to dance in front of. Jaden asked why, and Noémie explained that "They dream to have your position— they are the worst critics. Which you get used to. When nobody [parents, family] comes out, you can dance more securely than if they came out." She repeated the steps to the exercise, and told him to ask if he had questions. "Say 'stop— I don't understand.' When you're moving, Jaden, can you be more aware of things I went through. *Tombe, pas de bourrée*. Serena, start to learn to analyze what doing when you're a professional. No one comes to a job and does what you do. Face downstage. Face the audience. Finish in fifth. What do we have to do to make a perfect *soutenu*? How do I have to do what's next? How are my shoulders? In *Pirouettes— plié— push— you don't look down*." Noémie wanted them to learn how to critique themselves. "You have to take responsibility, you have to." [Field Notes]

Noémie's passionate conveyance of her vision of ballets aesthetic ideals served as one component, along with the students' ongoing identification of and with their favorite dancers, of their developing understandings of what a dancer should look like and how he or she should perform on stage. I asked one of the younger students, a twelve-year-old, to draw me a picture of a ballerina. She provided me with the following image, depicted below. Actually, she made two attempts at drawing a dancing figure, erasing the first one, although the outline can be seen behind the second. She decided the proportions of the body weren't right, and she simply didn't like the way it looked. The second figure has longer arms and legs in relation to length of torso than does the first. The dancer has arched, turned out feet *en pointe*, whereas the first figure was standing flat in *coupé* back. The neck is long and the arms, rather than being held to the side in second or possibly overhead, as they were in the first, are arranged in that stylized position often seen in Balanchine's choreography. These positions were rarely utilized in class, as the instructors emphasized the "cleanliness" and "purity" of the French technique, in

opposition to what they deemed the excessive stylization of the Balanchine technique. At one point Noémie said, “I’m French. I want *pas de cheval*. I want *tendu*. Only Balanchine wants—” she held her arms high— “different in front of shoulder.” Many seemingly casual interactions, as opposed to strictly classroom instruction, bring young dancers a vivid sense of the ideals of ballet especially as those interactions are augmented and reinforced by multiple sites and sources of information.

Figure 18: Student's illustration of a female ballet dancer



Note the half-erased figure in background and that the arms are stylistically Balanchine.

The students also came to ascribe characteristics emphasized in class to those of dancers in general. When asked what makes someone a good dancer, their answers followed along the lines of those characteristics emphasized in class. These extended beyond technical precision, to include those personal traits that often were subject to classroom derision via joking, such as “laziness” or “retardedness.” These types of verbal responses were, in general, not included in notes that students made in their “bibles,” but dramatically shaped their perspectives on dance and dancers.

The students sometimes shared a conscious awareness of the aesthetic curriculum as it relates to their bodies, with such insights emerging directly out of their activities in the class. One student wrote: “I am learning a lot in ballet right now on a technical and moral level. I am learning that my back is of a rather high level of importance if I want to balance. I am also learning to keep the tension out of my face and neck. Outside of class, I have learned to manage my time. At home and on the train, I perpetually think about what homework I have to do and about my upcoming class simultaneously.” Another student simply phrased these aspects as learning “discipline and determination.” Students also related classroom concepts to the construction of an ideal type of dancer. When asked what characteristics make a “good” dancer, students responded with comments such as those:

Student 1: A good balance of technical skill and artistry.

Student 2: Determination, perseverance, modesty.

Student 3: Dancers, first and foremost, must love and live for what they are doing. Dancers must also be of high intelligence and perseverance. The drive to correct and better your ability constantly also makes a good dancer. This is not to mention a certain level of technical skill dancers need to possess to further themselves.

Student 4: Technique, facial expression, acting ability, musicality.

Student 5: Being smart. You can have a perfect body, beautiful *pirouettes*, beautiful extension... but you have to be smart. You have to know that you will never be perfect, and you have to have the ability to constantly improve no matter how amazing you are.

Student 6: Someone that can reach the audience through their emotions, and someone that dances with passion and grace.

Student 7: Good technique and a good quality of movement.

Student 8: Musicality, physicality, being able to be related to, physical awareness, expression, connection with other dancers, appealing body types.

Student 9: Determination, hardworking, honest, musical, observant, optimistic, confident,

Student 10: Passion, elegance and trying to be a perfection.

Student 11: I think the lines of the legs and the way they use their upper body separates an average dancer compared to someone who will make you believe she's dancing on clouds.

These comments reflect a combination of physical requirements— a “perfect body” and “lines of the legs—” with such qualities as “passion,” “acting ability,” and “technique.” All such qualities emphasized in class came through in the corrections the students offered one another. These ideals also were expressed in the students’ selections and descriptions of their favorite dancers, and in the companies they said they aspired to dance for. Typically they selected dancers whom they perceived to have the qualities deemed throughout the instruction to be positive, though they also tended to select individuals whose physical features were not so different from their own. While some students listed contemporary ballet companies as their favorites, most listed companies and dancers selected from among the top national/international companies such as the Royal Ballet, the Paris Opera Ballet, the Bolshoi Ballet, American Ballet Theater, and New York City Ballet.

Students indicated an overwhelming preference for American-based companies and dancers: 51.8 percent indicated dancers from American Ballet Theater, NYCB, or a contemporary ballet company, such as Complexions, as a favorite, while 27.7 percent of students indicated either a Russian-based dancer in the Bolshoi Ballet or Ballet Russes as a favorite. 7.4 percent of students identified a Paris Opera dancer as a favorite, 14.8 percent listed a Royal Ballet dancer. 1.8 percent of students identified a Canadian and a Cuban company and dancer as their respective favorite. Students included historically renowned dancers as well as dancers who are principals in major companies on their lists. They tended

to value the physical characteristics such as feet, the artistic qualities such as stage presence and gracefulness, and the dancers' technical proficiency.

Only two of those dancers chosen fell into categories of non-white (African-American, Latino); in all cases but one these were selected by students who also fell into these categories. The majority of students selected female dancers as favorites though some girls also selected a favorite male dancer, and the majority the male respondents selected a favorite male dancer. In all cases the dancers the students admired were not ones they knew personally, though they were ones they had seen in performance or watched in recorded ballets (typically via YouTube.) A selection of their responses about favorite dancers is displayed in the figure below.

Figure 19: Selected student responses to questions about favorite dancers

Who is your favorite dancer or dance company? (open-ended response)	What characteristics do you admire about him/her/them?
Yuan Yuan Tan (San Francisco Ballet)	Her technique and grace.
Alina Cojocaru, (Royal Ballet), Polina Semionova (American Ballet Theater)	They combine outstanding technique with sincere artistry.
My favorite dance company (as of now) is Les <i>Grand s</i> Ballets Canadiens de Montréal.	One of my favorite attributes about LGCB is the supreme focus on creativity. Its perfect blend of classical ballet and contemporary ballet highlights this well.
Alessandra Ferri (Royal Ballet and later American Ballet Theater)	Acting ability
My favorite dancer is probably Fred Astaire (Broadway).	Even though he wasn't a ballet dancer, he was extremely talented and had a charisma and ease in his dancing that inspires me so much.
Isabelle Ciaravola (Paris Opera Ballet)	I love her feet. I think the way she executes her movements is beautiful, and her transitions are very clear.
Carlos Acosta (National Ballet of Cuba), Nureyev (Kirov Ballet), National Cuban Company	Mostly the quality of movement, and the artistry, but their technique is fabulous!
Paul Taylor (Paul Taylor Dance Company)	His body is similar to mine and he is a jumping addict. Also, he once said choreography is just "how the dancers get on and off the stage." The rest is just dancing.
Aurelie Dupont (Paris Opera Ballet)	She is not only embodies the purity and precision of French technique but she is also a beautiful artist. She is inspiring to watch, she creates music for the eyes and soul with her dancing and allows me to believe that I can also, with hard work, become a beautiful dancer like her.
My Favorite Dance Company: Royal Ballet My Favorite Dancer: Maria Kochetkova (San Francisco Ballet)	What I admire most about Maria is that she is so inspiring. She's only 5'0" and [yet has] made it so far in the ballet world. A lot of people think the stereotypical ballet dancer is a tall dancer with legs for days, beautiful and long everything. Maria said once, "Ballet isn't modeling business, it's about dancing. Tall people can dance, short people can dance, everyone can dance. It doesn't matter, it's all about how you express yourself and how you use what you have, nothing else is important." Maria's just an awesome role model.

Out of the total number of responses, 37.8 percent of the students listed a “performative” characteristic as a reason for selecting a favorite dancer or company; these included students who used such words as “artistry” and “acting” in their responses. A total of 20.8 percent listed the quality of the dancer/company’s movements as a reason for selecting them; this included references to “technique” and/or the quality of movement, including specific references to jumps and *pirouettes*. Many of the responses also included a reference to the personal characteristics of the dancer that they admired; this 20.8 % include those who addressed such bodily characteristics such as “feet” and “beauty” and such interpretations of personal character as “grace” and “drive.” These responses, in terms of what the students attended to aesthetically, also related to the corrections given in class, as well as to information instructors provided about what ballet “should be” when explaining concepts and ways of moving. This was clear from the fact that students tended to emphasize those characteristics that were assigned value in the classroom environment.

These concepts also extended to how students critiqued professional works. For example,

one student said she had been to see *Giselle* with her parents over the weekend as we waited in the hallway. She said it was so beautiful that she cried. On the way to the classroom, the students continued to talk about the techniques of the dancers who had performed in the ballet. They noted that the lead dancer had a beautiful arabesque, but sounded like an elephant when landing from her jumps.

To summarize this chapter this chapter has examined the relationship between students and ideologies as it emerges within the classroom. It has done so by looking at the correlation between factors that typically structure opportunities in dance and patterns of action/interaction within the classroom. My analysis of data trends revealed that in this case, there were no clear correlations between factors such as body type, gender, race, and the number of years studied to the number and type of corrections students received in the classroom. At the Academy, the work of boundary-maintenance primarily occurs through the process of admitting selected students, and though the students were aware that there were “favorites” within the classroom who fell into the category of

outliers in relation to the normative amount of attention given, there were no clear factors related to the structuring of opportunities. The analysis indicates that the majority of corrections given in the Academy's classes relate to those practices of the body required in order to achieve the desired aesthetics in ballet. These practices are oriented toward articulating limbs in relation to the division of the body between limbs and torso, and in conforming to an ideal of how such arrangements "should be." By looking at the ways in which students interpreted and applied these understandings to their own bodies and the bodies of others, this concludes that students are engaging with ideologies and positioning themselves and others in relation to these ideas. This chapter also reveals how the body can be used as a device useful for mediating "content" between choreographer and audience in a performed work, for it is constituted via multiple "selves" and "others," all of whom are at times subjects, objects, and agents. The following chapter will delve deeper into these concepts by looking at the relationship between rehearsal and performance, and by looking at how students are taught to engage with the concept of performance and audience.

Chapter Six: Experiential Exercises

Rehearsals and performances are an integral part of ballet training, particularly for those students for whom current studies are vocational training. The performance itself is a type of ritual; although there are variations in content, it is a form of “repeated and simplified cultural communication in which the direct partners to a social interaction, and those observing it, share a mutual belief in the descriptive and prescriptive validity of the communication’s symbolic contents and accept the authenticity of one another’s intentions.” (Alexander 2004:527). The instruction that occurs in relation to these ideas include the distinctions between public space (the stage) and private space (the classroom) and the “self,” (internal and external self, and roles one is cast in performance) and “others,” (audience, both real and imaged.) These distinctions in turn bespeak the difference between the rote practice of classroom technique and the application of learned skills, and at an even deeper level, the acquisition of status for individuals and for the school, with the foremen thereby being enabled to acquire increased mobility via the legitimating processes of performance. As Wulff (1998) noted, the process of performance also represent a shift in the nature of the relationships between student and the instructors, as the instructors also become the directors and the choreographers of works to be presented.

It seems then, that, a performance is, as Turner (2001) describes, “a structured unit of experience” embedded within the social drama of life and colored by all manner of symbolism conveyed via both verbal and nonverbal language. Schechner and Appel (1990), borrowing from and expanding upon the work of Turner, term this the *performance sequence*, while noting that “Western scholars have paid more attention to the “show” – what is most understandable in Western aesthetic terms- than to training, rehearsals, ritual frames just before and after the performance, and the aftermath following performances” (4). Schechner and Appel (1990) note that there are at least six phases to performance: training, rehearsals, warm-ups, performances, cool-downs, and the performance aftermath. The

purpose of this chapter is to scrutinize those components of the performance processes of in their relation to the concept of ideology, thereby assessing local ideologies in relation to how they are presented on stage, who participates in them, and the various roles associated with them in the context of performance.

Between Classroom and Stage

Wulff (1998) notes that the process of learning to dance takes approximately ten years. Her Study of ballet as a career looks closely at “coaching and choreographing relationships, including creativity blocks when the rehearsal process seems to go nowhere are also acknowledged, as well as the occurrence of dancers’ agency in rehearsal and performance” (59). The culmination of each semester of study and of each academic year with school-designed performances mimics the pattern of “off-season-rehearsal-performance” typically found in professional companies. Part of the process of dance training, for both students within a school and those who go on to take up apprenticeships and entry level company positions, is defined by learning: how to navigate the relationships each dancer has with teacher/choreographer/coach; how to be the material sculpted by the teacher/choreographer/coach; and how and when individual expression can be interjected. Students also learn how to respond to decisions made about casting; dancers have very little choice about role casting, and their responses to decisions made by choreographers can impact their future roles and their relationships with choreographers and directors (Wulff 1998).

The school aims to recreate for its students the experiences associated with the stage, so that they will emerge from it with a firm grasp of how to manage the relationships and processes that comprise the professional environment of dance, and will thereby be equipped with these skills needed to have a successful career. In the description of the academic-year program sent out by e-mail, performance is underscored as an essential part of students’ training. “While the emphasis of the pre-professional program will be on technique, there will be performances throughout the year. Performing

is necessary to the development of a dancer. Appropriate performance opportunities provide the challenge necessary for a young dancer to develop confidence and stage presence. All students will be offered performance opportunities throughout the year.”

