

DANCE AS A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: EXPLORING
DANCE GROUPS IN THE KANSAS CITY AREA
THROUGH THE LIFESPAN

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the embodied cultural practice of dance among several groups in the Kansas City area. The dance groups were studied as Communities of Practice (CoP), as outlined in the Lave-Wenger model of CoP. The CoP model uses the complementary concepts of “reified structures” and “peripheral participation” to explain social learning. This dissertation argues that participation in dance activities creates body schema and social bonds that make dance a powerful mechanism for learning and teaching social behaviors. The dance groups studied covered a spectrum of dance genres, including folkloric, popular, hip-hop, ballroom, ballet, and modern dance. Data were collected from participant observation, interviews, archives, cable TV shows, websites, and published materials. Archival documentation included photographic and video materials, as well as survey data available for secondary analysis. Grounded Theory Methodology based on qualitative data was deemed the most appropriate approach. By examining these dance groups, certain social processes were consistently observed, including 1) similarities in

dance practice across groups led to similar social practices and processes over the lifespan; 2) differences in dance genre aesthetic structure were associated with different forms of CoP structure and organization; the more structured the aesthetic of the dance genre, the more structured and hierarchical the organization of the dance group; 3) certain factors/attributes of the CoPs contributed to the dance group's robustness and longevity; and 4) the mediation of time and space with other dancers during dance served as a model of interactions between self and others and developed the skills of collaboration. Overall, this study found the sharing and mediation of time and space during dance shaped individual social interactions into increasingly cooperative and collaborative activities. Also, the aesthetic structure of the dance genre was associated with the dance group's hierarchical social structure.

APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER 1
THE PROJECT

“Music begins to atrophy when it departs too far from the dance.”

—Ezra Pound

Overview

This introduction will provide a brief overview of the project. It addresses the question of why one might study dance as a cultural practice in the social sciences. The next section discusses investigating dance as a cultural practice, rather than specifically as an “art form” open to interpretation.

Purpose

This project investigates the use of dance as a cultural and community practice, as an embodied medium to convey cultural information, as a vehicle for socialization, and as a space for exploring and negotiating personal and cultural identity. The study explores dance as a cultural practice and as cultural information. The argument of this dissertation is that dance and dance-related activities create body schema and form social bonds, which make dance a powerful mechanism for learning and teaching social behaviors and forging connections with others throughout the lifespan.

This study analyzes the way dance is used as a cultural practice to communicate cultural information in an embodied form, to convey social roles and socialization, and to help form cultural and personal identity. This study also explores how such cultural practices can be used to solidify personal identity cohesiveness, family relations, group identity, community cohesiveness, and social well-being, regardless of age. This analysis

may help further the understanding of personal and cultural relations, socialization and learning, the process of acculturation, and how cultural practices (such as folkloric dance) can serve to strengthen social relationships and social well-being throughout the lifespan.

Methods

Several common research approaches are used in the study. The project is primarily researched as an ethnographic study, supplemented with archival materials. Interviews with founders, long-time members, teachers, and principal participants of the groups provide perspective.

The methodology draws primarily on the following techniques and resources: (a) the examination of archival materials in historic archives, private collections, historical documents, journal articles, books, photographs, videos, and archival materials of the studied dance groups; (b) participant observation of local dance groups at their meetings, events, dance classes, rehearsals, and performances; (c) attendance at public performances of the respective dance groups; and (d) interviews with founders, teachers, dancers, participants, and patrons about the groups and their reflections about dance.

The study began as archival and participant observer research. The subjects of the study were “subjects at hand” during normal activities related to the dance groups; i.e., their classes, rehearsals, performances, and meetings, which usually occurred at community centers and other venues. Interviews become an extension of this initial research.

The participant observational research was focused on local community dance groups, all of which were originally based in local communities and had been in practice for several decades. Each group has historic roots in the neighborhood communities where they

operate, and each group has had to adjust and accommodate to changes in their respective communities.

The dance groups investigated included the dance genres of popular dance (Hip-Hop), folkloric dance (Mexican and Balkan Folkloric), social dance (Ballroom Dance), classical Modern Dance, and Ballet. Five dance groups, all within the Kansas City area, were investigated directly, and two groups were used as reference points, based upon archival documentation and informal interviews. The five groups included El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco (Mexican Folkloric Dance), the Kansas City Kansas Tamburitians (Balkan Dance), Culture through Ballroom Dance (Social and Ballroom Dance), City in Motion Dance Theater (Classical Modern Dance), and American Dance Center (Ballet). Kansas City Ballet (Ballet) and a loosely-organized group of Hip-Hop dancers (Popular Dance) were used as reference points for the other dance groups.

The research involved spending time with the groups at their meetings, dance classes, rehearsals, and performances. These groups served to illustrate a comparison of dance groups across ethnicities and communities, including their similarities and differences in development. The groups also illustrated dance groups at different stages of existence, since they began and evolved in different time frames. Additionally, each of the dance groups contributed information about how dance and the dance groups fit into the surrounding community, how they interact with the community, how the groups create community among dancers, and how they contribute to the community at large.

Additionally, my own experiences growing up in my mother's dance school and performance group (later becoming a partner in the endeavors), and my experiences with my

own dance students and dance troupe served to add context, insight, and perspective to the research.

Some of the immediate questions that arise when investigating community-based dance include asking how the dance groups are constructed, what processes or dynamics are involved in the practice of dance and within the group, who the participants are, what dynamics exist between the group and the community at large, and what insights can be gleaned from studying dance as a social activity.

Qualitative methodology, including heuristic inquiry, participant observation, archival documentation, secondary data analysis, and interviews, was an appropriate path for research, to look at the dance practice as a process and the dance group as a dynamic social system that responds and adapts to its community context. The dance groups were examined and compared based on the Lave-Wenger model of Community of Practice (CoP). In this case, the practice examined was a cultural practice—dance. The model of CoP was elaborated upon and extended to aid in analysis of the research.

By examining these dance groups, certain social processes were consistently observed, including:

1. Similarities in dance practice across groups led to similar social practices and processes regardless of age;
2. Differences in dance genre aesthetic structure were associated with different forms of CoP structure and organization;
3. Certain factors/attributes of the CoPs contributed to dance groups' robustness and longevity, and

4. The repeated negotiation of time and space with others served as a model of interactions between Self and others and developed a social skill set that allowed collaborative projects over the lifespan. (Note: For purposes of this dissertation, the word “Self” is capitalized to distinguish it as a specific concept.)

Dance as a Cultural Practice: Why Study Dance?

Although dance and rhythmic movement have been part of the cultural landscape since the beginning of human existence, dance has not been studied as much as other cultural practices within the social sciences. This is partly due to the nature of performance, which is an ephemeral phenomenon, making it historically difficult to record or document. Technologies developed in the last century have made dance more easily filmed, recorded, photographed, and notated. Interest in studying dance as a subject for the social sciences in recent years may also be due in part to changing attitudes about the nature and role of the body in the cosmos and changing attitudes regarding the Mind/Body split proposed by Descartes, which shaped modern Western scientific thought.

At the time of this writing, other countries and cultures have been much more vested in the preservation of their historic culture and folklore practices in general, than the U.S., and particularly in the area of dance-related studies. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the body of knowledge exploring dance as a symbolic communication and cultural practice, which both shapes and reveals much about cultural meanings and social behavior, as can be seen in the social processes related to the dance and within the dance group itself as a social system.

A Change of Perspective: Viewing Dance as Cultural Literacy

In order to fully understand the current research that uses dance as its focus, it may be necessary to adjust one's perspective of what dance is and the role it plays in social behavior and cultural practice. We must first remind ourselves that "dance" is a social construction. Although scholars point to evidence of dance behaviors in early humans (and even in animal groups), the actions or behaviors that become included in the categories of "Dance" or "Non-Dance" vary considerably from culture to culture.

As a form of comparison, it might be useful to look at a different culture's perspective of dance and its purpose in society. A striking example of dance as a form of cultural literacy is illustrated by the indigenous culture of the Aztecs, which can be observed both historically and as a cultural influence on modern-day Mexico and Latin America. Dance in these cultures is seen as form of literacy that is important for understanding other humans and the way of the world. This different cultural perspective can be instructive and provide insight into how dance may influence and play a part in our own culture.

For example, in the Aztec dialect of Mixtec, the word "yaa" refers to what we would consider music, dance, and game, all clustered together into a single concept (Stanford, 1966, p. 103). The words *kata/sita* refer to singing or to dancing, depending on the context, for dancing was seen as "singing with the feet" (Stanford, 1966, p. 103). The words *kaa/saa*, depending on context, refer to "high, loud, and strong when applied to voices" or playing wind instruments, but could also mean "to jump" when referring to dance (Stanford, 1966, p. 103).

In this way, we see that music, song, dance, game, and athletic sport could be seen as related concepts, to be presented together and not parsed out as separate categories as we do in the English language of the U.S. All of these activities were seen as cultural practices that relayed important cultural information. In a similar way, in older words in the English language, we grouped a variety of activities together, even if we parse these activities out from each other in more recent times. For example, we use the word “play” with slightly different connotations depending on context. We refer to “play” as a creative activity, or we go to a “play,” or we “play” an instrument. We also put a strategy into “play,” or we “play” a game with set rules. Some people “game the system” and armies “play war games.”

It should also be pointed out that the Aztecs valued knowledge and educated their populations, particularly the upper classes. Writing, music, poetry, song, sport, and dance were all considered important cultural practices to learn, along with math, science, engineering, astronomy, scriptures, military science, and government. To the Aztecs, to learn these skills was to be educated, and this education was important in order to be an effective leader of people and to understand one’s place in the cosmos. These cultural practices were seen as necessary activities in order to learn cultural information and universal truths.

In other words, what we consider to be performance “arts” and sport, were to the Aztecs and other pre-Columbian cultures important as part of their cultural legacy, common heritage, shared knowledge, communication, and etiquette. These practices conveyed cultural information and meaning, while also teaching appropriate roles and norms that shaped social behavior. Mores and beliefs were not only taught as written scripture, but

performed as poetry, sung as songs, and presented as performance narratives in theater, music, and dance. Festivals to the gods often had a combination of formal ritual dances and informal peripheral social dances (Kurath & Marti, 1964). Whereas in today's culture in the U.S., dance is often seen as decorative or recreational, many other cultures value their folkloric arts as part of important cultural literacy in a way similar to the Aztecs.

It is also important to note that in societies where not everyone has access to written scriptures, embodied performance rituals were effective tools for conveying information, such as teaching mores, attaching meaning to symbols, narrating mythology, and sharing stories. Alternatively, learning these embodied performances as rites of passage enabled participants to negotiate cultural and personal boundaries to form cohesive identities. Investing time, energy, and one's life force in the creation of a performance, practice, or cultural product can create a perception of added value. Studies indicate that participation and investment of time and energy give the activity or product the perception of more value (Bandura, 1976, 1985, 1997).

There are two aspects to valuing an activity or practice. First, one has to perceive the activity as worthy of participation in order to become engaged. In other words, there must be a perceived value by the individual and the individual's peers. The activity has to be perceived as valuable enough to cause one to invest one's time and energy. Then, by participating, one values that activity even more because one becomes vested in the activity, socially, culturally, emotionally, and personally as a result of that physical, embodied participation.

In order to understand the research presented in this study, it is helpful to look at dance as not just a recreational activity, but rather as a significant cultural practice that conveys important cultural information. In fact, for this research, it is appropriate to look at dance as a complex combination of social behavior, symbolic communication, and cultural literacy, as well as a cultural practice.

My Place in the Dance Community

It is useful at this point to explain my own position in the local dance community. As a second generation dancer, I grew up watching my mother take classes, teach, rehearse, and perform. She was a professional dancer most of her adult life, largely in Chicago and Mexico City. My mother and I owned and operated a dance school most of the time I was growing up, either as a major form of income or as supplementary income. When my mother finished her education, she taught dance at the college level, trained drill and dance teams, maintained a performing group, and produced concerts and show.

We came to the Kansas City area so my mother could do graduate work at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance and their Theater Department. As a result, I became involved as well, joining her in classes at the Conservatory and participating in musical theater productions at the Missouri Repertory Theater. My mother also became a member of the then Kansas City Civic Ballet, which was supported at the time by the Conservatory.

Like my mother, I was classically trained, but excelled in ethnic and folkloric forms of dance, and like her, I became a professional dancer for most of my adult life. In the years we lived in Mexico, I learned a great deal about Mexican folkloric dance, and it became a

part of my repertory. Along the way, I also learned a variety of other folkloric forms, including Hindu dance, Flamenco, Middle Eastern dance, and Balkan. I had an opportunity to work with Don Lipovac, the founder of the Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans, for four years; I learned some of the Balkan dances and performed with his group. Performing and teaching dance sustained me for many years and enabled me to pay for my secondary education in college. My goal was to become an academic and combine my interests in dance with research in the social sciences.

As a result of my background, I have become familiar with the different facets and skills involved in the practice of dance. These skills run the gamut from performing, teaching, organizing groups, producing shows, choreography, running tech, researching, making costumes, running a dance school, doing payroll, promoting, collaborating, and serving on the Board of a dance group. Being involved with dance, be it a dance group or dance school or as a solo performer, involves wearing a lot of different hats.

These experiences became useful when I began my dissertation research. Studying the dance groups that I had worked with over the years seemed a natural choice, and they were all supportive of the study.

The general research questions that I began with involved investigating the dance forms in their respective communities. The questions that drove the early parts of the research sought to discover how the dance was involved with the community and what purpose it served in that community. How was the dancing used as a social activity and cultural practice? How did the practice of dance shape social interactions and social/cultural structures?

As the research progressed, more specific questions arose. How did the dance group function as a Community of Practice? How might dance shape the social skills of cooperation, collaboration, and if so, what was their relationship to community cohesion? How might the structure of the dance itself aesthetically influence the structure of the dance group?

This dissertation research aims to answer these questions by looking at dance as a cultural practice that contributes to shaping social skills and cultural literacy. To be clear, this dissertation did not engage in cultural analysis, but rather analyzed social behavior and actions involved in creating community cohesion, regardless of age, and specifically, a Community of Practice, based upon the cultural practice of dance.

Research Questions and Hypotheses for this Study

The general research questions explored in this study include the following:

1. What purpose does dance serve in a community?
2. How do communities use dance? How do communities use dance as social and cultural practices?
3. How does dance help create community and culture?
4. How does dance contribute to social structures?
5. How does dance shape human interactions and social structures?
6. How does a dance group function as a Community of Practice?

The hypotheses guiding this study included the following questions:

1. Dance is an embodied practice that creates community, is used as a mechanism for socialization, and is a transformative activity/experience for individuals and groups.

2. The body is used as a metaphor for organizing the social world; embodied/physical practices (i.e., dance) create social structures that help shape and transform groups into communities.

3. The negotiation of time and space of Self with others, through embodied cultural practices such as dance, shapes social behavior and social structures.

4. Participating in embodied cultural practices such as dance builds social skills related to collaboration, cooperation, and community cohesiveness.

5. The more structured the dance form, the more structured the dance organization becomes as a Community of Practice.

Structure of this Dissertation

This brief overview describes how this dissertation is structured. Chapter 2, Literature Review of previous relevant research, lists and describes the seminal dance-related research studies in the social sciences. These are relevant in that they shaped the approach and methodologies used in the research of this dissertation. Also included are the initial theoretical approaches that shaped the selection of methodology and world view for the study.

Chapter 3, Methodology, lines out the research questions and hypotheses that drove this dissertation research and describes the data sources, methods, and research design used in the study. This chapter also includes a description of Grounded Theory Methodology (GTM), in order to highlight the steps used in this research study and how conclusions were drawn. This methodology was incorporated because of the gaps in social science research on dance.

Chapter 4, Historical Context, describes the historical development of immigrant neighborhoods, giving their folkloric dance groups' historical contexts within their respective communities. This examination has merit since their histories present diverse perspectives about how dance fits within the community and the importance of dance in the social and cultural fabric of the community.

Chapter 5, Theoretical Bases of Embodied Behavior and Social Interaction, presents the difficulties of doing research on embodied behavior and dance research. Considering these difficulties, an analysis of a typical event of one of the folkloric dance groups is discussed, including some typical descriptions of interactions during dance events and typical comments made during such events. This analysis is an embodied example of social interactions during a dance event.

Chapter 6, Analysis of Social Dance from a Meadian Perspective, is an analysis incorporating the theories of G. H. Mead and the development of the Self, based upon social interactions with others. It includes a short literature review tailored specifically for this analysis. The goal of the analysis is to take the development of Self (capitalized for the sake of clarity of concept), through the negotiation of time and space with other humans and the environment. The development of Self is reinforced with each dance event and is a perception of the Self that includes both an individual Self and a group Self. Through the negotiation of time and space with other humans to create the goal of dance patterns and formations, dancers learn skills of cooperation and collaboration. They also develop a sense of Self that sees others as part of a group "body," in order to complete these patterns and

formations. This group body then functions as a Community of Practice in order to sustain the group as a dance organization.

The following section is an analysis of one of the groups as a Community of Practice, according to the classic Lave-Wenger CoP model. This particular analysis serves as a foundation for the next analysis, which builds upon and extends the Lave-Wenger CoP model to apply specifically to the dance organizations in the study.

Chapter 7, Results: Analysis of Data as Community of Practice, describes the final stage of analysis presenting the results of Grounded Theory Methodology. Using the dialectic of reified structures and participatory practice, as suggested by the Lave-Wenger CoP model, a taxonomy of similarities across dance practices within the various dance groups is presented. This taxonomy points to evidence suggesting a progression from learning dance practice that increases in complexity to become embodied patterns of social action and interactions that leads to cooperative and collaborative skills that form the backbone of community. This analysis also points to the development of reified structures that emerge as resources to the dance groups, and also shape their respective organizational patterns.

Whereas the practice of dance formed the basis of identifiable similarities across the groups, the structures also formed the basis of identifiable differences between the groups. Some of the trends in structure contributed to the longevity and robustness of the groups, whereas others contributed to the attrition of them. The observations of attributes for the longevity and robustness of the dance groups are parallel to those suggested by the Lave-

Wenger model, but with particular adjustments for the practice of dance and the constraints of this study.

Chapter 8, Conclusions and Discussion, summarizes the conclusions drawn from the research and their possible implications. Also included are suggestions for specific applications of the research, as well as future considerations for related research. Specific examples of possible applications of the research are presented.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In selecting which studies to use for this literature review, the goal was to give a foundation to this form of research, yet limit the listing to only the most relevant studies that would inform rather than detract from the current line of research. Most of the research began in the area of Anthropology of Dance, but some of the later studies are more accurately classified as folkloric studies, ethnomusicology, ethnic studies, cultural studies, performance studies, or social history studies. Few studies were listed specifically as Sociology of Dance, since this seems to be a relatively new area of investigation.

This literature review begins with descriptions of some of the most well-known, classic studies of dance as cultural practice and social activity. Next, other studies related to the aspects of dance are investigated. Finally, an overview of popular theories of body are described, and the preliminary theoretical perspective and world view for this research study are described. The goal of this literature review is to position this study relative to previous research of similar topics.

Literature Review of Relevant Dance-based Studies

The earliest American studies in the Anthropology of Dance were done in 1939 by the famous Modern Dancer, Katherine Dunham, for her thesis at the University of Chicago, entitled “Dances of Haiti, Their Social Organization, Classification, Form and Function,” which was later published as a book, *Dances of Haiti*, and in detail as *Island Possessed* (Dunham, 1994). In this study, Dunham did ethnographic, participant observation research in Haiti, and as a professional dancer, focused on the traditional and folkloric dances

conceptually in terms of both “symbol/meaning” and “social structure/function,” in analyzing the dances, their function in Haitian society, and creating a basic taxonomy for future dance research. With this seminal work, Dunham single-handedly founded the sub-discipline of Anthropology of Dance and became a pioneer both as a performer of ethnic dances and as an academic of dance.

When Dunham attended the University of Chicago, Anthropology was still a young discipline, and still connected to the Sociology Department under Robert Park (of the well known Chicago School of Sociology), and heavily influenced by Franz Boas, one of the founding fathers of the discipline of Anthropology (Aschenbrenner, 2002). This bit of Anthropology genealogy may clarify some of the perspectives of Dunham’s work.

Franz Boas considered meaning and symbols to be important when studying culture (Aschenbrenner, 2002). Boas extensively studied Native American tribes of the Northwestern American area; he thought dance was an important cultural practice that warranted study in order to understand cultural meanings and symbols. Radcliffe-Brown eventually became the head of the Anthropology Department, and his perspective of the importance of structure and function was an influence on all within the department (Aschenbrenner, 2002).

In his famous studies on the Andaman Islanders, Radcliffe-Brown himself commented on the role that dance played in unifying community, saying,

As the dancer loses himself in the dance, as he becomes absorbed in the unified community, he reaches a state of elation in which he feels himself filled with energy or force immediately beyond his ordinary state, and so finds himself able to perform prodigies of exertion. (Radcliffe-Brown, 1933, pp. 252-253)

Both these influences (Boas and Radcliffe-Brown) and the guidance of her mentors can be seen in Dunham's work. Dunham's mentors were Robert Redfield (for theory, at the University of Chicago), and Melvin J. Herskovits (for fieldwork training, at Northwestern University). Both had originally studied under Franz Boas and their works were extremely influential in the field. As a young African-American woman who loved dance, Dunham was interested in doing fieldwork in Haiti, to study its ritual and secular dance (Aschenbrenner, 2002). Redfield suggested that she study fieldwork with Herskovits, since he had done fieldwork in Haiti and could make introductions for her, which he did (Aschenbrenner, 2002).

In her study of Haitian dances, Dunham created a taxonomy for studying dance, including a background of the Haitian people and an overview of their belief system, describing the different dances and their divisions (Dunham, 1939, 1983, 1994). She then went into greater depth describing the organization of the dance groups and the material attributes associated with each dance (e.g., props, costuming, instruments) and how they were used (Dunham, 1939, 1983, 1994). In her analyses of the dances, Dunham examined the function that each dance or each type of dance served to both the individual and to the community, creating a conceptual framework to classify each dance by function (Dunham, 1939, 1983, 1994). These conceptual categories included those for sacred and secular dance. Seasonal, large crowd dances (as for festivals) and smaller, social dances were subcategories of secular dance, and cult dances, spirit dances, and funeral dances were subcategories of sacred dance (Dunham, 1939, 1983, 1994). Finally, Dunham tried to associate form with function, in an attempt to analyze how certain physical patterns might be

associated with function (Dunham, 1939, 1983, 1994). Included in the pattern descriptions were not only the floor patterns of groups (lines and circles), but descriptions of body posture by individual participants. Dunham attempted to draw connections between these patterns and the functions of the dances that she had created within her framework (Dunham, 1939, 1983, 1994). Although her research methods and findings reflect the times (in academia) and the influence of her mentors, Dunham firmly established a template by which Anthropology and Sociology of Dance could be done. Other well known dancers and scholars of dance soon followed in her wake, including Pearl Primus and Franziska Boas.

About the same time, the well-known musicologist, Curt Sachs, created another seminal work entitled *World History of the Dance* (Sachs, 1937/1963) that documented the parallel development of dance and music based on historical evidence. Although a bit dated by newer discoveries, and in language not considered “politically correct” today, the study serves as solid work, and it is still used as a text in Dance Studies.

Franziska Boas, dancer and daughter of the famous anthropologist, Franz Boas (and classmate to Margaret Mead), published research in *The Function of Dance in Human Society* (Boas, Franziska, 1944/1972), which also included an excerpt of her father’s work on dance and culture, *Dance and Music in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indians of North America (Kwakiutl)* (Boas, Franz, 1888). Although written with a broader cultural perspective, this latter ethnographic work included a treatise on the importance of dance being studied as a cultural practice, to reveal deeper processes within a society. Franz Boas recognized the value of dance as a cultural practice that was worthy of anthropological and sociological study. Many of his students, including Margaret Mead (1928) and Robert

Redfield (1974, 1989) included observations of dance in their ethnographic research of other cultures. In examining her father's work, Franziska Boas reviewed some of the findings she and her father observed among the Kwakiutl Native American tribes (Boas, Franz, 1955/1972; Boas, Franziska, 1944/1972). The setting, context, and process involved in ritual dances were greatly detailed, including translations of lyrics and rough musical themes. Although the dancing is described and documented as a ritual process, the actual moves and steps were only lightly sketched. Including photographs by Margaret Mead, Franziska Boas' edited volume is intended as a text for seminars in this area of research. Several other anthropological dance studies are also presented in this small collection of early works, which are also focused on specific cultures, including dances of Africa, Bali, and Haiti (Boas, Franziska, 1944/1972). There are detailed, specific descriptions of particular dances in particular settings, and how the dance (as a whole) serves a function in the community at large, but there is little about the steps or execution of the movements.

One of the classic studies on folk dance in general, and Mexican Folkloric Dance in particular, is *A Treasury of Mexican Folkways* by Frances Toor (1947/1985), another anthropologist of dance. Toor's volume has become a canon to folklorists in both Mexico and the U.S. as a historical document and an aid to the reconstruction of traditional dances. Toor traveled throughout Mexico for several years, documenting dances from different regions, including meaning, context, materials, costuming, patterns, descriptions of steps, photographs, hand-drawn sketches, lyrics with translations, and rough musical notation. Toor's is a more pragmatic work that includes notations and instructions from a choreographer's eye, yet includes the social and cultural context for each dance.

