

SERIOUS PLAY: THE ROLE OF PLAY IN DANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Serious Play: The Role of Play in Dance in Higher Education

Play is integrated far more in children's lives than in adults' lives, and a variety of research supports the positive effects of play and creativity in education. However, once we enter into higher education and adulthood, play is less encouraged and may be even nonexistent. For many adults, work and play become two separate entities, and many adults believe that part of becoming an adult means to put aside the desires to play and be serious in order to succeed. To address the misconceptions of play and play in dance, the study investigates the potential of play in dance in higher education. Through the development of a curriculum, the study investigates a pedagogy of play within movement, creativity, and self-expression in dance. The evaluation of the design and outcomes of the curriculum and implemented study has resulted in identifying emergent themes as the fundamentals of play in dance.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of childhood and even into adolescence, we are often encouraged to play and explore our innate sense of creativity. The idea of play is integrated far more in children's lives than in adults. A variety of research confirms the positive effects of play and creativity when integrated into early education. However, once entering into higher education and adulthood, play is less encouraged and may be even nonexistent. For many adults, work and play become two separate entities when seriousness takes precedence. Unfortunately, for many people, part of becoming an adult means to put aside the desires to play in the belief that adults must be serious to succeed.

The study of dance in higher education has the potential to foster "serious" play in a productive environment through creativity, artistry, and freedom. Of course dance, as a serious study can possibly lose its potential for creative and artistic growth, especially if the structure of a course over-emphasizes "perfection" of technique. Teachers may even establish an atmosphere of unhealthy competitiveness in their reasonable expectation that students will work hard in the environment the teachers establish to improve their skills as dancers. Teachers can expect a strong work ethic and encourage students to perform at their best.

Those who are pursuing a degree and studying to build a career in dance may find themselves in an educational environment that suppresses individuality and freedom. Though I do not suggest that every educator and program is creating such environments, I do suggest that there are still misconceptions of play and of its values in everyday life which may have led to suppressing valuable aspects of play in dance curricula.

Arthur J. Cropley (2001) reveals that in the ability to play and be creative, the advantages children have over adults lie in the psychological and social factors such as self-image, motivation, social norms, and experience. Students, regardless of age, need the environment and encouragement to remain creative, and simply play. I propose that play can have an impactful part in dance in higher education.

Playing in dance can be instinctive, however specific guidance in activities and exercises can also help students with all ranges of experience in dance to investigate and find their own value of “play” through movement. Susan W. Stinson (1997) found that young students had a positive response to dance as a physical, social, and creative activity. Thinking and communicating creatively through movement, the students experienced freedom and their ‘selves’ in dance.

I am specifically interested in investigating dance in higher education not only because that is where I am currently studying, but also because there is a noticeably wide range of abilities and experiences in students who take dance classes at the University of Oregon. Students in higher education are drawn to dance for a variety of reasons. For example, many are beginners who are looking to try something new, others have enjoyed dance for most of their lives and continue for recreation, and then there are those who are training to be professionals in dance. I find these differences intriguing because they all experience something unique in dance. In my experience in higher education, I have noticed there is great pressure for excellence in technique and advancing quickly through levels of technique. My hope is that through play students can appreciate dance as a self-expressive movement form which may alter their views on technique and artistry in dance.

In this study I define and integrate play within a dance curriculum, with the goal to help teachers and students discover play as a “serious” enhancement to dance education. Furthermore, the goal of this study is to offer guidance to teachers and other researchers to help dancers develop a practice of investigating movement through play. I believe when students play in dance, they can find a variety of opportunities to help them investigate deeper into their technique, performance, composition skills and artistry. Taking this into account, the study integrates play into a curriculum in dance in higher education and encourages adults to re-experience their selves through movement.

Purpose and Problem Statement

The purpose of the study is to offer the potential of play in dance in higher education. The study investigates a pedagogy of play within movement, creativity, and self-expression in dance through a detailed syllabus which was developed and implemented. The study was guided by the following questions:

- 1) How can play be part of dance?
- 2) How can play be facilitated, taught, and encouraged in dance pedagogy?
- 3) How might play in dance influence movement, creativity, and self-expression?
- 4) What can the study contribute to the following?
 - a. My pedagogical development.
 - b. Recommendations for pedagogical development and curriculum expansion to include play in dance.

Delimitations

The study was designed to be conducted within the DANC course schedule at the University of Oregon, in which one-credit classes meet 50 minutes twice a week for 10-weeks in a term. As both the researcher and the instructor, there were limitations in how I could observe and evaluate each lesson.

Definition of Terms

In order to clearly conduct and evaluate the study, I state working definitions for the following:

Creativity – Creativity is to imagine, explore, reflect, experiment, and take risks (Jackson and Sinclair 2006). To engage in the process of investigation in order to discover new ideas and as a result to see and to feel things differently. Creativity evolves through play. To be creative means that there is a sense of play involved, and the following is present: *attentiveness, engagement, intent*, and the *materials* (Morris 2005). In this case, the materials in dance are the movement.

Play –Play is imagination in action (Lindqvist 2001). Play fosters creativity. Play is not what we do, but how we do it. Play is an attitude, spirit and way of thinking that allows for freedom to explore. It creates meaning for individuals and can enhance the relationship between dance and creativity. It is an act of freeing ourselves from restrictions and expanding our field of action. Play is not entirely the opposite of work. The integration of play with dance encourages people to actively find and sense the freedom to discover and ask questions.

Self – A person’s spirit and knowledge that can be distinguished from others. Self is a person’s physical body, how it responds to external elements and make movement choices. Self is a person’s expression of individuality through movement and cognitive reflection.

Self-expression – Communication of one’s individuality, feelings, or ideas through creative means. In dance, it is a means by which creativity is encouraged, and through which students can explore their bodies’ movement and natural tendencies. Through self-expression, awareness is developed and is a way to recognize and appreciate individuality.

Significance of Study

When play and creativity are integrated into the daily lives of children, there is growth, both physically and intellectually. Researchers, such as Gunilla Lindquist (2001) and Melinda Wenner (2009), have suggested the same for adults. Therefore, I propose that play should be integrated in dance in higher education. Teachers should encourage students to play in order to explore movement in new ways and to build an environment that fosters creativity. Aside from standard improvisation classes, prior to this study, the University of Oregon’s Department of Dance did not have a course dedicated to experiencing movement through play. In a large research university with many students from other departments registering for dance classes, this department took a chance in scheduling to offer a course called “Play and Dance.” This in itself is significant, as well as the integration of this course that examines the development and implementation of play. Through implementing the study in this course, I believe that it

can be seen that play in a dance education context can be accessible and can help adults to find the importance of self-expression and individuality.

The knowledge gained from the study contributes to an expanded understanding of how play in dance is taught, learned, and encouraged to others. At times, dance can be exclusive and intimidating for others not yet in the field. Play is a way in for them. And for those who are immersed in the field of dance, play is a way to approach movement and all its elements. Play will contribute to the growth of students in dance programs in higher education, in which they will discover their 'selves' in movement and in the creative process.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

An extensive search into the concept of play and the relationship of play and dance was prepared to support the research. The resulting review of the literature is presented in the following categories: Play; Play, Dance, and Improvisation; Creativity and Self-Expression; and Dance and Curriculum Development.

Play

In an edited interview with Joan M. Erikson, who was a visual artist, writer, dancer, choreographer, teacher, and researcher, Daniel Benveniste (1998) and Erikson pursued the importance of play in adulthood. Throughout her life, Erikson led creative programs for the arts including dance in schools, hospitals and other facilities. When asked how she defined play, she first responded with what it is not. Erikson said “the opposite of play is the order to stop, because you’re told to, or you’re told to do something else, or, in some way, you’re interrupted by an adult or someone in charge of you who has the authority” (53). Erikson believed that adults have learned to obey the limits which results in reducing enjoyment in play. Adults often place too much emphasis on accomplishing something and see play as a distraction or waste of time. She says taking ourselves too seriously will cause us to lose freedom of motion. Erikson encourages us to believe that “there’s always more than one way to go. You have choices all along the way. Play helps us to be aware of the fact that we do have choices” (53).

Erikson argues that another important part of play is a sense of wonder, which also allows for freedom. She discusses the distinction between *games* and *play*. Games

require a start and end, result in a win or loss, have rules and boundaries that are time sensitive, and surprises that can be hazardous. “Play has no ending. It strives for continuation and change. Surprises enhance the play. They are invited and hoped for. Vulnerability is accepted and can be incorporated” (55). Erikson believes imagination has an integral part in play. The greatest free play happens when perception, intellection and imagination intermingle creatively. Erikson’s ideas of play support my goal to integrate play within a dance class. I want teachers and students to recognize that we have choices and freedom. Play in dance can enhance these qualities.

Crosby S. Rogers and Janet K. Sawyers (1988), in their book *Play in the Lives of Children*, discuss ideas to design an environment that facilitates children’s learning through functional and constructive play. The role of functional play for children is to “enjoy the sensory stimulation from simple repetitive activities. [...] Functional play gives children a chance to master skills; at other times, their play may reduce tension or relieve boredom” (93). Repetition of activities will result in growth of motor, cognitive, and social functions. In order for children to engage in functional play, adults must first provide an environment where they can play safely without undue verbal or physical restrictions. The authors encourage adults to be sensitive and they describe how to be responsive to the children’s play. Adults should integrate encouragement in facilitating children in order to reinforce the children’s self-motivation and pride. In constructive play, the authors find that the emphasis on the process rather than the product is important to foster children’s creativity. They recommend giving children time and encouragement to solve their own problems and giving opportunities to explore their own solutions.

Rogers and Sawyers discuss other behaviors related to play. They define exploration as distinct from play, however they still encourage adults to facilitate children's exploration in all things new and old, alongside the play. The authors emphasize the importance of communication and other cognitive skills integrated within play, writing that, "In play skills are not isolated, but rather intertwined just as they are throughout life. Make sure children have the tools they need to develop their skills" (114). Though the book is geared towards the education and development of children, it offers concepts of play that are pertinent to this study. These ideas have aided me in designing a course that provides a safe and productive environment for dancers.

Johan Huizinga, a cultural theorist, investigates the significance of human play and its role in our culture. Like other researchers of play, he compares the idea and action of human play with animal behavior. Human play is a significant function that means something, and there is something "at play" which give the action meaning. Huizinga believes that a "fun" element is what characterizes the essence of play, and this "fun" element comes from the mind. He says, "Play only becomes possible, thinkable, and understandable when an influx of *mind* breaks down the absolute determinism of the cosmos" (3). He finds that this is what makes play a rational act for human beings and is part of a way of being rather than just an action. Huizinga closely examines the idea of play vs. seriousness. He argues that the phrase "play is non-seriousness" misrepresents play and leaves out its positive qualities. For example, someone playing chess may not indicate the slightest sign of joy, yet they are at play. Huizinga introduces a main characteristic of play: "that it is free, is in fact freedom" (8). He believes that all play is a voluntary act that cannot be forced upon, hence the freedom. Play is distinct from

“ordinary” life and contains its own meaning. Huizinga further explains that play “can be repeated at any time, [...] in this faculty of repetition lies one of the most essential qualities of play. It holds good not only of play as a whole but also of its inner structure” (9-10). Considering this, I believe the practice of play can help dancers find value in repetition through which they can find clarity in the intention, dynamics, and the essence of movement itself. Through repetition new information can be gathered which in turn can enhance the experience of play.