The cyclical pattern of training-rehearsal-performance is fairly predictable within the academic environment. In this school, as in most others, there is a Winter and a Spring performance, in addition to those performance opportunities that arise through events such as regional school showcases and fund raising events, such as an AIDS benefit. Jean-Pierre and Noémie typically develop their own choreography for students, who usually are arranged by level groups (intermediate/advanced) for the Winter and Spring performances. The advanced level students occasionally perform at venues outside the school, averaging about five performances of two to three choreographed pieces per year. In the first year, of my observations, for instance, the school offered an annual winter performance of *Nutcracker* excerpts that was repeated the second year, plus a spring performance. Each piece generally is shown twice on the day of performance. The biannual performances given by the school, as well as the performances of the rehearsed pieces at other venues, serve to bring legitimacy to the school even while providing experience for the students. The quality of these choreographic works and of the students’ performances of them sheds its luster on both the students and the instruction at the school, thereby helping position the school to gain a certain preeminence in relation to other institutions within the landscape.

There is an important distinction that is made between what happens in the classroom, during rehearsals, and on the stage; it is the difference between the private and public domain and a real and an imagined audience. Classroom learning and practice is private; it is the art studio, the space within which individual bodies are sculpted and created, by both instructors and students. The minute a classroom is opened to visitors, it is no longer a private space; it has become a space for performance, for conveying information to an audience. Likewise, when video is used within the classroom, the act of

filming transforms that room from private space into a public domain. For example, on an occasion when Jean-Pierre was planning to invite a guest into the classroom to view his teaching and the students, he told the students he was going to give barre exercises that they knew but show them like as they had not seen them before. He told them to make sure to use *épaulement*. “I want him to say that I went to see [the French Ballet Academy], and the kids are very well trained.” The students then asked if he wanted them to wear a black leotard, as they had recently done for a photographer. Jean-Pierre said no; that was for the photographs, it was largely aesthetic, what looks better in pictures; that what they wore wasn’t that important for this. Such a moment marks the transformation of the classroom space from private to something meant to be seen. Of course, unlike a classroom, stage is consistently public; it is where the finished product is witnessed, commented upon, evaluated, and experienced by the dancers themselves in relation to what it is that they have tried to create and by the audience to whom they have performed.

During rehearsals, and often during class, the students developed a relationship to an imagined audience that is sometimes was their instructor and sometimes their own faces staring back at them in the mirror. At one point, for example, Noémie said, “I am audience— “ then gesturing to me— “we are the audience.” More often it is an imagined audience, with people filling the balconies above and below and a king and queen sitting in waiting. Ballet originally was performed for royalty who sat in the balconies, hence the development of technique that would avoid presenting an offensive view of the body and the insistent use of *épaulement*. Students also are given specific directions about how to interact with the audience; at various times that will mean looking at audience, smiling at one another, and using the line of their gaze to direct the audience’s attention to a particular spot on stage. Thus the classroom floor then becomes a stage, and stage directions are attached to the space of the classroom.

For example, in both Jean-Pierre’s and Noémie’s classes, the classroom floor becomes a stage, and the mirror that runs the length of the classroom is occupied by an invisible audience:

- “*Tendu, piqué, chaînés*. Face downstage, face audience. Finish in fifth.”
- “First. Fifth.” Noémie demonstrated her head turning and pointed to the side of her face that was presented to the audience. “You close yourself to the audience when you tilt your head down. Keep it open, face out.”
- “Two single, one double. Remember how to do the *échappé*? Big basket of air-” Noémie demonstrated the correct position, followed by the incorrect. “Not here. *Big*, with stomach sticking out and throwing to the audience.” The students laughed.
- “Why are you forgetting the audience?” Jean-Pierre asked as they moved across the floor during class exercises. [Field Notes]

This concept of the audience, one that is both socially constructed by dancers and their instructors/choreographers, is inclusive of an imagined sense of whom they are dancing for, as well as a sense of the power an audience has in relation to the dance being performed; the audience must be acknowledged, presented to, and thought of as consumers, if not potential sponsors. Bourdieu (1993) explicates this conception of the audience in terms of status (power), position, and role-taking, by noting that “the encounter between a work and its audience (which may be an absence of immediate audience) is... coincidence which is not explained either by conscious. . . . adjustment or by the constraints of commission... it results from the homology between positions occupied in the space of production, with the correlative position-takings, and positions in the space of consumption. . .” (45). This understanding is very much in keeping with what Schechner and Appel (1990) term the *insiders-outsiders* distinction. The later was brought forth in the work of Goffman, as he pinpointed the factors that separate the stage from those everyday actions and interactions that are “rule-bound, governed by conventions that are networks of reciprocal expectations and obligations.” (Schechner and Appel 1990:25). By contrast the actor or dancer possesses a certain autonomy, for he or she prepares in advance, making a careful selection from all the body-movements and by methods of communication known to him or her

Precision, Artistry, and Employment

The students use the technical training they have received to take up roles and parts; to become actors, proficient in a particular language, and to use that language to communicate ideas to each other

and to those audience members, who, while not proficient at speaking with their bodies, are assumed to have a comprehension of language of dance. When Jean-Pierre was teaching a piece he had choreographed that would become the Spring Performance, he underscored the need to project one's role:

"Be artists! What lacks is the artistry, we have to coach you in everything! The foot is pointed. You could be a school of dead cod! [You need] a little imagination— don't wait to be told how to react. It's better to be told, '*I don't like that,*' than to have the ballet master [think that you're a] marble statue. I feel like you are little birds; I see how you are outside the school, that is how you should be in class. You have to play with the story. [This is] what actors do when they get the part: a doctor follows a doctor, hang-out with junkies, shoot a couple of times. Eh, *we* don't," he said referring to the drug use. "But, you have to do your homework, instead of waiting to be told [how to act]. That's a secretary's job," he quipped ironically. "Please do not take initiative!"

During a run-through of the piece, said, "Be careful it's not *Moulin Rouge*. Not bad. There are a few things. Nice, what's lacking is the *resistance* in everything, and it's not *gracious* enough. You're a fairy. . . be gracious, feminine, not real. It's not only about technique, though it's a big part of it. Get into the character." [Field Notes]

Clearly the distinction that Jean-Pierre was trying to drum into his students' heads is that between knowing a part or a variation and merely having the technical proficiency to dance it, and being able to *perform* it. The students were also, however, getting an important foretaste as they embark on careers in dance, of the constant negotiation that goes on between the individual and the director/choreographer/ballet master, each of whom has his or her own ideas about how a role should be interpreted or a movement executed. This boils down to the negotiation of a mutual understanding of what "should be;" the difference between two ideas of what "should be," even if at times a matter of miscommunication and thus space for conflict, can, at its best it be a space for innovation. Later in the rehearsal Jean-Pierre uses two methods of communication— nonverbal demonstration of movement, and the verbal suggestions of how he imagined the interaction between the male and female dancer— to illustrate his ideas as to how the piece should be played.

They went over the beginning of the *pas de trois* that would be a part of the Spring Performance plus what they presented for a separate showcase performance just "for the memory" of it— that is, to train their bodies and minds to remember the choreography. Jean-Pierre marked the

romantic segment with the girls, using every bit of femininity that he expected them to, then told them to do exactly as he had done. He explained to students the process of learning choreography. The first task is to teach steps; the next one to address spacing in relation to the stage; then, lastly, there is the cleaning of the piece. They went through the piece once, and he told them, “We’ll go over the *pas de trois* again. Don’t freak out. I felt that you were a little freaking out.” He told them there was a spacing issue with the *piqué arabesque* and he had the male students mark their segment again. He then did Briana’s part with her, as she learned the steps. He told them, “The total is only seven minutes after all,” and paused to explain how to he’d like to see the interaction between the female and male roles. He said that he wanted them to appear just a bit flirtatious, joking, “Juliet going to look at him, at his butt maybe.” Franklin grinned, laughing. “Do *soutenus* together,” Jean-Pierre said, in reference to the segment they were marking. Jean-Pierre told them,, “it is awkward. It [should be] like playing, instead of doing cricket. It’s a *dance*.” [Field Notes]

Although there are technical ways in which communication with an audience is understood to occur— through gaze, movements that convey and evoke emotion, and pantomime— the concept of projection was stressed to underscore the need for a dancer to communicate with an audience. Often, as Jean-Pierre explained to students, the technical precision of the piece is distinct from the performance/acting aspects. The concept of performance and projection, were deemed a difficult one to teach; students often were thought to simply have or not have this skill:

Noémie reminded Danielle to be a “drama queen.” In a sense this phrase had been constructed through translation from the French to have a different meaning than the vernacular phrase in English with the same terminology. She wanted Danielle to become the prima ballerina, the queen of the stage, each of her movements replete with dramatic emotion, the tension that captivates an audience. Noémie imparted this reminder with her chin and chest deliberately lifted, modeling what is termed “projection” in this school and “stage presence” in other contexts. The instructors previously noted that although projection *can* be learned and taught in dance, there are individuals who already know how to *dance*, in the sense that they can already captivate an audience and communicate via projection, though they may need to be taught *technique*. It is unclear if Danielle completely understood yet— she was new— and not quite familiar with the instructor, but she indicated by the nod of her head that she did understand, even though the look on her face was uncertain. [Field Notes]

Although often considered an ascribed characteristic, one that is mystified through repeated verbal interactions, my own observational data of classes at the Academy suggest that the transmission of knowledge about technique and performances, as well as the instructions given about how to assume roles within a production, do assume patterns that can be noted and analyze. Such a finding is in keeping with the study of Asian martial and performing arts done by Zarrilli (1990). He observed that the

disciplining of the body through “daily repetition of physical exercises and/or performance techniques” leads to the encoding of the “techniques *in the body*,” so much so that the performer achieves a state of “accomplishment” and transcends the “self” (131). This process is at first one of mimicry, of breaking a performance down into small pieces, down to the individual muscle-movements needed to produce an action. He notes that for the young student there is no room for personality; rather the movements are instilled into the body through repetition; it is only when he or she has reached a state so that he/she where he or she longer has to focus on technique that he or she can move beyond it. Such thoughts where in my mind as I observed the intermediate class, for the instructional emphasis was on building up the technical proficiency that would enable them to transition to performance.

On the last *tendu*, Noémie instructed the students to do a *petit allongé*. She demonstrates the rotation of the arm she expects the students to mirror. She told them not to give up wonthe *épaulement* while they are doing that. Noémie mimicking Celine’s bad posture, “do you feel like that?” Celine nodded. “Then why don't you fix it? Hold ribs in even, with the *épaulement*.” She explained, “you're not leaning back; this is the Russian style, it's bad for your back, it puts stress here.” She holds her lower back. She then asked the class, “Do you know when we change the *épaulement*?” Everyone but Serena raised his or her hand. “Serena,” she said, “do you know? At the end of the front *tendu*, or the beginning of the *tendu seconde*?” Serena decided it was at the end of the first *tendu*. Noémie elaborated: “The work at the barre is the work on stage. The barre is where you build muscle-memory for these things. You will carry the quality from the barre to the stage, to your work in center.”[Field Notes]

Zarrilli (1990) notes that there is understood to be a “path” that leads to mastery. This isn’t merely a “course of study” but rather a “totally absorbing way of life. . . . a person’s place in the social hierarchy set by birth determined if he would or would not take up such a path... The neophyte... was born into it.” Some of the students attending this school have been born into the arts tradition, having parents who are dancers or artists themselves. Such students are placed within a school at an early age, but depending on whether they are able to move effectively between institutions and thereby build the genealogy necessary to construct a career, they will or will not complete the “pat,” or learn to have “discipline.” Others come into the path of the school not by birth, but by choice, though this also is contingent upon a number of other factors. At various points along the path as when students move

from the barre to the stage, they are cast in particular roles and parts and thereby shift from acquiring discipline to steeping themselves in all aspects of performance.

The constant repetition of movements in technique classes held throughout the year, places the movements of ballet into the students' bodies. Then, as the students slowly achieve mastery, they are expected to have a greater degree of individual expression because most of the basic movements have become nearly automatic. In the case of the elementary/intermediate students who engage in performances but are at a lower level of technical proficiency, much of the rehearsal process is devoted to breaking the individual movements down into the muscle-groups used. For the advanced-level students the focus is less on technique and more on communication of ideas to an audience, with the latter process itself entailing a precise, even if nonverbal, articulation of the character whose role they are assuming. In both cases, however, the technique and the performance of each dancer is situated most broadly, in relation to the genre of ballet as a whole, and more narrowly in relation to the aesthetics of the group.

The process of developing choreography with students began intensively about two months before the scheduled performance, so that during this period, the students logged as many rehearsal hours as hours in technique class. The work to be performed sometimes was formulated as an idea, expressed to students through spoken words, but addressing the vocabulary of movement-competencies they already had in their bodies, now to be transformed into the set of movements that would communicate particular ideas to the audience. The types of performances the students participated in ranged from narrative ballets, to shorter narrative works that took the form of variations, to more contemporary, neo-classical works.