Another seminal study during this time was Dr. Anne Schley Duggan's work on folk dance (Duggan, Schlottmann, & Rutledge, 1948/2007). This research grew out of the settlement house movement in the early part of the 20th century (Shay, 2006; Tomko, 1999), when folk dances were introduced as an acceptable physical activity, suitable for co-ed teaching and a means for bringing immigrant and non-immigrant groups together peacefully to share cultural dance and music, often for performance at local festivals (Shay, 2006).

It is important to note that Duggan had been mentored by Russell Meriwether Hughes (known professionally as La Meri), who had studied Mexican Folkloric Dances and became a consultant to the Mexican government when it launched its "cultural missionary" program to document and preserve indigenous folkloric arts during the 1920s and 1930s in the wake of the Mexican Revolution (Ruyter, 2000). Hughes, a colleague of Ruth St. Denis, collected, notated, and re-staged theatrical representations of ethnic and folkloric forms from around the world. As a performer and teacher, Hughes promoted folkloric dance as a teaching tool for social, cultural, and physical skills. These perspectives of teaching folk dance for social and recreational reasons were passed down to her protégés, among them Duggan.

Duggan, in collaboration with Jeanette Schlottmann and Abbie Rutledge, created the *Folk Dance Library* (Duggan et al., 1948/2007), which documented and notated the most popular folk dances taught across the country and included a volume on the teaching of folk dance. The documented folk dances included those of Mexico, Europe, Scandinavia, the British Isles, and the U.S. This tome became the cornerstone reference volume for any teacher of folk and ethnic/cultural dances at the time and included additional supplementary

materials for recorded music and costume-making. Duggan also helped found the prominent dance program at Texas Women's University at Denton, Texas.

These studies were influential in my own work, for these were the names, the books, and the people with whom my mother studied. My mother had attended the University of Chicago about the same time as Dunham, so "Katherine Dunham" was a name frequently mentioned in our household, and the books and studies described were in our library. Dr. Duggan was my mother's advisor at TWU, and La Meri (Russell Meriwether Hughes) had been the inspiration for much of my mother's work in ethnic dance. As a single parent, my mother often met with Dr. Duggan with me in tow, and all of these women were familiar names in our home. Thus, the work of these early pioneers had a great influence on my research. These were the works with which I began research for this study, but I soon became familiar with others.

In 1932, Paul Goalby Cressey published his work, *The Taxi-Dance Hall: A Sociological Study in Commercialized Recreation & City Life*, which examined the Taxi-Dance Hall phenomenon that swept the nation during the Depression years (Cressey, 1932/2008). Studying at the University of Chicago under Robert E. Park, Cressey did an ethnographic study of the typical Taxi-Dance Hall in Chicago at the time. These establishments allowed male patrons to buy tickets to dance with ladies who were (presumably) trained in the popular dances. The dance halls were under public scrutiny and were criticized for promoting promiscuity, drinking, and amoral behavior, but one of the unspoken concerns of the time was also the "mixing" of races and ethnicities that occurred in such places, for they often attracted young immigrants (males and females) and minorities

into their doors and onto the dance floor. In his study, Cressey documented the history of these establishments, the type of patron, a typical night in one of these halls, the dance hall as a social world, the background of the dancers, the life cycle of the dancer, the ecology of the dance hall, and its relationship with the surrounding community (1932/2008). He examined the concerns about the morality of such places and the prospect of social reform (Cressey, 1932/2008).

Cressey concluded that although the dance halls may have created an opportunity to pursue immoral behavior, they also served a positive social function for those who participated, and if the dance hall were eliminated, something else would need to take its place (1932/2008). Cressey seemed to favor reform in lieu of prohibition, but he presented his research as descriptive evidence, rather than in a proscriptive manner (1932/2008). What is particularly interesting about Cressey's work is that he focused on a popular dance trend in an ecological relationship with the surrounding community, as well as a social world in itself. Although not focused specifically on the dance, he acknowledged that the dance served a social function above and beyond the physical execution of dance steps.

Soon, other social research related to dance began to appear, manifesting into the fields known as Anthropology of the Dance, Dance Anthropology, Dance Ethnography, and Dance Ethnology. Dance Anthropologist Gertrude Pokosch Kurath researched dance for 50 years (Kurath, 1986), ranging from essays about dance creation in 1931-1932, to articles on her fieldwork on dances in Mexico and among Native American groups from the 1940s through the 1980s. In her detailed work, Kurath documented musical themes (in musical notation), body movements (notated in Labanotation), movement patterns of group dances,

costuming, instrumentation, cultural context, historical roots, physical settings, ritual festivals, and other salient details of the dance and culture of these ethnic communities. Her most ambitious work, written in collaboration with Samuel Marti, attempted to historically describe and/or reconstruct early Aztec dances prior to the conquest of Cortes (Kurath & Marti, 1964).

Anthropology of Dance became its own field of study circa 1967, as a subfield of Socio-cultural Anthropology (Williams, 1997). The originators of this new field, JoAnn Wheeler Kealiinohomoku (1972), Adrienne Kaeppler, Drid Williams, and Anya Peterson Royce, set the standards for this burgeoning new area of anthropological research, which included “(a) legitimate, mainstream anthropological qualifications, (b) general scholarly standards, and (c) ethnographic description” (Williams, 1997, p. v). With these standards in place, academic research in the field of Anthropology of Dance began to flourish in the 1970s and 1980s.

One of the most influential academic studies in the Anthropology of Dance is Anya Peterson Royce’s well-documented work of the same name (Royce, 1977). In this meta-analysis, Royce highlighted and critiqued the landmark dance studies that helped shape the field up until the time of its writing and discussed common methods used in dance research including the tools of photography, recordings, various forms of dance notation, and historical documents to augment ethnographic and participant observation research. She also discussed theoretical and historical perspectives of dance research (Royce, 1977). In this seminal work, Royce mentioned the work of influential researchers in the area of dance and music, including Franz Boas (1888, 1897, 1902, 1904, 1925, 1927/1955), Franziska

Boas (1944/1972), Alan Lomax, John Blacking (1977, 1990, 1995), Curt Sachs (1937/1963), Frances Rust (2003), Drid Williams (1997, 2004), Anthony V. Shay (2002), Juana de Laban, Adrienne Kaeppler, Russell Meriwether Hughes (La Meri) (1977), Judith Lynn Hanna (1974, 1979, 2004), Joann Kealiinohomoku (2001), and Gertrude Prokosch Kurath (1949, 1986), all of whom had an influence upon my own research perspectives. Royce continued to emphasize structure and form as the primary theoretical framework for researching dance, yet she made a point to add the perspective of context and function (1977) in her suggestions for future dance research. Royce also laid out different approaches to dance research within that theoretical framework, including historical, comparative, meaning, morphology, symbol, and style (1977). Several of the studies she reviewed and critiqued were particularly influential in the formation of my work.

During the 1980s, in another seminal work, Drid Williams explored various theoretical explanations of dance, creating a series of lectures (and later essays) that reviewed and evaluated each of these perspectives (Williams, 1997). These theoretical perspectives included various emotional, psychological, biological, religious, artistic, and functional approaches for analyzing dance research (Williams, 1997).

Harking back to the work of Dunham, anthropologist and folklorist Anthony V. Shay did a study entitled, “The Functions of Dance in Human Societies: An Approach Using Context (Dance Event), Not Content (Movements and Gestures), for Treating Dance as Anthropological Data,” which examined dance in context—the dance event itself—as opposed to the content of dance, in terms of movements and gestures (Shay, 1971). Similar to Dunham, Shay presented a framework for using dance as information or data for studying

society and culture. However, rather than investigating a specific culture and dance that was used in that culture, he created a conceptual framework for how dance was commonly used across different cultures. In this valuable yet lesser-known work, Shay shifted the perspective of dance research from the specifics of a particular performance or movement in dance (content), to the dance event itself (context). Using specific cross-cultural examples, he then described a framework of typical social events that occurred across different cultures that either centered around dance performance, or typically were associated with dance events (Shay, 1971). Many of these social events were associated with rites of passage, such as weddings, births, deaths, puberty, and annual cultural festivals (English, 2007; Shay, 1971). This shift in perspective allowed more flexibility in studying dance in different contexts and cultures and for making comparisons, while still examining how dance fit within a particular culture or social structure. This shift helped open the door for more cross-cultural, comparative research in dance (Royce, 1977).

Shay's later work also was influential in my research as I realized that he and I had made similar observations about trends in folkloric dance. His concept of "parallel traditions" of professional and non-professional folkloric dance groups having separate yet intertwining trajectories in the interpretation of what was "authentic" or representative of particular cultural dances was a topic often discussed in my household, yet few academics have given this topic as much attention as Shay has (1999, 2002, 2006, 2007). Shay also points out that folkloric dance groups have historically presented a powerful political symbol, which can be used for cultural or political reasons (2002). Shay also investigated dance as a means for carving out individual ethnic identities (2006). Although Shay does

not linger specifically on embodied dynamics of cultural practice, he emphasizes the powerful imagery of bodies in motion to create potent cultural symbols (1999, 2002, 2006, 2007).

Sociologist Frances Rust did a remarkable study in the United Kingdom in the late 1960s in the field of Sociology of Culture on popular dance entitled “Dance In Society: An Analysis of the Relationship between Social Dance and Society, in England, from the Middle Ages to the Present Day” (2003). In this complex study, Rust used two approaches in the study of popular dance in England: historical research and survey research (Rust, 2003). Using a Parsonian framework of Structural-Functionalism, Rust analyzed the social dances of England through history and discussed the interrelationship of dance and society (Royce, 1977; Rust, 2003). The depth and detail of Rust’s historical research is in itself impressive today, but Rust also added the complexity and comprehensiveness of different methodologies, both qualitative and quantitative, to make her case. Rust concluded, “the social dance and society are so closely related that the dance must be seen as a significant part of the total cultural pattern.” She also suggested that sociologists should “acknowledge that any society can be better understood if its attitude to dancing and its social dance forms are included in his investigations” (Rust, 2003, p. 174).

At this point, it is appropriate to point out that all the studies discussed so far have been influential to the fields of Anthropology and Sociology of Dance and to Dance Studies in general. For the most part, however, dance is viewed as a way to communicate about, or learn about, or better understand, a particular culture. Dance is portrayed as a cultural practice that can be studied to learn more about a culture or society. It was not until Shay’s

later work (after 1999), that dance was discussed and studied for communicating culture, as a political symbol and as a means for creating and expressing identity, both personal and ethnic. In the 1980s, the social science literature on dance began to reflect studies of dance as cultural symbols, as a means of communicating political resistance, and as cultural critique.

From another field, Psychology, studies begin to appear in the literature during the 1970s and 1980s about the benefits of dance (and other arts) for psychological therapy and rehabilitation. Dance as part of education and its contribution to human development is also present in the literature. Although this literature has had an impact on my research in general, most of this particular literature is beyond the scope of the research discussed here but is recommended as a rich source for future research related to dance.

In 1986, Paul Spencer published a meta-analysis of various case studies on dance and society, entitled “Society and the Dance: The Social Anthropology of Process and Performance.” In this work, Spencer discusses several different theoretical approaches or themes for research of dance and society (Spencer, 1986). These themes include examining dance through the lens of cathartic theory, as a theory of self-generation, from theories of boundary display, as a theory of communitas and anti-structure, and from functionalist theories of dance as an educational tool and for transmission and maintenance of sentiments. Spencer concludes by recommending future research of uncharted deep structures of dance (1986).

Of particular interest for my study was Spencer’s references to dance as Durkheim’s collective consciousness, Curt Sachs on the universality of dance, and Radcliffe-Brown’s

comments on using dance to maintain homeostatic model of society. Spencer also discussed dance as an activity to maintain community in the face of structural divides (what Victor Turner referred to as *communitas*) (Spencer, 1986). Spencer's conclusions are that dance should be studied as a part of a "wider analysis of ritual action" and that "society creates the dance, and it is to society that we must turn to understand it" (Spencer, 1986, p. 38), which indicates that dance is important to study, but to understand the nuances of meaning, we need to study society. This position is a slight departure from previous studies, in that it not only implies dance can reveal information about society and culture, but also that it is necessary to understand the society and culture to understand what the dance can reveal. Although this may seem to be a circular chicken-and-egg sort of argument, his analysis makes clear that different approaches are necessary to study dance because it encompasses much complexity about society. My interpretation is that Spencer is touching on the interactive nature of dance; i.e., that it both reflects and shapes society, so that both must be studied in order to understand the dynamic relationship between them.

The next group of studies could be classified as using dance to research issues of ethnic identity, political resistance, and symbolic reworking of cultural performance, both from historical and socio-anthropological perspectives. The 1990s were rich with ethnographic and anthropological studies of dance, often exploring the issues of ethnicity and conflict. A number of these were focused on one of my areas of interest, Mexican and Latin American Folkloric Dances. Typically, these studies focus on particular festival-related performances and detail enactment and embodiment of ethnic identities, which are also instrumental to social movements and social change. These studies move from dance as

an indicator of social history, to the use of dance as a cultural space for working through ethnic and personal identities, to dance as a symbol of ethnic group membership and pride, to the use of dance as a proactive practice for social change, and ultimately, to the use of dance to proactively create community.

In-depth research into particular dance forms often reveal complicated social histories, in which the dances reflect major shifts in cultures, by being reviled or exalted, depending on social agendas. For example, art historian Robert Farris Thompson did a historical study on the Argentine Tango (2005) that explains its roots in the lower classes and African slave culture, later to be transformed into high-class ballroom dance. The Tango is now taught as one of the “national” dances of Argentina and is taught to children in public grade schools (Thompson, 2005). Thompson points out that art, including dance, is intimately tied to the social history of the culture in which it is created.

Dance historian Judith Chazin-Bennahum, in her history of Ballet during the French Revolution (1988), stated a similar position that dance reflects social history. She connects certain changes in the way ballet was perceived and performed with the social changes across Europe as a result of the French Revolution (Chazin-Bennahum, 1988). In a more recent study, dance historian Jennifer Homans makes a similar argument and expands the research to the influence of Balanchine on ballet into the late 20th century (Homans, 2010).

Anthropologist Olga Najera Ramirez (1989, 1998; Ramirez, Cantu, & Romero, 2009) did an excellent set of studies on the history and meaning of Mexican regional dances. Her major work was on re-enactments of indigenous dance in Guadalajara, Mexico, and the indigenous resistance to the Spanish conquest (and later, to the dominant culture) that are

represented in the performances (Ramirez, 1998). Ramirez also did a historical accounting of the spread of Mexican Folkloric Dances from Mexico to the U.S. (Ramirez, 1989). Her methods included historical investigation as well as ethnographic study. Ramirez's account of the spread of these dances opened my eyes on the real, tangible possibilities of using dance to teach not only history and culture, but also social relationships and political change.

Similarly, anthropologist Sylvia Rodriguez's work on the hybrid development of the Mexican-American version of the Matachines Dance in the upper Rio Grande Valley (Rodriguez, 1996) indicates that dance can be a historical text that speaks differently to those who interpret its meaning in terms of subjugation and resistance simultaneously. These perspectives can have socioeconomic and political implications for ethnic groups in maintaining identity on the one hand, and developing cultural adaptation on the other. In this way, dance and performance can be used as a safe space to work out cultural tensions and cultural critiques. Again, this study is an example of how dance can be more than simply a recreational activity or entertainment.

Along these lines, anthropologist Hermano Vianna did a study of Samba; how the development of this music and dance, along with the ritual festivals that feature it, reflect the development of Brazilian national identity and its need to come to terms with its racially mixed heritage (Vianna, 1999). Again, the music and dance presented in festival performance give space and recognition to minority influences in the culture.

In a similar way, folklorist and performance researcher Anita Gonzales explored Jarocho music, dance, and performance for the purpose of analyzing the performances as cultural identity and as an Afro-Mexican dance form (Gonzalez, 2004). As part of her

research into the Jarocho music and dance, Gonzales conducted interviews and historical research, as well as an in-depth analysis of a theatrical performance (Gonzalez, 2004). Performance of the Jarocho music and dance (as well as its representations) become an artistic, cultural “safe” space to work out cultural tensions, stereotypes, make cultural critique, and to create, redefine, and reinforce identities—in this case, both racial and ethnic.

Dance anthropologist Yvonne Daniel did a study on the Cuban folkloric form of Rumba and Cuban social life, where the Rumba is considered one of the national dances (Daniel, 1995). A dancer and teacher, Daniel did participant observation research in Cuba, living and working with the dancers, rehearsing, learning, and performing the dances (Daniel, 1995). In her study, Daniel’s goal was to trace the dance’s history and development and examine how changes in the dance reflected changes in the social history and shifted cultural attitudes (Daniel, 1995). In pursuit of this goal, Daniel made observations that although the dancers had other jobs and duties, it was the dance, the dance group, and performances that defined the dancers’ day, drove their day-to-day choices, and shaped their daily behaviors (Daniel, 1995). The dancing, rehearsals, and performances were the major focus of their day, their time, and their energies (Daniel, 1995).

Another such study by Zoila S. Mendoza, entitled “Shaping Society through Dance: Mestizo Ritual Performance in the Peruvian Andes,” made a strong argument that Mestizo Ritual not only helped participants come to terms with cultural tensions, but allowed a way for both indigenous and mestizo (mixed) peoples to carve out status and cultural identity, not only in individual terms, but in the dominant culture (Mendoza, 2000). Through the “folklorization” of ritual performances, marginalized groups can receive status and

recognition and can effect social and cultural change within their communities (Mendoza, 2000). Thus, the dances not only helped form and reinforce cultural identities for individuals, but also created cultural categories through recognition of the performance of their folkloric dances. This study indicates a shift of emphasis from dance as a cultural space to work out ethnic identities, to recognition of ethnic identities, to effecting cultural change by its performance. This change of emphasis on the role of dance in society and culture was intriguing and inspired me to look for similar effects in my research.

Another historical study was presented by dance scholar Linda J. Tomko, entitled “Dancing Class: Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Divides in American Dance, 1890-1920” (Tomko, 1999). This excellent history explores the role that dance played in defining gender, ethnicity, and social class during the turn of the last century (Tomko, 1999). Tomko ties dance to the Settlement House movement, the physical health/fitness culture trends of the time, and the attempts to teach diversity and tolerance through folk dance (1999). This research overlapped with some of the research done by Anne Schley Dr. Duggan, but highlighted it in a different perspective, giving the dance a more important, proactive role in society. It was this idea of dance, especially folk dance, being placed in a socially proactive role that began to reshape my views about dance.

Along these lines, Mirjana Lausevic, an ethnomusicologist, did a study on the popularity of Balkan folk dances in the U.S. (Lausevic, 2007). This study and Tomko’s research dovetail nicely, as Lausevic recounts the history of the folk dance movement in the U.S., from the turn of the last century until the turn of the present century, including the links with the Settlement House Movement and the Physical Fitness/Education Movement

(Lausevic, 2007). Lausevic also did a number of interviews with American practitioners of Balkan folk dance, pointing out that the dances display representations and symbols of ideals that the practitioners wish to attain, maintain, and/or reclaim (Lausevic, 2007). By performing the music and dance, participants attempt to manifest these ideals in their daily lives. In a comprehensive approach, Lausevic uses several different methods to triangulate and validate her research, including historical documents, performance analysis, interviews, participant observation, and surveys (Lausevic, 2007).

Anthropologist Alicia Carmona examined both folkloric dance and soccer playing (one activity generally evolved into the other within this group) in her research on Bolivian immigrants working in Argentina, and how these activities helped to preserve both ethnic identity and community (Carmona, 2008). In this innovative study, Carmona used the model of Communities of Practice to analyze her observations (Carmona, 2008). Evolved from theories of Situated Learning and apprenticeship models, the concept of a Community of Practice was developed by anthropologist Jean Lave and computer analyst Etienne Wenger to describe the dynamic present in a community that is formed around a particular activity or cultural practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999). Used to describe the social dynamics in a vast array of different communities, from pre-industrial to virtual communities, this model is both ecological and interactive, creating a useful tool for analysis.

Carmona's arguments included the observation that participation resulted in a sense of belonging to the group, group and ethnic identity, cohesiveness of community, mutual social and instrumental support, and cohesiveness of Self (Carmona, 2008). As a result,

immigrants who participated in this community experienced more social, emotional, and instrumental support, and were less likely to find themselves in difficulties (Carmona, 2008). While this study was not focused exclusively on the dance, folkloric dance was one of the prime activities that indicated membership in the group (along with soccer, usually done before the dancing began) (Carmona, 2008). The community benefits one acquired as a result of belonging to the group were directly related to participating in the dancing and game-playing (Carmona, 2008). This study opened the possibility that the effects of participating in folkloric dance could be translated into a community perspective.

In 2001, *Western Folklore*, an academic journal that publishes studies of anthropology, history, folklore, ethnology, musicology, and dance, devoted its Spring/Summer issue to folkloric dance groups as Communities of Practice, based on the Lave/Wenger model. In the guest editors' introduction, Paul Jordan-Smith and Laurel Horton gave a meta-analysis of the articles included in that issue (Jordan-Smith & Horton, 2001), including the use of the term "community," as opposed to *communitas* (Turner, 1969), or group, or web, or social network. Rather than debating the terminology, the authors accepted the Wenger model of Community of Practice (Wenger, 1999) as a working concept for analyzing the dynamics of dance groups that expand the social networks beyond the confines of the group itself.

One of the most interesting studies on the function of dance in community came from an unexpected source, William H. McNeill, a social historian who specializes in military history (McNeill, 1995). In his work, *Keeping Together in Time: Dance and Drill in Human History*, he builds a case that human accomplishments, from mere survival to the

conquest of nations, to the building of great monuments, have all necessitated the use of rhythmic, physical effort, which also creates social bonding (1995). The thesis of McNeill's study is that "Moving our muscles rhythmically and giving voice consolidate group solidarity by altering human feelings" and that "this sort of human behavior deserves to be investigated by historians, sociologists, psychologists, physiologists, and a host of other specialists" (McNeill, 1995, p. viii), and that anthropologists had opened the door for such studies. McNeill cites extensive historical research of the use of drill and dance among soldiers and warriors, which not only sharpened skills and timing, but also created a unique bond between soldiers as a result of engaging in this practice together (McNeill, 1995). McNeill refers to this special bond as "muscular bonding," by which he means "the euphoric fellow feeling that prolonged and rhythmic muscular movement arouses among nearly all participants in such exercises" (McNeill, 1995, pp. 2-3). McNeill points out that this "muscular bonding" is what some people refer to loosely as "esprit de corps" or team spirit, but McNeill proposes that the bonding takes place much more deeply than these terms imply, and often resides below the level of awareness, because it activates those pathways of emotion and movement in the older parts of the brain (McNeill, 1995). McNeill also cites research of sociologists studying troops from World War II, who "discovered that what kept men fighting was not propaganda nor words of any kind, but an intense fellow-feeling for those close at hand and sharing imminent, obvious danger," implying that their primary motivation for continued soldiering was out of loyalty to their peers, rather than blind obedience (McNeill, 1995, pp. 9-10; Shils & Janowitz, 1948).

McNeill believes that rhythmic movement and song have served to unite group solidarity from the earliest days of our prehistory.

Perhaps, too, genetic selection in favor of individuals and groups that enhanced social solidarity most vivaciously through dancing may have altered neural linkages of the sympathetic nervous system...Behavioral changes presumably acted selectively upon genetic variations, rewarding some and penalizing others.

My suggestion therefore boils down to the proposition that among our ancestors the habit of dancing together probably began to have a strong positive effect on survival before articulate language arose; and that this trait most probably established itself among *Homo erectus* bands on the African savanna, at a time when hunting larger and larger animals began to assume a greater place in our ancestors' food supply. (McNeill, 1995, p. 31)

In his conclusions, McNeill reveals that he believes that “muscular bonding” not only makes armies work better together, but all communities through history have benefited from this particular kind of social bonding (McNeill, 1995). McNeill believes that in the wake of the wars in the last century, drill has become less popular as a community activity, and with urbanization (and suburbanization), village life, with its communal sports activities, community dancing, and agricultural work, is quickly disappearing, and that few rhythmic, physical activities are now available to create the same level of social bonding at the community level (McNeill, 1995). He states, “Our contemporary disregard of this aspect of human sociality is unwise and probably also unsustainable over the long haul” and that the “dilemma is acute” (McNeill, 1995, pp. 157, 155). McNeill believes, however, that finding new ways for engaging groups in communal, physical, rhythmic activities, such as community dancing, could recapture this social bonding.

Muscular expressions of membership in such communities, by consolidating them and enhancing their emotional vibrancy, can conceivably take the place that village dancing did in times past by providing a fundamental cement for all levels of human society once again. (McNeill, 1995, pp.155-156)

These were all fine studies that did much to inspire my research. What these studies did not address, which I hope to do in my research, is the embodied factor of the dance, and what a powerful influence embodiment presents. In previous studies that mentioned embodiment, the human body was often portrayed as performing as an individual entity, or alternatively, as an individual in a group activity. This study was intended to point out that the embodiment quality of dance and dance-related activities can form social bonds (as noted by McNeill) and create body schemas that may reside below the level of conscious awareness, making dance a powerful, yet subtle way to teach and learn social behaviors.