Author of *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-brainers will Rule the Future*, Daniel H. Pink (2005) is recognized as one of the most influential authors in the world of business. He categorizes play as one of the six essential qualities necessary to achieve professional success. To investigate play, Pink interviewed and traveled with a physician in India, Madan Kataria, a “giggle” guru who plans to change the world through laughter. Kataria started “laughter clubs” around the world where groups of people get together to spend a one half hour laughing. Participating in a “laughter club” session, Pink found that engaging in thought-free laughter resulted in a meditative mind that led to joyfulness or playfulness. Kataria shares with Pink that children laugh hundreds of times a day and yet adults barely laugh a dozen times. “Laughing people are more creative people. They are more productive people. People who laugh together can work together” (196).

Pink writes, “Play is becoming an important part of work, business, and personal well-being, its importance manifesting itself in three ways: games, humor and joyfulness” (180). These three ways allow people to access and activate the right side of the brain, which is unlimited. Games provide whole-minded lessons that touch on key skills in demand by the “Conceptual Age” (181) businesses. Humor is a valuable form of

intelligence in people in a “high-concept world,” and joyfulness “can lead to greater creativity, productivity, and collaboration” (196). Unlike Erikson’s idea of games (See Review of Literature, pg. 7-8), Pink and Huizinga (See Review of Literature, pg. 9) believe that games are an essential part of play where key skills can be learned through whole-minded lessons. In the end, Pink described the “laughter club” experience as “weird” yet invigorating. I find that this boosts significance in the study because it shows that as adults, we have a hesitation to experience pure joyfulness.

Featured in many science journals, “The Serious Need for Play,” written by Melinda Wenner (2009) suggests that play, specifically unstructured and imaginative “free play,” is crucial in developing social, emotional, and cognitive skills. A science, health, and environmental journalist, Wenner looks at the issue from a psychological and childhood development point of view, however I believe her ideas of play can be applied to adults. She recognizes that parents, who tend to become concerned with their child’s development and future success, will reduce “playtime” to focus more on structured activities, which is actually “reducing time for the type of imaginative and rambunctious cavorting that fosters creativity and cooperation” (23).

Resembling Erikson’s concepts of play, Wenner stresses the importance of freedom; it does not have any rules to initiate creative responses. Wenner believes that if the child initiates and creates the play, it challenges the brain to develop and use imagination to try new activities. She also pairs communication with play. Wenner argues that communication is the most valuable social skill of all and says when play happens among peers it allows us to problem solve and communicate with more sophisticated language. Lastly, play is crucial for children’s emotional health and helps them to work

through anxiety and stress. Through unstructured imaginative play, children can build the skills and fantasies to help cope with difficult situations. Play is an essential concept in which children learn, and without that children can lose opportunities for learning. In this study, I found it similar for adults. Through play and playful activities, adults will also develop their brains and learn new ways to socialize, communicate, and cope.

Play, Dance, and Improvisation

In *Playdancing*, Diane Lynch Fraser (1991) focuses on children and their educators in grade schools to provide information, guidance and support. A child therapist and former professional dancer, Fraser believes movement for children can have great meaning and value in their lives, especially through creative exploration. To facilitate creativity in children, teachers are encouraged to show interest in what the child does by treating their questions with respect, by giving more attention to the positive than negative, and by giving genuine approval for real accomplishments. In order to engage in a creative process, children must become creative learners and ask questions that do not have definitive answers. Teachers should begin to become guides or facilitators for activities and increase students' participation in planning and their independence in learning. In designing the study with an atmosphere beneficial to fostering the creative process, the following suggestions by Fraser were helpful: support and reinforce unusual ideas and responses; use failure as a positive to help realize new strategies; and allow students to have choices, be part of the decision-making, and have a part in control of their learning experience.

Though Fraser's ideas on "playdancing" and creative process are geared towards children, I found this information valuable in developing a curriculum for the study. What she suggests for fostering creativity in children can definitely apply to adolescents and adults in the classroom too, especially in dance. In dance, students at all levels of experience need "play-work" to develop an understanding through their own bodies in movement. Fraser identifies three phases in the creative process of "play-work": 1) Idea Awareness – recognize an idea or problem, 2) Idea Formation – define idea and possible explorations, 3) Idea Reflection – evaluate the idea.

Susan W. Stinson (1997), in the article, "A Question of Fun: Adolescent Engagement in Dance Education," shares her thoughts on the importance of teachers helping students develop the tools to be engaged and motivated in dance. Stinson, who teaches in higher education and was selected Dance Movement Specialist by the National Endowment for the Arts Artist in Schools Program, believes dance can be more than "fun" and can be a part of a valuable experience in a student's life. Stinson examines engagement in dance, reporting from the perspective of the students themselves, to understand what draws them into dance. She selected three middle schools in the southeast region of the United States to observe how students were participating in dance classes. At the end of each term she organized interviews with the students in the classes both individually and in small groups. She analyzed the interviews and collected extensive field notes and documents such as exams and handouts.

Stinson found that the word "fun" was frequently used by the students in the interviews so she sought to analyze the meaning of fun. There were a variety of instances that are described by the students as "fun" including social interaction with friends,

opportunities to create their own dances, participating in a physical activity, and learning how to dance. To further understand why students are and are not engaged, Stinson focused on students who not only found dance to be “fun,” but also meaningful in their lives. From interviews and observation in classes, Stinson found that students who were engaged expressed these values in dance: stress release, focus and concentration, self-expression, self-esteem, and freedom. These values also influenced the development of the study’s design. Stinson concludes that teachers need to share their enthusiasm for dance. If teachers want students to go beyond pleasure to enjoyment, they need to challenge them to increase their skills and knowledge while giving them the tools to get there. There is value in students finding enjoyment in dance. Enjoyment in dance will help students find intrinsic rewards in dance, as opposed to extrinsic, and to value experiences in dance that are challenging, engaging and meaningful to them.

Stinson believes that “as an attitude, play involves choice (we play because we want to), freedom (the player maintains control), intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards, and heightened focus or concentration” (62). I believe this play attitude is perhaps not just for the students, but also for teachers. As mediators of the classroom, teachers should also define expectations for the dancers and apply appropriate language to set the right environment for play. In my study, students had many opportunities to delve into the attitude of play and explore their choices and freedom to be responsible for their own learning experience.

Another advocate for dance in the school curriculum, Gunilla Lindqvist (2001) examines the relationship between dance and play and the possibilities for dance to be meaningful to children. In “The Relationship Between Play and Dance,” Lindqvist says

play creates new meaning for children, and imagination is carried out in action through a creative process in which emotion colors the action. Lindqvist's study used a qualitative research design involving five towns in Sweden: Pitea, Lulea, Karlstad, Gothenburg, and Athus. A chosen group of children (6-8 years old) from each town was observed once a week in a 40 minute dance lesson. Lindqvist conducted interviews with the children and analyzed lessons through observation and videotapes. She focused on the content of the lessons and how the teachers instructed the children, and she analyzed the lessons in relation to two principles in a dance class that she had identified prior to the study in her thesis research. The first principle is comprised of improvisation, expression, creativity, and working with themes. The second principle is comprised of imitation, teacher as a model, and inspiration by language and imagery.

In the results, Lindqvist found that most of the lessons were following the first principle. Children were enthusiastic in studying dance through play and developing characters, roles or themes. She found play, as an approach to creativity, creates meaning for individuals, as well as emphasizes the relationship between dance and creativity. Again, the research focuses on young children. However, the findings are valuable for this study because of the specific attention to the link between dance and play, as well as how creative process in dance learning is the key element in development for children and even adults in dance. In evaluating the study and its significance, bridging the gap between dance and play is the key in validating play in dance in higher education.

Stephen Nachmanovitch (1990), a violinist, composer, and teacher who studied psychology and literature, has developed many multi-media works with various art forms including dance. In his book *Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art*, Nachmanovitch

discusses the role of play in art and creativity. He advances the idea that play is within the core of creativity and improvisation and says, “Without play, learning and evolution are impossible. Play is the taproot from which original art springs; it is the raw stuff that the artist channels and organizes with all his learning and technique. [...] Creative work is play; it is free speculation using the materials of one’s chosen form. The creative mind plays with the objects it loves” (42).

Nachmanovitch suggests that technique in an art form emerges from play. He believes that technique is practiced, explored, and expanded through play; technique tests the limits of play. He says play is not what we do, but how we do it; it is an attitude, spirit and way of doing that allows for freedom to explore. Similar to Erikson, he believes play is an act of freeing ourselves from restrictions and expanding our field of action. Play enables us to be more flexible and readily adaptable to change. Nachmanovitch also finds differences between games and play; game is a defined activity with rules and play is the being and doing for its own pure joy. There is no “why” in play, it is self-existent, “coming from a place of joy, self-discovery, and inner knowing. Play, intrinsically rewarding, doesn’t cost anything; as soon as you put a price on it, it becomes, to some extent, not play” (45-6). Nachmanovitch, who speaks of art as a whole, provides an understanding of what ‘play’ means in any art form. According to his ideas, in dance our instruments are our bodies. I believe the idea of play can be internalized. Play is creative work, and our creative work emerges from our own bodies. For the participants in the study, the play was a starting place for their understanding of and delving into technique.

In *Creativity Across Domains: Faces of the Muse*, John I. Morris (2005) delves into the development of creative research in dance, and how people experience the

choices that artists make in their work through creative process. Morris believes that in order for creativity to exist, there are overarching factors that must be present:

attentiveness, engagement, intent, and the materials. Attentiveness involves paying attention on different levels, from one's sensory information to the characteristics of materials. Engagement includes motivation, interest, and connection that lead to true discovery and experience. Intent is to initiate, carry through, and conclude something, which is the process. Materials allow the creative process to be active; in dance, movement is the material.

Morris then focuses on three distinct areas of choice-making in dance: *movement/dance performance, dance improvisation, and dance making.* Morris argues that the creativity of performing dance is rooted in movement itself, and creative performers are "those who maintain heightened awareness of and sensitivity to the creativity of the human body at rest and in motion, as well as the creativity of the interface of the body/mind" (89). Creative dancers experience their own movement through attentiveness, engagement and intent to perform movement with awareness of a world larger than one's movement. Morris discusses two general purposes of dance improvisation: (1) it is a tool for dance-making to expand movement skills through exploration and (2) it is a tool to engage in as its own experience and performance. He finds that creativity in dance improvisation is about making appropriate, meaningful and internally felt choices, as well as maintaining connections in body and mind. For Morris, dance-makers focus on what intrigues, motivates, or inspires them to create. The creative process will vary greatly for each creator and each work.