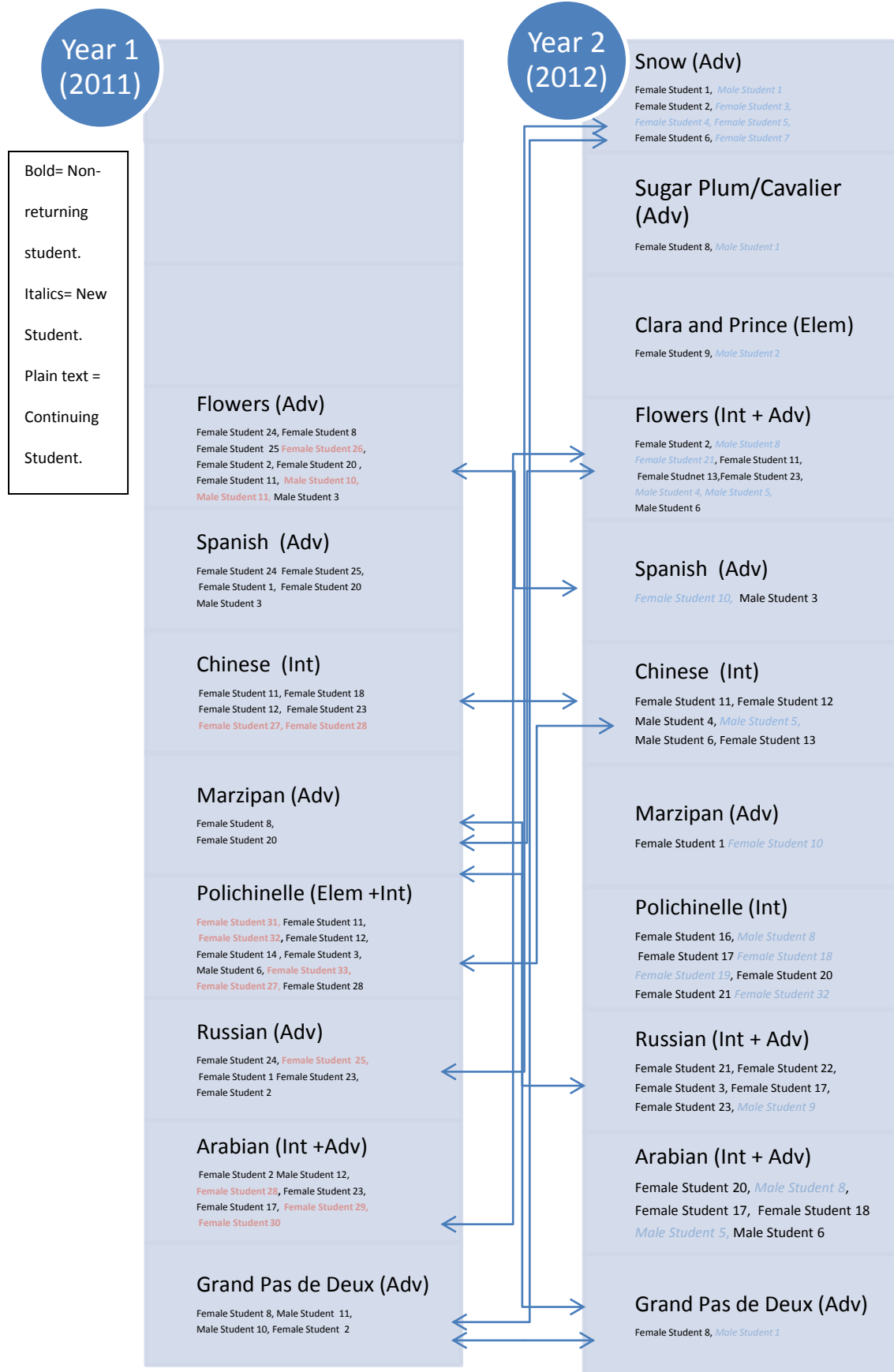
For each of the performances the instructors made all the decisions about casting and the arrangements of students. Casting was carried out with an eye on which work was being performed, where it was being presented, which students were available, and what experiences they wanted the

students to have. For example, when making decisions about casting the *Nutcracker*, the instructors had two students learn the *pas de deux*, then decided as follows whom to use in the performance.

“... Jonassaint and Laura are sometimes beautiful, but Tate helps out a lot, when you ask. Ask Jonassaint to do something, it's never. Tate has never missed.” Jean-Pierre looked over at Jonassaint and a few other other students who were standing to the side, listening to his and Noemie’s discussion about casting. He joked, “Jonassaint should be saying, ‘I’m making a donation to [FBA]....’” At that point, Jonassaint interjected playfully that he would give a donation, and then Bridget added that her dad had offered to do architecture for the new space. The instructors commented that, “if you have to play politics. . . Bridget is older than Laura, so give it to Laura next year. Iris, I like her a lot, but she is not a Sugar Plum, and when they're not a part, I don't care how much I like them, they're not a part. Can always say it doesn't work with a costume change.” [Field Notes]

In *Nutcracker Nation: How an Old World Ballet Became a Christmas Tradition in the New World*, Fisher (2004) demonstrates how performances of this ballet serve as a seasonal ritual both for an audience and for ballet students, with the latter being promoted to increasingly difficult roles as they advance through the school; by the time the students graduate, they typically are familiar with most of the roles of this ballet. Such was the case during my second year when I observed *Nutcracker* excerpts casted and performed; some students had been moved between roles, and the choreography had been altered to highlight each students’ strengths, and disguise their weaknesses. Although the excerpts presented were basically the same, some of the roles had been shifted to accommodate the Academy’s increased enrollment and to give students the chance to experience other roles (see the figure below).

Figure 20: Shifting Roles in the *Nutcracker*



Overtime, students interpret these roles in their relation, not just to this particular work, but also to the broader social landscape of ballet in which must find their places. As Sechner (1976) pointed out, “in some social settings ritual performances are part of ecosystems and mediate political relations, group hierarchy, and economics. The arrangement of students in performance often reified positions within the school, with the students with the greatest level of technical skill being given the most visible roles. Students often, from an early age, come to be associated with the predominant characterizations of existing roles within frequently performed narrative roles, whether through some association between particular ways of moving that exemplify certain characters, or through similarities in personality and character. For example, one girl was teased for always dancing the same way, no matter the combination. She was always a “sylph,” she was told, never a “Kitri,” and Jean-Pierre wanted to see her dance a “Kitri.” In another instance, Serena and Mirella were called out for their stylizations. Noémie told them “We aren’t doing little kitsch things with hands— why are you dancing all kitsch? Two little sylph— we’re missing wiles. Maybe they are—” she gestures to the rest of the class, suggesting that others might fill these roles.

Localizing the Collective Repertoire: History and Digital Media

Performances are done in relation to the existing canon of ballet, which includes the range of myths, movements, and narratives that have been inherited from the past as a part of the tradition within which dancers and choreographers operate. There is a careful balance that students and instructors strive to achieve between gaining distinction for their institution, and showing the proper respect for ballet as a genre and a social landscape. The presentation of something novel may help to engage with other institutions by entering into the ongoing negotiation for status but it will lose rather than gain status if it doesn’t also align itself implicitly as it were, with ballet canon in terms of both the genre as a whole and the national style that the school, and/ or the work being performed pays homage to. Bourdieu (1993) talks about art and the development of literary distinction; the separation both

emphasizes and legitimates the original production from which more novel productions gain their inspiration. He states, "The aging of authors, schools and works is far from being the product of a mechanical, chronological slide into the past; it results from the struggle between those who have made their mark... and those who are fighting to persist, and those who cannot make their own mark without pushing into the past those who have an interest in stopping the clock, eternalizing the present state of things" (60).

The implicit notion here of their being some sort of continuity, a mingled sameness between the past and the present, is reflected in the attempted balance between the purveying of a ritual construct, a product of the knowledge and symbols shared by the dancers and choreographers with the maintenance of communication between choreographer/performer and the audience. When the performance is thought of as a ritual process, continuity becomes key in the maintenance of communication between the choreographer/performer and the audience, as accessing the shared bases of shared knowledge that exist both within and outside of individuals, that effective communication occurs. The later goal is reached via adherence to technique and to the conventions of balletic expression as the professionals go about rehearsing and performing a work that will enable an audience to "understand." The idea of continuity, as used here, can be defined as a form of perceived consistency between past and present and between individuals and ideas through actions and interactions. This also means creating continuity is possible by adherence to technique, and through the conventions of expression in performing a work.

The process of learning and inheriting choreography engages with the concept of collective memory, when the choreography being accessed falls within the canon of ballet in the sense of works that have already been produced. The concept of collective memory was developed by Halbwachs (Coser 1992) and is connected to individual memory and historical memory, for it "endures and draws strength from its base in a coherent body of people," with individuals remembering the past in the

context of their membership in a group (Coser 1992:22).⁴⁷ Memories of the past often are stored in institutions, as well as within individuals; they are then passed down to future generations, who thenceforth hold memories that they had no role in shaping. Halbwach's theory also suggests that the memories which individuals hold about the past are not informed solely by one source, but rather spread across the various social bases in which they operate. This relates to Cremin's (1975) ideas as to the ways in which education occurs across multiple sites, each of which exerts its influence upon what is transmitted; Connerton (2012) also addresses these concepts in relation to the different ways in which memory is localized outside of individuals. He notes that "control of a society's memory largely conditions the hierarchy of power; so that, for example, the storage of present-day information technologies, and hence the organization of collective memory through the use of data-processing machines, is not merely a technical matter, but one directly bearing on legitimation..." particularly when the memories in question are identified as a tradition, and their importance is re-asserted through continued "commemorative rites," such as ceremonies, performances, and bodily behaviors (Connerton 2012:1).

All such considerations are hugely germinal to the world of ballet, a realm that can be deemed intrinsically "classical" because revering and even protecting its highest accomplishments of the past. Nonetheless the video recording of ballet performances has been a widespread practice since the 1950s, and even then, only performances deemed to be of high cultural value found their way onto film, as the cost of production was prohibitive. When Noémie discussed her own exposure to recorded material from the past, she said that while most of it came from her father's extensive video library, it had been supplemented with the materials she had spent many hours recording from television. The introduction of accessible and inexpensive production equipment, from digital cameras to video cameras embedded in smart phones— and platforms such as YouTube where both commercially produced and self-

⁴⁷ Wulff (2007) also engages with the concept of collective memory in relation to Irish dance, in *Dancing at the Crossroads: Memory and Mobility in Ireland*. Berghahn Books, New York.

produced media can be shared with specific audiences or accessed by the public, has altered our conception historicity and tradition, by broadening the scope and type of information available. At the very least, these new these spaces represent sites for the diffusion of ideologies and pedagogical tools for purveying the curriculum. It is even probably that they are subverting tradition; the sense of historical continuity, by making it possible for interested parties to legitimize aesthetic ideologies and the associated practices that maintain them. The school itself is located within a specific historical tradition, but outside of the institutional structure where it has been housed and passed down through the generations. Over the course of my observational years, it was not uncommon for video recordings to be used to learn/re-learn choreography, and to serve as a point of reference in maintaining continuity between years. Often, during class, Jean-Pierre and Noémie would take out their computers or iPads, and watch the excerpt that they were going to rehearse that particular day.

Thus, many of the critiques given to students during rehearsal time were developed in relation to two factors: first, focusing on creating visual symmetry in the relationship of the individual student to the others within the group, to other performances within the tradition, and to the aesthetic of the ballet genre as a whole; and the second, focusing on those unique aspects of the individual that could be used to further a sense of aesthetics and distinguish the school from its compatriots. For younger/intermediate level students, as well as for Jodie when in a contemporary piece Noémie choreographed, who had come to the school at a later point in her training and had thus far spent less time under Jean-Pierre and Noémie's tutelage than the other students in the advanced group, the primary focus tended to be on creating a sameness between the movements of all of the students, in terms both of technical precision and in the synchronization of movement, thereby incorporating them within the specific tradition in which the school operated.

Jodie had been the recipient of a great number of corrections. This time it was about having her arms up. Noémie told her to write down the choreography, and to practice it before rehearsal. She said that in this piece of four-minute choreography, if everyone is not the same, it's ugly; hence Jodie needs to practice before. Noémie said that this was going to be the first time that

she showed her own work out of the school, and “we want to be a good school.” She said that if it were ugly, she would be ashamed to put her name to it.

She had them run through it with the counts. After they went through it, she corrected Jodie for having too much movement; she said that it was not classical— and too kitsch. Jodie nodded her understanding. She told them to have the arms go through first, when they go to arabesque. After they marked it that way, she told them to stop, that the” arms go from down to out; then after the *pirouette*, from the flic-flac.” She modeled the position of her head and pointed front and down. “Arms where the belly button is, Jodie. Christina, kick higher! More *plié*.”

Noémie went back to Jodie and said, “You cannot do the arms different! There are too many differences. It’s a little frustrating to work in a group. If you work in a company, you have to do the same or otherwise, all eyes come to you.” She demonstrated the arms pulling like an arrow when crossing the body. “Here,” she said, showing a *chambre* in upper body, with the head back. Jodie had done this part with her head down. In a softer voice, she told Jodie: “I don’t know why I [choreograph]. You have to get used to it.” She told them to do it all together once more. [Field Notes]

Noémie said once that she felt bad about scolding Jodie so much during rehearsal, because she was so sweet, but noted that she had the body of a woman— the others looked like they were the adolescents they are— and everyone needed to look the same for the piece. Since also had had fewer years in training with Noémie and Jean-Pierre— the other students had been studying in a group together for years, and already moved in the same way— extra effort had to be invested into shaping in her movements so that she and the others moved as one.

She repeated that Jodie should write everything down, that she had no other choice. She needed to “learn it like poetry.” [Field Notes]

Within the school’s core overarching ethos of recreating a tradition with some degree of continuity with the ways in which it was practiced in the past, and is currently practiced elsewhere in the present, opportunity often arises for distinction, as students reach a certain level of competency and are encouraged to add individual expression to the movements that are asked of them. Students only can engage at this level once they have achieved a great deal of conformity within the school and ballet tradition, as well as in relation to other students and dancers, though it is quite clear that students are expected to eventually reach this point.

One of the school's most vital tasks is to create dancers who can move between roles in productions and positions in a company—the hope and expectation is that they will, throughout their careers, move up through the lower ranks of the *corps* to achieve noteworthy positions. This expectation often was communicated to students during classes and rehearsals, both through such statements as: “*Corps de ballet* and your parents are the worst people to dance in front of. They dream to have your position—they are the worst critics,” and through corrections given. A good example in this regard is the correction Jean-Pierre issued to one of the advanced level boys for having paused doing steps when he got to the corner of the room. The student said that he was worried about being in front of someone else, and someone who was dancing behind him. Jean-Pierre picked at him, asking if he was going to say “Excuse me, the *corps* must be seen.” The implication was that as lead dancer, and he not need excuse himself for dancing in front of the *corps*; he was *meant* to be out front and own the position. Those who are able to set themselves apart— whether by virtue of physical form, technical precision, or a particular quality that they lend to movements— are often granted roles that have a greater visibility within a performance.