Also, rather than to consider dance as an artifact or mere indicator of culture and social change, my research presents the argument that dance, like media, tools, or technology, interacts with culture, so as to both reflect and shape society simultaneously. Dance can communicate at a very basic level—at the level of the human body—which transcends the use of any human language or technology as a means for connecting us with others.

Related Social, Psycho-physiological, and Developmental Studies

In investigating the literature in the fields of social sciences, psychology, and psycho-physiology that related to this area of research, there is much to choose from that is broadly “related” to the research topic, but little that is specifically targeted to dance. This was both frustrating and inspiring at the same time. Frustrating in the sense that I had to construct some of my arguments with research that was marginally related to dance but broadly related to other activities, and inspiring in the sense that although I have met many dance aficionados who agreed with my assertions, relatively little research has been done on

dance to support these assertions, putting my research in the unenviable position of being on the “bleeding edge” and all that description implies.

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of this work, I was able to draw material from psychology, social psychology, neuro-psychology, developmental psychology (including studies of aging), psychology of music, therapeutic studies (including body work, dance therapy, and music therapy), social history, music studies, dance studies, anthropology, and ethnomusicology. In this section, the emphasis is on the psychological research, which overlaps with some of the other fields, as did the previous section.

The studies reviewed in this section touch on the following areas of research. Although these areas do not deal with dance specifically, they are included in the activity of dance, and are thus relevant to the study at hand. These factors and research areas related to dance include the following topics: (a) synchrony; (b) body mapping; (c) peri-personal space; and (d) body image versus body schema (or body mapping) (Gallagher, 2005).

There are numerous studies on the use of music and dance in education to enhance learning, language, math, and cognitive ability (Dewey, 1934/2005, 1938/1997; Gardner, 2011; Polya, 1945/2004). There are also a number of studies in Developmental and Life Span Psychology linking play, music, and dance to cognitive abilities, creativity, learning, and normal development (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969). There are also a number studies on the use of dance and music in therapy, rehabilitation, and healing (Hanna, 1979). Most of these studies are beyond the scope of the research described here.

This literature review primarily focuses on studies to build a case for music and dance creating community. That said, however, social bonding creates a situation that is

more conducive to learning, creativity, cognitive development, healing, and subjective well-being, so there is potential for overlap in goals and related evidence.

Some studies are notable and give examples of how dance (and music) in particular have qualities that contribute to human functioning in specific ways. For example, in June 2003, a study appeared in the *New England Journal of Medicine* describing a study of leisure activities and the risk of dementia in elderly adults (Verghese et al., 2003). The findings state, “Among leisure activities, reading, playing board games, playing musical instruments, and dancing were associated with a reduced risk of dementia” (Verghese et al., 2003, n.p.). The study investigated 11 physical activities, including playing tennis or golf, swimming, bicycling, dancing, participating in group exercises, playing team games such as bowling, walking for exercise, climbing more than two flights of stairs, doing housework, and babysitting (Verghese et al., 2003). However, among these physical activities, “Dancing was the only physical activity associated with a lower risk of dementia” (Verghese et al., 2003, n.p.).

Dancing also had a larger effect on individuals (75%), almost twice as much as any of the other non-physical leisure activities that lowered the risk of dementia (Powers, 2003). This seems to indicate that although playing music, reading, and crossword puzzles all had a positive effect, it was not nearly as strong as the activity of dancing. One reviewer of this work speculated that possibly the real-time coordination and decision-making and creativity involved in performing partnered dance was a factor in stimulating and protecting the brain from dementia (Powers, 2003). It is also possible that the social aspects of dancing among

the elderly (predominantly Ballroom and Folk Dance) could contribute to the improved showing of dance in this study.

Synchrony studies also support the proposition that dance may create social bonding in particular ways. For example, two studies used synchrony and found heightened feelings of affiliation and higher likelihood of cooperative behaviors (Hove & Risen, 2009; Wiltermuth & Heath, 2009). Studies in synchrony are directly related to studies of community dance because the dancing itself is an exercise in synchronous movement. Thus, these studies on synchronous behavior give evidence to support the assertions of this research study that the activity of dance can increase activities related to affiliation and cooperation.

David DeSteno and Piercarlo Valdesolo (2011) using several different techniques in Social Psychology studies concerning trust, camaraderie, compassion, and feelings of similarity. Their first study indicated that merely being assigned to a group label tripled the likelihood of receiving altruistic and compassionate behavior (helping behaviors) from one's peers (DeSteno & Valdesolo, 2011). The next study tested whether feelings of connectedness could be created, even if one was not assigned or part of a designated group. This study used only a brief session of synchronized hand-tapping before testing paired participants. By initiating a short session of coordinated hand-tapping, feelings of trust, similarity, and compassion were tripled, and hand-tapping had a more powerful effect than other activities (such as talking about similarities or mirroring behavior) (DeSteno & Valdesolo, 2011). The perception of connection and commonality can be initiated in these simple, small-scale situations involving synchronized movements and do not necessitate

obvious group affiliations. Concerning moving in synchrony, the authors had the following comments. “It acts as a kind of social glue, binding individuals into a larger whole” (DeSteno & Valdesolo, 2011, p. 141). They also stated, “Plus, the more similar they felt, the more compassion they experienced, the more willing they were to help, and the longer they spent helping him with the onerous task” (DeSteno & Valdesolo, 2011, p. 142).

The latter study utilizing hand-tapping creates a setting that is similar to a community dance setting, where groups of people interact by participating in dance and making music. Instead of just hand-tapping, the entire body interacts and coordinates with other humans, negotiating time and space, touching, coordinating feet, hands, and arms, and creating aesthetic patterns and formations. Individuals participate in synchronized group activities, much as the study describes, but on a larger scale.

Related to feelings of compassion and affiliation is also the issue of trust, which appears in other empirical studies of collaborative activities. For example, Bertram F. Malle and Sara D. Hodges (2005) point out that in a series of empirical studies, it was observed during collaborative physical tasks that people take their visual cues for behavior from the actions of others. These actions of others were also perceived as more “authentic” than facial expressions and a more reliable indicator of the mood and thoughts in the minds of others (Malle & Hodges, 2005). In dance, it is necessary to learn to trust others to move in assigned directions, in order to avoid collisions and create formations. In partner dance, it is also necessary to have a certain amount of trust in the partner when executing intricate patterns and difficult moves in order to avoid injury.

From another perspective, coordinating with others in dance deals with moving through space, which includes issues of personal space, peri-personal space, touch, connections, and ultimately, body schema. People who dance, work, and exercise together become accustomed to coordinating with others and to being flexible concerning personal space. In fact, as evidenced from personal experience and in numerous informal conversations, it is common to hear dancers talk about peers during dance as feeling a part of a larger whole or of partners moving as if they were extensions of each other's body.

In one of the classic studies in moral psychology, the moral dilemma of the runaway trolley car, proximity and touch were shown to make a significant difference in the subjects' reaction times (Greene, Nystrom, Engell, Darley, & Cohen, 2004). When the moral dilemma is framed as a trolley switch, with one way killing five workers, or the other way killing only one worker, brain scans indicate only the reasoning parts of the brain are activated. Reaction times among participants are short, and they predominantly choose the more utilitarian alternative of throwing the switch that dooms one person as opposed to five persons (Greene et al., 2004). However, when the moral dilemma is framed in such a way that instead of throwing a switch, the participant is asked to push a person off a bridge in order to save five other persons, brain scans reveal that the motor and emotional (i.e., older) parts of the brain are activated, reaction times are longer, and participants report being more conflicted about their decision (Greene et al., 2004). One author (Eagleman, 2011) speculates that just the perception of proximity of personal space and the act of touch is enough to fire the areas of the brain that make decisions about behavior that are below conscious awareness.

Studies of body image and body schema, ranging from the pathology of phantom limbs to the practice of crafts and martial arts, indicate that regular handling of tools and the proximity of others can be incorporated into one's body mapping, making physical interactions automatic and without conscious reflection. Studies on body schema and peri-personal space indicate that the brain automatically adjusts and adapts to the representation of the body and its "bubble" of peri-personal space for tool use (Holmes & Spence, 2004). For example, a martial artist mastering a tool or weapon will incorporate that tool into their body map (or body schema), so the brain treats it like another part of the body (Blakeslee & Blakeslee, 2007).

It should be noted that there is a difference between body image and body schema (or body mapping) (Gallagher, 2005). Body image tends to be more evaluative, given cultural values, whereas body schema (or body mapping) tends to be more functional, allowing one to perceive the body in time and space to maneuver around physical objects and other persons. Both are relevant in the activity of dance, where mastery of the performance of dance can shape both.

Regular physical practice can shape the perception of what forms the embodied Self (Ramachandran & Blakeslee, 1999). In arts and crafts, one often hears the expression, "the tool becoming transparent," or in other words, the brush (or other art tool) becomes an extension of the artist's brain and body, to enable full expression of the artist's vision. A similar experience occurs in dancing, in which partners learn to anticipate each other's movements in such a way that they can seem to function as a single unit. Just as with regular use of tools and equipment, the regular practice of synchronous movement with

other persons within one's peri-personal space can make a similar adjustment in the brain's body schema to include the other person (Blakeslee & Blakeslee, 2007).

In cases of body mapping (body schema) disorders, dance has been found to be helpful in retraining the brain and adjusting the "body mandala" (system of body maps carried in the brain) to more realistic functioning, putting the brain more in touch with the body (Blakeslee & Blakeslee, 2007). Participating in dance on a regular basis helps to train the brain in forming the relevant system of body maps needed to create the patterns and formations required by the dance.

Probably most relevant to my research is the work of musician and neuro-psychologist Daniel J. Levitin, who has done extensive research in the psychology of music (Levitin, 2007, 2009). Levitin makes the argument that the human brain has evolved a capacity for music, art, and dance in the same way that it has evolved a capacity for language, and these are all ways of communicating in a uniquely human way (Levitin, 2007, 2009). Levitin asserts that certain evolutionary developments have pre-disposed humans not only to speech, but to music, dance, and other arts, as forms of communication and social bonding, and these activities have all played an important part in the survival and evolution of human beings (Levitin, 2007, 2009). Levitin further asserts that music and dance and other arts have served important functions in human society, including creation of social bonds, communication of emotions, selection of mates, easing of social tensions, enhancing social and individual harmony, passing along important survival information, enabling large-scale work projects, enhancing memory, and even enhancing brain development itself (Levitin, 2007, 2009).

In less industrialized societies, many of the activities we associate with arts and recreation are much more integrated than in more industrialized and Westernized societies. Singing, music, dance, painting, drawing, costume-making, crafts, martial arts, sports, and games are seen as integrated processes, rather than as discrete, mutually exclusive activities. Some individuals might be better than others at various processes, but everyone is part of the communal activity. Thus, it is useful to think of these activities as important cultural practices that enhance social bonding and social functioning.

Recent brain research utilizing brain scans can illustrate how listening, playing, or thinking about music can utilize different parts of the brain in particular ways (Sacks, 2008), and in different parts of the brain than those associated with language (Levitin, 2007, 2009). Levitin presents evidence that certain structures in the human brain, which are not present in other animals, allow humans to make music and art (Levitin, 2007, 2009).

Levitin expresses a position similar to my own that music and dance have historically been intertwined, often more as a continuum rather than mutually exclusive or discrete processes (Levitin, 2009). However, my argument is that dance, because of its physicality and embodied quality, creates another dimension of bonding (at a physical level and below the level of awareness) in addition to the benefits of music described by Levitin (2007, 2009), and similar to that described by McNeill (1995)—dance creates a stronger social bond (muscular bonding) than by music alone.

Additionally, my argument includes the concept that this social bonding is a dynamic, continuous, interactive, and ecological process that can change both the individual internally and externally, as well as the community where the individual participates, and

also affect the ecology where the community resides. And finally, my argument proposes that these bonds and schemas must be periodically renewed (practiced) in order to maintain the strength of the social bonding and a presence in body schema; otherwise, they begin to weaken and fade. Conversely, my argument is similar to McNeill's conclusions (and similar to Connerton's thesis), that without regular, physical cultural practices (such as community dances and activities), social bonds can weaken and communities can deteriorate.

Another study that sheds light upon the assertion that cultural practices can create social bonding and community is a classic study from Social Psychology, often referred to as the "Robbers Cave Experiment" (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1954/1961). It was named for the Robbers Cave State Park in Oklahoma, where Sherif and his researchers posed as camp personnel and observed 22 boys, aged 11-12, who were unknown to each other. Hypotheses investigated included (a) whether the boys would create social group structures, hierarchies, and rules; and (b) if conflict could be created between social groups by introducing competition and frustration. The first stage of the experiment was referred to as "in-group formation," in which social groups were formed and members self-identified with the respective groups. The second stage was referred to as the "friction phase," in which the groups were put in competition with each other in camp games for prizes, when negative attitudes and behaviors were observed. The third and final stage of the experiment was referred to as the "integration stage," in which attempts to reduce tensions between the groups were introduced in the form of "superordinate goals" that could be achieved only through cooperative action.

The conclusions reached by Sherif et al. (1954/1961) included that putting groups in competition with each other can create (or aggravate) hostile and aggressive behaviors between groups, and mere contact between the groups is not sufficient to reduce tensions between groups. The researchers also concluded that friction between groups can be reduced and positive relations maintained only through the introduction of superordinate goals that require unified actions and cooperation between groups.

It is this latter stage of the experiment that is most relevant to the study at hand. In community dancing, strangers are put into contact with each other in order to execute the goal of performing a dance. The more complicated the moves and patterns, the more cooperation and coordination are needed to reach the goal. If the group also does public performances, then the need for cooperative engagement is heightened in order to successfully produce the performance. This integration stage of the study by Sherif et al. (1954/1961) also supports McNeil's assertions that physical engagement with others (in drill, work, or dance) is necessary for social cohesion of the group. Sherif et al.'s study also supports the assertions of my study, that physical cultural practices, such as dance, create social bonding, social cohesion, common goals, coordination, cooperative action, and community.

Interdisciplinary Approaches and Theoretical Underpinnings

Interdisciplinary research is as challenging as it is innovative and fresh. One of the most difficult aspects of doing interdisciplinary research is finding a theoretical framework that works and is meaningful across disciplinary boundaries. The research question put to

this research is how dance, as an embodied cultural practice, may contribute to shaping human action and social interactions.

Because the nature of this research called for a theoretical perspective that could include body, movement, activity, dance, culture, and communication, finding an interdisciplinary theoretical framework was one of the most difficult tasks for the researcher. Some of the theoretical frameworks which position these disciplines as distinct are discussed to establish a unified interpretive framework.

Philosophically, this research examines a theory of mind that is loosely based upon concrete metaphors of the body and ordinary day-to-day experiences and activities. This perspective is reflected in the current work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who employ metaphors of the body and bodily activities to shape human thought (Johnson, 1990, 2008; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). This is a theory of mind implicated in the research question, which challenges the mind-body dualism put forth by Rene Descartes (Damasio, 1994; Descartes, 1999).

Similarly, from Community Psychology, Ecological Theory perspective (Barker, 1971; Gist & Lubin, 1989) presents a dynamic, systemic approach, which sees individuals acting, interacting, and responding within the physical environment, in a social context, and interacting with other individuals. From an embodied perspective, Gist and Lubin (1989) used this theory as an approach for dealing with groups of individuals traumatized by disasters, using ritualized behaviors to help people cope with their situations in the aftermath of tragedy.

Ecological Theory is also a useful theory for investigating the development process of groups and organizations (Hanson & Lubin, 1995). For this study, this theory created a world view that was flexible, portable, and scalable from an individual (internally and externally), all the way up to large groups, including the environment and relationships with other individuals.

Both of these theoretical approaches view humans as dynamic entities interacting with the environment and other humans, and using interactive everyday experiences to shape thoughts and actions in the form of a feedback loop. We use concrete interactive experiences as information to shape our thoughts, which, in turn, shape our actions.

Several Social Psychology traditions are touched on in this study, including Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1976, 1985, 1997) with its emphasis on interactive learning and role models, Realistic Group Conflict Theory (Sherif et al., 1954/1961), as well as theories concerning trust (DeSteno & Valdesolo, 2011). These theories explore how humans bond, learn, and form attachments through interactive and joint behaviors. Of particular relevance to the study are the studies of synchrony, affiliation, and cooperation (Hove & Risen, 2009; Wiltermuth & Heath, 2009).

Related to these theories are Neuropsychological perspectives on mirroring neurons, synchronous activities, cognitive processing, brain development, and body mapping. These theories are based on neurological research studies that are beyond the scope of this study, but are helpful in explaining, understanding, and giving insight to observed joint activities.

From the fields of Philosophy and early Social Psychology, William James was one of the early adopters of Pragmatism and a proponent of “radical empiricism” and the

concept that any idea has value and validity based solely upon experience and practical outcomes of action (James, 1995). This perspective laid the groundwork for the later works of George Herbert Mead, Charles Cooley, and Herbert Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism.

From Educational Psychology, the work of John Dewey, as a Pragmatist and "Instrumentalist," focused on the activity of mind and body (Alexander, 1987; Dewey, 1938/1997). He also held perspectives that historical documents were always "reconstructed" for the times in which they are later read (Alexander, 1987; Dewey, 1938/1997), anticipating modern perspectives of Cultural Memory. Dewey also promoted the teaching of the arts in school as important for the education of all members of society, for the arts attempts to capture experiences and communicate them to others (Dewey, 1934/2005). Dewey emphasized that members of a community need to be active participants in group activities, and this was necessary to promote civility (Boydston, 1981/2008). The importance of this experience of participation is essential for the understanding of social life as a systemic, interactive whole, rather than as disjunctive parts (Alexander, 1987; Dewey, 1938/1997).

The following segment summarizing Dewey's philosophy embraces some of the fundamental assumptions underpinning the research of the study at hand. Dewey's philosophy sees the human organism as an embodied entity that interacts with the environment, and meaning is mediated by physical experiences.

Dewey's metaphysics establishes the context for his understandings of meaning as a transactional event mediated by symbolic communication. Although experience arises from the interaction of the organism with its environment, for human beings it is primarily an event within a social or cultural context, a "lifeworld." The world of human activity constitutes the matrix within which any symbol system must function. The body provides the primary structures for meaning in its capacity for

organized action. Dewey severely criticizes the sort of behaviorism which sees the live body as a passive or reactive stimulus-response mechanism. The body is better regarded as a center of life activity, as a developer of experience, an explorer of its world. It is the central instrument in organizing the world into an integrated order through its own activity....The primary demand is for experience to grow in a dynamic but coherent way. There is a general impulsion for wholeness in all activity, according to Dewey, and art and aesthetic experience are but refined developments of this essential desire to make sense of the world. In this manner, the live body connects the creature with its environment actively and thereby provides for the very possibility of meaning. (Alexander, 1987, p. xviii)

This physical experience of the lifeworld also includes the shared world of a social network. Interactions and communications shape our perceptions of the world, of ourselves, and how we make meaning of those perceptions.

Because human beings are social, they require a shared world which allows for common ends to be articulated and for cooperative activity to be regulated so that they may be attained. Symbolic interaction arises from this need. Meaning, in other words, originates in the act of communication. Communication is a process involving members as participants; the members, moreover, understand themselves as conjoint participants and use that understanding as part of the regulative meaning of the situation. Individuals become aware of their individuality only through a social context and the ability to regard themselves from the social perspective. The theory of meaning which emerges from such a view is far removed from that which attempts to see meaning in purely formal terms, as a timeless, impersonal structure. Meaning is rather the very struggle to make the world coherent; it is the on-going process of trying to make sense. This is a communally shared task or project. (Alexander, 1987, p. xviii)

Again from Psychology, the concept of Flow was helpful, for its premise is that by engaging in activities that bring about a “Flow” experience, one interacts and engages with others and other activities that broaden the learning experience (Csíkszentmihályi, 1994, 1998). Flow activities and the immersion experiences that they imply lead to broader learning opportunities. This concept became a driving force in my own activities and inspired much of the research for this study.

Traditionally in Sociology, there are three classical theoretical approaches to research, i.e., Structural/Functionism, Symbolic Interactionism, and Conflict Theory. The approach in this study is weighted in the direction of Symbolic Interactionism, in the tradition of Mead, Blumer, Becker, and others, as reflected in the immersion experience of joint activity. For Mead, Blumer, and Becker, it was joint action and collaborative activities that create community and society. For Becker, this was particularly true for arts-based communities, or art worlds, where people collaborate in order to create art events and works of art (Becker, 1974; 1984a; 1984b, 1989).

From a Communications Studies perspective, Norbert Wiener's biological model of the cybernetic feedback loop, again, emphasizes the interactive, ecological nature of an organism to adapt and adjust to environmental factors based on a continuous feedback loop. This ecological model has been used in numerous disciplines and has inspired similar theories, including Information Theory, Artificial Intelligence, and Embodied Intelligence.

In the fields of Language and Dance, the Gesture Theory of Language and the Language Theory of Dance are relevant. The former views gestures as the origin of language, and the latter views dance movement as a form of non-verbal communication, not unlike a proto-language (Armstrong, Stokoe, & Wilcox, 1995). In Anthropology, there is also a co-evolution theory that language and gestures/rituals developed inexorably in parallel, making them essential media of communication in social contexts (Rappaport, 1979, 1999).

The aspect shared by all these theoretical perspectives from different disciplines is that they are all based on activity and are all interactive, dynamic, and ecological. Humans

learn and communicate in a context of immersive, interactive, dynamic activity. The response (or feedback) to this activity creates a continuous feedback loop that allows humans to adjust and adapt to the world around them. By examining human activity, we can learn more about how humans learn, process, adapt, and act.

This brief overview positions this work within a constellation of particular perspectives that are common to different disciplines, even though they carry their own terminology and histories. The theoretical framework that was selected as a best fit to this matrix or nexus of theories was the Theory of Practice, sometimes also referred to as Social Theory of Practice or Theory of Social Practice. This interdisciplinary perspective is largely based on the work of Bourdieu, Giddens, Mead, and others, to describe Social Theory that investigates human activities and practices, rather than specific subjective states or social structures.

The current study examines the embodied activity of dance as a social and cultural practice. It explores the activities and behaviors of individuals interacting with others, engaging in joint action to create communities, and the social dynamics within those groups.

Theoretical Considerations (World View) of this Study

This research project is an interdisciplinary study that integrates a number of diverse disciplines, including Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Arts Research, Education, Communication Studies, Information Science, Performance Studies, and Dance Studies. The research referenced and the theoretical frameworks used are also interdisciplinary, but mainly draw on the fields of Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, and Communications.

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the project, it was helpful to find theoretical frameworks that were also interdisciplinary and able to traverse across different fields of research to create a common language of concepts. With that in mind, the “World View” theoretical perspective used for this study is Ecological Systems Theory. This theoretical framework is interdisciplinary, commonly used in the fields of Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Communications, Biology, and others.

Ecological Systems Theory is a flexible perspective that makes it useful for organizing concepts. The theory can scale from systems within the organism (the human body), to the world as global system. Systems can be layered within each other, into subsystems and supra-systems. Systems can be examined as stand-alone entities (for simplification) or as complex sets of interacting or overlapping entities that evolve over time. Systems are dynamic, adaptive, and self-organizing, responding to their environments, internal pressures, and situational changes or influences.

Ecological Systems Theory embraces other useful theories that are implicit in its ontology. For example, Social Learning Theory and Situated Learning Theory (Communities of Practice) fit well within the scope of this world view, but are not adequate theories in themselves to explain all the nuances of this study. As a result, these theories were used as a loose framework to shape the early stages of the research. Later, using Grounded Theory Methodology, a theoretical model was constructed to describe the social dynamics that existed in these dance groups while under investigation.

Dance is a complex and integrated activity, an embodied practice that integrates social, cognitive, emotional, cultural, and physical factors and skills. Dance is performed by

individuals, but it is also a collaborative, interactive, phenomenological, participatory activity. As a result, dance groups become their own social systems, their own micro-communities within—and interacting with—the community at large.

At this level, it makes sense to examine the dance as a cultural practice, and the dance group as a Community of Practice—i.e., of dance—but with an eye on the fact that it draws on, and interacts with, a larger system—i.e., the community at large. At the same time, it is important to recognize that dance is a physical practice involving the participation of individuals, the interaction of individuals, and the discipline of individual bodies in motion.

Theory/Theories of Body

For centuries, theorists have debated the place and importance of the body and physical existence. From a philosophical perspective, one's epistemology depends on one's views of our physical presence in the world and what it means. Our experiences, our knowledge, our history, and our perceptions of the world are all filtered through our human mechanism, the body.

Dance, by its very nature, is an embodied, physical, and psychical activity. Our views of the body are thus relevant, because those views reflect on how we dance and how we perceive dance. Unfortunately, modern Western civilization perspectives have moved away from the Greek philosophical ideal of a healthy balance of “body, mind, and spirit,” to a position of denigrating the physical and viewing the human body as base, vulgar, or lowly. As a result, activities and research regarding ordinary, everyday, embodied activities tend to be perceived as less important or less worthy than more detached, abstract pursuits. Yet, the

human body is the nexus of our life experience. One cannot live, cannot be human, without the human body, with all its multi-faceted elements.

Modern Western Civilization has been influenced by the dualism of Descartes, which shaped scientific thought and academic research by assuming a separation of body and mind, with the former being the purview of science and the latter as the purview of religion. This duality has hobbled some lines of research that had the goal of investigating embodied practices by artificially and unnecessarily separating the physical from development of affect and cognition.