Again, the four overarching factors flow together and guide the dance-maker in the choreographic process. Not only has this article led me to other great sources cited in the text, Morris clearly states the role of creativity in specific areas of dance. I find the four overarching factors to be very important in understanding the creative process in dance. Merging Fraser and Morris' ideas helped establish in this study an optimal environment for students to work creatively and be self-motivated to learn. I have incorporated the overarching factors in the curriculum so that the students are asked to engage in a creative process while sequencing movement.

Creativity and Self-Expression

In an unpublished paper presented at the National Dance Association Assembly, Margaret H'Doubler (1974), a dance educator, argued that dance is an essential tool in education. H'Doubler suggests that teachers must prepare the young to live creative and productive lives in the society they live in and may wish to change. She questions the nature of our endowment for existence and life. Since art is a human activity, teachers need to understand the importance of individual desires and perspectives that exist as guidance in our creative endeavors. Teachers must recognize an individual's awareness of "being" and approach instruction with a belief that students are endowed with integrated personalities, are sensitive and responsive. They are capable of evaluating their own movement experiences with intelligence and a unique aesthetic. She suggests art is a human necessity through which individuals can express and communicate values and meanings found in everyday living experiences.

H'Doubler suggests that creative activities combine knowledge and with what an individual experiences at that moment, and they can therefore reveal a personal relationship to the art. These activities allow students to establish an identity with their own actions and to heighten self-awareness. In addition to the knowledge of their own bodies and sensitivities, students will learn to evaluate for themselves the meanings and values they discover in order to initiate appropriate movement responses. As Stinson also points out (See Review of Literature, pg. 14), H'Doubler reminds teachers that students bring a wealth of natural endowment to movement investigation, so they are simply fostering students' self-expression and creativity. H'Doubler emphasizes the importance of discovering 'self,' empowering the students, and giving them the responsibility to be creative. All of H'Doubler's ideas on self-awareness and giving the students the power and responsibility to discover the values of movement helped guide my developing pedagogy as I approached this study.

In the article "Creativity, Self-Expression, and Dance," Peter J. Arnold (1986) a contributor to physical education and dance, refers to four conditions that characterize creativity: novelty, relevance, conflict, and valuation. The novelty condition suggests that creativity is essentially related to something that is new or different, an original idea. An idea or an act then must also be relevant to a given situation or field of study in order to be creative. In the third condition, conflict, Arnold implies that there must be a process of thinking beyond typical boundaries. The last suggested condition of creativity requires that what is produced or achieved should be valued in some way.

Arnold suggests that within creativity there is a logical priority on "product" rather than "process." He argues that certain people are recognized in their specific field

as “creative” because of the achievements they have produced for the public. Arnold asserts that judgments of creativity are based on what has been physically presented, not the individual’s private process. He also finds that we need to be clear about what a creative product is before any references are made about creative process. I disagree. I believe a creative process can be investigated without a fixed end product in mind. In order to foster creativity, the process should have priority over product.

Arnold says creativity in the education stems from a student-centered view, which maintains that creativity is a positive process to help promote individual freedom and autonomy. He finds there is also more freedom and demand for creativity when we recognize that dance is an art form and an aesthetic activity. Discussing the relationship of self-expression and creativity, Arnold suggests that self-expression in an educational sense involves both freedom and discipline. He says, “There is a good deal to learn about the conventions and rules of a practice before one can reasonably be expected to exercise choice within it. Freedom of choice can arise only from a known background of possibility” (54). Arnold’s ideas in this article help me understand the connection between creativity and self-expression in dance education, and they have influenced the design of the activities integrated in the study’s curriculum.

Dance and Curriculum Development

Barbara Mettler (1960), the author of *Materials of Dance as a Creative Art Activity*, is a dance teacher and choreographer specializing in improvisation and creative dance. In her 60-year career she studied and worked with other artists and educators including Margaret H’Doubler and Mary Wigman. Her book, *Materials of Dance*, and

her ideas of improvisation have become standards in dance education. Mettler clearly shows the development of the principles of improvisation and shares her knowledge and enthusiasm for exploring creative problems. She encourages teachers to create a lesson plan that can be adapted to any student regardless of gender, age, body structure, or temperament.

Mettler offers material in her book that is a progression of creative problems which build from basic dance experiences to mature artistic expression. However, she implies that the progression should not be a linear path and says, “a study of dance as a creative art activity represents total personality growth rather than an accumulation of knowledge or technique, the student’s path of progress is more a spiral than a straight line” (11). Mettler believes that in order for a student to truthfully investigate movement and develop their creativity, they must continually circle around the basic elements. Teachers are encouraged to create a curriculum that is a spiraling progression, which has the potential to always come back and make reference to material already explored.

Mettler’s ideas and guided materials were helpful in developing a gradual progression of basic concepts for my study (See Figure 1). A spiraling progression can allow for alternate paths in the course to revisit previous lessons. I designed my course based on Mettler’s exploration of movement and lessons that are accessible to all participants at any range of experience in dance. The study’s specific curriculum helps participants understand basic elements of movement, and also investigate a new way to work in dance.

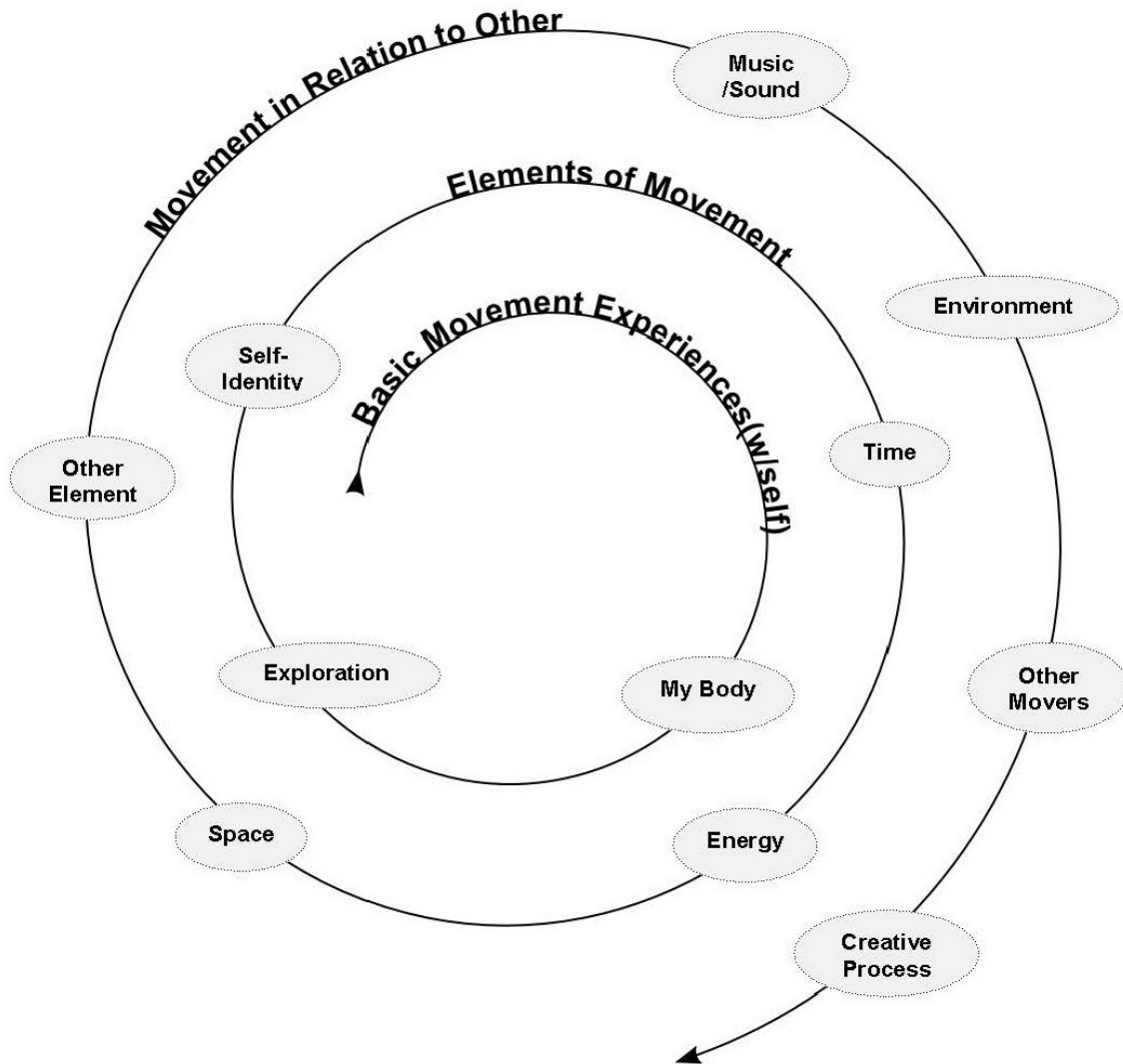


Figure 1. Circular-Progressive Model. Shows the progression of the play and dance course curriculum in a circular path, which allows opportunities for alternate paths to revisit previous lessons.

Authors of the article “Alignment of Developments in Higher Education,” John Cowan, Judith George, and Andreia Pinheiro-Torres (2004), have come together to suggest a model for change in university curricula which focuses on student-centered experiences. Working as professors and researchers at universities in the UK and

Portugal, the authors believe higher education institutions face important challenges in curriculum development. In their article they suggest:

Curriculum Development is most likely to succeed if those who wrestle with its demands are suitably (and recently) equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills. These will ground any such development in the relevant pedagogy and existing best practice, and enable the staff concerned to build upon that foundation creatively and effectively within their own context (441).

The authors believe that teachers should be concerned with their knowledge of material and follow a model of curriculum development that focuses on the student and learning, rather than on the subject matter and teaching.

The authors, resembling Mettler's ideas, also suggest that curriculum development should follow a more circular path instead of a chronological linear path. Drawn from John Cowan and Alan Harding's (1986) previous research on curriculum development, the authors advocate for a model where the aims are central, and the entire process of curriculum preparation and delivery is influenced by the aims. Then the assessment of the aims and the students is the starting point for planning the curriculum, which leads to the consideration of how the learning and teaching will occur. The learning and teaching activities are then evaluated through assembly and analysis of the data of what was learned and experienced. This leads to making judgments of the curriculum and decisions for change. The grey space surrounding the model represents the world outside the context of the curriculum development, which have inputs to transform and be a part of the process. I was encouraged by Cowan, George, and Pinheiro-Torres' discussion in the article to develop a curriculum that is logical and clearly follows the aims of the study, which is to integrate play in dance and for students to re-discover their 'selves' through movement.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In order to research the practical ways in which to integrate play into dance in higher education and to develop a specific term-length course, I organized a series of workshops for a pilot study. The development of lesson plans and syllabus for the pilot study and its evaluation informed the lesson plans and syllabus for the final study.