The same stands for the school, wherein, through performance, opportunities emerge for achieving distinguished status as a school within the landscape of ballet. One critic who came to a performance of the *Nutcracker* complimented Noémie and Jean-Pierre, saying that the choreography for was “smart” and “intelligent.” Jean-Pierre explained that this was related to the approach he and Noémie took when choreographing for students. He said that the choreographer's ego stays back if he or she wants the dancer to look good; in other words, the choreography should serve the dancer almost as much as the other way around. While schools often perform their own versions of classical works, both utilizing narrative and movement tradition in ballet, the possibility of creating a new work raises the stakes, as if successful, the new work could garner acclaim for its uses of the movement tradition, and the new narrative could be incorporated as a part of the classical framework of ballet. If

unsuccessful, the schools position in relation to classical works — and their social standing — falls under critique. The dancer-centric approach to choreography, as well as the originality and diversity of the works presented at various venues, was able to garner media recognition for the school and the instructors. It thereby served to build the reputation of the school as an elite institution that produces well-trained dancers and brings something novel to the New York dance school scene through the use of French technique.

Process in Teaching New Choreography

New choreography within the French Ballet Academy is developed in relation to the students who will perform it, in relation to the students' abilities and their knowledge of the collective repository of possible movements, as well the stories and ideas that exist both within and outside of the individual members of a group. This differs in its relationship to tradition from works that have been choreographed in the past and are being re-presented (even if the actual steps of the choreography shift). With the latter, the roles in many performances are passed down from generation to generation by dancers who have previously danced the roles; retired dancers are often brought back to teach roles. As choreographers develop ("mount") new ballets, they occasionally design roles for individual dancers (Wulff 1998). However, these roles and ballets are not isolated; they are developed within a social context, in relation to the concept of tradition, and by using the language of ballet. For example, when, Noémie emphasized how to create characterizations through movement, she drew from how characterizations had been created throughout ballet history by associating specific ways of movement with the portrayal of individual character or a group or category of people, such as nobles and peasants, even though the ballet was being newly choreographed. Although most students expressed a familiarity with the storyline they were working with since it was drawn from a French children's tale, Noémie worked with the elementary/intermediate level students to develop movements that both told the story and fell within their technical abilities.

Noémie addressed the girls who were cast in the roles of the paupers, and told them make a grotesque face. “We should be like, ugh, when we see you girls.” She had also had them adjust the position of their heads; the court were to carry themselves with their sternum more lifted, more *épaulement*, with the underneath of the cheek/chin lifted sky-ward, royal, elegant- while the paupers were to hold their heads at more of an even level, looking out towards the audience, with less *épaulement*. There was also a different cadence to their walk; less toe-ball-heel and more *plié*. She positioned herself like Iris- incorrectly, with neck and face forward and joked, “stay for one hour like that,” as an example of how not to do it. Iris reacted with a bit of an embarrassed smile, but corrected the position, checking herself in the mirror to make sure she didn’t look like that anymore. [Field Notes]

As this illustrates, there is a clear process in rehearsal that involved practicing segments of the work to be performed: focusing on the general movements/steps to be performed; the ‘togetherness’ of the group; the arrangement of the dancers to each other and to the space in which the work would be performed; the story being told; and the type of emotion that the dancers were to use within the piece to communicate with the audience.

The process was the same for the advanced level students, for whom Noémie choreographed an original piece to the music of a man she described as a revolutionary musician, in spite of his short life. Due to the abstract nature of the piece, the students formed a different relationship with the ideas being communicated through movement, as they were not assuming character roles. The piece was more contemporary or neoclassical than classical, and the positive reviews of the performance took the opportunity to comment on the versatility of the training the school provided to its students. Attention to detail also clearly was at the center of the school’s success. With each additional “mark” of a segment during rehearsal, increasingly greater attention was paid to precisely how specific movements were to be performed. The process involved developing movements to go with the music, and continually revising them so as to achieve the perfect aesthetic in relation to the students’ abilities.

At the start of rehearsal time, Noémie had the students run through everything that they had done so far. She watched one student and told her she didn’t like the one step: the *attitude* to *plié*. The student said that she did it wrong. Noémie said that it wasn’t that. Noémie told the group that she was thinking about having a solo to follow next, which will mean dimming the lights on stage and spotlighting the middle. She had them stop, and said that everyone looked good when they were *a la seconde*. She asked them how they felt, and one student said that she felt weird. Noémie agreed that the student looked weird, and showed her the steps again, this

time with more clarity. Brush front, flic flac, *seconde*, brush, step over, *attitude*. The student marked it with the additional clarification, and Noémie nodded her satisfaction, saying okay, let's clean it. [Field Notes]

At times the focus during rehearsal was on the quality of movement, at other times, it focused on the development of cohesion as a group or on the relationship of the dancers to the audience, which became real only during the actual performance. When compared with stills drawn from a video recording of the performance, it becomes clear that each movement and allegory carefully developed in the classroom translates to seconds on stage that equate to one stroke of the brush in a painting.

All the students start with the first segment, where they are standing on a high *demi*, moving side to side off balance, as though in an airplane. Noémie told them to look down, look very down. They move to the next position, and she stops them. The *tendu*, the arms- the shoulder should be completely *en face*. The boobs need to be front, the body diagonal. People need to see the boobs. "Here—be like a marionette. *Effacé*, *tendu* to the diagonal, *plié*, *rond*."

"Go up, bevel the foot- it's using the popo." Noémie describes it as sensual. The students all try it; the leg rotates around with the arms out. "Walk—that's correct—to stage left; half *attitude*, pivot to the right. Regular walk—not like that— through the toes— emphasize *tendu* comes out like that." She demonstrated the arms: "here, not there: it's too vanilla."

During this segment Noémie singles out one student. "It's *en face*," she said, "the back foot turned out." "Fourth; step fourth, pivot with *tendu* foot on the floor, and a nice *tombe* away from you. It's your head that pulls you around." She demonstrated, and the students copied her. "Nice. A little too much force." She asked the student she'd singled out to redo the movement.

"Step-Step, walking in fourth." Noémie said, "To make sure it comes from underneath." The students try it, and Noémie said, "Yes. Because they can see the back of your thigh, the popo reaching the ceiling, then the arms, you are a goddess— a sex goddess. You have to be—" She made the sound of something tingling or fizzing— "You have to feel a little bit of sensuality. People are going to be—" she made an elusive gesture. The students looked a bit embarrassed; their faces red.

"It's *rond*, heel front." Noémie corrected. She told them that they need to remember the details: "Head here, to the floor, then *en face*." "You have to be precise. You have to be a clone. If one person does—" she demonstrated holding her head wrong, too close to the shoulder— "then it's tacky. When you work in a company, if you're not precise, you're going to fly away fast. You hold—" she showed the head the way she wanted it— "you hold."

She had the students position themselves with their heads on their arms, looking down, with a high arabesque. "No banana feet; posse." A banana foot refers to a foot that is sickled. She told the class: "I would love if you had amazing turnout in front."

She corrected them again: “I don’t want ballerina stuff; you look ridiculous in a contemporary piece.” She referred here to the divisions of the body; those that are used in ballet did not quite hold true here. She demonstrated pushing the stomach out, with their arms out to their sides. She said they’re not conveying the suffering in the song. “There needs to be more suffering. The foot swims; turn it in, turn it out, stay flexed.”

“Flic flac to B+; go through the toes when step back. Nice, it’s really coming! Arms go around like a circle; leg goes *battement a la seconde*.” “Your hips stay square.” She demonstrates the arms reaching overhead. “Now, do like a Balanchine dancer.” “Shock, *failli*, diagonal up— brush to *attitude* back on *demi* pointe, then down. Feel how your right side is absolutely not turning.”

After they finish this segment they revisit a movement: “Too much *penché*,” Noémie told one student who then tried it again. Noémie told her that she can do more *plié*. “Think of this— sharp— this sharp.” She told one student that her arms have to stay square, her neck is pulling “Can you feel this a little? The turn; why are you looking down? Pull your arms down.”

“From there- *plié*, *pas de bourrée*. Noémie told them to completely let them to completely let the hip go, not to bend from the waist, popo out, not jazzy, not cheap. Then, pivot, bring arm through.” The students experimented with it, watching themselves in the mirror and trying out the position on their bodies. She told them to wait, then: “down and up, the other arm pulling through in a brush *plié*.” The students marked it through, and she changed the timing of the arm together with the leg. The arm was slightly delayed, the hand more flexed, and the elbow straightened, but the palm was still up.

“You must walk normal. Don’t walk like a dancer!” She took time during the earlier technique class to teach the students how to walk “normal;” dancers tend to walk with their feet turned out and lifted through the center than pedestrians do. This is part of that language of the body that makes it easy for dancers to identify their fellow dancers, even when the latter are in their street-clothes, and distinguishes them from people who do not dance. [Field Notes]

As the segment above illustrates, the process of choreographing comprised revising, rewriting, and recreating new and existing movements, and creating processes by which students could understand and internalize the vision of the choreographer. Some of these were contained in the broader vocabulary-set outside of the student’s bodies while others of which were within the students’ bodies, and thus appropriated into the choreography. The older students tended to be more involved in the process, and thus had a greater influence on the nature of what was choreographed.

Between Audience and Dancers: Meaning-Making in Performance

Apart from the learning the actual choreography, rehearsals also conveyed an understanding of such things as stage decorum, presentation of the work to the audience, entrances and exits, and

costume care; such issues were addressed to the elementary/intermediate students as a group. For example, students were given information about costumes that included the mundane but vital direction not to eat or drink anything but water in them, as, for this performance of the *Nutcracker*; they were rented! They also were told to be careful where they sat, make sure that no one in the audience caught a glimpse of their costumes before the performance, and told to just let them air out after the performance. Also purveyed were other costuming details that the advanced-level students already were aware of, such as to wear dance briefs under the skirted costumes, to make sure they had hairnets and to wear full-footed mesh tights that they could make a small hole in, near the toes, if they needed for the padding for their pointe shoes. They also were cautioned not to talk back stage and to perform both in relation to each other and to the audience. They were told: “Be up, dance with each other. I have to fall in love with you, so good luck, work harder! Be elegant and fragile at the same time.” These performance experiences were used to prepare students for future performances in more public venues.

On the day of the *Nutcracker* performance, the elementary/intermediate students were guided through their preparations. They were instructed to get changed into their leotards, but not to put their pointe shoes on yet and to get together everything they might need. In the women’s bathroom, the girls put on their leotards, either black or a taupe/skin-tone that was invisible under the tutus, and did their hair and makeup. They had to do their own stage makeup; Noémie had told them that often this is the case in the smaller companies where they might end up dancing. Their hair had to be in proper buns, small and flat, covered with a hairnet, and with all wisps of hair tucked away tightly with the help of hairspray. The girls clustered in front of the mirror and donned their mascara, blush, and a touch of lipstick; under the lights of the stage the makeup created a natural appearance, so that the dancers wouldn’t look washed out by the lighting. Jean-Pierre and Noémie organized the students once they had gotten changed and gave them a tour of the space, explaining what each part was used for, how to

orient themselves when they came on stage, and how to conduct themselves when backstage; for example, no talking, because the audience would be able to hear you. They had the students do a full run-through of the performance, so that they could practice how/when to come on stage. Ben and Angel held the curtain closed and peered around it, trying to determine how they could see when it was time to come on stage without the audience seeing them. Although the general guidelines remained the same, differences in spaces and venues sometimes altered the students' relationships to the performance space.

Decisions as to where and when to perform typically were made by the instructors, and taking into account factors as access to venues, the lighting in the performance space, the cost of space rental, and the availability of the venue within the timeframe needed. Jean-Pierre spoke of the difficulties he'd had in the past with selection of venues, and the of challenges of making performance-related decisions for his new school.

Finding performance venues for the students who have followed him is also a bit complicated. If they perform at cheap spaces, they have to deal with bringing their own lighting and sound equipment, and even with cleaning the bathrooms for the audience to use. There was a time when he and Lauren rented a van; they drove it a couple of blocks, with the back full of costumes and lighting, only to have it break down in front of the theater. They contacted the rental company and someone came out and changed the battery, but when they left, for the long drive back into the city, it started raining, and they discovered that the driver's side windshield wiper did not work. They laughed about it, and said they were lucky that it had stopped raining, and mostly was just windy. Lauren said that she didn't think that was turning out a whole lot better, because the van was rocking from side to side, but Jean-Pierre said he preferred it to the rain.

Unlike that particular venue, the more expensive ones are better maintained and cared for and they only have to go and dance, so of course he prefers those. The students he had at his previous school often performed at the theater that was associated with the school, and occasionally at a local college's theater. His present concern is to find his current students other opportunities; he is going to have them perform some of his own choreographic variations, plus a few of those they were working on before they left the other school at a showcase of schools, schedule to take place about a month from the current date, at a well-known venue. [Field Notes]

This particular event that Jean-Pierre referred to was also a new event designed to showcase local ballet talent, and would be one of the first performances presented publicly out of his new school.

Due to the preeminence of the ballet master arranging the event it had drawn numerous well-known schools from the area plus some college dance groups; there was even going to be a performance by a well-known modern dance in the finale. Quite simply, this performance would be critical in establishing the French Ballet Academy as a worthy competitor to other schools attending. It also would be attended by the media and in fact some subsequent reviews did spread public awareness of the school. Thus, the careful selection of venues for performances was viewed as vital to the establishment of the school's reputation. And yet, and especially since the school self-identified as an elite institution, engaging in competition with other schools was seen as outside the class category in which it was positioned. Entering into competition with other schools was considered something an elite professional school should not do. Their judges were the audience, and the best markers of the quality of the school's instruction was the students' ability to hold their heads up within a respected company; it also was something that other pre-professional schools such as the Paris Opera School and the School of American Ballet, did not do. These operational guidelines became clear when they were violated, as the school signed up for a performance at an AIDS benefit that was limited to a few select dance companies and performances, however, the event was performed at a selective venue that otherwise would have been difficult to access.