Fortunately, some theorists have allowed space for the body and embodied practices to be included into their theoretical frameworks. It is useful to examine some of these more integrated theoretical frameworks, as an example of perspectives that run counter to the duality of modern scientific theory and methods.

At the most basic level, Norbert Wiener (1950, 1954) presented his biologically-based communication theory, which was soon adopted by other disciplines. Wiener described how an organism develops an adaptive feedback loop in relation to its environment, coining the word “cybernetic” to describe this communication of information and the self-adjustment of the organism in reaction to this “feedback.” This concept became the basis for Information Theory and Communication Theory based upon the cybernetic, self-adjusting, feedback loop. This concept scales upward from the level of biological organisms to organisms and to computer systems. This theoretical mechanism is also reflected in Ecological Systems Theory, because systems, like organisms, are seen as self-organizing, adaptive, responsive entities that evolve and adjust to their environments. In

order to maintain its internal balance or homeostasis, the organism adapts to changes in the environment (including other organisms).

For example, George Herbert Mead (1934) approached identity formation as an interactive process. The development of the Self can be seen as an internal system interacting with an external system. As these systems interact, they serve to shape each other. The internal world of the “me” is shaped by the interactions of the “I” with other human beings. This could be compared to looking at the individual’s internal world as a subsystem unto itself (identity and Self), interacting with family systems or other peer social systems, as the Self and identity continue to evolve throughout the lifespan.

Marcel Mauss (2006) presents a case that cultural learning is imposed upon and reflected in techniques of the body through continual social interactions with peers, parents, and authority figures. According to Mauss, these interactions not only shape social behaviors, but also shape physical behaviors, postures, gestures, actions, and style of movement. He gives examples of how cultural differences can create differences in posture, walking, and work (Mauss, 2006). These differences also manifest as form of aesthetic; for example, he notes how Maori women adopt a particular gait, which is culturally learned and encouraged, that is considered attractive and admirable by the Maori (Mauss, 2006).

Similarly, Pierre Bourdieu speaks of “habitus” and “field” (1977), which could easily map to an individual system and its environment. Habitus, for Bourdieu, is that individual life-space that we live and work within, interacting with others, learning through socialization, adapting, and evolving, including the human body itself. Field, for Bourdieu, is that arena where individuals apply their talents, prove their worth, compete for resources,

and deal with what life doles out. Bourdieu's world view is more conflict-based, seeing individuals compete for scarce resources, where collaboration and cooperation can occur, but is done as a trade-off for competition, rather than desirable in itself. Individuals negotiate positions of power in order to protect equilibrium.

Paul Connerton's conceptualization of cultural memory (1989) involves the engagement of individual bodies on a larger scale, pointing out cultural memory is both selective and participatory. Physical participation in annual commemorative events influences and shapes cultural propagation and cultural memory. Physical rituals that are performed become deeply ingrained into human corporeal consciousness and into everyday praxis, so that culture may be passed on seamlessly, and often below the level of awareness. Although Connerton points to rituals and specific commemorative events in his thesis, his ideas blend well in an ecological systems framework, because they help explain the selection process that takes place within systems as they evolve.

Ecological Systems Theory is a useful conceptual framework because it is scalable (from intra-organism, to dyads, to small groups, communities, countries, global networks, and beyond); it is flexible (can be used in a variety of contexts and disciplines); layered (subsystems within systems within supra-systems); considers the environment factors; allows systems to overlap/interact; and explains both complexity and entropy arising within systems (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 2005; O'Connor & Lubin, 1984). Ecological Systems Theory gives a conceptual framework that also explains both homeostasis and change within systems, groups, and cultures, as they adapt, select, and evolve. Systems are not static, but instead are dynamic, cybernetic, adaptive, and self-organizing.

The model of a Community of Practice can be seen as a special case or particular type of system. Based in Situated Learning and Social Learning Theory concepts (in Anthropology, Sociology, and Psychology), a Community of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999) is a group of individuals drawn together by a particular activity or cultural practice (in this case, dance), into a particular setting, for learning, teaching, and performing, based on an interactive, social learning, apprenticeship format (Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger, 1999). This perspective harks back to George Herbert Mead and his conception of society based upon shared human activities, rather than upon values, mores, and belief system. The dynamics are similar to those of Ecological System Theory but goes beyond this general theory to identify specific roles and responsibilities for members of the group, including experts, teachers, learners, participants, and outside supporters who contribute to the “process” of the group.

Although these groups can be competitive (i.e., formally/informally or internally/externally), the primary dynamic for CoPs is one of collectivity, collegiality, community, collaboration, cooperation, coordination, and the sharing of knowledge, rather than competition. Many of the dynamics described in a CoP also blend well with Connerton’s ideas of cultural memory, selection of cultural alternatives, and the practice of commemorative cultural events. The CoP model also provides a model for cultural remembering and collective memory, identifying dynamics and processes of how cultural information is codified, recorded, and passed along to future generations. This concept and how the dynamic of cultural practice serves as a medium to transmit cultural information

from experienced veterans to inexperienced novices is discussed more in depth during the analysis of dance as a Community of Practice.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Methods Overview

Several common research approaches are used in the study. The project is primarily researched as an ethnographic study, supplemented with archival materials. Interviews with founders, long-time members, teachers, and principal participants of the groups provide perspective.

The methodology draws primarily on the following techniques and resources: (a) the examination of archival materials in historic archives, private collections, historical documents, journal articles, books, and archival materials of the dance groups studied; (b) archival materials including scrapbooks, photographs, videos, audio recordings, performance programs, costumes, performance notes, and materials from public institutions and historical centers; e.g., the Guadalupe Center Collection, part of the Historical Missouri Valley Special Collections at the Kansas City Public Library; (c) participant observation of local Folkloric Dance groups at their meetings, events, dance classes, rehearsals, and performances; (d) attendance of public performances of Folkloric Dance; and (e) in-depth interviews with founders, teachers, dancers, participants, and patrons about the group and their reflections about the dance.

Basically, the study began as archival and participant-observer research. The subjects of the study are “subjects at hand” during normal activities related to the dance groups; i.e., their classes, rehearsals, performances, and meetings, which usually occurred at

a community center or similar venue. Interviews become an extension of this initial research.

The participant observational research was focused on local community dance groups, all of which were originally based in local communities and had been in practice for several decades. Each group has historic roots in the neighborhood communities where they operate, and each group has had to adjust and accommodate to changes in their respective communities.

One group was local Mexican Folkloric Dance dancers in the Kansas City area, primarily those in the Latino community, and attached to established and recognized historic Latino community centers, such as Guadalupe Center in Missouri and El Centro in Kansas. The primary dance group of research is the resident Folkloric Dance group at Guadalupe Center, El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco, under the direction of Maria Chaurand and Jaime Reyes. The primary site for the research for this group was the Guadalupe Center in Kansas City, Missouri.

The other folkloric group researched was the Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans, under the direction of Don and JoAnn Lipovac. Although not as active as they were in decades past, the Tamburitzans embrace Eastern European ethnic music, dance, costumes, and customs (including Croatian, Serbian, Slavic, Bulgarian, Russian, and other ethnicities from the Balkan area). Don Lipovac and some of his older students are now trying to resurrect the dance group, to pass on their traditions and teachings to a new generation. the research location for the Tamburitzans was whatever community center they were using at

the time, but primarily, it was the recreation center at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Kansas City, Kansas.

Other groups used for comparison included a Ballroom Dance group that also has a program to teach the dance to children in public schools (Culture through Ballroom Dance); a Modern Dance group that also has a children's dance program; and a Ballet Dance school that teaches children (American Ballet Center). Additionally, my own experiences growing up in my mother's dance school and performance group and my experiences with my own dance students and dance troupe served to add context, insight, and perspective to the research.

The research involved spending time with the groups, their meetings, their dance classes, their rehearsals, and their performances. These groups served to illustrate a comparison of dance groups across ethnicities and communities, including their similarities and differences in development. These groups also illustrated dance groups at different stages of existence, since they began and evolved in different time frames. Additionally, each of these dance groups contributed information about how dance and the dance groups fit into the surrounding community, how they interact with the community, and how they contribute to the community at large.

Some of the immediate questions that arise when investigating community-based dance include (but are not limited to) asking who the participants are, how the dance groups are constructed, what processes or dynamics are involved in the practice of dance, what processes or dynamics are involved within the group, what dynamics exist between the

group and the community at large, and what insights can be gleaned from studying dance as a social activity.

Using qualitative methodology, including heuristic inquiry, participant observation, archival documentation, and interviews, was an appropriate path for research in order to examine the dance practice as a process and the dance group as a dynamic social system, responding and adapting to its community context.

Methodology for this Project

The study of dance in the social sciences has been a relatively novel event. Some good anthropological studies have been done with dance, but dance is still a small part of the field as a topic of study, often combined with music or other cultural practices to justify its study. A handful of studies have been done with dance in sociology, but these studies generally used existing theories, and applied them to the activities surrounding dance as a social phenomenon, rather than looking at the dance itself as a social activity. In other words, the focus has been on the individuals who partake in dance, or the groups who dance, or dance events as a setting for social interaction.

All of these studies are important and informative and served as guidelines for this research, which is concerned with dance as learning and communication. However, it was apparent that existing theories lacked focus on the actual practice of dance and how it offers its own insight into socialization, communication, and the learning process.

Some research also exists on the psychology of dance, particularly in its use in dance therapy, but these studies typically focus on individuals in therapy. Although informative,

these studies do not address dance as a social and cultural activity, nor how dance may contribute to community.

An additional problem is how to study dance and what methodology is most effective. Because dance is a physical, participatory activity, the intangible transmission of skill and social structure are often overlooked. As a result, surveys or structured interviews may not capture the dimensions of the experience of dancing, or may focus the research on the elements of physical practice, which may not be particularly informative for social theory. By focusing on specific questions in a single encounter, the researcher may acquire a snapshot view of a particular issue, but may miss how a practice grows and evolves over time for individuals, groups, and communities, and thus not address dance as a learning process that integrates the role of time and space into the stages of human development.

The research questions that began this study focused on the function of dance within a dance group, and by extension, the surrounding community. The initial general research questions were as follows:

1. What can dance teach us about social interactions?
2. Can dance shape social action?
3. What can dance teach us about social capital and cultural capital?
4. What can be learned from dance about community?
5. Is there a relationship between dance and community?
6. What is the relationship between dance and community?
7. How does dance, as an instrument of cultural transmission, then enable, create, and contribute to community?

These research questions led to more specific questions concerning the relationship between dance and community, including:

1. What purpose does dance serve in a community?
2. How do communities use dance? How do communities use dance as social and cultural practices?
3. How does dance help create community and culture?
4. How does dance contribute to social and cultural structures?
5. How does dance shape human interactions and social structures?
6. How does a dance group function as a Community of Practice?

The specific hypothesis that this study investigates could be phrased as the following statement: “Can dance influence/shape social behavior (and collaborative action)? And if so, how?”

It may be useful to present a working definition of both *dance* and *community* for the purposes of this study. First, there is the issue of defining what is “dance” in a culture, which is often problematic, other than to say it is an embodied cultural practice. In this study, however, the dance groups are practicing previously defined forms of dance that also have documented histories. As such, defining what comprises “dance” is less useful, and documenting the groups’ forms of dance practice is more useful. The dance groups in this study cover a range of performance and social dance, including Folkloric, Ballroom, Classical Modern, and Ballet Dance. These dance terms are ones used by the dance groups themselves to describe the type of dance they do.

Community is defined by Roland Warren as “that combination of social units and systems that perform the major social functions having locality relevance” (Warren, 1978, p. 9). This “relevance” is identified with five major functions, according to Warren: (a) production-distribution-consumption; (b) socialization; (c) social control; (d) social participation; (e) mutual support (Warren, 1978). Warren eventually shifted from thinking of the parameters of community in terms of institutions to being a function-based organization. By extension, function-based communities can be organized around a particular interest, occupation, profession, affiliation, association, or cultural ethnicity.

Similarly, Etienne Wenger describes communities of practice as places of participation, meaning, and learning, where shared knowledge forms a permeable boundary around a particular community of interest (Wenger, 1999). Wenger sees communities of practice as a form, or place, of social learning (in fact, social learning systems), which produce social structures (Wenger, 2012, pp.1-2).

Engagement in social contexts involves a dual process of meaning making (i.e., reification and practice). On the one hand, we engage directly in activities, conversations, reflections, and other forms of personal participation in social life (practice). On the other hand, we produce physical and conceptual artifacts—words, tools, concepts, methods, stories, documents, links to resources, and other forms of reification—that reflect our shared experience and around which we organize our participation (reification). (Literally, *reification* means “making into an object.”) Meaningful learning in social contexts requires both *participation* and *reification* to be in interplay. Artifacts without participation do not carry their own meaning; and participation without artifacts is fleeting, unanchored, and uncoordinated. But participation and reification are not locked into each other. At each moment of engagement in the world, we bring them together anew to negotiate and renegotiate the meaning of our experience. The process is dynamic and active. It is alive. (Wenger, 2012, pp. 1-2)

The dialectic of participation and reified structures organizes the community around the practice of interest. This dialectic is similar to the view of Giddens and his Structuration

Theory, which views structure and interaction as a mutually constitutive duality (Giddens, 1991).

Like Connerton (1989), Wenger also links the use of communities of practice with the perpetuation of cultural memory through social learning (Wenger, 2012). The CoP, in fact, presents a model of how cultural memory can occur through social learning. This model includes the dynamic created by the interaction of the individual with the collective.

Participation and reification represent two intertwined but distinct lines of memory. Over time, their interplay creates a social history of learning, which combines individual and collective aspects. This history gives rise to a community as participants define a “regime of competence,” a set of criteria and expectations by which they recognize membership. (Wenger, 2012, pp. 1-2)

These competencies that Wenger refers to include an understanding of the meaning created, productive engagement, and the appropriate use of the repertoire of resources accumulated by the community of practice (Wenger, 2012). Through the acquisition of these competencies, participants acquire a sense of identity and membership in the group. The CoP becomes a system of social learning, creating its own social structures, and the practice itself becomes its production, the product of the CoP process (Wenger, 2012).

Over time, a history of learning becomes an informal and dynamic social structure among the participants, and this is what a community of practice is....Through active and dynamic negotiation of meaning, practice is something that is produced over time by those who engage in it. In an inalienable sense, it is their production. (Wenger, 2012, pp. 1-2)

This is the model that was used as a starting point of this study. Later, some terminology was added for the sake of communication and clarity. The “communities of practice” in this study are dance groups, which focus on the practice of dance, but also include other auxiliary, instrumental activities. For this study, the community of practice

was specifically a community participating in a “cultural practice” (dance), which was associated with a particular history and was recognized as having meaning beyond the performance of a simple physical activity. It could be argued that any practice could be seen as a cultural practice and can carry cultural information. However, the emphasis here is specifically on an embodied cultural practice (dance) that is a cultural activity with a recognized history of being part of an existing tradition.

For the purposes of this study, the terms “reified structures” and “participatory cultural practice” are used to indicate the dual dimensions that produce meaning and identity. Reified structures are the instructions, protocols, rules, codification, inscriptions, documentation, archives, recorded materials, and procedures that are put in place for the dance group and the dance genre, if applicable. Participatory cultural practice (or more simply, participatory practice) are those embodied activities that the groups do together and build experiences that are shared.

Investigating dance as cultural practice and social action, and particularly looking at dance as a community activity transmitting cultural information, is a relatively recent area of research. There was little theory or research in the social sciences that addressed the research questions investigated in this study concerning dance as social action. That said, there were some parallels with other forms of research on cultural practices and social action that could be used as a precedence for this form of research. For this reason, I selected qualitative research, heuristic inquiry, and Grounded Theory Methodology for gathering data, analyzing the data, and generating new concepts and theory for thinking about the use of dance as an investigative tool in the social sciences.

Rationale for Using Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is empirical and begins as an inductive process. The researcher becomes embedded in the same experiences as the participants but must also maintain a certain amount of neutrality, in order to analyze experiences and put them into a theoretical perspective (Patton, 2002). Qualitative methodology was the most appropriate choice for this study, given the type of behavior under study and the participatory nature of the activity; it was also a means to maintain context for the data. Because of the lack of theory specific to this area of inquiry, and given my experience with both dance and research, the theoretical traditions of Grounded Theory Method and heuristic inquiry were the most appropriate for use in this study. Grounded theory highlights the experiences of the participants within the context of the activity, whereas heuristic inquiry emphasizes the wealth of experiences and insights the researcher can bring to the table. Both of these approaches are appropriate for this line of study.

Grounded Theory Method

Grounded Theory Method (GTM) conceptually developed within the field of Sociology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Urquhart, 2013) as a means for developing new theory that would be specific to the needs and demands of the social sciences, rather than applying existing theory to new data, which may not be a good fit, considering the context. This methodology investigates social phenomena in an inductive manner (rather than deductive), allowing the data to present emerging patterns and insights without the influence of previous theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Urquhart, 2013). This allows the data to generate theoretical concepts and categories, rather than applying pre-existing (and possibly dated)

theoretical categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Urquhart, 2013). In other words, Grounded Theory generates context-dependent analytic categories in the same way that Anthropology depends on “native” categories.

The Grounded Theory Method used in this study was the version outlined by Urquhart, based on Glaser’s branch of Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Urquhart, 2013). This version has fewer defined steps than others and was a better fit for the research in this study, because of the way it was conducted.

Heuristic Inquiry and Tradition

Heuristic inquiry focuses upon the researcher’s own experiences and insights as part of the research process and is based upon phenomenological inquiry (Patton, 2002).

Because of my life-long experience and interest in dance, this tradition of inquiry was appropriate, adding a layer of insight that might be overlooked by non-practitioners. My experience as a dancer, teacher, performer, participant, and spectator could serve as a filter in classifying observed dance activities and as a guide in formulating emergent theories.

Design

This study and its related procedures and protocols was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board for the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Because of the nature of the study, using qualitative methods, participant observation, informal interviews, and archival documentation, this study was determined to be of an “exempt” status.

Recruitment Process

The dance groups studied in this research were all groups with which I had previous experiences, either as a dancer, participant, teacher, student, or volunteer. The leaders of

each group were approached with the appropriate paperwork and protocols (according to IRB guidelines) and were invited to participate. All the groups were enthusiastic about being included in the study. The original focus of the study was on folkloric dance, but it quickly became apparent that a broader, more comparative perspective would be helpful in generating theoretical concepts applicable to all forms of dance. The groups were selected in order to give a broader spectrum of dance. All of the dance groups were local to and originated in the Kansas City area. The dance groups participating in the study include the following: (a) El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco; (b) the Kansas City Kansas Tamburitans; (c) Culture through Ballroom Dance; (d) City in Motion Dance School; and (e) American Ballet Dance Center.

Inclusion Criteria

The primary criteria for inclusion were that these organizations thought of themselves as dance organizations first and foremost, and that they considered themselves to be primarily community-based organizations or groups. This does not mean that there were not professional dancers involved, or that professional standards were not maintained, or that the groups were not considered semi-professional performers in the community at large. All of the groups consider themselves professional in presentation and performance. Most importantly, however, participation, support, and attendance were embedded in the surrounding community. In contrast with primarily professional performance groups, the goals in community-based dance groups are inclusion, continuity, multi-generational participation, and transmission of cultural information, rather than the competitive standards and performances beyond the community setting (which would emphasize selectivity,

exclusivity, and emphasis on youth, which typically characterize dance groups that promote a path to professionalism).

However, even within the spectrum of these groups, a path to professionalism is often discussed by the participants. It should be noted that there is a continuum of commitment to dance, ranging from a “more community-based” path to a “more professionally-based” path. That is, even within amateur groups, there is a path to professionalism, and even within professional groups, there is a sense of community. The difference is more in degree, emphasis, and priorities than in a difference in type. Some of the typical dance gathering activities included the following: (a) arranging for transportation; (b) maintaining a telephone tree of parents and care-takers; (c) informal parental and guardian interactions; (d) formal group meetings focused upon the support of the dance group; (e) maintaining a semblance of an attendance tally, be it formal or informal; (f) costume creation, arrangements, fittings, and maintenance; (g) event planning and arrangements, including performances, festivals, fundraisers; (h) discussions and planning for dance group financial support; (i) funding; (j) teaching; (k) participating in the social and cultural practice of dance; (l) learning; (m) rehearsing; (n) music and equipment arrangements; (o) venue and space arrangements; (p) discussion of duties, roles, and responsibilities; (q) community connections, community fitness, and community niche; (r) arranging future meetings; and (s) the formation of an organizational board or other administrative duties.

Data Sources

Interviews

Interviews are a common technique used in qualitative research to explore the thoughts and feeling of participants; for example, the importance of dance in their lives, in their community, and as a cultural practice. Interviews ranged from informal, unstructured, and open-ended to more formal, structured, and closed-ended, depending on the stage in the research, the person participating, and the context. All participants were aware of the research and assured of anonymity for anything said.

Informal conversational interviews. This form of interview constituted the bulk of the interviews. Initially, informal interviews were a way of introducing myself as a participant and researcher into the group discussion. More often than not, it involved merely listening to what was being said around me in the course of the dance activities. The questions I asked reflected a genuine interest in the group and its activities, as well as a need to fill in informational gaps about the group. Much of the time, the information was volunteered without the prompting of a question, simply because of the context of the dance event or activity.

Typical questions/topics in these informal conversations included the following:

1. How long have you been involved with the group?
2. How did you get started with the group?
3. What is the appeal or importance of the dance to you?
4. What is the appeal or importance of the dance group to you?
5. What sort of activities do you do with the group?

6. How do you think the dance and the dance group reflect the community?
7. How do you think the dance and the dance group reflect local culture?
8. What are some of your memorable experiences with the dance group?

Guided interviews. For dance group leaders, it was necessary to include more formal and structured questions for the sake of comparison between groups. These interviews, however, were conducted without recordings, in order to preserve the anonymity of the interviewee. Simple notes taken after these more structured conversations did not include names or other identifying information about the interviewee. Much of the information was publicly available about the group, but was clarified and verified in the interview. These questions were more focused on the structure, organization, and administration of the group process.

These guided interviews included the following questions:

1. Has your group become a non-profit organization? If so, why?
2. How long has the group been organized as a non-profit?
3. Is there a Board? Why was a Board formed?
4. What is the function of the Board?
5. Who are the members of the Board?
6. Does the group consider itself a community-based group? How? Why?
7. What are the cultural goals of the group?
8. Where does the group stand as a path to professionalism?
9. Why is the group important? To the community? To culture?

The purpose of these questions was to explore the structural aspects of the dance groups and how they perpetuate themselves. Structural aspects of the dance groups can create continuity, consistency, and a common canon among the participants; organize the group and its activities; and serve as a resource for funding.

Standardized open-ended interviews. These questions were directed at group leaders and group core members. These questions were open-ended and philosophical about the purpose and place of dance in the community. These questions included the following:

1. Why form a dance group?
2. What is the place of cultural practice in a community?

These questions were intended to explore the dance groups' interaction with the community and how they see themselves fitting into the larger culture perspective and into the surrounding community at large. Also, the questions served to explore the function and purpose of cultural practice (dance) in community-building and cohesion.

Archival Documentation

Archival documentation for the dance groups included any text written specifically about the groups, including mentions in books, promotional materials, biographies, performance programs, teacher notes, news clips, articles, photographs, videos, DVDs, recordings, and artwork. These were all materials that group leaders had created, maintained, circulated, and stored for the group to publicize the group and share its history.

Also included were archival historical documentation available in the public domain, such as state historical archives, university historical projects, local library archives, local museums, and academic publications. These documents were helpful giving a historical

context to the neighborhoods and communities where the dance groups originated. The archives sometimes included dance artifacts, articles of clothing, traditional garb, performance costuming, and dancewear.

Also included in the documentation were the personal archives that individuals and families kept over generations, which included information about their participation in the dance groups. These were often family scrapbooks, photographs, home movies, videos, and recordings.

Other archival information included testimonials and applications for scholarships written by dance students stating why dance was important to them, how dance had changed their lives, and what they had learned from their experiences with dance. They also wrote about how the dance group to which they were applying was important to them. These were often touching and also revealing in that the lessons learned through dance were told first-hand and included life-lessons not often associated with dance by non-dancers.

Other archival data available were survey data collected by the dance group themselves for purposes of tracking and improving programming and fundraising (see Appendix A). These survey data give clear evidence of the impact of the dance training for students that goes beyond the boundaries of the specific group and impacts the community at large. Students frequently shared what they learned with peers, friends, and family, in both formal and informal settings.

These archival data were helpful in the research for a number of reasons. First, the promotional materials were important because they often stated the cultural goals and mission of the dance group and how they viewed themselves and their activities in the

cultural landscape. These documents also gave a historical narrative regarding the group's origins, founders, and the particular form of dance they perform. This historical narrative is often repeated during instruction, rehearsals, and performance events, serving as a cultural framework or nexus for other relevant cultural information. For example, the origin narrative may be tied to immigration patterns in the area, traditional immigrant ethnic activities, political activities, cultural changes, or historical events associated with ethnic migrations. Additionally, the data in survey and photographic documentation allowed more detailed research over time, validating other empirical data gathered during participant observation.