The Pilot Study

The pilot was conducted for two hours on three Saturdays during spring term of 2012 at the University of Oregon, Department of Dance. Students who were enrolled in dance technique classes during the previous term were recruited. Though there were several students who expressed interest, I ultimately had six dancers who participated each week. The students were given a syllabus (See Appendix C) that detailed the purpose of the study and goals. They were also asked to fill out an Introductory Questionnaire (See Appendix A) to be submitted before the start of the workshops.

The two hour workshops were intended to allow each student to experience movement in a unique learning environment that I designed to integrate play into dance. We played with the following themes: Basic Movement Experiences, Elements of Movement, and Movement in Relation to Other(s). I organized each week with specific objectives and activities based on each of the themes (See Appendix B). At the end of each workshop the students and I also engaged in discussion and journaling. In their journaling, I proposed questions relevant to each week's activities (See Appendix D).

The preparation and evaluation of the lesson plans in the pilot study allowed me to look more closely at what specific exercises were best engaging the students in play.

The following thoughts were brought to my attention during the pilot study and informed the development of the study: use of language, delivery of activities and objectives, use of time, journaling questions, and my role as facilitator. The pilot study was an opportunity to “test drive” the ideas and exercises I had considered for the final study. It informed the structure and progression of the study’s lesson plans. There were specific exercises that needed more clarity in the idea and in how to introduce the exercises. It did not change the study’s lesson plans, but it confirmed certain ideas and informed the progression.

The Study

The study was conducted over the course of a term at the University of Oregon, Department of Dance. It was scheduled as a standard DANC level course and met for 50 minutes, twice a week for 10 weeks. The entry level course, scheduled in Fall 2012, was titled “Play and Dance” and was open for registration to all UO students for one credit with a P/NP grading option. In accordance with university protocol, the department designated this experimental class as a DANC 199 course. All levels were welcome however, students registering for the course must have completed a minimum of one term in dance technique.

The lesson plans I developed followed a pre-determined course outline (see Appendix F) to integrate play and foster creativity through movement in dance. Each week there were goals focusing on dancers as individuals and their relationships to the elements around them. Mainly through structured improvisations and individual explorations, participants investigated movement through self-awareness, expression,

relationships, dynamics, and movement quality. Following the goals of each week, I guided students through a class that was designed for them and allowed them to experience movement by means of play. I designed an environment for the students to explore freedom and engage in individual investigations of movement.

As the researcher and instructor, I had an inside perspective and experienced with the participants their journey throughout the course. As a major part of the study, the participants were engaged in each step including taking the time at the beginning of each class to briefly discuss the day's objectives. Participants were also asked to provide a notebook for journaling their experiences. I collected and have access to the students' journal entries in which they evaluated and reflected on course activities. At the end of each lesson, participants were encouraged to engage in free-writing where they reflected on the objectives of the day in their notebooks. There were also required journaling which were prompted by questions or thoughts I assigned for some lessons (see Appendix H). The participants' reflections on their experiences were a part of examining how the course progressed for the dancers in the evaluation of the course design.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In order to evaluate the study itself, I will assess the process leading up to the study and its results. After many hours of collecting resources and reading supportive literature, the idea of a pilot study emerged which then led to developing a series of lesson plans for the study. Within the study, play is defined and integrated to help teachers and students re-discover play through movement. The purpose of this study is to offer guidance to teachers, dancers, and other researchers to develop a practice of investigating play in dance and experiencing movement through creativity and self-expression.

The Pilot Study

The two hour workshops held for three Saturdays were a success in that I was able to find more clarity in my purpose and significance for the study. There were six participants in total: two Dance majors, one Dance minor, and three non-dance majors. Four of the participants had more than 10 years of experience in dance, one participant had 1-3 years experience in dance, and another participant had less than one year of experience in dance (See Appendix E). From the students' responses to the Introductory Questionnaire, I found that the word "fun" was closely associated with most of their experiences of play in dance and in their definitions of play. Participant A defined play as "doing something that person would consider fun," and Participant D said, "I associate play with trying out new ways of doing things, doing an activity over time out of fun and own interest in the activity itself, and being curious about it." In accordance with

Stinson's research (See Review of Literature, pg. 12), I wondered about the students' association with the concept of "work" and sought to determine how we can truly integrate the two, play and work, in dance. However, I was also pleasantly surprised to read that all of them used a combination of the following words or similar words in their definition for play: imagination, exploration, curiosity, engagement, and freedom.

With only six dancers in a two hour class, immediately I was able to allocate more time for in-depth experiences with each activity and with each student in ways that would not have been possible with a larger group. Overall, I found that the students were open-minded and willing to explore elements that may have been unfamiliar to them.

Introducing them slowly to the way I was to work for the rest of the workshop was helpful for the students to ease into some of the explorations that involved them to work deep into their subconscious and bodily functions, such as how their spine moved. I designed the first exercise so there was minimal body movement and the participants could just listen to my voice describing the images I provided for each body part. Since there was a wide range of experiences among the participants, I was sensitive to those who may not have studied anatomy or have access to imagery specific to dance. Though the workshop explored movement in dance technique, I encouraged each participant to engage in the movement as a person and not necessarily as a dancer. I enjoyed observing the participants' curiosity for their own movement in many of the exercises. For instance, in an improvisation of initiating movement from a specific body part (i.e., shoulders, knees, spine), participants were at first hesitant and tended to force their bodies in to creating shapes and movement from dance vocabulary. When reminded to simply initiate their suspensions and falls from the movement of the body part, the participants started to

find new ways to engage and move how their 'selves' wanted. Asked to reflect on their experiences and new thoughts about their body and self-identity, Participant B said, "I need to remember my body is unique to me." Participant E also shared in a group discussion that she had learned more about her body and regained a better awareness of how her body moved and its relationship to the elements.

Students responded particularly well to the freedom to explore their own movement qualities and natural tendencies. Given many opportunities to play, students were excited and found joy in exploring different qualities in their individual movements. For example, I designed an exercise where the participants had a "break" to venture outdoors and go anywhere they pleased. When the participants returned to the studio, they wrote down thoughts on what they experienced outside and improvised movement based on those ideas. The participants experienced joy in the freedom to explore outdoors and reflect on their pleasures through movement. I found that allowing time for students to experience continuous movement and execution of the movement on their own enhanced their engagement in the material and they seemed more eager to improve.

Though students appreciated and took advantage of the freedom to play in movement, I also realized the need to set objectives for the students and myself to follow each week. As Erikson mentions (See Review of Literature, pg. 6), the opposite of play would be to have someone with authority to interrupt and ask for something different hoping for an emphasis on an accomplishment. Since it would be contrary to my definition of play, I did not want to set any restrictions or expectations for an end goal, however I needed to communicate clearly to them their options in the activities. For instance, in one activity they were asked to recall a movement or concept from a

technique class that they struggle with or want to improve on (i.e., turn, balance, fall). At first I felt that repeating the movement in different qualities like time and energy would be an in-depth investigation of the movement. However, I saw the participants being uncomfortable with the changes and not delving into the essence of the movement in their bodies. To change their approach, I facilitated a “self” experience where they were asked to close their eyes and visualize themselves doing the movement the way they imagine to be successful. With this in mind, the participants improvised with other movements that have similar qualities and concepts as their original movement. At the end of the activity, they went back to the original movement they had struggled with, and all agreed they felt a sense of release in their selves and were confident in their success.

Though the pilot was helpful for me in clarifying the curriculum and my intentions, the participants may have benefited more from the experience if the workshops were shorter and more frequent than once a week. I did sense fatigue and loss of engagement towards the end of each workshop.

The pilot’s plan of working on “self” to working with “other” was designed as a progression based on Mettler’s ideas on curriculum development (Ch.2, pg. 20), which also informed the design of the study’s curriculum. Building from basic movement elements, the progression was circular in path where participants always went back to the ideas of “self” in order to explore the relationships with “other.” The first week was definitely more difficult for the students to delve right into their own bodies and identities in movement. Two hours was an overwhelming amount of time to be working so deeply in “self.” Taking breaks was helpful as well as allowing the students to communicate their needs or other concerns. During the first session, I had planned for the participants

to take a break by going outside for 10 minutes to experience freedom in a space outside of the studio. When given this activity, they were insistent on having 15 minutes instead of 10 minutes to explore.

The following summary points are based on my review of the journal entries from the participants, my observations of the activities throughout the sessions, and evaluation of the pilot lesson plans.

- 1) Basic movement elements were explored through the idea of play.
- 2) Students were encouraged to value dance as self-expression through movement exploration and play.

Participant A: “Free play can express one’s creativity. There is no right or wrong way to do things so creativity can shine.”

- 3) A student-centered learning environment was essential. Students felt motivated to learn and became responsible for their own learning experiences.
- 4) Through play, students developed a better understanding and appreciation for their individual movement qualities and natural tendencies.

Participant D: “It was useful to see others’ interpretation of [my] own movement. Discovering [my] own tendencies through the set movement phrase was also very revealing and for me related to finding more of myself in other exercises.”

Moving forward in designing the lesson plans for the study, these points helped me to stay in line with the purpose of integrating play in dance and creating an environment and curriculum where adults can play and re-experience their ‘selves’ through movement.

Recruitment

In order to get the word out about the course and the study in the fall, recruitment was thorough. Reminders about the course and its details were emailed to most of my

former students, as well as to all members of Dance Oregon, a student organized group on campus that supports students interested in dance. Fliers were posted and announcements were made in other DANC courses in the spring. I wish there had been more time at the beginning of fall term to continue recruiting students to register for the course. With having an entire summer off before the start of the study, it was difficult to keep students interested enough to register for a new elective course with a clearly unusual title, “Play and Dance.” In the initial list of those who were interested in participating in the pilot study, there was an overwhelming amount of enthusiasm to participate and over 25 students submitted their names and email address.

There may have been other reasons for low enrollment like schedule overlap in courses required for majors and minors. However, I believe there might have been some hesitation in registering for a class called “Play and Dance.” Students pay a lot of money for their education at the university, and I sense that there are doubts about the efficiency of “play” in a higher education environment. As Wenner mentions in her article (Ch.2, pg. 10), adults are more concerned with development and success and tend to dismiss play. Students are required to take a number of courses in order to complete their degree and leave with an abundance of knowledge and experience. However, the experience of play as an adult has brought attention to values of dance such as self-expression, confidence, focus and concentration, and freedom.

Study Participants

The play group consisted of three students from the University of Oregon, none of whom were a part of the group in the pilot study. Participant A is a sophomore Dance

major with 4-6 years of dance experience. Participant B is a senior Anthropology major and Dance minor with over 10 years of dance experience. And Participant C is a sophomore Dance major with 7-10 years of dance experience. All were present every class lesson and participated in all activities, journaling, and group discussions. My hope was to work with a larger group of participants, however the small group's range of experience and individual views allowed the class to have intimate moments and conversations throughout the course. Some activities were difficult with only three movers, but others were unique and exceptional to this play group.