The French Ballet Academy's participation in the AIDS benefit performance came about when Briana's mother suggested they submit an application to perform at the venue, and Jean-Pierre agreed; he told the students the venue was good, though he later stated that he would not have submitted the application if he realized the event itself was a competition. There were a number of criteria that framed the submissions; they could not last longer than 6 minutes and groups must include a group of dancers under the age of 24. Out of the submissions, the top 20 would be selected and granted a spot at the event. Those who were granted spots would be charged a fee per performer and were required to sell tickets at a cost of \$45 per ticket.

A video was submitted of a performance given the previous year at his other school's theater. The piece had been choreographed by Jean-Pierre and one of the students, Aiden. Both Aiden and another boy who served as its central figures, moved on to take company positions. Aiden had maintained a close relationship with Jean-Pierre and as a part of his own career development, would potentially benefit from the opportunity to be seen, both choreographically and in terms of technique at the venue. At any rate, the piece was accepted and the students began their preparations; Aiden would return to perform, four female students would be chosen, and Jonassaint would take the place of the other male lead dancer.

There was a striking visual similarity between Jonassaint and the boy originally who had danced the part; both were dark-skinned, muscled, and long-limbed. The rehearsals for this piece were framed by two additional factors: the anger Jean-Pierre expressed toward Jonassaint for accepting without his permission a guest spot that shortened the amount of time available to rehearse the piece, and a legal matter that had arisen between Jean-Pierre and the New York Children's Ballet, the institution where he had formally taught. Although the lawsuit was dropped because there were no grounds for the accusations, it meant he had to re-create the costume used in the original work, which had been designed for him, while in residence at the other school. Briana's mother, who had a background in fashion, did the re-design in conjunction with the usual costume designer, a friend of Jean-Pierre and Noémie's. The flowing red garment—floor length, with a hood and long sleeves— closely resembled the original. Jean-Pierre was worried they would think he stolen the creation given that it was a near clone, but he thought it was beautiful. Given all that context, it comes as no surprise that rehearsal of the piece tended to be filled with tension.

Aiden and Jean-Pierre had the advantage of knowing the piece inside and out. Much of rehearsal involved teaching Jonassaint the choreography and the way the piece should be presented, with typical corrections being that his movements were too small because they were supposed to be

like fencing. Jonassaint was told to use Google to search for videos and examine the quality of the movements fencers use. He forgot the arabesque, then had a moment of confusion about which leg to use. Jonassaint motioned to the leg; and Jean-Pierre snapped that that wasn't the answer to the question he had asked. The expressions on both their faces were tense. Jean-Pierre stopped and looked at him. "You see how hard it is to be a girl! Partnering is a lot of leading. You're lucky, because he's really partnering you." The ideal is for a dancer to be able to do the movements that he or she do with a partner without a partner; thus Jean-Pierre was implying that the quality of his movements was lacking, since he wouldn't have been able to perform without the partner there. Nonetheless, as I sat on the floor and observed them rehearsing this piece, I found it breathtaking; and the performance occurred, as scheduled, the following week.

Aiden rehearsed not only the movements but also the performativity aspects of the emotions, and danced it with the strength and quality the students are were expected to give on stage when performing. I was privileged to sit quietly on the floor in the downstage right corner of the room, and at times I literally could not breathe, stunned as I was by the anguish Aiden inscribed on his face and captured in the small movement of reaching his hand out to Jonassaint, and by the sheer grace with which Jonassaint moved. At the end of one particular rehearsal period, as Jean-Pierre nodded and told them simply that they were done for the day all I could find to say, was that "it was beautiful," and these words seemed inadequate to express the emotions I had experienced while sitting at their feet.

The piece itself was named after an element of the Sicilian flag— the medusa's head, framed by wings, wheat, and three legs—the positioning of the dancers within the space of the stage mimics this shape. As it begins the two central male figures, one shrouded in a flowing, brilliantly red robe and the other wearing only nude color briefs are spotlighted, standing across the stage apart from one another. Then suddenly they are running together toward one another, their bodies intertwining as hands, shoulders, and legs overlap in time and space, Aiden's bare muscles outlined by the harsh light and the lines of the red-robed figure throwing soft, rounded shadows over him and onto the stage. The lines are those of French classical and neo-classical technique, with long extensions and those sweeping arm movements that exude to romanticism; Jean-Pierre frequently incorporates these movements into his choreographies. The girls in the piece stood behind the two male leads, moving into the shifting angular poses characteristic of the French neo-classical and Balanchine-influenced style; lines tilted as they alternated positions with one another while still maintaining the frame for the central figures; they are the frame, but not the story that is being presented. One of the boys caresses the other's face and they are pulled apart by forces unseen, hands stretched out toward one another, Aiden's face wrought with anguish and the other's face devoid of any recognizable emotion. In the final moments, they come back together and Aiden is lifted over the head of the other boy, his arms and head falling backward to form a cross. The steps the boys perform

together were closer to steps that a girl might perform, and the lifts that were incorporated into the *pas de deux* were classical elements of male-female partnering. [Field Notes]

The piece could be read and interpreted on many different levels, themselves varied with context of performance. In many senses, it was a love story. It was a story about desire, pain, and ultimately of sacrifice, with the barely clothed male, being pulled to and from the robed figure whom might be understood as representing his own desire, to ultimately which he was sacrificed. In another sense, it and be read as a story of nationalism, with the red-cloaked figure representing a painful sort of love for one's country, shaped by war and bloodshed. In the context of the performance given the AIDS benefit, it arguably became the story of a boy dancing with love and death, sacrificed, because of his homosexuality; an interpretation of the red-robed figure as AIDS itself, or at least as a young man with AIDS, was inescapable, for the brilliantly red, flowing fabric of his robes evoked the color and the textures that have come to symbolize the AIDS awareness movement. It is interesting that this particular piece was chosen; arguably, submitting it in response to a benefit for AIDS intersected with the students' and instructors' perceptions of whom AIDS affects, with those perceptions in turn impacting both the casting of dancers and their interpretation of the roles that they danced for this particular performance. Here as everywhere else in the dance world, the process of rehearsal including the selecting of individuals for parts, reinforces the construct of beauty, that sense of aesthetics which is deeply rooted in an understanding of the possibilities of human movement within the vocabulary of ballet. Or to look at this matter from a slightly different perspective, the students' positions and subjectivities were built upon, but also sometime playfully challenged by such movement possibilities.

On the day of the performance, Jean-Pierre, Lauren, and Briana's mother were sitting in a row in the center of the theater. A few other students also had come out to support their classmates, and the parents of most of the students who were performing had come and had taken seats in the same row as us. Jean-Pierre spoke to several people he knew, and made some observations about the audience, and we perused the listing in the back of the program, he commented that he didn't know who they were, the judge panel hadn't been announced publically prior to the event, and Jean-Pierre said again that he wouldn't have made the submission if he had known it

was a competition. For the most part, the judges consisted of directors of various schools and college dance programs in the vicinity; most were affiliated with an institution that had levied a “prize” of sorts— often, attendance at a workshop or summer-intensive— for the competition winners or for talented students identified in the course of the performances. Although well respected, most were not from the schools deemed to be elite pre-professional programs.

The majority of the audience was white and presumably middle class (as identified by such stylistic elements as clothing choices, handbag brands, and their ability to spend \$45 per ticket); I presume they were largely the parents of students performing in the event. Most of the schools listed in the program were located in suburban areas outside of the city and known as “competition schools.” The type of choreography done for competitions, while also frequently very technically precise, differs in form and in content from the type of productions done by “pre-professional schools.” The object of the pre-professional school is both to produce/reproduce “classical” forms, and to provide vocational training/preparation for students, whereas, the “competition schools” tend to focus on the creative development and social engagement of those involved, and as their name suggests, on garnering of prestige and capital by entering into ranked competition.

The performances presented by other contestants included a spoof of the famous jail scene from Chicago; a pantomime in which a group of wild-haired young-women dressed in conductors’ coat-tails, danced madness with, long, lanky, movements; and a number of contemporary pieces in which color symbolism was invoked to mark the performance as being for the benefit of those affected by AIDS. Most of the performers were girls; the number of performers of color could be tallied on one hand, and only one other group had any males; in essence, the two boys represented a statistical minority in a number of senses; they were black (Haitian), Latino, and gay. An opening remark was made about how the event was arranged on behalf of an organization supporting those in the community who had been affected by AIDS; the speaker noted that it was likely that everyone had known someone whose life had been affected by AIDS. Implicit assumptions seemed to be at play about whose lives could and could not be affected by AIDS. The faces represented on the benefit website were those of black women and gay men under the outline of a city sky scape— a far cry from all of those middle-class, white faces, of the parents of suburban dancing girls. These images also, however, very much in keeping with the presentation of the particular piece the Academy had chosen for the benefit, and with the lead males chosen to dance it.

When Jonassaint, Aiden, and the four girls took the stage, the tension in the audience became palatable. I glanced back and saw that most people drawn back into their seats, backs stiff, leaning away from the stage. They were, in a sense, being brought face to face with the constructed AIDS subjects— black, Latino, homosexual men— enacting a love story full of torment, anguish, and desire and garnished by a brilliantly red cloth that might have represented the presence of AIDS. The performance itself got off to a bit of a rocky start, slightly off tempo; I could tell from the way Jonassaint held his arms that he was nervous, though by the second count of eight they were focused more on their movements, and less on the fact that they were performing on a stage, so that the ending was smooth. The stylistic distinction between the French Ballet Academy and the other schools was marked. At the end, I wasn’t all that surprised that the applause was tepid and restrained.

After the final number, the performers were brought back on stage. The presenters began by announcement of results and the bestowing of the awards. They started with the recognition of some of the schools, and the awarding scholarship slots for workshops and summer-intensives; all of the judges explained their professional positions and what they had brought with them in terms of gifts/rewards. Every school received at least some sort of recognition, through acknowledgement of either some particularly talented individuals, or for the general choreography. Aiden received recognition from the director of a Latin ballet company, and was invited to attend a workshop; notably, he was the only male student Latino in appearance. Toward the end, Lauren noted to Jean-Pierre that they tended to give the consolation recognition awards first at these events, which perhaps was why the school had hitherto gone largely unrecognized. As it turned out, however, the major choreography award (with attached summer-performance venue) went to another school, with the Academy's performance unacknowledged. The effort to bring the AIDS crisis face-to-face with the audience, had, it seemed, been for naught; perhaps it has paradoxically been so obvious as to become invisible. Over the course of the ensuing week, I never heard Jean-Pierre, Aiden, Jonassaint, or any of the girls who had danced in the piece remark upon their participation in the competition or the lack of response accorded to the piece. [Field Notes]

This particular performance allows us to draw together several theoretical strands about the relationships between the student dancers and the performance, the audience, and the cultural context in which they operate. According to Alexander (2004), working from the theories of Turner, Schechner, and Hall, "cultural texts" (the content of performances) are presented to audience members, who are by definition "others" in relation to the actors/performers. The audience engages with the performed work via shared symbols and culturally derived understandings, emotional connections, and psychological identifications with the actors. He notes that not all performances are granted the same legitimacy, or assigned the same symbolic meanings by individual members of an audience: "The distribution of power in society— the nature of its political, economic, and status hierarchies, and the relations among its elites- profoundly affects the performance process. Power establishes an external boundary for cultural pragmatics that parallels the internal boundary established by a performance's background representations. Not all texts are equally legitimate in the eyes of the powers that be, whether possessors of material or interpretive power" (Alexander 2004:532).

The paramount goal is always "to create, via skillful and affecting performance, the emotional connection of the audience with the actor and text and thereby to create the conditions for projecting

cultural meaning from performance to audience” (Alexander 2004:547). In the case of this particular performance, it seems a problem arose between the performance and the audience, because the material was perceived coming dangerously close to flaunting the legitimacy of social categories. The chilly reception given to the performance by the audience stands, in its relation to the passionate and student performances, as a type of cognitive dissonance, and an implicit attempt to the production of particular narratives within the landscape of ballet.

Such experiences are valuable, however, because they allow an institution both to assess its relative position and status in relation to others and because its chief players are able to make and remake the landscape of ballet through the process of engagement. To put the matter differently, as students and institutions engage with one another and the audience through rehearsal and performance, these encounters cause one and all to rethink the existing body of ideas, norms, and historical contexts within the landscape, as well as the positionalities of the individual students and audience members.

In summary, this chapter examined the processes of ideology in relation to performance on a stage. The process of generating a performance one of writing and rewriting history; it comprises a narrative effect, historical narrative, myth, or fictional moral tale, drawn from the repertoire of collective experience and knowledge. Choreographers and individual dancers are active players in the process of constructing and reconstructing for the audience these remembered experiences for the audience, who ideally are able to engage with the experiences being communicated in interpretive contexts. One might say that when individuals engage with the collective memories being invoked, those memories are rewritten and re-informed through the sheer process of remembering. The dominances of some narratives and some narratives styles produced by particular institutions and individuals, and the silencing or repression of others, collectively shapes the distribution of power and

the arrangement of people and institutions within the cultural landscape, as well as the ideologies through which they operate.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

The two theoretical issues pertaining to the material presented— that of education in ballet, and its relationship to ideology—brings us back to our two central concerns: how a specific set of ideologies are developed within specific educational settings, and how the individuals who imbibe and purvey these ideologies situate themselves and their practices in relation to them. Thus, this chapter will discuss the ways in which the data presented address the three central questions of this dissertation: 1) How are ideologies associated with aesthetics developed within specific educational settings? 2) How do students learn to navigate the boundaries that arise between the physical body and aesthetic ideologies? 3) How are ideologies created and contested through the choreographic process and related performance?