Participant Observation

As a researcher, I was able to participate in the dance group activities over an extended period of time alternately as a dancer, student, teacher, performer, support staff, administrator, and/or volunteer. This participation allowed me to have intense, long-term involvement with the dance groups in a variety of roles and from varying perspectives. The embedded experience allowed me to gather information and data at a much deeper level and within a context of understanding that was richer than could be gleaned in other ways.

Using the technique of participant observation allowed the opportunity to directly participate and engage in the phenomena that the other participants also experienced, while simultaneously observing and documenting the events as they unfolded. This form of research has been described as one of the most comprehensive of research strategies and one that increases understanding directly, through first-hand experience within the appropriate context (Patton, 2002).

The steps involved in developing the skills for participant observation research as outlined by Patton (2002) are as follows: (a) learning to pay attention to behavioral phenomena in detail; (b) learning to write descriptively about behavioral phenomena; (c) learning the discipline of recording field notes; (d) learning to separate trivia from detailed information; (e) learning the triangulation of data in order to validate observations; (f) learning the art of self-reflection in order to take stock of one's own strengths, weaknesses, and biases, and report them appropriately.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

The exempt status of this study allowed anonymity for all participants in the study. The difference between anonymity and confidentiality is that in the former, the research guarantees that the participants are not identified as individuals for any particular quotes or attributes, either in the research records or in the written results of the research. Confidentiality indicates that the researcher keeps records on the individuals but does not publish any identifying markers.

For this study, other than the identification of the dance groups and describing the principals of the groups, no identifying information was recorded that could be attributable to any individual within the group. Informal interviews, conversations, and dance behaviors were documented anonymously and without attribution to any specific individuals. Any photographs, images, or materials used in the research were either public domain, publicly displayed, or shared with the public by the dance groups themselves with their permission (see Appendix B).

Data Analysis—Interpretive

Data analysis was also done using Grounded Theory Methodology. This method involves checking new information against a working theory in progress. This form of research embeds self-checking validation across the entire research process and involves particular characteristics (Creswell, 2007; Dey, 1999; Urquhart, 2013). These characteristics include the following: (a) data analysis is systematic, and starts as soon as any data are collected; (b) data analysis identifies cohesive categories and their connections; (c) through constant comparison, new data validate these categories; (d) data collection is finished when no new concepts emerge; (e) data analysis progresses from open coding, to selective coding, to theoretical coding.

Although terminology and the procedural steps vary slightly across different practitioners for qualitative research (and for Grounded Theory Methodology, specifically), the process used in this study was similar to that described in Bogdan and Biklen (2007).

These steps can be summarized as follows:

1. Focus the study as much as feasible
2. Develop analytical questions as data are gathered
3. Use feedback to shape data collection in the field
4. Write “observer comments” as ideas are presented in the field
5. Write theoretical memos regarding observer comments
6. Get feedback from informants on the ideas and themes proposed
7. Explore the research literature while in the field
8. Explore the use of metaphor and analogies to illustrate concepts

9. Use imagery to communicate concepts and ideas.

A content analysis orders frequencies and occurrences, which can be represented as dynamic flow charts, processes, logical steps, tabular displays of frequencies, or cross-case analysis. These approaches can add to both the generalizability of concept, as well as form a self-check for validity, as data are gathered and subsequently analyzed.

Thematic analysis is a process of data reduction into meaningful chunks that can reveal connections and relationships between data groups. Two approaches involve creating labels for data categories and conceptual mapping, which illustrates the relationships between these data categories.

Both content analysis and thematic analysis are present in Grounded Theory Methodology, but terminology is slightly different. Content analysis is referred to as initial and axial coding, in which data are categorized and relationships between categories are noted. Thematic analysis is referred to as selective coding and themes. In selective coding, new data are tested against existing categories and relationships and refined, if necessary. Themes are documented as comments and memos and later may be portrayed as a flow chart or diagram. This process of analysis allows smaller categories to be built into a larger conceptual framework with overarching themes (Creswell, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Ideally, the process of Grounded Theory Method allows an additional layer of analysis by projecting a paradigm model. The steps involved in forming a paradigm model include the following (Strauss & Corbin, 1990):

1. Phenomenon: a central identified idea or event
2. Causal conditions: identifying precedent conditions or events

3. Context: identifying related setting and conditions

4. Intervening conditions: conditions that influence phenomenon under investigation
(which might include time, space, culture, economic status, technology, or history)

5. Action/Interaction strategies: processes of strategic actions

6. Consequences: outcomes.

Applying this model to the study under investigation would include the following elements:

1. Phenomenon: A central identified idea or event; i.e., the bonding, collaboration, and information transmission that occurs during cultural practice (specifically, in this study, dance)

2. Causal conditions: Identifying precedent conditions or events; i.e., behaviors associated with the bonding, collaboration, and information transmission process, during cultural practice

3. Context: Identifying related setting and conditions; i.e., settings where cultural practice occurs, and where bonding, collaboration, and information transmission develop

4. Intervening conditions: Conditions that influence phenomenon under investigation (which might include time, space, culture, economic status, technology, and history)
Cultural practice, especially dance, is shaped by time, space, cultural influences, class, and individual and group histories

5. Action/Interaction strategies: Processes of strategic actions. Cultural practices form Communities of Practice, which ensure continuity.

6. Consequences: Outcomes. Communities of Cultural Practice form a cascading pattern that has an impact that reaches far beyond the boundaries of the original Community of Practice.

It is also common in Grounded Theory Method to review the literature for similar theoretical themes and parallel research studies as a secondary source of data and to help validate the research findings. Examining related research data gives points of reference for comparison, contrast, and the interpretation of that data. This helps in constructing a theoretical framework, guiding research possibilities, supplementing data gathering, and supporting the validity of the research (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Ideally, theory gives meaning to the data, and the data give support and evidence for theory. The process of theory and data integration and validation unfolds in the following way in Ground Theory Method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990): (a) formulating an explanatory narrative to describe the core issue, which becomes the core category; (b) choosing the core category puts the other categories into relationship to the core category; (c) putting categories into hierarchies or into dimensional relationships; (d) validating these categorical constructs and conceptual maps against the data, using observational memos and diagrams to represent those relationships, and refining as needed.

Using Heuristic Inquiry with Grounded Theory Method

Heuristic inquiry blends well with Grounded Theory Method and serves as yet another check and balance for evaluating incoming data, categorization of that data, and confirming the relationships between those conceptual categories. According to Moustakas (1990), the process of heuristic inquiry involves the following stages: (a) initial engagement,

(b) immersion, (c) incubation, (d) illumination, (e) explication, (f) creative synthesis, and (g) validation of the research. The stages in the process of heuristic inquiry include: (a) initial engagement; (b) immersion; (c) incubation; (d) illumination; (e) explication; (f) creative synthesis; and (g) validation of the research (Moustakas, 1990).

As a result of my dance experience in many roles, initial engagements with the dance groups were generally congenial, for there was much common ground. Incubation, illumination, and explication all occurred when I logged my notes of various sessions, events, performances, meetings, and classes. Creative synthesis occurred when I included theoretical memos or flashes of insights after I had had a chance to reflect on the event or situation. These memos were later added to my logs. Self-reflection was also a part of the process, as was creating metaphors, logic diagrams, flow charts, and other visual displays to illustrate the concepts I was trying to communicate. Selecting photographs and video clips to illustrate these concepts was also part of this reflective process.

After this reflective process and documentation, I confirmed these conceptualizations with my dance and research informants, peers, colleagues, co-workers, teachers, and students, for validation and feedback. This helped me keep perspective on the research, as well as focus some aspects of the research in more productive directions.

Heuristic inquiry and Grounded Theory Method blended well and supplemented each other in a way that made me much more confident about the progress I was making in my research. The data analysis for this study regarding Grounded Theory Method proceeded generally along the typical process for the method, guided by the following steps (Creswell 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1990):

1. Initial Coding: Data were parsed, compared, categorized, and coded with useful labels.

2. Axial Coding: Connections were made between label codes, categories, and data sources. Significance of these relationships were explored.

3. Selective Coding: New data were checked against existing categories and relationships. Adjustments were made as needed.

4. Memos: Logs were kept, describing events, interactions, and conversations. The logs included written reflections about integrating the data from different sources into a meaningful whole, a workable narrative explaining the observations. Memos introduced theoretical themes.

5. Logic Diagrams: Images, photographs, charts, diagrams, and metaphors were selected and/or created to visually display the flow of the data and explain the theoretical narratives observed in the data.

The process of the data analysis is represented in Figure C1 in Appendix C, which describes the flow of information. This diagram represents how Grounded Theory Method and heuristic inquiry were combined and contrasted to guide and validate the research. These two methods complemented each other well and were easily combined to give a fuller, richer perspective in data analysis.

Reliability, Validity, and Possible Limitations of the Research

Usually the concerns in qualitative studies pertain to issues of reliability and validity of the research. Reliability refers to the stability or consistency of findings (Creswell, 2007)—whether or not the study could be repeated the same way with the same or similar

results. One way to deal with this concern is to have multiple coders of data sets (Creswell, 2007) instead of a single coder. In this case, with only one researcher, reliability could have been a concern. However, using other strategies in addition to coding can help mediate those concerns. For example, the heuristic inquiry method helps compensate for the reliability concern by guiding coding according to past experience and through checks with other participants. The coding was compared to past situations to determine if it was valid. Additionally, the meta-analysis of other studies with similar research interests were revealing and enabled an additional, objective, if somewhat projected, reliability check.

Validity refers to the precision and truthfulness of the research results and is of particular concern when developing grounded theory (Creswell, 2007). It asks whether we are actually measuring what we think we are measuring; i.e., whether the yardstick was appropriate and worked for the research at hand. Heuristic inquiry supplied some aspect of checks and balances in evaluating data. Past and personal experiences can give perspective to the significance of the data and the categories created to classify them into meaningful chunks. The literature review gave the opportunity to do a meta-analysis of any other relevant studies with similar research questions and their procedures for exploring these questions.

To address both issues of validity and reliability, a variety of different dance groups were included in the study, covering a wide range of dance types. These dance groups ranged from informal community groups to formal semi-professional organizations, and from groups performing popular, social, and folkloric dance to highly structured classical dance forms, including Ballroom, Classical Modern, and particularly, Ballet.

Finally, both issues of validity and reliability were addressed by the triangulation of the different data sets (observations, interview, and documents), the inclusion of negative or discrepant data, member checking, peer review at conferences, and first-hand immersive experience self-checks with frequent journaling and logging (Creswell, 2007).

My experience as a dancer, combined with direct involvement with the groups studied, gave me a unique insider/outsider perspective that few researchers are privy to in similar investigations. Discrepant data and negative cases were included for verity and authenticity and served as another check and balance to challenge data coding, categories, and relationships, making results more robust and conclusions more useful. Transcribed quotes, observations, and conclusions were periodically presented to peers and informants to be checked and evaluated for accuracy and robustness, as well as to invite feedback during the data analysis process. Finally, the triangulation of the data from observations, interviews, and documents served as a comparison check of my interpretations, to ensure the validity of the results.

One possible limitation of the study involved the scope of the study itself. It is a challenge to decide how much qualitative research is “enough” and to determine how the findings might be generalizable. Urquhart (2013) describes a point in the research at which there is sufficient detail in the data to be rich and clear, yet abstract enough in theory that there is explanatory power in the theory proposed. At this point, the researcher can be confident that the research study is finished enough for presentation (Urquhart, 2013). Additionally, this scaling up of the abstraction, or explanatory power of the research, makes

the proposed theory more likely to engage other theories in the field for purposes of theory integration and validation of the research (Urquhart, 2013).

Ethical Concerns and Considerations

Ethical concerns and/or risks were minimal in this study. Possible breach of confidentiality was a concern, yet most of the information recorded was primarily anonymous. Data drawn from archival information from the dance groups included publicly available information, historical documents, secondary survey data, publicity photographs, programs, website materials, news interviews and articles, and other similar documentation. The study protocols and procedures were regularly reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the university research institution.

Participation in the study was completely voluntary, and participants could decide to continue or withdraw from the study at any time. Participation or non-participation resulted in no penalty or loss for the participants. Although unlikely, there was a potential risk of violation of confidentiality, which was addressed in the research process. Individuals were not identified directly in the presentations or research write-ups. Permissions and informed consents were obtained from participating groups and informants.

CHAPTER 4
HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Historical Context: Immigrant Groups in the Kansas City Area

In the 1880s, Kansas City became a central location for industry using immigrant labor. The railroads, livestock, and meat-packing industries were congregated close to the riverbanks of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers, which had historically been a main artery for transportation. Nearby, the silver-smelting plant located in Argentine, Kansas, also employed large numbers of workers until 1901. After 1907, the Kansas City Structural Steel Company was a major employer of immigrants. These labor-intensive industries created a steady demand for immigrant labor, both as workers and as strike-breakers. Most immigrants lived close to the industries where they worked, mostly along the riverbanks. The meat-packing industry was located along the Kansas River floodplain known as the West Bottoms (Greenbaum, 1978).

Waves of immigrants came from different countries, including Ireland, Sweden, and Germany, in 1879. Within the next decade, many of these immigrants had improved their incomes and living conditions sufficiently to move from the vulnerable, less desirable West Bottoms area to the nearby and more up-scale Strawberry Hill area in Kansas City, Kansas.

Strawberry Hill, Kansas City, Kansas

The strike of 1893 (“The Panic of ’93”) cost immigrants their livelihoods. As a result, many of the Swedes left, but a number of the Irish and German immigrants remained (Greenbaum, 1978).

The next wave of immigrants came from Eastern Europe, where turmoil and conflict between the failing Ottoman Empire, Prussia, and Russia were redrawing political borders (Gerolymatos, 2002) and caused many to flee from the Balkan regions. They followed in the footsteps of the immigrants who preceded them and took up residence on the floodplain lodgings of the West Bottoms for the next decade. Flooding in 1903 pushed these Eastern European groups (most notably Croatian, but also other Slovak ethnic groups) to also take up residence in the nearby Strawberry Hill area of Kansas City, Kansas.

Several Catholic churches had been built in the area to service and care for ethnic immigrant groups. The first, built in the late 1800s, became predominately Irish, the second was German (1880s), the third was Croatian (1900), and a fourth was Slovenian (1908) (Greenbaum, 1985). The Catholic Church was instrumental in helping immigrants find housing in the area, buying up additional land for assistance and housing.

The Church became the anchor for the neighborhood as a central meeting point for assistance, education, recreation, social cohesion, and social support, as well as religious services. The Church also served as a community center, hosting youth programs, concerts, folkloric music and dance education, and weekly social dances (Richmond, 1989).

Although the Strawberry Hill neighborhood has experienced a number of changes, the Eastern European and Slavic community remained relatively stable throughout the 20th century. Despite a number of civic renovations, including the building of highways, which displaced 211 Slovak families in the community in the 1950s, the community continued to adjust and evolve (Greenbaum, 1985). Many families returned to the neighborhood later to be close to elderly family members. Additionally, the ethnicity of the area was renewed as

more waves of Eastern Europeans arrived and settled in the area over later decades. Urban renewal in the 1980s and 1990s also revitalized the neighborhood.

The first decade of the 21st century put more pressure on the community as an ethnic enclave. Recession, anti-immigrant sentiment, and a high influx of Latin American immigrants have changed the composition of the neighborhood considerably. After a few years of dormancy, however, the community has again developed an interest in ethnic revitalization, as a new generation of children grows up, and parents want their children to have the same exposure to ethnic heritage that they experienced in their youth.

West Side, Kansas City, Missouri

Mexican immigrants came to the Kansas-Missouri area beginning in the late 1880s, as they followed the cattle drives to market, and then later as workers for the railroads (Minor, 2002; Schirmer & McKenzie, 1982; Shortridge, 1995), with communities clustering around urban areas, such as the Argentine district in Kansas City, Kansas, and the West Side area of Kansas City, Missouri. With the demand for manual labor so high, many immigrants eventually brought friends and family up from Mexico to join them in these urban areas, and communities began to form. Often landlords were reluctant to rent to Mexican immigrants, so many set up living accommodations in abandoned boxcars near the railroad, but in a secluded enclave away from the city. As the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) became more dangerous, more Mexicans migrated along the rail lines to relocate to known Mexican enclaves in both rural and urban areas.

In 1914, the first Spanish-speaking parish in Kansas City was founded by Father Jose Muñez, and the Church was named for the patron saint of Mexico, Our Lady of Guadalupe

(Ford, 1999; Gallagher, 1974). Muñoz, originally from Spain, had a parish in Mexico until pressures from anti-Revolutionary military forced him to leave (Ford, 1999). He came to Kansas City riding the rails along with the other Mexican immigrants hoping to find a better life by working for the railroad (Ford, 1999). With the establishment of the Church, a barrio-style community was organized to assist incoming immigrants to adapt to their new environment.

In 1922, a charitable organization called the Amberg Club opened the Guadalupe Center, located at the parish, largely due to the efforts of social worker Dorothy Gallagher, known as the “Godmother of Guadalupe Center” (Ford, 1999; Gallagher, 1929; Magerl, 1999). The Center’s goal was to help Mexican immigrants acculturate to their new surroundings and yet preserve their cultural heritage. The Center sponsored language and job skills classes, dances, festivals, and a health clinic. The Gallagher family donated land for the Center to construct a permanent building for its activities in 1936, which still stands today, functioning much as it did when it was first built. It continues to serve the Latino population on Kansas City’s West Side by offering services in job-seeking, counseling, health care, as well as credit union support and youth and preschool programs. It also supports activities at Alta Vista Charter High School (Gallagher, 1974).

In its early years, Guadalupe Center offered a large annual event to celebrate Mexican culture and heritage, a fiesta held on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, including Mariachi Band music, ethnic food, and participants in native dress (see Figure D1 and D2 in Appendix D). The high points of the fiesta were the Mexican and Hispanic music and dances presented for entertainment and a social dance for the public. Today, Guadalupe

Center offers annual events in a similar way, celebrating Mexican and Latino holidays such as Cinco de Mayo, Dia de los Muertos, and Mexican Independence.

Not long after Guadalupe Center opened, the music and dance group traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in the National Folk Festival of 1938. Eleanor Roosevelt was impressed with their performances and invited the dancers and musicians of Guadalupe Center to perform on the White House lawn on May 6, 1938. The images commemorating this event remain proudly on display today at Guadalupe Center (see Figures D3 and D4 in Appendix D). Current folkloric teacher Maria Chaurand pointed to several dancers in the photograph who were mentors to her own dance experience as she grew up (M. Chaurand, personal communication, 2008). The legacy of Guadalupe Center continues to contribute to the cultural heritage of the West Side even today.

Overview of American Folk Dance Movement in the United States

In the U.S. from the 1890s through the 1920s, there was a great deal of social change and redefining of body, health, and gender. This period of time witnessed the rise of the settlement house to deal with concerns of community health, cleanliness, and fitness. Social roles were changing as a result of industrialization and urbanization, exacerbating existing social problems.

At this same time, dance was also going through changes that both reflected and led social changes. Dancing had been a male-dominated field until industrialization, but female performers began to become strong attractions in urban settings as gender roles became more distinct. Also, social dance began to change as Ballroom and partner dancing began to make its appearance (Tomko, 1999).

Women became activists during this period, pushing the envelope in the fields of education, arts, entertainment, volunteerism, fitness, health, and medicine. This era saw the popularity of couples' dancing, shorter skirts, bathing suits, bobbed hair, the suffragette movement, and film. The world was quickly changing, and women were a big part of those changes.

Although there were many such voluntary organizations, the activities and programs of the Girls' Branch of the Public Schools Athletic League in New York City were influential in setting the standard for other such organizations (Tomko, 1999). This organization helped to naturalize female dancing as a valuable pursuit for purposes of art, culture, and health (Tomko, 1999). It also helped to construct "folk dancing" as a concept and practice in the U.S. and "argued issues of power and identity in Progressive-era America" (Tomko, 1999, p. 181).

Folk dancing began to be promoted as physical and cultural education, healthy for body and mind. Schools across the U.S. quickly adopted folk dance programs during this period, and many of these traditions continue today in U.S. public schools. Although the folk dances taught in schools were often pale reproductions of the original indigenous dances, they stimulated an interest in and appreciation for documenting, learning, and teaching these dances, creating new careers for ambitious young females. In this context, when immigrants brought dances with them from their countries of origin, a certain portion of the U.S. population embraced these new dance forms as material to be added to a growing repertoire of school-based folk dance.

State-supported Folkloric Dance Groups and their Influence

Often referred to as the “grandfather” of all state-supported folkloric dance groups, the Moiseyev Folk Ballet was founded in 1936 under the direction of Igor Moiseyev to represent the “unity in diversity” in folkloric dance of the different ethnicities present in the former USSR (Shay, 1999, 2002, 2006, 2007). Although dominated by dance and music of the Russian provinces and utilizing a theatrical aesthetic based on Ballet and Character dance rather than native folk aesthetics, the Moiseyev Dance Company brought awareness, pride, visibility, and respect back into folk dance companies and revitalized the folk dance movement worldwide (Shay, 2002, 2006). Folk dancing was seen as a “safe” way to exalt the worker and peasant lifestyle, which also conveniently supported the Communist philosophy and agenda (Shay, 2002, 2006).

Although Mexico had already begun collecting, recording, and performing folkloric music and dance with its state-funded “cultural missionaries” initiative in the wake of the Mexican Revolution, the concept of a state-supported folkloric dance group representing a nation at large did not become a reality until the Moiseyev Dance Company became a worldwide icon of folkloric dance, as the Cold War eased up in the late 1950s. Within a few years, Mexico had its own state-supported folkloric dance group, Ballet Folklórico, directed by Amalia Hernández (Shay, 2002). Ballet Folklórico also utilized a theatrical aesthetic based on Ballet and Character dance rather than native folk aesthetics, yet created international visibility and respect for Mexico’s colorful folk music and dance, in the same way the Moiseyev Dance Company did for the USSR.

In Croatia and the former Yugoslavia, under USSR Communist rule, local folkloric companies were encouraged and exploited (Shay, 2002, 2006). In the late 1940s, in the wake of World War II's devastation in Eastern Europe, the Young People's Society for Culture and Art (Jozo Vlahovic), under the direction of Zvonko Ljevakovic, became a prominent and polished performing folk group (Shay, 2002, 2006). Ljevakovic created a core group of semi-professional performers within the larger amateur community group, which eventually became the professional dance group, LADO (Shay, 2002, 2006). Ljevakovic's approach to folkloric dance was slightly different than that of Moiseyev, in that he tried to retain as much of the authentic folkloric aesthetic within the choreography, music, instruments, and costumes as possible, rather than a Ballet aesthetic (Shay 2002, 2006). Thus, performers were not necessarily trained in Ballet, and often crossed roles as dancers, singers, and musicians (Shay, 2002, 2006). Although specializing in Croatian music and dance, LADO would also perform carefully researched dances from other parts of the former Yugoslavia regions and would collaborate with other folkloric dance groups in the area, such as the Serbian folk dance group, KOLO (Shay, 2002, 2006).

In the U.S., a semi-professional university-sponsored group, the Duquesne University Tamburitzans, also became influential on the folkloric dance scene. It was founded in 1937 by Dr. A. Lester Pierce, an admirer of Eastern European culture and music, who brought his "Slavonic Tamburitza Orchestra" from St. Edward's University of Austin, Texas to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he found much support from the immigrant communities (Duquesne University Tamburitzans, 2014). In conjunction with Duquesne University, Pierce negotiated a work scholarship program that became the basis and

inspiration for many local folk dance groups for decades (Shay, 2007). The group members are selected from auditions of hopeful students from around the country, and once selected, the dancers are given a full scholarship to the University, while performing with the Tamburitzans touring schedule (Duquesne University Tamburitzans, 2014).

These professional and semi-professional groups are important for a number of reasons. For immigrant populations, these professional folk dance groups provided a model for local community dance groups to aspire to, and they also created a space for immigrant populations to acculturate to new surroundings and share their cultures with other populations in their area. More importantly, however, these professional folkloric dance groups imparted respect and value to the music, dance, and culture of the regions they represented. Music and dance became perceived as a pathway to education, accomplishment, recognition, and success in small rural communities and neighborhoods. Folkloric music and dance became a legacy to the older, an opportunity for the young, and a source of pride and recognition for the in-between. Folkloric dance was considered an investment in community and future and a bonding process that encompassed groups of people across ages, cultures, families, geographic regions, and into local Communities of Practice (CoPs).

Anthony Shay spends much time describing how professional folk dance groups may become detached from their origins, from dances “in the field” (Shay, 1999, 2002), and how amateur community dance groups may follow, or differ from, professional dance groups (Shay, 2006, 2007). He calls them “parallel traditions” that develop their own cultural trajectories. I have long been aware in my own work, however, that these different folkloric

dance groups (field, amateur, and professional) actually feed into each other and support each other. One group creates the model and inspiration for another, which, in turn, creates an audience for the other, bi-directionally. For example, watching a professional dance group makes having a local amateur dance group desirable, and having a local amateur dance group creates an audience (and sponsors) for the professional dance group.

In this study, both of the folkloric groups examined had originally been inspired by professional folkloric dance groups. Grupo had been inspired by the various Ballet Folklórico dance groups of Mexico, and Don Lipovac's group, originally known as St. John's Tamburitzans, were inspired by the Duquesne University Tamburitzans. Both Kansas City dance groups often traveled great distances to see their inspirations perform live, and collected photographs, books, recordings, and videos of their performances and repertory.