Lesson Plans

As I started to develop my lesson plans for the "Play and Dance" class in the fall, I had no idea how many students I would have as participants for the study. Not only did I not know the size of the class, but also who these participants would be. Hoping for the best, I anticipated a class of about 15 dancers with a mix of different experiences. Based on the three major themes (Basic Movement Experiences, Elements of Movement, Movement in Relation to Other), I built a plan for each week with simple objectives and a list of activities (See Appendix F). Though the class was an intimate play group of three dancers, having a plan to follow was helpful. The objectives planned for each week were still necessary to stay on track and to be clear on what themes were being explored. There were many adjustments I had to make along the way, but the structure of the course was unchanged. I quickly learned to think on my feet and adjust activities as needed. For example, partnering activities were modified to work in trios or were kept as duets with rotating partners. I often participated in the activities with the dancers, allowing each

participant many opportunities to observe the activities from the outside as well as observe their peers.

The Study: Play and Dance

Over the first few weeks of classes, participants seemed to be finding a new view on their own movements and got accustomed to a different environment in dance.

Reflecting on the first week of classes, Participant C says:

New, interesting. I feel like I'm trying to be 'different' from other movement experiences but I want to let go of that. My thoughts aren't feeling 'finished' I'm more just going in the moment but that's still valid – hey, that's play! I'm wanting to feel comfortable with the decisions I'm making and let go of the criticism and judgment while still being observant and noticing.

All participants seemed shy at first. They were hesitant and unsure of their abilities to delve into the exercises that asked them to explore their bodies. For example, I guided them in an exercise where they brought attention to each specific body part, and they investigated how it moves and is a part of their entire selves. The first time, I saw tension in the participants' bodies where their shoulders or hip joints showed less mobility and "grounded-ness" to the floor. Also unsure of their focus and movement, the participants often peeked over to their peers to see if they were "doing it right." It took about two weeks of classes for the participants to start showing more freedom in their movement. Following Huizinga's idea of repetition (See Review of Literature, pg. 9), I designed the course to allow time to revisit exercises or similar ideas. The repetition of the practice and repetitive engagement in the activity gave the participants more clarity in their intention and confidence to play. Mettler, as well as Cowan, George, and Pinheiro-Torres (See Review of Literature, pg. 19-22) value repetition as they discuss how to develop a

curriculum that progresses in a circular path rather than a linear path. Building further from the Circular-Progressive Model (See Figure 1) shown earlier, I created a more comprehensive model for developing a curriculum for a course like “Play and Dance” (See Figure 2). The study’s course was designed so that ideas explored in previous lessons were revisited. This helped the participants experience and understand objectives in multiple ways.

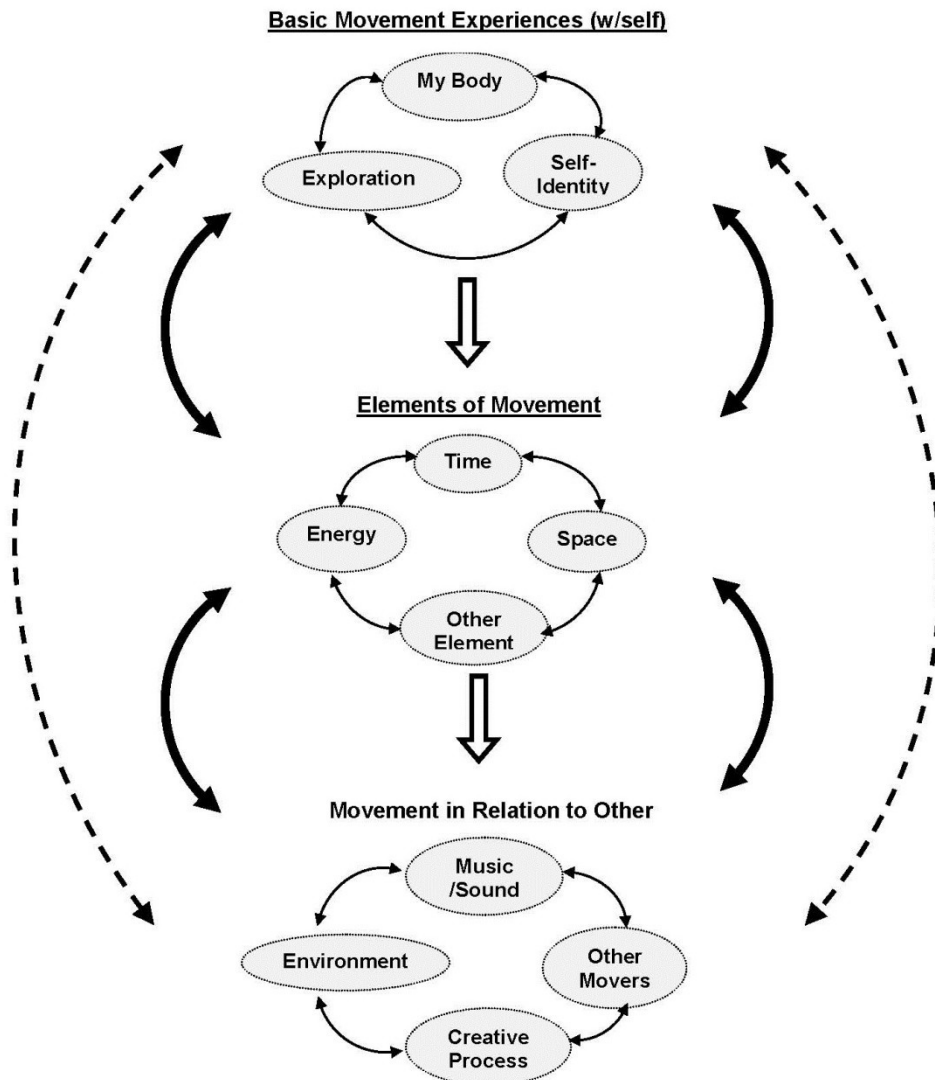


Figure 2. All-Inclusive Play Model. Shows the progression of the three major themes, and within each theme, the concepts are comprehensive. All concepts can be revisited at any time and can be integrated from either side.

I also experimented with the language I was using to guide participants in many of the activities, and participants agreed that it was most helpful when I utilized imagery. For instance, in an exercise where they played with the movement of their bones and joints I asked for them to imagine fine sand slowly filling up their skulls, pelvis or ankle joints. Considering Lindqvist's second principle of dance (See Review of Literature, pg. 14), I found that using imagery as a teaching tool for many of the activities helped participants to approach movement and its play as a person. There was a slight struggle with time management because of the class size, and naturally activities were not taking as long as I had anticipated for a larger group. Still, this allowed us to take time in class to discuss and for the students to share their thoughts.

Throughout the course, I also played with how to facilitate the activities: more freedom or more guidance. There were times when I needed to step in and offer more feedback and facilitate their exploration further. For example, the participants struggled a bit in a series of exercises where they were invited to play with the quality and dynamics of movement based on the music. It was brought to my attention by an observer that the exercise could be pushed further so that the participants are really finding play in moving with the rhythms and characteristics in the music. In order for the participants to see their lack of change in dynamics in each type of sound, I video-recorded the exercise for them to view, reflect, and then they played with the exercise again. They all saw what I observed and took their investigation deeper the second time around. Other times, as Morris describes dance improvisation (Ch.2, pg. 16), I wanted the group to notice and engage in the movement experience itself, as well as finding creativity in the movement through heightening the sensitivity to being a human. Participant C appreciated the

facilitation and wrote, “Ayumi guided us only when necessary, otherwise allowing us to find out [our] own movement discoveries within each exercise. This created an open, investigative atmosphere that made the class very enjoyable and beneficial.”

Weekly Summary and Evaluation

As mentioned earlier, the course followed a lesson plan (See Appendix F) outlined for the entire term based on three major themes: Basic Movement Experiences, Elements of Movement, and Movement in Relation to Other. Each week also had sub-themes to narrow the focus. Referring back to journal entries, class discussions, lesson plans and how it played out in each class, I will describe in depth each week’s activities and experiences. Each week will be followed by an evaluation of the design of the activities within the study (See Table 1):

- statement of positive outcomes
- weaknesses and areas in need of change
- values and recommendations

All points have helped in understanding how play can be a part of dance, as well as how play can be taught, facilitated, and encouraged in dance pedagogy.

Week One: The Body

In an activity of free movement in the body, I facilitated an exploration of isolating body parts and playing with each of the body parts’ movements. Participants were asked to lie on their backs, however there seemed to be some body parts that were difficult to access in that position (i.e., head, spine, diaphragm). We played with the same exercise the second day, but in a comfortable sitting position of their choice. In either way, laying or sitting, there were body parts that were easier or more difficult to access.

In the future, the mover may have a choice in how they would want to explore their body that particular day.

I also discovered the use of Pandora radio station, an online radio that allows you to program a genre of music to play continuously. In a short class time, it was useful to have sound playing in the background without interruptions or necessities to run back and forth to the stereo system to change the sound.

- Participants played with the use of their own bodies, and the activities increased their curiosity to explore their bodies' movements more in depth.
- Need to adapt more efficiently to class size and atmosphere.
- Active curiosity for each body's movements can engage students in play. It is essential for students to understand their body's functions in order to effectively play.

Week Two: Exploration

In the "Mirrors" activity (See Appendix F), I preferred the class to work in pairs and since there were three students, I joined in on the activity. It was a powerful exercise that allowed us to tune in to how to move our own bodies and in relation to our partners. The sustained movement as we mirrored our partners felt surreal, and there were opportunities to play with stillness and flow. Looking back, the activity could have been explored deeper by attempting it with quicker movements or taking the movement through space.

In another activity, students had a chance to explore movement derived from everyday speech (i.e., roll, twist, shake, slice). Students were encouraged to play with movement that resembled human actions as opposed to drawing from dance vocabulary.

Though at first they had struggled with staying away from dance vocabulary, this helped students understand how their bodies moved naturally through space.

- Participants experienced a part of play that included focus and concentration, as well as sensing others in the space to generate movement. The course designed for a smaller class allowed for more in-depth discussions and reflections of the week's objectives.
- A larger class size would have enhanced some activities involving partner or group work. Need to prepare a variety of investigations for each activity.
- Focus and concentration can be a part of play in dance. Try to encourage students to reflect on their experiences in the play.

Week Three: Self-Identity

In one of the activities this week, students improvised freely one at a time as the others observed to capture their “essence.” The observers then improvised based on the one student’s essence. Improvising on each other’s essence in movement allowed them to see their own individuality and embrace it. I felt as though this was a pivotal week for the class. Students were becoming more comfortable with the class structure, and each of them enjoyed the in-depth investigation of their individuality in movement. On her thoughts of the first three weeks of the class, Participant C wrote, “I’m wanting to feel comfortable with the decisions I’m making and let go of the criticism and judgment while still being observant of my natural instincts.”

- Participants experienced freedom through play and expressed their individuality in movement.

- There can be more of a sense of individually incorporated into the activities at the start of the course.
- Play is a part of movement through improvisation and freedom in self-expression.