Encompassing Ideologies

In chapters 2 and 3, our look at the students' backgrounds suggested two possibilities for their relationship to the aesthetic ideologies of ballet. First, the relationship is organic, in the sense that the individuals are situated within the historical tradition and the current practices from which the ideologies have sprung. I am thinking here of ideologies as Gramsci used the term (Hoare and Smith 1971) and Bond (2000) elaborated upon it. Second, individuals outside an ideological system are nonetheless encompassed by it through educational processes. Using parental occupation as an indicator, we found that the majority of students have parents who are either in art-related occupation, or in the field of finance, and that this places the student body within the class and/or occupational tradition where these values tend to be localized.

The students within the French Ballet Academy made it quite clear, through interviews and classroom practices, that they understand there to be an “ideal type” of ballet dancer, who is “fair-skinned,” “thin,” “smart,” and “hard working,” and possesses both “determination” and “technique.”

These ideal types are represented in the actual dancers that both male and female students come to admire as embodying these qualities, such as Alessandra Ferri, a former American Ballet Theater dancer, and Carlos Acosta, a dancer with the Royal Ballet. Much of the student's engagement with their roles in the classroom springs from their ongoing attempt to achieve these idealized qualities. They aim to, as they and the instructors put it, sculpt and mold their bodies, and thereby perfect themselves. In reality the degree to which they are able to conform to the ideal is impacted by everything from the body type they were born with, to the training they have received. All of that affects their ability to secure a career as a dancer, including the status and rank (as well as pay scale) of the company they can get a position with, the likelihood that they will become principal dancers or remain in the *corps* of that company, as and likelihood that they will garner any media attention for their work. Nonetheless, one feels the hidden presence of the operative ideals, even as the students focus on learning the class material that will shape their physical bodies and hone their technical skills. The fact that they record in their notebooks corrective details such as, "upper body should always be in front of the legs in *adagio*," "*pirouette* fourth, bring posse from underneath," "tailbone down," "hips stationary," and "arms in sync," suggests that they are continually seeking to understand the relationship between their physical body and the technical skills learned to achieve the aesthetic of the French classical tradition.

Curriculum and the Collective

The curriculum set forth by the instructors when it is taken in conjunction with the standard practices of the tradition within which it is shaped, forms a deliberate and intentional agenda. This agenda's methods are used to communicate the curricular content to students, as the students' work their way through a long series of movements and combinations. The agenda also purveys the underlying aesthetic ideologies and the practices used to reinforce those ideologies. Put all of these thoughts together and one arrives at the contention advanced by Cremin (1975): that the intentional and incidental curriculums operate to produce and reproduce existing social forms. The idea of

classicism, while present in the ways the in how students and instructors express the technical tradition in which they operate, is even more fundamentally oriented toward an understanding of the historical context, for all that the dancers inherited from the past is deemed a “pure” form. Thus ideology affects not only what is taught in the school, but also impacts how the school positions itself in relation to other institutions, and to the broader corpus of institutions, nations, and variations in technique that exist within the landscape of ballet.

Consulting the school’s mission statement posted on the website, which is used to describe the purpose of the school to potential students and their parents and to represent the school virtually, one learns that its slated objective is to “instill the tradition of classical ballet in our dancers” and “train our dancers with the curriculum of the French School of Classical technique, promoting ballet in its purest form by placing an emphasis on cleanness and elegance.” This is echoed through statements that students make in relation to understanding the French technique in relation to other techniques, which are associated with national forms. Through classroom practices, such differences are articulated in as when showing the proper or “clean” way in which certain movements are to be done and the body is to be positioned. During class, when Noémie explained a step to the students she demonstrates with her feet and her body the quality that she wanted to feel emanating from a movement while saying the words: “I’m French— I want *pas de cheval*— I want *tendu*. Only Balanchine wants” she holds her arms high, “different in front of shoulder.”

Monasta (2002), in reflecting on Gramsci’s distinctions between classical and technical education in the production of intellectuals, notes that classical forms of education serve to demarcate the two chief types of labor in a society: intellectual and manual. Ultimately this is ideological distinction that relates to political leadership. By capitalizing on the legitimacy of the traditions they have inherited, “organic intellectuals” “put themselves forward as autonomous and independent of the dominant group.” Gramsci goes on to say that “every ‘essential’ social group which emerges into history out of the

preceding economic structure . . . has found (at least in all of history up to the present) categories of intellectuals already in existence and which, indeed, seem to represent an historical continuity uninterrupted even by the most complicated and radical changes in political and social forms” (Gramsci, QD, 1514 and SPN 6-7, quoted in Monasta 2002). That statement certainly rings true of the school, a “new” institution that is nonetheless deeply embedded within the ballet landscape.

Such embeddedness has both its political and economic aspects contextualized by two geographic and historical factors— ballet in the US and ballet in France— as well as by the political, social, and historical factors interplay that has marked the two nations even since the establishment of this nation. Within the landscape of the US ballet tradition, marked by the expansion of institutions to support ballet and the shift in techniques that occurred after Balanchine’s arrival in the US, the French Ballet Academy is striving to build a reputation based on its ability to offer a “pure,” “French” version of ballet, one distinct from most of the forms offered elsewhere in the US. This amounts to an attempt to become “autonomous and independent of the dominant group,” though they inevitably encounter “categories of intellectuals [or in this case, dancers] already in existence” (Gramsci, QD, 1514 and SPN 6-7, quoted in Monasta 2002).

The instructors, both of them French nationals emerging out of eminent institutions associated with French ballet, where they received their training and began their professional careers as dancers, were selected by these institutions to be the recipients of the knowledge contained within the cultural sphere. Thus, their participation in these venues creates a sense of legitimate inheritance, in a particular tradition that stems directly from the legitimization of royal authorities and via institutions largely nationalized. Rather than continuing to operate within those parameters and passing down the knowledge they inherited to future generations within them, however, the founders of the French Ballet Academy are passing on the tradition to a new generation operating within a different institutional structure and outside the patronage of the French nation. This means that knowledge purveyed to

students about the relationship of their school to other institutions, and to ballet in general, is contextualized by both the curriculum of the school and the cultural context surrounding them. Thus when Jean-Pierre wanted students to see what classes are like in the Paris Opera school where he was trained— and to thereby understand what he wanted the classes he taught to be like, he posted a link to a video from the Paris Opera school on Facebook and told the students in class to watch it.

Although the Academy's curriculum is grounded in tradition and context, as the instructors shifted from the first to the second year of the school's operation, they made modifications to the arrangement of levels in keeping with their experiences teaching. The shift in the distribution of content across classes was explained to parents and students via email newsletter that stressed that remaining assigned to the same level was not indicative of a lack of progress. It also underscored the continued focus on technique, for that ensured "proper placement with all of our Intermediate students to enable them to continue to progress quickly and to safeguard them against unnecessary injury" and "building a strong foundation to ready these students for more advanced pointe work." Such points were made within an expression of gratitude to the parents for "trusting us with your child's training. I know you took a leap of faith enrolling your dancer in the inaugural year of the [French Ballet Academy]."

Legitimacy, Tradition, and Landscape

Much of the work of the school as an institution occurs in relation to legitimating processes; obtaining recognition: as a school with legal standing and nonprofit status; for legitimately instructing in the French classical technique; and for the quality of the students produced by the school. More specifically we are talking here about such tangible achievements as sending their students on to reputable intensive programs in what might be considered national-level institutions within the US (such as ABT, SAB); receiving recognition in media publications for the work they do; positioning students in high-ranking companies after they graduate; and making selective choices as to the venues in which they will present themselves. The school's need to be selective about the students who enter its ranks, in

terms both of students' aptitude for ballet technique and of cultivation of a particular aesthetic; only thus can it bring itself up to the level of the other dominant institutions of dance. Although the school operates in connection to the dominant aesthetic ideologies already in place in the ballet landscape in the US, it is trying to distinguish itself from it by cultivating the concepts of "French" and "classical" within the student body. Thus we see that simply by entering into a landscape already populated with individuals, institutions, and ideologies, this new school is forced to seek legitimacy and to negotiate for status, distinction, and a high position within the hierarchical arrangement already in place.

The Body as a Site

These concepts of education and ideology emerge in the classroom in two ways, both in relation to dance's inevitable focus on the aesthetics of the body and establishment of boundaries, be they institutional, national, or other. The first occurs through the appropriation of the body for participation in a choreographed work; the second, through the way in which the body becomes a device for navigating the landscape of ballet. The latter way tends to be fairly routinized: auditioning for summer-intensives and gaining acceptance one or more of the plethora of programs that populate the landscape; auditioning for companies; and developing those social networks that facilitate movement among institutions. There are boundaries between institutions, and particularly between the increasingly selective institutions as one moves up the hierarchy; boundaries are maintained through the ways in which criteria for membership are established. M.G. Smith addresses the nature of these boundaries by categorizing them into two basic types: those with firmly bounded membership criteria, which have "clearly defined and routinely enforced rules of recruitment and exclusion," and those without clear criteria/rules for membership (Smith 1998:72). Smith (1998) goes on to suggest that those "social units" that have concrete internal structures tend to have members who are "aligned by their statuses, roles, and interrelations. . ." this means that "social units articulate with one another in diverse ways, as units, and by relations between their members" (71).

Thus boundaries emerge directly out of the criteria for accessing different instructions; at times these are formally established through administrative procedures, at other times, informally established via standard practices. Examples of these boundaries can be seen in for membership established by many institutions, the French Ballet Academy among them. A perusal of the Academy's application demonstrates the formal criteria for membership are contingent upon the age of the student and participation in training and summer-intensive programs prior to enrollment.

A less clearly formulated criterion is the evaluation of the student during the audition process, with his or her potential for development in ballet being assessed in relation to current skill-level, prior training, musicality, and physical aspects of the body. These less formally articulated criteria are nonetheless very much related to the objective/mission of the institution and to the ways in which aesthetic ideologies are made manifest within it. There is some flexibility to these boundaries, for they may shift along with such factors as the number of students who arrive for an audition and their genealogies in comparison with one another; a student's talent; changes in the faculty within these programs, some of whom may have greater reputations than others; and the students'/parents' relationships through social networks with the institution and its faculty.

Within the French Ballet Academy and across the whole range of students' experiences in and out of various programs and schools, students acquire an awareness of these boundaries and of the formal/informal rules about staying within and sometimes crossing them. Providing students with this information is a vital aspect of the school's informal curriculum. During the summer-intensive information session, for example, the criteria for membership in various summer-intensive programs were articulated in relation to the physical bodies of the students as well as to their technical strengths and weaknesses. The reader may recall in this regard the time when Jean-Pierre and Noémie suggested programs for Lucy that included programs on the West Coast known for preferring tall thin dancers akin to those whom Balanchine preferred, because she had that look, the right body for them. Boundary-

awareness is also raised through the informal discussions between students and faculty members had out in the hallways. These allow students to position themselves— their school, their training— in relation to others within the landscape. In this regard I think of how one dancer talked about not being fond of the company she danced with because she perceived that the ballet mistress was not well trained in comparison to others; she said that this woman’s having come to the company 20 years ago, after training at a “dolly dinkle” did not qualify her to be a director. This dancer’s dissatisfaction was expressed in relation to the perceived hierarchy of ballet training and company rankings within the landscape.

This aspect of the curriculum also emerges within classes, where students often focus on the development of their bodies in relation to potential career advancement. Thus the degree to which the body can and cannot be shaped and molded is not just a matter of technique, but also a concern with respect to access to institutions and companies. The student who wrote in her notebook, “heels down, arms and head together in *port de bras* back, long back, tailbone down, hips stationary, arms in sync w/ leg, and hands alive” was articulating the ways in which she understood the directions given about how to place her body and thereby striving conform to technique being taught, in pursuit of a particular aesthetic. In terms of classroom corrections, when Noémie admonished the intermediate class for being fidgety and “undisciplined,” she went on to say that if they go to an audition for a company, where there are a lot of people who have good 5th positions— turned out, feet aligned heel to toe— that is, the same ability they have to approximate the ideal positions based on their physical form, as they did, then, all else being aesthetically equal, companies would certainly choose those dancers who have an ability to remember the combinations. Thus students relate their ability to become professional dancers to their ability to incorporate the technical considerations imparted in class and their quest to achieve the highest possible aesthetic via their physical forms. One student put it this way: “I think the lines of the

legs and the way they use their upper body separates an average dancer compared to someone who will make you believe she's dancing on clouds.”

For the most part students, striving as they are, operate within the boundaries established by institutions, adhering to the rules and decisions made by them and submitting to their will to the individuals who control them, to achieve a position within the current landscape. They and their parents, given the economic, political, and educational resources available to them, to leverage the capital needed to pursue a career in dance, from academic education at a private school for professional children, to transportation to and from the city and frequent medical care for dance-related ailments. Nonetheless there are moments and places at which students are denied access, as the case study of Sabrina illustrates; indeed, instructional boundaries related to aesthetic ideologies are maintained through processes of exclusion, particularly as students age and the criteria become more rigid. It is not uncommon for a dancer deemed ungifted to be stuck for too long at a low level and/or to be denied admission to a year-round program. In the case of this particular student she and her mother were able to leverage their network connections to navigate some of these institutional boundaries, and thereby both gaining entry into highly selective institutions and locating opportunities for her to perform. These two also were able to access spaces and individuals who had developed competing, alternative ideologies that existed in quiet defiance of dominant aesthetic ideology of ballet, thereby finding a new and different way to penetrate the landscape of ballet.

Discipline and Sculptures

In *The Body, Dance, and Cultural Theory*, Thomas (2003) explores the origins of those theories of the body that dominate the sphere of dance and cultural theory, situating these approaches in their relation to foundationalist, anti-foundationalist, discursive, and phenomenological paradigms (28). In her eyes Durkheim's ideas about the relationship between the body and society serve as precursor to those paradigmatic trends that early dominated the field of sociology, for Durkheim “attempted to

demonstrate the power of the 'social order' over institutions and individuals. He sought to reveal how society shaped the individual in its own image by examining a range of social phenomena including the division of labour, suicide, and knowledge and belief" (18). He viewed approached the body from the perspective of social constructed meaning (Thomas 2003). This idea of the body as symbol also found its way into the work of Bourdieu, who viewed it, with physical form and movement/gestures, as cultural content, and Foucault.