The Mexican Folkloric Dance Movement

This section examines Mexican Folkloric dance in the social and political context. To limit the scope of this exploration, this examination begins with events during and after the Mexican Revolution and segues into the Mexican Folkloric dance movement in Mexico and its spread to the U.S., especially during the Chicano movement in the 1960s and 1970s.

In the wake of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), the Mexican people were looking for ways to "re-assemble" their culture. Much of the population was illiterate, but people found other ways to express themselves in a variety of expressive arts, including dance. During the Revolution, music, song, dance, theater, and the visual arts were all called upon as means to communicate and portray the news (and propaganda) of the day. To a

population that could not read, songs and performing arts became the newspapers, editorials, and political commentary of the day, rousing the public to rally in political solidarity.

After the Revolution, this tradition was continued as a part of the youth movement in universities to protest an oppressive government. Art, music, poetry, and theatrical arts all were pressed into service as media for both protest and propaganda.

During the 1920s and 1930s, a new search for Mexican nationalism began (Ramirez, 1989). At this time, Jose Vasconcelos-Calderon, a lawyer, writer, philosopher, and politician of Native American and Portuguese ancestry, became the first Secretary of Public Education (Minister of Education) under Alvaro Obregon and authored his famous “unifying” work, *La Raza Cosmica* (1925).

Under Vasconcelos’ direction of the Ministry of Education (the Secretaria de Educacion Publica—SEP), a program was created to collect folk dances. He also saw to it that the regional folk dances were taught in schools to children in order to preserve ethnic identity. Vasconcelos was no doubt influenced by the “Manifesto of 1923,” which was written by politically motivated, prominent artists of the day (including Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and others). This Manifesto promoted the concept of the art of the “people” and of the “community,” in preference to the art of bourgeois “individualistic” intellectuals.

Under Vasconcelos’ guidance, the Mexican government launched a program of “Cultural Missions” (Stark & Tortajada, 1994), in which “misioneros” (artists, musicians, and educators) were sent into rural areas to teach the populace about agriculture, hygiene, domestic management, and physical education. These misioneros made an effort to record,

document, and maintain local traditions in their travels. The emphasis was on an indigenous aesthetic, ethnic values, and diversity as a national resource and source of “ethnic empowerment.”

The primary goal of the Cultural Missions was to create a united national society that included all the colorful diversity that Mexico had to offer (Ramirez, 1989). Ramirez describes the importance of folk dance to the Mexican government in her translation of Jimenez’s writings in a publication for the cultural missionaries:

The Department of Cultural Missions is making these dances known so that the rural teachers will use them in school festivities; at the same time, we wish to draw (the) attention (of rural teachers) to the beautiful expression of the popular soul and recommend the representation and exaltation of the local dances, as well as their study, requesting the collection of the accompanying music, costume, choreography, etc., which should be sent to this Department of Cultural Missions, for public promotion. (Jimenez, 1932, p. 23, cited in Ramirez, 1989, p. 19)

The Cultural Missionaries did much to raise awareness of the importance of preserving regional folklore, yet their methods were haphazard, often breaking dance into its simplest forms. This resulted in some dances becoming simplified, stereotyped, and devoid of their original meaning (Ramirez, 1989). Although some of these indigenous traditions were recorded or documented out of context, the Cultural Mission Movement did much to help maintain local traditions. Even more important, it raised awareness that preserving indigenous art and culture was a matter of national pride and strength.

The material that the “misioneros” accumulated was envisioned in 1931 as a basis for the short-lived School of Dynamic Plastique (Stark & Tortajada, 1994) for the purpose of creating themes for Mexican Ballets. In 1932, the National School of Dance was founded

and eventually directed by the famous Nellie Campobello, who used traditional Mexican themes in some of her choreography (Stark & Tortajada, 1994).

The SEP did not rely solely on the cultural missionaries for preserving ethnic heritage, but also tried to encourage indigenous dancers and musicians to come to the capital to perform in folkloric exhibitions. In 1939, for example, the SEP brought folk dances in “original form” into Mexico City for exhibition (Ramirez, 1989).

In 1946, the National Institute for Fine Arts (INBA), one of two government entities supporting Mexican dance as a national treasure, was founded. It proposed the creation of new Mexican dance forms as well as research into dance in general (Stark & Tortajada, 1994). The other government entity supporting dance as a cultural resource was the National Council for Culture and the Arts (CNCA), which would be the equivalent of the Ministry of Culture (Stark & Tortajada, 1994). Working under the auspices of these two organizations was the National Center for Research, Documentation, and Information of the Dance. Under the watchful eye of teacher Noemi Marin, a specialist in traditional dance, this organization, founded in 1983, has been gathering materials from the archives of the Secretariat of Public Education and other sources to reclaim information gathered during the Cultural Missions from 1922 to 1936 (Stark & Tortajada, 1994).

Other parallel developments also supported preservation of traditional and regional dance forms. In 1947, The Academy of Mexican Dance was founded, promoting the creation of and research into traditional Mexican Dance (Stark & Tortajada, 1994).

That same year, 1947, anthropologist Frances Toor published her seminal work, *A Treasury of Mexican Folkways*, which detailed customs, music, dress, rituals, dance, and

photographs of regional folk art. The book was an accumulation of selected articles that had been presented in the bi-lingual journal that Toor had founded in 1923, *Mexican Folkways*, the first journal of its kind. With the founding of this journal, Mexican folklore partnered with the Mexican tourist industry in a successful joint venture (Ramirez, 1989). The journal was published into the late 1940s (Ramirez, 1989).

In 1959, the Academy of Mexican Dance was reorganized into a school to encourage the research, teaching, preservation, and promotion of Mexican dance for future generations (Stark & Tortajada, 1994). In 1972, Josefina Lavallo founded the National Foundation for the Development of Mexican Popular Dance, which continued the mission by conducting field studies and using film and audio recordings to document dances that were in danger of disappearing (Stark & Tortajada, 1994).

Mexican Folkloric Performance Groups

Another way of disseminating cultural folk dance was the performance of those dances by bands of traveling groups. This method of collecting and disseminating the dances was proactive and embodied, and incorporated agency by the participants. Earliest performances can be traced to the bands of “carpas,” roving “tent” shows that traveled throughout Mexico and the Southwest U.S. in the 1920-1930s, performing “tandas de variedad” or variety shows (Ramirez, 1989). These carpas were entertainment for and by the common people, that presented long-ignored folklore in dance, music, and theater (Ramirez, 1989).

To a population that was largely illiterate, these carpas became an important venue for national sentiment, national news, political critique, and social commentary during the

post-Revolutionary era (Ramirez, 1989). The *carpas* eventually fell out of fashion as people began to tire of the nationalistic agenda, and *carpas* became regarded as “tourist entertainment” (Ramirez, 1989). Ramirez points out that this is significant because it demonstrates that not only was this entertainment effective as a “nationalistic tool” in its day, but also that people were aware of its use. Performing groups of folkloric dance continued to survive, but until the formation of the Ballet Folklórico de México, these groups had little visibility.

The founder of Ballet Folklórico de México was Amalia Hernández (1917-2000). Born into a wealthy ranching family, Hernández was able to study ballet with masters from the Paris Opera Ballet, Flamenco with La Argentinita, and choreography with modern dancer Waldeen (Anderson, 2000). She studied the modern dance styles of Martha Graham and Alwin Nikolai (Shay, 1999, 2002).

Hernández is also known to have worked with Luis Felipe Obregón, who was a pioneer in the field of Mexican folk dance research (Shay, 2002). Against her wealthy father’s wishes, she pursued a dancing career and began dancing and teaching at the well-known baroque Palacio de Bellas Artes theatre as a modern dancer (Shay, 2002). She performed as a dancer in the early years of the theater and became a featured dancer until about 1965, when her name no longer appeared on the programs (Shay, 2002). From that point on, she is linked exclusively with the Ballet Folklórico de México (Shay, 2002).

In 1952, with the encouragement of her television-executive husband, Luis de Llamas, Hernández formed a group of eight female dancers and began a series of television shows called “Gala Performances,” creating some of the choreographies that remain with the

Company's repertoire to this day (Shay, 2002). The company also toured the country performing in rural areas (Ramirez, 1989). Her characteristic "skirt-work" left a permanent impression on Mexican folkloric dance (Shay, 2002) and is reminiscent of the "skirt-dances" of high-profile dancers of the turn of the century captured on silent film, such as Loie Fuller (1862-1928) and Annabelle Moore (1878-1961), who performed *Butterfly Dance*, and *Tambourine Dance* in 1896 (Annabelle, n.d.).

Hernandez's approach was to use folklore as a starting point, an inspiration, and then embed it into the discipline of classical Modern Dance and Ballet, enhanced by stagecraft and presented as a theatrical performance. She used traditional folkloric themes, but condensed and manipulated the choreography into theatrical performance and spectacle. She did not claim that her choreography was entirely authentic, but rather, that it was representative of the authentic.

There was some precedence for doing this kind of work. In 1919, Anna Pavlova, the famous Russian ballerina of the Ballet Russes, toured Mexico and became so enchanted with the Mexican folkloric dances that she was inspired to study one in particular, *Jarabe Tapatio* (often referred to as the "Mexican Hat Dance"), which she performed in pointe shoes (Clarke & Crisp, 1981; Macias, 2014; Roberts, 1998; Ruyter, 2000; Stark & Tortajada, 1994) (see Figure D5 in Appendix D). The dance was well received in Mexico, inspiring the audience to fling hats onto the stage at her feet to show their appreciation of her performance. The dance was so popular that she added it permanently to her repertoire and performed it abroad. Because of its immense popularity and high international visibility, Secretary of Education Jose Vasconcelos declared the *Jarabe Tapatio* the national dance of

Mexico in 1924 and decreed that it should be taught in every public school to children as a reminder of their heritage (despite the fact that it was a relatively local regional dance recently born of the Revolution).

Although this was an innovation in Pavlova's ballet repertoire, it fit the mood of the times for ballet. During the Romantic ballet era, there had been a range of borrowing as European interest in dances of different cultures served to inspire music and choreography (Ruyter, 2000). Pavlova's seeking dance instruction outside of her own ballet tradition was not unusual in this regard (Ruyter, 2000). Other well-known non-balletic dance artists such as Maude Allan (1873-1956) and Loie Fuller (1862-1928), and Modern Dance artists such as Ruth St. Denis (1879-1968) and Ted Shawn (1891-1972) also did research and borrowed themes from art works and texts to create compositions based on Oriental, Spanish, and Latin American dances and music.

During the 1920s and 1930s, La Meri (Russell Meriwether Hughes, 1899-1988) was the first 20th century American dancer to pursue "the study of foreign dance languages—the movements, the choreographic forms, the styles, and the cultural components" by touring many parts of the world (Ruyter, 2000, p. 173). La Meri studied Mexican and Spanish dancing as her first dance form from 1913 through the 1920s. Her first foreign engagement was in Mexico City in the 1920s (Ruyter, 2000). During her initial three-month engagement, she performed and learned Spanish dance, Mexican regional dance, and movements in the *torero* (Ruyter, 2000). Among the teachers with whom she studied was Pedro Valdez, whom she describes in her autobiography as "Mexico's finest native dancer,

who had taught Pavlova and helped her with the staging of her well-known Mexican Dances ballet” (Hughes, 1977, p. 30).

Having found her calling, La Meri began a quest of documenting and performing dances of folkloric origin. La Meri used these Mexican regional dances, as well as other dances she learned later, in her own presentations of world dance on stage (Ruyter, 2000). From the 1930s on, she specialized in what she termed “ethnic dance,” but particularly in dances of Oriental and Hispanic origin (Ruyter, 2000). She offered training in ethnic dance at various locations but was based at her own school in New York City, the Ethnologic Dance Center (EDC), from the 1940s to 1956 (Ruyter, 2000). She also taught with Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn at their dance schools (Ruyter, 2000).

La Meri documented and presented traditional dances for the Mexican government, but it was Hernandez who popularized and commercialized Mexican folkloric dance both at home and around the world. Ramirez (1989) classifies Hernandez as a “romanticist” who paid homage to the quaint customs of the past, portraying positive images of happy peasants celebrating their culture. Perhaps more significantly, Shay (1999, 2002) points out that Hernandez also created a version of folkloric dance that was entirely acceptable to the Mexican elite of the time and to an international (i.e., American and European) audience.

By 1954, the company had created 67 programs based on Mexican folklore and was popular and well known to Mexican audiences (Ramirez, 1989). Soon, the company became sponsored by the Department of Tourism and made an official cultural representative of the Mexican Government (Ramirez, 1989). Under the Lopez Mateos presidency, it became Mexico’s national Ballet Company as part of the National Institute of

Fine Arts, Bellas Artes (Ramirez, 1989). Hernandez became the authority of what was to be represented as authentic Mexican folkloric dance (Ramirez, 1989; Shay, 2002). In the Ballet Folklórico de México de Amalia Hernández program notes, her approach is described as follows:

Amalia Hernández goes back to the origins of the culture, folklore, or region she intends to develop into a ballet. The art of her ancestors, their sculpture and murals, provides her with information about myths, legends, and especially, the aesthetics of the culture. In the museums of Mexico and carved or painted on the walls of towns and ancient pyramids are the sources Amalia shapes into the Ballet's art.

In those cases where the descendants of a culture still exist as a community, Amalia's research becomes anthropological as well as historical. She studies the way the people live, their rituals, ceremonies, and beliefs. From these things she extracts the essence of the culture and gives it drama and meaning for use on stage. (Shay, 2002, p. 36)

Much could be said about the process of representation, both positive and negative, of folkloric dance in a highly visible national dance company (Ramirez, 1989; Shay, 1999, 2002). How dances are selected, staged, costumed, and choreographed has had implications on how international entities perceive Mexican culture, and even how Mexicans perceive themselves, but that is beyond the scope of this current work. How much artistic license should be allowed in staging folkloric dance is also an issue. This is a topic that deserves more research and follow-up study about its implications on the culture at large.

Despite controversy concerning Hernández's methods, the result was that it greatly popularized and made visible Mexican folkloric dance to a wide audience. The group's immense popularity inspired the creation of other folk dance groups, many of whom dropped the use of the word "ballet" and chose labels such as "grupo folklórico" or "bailes regionales" to distinguish themselves from the type of work that Hernández was doing

(Ramirez, 1989). The goals of these folkloric groups were typically to preserve the authentic while still presenting public entertainment in a combined, harmonious endeavor.

In May 1960, an alternative folkloric group was founded by Silvia Lozano in order to give a more “authentic” folkloric presentation with less emphasis on spectacle. Christened Ballet Folclórico, its mission was to “preserve and perform the authentic folk dances, music, and costumes of the individual regions of Mexico” (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Mexico, n.d.).

Lozano, born in the city of Puebla into an artistic family of Spanish, French, and indigenous heritage, was always fascinated by dance (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Mexico, n.d.). Her grandfather, Roberto Baillet, was an actor and theater director, and her grandmother was a distinguished opera singer recognized in Europe and the Americas. Her mother was also a talented painter and singer (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Mexico, n.d.).

Described as a “young and talented bailarina (dancer),” Lozano began her studies at the Academia Mexicana de la Danza, graduating with a degree in contemporary dance and classical ballet, and later went to the Instituto Mexicano de las Bellas Artes, where she graduated as a Mexican folkloric dancer. Having trained in Mexico’s leading school of dance, the Classic, Contemporary and Folkloric Mexican Dance Academy, Lozano continued her study of Mexican folk dance throughout the country and began her professional career with Mexico City’s Beaux Arts Ballet.

Upon completing her studies, she spent seven years intensely researching the history of Mexican dance, clothing, music, and songs, while traveling and living with people of different ethnicities and regions across Mexico. She cataloged a diversity of customs and

traditions as a part of the cultural heritage of Mexico (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Mexico, n.d.). She dedicated herself to a mission of preserving the uniqueness and authenticity of the dance scenes she presents by conserving the symbols and meanings of centuries of tradition and history (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Mexico, n.d.).

The mission began in response to a call by Maestro Jaime Buentello to rescue folkloric traditions and information about the state of Nayarit. Lozano was greatly influenced by this effort. Her company, Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Mexico, was formed with the participation and support of the provincial Normal School Teachers and the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes.

Her first production, “Songs and Dances of Mexico,” was created in October 1960. The goal was to retain the originality of the costumes, dance, music, and symbolism of the folkloric traditions. The debut took place at the Auditorio Nacional and with only three people as spectators. These spectators were, however, an impressive audience: Maestro Zeferino Torreblanca, Alvarez Acosta, who was Director of the IMS (an agency under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and the Master Celestino Gorostiza, who was functioning then as director of INBA.

Under the auspices and sponsorship of the INBA, the company was hired to go the Folklife Festival in Chicago as a representative of Mexico. This led to a tour of several countries, including Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia. In 1968, the company was signed to be part of the cultural program of the Mexican Olympics at the Teatro del Bosque. In the same year, Jose Marroquin Saber offered a temporary engagement of six months to perform in Las Vegas, Nevada. This engagement won them the recognition

of being the first “family entertainment” (considered suitable for anyone to attend) Las Vegas show to remain that long on the bill. Most “family entertainment” spectacles had short runs at the time in Las Vegas.

In 1970, the Maestra Lozano created the “Boda Tarasca” of the state of Michoacan and the “Xochipitzahuatl” of the state of Morelos. Later she co-authored “Jarabillo de Tres” with the renowned music researcher Raul Helmer. This dance from the state of Michoacan earned the recognition of professional folklorists in Mexico to the degree that it is recognized as part of the official dance repertory of the state. In the same decade, the company participated in the famous “Feria del Hogar,” achieving a success that gained the company a contract for several more high profile performances: five in the Auditorio Nacional, two in Tijuana, one in Los Angeles, and one in Guadalajara. A few months later, the company changed its name to “Ballet Aztlán” (“Aztlán” is the Aztec word that means “land of the gods”) (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Mexico, n.d.).

In 1977, the Mexican government recognized the Ballet Folclórico as the official dance troupe of México. In February 1980, an announcement was published in the Official Gazette of the appointment of the company as the Official Ballet Company of the Government of the Mexico City Federal District. It was given the title “National Ballet” and was given permanent headquarters at the Teatro de la Ciudad. In the 1980s, the company was given exemption from paying tax to copyright their work by the Ministry of Public Education to the Federal District under the mandate of Dr. Ernesto Zedillo (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Mexico, n.d.).

The company continued to perform both as a folkloric group and as family entertainment, acting as ambassadors for Mexican folkloric art. In 1980, the Ballet Folclórico performed with Liberace at the Las Vegas Hilton for a year before sold-out audiences. In late 1989 and early 1990, the company opened its show in El Cortijo Flamingo Cancun, Quintana Roo, as a “still date” (no touring necessary), where it stayed for four years. In 1990, the company opened the Mexican Dinner Show at the Hotel Continental Plaza Villas in Cancun, Quintana Roo, where it performed for seven years. In 1996, the company became part of the Xcaret Riviera Maya Quintana Roo Park show as part of the “Xcaret de Noche” presentation. Its home venue is now at the Xcaret Ecological Park in Cancún, where the Ballet Folclórico plays nightly to dinner audiences of thousands, when not performing in Mexico City (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de México, n.d.).

The Ballet Folclórico (now known as the Ballet Folclórico Nacional de México Aztlán) has attempted to faithfully fulfill its mission of preserving authentic folkloric dance, music, and costumes through close work with Mexico’s most prominent researchers and regional experts in these fields. It is generally recognized as one of the most authentic performances of Mexican traditional dance (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de México, n.d.).

In 1993, Lozano created the Mexico National Folk Foundation (Fundación Folclórica Nacional de México), which supports ethnic and cultural projects in Mexico. The company also often travels to the U.S. to give presentations and workshops. In 1999 the official “Aztlán Workshops” was inaugurated. These are workshops in Dallas, Texas, for training students and teachers of dance in folkloric dance and Mexican folklore. Miami, Florida, and San Diego, California have also given recognition to Lozano’s outstanding work in the

preservation and dissemination of Mexican culture (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de México, n.d.).

Director Lozano has also worked to create enclaves for folkloric dance study by partnering with government and academic entities to perpetuate the teaching of folkloric dance. She established the Artistic Unit of the Mexican Army, earning her a commission as a Captain in the Mexican armed forces. Lozano also created the curriculum for a Mexican Folkloric Dance degree at the State of Hidalgo's Real del Monte University (Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Mexico, n.d.). She continues to travel to the U.S. to speak or teach at dance events, and she teaches Mexican folk dance at annual workshops in Dallas, Texas, for American students.

In comparing these two folkloric groups of Hernandez and Lozano, both considered "National Dance Companies of Mexico," it is apparent that both companies have contributed to the preservation and promotion of Mexican folkloric dance. The paths to this common goal and the approach to their missions were somewhat different. Hernandez was innovative in packaging Mexican folklore as a "high art form" and highly visible commercial entertainment. Her top-down approach began with a theatrical framework of European classical dance and then adapted folkloric dance within that framework. It was an approach that melded well with her intentions and her resources, including theatrical and television presentations.

Lozano followed a "bottom-up" approach, which focused first on preserving folklore, rooted in local traditions and on-site research. These presentations eventually evolved into show performances. From the outset, more emphasis was put on context and

authenticity, rather than the theatrical and commercial aspects of performance. Lozano's goals were more educational than for entertainment. Both companies have their place and do remarkable work, and both have succeeded in making Mexican folkloric dance much more visible, both within Mexico and abroad. This visibility inspired other folkloric groups to form and carry on a similar tradition of dance performance.

In 1964, Rafael Zamarripa of Guadalajara, a former member of Ballet Folklórico de México and internationally recognized choreographer, continued and expanded the concept of Mexican folkloric performance dance. He established a program of Mexican folkloric performance dance at the University of Guadalajara, with the performance group, Grupo Folklórico de la Universidad de Guadalajara (McNulty, 1997). Later, his students, Cashion and Morones, continued his vision of folkloric dance by creating original choreography and theatrical pieces based on traditional Mexican folkloric dance. In 1980, Zamarripa founded another dance company, El Ballet Folklórico de la Universidad de Colima, where he currently holds the position of general director (Muñoz, 2005). His curriculum evolved into university programs and academic support for the pursuit of folkloric dance, in addition to what was available in Mexico City. He continues to teach workshops and choreograph, and he has held temporary positions at the University of California and the University of Texas, where he has shared the teaching of folkloric dance.

Ramirez (1989) points out the significance of the historic development of folkloric dance tradition in Mexico. Beginning in the 1920s, folkloric traditions became institutionalized, supported, and controlled by the government. Folkloric dance also became part of the educational system, entrenched in high-profile universities, and promulgated in

public schools. Additionally, Mexican folkloric dance was promoted politically and diplomatically, making it both a cultural and an economic resource to this day in Mexico (Ramirez, 1989).

Mexican Folkloric Dance in the United States

Mexican immigrants who relocated to the U.S. in order to escape the Mexican Revolution brought a great deal of their culture and arts with them. Although not always fashionable in their customs, these immigrants often found comfort in reminders of home (Ainslie, 1998). More importantly, Ainslie (1998) points out that newly-arrived immigrants used reminders and symbols from their culture of origin to build bridges and make transitions into their newly adopted culture. Until they became enculturated, they practiced what they knew best, which were the traditions they grew up with and transplanted from the homeland.

Among the traditions that Mexican immigrants brought with them to the U.S. were their songs, music, and dancing. During the period of the Mexican Revolution, Mexicans came to the U.S. to escape the conflict, poverty, and starvation that gripped their homelands. Many planned to return after the conflict was over, so they had little motivation to give up their culture and traditions. Others planned to relocate permanently, but found their cultural traditions a comfort in a new world.

As previously discussed, Mexican carpas had traveled throughout Mexico and the Southwest U.S., often featuring regional songs, music, and dance. These groups continued to exist even into the 1930s, overlapping an era of growing interest in the U.S. for folk dance in general. According to Ramirez (1989), Mexican folk dance during the 1930s generally

was either taught in schools (in a highly idiosyncratic way) or performed by Mexicans in their own communities for entertainment.

In the period 1930-1950, folk dances taught in schools were often based on “how-to” books that had brief descriptions of steps and costuming and were highly simplified and diluted of their ethnicity for purposes of teaching children (Ramirez, 1989). These books gave little depth and provided little or no information on “how or who collected these dances and why” (Ramirez, 1989, p. 24).

The fact that Mexico was so “foreign,” yet so close, added to the interest in Mexican folklore and tourism (ignoring the fact that many U.S. citizens had come from Mexico) (Ramirez, 1989). This gave the mixed message of Mexico as being simultaneously a “neighbor,” “alien,” and an “exotic” culture of delightful pleasures (Ramirez, 1989, p. 24).

There was keen interest in Mexican folk dance in the U.S., but the motivation for performing or teaching the dances was different for Americans than it was for Mexicans (Ramirez, 1989). For Americans, the dancing was considered little more than a tourist attraction, a cross-cultural exercise that was educational, but ultimately, an optional entertainment (Ramirez, 1989). It did not hold the reverence for cultural identity that existed in Mexico, despite the geographic and cultural proximity. Additionally, folklore was cast as “quaint,” “old-fashioned,” perhaps even “low-class” or “backward” compared to American culture.

During this time, however, the immigrant population continued to actively collect, teach, and perform traditional dances, despite unavoidable losses due to acculturation. New

immigrants constantly arrived, many immigrants visited their homelands and tried to keep family traditions alive, including music, song, and dance.