Week Four: Time and Energy

After constructing a simple phrase with basic elements like rolling, spiraling, and jumping, the students played with each sense of time discussed earlier in the class (i.e., fast, slow, start, stop, regular, irregular). The students enjoyed the change in dynamics due to the change in time and felt they were challenging their natural tendencies in movement. Continuing to play with time, the class improvised together considering the concept of time. We experimented on contrasting the movement, as well as aligning the movement in time. This particular activity was a bit difficult with a small play group, giving the students interactions with only two other movers. Though, again, it gave them an opportunity to observe in pairs (including myself) and discuss the activity.

Structured similarly to the exploration of time, the participants played with concepts of energy (i.e., hard, soft, sudden, gradual, spiral, lengthened). The students also collaborated on making the list of qualities of energy before the activities, which heightened their curiosity of the concept and its characteristics.

- Participants engaged in play with movement as the material.
- Activities requiring interaction with others would be more beneficial in a larger group of students. Playing with a larger group would possibly engage students to be adaptable and curious to changes in elements.
- Focus on the larger concepts such as time, space, and energy allows for the course to build in a circular progression. These larger concepts can be revisited later in

the course, and can give the participants an opportunity to play in a variety of ways.

Week Five: Space

In this week's activity where they drew pathways on paper and explored movement based on the pathways, the students had to engage in a creative process in order to use space as well as challenge their spatial orientation in movement. Students played with varying movement as they traveled through space, and again engaged in play with the movement as material. However, there could have been more play in movement included in this activity because the students focused so much on the pathways that they forgot that it was still about the movement. In the second activity, students played with images and shapes within the concept of space (i.e., close, far, over, under, direction, contact, intertwined). The students took turns completing images with three people, allowing them to delve into observing their surroundings in relation to their peers and space. Dedicated to concepts of space and pathways, I believe both activities were successful based on the students' playful attitude and their curiosity to expand on each activity. I saw students being playful as they were eager to share their thoughts on each of the activities, and often encouraged each other with affirmations as they took the role of observer. A playful attitude was also seen where students were willing to try things that may seem like games or child-like, such as drawing.

- Participants interacted with their peers, the space, and the activities within the space which encouraged play and investigation of movement through others.
- The activity playing with pathways could have involved more investigation in the movement alongside the creative process.

- A playful attitude is necessary in fully engaging in play and finding pleasure in the movements itself.

Week Six: Qualities derived from other

The “Element Game” (See Appendix F) was difficult to facilitate and I struggled with the language in how to establish its objectives. The list of “things” and “descriptive words” were created by the students beforehand, however, because of my lack of clarity in the objectives for the activity the list seemed random and irrelevant. For instance, “puppy” on the “things” list was revealed to be literal and resulted in superficial movement where the participants were not finding pleasure in the movement itself. In the future, I may consider creating the two lists myself. For example, the “things” list would include: sand, leaf, whirlpool, molasses, etc. The “descriptive words” list would include: light, heavy, spiral, suspend, etc. Regardless of my notes, the students did enjoy the playfulness they engaged in the activity.

The activity playing with the variety of textures and qualities in the following objects was much more successful: a plastic bag, a knobby scarf, a silk handkerchief, an elastic band, and sheet of newspaper. The students were interested and curious about each object’s characteristic and enjoyed the time to improvise based on those characteristic. The improvisation allowed them to have a relationship with each object and establish “favorites” as well as ones they struggled with.

- Participants experienced play in dance through improvisation.
- “Element Game” needs improvement in delivery and execution. Activities involving multiple elements need to be delivered with clarity and intention for the students to be fully engaged.

- Facilitating creative improvisation activities will keep interest in investigating movement in a new way and continue to spark curiosity through play.

Week Seven: Music/Sound

As mentioned earlier in the evaluation, the music activity resulted in success after a second attempt on my part as a facilitator and resulted students to play more in-depth with their movement quality alongside the music's unique characteristics. In the other activity, they played with moving to "music" created by themselves or objects in the room. The students all thought outside of the box to produce a sound score for their peers to improvise movement. We switched roles and also played with how the mover interacted with the sound. For instance, in the first round the mover improvised to the sound and in the second round the mover was the inspiration for the students creating the sound.

- Participants experienced freedom in moving to their bodily impulses.
- Need to recognize when more guidance is required for the students to delve into play and investigation of concepts and movements.
- Curiosity and play can be heightened by playing with relationships to the external and pushing the boundaries of each individual's natural tendencies.

Week Eight: Environment

The class played with movement in a changed environment within the studio space. In one activity, we pulled together a variety of "seating" options (i.e., wood chair, metal folding chair, cube, piano bench) and improvised movement in relation to the environment the seating provided. The students expressed their interest in the seating's weight, surface area, stability, and flexibility among others, and how it informed their

movement choices. Another activity incorporated other sets such as a table, ballet barre, a backpack, and dry mop that created an environment for the class to play through movement. The objective of the activity to move *with* the environment was not as clearly facilitated, which resulted in the students using the objects as props instead of considering their presence as part of the environment.

Later in the week, the class had the opportunity to venture outside of the studio space and play with movement in untraditional dance spaces. In one particular site, the class explored movement in a long, narrow walkway outside surrounded by wood railings and benches. Within the play of movement in the new environment, I encouraged the students to rediscover some of the concepts from earlier in the course (i.e., time, energy, space). The students enjoyed being submerged into a new space as well as playing with the spontaneous interactions that develop from others in the environment. In discussion, the group agreed on the idea that the new environment heightened their sense of moving on their instincts and spontaneity.

- Participants experienced free play in creating relationships with their environments and expressed their individuality through movement. Play and curiosity in movement was at its peak when the participants were taken outside of the traditional studio space.
- The intention of relationships with the objects and environments need to be clearly addressed for students to fully engage in play.
- Play is freedom in exploring relationships.

Week Nine: Other movers

This week the class focused on movement in relation to other movers incorporating many of the concepts explored previously in the course. We worked in pairs (including myself) and played with negative/positive space with each other as well as rediscovered the “Mirrors” activity from the beginning of the term. There were new ideas inserted with the experience in the activity, such as playing with the dynamics of time. When we first explored the “Mirrors” activity the movement was mostly still or sustained, whereas this time around we challenged ourselves with more sudden and large movements. It was clearly more difficult to maintain the mirroring with a change in quality, however the students continued to play and they shared that there was a sense of freedom in this approach.

The “Laying, Sitting, Standing” (See Appendix F) activity heightened the students’ awareness and non-verbal communication with the other movers. At first, they were tentative and moved with caution, not to “mess up” the structure of the activity. However, once we discussed the idea of continuous movement and adaptability, the activity became more enjoyable and the students found a playful sense of movement.

- As more complex ideas are introduced, participants played with integrating concepts from previous lessons, which allowed participants to deepen their curiosity for each concept.
- Develop activities that can be expanded or modified efficiently to accommodate all types of play-groups.
- Play is a willingness to integrate a variety of ideas. Develop a curriculum with play that follows a circular progression.

Week Ten: Creative Process

During the final week of the course, the class referred back to the activities and concepts explored throughout the course and played with movement in a creative process. The students worked together to create a sequence of movements. It was a playful experience for them to discuss and realize some of the concepts among themselves. Picking out activities and concepts the students enjoyed, they constructed a sequence of movements and structured improvisation. Throughout the week, they organized the arrangement and played with how the movement and experience flowed. If we could do it again, I think they would benefit from having more than two class sessions to play in this way, and also provide them with a video-recording device to be able to view and evaluate their own process.

- Participants experienced play through a creative process where they were encouraged to embody the many concepts of play.
- A longer session or series of sessions would have been beneficial for the students to spend more time and fully engage in the creative process.
- Play empowers students and encourages a positive and playful attitude in dance.

Table 1. Weekly Outcomes – a collection of statements resulted from the evaluation of the course lesson plans and instructor and student reflections.

Week	Positive Outcomes	Weakness/ Need of change	Values
1	Students played with the use of their own body parts. Activities increased their curiosity to explore their bodies' movements.	Need to adapt more efficiently to class size and atmosphere.	Active curiosity of each body's movement can engage students in play. It is essential for students to understand their body's functions in order to effectively play.
2	Students experienced focus and concentration in play. Course designed for smaller class allowed for in-depth reflections.	A larger class size would have enhanced group explorations. Prepare a variety of investigations for any modifications.	Focus and concentration can be a part of play in dance. Try to encourage students to reflect on their experiences in play.
3	Students experienced freedom through play and expressed their individuality in movement.	More sensitivity to individuality in the activities at the start of the course.	Play is a part of movement through improvisation and freedom in self-expression
4	Students engaged in play with movement as the material in dance.	Activities requiring interaction with others would be beneficial in a larger group, in order to engage students to be adaptable and curious to the changing elements.	Focus on the larger concepts - time, space, and energy - allow for circular progression. Concepts can be revisited and can give an opportunity for play in a variety of ways.
5	Students interacted with their peers, the space, and the activities, which encouraged play of movement with others.	An activity playing with pathways could have involved more investigation of the movement with the creative process.	A playful attitude is necessary in fully engaging in play and finding pleasure in the movements itself.
6	Students experienced play in dance through improvisation.	Activities involving multiple elements need to be delivered with clarity and intention for students to fully engage.	Facilitating creative improvisation activities will keep interest in investigating movement in new ways and continue to spark curiosity through play.
7	Students experienced freedom in moving to their bodily impulse.	Need to recognize when more guidance is required for the students to dive deeper in the play.	Playing with relationships to the external and pushing the boundaries of each individual's natural tendencies can heighten curiosity and play.
8	Students experienced free play in creating relationships with their environments and expressed their individuality through movement. Play and curiosity was at its peak when explorations were taken outside of the traditional studio space.	Intention of the relationships being created with the objects and environments need to be clearly discussed.	Play is freedom in exploring relationships.
9	As more complex ideas are introduced, students played with integrating concepts from previous lessons - allowing deeper curiosity for each concept.	Develop activities that can be expanded or modified efficiently to accommodate all types of play-groups.	Play is a willingness to integrate a variety of ideas. Develop a curriculum with play that follows a circular progression.
10	Students experienced play through a creative process where they were encouraged to embody the many concepts of play.	Longer sessions or a series of sessions would have been beneficial for students to fully engage in the creative process.	Play empowers students and encourages a positive and playful attitude in dance.

Fundamentals of Play

Throughout the course, I questioned the difference between play in dance and improvisation in dance. I believe improvisation can be a significant component in play. Improvisation allows students to delve into play and is a tool for teachers to facilitate play. Participant B wrote, “This class is much more focused with an intent to experience the play inside the basic methods of improvisation [...] Play is an exploration in dance and I think it’s important for finding movements in ourselves and in technique.” Improvisation is essentially a starting point for play, especially if it is being investigated for the first time. Nachmanovitch who speaks of play in the arts, also believes that improvisation is a part of play explored with the practice and expansion of technique in an art form (Ch.2, pg.14-15). As we engage in movement improvisations, we engage ourselves in play, physically and intellectually.