The current theoretical trend in studies of dance and the human body makes liberal use of Foucault's concept of discipline as it seeks to interpret the processes associated with training the human body in several ways. It does so first by relating to the concept of a technique in ballet to Foucault's definition of a technique as a "technology of the self" (Green 2002). It does so, second, by viewing the concept of "discipline" as it exists within ballet classrooms as related to the positioning of individual in relation to collective, generally through the maintenance of hierarchies of power and the positioning of people within those hierarchies. It does so, third, by positioning the control and creation of the physical self in relation to ideal criteria. When observing an interaction between Noémie and Serena during an intermediate level class, I felt that a contextual and historical understanding of discipline such as Foucault's was emerging in the classroom. Noémie chided Serena for looking in the mirror and fixing her leotard: "It's disrespectful to be- Noémie mimes adjusting the leotard and looking at herself in the mirror—"When I'm trying to fix you. It's discipline, respect. That's the difference between you and the Kirov kids— you have no discipline. . . .You're going to have to take directions from the coach and the director— you're like a sculpture in that moment. You don't move!" At moments such as these, students understand that they are learning "discipline and determination," which they mentally classify as skill-sets they will need if they are to have a career in dance. As students' move through the program, both their bodies and their classroom comportment are viewed as having become more disciplined.

Jean-Pierre's remarks to the advanced-level students, as they practiced a variation on Parent Observation Day, also give us an insight even more into the *why* than into *how* of student discipline. For even as they develop greater control over their own bodies, learn how to comport themselves in a classroom, and strive for a closer approximation to the aesthetic (and moral) ideals of ballet, they also are able to find more room for individual expression within the framework of movement, as Jean-Pierre indicated: "You can do everything nicely— hard work— but make it fun! You're afraid of doing it wrong— you're holding back. Do it wrong, but do it all out, at your level. Don't wait! That was good at level six. You're young adults now and not kids— be more intuitive. Not be undisciplined, but show me who you are." Bates (2008) depicts the "idealization of form" that occurs as the body is created for ballet emerging from both "nature" and "nurture," and notes that conflict often arises out of the tension between the "structured knowledge" and contemporary ideas of "freedom and creative expression" (77). As the advance-level students were finding the time and space when and where they could interject self-expression and characterizations into the movements they had learned, Bates' tension was being coped with.

There are a myriad of alternative interpretations of the body. Birdwhistel, for example, viewed the movements of the body as a form of communication akin to verbal language, while phenomenologists such as Merleau-Ponty and Garfinkel approached the body through ethnomethodology seeing it as a social and subjective entity (Thomas 2003). The data suggests, however, that students and instructors take an approach to the body that is rooted within the theoretical/ideological traditions that gave rise to those theories developed by Foucault and Bourdieu. Students and instructors often indicated that they believe the body is shaped and molded ("sculpted") in relation to its capacity for movement and the intrinsic abilities of the individual; the process of sculpting occurs through the intervention of the instructor in the forms pedagogical practice and the process of choreographing for performances, but also through the conscious design of the student, who is

encouraged to spend time in front of a mirror examining his or her body and creating and re-creating the positions and shapes that approximate ballet's aesthetic ideals. This understanding of the body is very much in keeping with the concept of education as method of "disciplining" the body, with an eye toward economic and social exchange.

Thus both concept of discipline and the arrangement and use of bodies within space and time inform the students' ongoing attempts to navigate the myriad people and places found within the ballet landscape and governed by subset of aesthetic ideologies. Individual students draw upon their bodies' even greater ability to produce the sought-after gestures and movements to generate opportunities to move between institutions that require increasingly more exacting executions of the gestures and movements of ballet. Thus, conceptions of the body, and of the relationship of the body to the social order, live at the heart of ideological system which views particular relationships between body and society as being accepted social facts. One might say that conceptions of body-image and the bodily-ability are legitimated and acted upon, as the individuals schooled within this system begin to act in relation to them. Thus knowledge of the landscape, its techniques, social networks, and hierarchies, how to leverage oneself within the hierarchy, is what the seemingly incidental educative processes that occur within the school are all about. This is what is going on behind the scenes, as it were, as students, audition for intensives, discuss relationships between people and companies, gain some sense of their school's placement in the latter regard.

Institutional Choreography

Institutionally, performance provides an opportunity to make a public statement through choreographic work; such statements are complicated by the relationship between the body- as a specific symbol within the context of performance— and the practices associated with the maintenance/transformation of ideological systems. For example, Martin (1998) points to the contradiction between the performance of a particular choreographic work and the way in which the art

of dance is cultivated through the development and perpetuation of particular techniques. The latter act in many ways as a “juridical structuring of opportunity,” for it is by conforming to techniques that bodies are subordinated by ideology and legitimated to participate in performances (20).⁴⁸ Those same performances also, however, provide opportunities for students and instructors to engage with both the ideological and structural aspects of the landscape, writing and rewriting the narratives and ideologies by choosing to either reify or challenge them.

In the performance at the AIDS benefit, the sexualized, gendered, racialized norms established by virtue of the context of the pieces presented by the other schools participating in the event were contested through the French Ballet Academy’s presentation of bodies and movements that were very noticeably marked by race, gender, and sexual orientation. Even in the context of such a challenge presented to the prevailing ethos, however, individual students were called upon to fill the roles in part because of their adherence to the piece’s aesthetic, in part owing to their good fit with the intention of the choreographers, who in this case were a student and an instructor. The presentation of original works underscored their uniqueness since they come in under the Academy’s specialization in the French classical and neo-classical form. In other performances, such as by the presentation of “classical” variations, the school’s position in the landscape was reified by the presentation of bodies and movements that adhered to the highest standards within the aesthetic of ballet. This tells us that institutions and individuals are able to cultivate and legitimate their status through in the world of dance by operating both against and in connection with existing ideologies.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter’s discussion of how an ideological system associated with the aesthetics of ballet is created or recreated in education, and navigated by those who operate beneath its umbrella, sheds light on the ways in which such systems are articulated, developed, and altered in various ways as an

⁴⁸ This paragraph modified from proposal.

expression of continuity and change within a social system. It also demonstrates how ideologies operate in relation both to the human body, through the process whereby a relationship is built up and sustained between the physical form and the type of training/discipline undertaken in the classroom, and to the presentation of choreographed works. Foucault's keen understanding of this relationship to education in general suggests that these practices contribute to the maintenance of a social order; the latter, emergent out of both law and the "natural" processes of a society, sees to it that individuals are ranked, sorted, and organized across space and time (Foucault 1995:179). The underlying argument is that these educative processes work to maintain social cohesion, as corrective measures are implemented to reduce differences and as inclusionary/exclusionary measures are adopted that establish and maintain boundaries in such a way that those who are encompassed by them are able to conform to and, thereby uphold, the aesthetic ideals within.

While these forces are really at work and comprise the ideologies underlying education in the given environment, the process of maintaining and recreating an existing social landscape requires that the encompassed individuals actively engage with the processes and ideas that comprise the boundaries. In the time following my two-year period of ethnographic research, the school has already undergone significant changes. A number of intermediate-level students were not invited to return for the following school year, for the school's more secure financial base and its increasing status and reputation have allowed it to be more selective and to focus itself even more intently on cultivating a particular aesthetic. Noémie also chose not to return to the school to teach and new faculty members were brought in, including both dancers in the French tradition as well as former students of Jean-Pierre's who were retiring from their professional careers. Thus, the ways in which the French Ballet Academy defines itself, and is in turn defined and understood by its members within the landscape of ballet and within the French tradition, is part of an ongoing social process. Arrangement of institutions, individuals, and ideologies within a society are continually created and recreated with each new

encounter. Much the same is true of the ways in which individuals construct and reconstruct their internal understandings of these encounters and the resulting social arrangements, ways that include knowledge imparted across multiple sites. All of this bespeaks what Firth (1981) termed the “dynamics of a society,” in the course of urging for the development of a dynamic social theory, one that studies not only moments of radical social transformation such as revolutions, but also all “systems in motion” that are undergoing “different *kinds* of social change” (17). That objective of essentially enacting a tradition, of developing continuity with the individually perceived and collectively remembered past, suggests that the processes whereby social cohesion is maintained are also processes of social and individual change, mediated by the various forms of education.

These observations have a broad applicability to educational settings, particularly with respect to how status and hierarchy can be navigated by the individuals who find themselves within them, because to some extent education in a society concerns the training/disciplining of the human body in space and time, and because the ideologies associated with the organization and arrangement of social landscapes inevitably manifest themselves in relation to the human body. It is by scrutinizing how people and institutions operate in relation to the existing social arrangements within education (creating, recreating, and altering them) that we bring into sharper focus those processes within schools and school systems that produce educational, and thereby sociocultural outcomes.

Works Cited

- Alderson, E.
1987 Ballet as Ideology: Giselle, Act II. *Dance Chronicle* 10(3): 290-304.
- Alexander, Jeffrey C.
2004 Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy. *Sociological Theory* 22(4):527-572
- Amidon, Edmund
1966 Interaction Analysis: Recent Developments . US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Office of Education. EDRS
- Anderson, Benedict
1992 *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso Press
- Atencio, Matthew and Wright, Jan
2009 'Ballet it's too whitey': Discursive Hierarchies of High School Dance Spaces and the Construction of Embodied Feminine Subjectivities. *Gender and Education* 21(1) 31-46,
- Bales, Melanie
2008 Ballet for the Post-Judson Dancer. In *The Body Eclectic: Evolving Practices in Dance Training* Ed. By Melanie Bales and Rebecca Nettle-Fiol. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Ballet Theatre Foundation, Inc.
2011 Company History: American Ballet Theater. Online. Accessed 6/20/2013.
2013 American Ballet Theater. The ABT Summer-intensive Program
<http://www.abt.org/education/summerintensive.asp> Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.
- Bateson, Gregory
1972 Cultural Contact and Schizmogogenesis. In Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- Bateson, Glenna
2008 Teaching Alignment. In *The Body Eclectic: Evolving Practices in Dance Training* Ed. By Melanie Bales and Rebecca Nettle-Fiol. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Bernard, Thomas J.
2008 William Sheldon. *Encyclopedia Britannica*
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/539615/William-Sheldon#ref784525>
Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.
- Bolshoi Ballet Academy
2013 Summer-intensive NYC (Ages 15 and older)
<http://www.bolshoiballetacademy.com/bba-programs/bolshoi-ballet-academy-summer-intensive-nyc> Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.

Bond, George and Gilliam, Angela

- 1997 Introduction. In *Social Constructions of the Past: Representation as Power* G.C.B. and Gilliam, ed. One World Archaeology. New York: Rutledge Press.

Bond, George

- 2002 Ideology, Dominance, and Inequality: Gender and Control in Myombe. In *Locating Capitalism in Time and Space: Global Restructurings, Politics, and Identity*. D. Nugent, ed. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- 2000 Historical fragments and Social Constructions in Northern Zambia: A Personal Journey. *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 13(1):76-93

Bourdieu, Pierre

- 1980 *The Logic of Practice* Stanford: Stanford University Press
- 1984 *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Trans. Richard Nice.
- 1999 *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art in Literature* Columbia University Press
- 1990 Artistic Taste and Cultural Capital In *Culture and Society: Contemporary Debates* Jeffrey C. Alexander and Steven Seidman, eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Bourdieu, Pierre and Passeron, Jean-Claude

- 1980 *The Logic of Practice* Stanford: Stanford University Press
- 1990 *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. London: Sage Publications.

Burt, Ramsay

- 1995 *The Male Dancer: Bodies, Spectacle Sexuality* New York: Routledge Press
- 1998 *Alien Bodies: Representations of Modernity, 'Race' and Nation in Early Modern Dance*. London: Rutledge.

Carman, Joseph

- 2006 Gay Men & Dance. *Dance Magazine*. Nov. <http://www.dancemagazine.com/issues/November-2006/Gay-Men--Dance>
- 2013 *Espirit de Corps*. In *American Ballet Theater Playbill* June 2013. New York: Playbill Incorporated.

Carolina Performing Arts

- 2013 Rite of Spring at 100. Online <https://www.theriteofspringat100.org/the-history/> Carolina Performing Arts

Carr, David

- 1991 *Time, Narrative and History: Indiana*.

Catholic Hierarchy

- 2005 USA Statistics by Province. <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/country/spcus1.html>

The Cecchetti Council of America.

2013 Syllabus. <https://www.cecchetti.org/students/syllabus-overview/> Accessed December 15 2013

Connerton, Paul

2012 *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge University Press.

Coser, L.

1992 Introduction: Maurice Halbwachs 1877-1945. In M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cremin, Lawrence

1975 "Public Education and the Education of the Public." *Teachers College Record* 77: 1-12.

Cumming, Alister, Tarone, Elaine, Cohen, Andrew D., Connor, Ulla, Spada, Nina, Hornberger, Nancy H Pennycook, Alastair and Auerbach, Elsa

1994 Alternatives in TESOL Research: Descriptive, Interpretive, and Ideological Orientations *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(4): 673-703

Everist, Mark

2010 *Grand Opéra—Petit Opéra: Parisian Opera and Ballet from the Restoration to the Second Empire*. *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 33(3):195-231

Fairfax, Edmund

2003 *The Styles of Eighteenth-Century Ballet*. Landham: Scarecrow Press

Firth, Raymond

1981 *Essays on Social Organization and Values*. London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology No. 28. Reprint. New York: Anthelone Press.

Fisher, Jennifer

2003 "Nutcracker" Nation: How an Old World Ballet became a Christmas Tradition in the New World. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Foucault, Michael

1995 *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans by Alan Sheridan, 1978. New York: Vintage Books.

Foulkes, Julia

2002 *Modern Bodies: Dance and Modernism from Martha Graham to Alvin Ailey*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press

Franko, Mark

1995 *Dancing Modernism, Performing Politics*: Indiana University Press

2002 *The work of dance: Labor, Movement, and Identity in the 1930's* Wesleyan University Press.