Maintaining these traditions was not always popular, since the hegemonic processes often worked against the preservation of Mexican culture, painting such traditions as reminders of an uneducated, backwards, unprogressive, and low class society (Ramirez, 1989). Negative stereotypes painted Mexican immigrants as ignorant, lazy, simple, and of low morality. These negative stereotypes became associated with folkloric symbols of Mexico, including its music and dance.

During the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, these negative stereotypes began to change. Chicanos began to become increasingly visible and politically active across the nation, particularly on college campuses. The term “Chicanos” came from a slang combination of the words “Chicos Mexicanos,” or “Little Mexicans,” referring to second generation Mexican-Americans and beyond, who were of Mexican heritage, but not Mexican-born (Marin, 2007).

According to Ramirez (1989), “With the rise of the Chicano Movement in the 1960s, Chicanos searched for mediums [media] through which their cultural identity could be reaffirmed, promoted, and preserved” (Ramirez, 1989, p. 26). Chicano organizations attempted to reclaim their Mexican cultural heritage from the denigration suffered from the mainstream hegemonic cultural forces, including their language, images, history, and expressive arts (Ramirez, 1989). They were searching for cultural symbols to unite them as a single, shared cultural tradition and a heritage in which they could take pride.

In imitation of the post-Revolutionary era in Mexico, the Chicano Movement embraced the feelings, symbols, and values (albeit a reconstructed nationalist Mexican tradition) and redefined them as their own. This reconstruction also embraced and encouraged the spread of Mexican folkloric dance groups as part of the Chicano Movement and Mexican heritage. “Young Chicanos thus chose to recover the control over their own cultural traditions and to reinvest them with a new significance” (Ramirez, 1989, p. 27).

In 1973, the Asociación Nacional de Grupos Folklóricos (ANGF), an international non-profit organization, was founded to promote the teaching and learning of Mexican folkloric and regional dances. It continues to support Mexican folkloric groups around the U.S. through its membership. It is “dedicated to the research, preservation, presentation and education of La Cultura Mexicana and Latina within the realms of dance, music and art” (ANGF, 2007, para. 1).

It was in this context that Mexican folkloric dance groups’ popularity took hold and flourished, not only in the Southwestern U.S., but across the nation. Anywhere that Mexican communities were active, some form of folkloric dance was like to develop. This included such Midwestern cities such as Chicago and Kansas City.

Mexican Folkloric Dance in Kansas City

Folkloric dance existed in the Kansas City area for at least a century, and yet it has not been thoroughly researched. This study focuses primarily on the most recent developments of the most visible Mexican folkloric groups in the Kansas City area. Historical information is presented that indicates that Folkloric Dance has continually been part of the Latino culture in many communities.

Folkloric Dance groups in Kansas City have been associated with the community centers that served the Latino population in the areas in which they were located. In Kansas City, Kansas this was El Centro (established in 1976), and in Kansas City, Missouri, it was Guadalupe Center. Founded in 1919, Guadalupe Center is described as “the longest continuously operating organization serving Latinos in the United States” (Guadalupe Centers, n.d., n.p.), and it still operates today as a center for social support to the Latino community.

Of these two folkloric dance groups, this paper follows the one based in Kansas City, Missouri in detail. These two folkloric dance groups grew out of an original Kansas City, Kansas, dance group that drew together the talents of three people: Jaime Reyes and his wife Rose Marie (later Rose Marie Mendez), and their colleague and dance partner, Maria Chaurand. Reyes arrived in the Kansas City area in 1973 and started their dance group in 1975 (J. Reyes, personal communication, October-November 2007).

Reyes began dancing when he was eight years old and living in Mexico, where folkloric dance was taught as a regular part of the K-12 curriculum. He saw no reason to stop dancing after school life, and he plans to continue dancing to the end of his days (J. Reyes, personal communication, October-November 2007).

In the 1970s, inspired by her experiences performing with Reyes’ group in Kansas, Maria Chaurand went in her own direction and in 1979, founded her own dance group based in Kansas City, Missouri. She christened the dance group El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco (M. Chaurand, personal communication, October-November, 2007).

In 1984, Jaime Reyes and Rose Marie went their separate ways. Jaime Reyes joined El Grupo Folklórico Atotonilco as teacher and co-director of the company with Maria Chaurand. Rose Marie Mendez went on to direct the folkloric group based in Kansas City, Kansas, called *Fiesta Mexicana* (J. Reyes, personal communication, October-November 2007).

Origins of Grupo Folklórico Atotonilco

Maria Chaurand founded El Grupo Folklórico Atotonilco in 1979, named for the town where her family originated and in fact, where her uncle had been the mayor. (M. Chaurand, personal communication, October-November, 2007). Atotonilco refers to the “flowing waters” of the natural springs in the area. The site is also known as peaceful, spiritual, and mystical location by the indigenous people.

Born in Mexico City, Chaurand came to Kansas City when she was three years old. She had always loved to dance, especially the Mexican folkloric dance of her heritage, but she was not able to pursue it until she grew older. Folkloric dance was not taught in schools in the U.S.

Chaurand started with 16 children and a handful of costumes. Currently, the group comprises more than 80 participants, ranging in age from four years old to senior citizens. The group estimates that since their founding, that they have served 700-800 children in the community as students of folkloric dance. Almost 25 of the students are advanced enough to do a variety of dances from all over Mexico and tour with the group (El Grupo Folklórico Atotonilco, n.d.; RDS Marketing, 2015).

A long-time member of Asociación Nacional de Grupos Folklóricos (ANGF), the group participated in national performances and won awards for their presentations. Maria Chaurand, along with co-director Jaime Reyes, and her sons have taken the group on tour and have performed at a number of folkloric conferences, both in the U.S. and in Mexico.

Chaurand's four sons became involved in folkloric dance as young as four years old. Now adults, these sons perform as principal dancers and teachers of different age groups. Chaurand's eldest son, Enrique A. Chaurand Jr., has taken up his mother's passion for the dance and has continued to participate in the group's teaching, organizing, and performing. By the age of 14, he had become the head instructor for the group. He later studied folkloric dance at the University of Guadalajara and at El Instituto de Artes Cabañas in Guadalajara (Ballet Folclórico de la Universidad de Guadalajara, n.d.). During his time in Guadalajara, Mr. Chaurand danced under the direction of Raul Valdez Palido. Mr. Chaurand has instructed and performed with El Ballet Folklórico Quetzali of Xalapa, Veracruz, another well-known Mexican folkloric dance group. In 1997, he served as an instructor for the Asociación Nacional de Grupos Folklóricos (ANGF) National Conference in Kansas City.

El Grupo Folklórico Atotonilco has established a reputation as one of the best Mexican folk dance companies in the U.S. and is the most often requested dance group in the state of Missouri's folk arts roster. The group represented the U.S., the state of Missouri, and the City of Kansas City, Missouri at the 1992 World's Fair in Seville, Spain.

In 1997, the group was given the "Premiere Mexican Folk Dance Company in U.S." award, the first of its kind. It was bestowed on the group by the National Association of Mexican Folk Dance Companies, an organization with more than 500 members in the U.S.

and Mexico. To date, no other U.S. folkloric dance company has been awarded that honor. The dance company also has been recognized in national publications, such as *The President's Book on Arts in 1998* (1998), and the book, *Americanos*, created by well-known actor Edward James Olmos (1996) (El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco, n.d.).

Between 1985 and 2005, El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco traveled to participate and perform for folkloric dance conferences, each held in a different Mexican state, including Agua Calientes, Vera Cruz, Guadalajara, and Saltio, Guajila.

On May 6, 2004, El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco celebrated its 25th anniversary with three sold-out performances at Kansas City's historic Folly Theater. The dance company received favorable reviews in the *Kansas City Star* newspaper and *Pitch Magazine*, as well as from several other artistic publications (El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco, n.d.).

Often when they perform, members discuss the history and evolution of Mexican folk dance and its music. They also highlight the influences upon Mexican folkloric dance, including Mexico's indigenous populations and European countries. The group typically performs dances from several Mexican regions, demonstrating intricate footwork and costumes unique to each locale.

Although this not-for-profit organization charges only a modest fee from its students, the group tries hard to bring in top quality costumes, music, and accessories from Mexico and organize workshops and training by well-known teachers in Mexico. The group does a great deal of fund-raising and community performances on behalf of the students, the organization, and for the community they serve. In this way, the students are vested in the group, in the performances, and in the training that they receive.

With support from the community, the group has been able to maintain a high level of performance quality. It is known as one of the best folkloric groups in the region, although competition between folkloric groups is very keen. There is competition on how well the dance steps are executed, and also on how well the performance represents authentic folklore from the region of its origin. Competition includes the choreography, the general movements, the music, the instruments, the manner of dress, the shoes that are worn, the way the hair is worn, and mannerisms used within the dancing. All these details must conform to a certain standard of “authenticity” to be eligible for competition. The general choreography of the group and the patterns of movement for the group, however, are flexible (within each region), in order to allow for creativity in group presentation. Grupo Folklórico Atotonilco manages to hold its own among other groups because of the high standards of the teachers, community support, and the engagement of the families of the dancers.

Recent Mexican Folkloric Dance Popularity in the United States

As Ramirez (1989) points out, Mexican folk dance groups, or grupos folklóricos, “stand as public symbols of Mexican culture to the Chicano community at large” (Ramirez 1989, p. 15). She also points out that despite the fact that folkloric groups are so popular and enjoy high visibility in both the U.S. and Mexico, these folkloric dance groups have not received much scholarly examination, as have other public forms of Mexican culture, such as artists, muralists, theatrical groups, and musicians. The social and political significance of the folkloric phenomenon is also complicated by issues of “authenticity” versus “commercialization,” and where folkloric dance places itself within this dichotomy (Ramirez 1989).

Ramirez (1989) also points out that some folklorists such as Linda Degh (1984) make rigid distinctions between folklore, fakelore, and folklorisms that “are not useful in actual practice” when examining practices in social and cultural contexts. She finds the social and political dimensions of the cyclical nature of folklore are missing from Degh’s conceptualization. Sociologist Raymond Williams, on the other hand, presents a case for the evolving nature of cultural traditions, especially when cultures cross-pollinate or when new traditions are introduced into ethnic communities (Williams, 1973, 1977, 1995), resulting in the emergence of a different hybrid cultural practice that serves the same purpose as the original.

Ramirez (1989) herself draws on the cultural criticism of Raymond Williams to “examine the social and political process through which folk lore is manipulated,” and particularly on Williams’ notion of residual and emergent culture. She describes Williams’ concepts as relevant to the study of folkloric dance (Ramirez, 1989):

Williams describes *hegemony* as the complex process through which a *dominant group* imposes its *values, beliefs, and interests* upon the rest of society by creating, appropriating, or otherwise controlling the various cultural institutions through which the members of society are socialized. In this way, the hegemonic order pervades society at many levels such that it eventually is *internalized* and perceived as the *natural*—if not correct—order of the world. Williams also notes that hegemony can never be complete and is thus constantly being *contested* and *negotiated*. Moreover, *in the struggle for hegemony, appropriation occurs by both the dominant and dominated groups*.

Particularly relevant to our discussion are Williams’ notion of *residual* and *emergent culture*. *Residual* culture are those experiences, values, and practices formed in previous social cultural institutions which continue to be lived and practiced by dominated groups although they are not verified in terms of the dominant culture. As such, residual culture provides an important resource for developing either alternative or oppositional culture. *Emergent* culture, on the other hand, consists of new meanings, values, and practices which are not merely novel forms of the dominant culture. (Ramirez, 1989, p. 16; italics added)

In this regard, Ramirez (1989) notes that Williams' theoretical framework provides a good starting point for a political analysis of cultural practices in general and for the folkloric tradition in particular. Although in this case, we are discussing one folkloric tradition—dance—in two social and political settings, there are as many strong similarities as there are differences.

The accuracy of authenticity might be less important than the reverence that is held for these symbols, practices, and traditions and the meaning they have for the people involved. Although the attention to accuracy and authenticity is important, it is difficult to know how much accuracy has been lost over the years, and how much artistic license had been taken with each layer of interpretation. However reconstructed, certain motifs, themes, symbols, and images survive. These could be described as Williams' concept of "residual culture" and perhaps capture the essence of previous traditions, even if the original meanings are lost to time.

These reconstructions and revivals of traditions could be compared to Williams' concept of emergent culture. They hark back to ancient traditions, yet are redefined and renegotiated to fit the needs of the people of the moment. Expressive arts are particularly important in pre-literate societies where art, prose, music, song, and dance all become outlets for social commentary, criticism, and parody. These emergent reconstructions become venues for both emulating and parodying the dominant culture, sometimes simultaneously.

Culture is not static, but is an organic, growing, ever-evolving entity that changes with the times and responds to the desires and needs of the populace. In studying cultural

practices, the best we can hope for is to capture “snapshots,” determine patterns, and follow trajectories.

Cultural identities are also not permanent or static, but must be reaffirmed constantly, Cultural practices reinforce these cultural identities and serve to shape (and contain) the concept of Self (Ainslie, 1998). Some of the most powerful and enduring cultural practices that exist are those that are embodied. As an embodied cultural practice, dance is a potent instrument for expression. Both choreographed and improvisational styles of dance can be informative to the experienced eye.

Because of Mexico’s post-revolutionary passion for preserving its folklore, we have an extensive case study of how culture has responded to political changes and endured despite internal struggles, conquest, colonialism, revolution, post-colonialism, industrialization, globalization, and transnationalism. These different eras can be clearly seen in the dances presented in the “baile folklorico” tradition. Although many nations and cultures have folk dance companies that represent their cultural traditions, few have embraced the full spectrum of folklore and diversity their cultures have to offer as Mexico has done. Selection of material in folk dance companies always reflects the values, standards, and politics of the time (Shay 1999, 2002). The selection of material reflects an agenda (or hegemony) of what is considered important or worthy of presentation.

Few folkloric dance traditions that embrace dance forms present material that goes all the way back to indigenous peoples (animal dances, Deer Dance), through colonialism (La Bruja, Matlachines, zapateados, Viejitos), post-colonial (waltz, polka), Revolutionary (soldaras, Adelitas, Cucaracha), post-Revolutionary (Jarabe Tapatio), ranching and

industrialization (rope dance, calabazeados), and contemporary times (Quebradita, Duranguense). Few folk dance traditions also record the other cultural influences that were integrated into local, regional traditions (La Bruja, La Bamba, and La Negra). Yet the “baile folklórico” tradition preserves these works very clearly, for teaching, learning, and presentation as living traditions. This is a rich, diverse body of cultural information that has not yet received the scholarly attention it deserves.

An American equivalent to the Mexican Folkloric dance tradition does not exist. If such a body of work existed, a Folkloric Americana, it would have to include (on rotation) a repertoire of various Native American cultures in different geographic areas. It would need to include square dance, minstrel shows, the cake walk, clogging, tap, Jazz, Charleston, classical Modern Dance, Swing, and Broadway musical dance, as well as others. Additionally, all these dance forms would be studied in their original contexts, and how they relate to each other over time, including details about their costumes and music. Clearly, there is no venue for such an assortment of dance traditions in the U.S. at this time. It could be argued that each of these dance forms has its own venue, but these venues do not “connect the dots” in presenting these dance forms in their original contexts, or how they represented the culture at the time, or how they contribute to the culture today. By not making these connections to the culture at large, American dance has allowed itself to remain peripheral and marginalized compared to the rich cultural heritage presented by other expressive arts (e.g., music, fashion, theater, literature, and visual arts).

A drawback of not studying dance is the lack of realization of how fundamental dance is to culture. It is a sad loss to cultural history. For example, one little known fact is

that many dance forms actually predate the music that eventually became associated with its performance; e.g. Tap, Swing, and Jazz dancing predates the Jazz music with which each dance later was associated (Frank, 1995; Nicholas Brothers, personal communication, 2000-2003, L. Reed, personal communication, 2000-2003). The dance shaped the music. Dance was not added later as “decoration,” but rather, the dancing was fundamental to shaping the structure of the music. This can also be detected in various folkloric dance forms around the world, such as Flamenco, Middle Eastern, and others.

Although folkloric dance is often trivialized as commercialized folklore for tourist consumption, as Ramirez (1989) notes, the key point is that “it has been used and applied as folklore by various groups for different political ends and has played a pivotal role in the hegemonic struggle in two nations” (Ramirez, 1989). What is unique about Mexican folkloric dance tradition is that it can also illustrate these struggles over time, embodied in the performances, costumes, and music of the dances, regardless of how “authentic” the performance is deemed to be.

Balkan Folkloric Dance in the United States

Balkan folkloric dance and music came with the early immigrants in the late 1800s and expanded as families created communities within ethnic enclaves, building churches, social halls, and taverns (Shay, 2006) where social events took place.

Just after the turn of the 20th century, the folkloric dance movement gained momentum within the settlement house movement, which had the goals of educating people about cultural diversity and encouraging tolerance among different social groups. Festivals and holiday celebrations, including native dress, ethnic food, music, and dance, were

encouraged in order to share cultural activities with the mainstream dominant society. These events had the effect of creating more (and much needed) cultural pride among immigrants and created a bridge with dominant social groups that made immigrants seem less “strange” and threatening (Shay, 2006, p. 122). At these events, costumes often would be assembled ad hoc, in joint efforts by immigrant families, which sometimes included different parts from different regions, so purity of “authenticity” would frequently be overlooked in favor of giving a colorful display of native costuming (Shay, 2006).

One of the earliest public festivals featuring Balkan dancing was presented in 1919 by the Officers of the International Institute in St. Paul, which offered some of the earliest programs in international folkloric music and dance (Shay, 2006). In 1932, they moved the festival from their headquarters to a large civic auditorium, which helped launch a national movement (Shay, 2006). The folk dance activities that began as small festivals in settlement houses and international institutes grew into large civic events, and the importance of the presentation of costume, food, music, and dance expanded. These folk dance activities spread far and wide to different cities that had ethnic enclaves.

Origins of St. John’s Tamburitzans of Strawberry Hill

Founded by Don Lipovac, and assisted by his wife, JoAnn, St. John’s Tamburitzans grew out of local ethnic immigrant cultural roots. Born in 1935 of Slovenian descent in a Slavic community located in the Strawberry Hill area of Kansas City, Kansas, Don Lipovac began playing music at age four when his grandfather, Matt Lipovac, a Slovenian immigrant eager to pass on their cultural musical heritage, gave him a button accordion.

Showing early talent for music, Lipovac began studying music formally with Alfred Vacca of Kansas City, Missouri, from age eight to 17, then went on to study at the Kansas City Conservatory of Music (now part of the University of Missouri) and graduated with degrees in Music Theory and Music Education (Don Lipovac, 2014; Kansas City Kansas Tamburitza, n.d.)

While still in high school, Lipovac began playing with the Blue Danube Tamburitza Orchestra of Kansas City, which played for many Croatian and Slovenian church functions, polka dances, and weddings in the area. Lipovac also became part of the Croatian Kolo Club, a Yugoslav folk song and dance ensemble. In 1952, Lipovac auditioned and was accepted for the Kansas City show of the Ted Mack Amateur Hour, a popular TV program of the time. The local performance was held at the Municipal Auditorium in downtown Kansas City, Missouri. Lipovac also received a trip to New York for winning the local competition (Don Lipovac, 2014).

Also in the early 1950s, Lipovac began a small band. The original members were Don Lipovac on accordion, Ray Rodina on tamburitza, and Frank Zager on bass. The trio played for dances, wedding receptions, and other events in the local area.

From 1956 through 1958, Lipovac competed in a variety of accordion contests. In 1958, Lipovac earned the nation's top accordion honor, placing first in the American Accordionist Association National Championship contest in New York City, and representing the U.S. in the International Accordion competition in Brussels, Belgium. In the same year, Lipovac also appeared on the Lawrence Welk Show playing polka music.

Later he appeared as a soloist with the Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra (Don Lipovac, 2014; Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans, n.d.).

Other honors and recognitions that Don Lipovac earned included a citation in 1974 from the Kansas Federation of Music Clubs in recognition for outstanding musical service; induction into the Tamburitza Association of American Hall of Fame, for outstanding contributions toward the preservation of Tamburitza music; and induction into the Polka Hall of Fame, awarded at Ironworld, U.S., in Chisholm, Minnesota (Don Lipovac, 2014; Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans, n.d.).

By the 1960s, the Croatian Kolo Club began to suffer from attrition as members moved into their 20s and 30s. Because of the demands of starting families, job obligations, and relocations, people found it difficult to sustain the group. Lipovac, however, stayed committed to his music full time.

During this period Lipovac married his wife, JoAnn, whom he had known since childhood. Also from a Slovenian family, JoAnn shared Lipovac's love of their musical heritage and supported his efforts to teach and perform.

In the 1960s, Lipovac and his supporters attempted to revive the Kolo Club. In 1966, Lipovac offered a class on the Croatian stringed instrument, the tamburitza, at St. John's School, a private Croatian institution. The first class was popular, and Lipovac became the musical director of the St. John's Tamburitzans, a group formed to preserve the folk songs and dances of the Yugoslav community (Don Lipovac, 2014; Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans, n.d.).

Under his direction, the group produced six record albums, composed of Yugoslav national music, popular, and classical music. St. John's Tamburitzans appeared at the International Folklore Festival in Zagreb, Yugoslavia, where they taped a 45-minute program of music for Radio Zagreb. The Tamburitzans gave annual concerts, usually consisting of 40 to 50 performers, and appeared at numerous civic functions. In 1988, the St. John's Tamburitzans program applied for and was granted funding by the Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program (Don Lipovac, 2014; Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans, n.d.).

Both Don and JoAnn Lipovac have devoted a great deal of their lives to the St. John's Tamburitzans in the last decades. Lipovac has written all the instructional material and musical arrangements for the group, including approximately 500 folk songs, dances, and concert selections. Since the inception of the St. John's Tamburitzans program, Lipovac has taught hundreds of tamburitza students in the Kansas City area. Two of his former students, Dan Vrabac and Mike Sandelich, were distinguished by earning four-year music scholarships as members of the highly respected Duquesne University Tamburitzans. Another talented singer and musician, Bunny Delich, has continued to sing and play professionally with various bands in the area and has performed on a number of musical albums.

My Association with Don Lipovac

My association with Don Lipovac began in 1971 in Kansas City, Missouri, when he had a regular job playing evenings and weekends at Grecian Gardens Restaurant, which featured folk dancers on the weekends. The former Toni Cammiyano had seen me perform at an Arab-American Banquet and asked if I would consider a regular job at an ethnic

restaurant. Cammiyano had married a Greek man, Gus, brother to Anna Mitef, who with her husband, Ivan Mitef (a Bulgarian), owned the Near Eastern restaurant, Grecian Gardens. They were looking for dancers.

My mother checked out the restaurant first. She was familiar with Don Lipovac's work through Steve Resivich, who had taught folk dance workshops for the Dance Department at Central Missouri State University, where my mother taught dance. She gave her approval, so I auditioned and was hired. During the two shows we worked each evening, I did the Mexican Hat Dance (Jarabe Tapitio), Greek folk dances, various folk dances between shows, and a Middle Eastern dance solo. During most of the four years I worked at Grecian Gardens (1971-1975), I danced with two peers, including Don Lipovac's protégé, Bunny Delich, and the owners' eldest daughter, Mary Mitef. The three of us did an assortment of folkloric dances, including duets, trios, and solos, and Bunny Delich also played and sang traditional Balkan music.

Years later, in the spring of 2010, as I got deeper into my dissertation research, I contacted Don and JoAnn Lipovac in order to add their perspectives and to include their events as part of the research. They were supportive of the work. It was an interesting point of comparison to the Mexican folkloric group, whose popularity was strong; whereas the popularity of Balkan folkloric dance had waned since the tragedy of September 11, 2001. However, interest was picking up again as a new generation was coming of age in the Strawberry Hill community.

These two groups, Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco and the Kansas City Kansas Tamburitians, serve to illustrate a comparison of Folkloric Dance groups across ethnicities

and communities, and their similarities/differences in development. They also illustrate dance groups at different stages of existence, since they began and evolved in different time frames.

CHAPTER 5

THEORETICAL BASES OF EMBODIED BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

Embodied Behavior as Data

In this study, several levels of analysis are presented, ranging from the embodied experiences of the individual, the experiences shared with the group of dancers, and the organization of the group as a Community of Practice. One level of analysis focuses on the embodied elements and dynamics that are engaged during the practice of dance. Another level of analysis focuses on the dance group as a Community of Practice, using the Lave/Wenger model based on a theory of Situated Learning. Additionally, the social structures created within the CoP are examined.

Both of these perspectives, that of the individual and that of the group, fall within the general ecological theory framework and should not be construed as separate events, but rather as different views of the processes. The goal in this analysis is to unite these two perspectives as “two sides of the same coin.”

Dance as an activity or practice is interesting as a sociological topic of study in that practitioners report feeling a part of something, a group, that is bigger than themselves, and a sense of belonging, while at the same time describing how the dancing allows them to “find themselves” as individuals, express themselves, be creative, or find their “artistic voice.” Practitioners often prepare in isolation, in addition to the group activities, and may or may not participate in supportive activities outside of dancing. Although this can be said

of other artistic and cultural hobbies and practices, dance is also interesting in that it is an embodied practice, yet communicates cultural information, often in a non-verbal manner.