Through the development of the course and evaluation of the design, I have a better understanding of the role of play in dance, as well as how play can be taught, facilitated, and encouraged in dance pedagogy. Each week’s objectives allowed the class to approach movement through play in a different way. The class worked with individual movement, partnering, space, time, energy, music, environment, texture, and others. Through the evaluation of the design and outcomes of the course, I have identified the following emergent themes as fundamentals of play in dance:

1) Freedom to act on our impulses.

Participant A: “For me, the word ‘play’ means not being embarrassed about being free spirited. Play in dance is letting go of fear (fear of failure, fear of imperfection) and getting down to the bare-bones reason why we dance. To be free.”

2) *Active curiosity.*

Participant C: “Play in dance is about exploration, curiosity, mindfulness, fun, improvisation, questions – taking a new lens on how to think about movement.”

3) *Playful attitude and spirit.*

Participant B: “Play is an activity that brings happiness/joy to the soul. Imaginative, creative, ever-changing, and actively doing something.”

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the study's detailed design, course activities, and outcomes has resulted in finding the three fundamentals of play in dance. 1) *Freedom to act on our impulses*. Play is a voluntary attitude and activity where students have the freedom to make their own choices in movement and its intentions. Play initiates creative responses and fosters individuality. 2) *Active curiosity*. Play encourages students to ask questions about their movement choices and engage themselves in an in-depth investigation. Play is eagerness to discover and experience more movement. 3) *Playful attitude and spirit*. Play is a willingness to attempt new approaches, but also finding pleasure in repetition. Play encourages students to be expressive.

Considering these three fundamentals, play can be an underlying theme in dance and dance education. Regardless of the idiom or course title, play can exist. Teachers can design curricula and their philosophies with an understanding of the fundamentals of play in dance. As a voluntary act, teachers should encourage play in dance, thus the “work” in dance can develop intrinsic values for students. However, it is extremely important that not only do teachers have to create an environment and design a curriculum that fosters play, but students also need to understand the values in play. The students' active engagement in the intention of play (freedom to act on impulses, active curiosity, and playful attitude and spirit) is a large part of integrating play in dance.

As an exploration of movement itself, play in dance utilizes movement to explore and identify the relationships of movement with other elements of dance. Since play allows for students to move freely on their impulses, the investigation of movement

becomes an investigation of their individuality and self-expression. It may lead to an expansion of the student's approach to technique, performance, composition, and artistry, which through play will influence the development of the student's movement and creativity.

Significance

The study's research and evaluation of the course design and its outcomes has confirmed the values of integrating play in dance in higher education. Students as learners in a play environment can gain new experiences in movement through self-expression, freedom, pleasure, active curiosity, and confidence. The defined fundamentals of play in dance can also be valuable for teachers' development of pedagogy. Curriculum development in dance technique classes can be revisited and modified considering the underlying theme of play and improvisation as a tool. Teachers can develop environments and activities to support concepts important to the structure of the course and its objectives, and at the same time incorporate the fundamentals play.

In higher education, play can be a new and inclusive approach to performance, choreography, and practice in dance with a playful and curious attitude that allows students to experience pure enjoyment. The integration of play can bring new life to the dance community as well as offer a way for dance to be inviting for others new to the dance community. Encouraging active curiosity, individual freedom, and playful attitude can enhance the engagement and development of dance.

Further Research

As I conclude this study on play in dance in higher education, I ask myself where else play can exist for adults. Is it possible to integrate play into other academic classes like Business or Chemistry? What would that be like? What about in other arts disciplines? Could all activities in the arts be incorporated as one? How would play be integrated into dance in the professional field? Would it be different? How would play be integrated into a choreographic or creative process?

Final Thoughts

In conclusion, I believe the three fundamental of play – 1) Freedom to act on our impulses 2) Active curiosity 3) Playful attitude and spirit – are the connecting points of play and dance, and they are ways for play to be a major part of dance education. They have influenced the development of my pedagogy in integrating play into dance in higher education, as well as my overall teaching philosophy. These characteristics of play within dance will encourage students to trust their instincts and engage in a learning experience, which will show growth in the students both as dancers and people. I believe that teachers can utilize the fundamentals of play in their pedagogy regardless of the course. In play, students will embrace their own learning experiences. I have learned that play is the artistic mode of thought in dance. It is how students learn and make sense of the many critical elements in dance, and play only becomes possible and understandable when we can experience our own movement. I believe now that play is present everywhere. We just have to recognize play and integrate it as an essential part of life not to be taken for granted.

APPENDIX A

PILOT STUDY: INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ Age: _____ Sex: M F

Major and/or minor: _____

Number of years in dance technique classes (circle one):

less than a year 1-3 4-6 7-10 more than 10 years

- 1) Describe your most memorable moment in a dance technique class.

- 2) What are your other interests? What activities do you enjoy besides dance?

- 3) How would you define the word “play”? Describe in your own words.

- 4) When was the last time you engaged in “play”? Describe.

- 5) Have you ever experienced “play” in a dance technique class? Explain.

- 6) Reflect on how you learn best in a dance class (visual, kinesthetic, tactile, etc.).

- 7) Why are you drawn to participating in this project?

APPENDIX B

PILOT STUDY: LESSON PLAN

Saturday, April 14, 2012

Basic Movement Experiences (with Self)

Materials – pens and paper, industrial size paper and markers, music

- 1) The body – awareness and how the body moves
 - a. Industrial size paper and markers – “draw yourself”
 - b. Guide students to experiment freely with movements of each individual body part (head, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers, chest, naval, spine, pelvis, knees, ankles, toes)
 - c. Guide students to experiment freely with movements of a combination of body parts (elbows and knees, shoulders and pelvis, arms and legs, hands and feet, head and spine)
- 2) Explore one’s natural movements/tendencies
 - a. Partner up – turn on some music and A improvises across the floor, then B improvises across based on what they saw from A, then A creates a phrase from what they saw from B.
 - b. Give them simple phrase – have students find their own natural tendencies and exaggerate them. Make it their own.

~BREAK~

Students will have 10 minutes to step outside of the studio space and explore. They are free to go wherever they please and experience their “play” time as individuals. Once they are back to the studio, they will engage in a short journaling session about what they experienced and saw during their break.

- 3) Free movement expression
 - a. Guide students through improvisational movement expression based on journaling session. They will focus on specific things they experienced while on their break.
- 4) Exploration of movement

- a. Balance, stillness, self-expression, breath, environment/space (improvisational exploration of their “experience phrase”)
- b. Explore a specific movement that has challenged the student in a technique class. Play with its quality.

Saturday, April 21, 2012

Elements of Movement

- 1) I will start by teaching students a simple phrase with neutral elements.
 - a. Lying, sitting, walking, jumping, sliding, melting, stopping, starting, etc.
- 2) With given phrase, students will explore qualities of movement. For each quality, encourage students to experience and express with their whole body, and try different possibilities.
 - a. Energy – hard, soft, gradual, sudden, sharp, smooth, flick, melt, poke, swirl, etc.
 - b. Time – slow, fast, stop, start, regular, irregular, etc
 - c. Space – small, large, straight, curved, etc.

~BREAK~

There will be a variety of art supplies and random objects for the students to engage in a creative art exploration. They are free to play and create whatever they desire for 15 minutes.

- 3) Contrasts in time, dimensions of space, pathways and shapes
 - a. Have students draw simple designs on sheets of paper. Work together to put them together and imitate designs in the space with their bodies.
- 4) Movement qualities derived from other
 - a. Possibly working in pairs, investigate other qualities derived from weather, sky, earth, plants, animals, machines, etc.
 - b. “Element Game” - there are two categories (thing and descriptive word), students will “draw out of a hat” one from each. They will explore

whatever they drew (i.e, wiggly and airplane, stretchy and river, exploding and leaf)

- c. Box of different things with different textures – improvise based on those textures

Saturday, April 28, 2012

Movement in Relation to Other

1) Music/sound

- a. Guide students through improvisational exploration of movement in relationship to sound. I will come prepared with a variety of genres including “found sounds.”
- b. Divide the group into smaller groups and each will work together. Each person in the group will have a turn in improvising movement in relationship to “sounds” that the other members of the group will “make” with their body. (i.e, clapping, clicking tongue, tapping floor, etc).

2) Environment

- a. Materials, props, and costumes – Guide students through improvisational exploration of movement in relationship to objects. Go outside, find objects – start embodying the object. Improvise with the objects
- b. Indoor/outdoor – we will explore movement in different sites inside and outside of the studio space.

~BREAK~

Students will be free to “play” with some of the activities I will provide. All activities will be interactive and “multiplayer” activities (i.e, jump ropes, tag, red light/green light, four squares, bubbles, etc).

3) Other movers

- a. Response to others’ presence and movement – mirroring, negative space – up/down relationship, quality contrast and other improvisational explorations.
- b. Duets, trios, groups – 1,2,3 exercise

APPENDIX C

PILOT STUDY: SYLLABUS

Movement Experience

Lead by Ayumi Hori

Pilot study for curriculum development of a course that fosters creativity and integrates fundamentals of play.

Saturday, April 14, 21 & 28 (Weeks 2-4)

2:00-4:00pm

Gerlinger Annex 352

I have organized this pilot study to assist me in preparation for my M.F.A. thesis movement project, which will be conducted during Fall 2012. My research is based on my belief that experiences and skills learned in dance and play can be integrated into daily life for a better understanding of self, others and the relationships we build.

The two hour workshops are intended to allow each student to experience movement in a unique learning environment, investigating the following themes: Personal Basic Movement Experiences, Elements of Movement, and Movement in Relation to Other(s). Throughout the study, we will engage in group discussions and journaling sessions.

The goals I have identified are for:

- Students to explore basic movement elements in an environment that fosters creativity;
- Students to explore a curriculum that encourages them to play;
- Students to be encouraged through play in dance to value dance as self-expression;
- All of us to establish a student-centered learning environment, where students are motivated to learn, encouraged exploring individual expression, and becoming responsible for their own learning experiences.

Students will fill out an introductory questionnaire and submit it prior to the first session. I would prefer a hard copy in my box in the main dance office **DUE no later than Wednesday, April 11th**.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Office hours in Spring 2012: Fridays 1:00-2:00pm or by appointment.

ayumih@uoregon.edu

THANK YOU for your interest in my research! Looking forward to “playing” with all of you!

APPENDIX D

PILOT STUDY: DISCUSSION AND JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Basic Movement Experiences (with Self)

- 1) In the explorations today, were there activities that may help you in a technique class? Explain.
- 2) Did you learn anything new about your body, movement, and/or self-identity? Explain.
- 3) Any other comments – What worked, what didn't work?

Elements of Movement

- 1) What does creativity mean to you?
- 2) When do you feel most creative?
- 3) Did you play today in class? How?

Movement in Relation to Other

- 1) What element or “other” did you feel the deepest connection with? (sound, environment, objects, dancer, etc.) Why?
- 2) Any other thoughts about any of the other classes?

APPENDIX E

PILOT STUDY: DATA

Participant A:

Dance major, less than year

“It overall sounds fun to be a part of. Plus I have free time so why not ‘play’ for a little bit.”