- Garafola, Lynn
2002 Dollars for Dance: Lincoln Kirstein, City Center, and the Rockefeller Foundation. *Dance Chronicle* 25(1) 101-114
- Gottschild, Brenda
2005 *The Black Dancing Body: From Coon to Cool*. Palgrave
- Graff, Ellen
1997 *Stepping Left: Dance and Politics in New York City, 1928-1942* Durham, NC: Duke University Press
- Green, Jill
2002 Foucault and the Training of Docile Bodies in Dance Education AERA Conference Paper New Orleans, LA
- Guidetti, Laura, Emerenziani, Gian Pietro, Callotta, Maria Chiara, Gregorio da Silva, Sergio, Baldari, Carlo
2008 Energy Cost and Energy Sources of a Ballet Dance Exercise in Female Adolescents with Different Technical Ability. *European Journal of Applied Physiology* 103:315–321
- Guillot, Genevieve and Prudhommeau, Germanine
1976 *The Book of Ballet*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall. Trans. 1969 *Grammaire de la danse classique*. Paris: Hachette.
- Handler, R. and Linnekin, J.
1984 Tradition, Genuine or Spurious. *Journal of American Folklore* 97(385):273-290.
- Hanna, Judith
1988 *Dance, Sex, and Gender: Signs of Identity, Dominance, Defiance, and Desire*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Homans, Jennifer
2010 *Apollo's Angels: A History of Ballet*. Random House
- Hoare, Quintin and Smith, Geoffrey
1971 *Selections from the Prison Notebook of Antonio Gramsci*. New York: International Publishers.
- Johnson, Randall
1999 Editor's Introduction in Bourdieu, Pierre *The Field of Cultural Production : Essays on Art in Literature* Columbia University Press
- Karina, Lilian and Kant, Marion
2003 *Hitler's Dancers: German Modern Dance and the Third Reich*. New York: Berghahn Books. Jonathan Steinberg, trans.

- Kaufman, Becky, Warren, Michell, Dominguez, Jennifer, Wang, Jack, Heymsfield, Steven and Pierson, Richard
 2002 Bone Density and Amenorrhea in Ballet Dancers Are Related to a Decreased Resting Metabolic Rate and Lower Leptin Levels. *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* 87(6):2777–2783
- Kent, Allegra
 2009 *Once a Dancer: An Autobiography* University of Florida Press
- Kealiinohomoku J
 1983 An Anthropologist Looks at Ballet as a Form of Ethnic Dance. In Copeland R, Cohen M (eds.) *What Is Dance?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kinsella, David
 2008 *A Beautiful Tragedy*. Faction Film.
- Kirkland, Gelsey, and Greg Lawrence
 1986 *Dancing on My Grave*. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1986
- Koegler, Horst
 1994 Review: Wigman and the Demon. *Dance Chronicle* 17(3):369-372
- Kroeber, A.L.,
 1963 "Cultural Processes" in *Culture Patterns and Processes*, A.L.Kroeber, Harcourt, Brace & World, pp. 152-193.
- Lareau, Annette
 2003 *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lowen, J.W.
 1988 *The Mississippi Chinese: Between Black and White*. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press.
- Manning, Susan
 2004 *Modern Dance/Negro Dance: Race in Motion* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota
- Mase, Damien
 2003 Your Body Type - Ectomorph, Mesomorph or Endomorph? Muscle and Strength <http://www.muscleandstrength.com/articles/body-types-ectomorph-mesomorph-endomorph.html> Online. Accessed 7/12/2013.
- Mayer, Adrian
 2004 The Significance of Quasi-Groups in the Study of Complex Societies. In *The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies*. M. Banton, ed. Pp. 97-122. London: Tavistock Publications.

Miami City Ballet

- 2013 Miami City Ballet School: Summer Program Admissions.
http://www.miamicityballet.org/school/admissions_auditions.php Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.

Monasta, Attili

- 2002 Antonio Gramsci: The Message and the Images. In Gramsci and Education. Carmel Borg, Joseph Buttigeig, and Peter Mayo, Eds. Roman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Morris, Geraldine

- 2008 Artistry or mere technique? The value of the ballet competition. Research in Dance Education. Vol 9(1):39-54 Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.

Morris, Gay

- 2006 A Game for Dancers: Performing Modernism in the Post-War Years, 1945-1960. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press

New York University

- 2013 Dance in the Professions: ABT Ballet Pedagogy.
<http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/dance/programs/graduate/abt> Accessed November 13 2013.

Nichelle

- 2010 "How Do You Define "Dolly Dinkle" Dance Instruction?" Dance Advantage Online.
<http://www.danceadvantage.net/2010/08/11/define-dolly-dinkle/> Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.

Novack, Cynthia

- 1990 Sharing the Dance. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI

Nutcracker: Rated R

- 2012 Nutcracker: Rated R Poster. www.nutcrackerratedr.com

Opéra National de Paris

- 2013 The Paris Opera Ballet School. <http://www.operadeparis.fr/en/les-artistes/l-ecole-de-danse>

Orlando Ballet School

- 2013 Orlando Ballet School <http://www.orlandoballet.org/school/summer.html> Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.

Pollock, Mica

- 2005 Colormute: Race Talk Dilemmas in an American School. Princeton University Press.

- Prevots, Naima
1998 Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War .Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press
- Radcliffe-Brown, A. R.
1940 On Joking Relationships. *Africa* 13(3):195-210
- Ritenburg
2010 Frozen Landscapes: A Foucauldian Genealogy of the Ideal Ballet Dancer's Body. *Research in Dance Education* 11(1):71-85.
- Rossen, Rebecca
2007 Mary Wigman Dance Teacher 29(4):74-79
- Royal Academy of Dance, Faculty of Education
2013 Certificate in Ballet Teaching Studies.
<http://www.radeducation.org.uk/applycbts> Accessed November 13 2013
2013 Ballet Syllabus. <http://www.rad.org.uk/learn-to-dance/our-dance-school/ballet-classes-syllabus-1> Accessed December 15 2013
- Ruggles, Fairchild and Silverman, Helaine
2009 From Tangible to Intangible Heritage. In *Intangible Heritage Embodied*. Springer Press.
- Sadeghi, Sima; Ketabi, Saeed; Tavakoli, Mansoor and Sadeghi, Moslem
2012 Application of Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (CCDA) in Analyzing Classroom Interaction *English Language Teaching* 5(1):166-173.
- Safa, H.
1971 Education, Modernization, and the Process of National Integration In *Anthropological Perspectives on Education*, Basic Books. e.a. M.L. Wax, ed. Pp. 208-222.
- San Francisco Ballet
2013 Summer Session. <http://school.sfballet.org/summer-session> Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.
- Schechner, Richard
1985 *Between Theater and Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- School of American Ballet at Lincoln Center
2013 Summer Course Overview. <http://www.sab.org/summercourse/overview.php> Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.
- Silverman, Helaine
2008 Embodied Heritage, Identity Politics and Tourism. *Anthropology and Humanism* 30(2):141-155

- Smallridge, Jared
 2011 2011 Jobs Guide. Dance Magazine. <http://www.dancemagazine.com/issues/March-2011/2011-Jobs-Guide>. Online. Accessed 5/11/2013.
- Smith, M.G.
 1998 *The Study of Social Structure*. New York: Institute for the Study of Man.
- Spicer, Graham
 2011 Photo: Sofia Rosolini in Rubies. Balanchine's Jewels finally sparkle at La Scala. Gramilano Blog.
- Stoneley, Peter
 2007 *A Queer History of the Ballet*. Rutledge Press.
- Taper B.
 1994 *Balanchine: A biography* New York: Times Books
- Thomas, Helen
 2003 *The Body, Dance, and Cultural Theory*. New York: Palgrave
- Turner, Victor
 2001 *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: PAJ Publications.
- University of Florida Press
 2013 *Overview of The French School of Classical Ballet* by Vanina Wilson.
<http://upf.com/book.asp?id=WILSO010>
- US Equal Employment_Opportunity Commission
 2007 *EEO-1 Job Classification Guide*
<http://www.eeoc.gov/employers/eeo1survey/jobclassguide.cfm> Online. Accessed 7/05/2013.
- Vincent, L. M
 1989 *Competing with the Sylph: The Quest for the Perfect Dance Body*. Pennington: Princeton Book Company. (Reprint of 1978 ed.)
- Wainwright, Steven, Williams, Claire and Turner, Bryan
 2006 Varieties of Habitus and the Embodiment of Ballet. *Qualitative Research* 6(4):535–558
- Wallace, Anthony F.C.
 1973 *Schools in Revolutionary and Conservative Societies*. In *Cultural Relevance and Educational Issues*, F.A.J. Ianni and E. Storey (eds). Little, Brown & Co., 1973, pp. 230-249.
 2003 *Revitalizations and Mazeways: Essays on Cultural Change, Volume 1*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. Robert S. Grumet, Ed.

- Weber, Max.
1958 "The Three Types of Legitimate Rule. In *Society and Institutions*, 4 (1): 1-11. Translated by Hans Gerth.
- Wilson, Vanina
2013 *The French School of Classical Ballet: The First Year of Training*. University Press of Florida
- Wulff, Helena
2008 "Ethereal Expression: Paradoxes of Ballet as a Global Physical Culture", *Ethnography*, 9(4): 519-536.
2007 *Dancing at the Crossroads: Memory and Mobility in Ireland*. Berghahn Books, New York.
2005 "Memories in Motion: The Irish Dancing Body", *Body & Society*, issue on "the dancing body", (ed.) Bryan S. Turner, vol. 11(4): 45-62.
1998 *Ballet across Borders: Career and Culture in the World of Dancers*. Oxford: Berg.
- Zarrilli, Phillip
1990 *What Does it Mean to "Become the Character" Power, Presence and Transcendence in Asian In-body Disciplines of Practice? In By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*. Richard Schechner and Willa Appel, eds New York: Cambridge University Press

Appendix I: Class Schedules

Year One Groupings

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Intermediate						
Group A (Int + Elem)	5:00 - 7:00 Technique	5:00 - 7:00 Technique	6:00 - 8:00 Technique		6:00 - 8:00 Technique	10:00 - 12:00 Technique
Group B	5:00 - 7:00 Technique	5:00 - 7:00 Technique	6:00 - 8:00 Technique		6:00 - 8:00 Technique	10:00 - 12:00 Technique
Group C	5:00 - 7:00 Technique	5:00 - 7:00 Technique	6:00 - 8:00 Technique		6:00 - 8:00 Technique	3:30 - 6:00 Technique
Group D	6:00 - 8:00 Technique	5:00 - 7:00 Technique	6:00 - 8:00 Technique		6:00 - 8:00 Technique	3:30 - 6:00 Technique Men 2:30 - 3:30
Advanced	Floor barre 4:00 - 4:45 Modern 4:45 - 6:00 Advanced 6:00 - 8:00 Technique	5:00 - 8:00 Technique	4:00 - 6:00 Technique	5:00 - 8:00 Technique	4:00 - 6:00 Technique	Advanced Technique 12:00 - 1:30 Women's Variations 1:30 - 2:30Men 2:30 - 3:30

Year Two Groupings

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Green	5:30 - 7:00 Technique	5:00 - 6:30 Technique				10:00 - 11:30 Technique 11:30 - 12:30 Pointe
Orange	4:00 - 5:30 Technique & Pointe	6:30 - 8:00 Technique & Pointe	Orange 4:00 - 5:30 Technique 5:30 - 6:15 Pointe/Variations	Men 4:00 - 7:00 Technique & Partnering		12:30 - 2:00 Technique 2:00 - 3:00 Pointe/Variations 3:00 - 4:00 Men's Class
Red	4:45 - 6:00 Modern 6:00 - 8:00 Technique	4:00 - 5:30 Technique 5:30 - 7:00 Rep		Red 4:00 - 7:00 Technique & Partnering	Red 4:45 - 6:00 Modern Red 6:15 - 8:00 Technique	12:30 - 2:00 Technique Red 2:00 - 3:00 Variations 3:00 - 4:00 Men's Class

A typical schedule during a rehearsal period

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Intermediate						
Group A	Int - 5:00 - 6:00 Warm-Up 6:00 - 8:00 Rehearsal	5:00 - 7:00 Warm-Up & Rehearsal	4:00 - 6:00 Warm-Up & Rehearsal		4:00 Warm-Up 5:00 Run-Thru 6:30 Performance 8:00 Year- Performance	Year-End Conferences
Int - Group B	5:00 - 6:00 Warm-Up 6:00 - 8:00 Rehearsal	5:00 - 7:00 Warm-Up & Rehearsal	4:00 - 6:00 Warm-Up & Rehearsal		4:00 Warm-Up 5:00 Run-Thru 6:30 Performance 8:00 Year- Performance	Year-End Conferences
Group C	Int - 5:00 - 6:00 Warm-Up 6:00 - 8:00 Rehearsal	5:00 - 7:00 Warm-Up & Rehearsal	4:00 - 6:00 Warm-Up & Rehearsal		4:00 Warm-Up 5:00 Run-Thru 6:30 Performance 8:00 Year- Performance	Year-End Conferences
Int - Group D	6:00 - 8:00 Rehearsal	5:00 - 6:30 Warm-Up 8:00 Tech Rehearsal at Venue	5:00 Theater Call 7:00 Performance	5:00 Theater Call 7:00 Performance	4:00 Warm-Up 5:00 Run-Thru 6:30 Performance 8:00 Year- Performance	Year-End Conferences
Advanced	Floor barre 4:00 - 4:45 Modern 4:45 - 6:00 6:00 - 8:00 Rehearsal	Advanced 5:00 - 6:30 Warm-Up 8:00 Tech Rehearsal at Venue	5:00 Theater Call 7:00 Performance	5:00 Theater Call 7:00 Performance	4:00 Warm-Up 5:00 Run-Thru 6:30 Performance 8:00 Year- Performance	Year-End Conferences