Participant B:

Communication Disorder and Science Major/ Dance and Psychology minor, more than 10

“I am interested to see how we are going to integrate play into our regular work habits. I am hoping I will be able to incorporate play into more of the things I do so they become less taxing on my body.”

Participant C:

Family and Human Services Major, more than 10

“I’m looking for any outlet of dance since I have been deprived of endless hours in the studio.”

Participant D:

Dance major, more than 10

“I want to learn and explore new tools and strategies for creating movement material.”

Participant E:

Economics and International Studies major/ Dance and Political Science minor, more than 10

“I’m drawn to participating because I know that I can be stiff and rigid and I feel like this might help me to open up my movement possibilities and let go of my ‘over-thinking’ type habits.”

Participant F:

Sociology major/ psychology and music minor, 1-3

“I was drawn to this project because it really intrigued me and I wanted to see what it was all about and how you were going to incorporate play into dance.”

APPENDIX F

PLAY & DANCE: LESSON PLAN

BASIC MOVEMENT EXPERIENCES (WITH SELF)

Week One: My Body

Objectives: Introduction/syllabus & Ice-breaker
Familiarize with body and self
Explore body parts and how they move

- Give introduction to the course and research. Go through the syllabus.
- Guide students to experiment freely with movements of each individual body part (head, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers, chest, naval, spine, pelvis, knees, ankles, toes)
- Continue working with body parts – pair students up (decide who is leader and who is follower). The leader uses one part of their body to lead another part of their partner’s body. They do not need to stay in physical contact, but should try to stay in “contact.” The leader doesn’t only determine the movement of the follower but their timing and dynamics.
- “Name the Movement” game – stand in circle, each person shows a movement along with their name. Rest of class echoes back movement and name.
- Provide paper and drawing utensils. “Draw yourself” – ask students to draw themselves onto the paper. Draw how they view their body and self. Add to their drawing, in writing, an active verb and color they identify with themselves.
- Improvise movement based on their verb, then color, and then image. Explore combinations of all.

Week Two: Exploration

Objectives: Explore awareness of body and others
Explore stillness
Draw movement from everyday action and speech

- “Mirrors” – form two parallel lines facing each other and establish partners on the opposite side. First, students will explore the space around them and experience the stillness with their partners. When both partners are ready, they may start moving, continuing to mirror each other. There is no leader or follower, simply listening to each other and staying in contact. While moving, students may start passing in front or behind others in the line. This could be expanded by starting to add interactions and movement with the students moving next to them.
- A free approach to dance, guide students to draw movement from everyday speech and explore movements of the “human” body. (wiggle, roll, stretch, twist,

flop, shake, swing, float, explode, crumble, slice, punch, cringe, hug, bloom, melt, etc.)

- Work individually to warm-up
- Improvise and create a short phrase inspired by a word of their choice

Week Three: Self-identity

Objectives: Experience solo dancing – find one’s essence
Explore one’s natural movement tendencies

- Supply them with a simple sequence for a phrase (circle, jump, twist, roll, walk, etc.) and have students find their own natural tendencies and exaggerate them. Make it their own.
- Partner up – One improvises across the floor (move as themselves), then the other improvises across based on what they saw from their partner. Capture their essence. Switch roles and repeat.
- Students will have 10 minutes to step outside of the studio space and explore. They are free to go wherever they please and experience their “play” time as individuals. Encouraged to journal on what they saw, heard, and experienced.
- Guide students through improvisational movement expression based on journaling session. They will focus on what they enjoyed in the experience.
- Exploration of movement
 - Balance, stillness, self-expression, breath, environment/space

ELEMENTS OF MOVEMENT

Week Four: Relationship to Time and Energy

Objectives: Apply various qualities of energy to movement
Explore contrast in time of movement in solo and with others

- Start by teaching students a simple phrase with neutral elements. (Lying, sitting, walking, jumping, sliding, melting, stopping, starting, etc.)
- With given phrase, students will explore qualities of movement. For each quality, encourage students to experience and express with their whole body, and try different possibilities.
 - Energy – hard, soft, gradual, sudden, sharp, smooth, stillness, heavy, light, circular, swirl, lengthened, excited, calm, etc.
 - Time – slow, fast, stop, start, regular, irregular, etc
- Continue to play with energy and time in improvisations with partners and groups.

Week Five: Relationship to Space

Objectives: Play with various dimensions of space
Create pathways and shapes

- Continue to explore contrasts in the qualities. Guide students in improvisational investigation of different combinations of time, energy, and space.
- Explore dimensions of space, pathways and shapes.
 - Have students draw simple designs on sheets of paper. Work individually to put them together and use the design to create movement in the space.
 - As a group take turns entering the space and completing an image – considering space and shape.

Week Six: Qualities derived from other

Objectives: Explore creativity through improvisation
Play with textures and sound

- Possibly working in pairs, investigate other qualities derived from weather, sky, earth, plants, animals, machines, etc.
- “Element Game” – there are two categories (thing and descriptive word), students will “draw out of a hat” one from each. They will explore whatever they drew (i.e, wiggly and airplane, stretchy and river, exploding and leaf)
- Supply a collection of objects with different/interesting textures and qualities (plastic bag, newspaper, rubber band, etc.) – improvise based on those textures. How they feel, move, and sound.

MOVEMENT IN RELATION TO OTHER

Week Seven: Music/Sound

Objectives: Listen to the vibrations and sounds from one’s body
Find a relationship to music/sound

- Guide students through improvisational exploration of movement in relationship to music. I will come prepared with a variety of genres. Also explore relationship to the textures and characteristics of the music with set material.
- Divide the group into smaller groups and each will work together. Each person in the group will have a turn in improvising movement in relationship to “sounds” that the other members of the group will “make” with their body. (i.e, clapping, clicking tongue, tapping floor, breath etc).

Week Eight: Environment

Objectives: Movement with materials, props, and costumes
Explore movement in various sites indoor/outdoor

- Guide students through improvisational exploration of movement in relationship to objects (chairs, tables, barres, etc.)
- Go outside, find objects – start embodying the object and its existence. Pair up found objects and integrate characteristics and qualities.
- Working in groups, explore movement in different sites inside and outside of the studio space. Investigate how movement is effected by the environment and its properties.

Week Nine: Other movers

Objectives: Work in duets, trios, groups
Exploring individuality through relationship to others
Respond in movement to the movement of others
Investigate communication through movement

- Response to others' presence and movement
 - mirroring, negative space, up/down relationship, quality contrast and other improvisational explorations.
- Duets, trios, groups
 - “1,2,3” exercise
 - “Laying, Sitting, Standing” exercise – working in groups revisit qualities explored earlier and improvise.

Week Ten: Creative Process

Objectives: Apply lessons to create movement
Explore creative process

- Working in small groups, revisit all activities and improvisations from the class and engage in creative process. Facilitate process and encourage to go further.

APPENDIX G

PLAY & DANCE: SYLLABUS

DANC 199 Play and Dance

CRN: 17697

T/Th 3:00pm-3:50pm
354 Gerlinger Annex

Course Overview

The class has been established as a part of the research for my M.F.A. thesis movement project. My research is based on a belief that experiences and skills learned in dance and play can be integrated into daily life for a better understanding of self, others and the relationships we build.

My goal is to allow each student to experience movement in a unique and playful learning environment, investigating the following themes: Personal Basic Movement Experiences, Elements of Movement, and Movement in Relation to Other(s).

Course Objectives

- Students to explore basic movement elements in a creative environment
- Students to experience activities that encourage them to play
- Students to value dance as self-expression
- To establish a student-centered learning environment together, where students are motivated to learn, explore individual expression, and be responsible for their own learning experiences.

Requirements

Participation & Effort (60 pts)

This is a participation oriented class. Dancers must be present in order to demonstrate that they have thoroughly explored the ideas in class. Dancers should take time outside of the short 50 minute class to reflect and go over ideas explored during class time.

Attendance

Though this is a P/NP course, **attendance is mandatory. After 4 absences, you will receive an automatic NP.** We have a lot of material to cover in a short amount of time and lateness will not be acceptable. **2 'lates' will count as 1 absence.**

Journal Entries and Group Discussions (40 pts)

You will need a **notebook** to keep track of all your journal entries. I will assign journaling sessions to be done during both class and on your own

time. Journals will consist of reflections about your experiences in class, responses to class activities, and any other thoughts. Group discussions will be led by myself during class time, also discussing our experiences in class activities.

Grading

Participation and Effort	60 pts
Journals	40 pts

Total	100 pts

100 pts – 70 pts : PASS
69 pts – 0 pts : NO PASS

Attire

Students should wear clothing that will be comfortable to move in the studio.

Class Etiquette

Dancers must respect the studio space, fellow dancers, and ME 😊. Clean up after yourselves, we need to keep the studios clean. We are all on this journey together, so help each other during and outside of class; we can all learn from one another.

Rainy Day Plan

In the event that class is cancelled, I will do my best to email you as soon as possible. There will be a short video clip posted on Blackboard for you to view during the cancelled class time. Be prepared for a discussion the next class.

Strategic Diversity Statement

Students should be aware that the School of Music and Dance desires to discourage any sort of action that makes an individual feel uncomfortable or unwelcome. Students with concerns related to discrimination, bias, or sexual harassment are encouraged to contact the following offices should you wish to report such an incident and get help in resolving the incident.

Bias Response Team, 164 Oregon Hall 541-346-1139
Affirmative Action & equal opportunity Office, 474 Oregon Hall 541-346-3123
Conflict Resolution Services, 164 Oregon Hall 541-346-0617
Counseling Center, 210 Health 541-346-3227
Student Advocacy, 334 EMU 541-346-1141

Crisis Center Information

The University of Oregon Crisis Center, a student-funded organization, provides all students with confidential telephone crisis intervention 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Students often believe their issues are not severe enough for them to call a crisis intervention hotline. Here at the Crisis Center, we truly believe there is no problem too small for us. At one time or another, everyone needs a little help through a difficult situation. The hotline number is 541-346-4488.

If you are registered with the **Office of Disability Services**, you should make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary. To request disability accommodations, register for services at the Office of Disability Services.

Office of Disability Services, 164 Oregon Hall, 541-346-1155.

APPENDIX H

JOURNAL QUESTIONS AND PROMPTS

Class Journaling:

- 1) Free write – reflection on first week of classes. What are your thoughts on the experiences so far?
- 2) How would you define the word “play”?
- 3) Describe your most memorable moment in dance technique class.
- 4) Watch the videos from the class exercises (improvisation exercise during week 3), and reflect. Do you see play in your movement?
- 5) What is the relationship of play and creativity, for you?
- 6) In your opinion, is there a difference between a standard dance improvisation class and this “play and dance” class?

Final Questions:

- 1) What new experiences or thoughts did you have about working in a group (trio) after a term of exploring play and its concepts?
- 2) Share your thoughts on if and how play can be integrated into dance in higher education.
- 3) Share your thoughts on how I (Ayumi) facilitated and directed the class and its activities.
- 4) Share any new thoughts on movement and dance from your experiences during this course.
- 5) What is play in dance, to you?

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