In this regard, practitioners simultaneously express their individuality, as well as their group belongingness, in a physical activity, and these associative practices can be performed alone or in conjunction with others. Dance and similar activities that involve synchronous body movements with others allow individuals to explore the part-whole relationship in a tangible, embodied way that is relatively safe and non-threatening.

The Challenge of Studying Embodied Behavior

The challenge of investigating embodied behavior as a qualitative study is limiting oneself to observable behaviors on the one hand, yet allowing the possibility of an interaction between internal “states,” or a “Self,” with external behaviors, events, and surroundings. This process can also be simplified or complicated by taking an interdisciplinary approach. Another challenge is deciding what to include, what is most relevant, and what to exclude; otherwise the research would continue indefinitely.

By approaching the problem from an ecological perspective (which is itself interdisciplinary), I was able to come to terms with some of these difficulties and build a substantive argument to support my premises and conclusions. The ecological perspective assumes a dynamic and immediate interaction between entity and surroundings, be they internal interactions within the entity (or system), or external interactions between entity and environment (including the social milieu). Internal interactions within the entity would include, for example, the case of emotional “states,” cognitions, social learning, schemas (including body schema and mapping) and/or the forming of the “Self” (and related

concepts, such as self-image, self-identity, self-concept, body image, and peri-personal space). External interactions would include, for example, responding to the physical environs, social behaviors, social schemas, customs, habits, rituals, and dance. Although for purposes of study, research, and analysis, we parse these elements apart to learn more about the dynamics of each, in truth, all of these elements and dynamics occur concurrently, dynamically, together, and interact and influence each other accordingly. Life does not occur in the “closed system” of a laboratory, but rather in the permeable, “open system” of the real world.

That said, in order to make a stronger case for folkloric dance not as an activity that merely “reflects” community, but as a specific process that can actually create community, one must question what is being observed. Many of the studies that inspired this one specifically focused on dance and dance-related behaviors, added to the comments of the participants looking forward to the dance, as evidence of a “Flow”-related dynamic creating (or alternatively, reflecting) community. This was the perspective where this study began.

With all due respect (and gratitude) to the previous studies, through conversations with my adviser, I realized that a stronger case could be built concerning dance as shaping behavior, if embodied theory was included. Because I have a Psychology background, this appealed to me intuitively, but how to observe and/or record such an effect (without using an invasive method, such as brain scans) seemed quite a challenge.

Participant observation of dance activities was selected as the method of choice. Through observation, one could see evidence, for example, of children and adults learning dances together and forming a dynamic bigger than themselves. One could see dancers

learning how to coordinate, collaborate, compensate, and support each other's efforts, even in the spirit of competitive performances.

Typical Class, Event, and Performance

To get an idea of how the activity of dance creates a self-organizing process contributing to a Community of Practice and to community at large, it is useful to look at a typical class meeting and a typical event or performance. A description of a class meeting follows, and then a dance event/performance is examined.

El Grupo Folklórico Atotonilco normally holds classes Monday through Thursday, with optional Saturday morning classes, during most of the academic school year. Presented as a neighborhood after-school program, teachers assemble around 5 p.m. in Guadalupe Center or in the studio space to organize, rehearse, and prepare for the evening's activities.

Some parents drop children off and come back later to pick them up. Family members, usually female, stay and watch the dancing or chat with peers. Some of these family members are pressed into service as attendance-checkers, for costume, music, and equipment care, and other support.

Periodically, María Chaurand holds a meeting of parents during the classes, to plan, select performance dates, assign roles, discuss budget issues, encourage monthly payments, call for volunteers, solicit support, arrange rides, inquire about vendors, and ask for costume care and transport. Several performances are generally planned, including Mexican Independence Day (September), Día de los Muertos (October-November), and Pasados (December) for the Fall semester and various Cinco de Mayo performances for the Spring semester.

In more prosperous years, the group might bring in professional teachers to teach workshops for teachers and students, or it may send their teachers to conferences to learn new material, and/or send the advanced group to participate in competitions. In recent years, however, there has been a recession, so the group has not been able to afford such extra expenditures.

Classes begin around 5:30 p.m., and children are separated by age and experience. Younger children (some as young as toddlers) and beginners meet first. Older children, adults, and more advanced members meet later, during the second hour. Generally, all groups warm up with basic drills, footwork, and *zapateados* (heel work) and then begin working on combinations of steps for specific choreography and music, usually with a performance as the final goal.

During the class, the children usually pay close attention to the patterns and attempt to understand how and where they are supposed to be during various parts of the dance routine they are learning. Older and more experienced children help guide the younger and less experienced children into the appropriate moves, patterns, and positions. During the breaks, children clump together in smaller peer groups, some to gossip, some to practice individually, others to do impromptu peer learning and peer coaching. Students are dressed in practice skirts and pants, with character (folkloric) shoes, which are provided by the group. The group also provides costumes for performances and dance supplies, often importing materials directly from Mexico for purchase by students.

Revealing Dance as Microcosm of Social Interaction

Folkloric dance had always been presented as a cultural practice that reflects and reinforces local mores and customs. In my observations, I often thought of behaviors at a public dance as a laboratory, a microcosm of the society at large. There seemed, however, to be more to the story than just looking at dance as a “cultural artifact.” In working with different dance groups, I heard much anecdotal evidence that children and youth were much better behaved, and more polite, motivated, focused, social, and

alert, among other attributes, after being involved in a dance program.

For example, one of the administrators in a group under study commented that she noticed a dramatic difference in the behavior of the children after they had taken a few weeks of a Ballroom Dance program. Her comment reflected her perception of a change in the children’s behaviors towards each other; i.e., that the children were more polite towards teachers and peers. One of the administrators, who was also a teacher, commented that the children seemed to act more respectfully toward each other after being involved with the Ballroom Dance program (A. David, personal communication, 2009).

In discussions with other teachers in the same school and in other schools, similar comments were gleaned and recorded in a series of short surveys recorded in the dance group’s historical archive. One teacher noted that she observed more civility and politeness in children’s interactions with peers in general, but inter-gender civility was most noticeable in particular.

Dr. David’s and the teachers’ remarks are also reflected in the popular films, *Marilyn Hotchkiss School of Dance & Charm* (Miller, 2005), *Mad Hot Ballroom* (Agrelo, 2005), *Shall We Dance?* (Gere, 2004), and *Take the Lead* (Friedlander, 2006), where dance (and

Ballroom Dance specifically) is presented as a discipline in which one learns about social skills and how to deal with life by working through the metaphor of dance.

The next question was then, how to observe and/or measure pro-community and civility behaviors learned in dance applied in broader life. In other words, do lessons learned in dance map to pro-community and civility behaviors go beyond just the dance? And if so, what could be pointed to as evidence of civility behaviors learned as a result of learning dance? Are there skills learned in dance that translate directly to, or extrapolate to, everyday social behaviors?

Once these questions came up, potential examples of dance skills mapping to a larger context began to become apparent. For instance, in our conversations, my partner (also a dancer) often discussed our students and how to reach them better when teaching online classes and skills. Much to the surprise of our peers, we found the students who were in athletic and dance programs to be the most focused and tenacious, despite hectic academic schedules. This is a generalization, but these students, as a result of their dance training, seem to learn better planning, coordination, collaboration, and self-discipline skills before entering our classes, which then translated to better motivation, better academic work, and better learning, resulting in easier teaching for us. We believe it is because these students learned these skills of collaboration and self-discipline through their involvement in athletics and dance. As a result, our dance and athletic students have a higher completion rate, generally with higher grades.

These anecdotal observations required further evidence; the next question was, how to observe it directly in the dance groups under study. Some of the skills seem obvious, such

as learning the dances and dance-related skills. But what would be the evidence that these skills transition to wider application spontaneously? The answer occurred to me one day as I was watching children performing Mexican Folkloric dances for a Christmas show. It was clear that one of the older boys was cueing one of the younger boys from the wings, just as one of the teachers or parents might do. This was a revelation, because the older boy obviously did it spontaneously, in response to the younger boy starting to enter too early. He signaled a “stop/wait” palm up when the boy began to enter with his steps. The younger boy reacted immediately and adjusted his entrance when the older boy signaled the “now” gesture (see Appendix E).

It could be said that the older boy had learned this behavior from watching others, specifically, the teachers and parents. However, the application was immediate and spontaneous, seemingly motivated by a wish to preserve the integrity of the performance. After this observation, so revealing in its spontaneity, other examples of similar “helping behaviors” related to the dance immediately came to mind.

During breaks in the class, dance students could often be seen asking for or showing clarifications in steps to each other. Peer teaching and tutoring was common. Even though students may have felt competitive with each other in order to perform their best and to seek personal excellence, the primary concern was a good performance as a group.

For example, during a lull in a class for Grupo’s younger children at the Guadalupe Center when the teachers were discussing issues concerning the music, I observed an older girl helping one of her younger peers to master a step that had just been taught. Some of the other students chimed in, creating an impromptu mini-rehearsal and tutorial session in the

corner of the room. The students who had mastered the step either used this encounter to practice the step or would peer-tutor another student who had not yet mastered it. Because of the elaborate spacing and patterns used in folkloric dances, these more accomplished students would at one time or another be paired or partnered with the less accomplished students, so they had a vested interest in all students doing well in the performance of the steps. Usually, these mini-tutorials stayed within gender groups, but occasionally, they might cross gender lines, as with an older sister tutoring a younger brother. Occasionally, a teacher might ask a student to tutor another child, but usually these impromptu peer tutoring mini-sessions would occur quite spontaneously, as the children interacted with each other around the periphery of the class. This kind of peer tutoring was observed so often, it was almost ubiquitous during class times, rehearsals, and around the performance venues. These observations are documented and commented on individually in the photographs included in Appendix E.

Another example of spontaneous children's peer tutoring was observed in the Strawberry Hill area among the Croatian community during one of Don Lipovac's band appearances. This was a more informal event and situation than a class, which made the observation much more striking and the realization more powerful. A young woman was showing a child, approximately eight years of age, how to polka. The child was presumably her daughter. After dancing the entire song with the adult, the child bolted out of the dance area, only to return with a toddler in tow. The older girl then began to teach the polka she had just learned to the younger girl (possibly a sister). Similar examples were exhibited during the regular Kolo Dance nights held at St. John's Church and in other dance situations.

Again, these exchanges happened so often that they often were overlooked as “background noise” during the main event (see Appendix E).

Originally, when I noted these behaviors, I thought of them in terms of the Wenger Community of Practice model. Younger participants became more engaged, and as they became more proficient practitioners of the dance, they then became part of the dissemination mechanism to distribute information to even younger, newer participants. This dissemination process has a “cascading effect” that can spread beyond the reach of the dance group, yet create a learning path and role-modeling process that can engage ever-younger members.

Much later, as I reflected on the embodied theories applied to the process of learning folkloric dances in a community setting, it occurred to me that a more powerful process was also occurring below the level of conscious awareness, which had greater relevance to general life beyond that of the dance and the immediate Community of Practice. The fact that it is embodied social learning, i.e., the learning of an embodied cultural practice in a physical and social context, and that it leads to other supportive behaviors without formal instruction, spontaneously and without formal thought, indicates how powerful, yet subtle, this process can be.

Learning the dances becomes a process that leads to peer tutoring or teaching, and then to otherwise helping peers with steps, cues, entrances, and the like. These behaviors then become precedents for learning other related and relevant skills and actions, such as assisting with costumes, makeup, equipment, scenery, props, music, cleaning, moving, running errands, and assisting audience members during events. It is common to see the

students and performers help each to dress, arrange hair, fix make-up, and set up equipment (see Appendix E). Because elderly family members often attend such events, it is common to see students and performers help the elderly to chairs before performances and to cars afterwards, and run errands for refreshments when not engaged in the performance.

What observations seem to indicate is that learning the dances sets a precedent for behavior, establishes role models, and models collaborative behavior for a common goal, and does so without causing the relinquishment of individual identity. Learning the dances and observing the role modeling inherent in learning this cultural practice led to peer coaching behaviors, again with the common goal of a good performance. The peer coaching behaviors generalized to helping behaviors associated with the performance itself, and these helping behaviors then generalized to other forms of helping behaviors (which were only marginally related to the performance of the dance) and into the community at large.

These trends can be seen in the photograph documentation (see Appendix E), as well as in the survey data by particular dance groups that were collected specifically for funding opportunities to demonstrate an impact on the larger community (see Appendix A). The cultural practice of dance created a virtual laboratory for social skills, social rehearsals, social experimentation, and social role modeling, all in a relatively safe, non-intimidating context.

Another aspect of learning dances and coordinating with others, is that it develops a sense of trust with one's fellow dancers. Among scholars of embodied behavior, it is common to hear that "the body does not lie" or "actions speak louder than words," implying that intentions can be camouflaged much more easily with words than they can with body

language (although this is mediated a great deal by cultural standards). It is much more difficult to subvert or disguise one's true intentions in body language and activities. In fact, polygraph tests depend on the fact that the body will belie an intentional deception. People often say that they trust people more when they can actually see them, and scholars claim that most of our communication takes place via body language (Mehrabian, 1971, 1972).

Matt J. Rossano (2012) comments on the concept of physical commitment and the earning of trust within the context of his studies of ritual and ritualized behaviors. Elaborate repetition, mastery of difficult skills, and investment of time and energy to learn ritual behaviors are generally perceived by individuals and the community as having value, indicating commitment, and engendering trust (Rossano, 2012).

In dance, you have to depend on your partner and fellow dancers to “look out for you” during the dance, which requires a certain amount of trust. This realization occurred to me as I was dancing a Polka with one of the regulars at Don Lipovac's Polka Dances. For example, you have to trust that your partner is not going to run you into someone or something, that he is not going to step on your toes, that he is not going to trip you, drop you, or knock you down. Much of the time, one partner (the Follow), cannot see ahead, so there has to be a lot of trust in the partner (the Lead) to look out for you and make sure you are not going to collide with anything or anyone. Once you fall into a rhythm, then partners can be confident enough to elaborate, be creative, and add nuances or frills to the dancing.

There is a similar trust among the other dancers that they are not going to barrel into you, that everyone will go in the same general direction, that everyone will respect personal space. Although this situation was a Polka, a Ballroom situation, the same level of trust

applies to dancing in a group for community, popular, or folkloric dances. This is another way dance encourages pro-social behavior and community behavior. As a growing part of this trust, more experienced dancers may guide less experienced dancers into the patterns, routines, and rhythms, or they may actually cue and communicate with other dancers to maintain the “harmony of the whole” for the sake of the performance, as was described in the Christmas show. By working together in synchrony, a certain trust develops between the performers.

This evidence of trust is reminiscent of McNeill’s arguments that events that feature synchronous behaviors create and maintain communities (McNeill, 1995). This perspective is also supported by the evidence in Social Psychology that synchronous behaviors increase feelings of affinity, affiliation, trust, cooperation, altruism, and good will among participants (Hove & Risen 2009; Wiltermuth, 2009). It is these feelings that seem to give rise to what is often described as “pro-social” and “pro-community” behaviors, similar to the behaviors I describe at these various dance events.

The sociologist Edward Shils referred to these behaviors in general as “civility” (Shils, 1957, 1958, 1971). Shils also pointed to the performance of rituals and traditions (i.e., cultural practices) as being key forms of learning civility, cooperation, collaboration, and the skills needed to form community (Shils, 1957, 1958, 1971). Shils also pointed out that the traditions did not need to be indigenous to teach the lessons of civility, noting that invented traditions could serve the same purpose (Shils, 1957, 1958, 1971).

It is important to note that it was the actual physical participation in the traditions that allowed this civility to emerge. Some of the post-World War II research done by Shils

indicated that soldiers who had trained together in drills were much more likely to form a cohesive unit, be more loyal to each other, trust each other, and be more motivated to fight for each other (Shils & Janowitz, 1948).

This is also reminiscent of Paul Connerton's (1989) assertions that Cultural Memory is engendered and propagated through commemorative, memorial, ritual practices, based on the work of Maurice Halbwachs' (1950) ideas of collective memory. Both emphasize that collective memory is based on what one experiences as cultural practices.

A case could also be made that physical activity, already shown to be a positive mood enhancer, added to synchronous movement, with demonstrated feelings of pro-affinity towards peers, can be a powerful combination, making dance (and similar synchronous activities) an effective tool for creating community feeling, especially among strangers. Additionally, dance events would allow negative moods and feelings to be rechanneled into more pro-social behaviors; for example, in the film *Rize*, where gang behavior was transformed into competitive dance events (LaChapelle, 2005). Similarly, antagonisms between participants, competition between dancers, or tensions between members can often be worked out on the dance floor, which helps maintain group harmony.

Although these pro-social and civility behaviors are not always directly related to the dance steps themselves, the precedence for supportive, helping behaviors is present in the dance learning and performing process. The dance events themselves become the opportunities for these behaviors to manifest within the community. The performances create the opportunity for the Community of Practice to become a focal point for the

community at large, even as far as becoming an iconic symbol of community and cultural integrity and solidarity.

Additionally, becoming part of the folkloric group (both in the West Side and the Balkan community) also created a tangible “path for success,” by creating an opportunity or desire to seek a college education. Studying the folkloric dance and music has become the foundation and training ground for other forms of education and study. The advantage of having folkloric dance as a focus for education is that the effects and outcomes of the learning are immediately applicable in visible and pragmatic ways for both children and adults. The fact that this learning takes place in a social context reinforces the immediacy and primacy of the learning. Layered upon that primacy of learning situation are the role modeling and mentoring opportunities through the CoP, which can shape life trajectories outside of the CoP. Through the CoP of folkloric dance, a variety of tangible mentors and role models are accessible and available, from adult teachers and parents, to older peers and siblings, to cohort peers and friends within the CoP. These factors can be important in the formation of not only a cultural identity, but of a personal identity, personal life trajectory, and in the formation of the competent Self.

In a personal example, my mother was my most influential mentor, teacher, and role model, but other related dance experiences created a palette of choices that I thought would lead me to my goals. Thus, I tried hard to prepare myself for those opportunities, even though I was not sure which path would manifest for me.

For example, prior to my meeting Don Lipovac, my mother had taken me to various dance performances, including ballet and folkloric dances. My favorites were always the

latter, although I also studied ballet. Among the folkloric dance companies I saw was the Ballet Folklorico de Mexico, when it was still a young company. This inspired me to learn more folkloric dance and to see a path of dance as a possible profession. When we returned to the U.S., I learned what my mother taught me, but there was little professional Mexican Folkloric Dance in the areas where we lived. Then, when I was a young teen, my mother took me to my first performance by the Duquesne University dance company, who performed folkloric dances of the Balkans and Eastern Europe. If you were good, you could become part of the performing group, and have a college scholarship to boot. This became one of the potential goal-paths into college that I envisioned for myself. This goal/dream sustained me for many years as I saw myself preparing for this future. It shaped my behavior, my lifestyle, and my choices of what activities I would do, and even what foods I would eat, since dancers must be fit and trim. Later, a Dance and Theater degree (similar to my mother's) seemed more attainable, but the goal/dream was similar, adjusted only due to finances, accessibility, and availability.

In my research, I found that my peers and other folkloric dancers shared similar goals and outcomes. In talking with other dancers in Don Lipovac's group, I found that they had all had similar dreams and goals. They had studied music and dance with Don Lipovac. They had all watched the Duquesne performances and had been as enchanted and inspired as I had been. As in my case, their dream was to become proficient, get a scholarship, and become part of the Duquesne University performing group. Few from the neighborhood made it to Duquesne University, but many shared the goal/dream. The important thing to

bear in mind is that folkloric dance practice became part of the preparation for becoming educated and for a potential path to success in life.

The compelling thing about growing up involved in a music and dance performing group is that each day, each week that one practices, learns new material, rehearses, and performs is, in a sense, “practicing” one’s life calling. If one’s goal and dream is to become a Duquesne performer and scholar, each time the student takes class and practices the dance and music skills, they are also preparing themselves physically, mentally, and emotionally for such goals. This involves not only “automatic” behaviors, such as carriage, movement, and breathing, but also choices of activities that support their goals or viable alternative goals, which may be more available and accessible, yet close to the original goals. These behaviors can have the effect of self-fulfilling prophecies, according to Labeling Theory and theories of Self, by creating an embodied image of identity, and not unlike what Bourdieu describes as *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977, 1989).

Music and dance can serve as embodied training for other education and other endeavors. For example, I asked Don Lipovac how he happened to start his Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans dance group. He said that as much as he loved the music, the dance was an important element to be added to the music. The visuals of the dance and the interaction of the dance and music made the presentation more lively and interesting. Also, he felt that not everyone was interested in playing music. Many students just wanted to do the dances, and some wanted to do both. He said he had already been interested in studying music, but when he saw the Duquesne University group in performance, that sealed the deal

for him. That was it. That was what he knew he wanted to do. He used the Duquesne performances as his model and created his group based upon that model.

It was not just Don Lipovac and his students, however, who saw learning the music and dance as a path to education and life success. Members of the community, especially those with close ties to Old World Europe, assumed this same association between the study of folkloric music and dance and a potential path to education and life success.

For example, during the research, at a gallery showing of East European photographs and wine tasting of newly imported Croatian wines, I spoke with a Croatian woman who had created some of the costumes for the local Croatian band that was playing. We chatted about a recent Duquesne performance in Kansas City, and she pointed to several people with whom I had done Kolo Dances, saying they had gone to Duquesne University and I should speak to them. Through my associations with Don Lipovac, I was aware of only two men who had actually gone to Duquesne, and neither of them were there, so I was eager to talk to the people she pointed out.

When I spoke to them, they shared the same sentiments that my dance peers and I had had when we were young. They had studied with Don Lipovac, and their dream had been to go to Duquesne University. However, they ultimately attended colleges closer to home, becoming doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, teachers, and the like. The dream to attend Duquesne to pursue music and dance had fueled their academic careers.

What struck me most about this exchange was that the Duquesne University goal/dream seemed to permeate the community at large, not just the participants of the dance. Duquesne University became the generic symbol of quality education,

professionalism, and attainable success in life, and this success in life was linked with the study of the folkloric music and dance. Some of this probably has to do with how folkloric dance and music is perceived in their countries of origin.

In the 20th century, many Old World countries, including the Balkans and Eastern Europe, and in Latin America, folklore is considered an important part of the curriculum (Shay, 1999, 2002, 2006, 2007). Children are taught traditional and regional dances and music, the appropriate costuming, and the historical precedents and contexts for each (J. Reyes, personal communication, 2008; Shay, 2002). To become a folkloric performer or scholar was a very worthy pursuit, and one that could garner the student travel, scholarships, and a generous stipend to support the family. Children selected to become trainees for professional folkloric performing companies were thought to be very lucky and to have the potential for lucrative professional careers with many opportunities. These attitudes and values concerning folkloric dance and music performance and study were carried into immigrant communities in the U.S. and reinforced by later waves of immigrants.

A similar attitude towards folkloric dance and music occurs in the Mexican community on the West Side, although the goals/dreams are less specific and more diffused. Students are encouraged to learn folkloric dance and music as a part of their cultural heritage, as it is important to their cultural identity and self-confidence. Again, it is thought to be important as a part of a full education, and it is believed that the skills they learn will serve the students well in later life, but the trajectory seems less specific. Some students go on to major in dance at a local college, but later switch majors to more “pragmatic” callings needed in the community, such as business, teaching, law, or social work. The music and

dance, however, is still considered an important link to friends, family, culture, and community, and to other humans in general.

To some extent, Ballet and Classical Dance training performs a similar function in the more general dance community. For ambitious and talented dance students, the training can lead to a college scholarship at a university that offers a dance program, such as the one offered by the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) Conservatory of Music & Dance.

Meadian Analysis of Self

Theoretical Approaches for this Analysis: G. H. Mead and the Self

This selective theoretical overview creates a framework for specific analysis, using well-known theoretical social concepts, to bridge together a perspective of intentional human action and interaction. This theoretical framework is one that spans the territory from the individual Self, to that inter-locking, interactive entity we refer to as “community,” and includes its legacy of continuity, often referred to as Cultural Memory. This analysis is based primarily on the theories of George Herbert Mead, but supported, where appropriate, by complementary concepts of other theorists, largely drawn from the University of Chicago tradition to add nuance, detail, and clarity.

The theoretical overview for this analysis begins with George Herbert Mead and his perspectives of humans as social beings. Humans are social animals. They cannot survive, reproduce, develop properly, or reach full potential without interaction with other humans. Mead begins his theoretical framework with the construct of the “Self”; in essence, the awareness of an individual’s existence in relation to Others. (For the purposes of the

discussion of Mead's concepts of Self and Other, I will use a convention of capitalization, as an attempt to make terminology more clear, although Mead and Blumer did not use such conventions.) It could also be argued that Mead used human action as the tool to shape both the Self (individual) and society (group), and did so in a way that there was little or no distinction between these interactions. They were participants in the same process, shaping and influencing each other. In this respect, it could be said that Mead used the human "act" as a unit of analysis. Blumer (1966) described Mead's perspective of the importance of human social/group life on the development of the individual:

His treatment took the form of showing that human group life was the essential condition for the emergence of consciousness, the mind, a world of objects, human beings as organisms possessing selves, and human conduct in the form of constructed acts. (Blumer, 1966, p. 535)

As Blumer (1966) described Mead's theoretical framework, the Self was the important construct that separates humans from other living entities. It is the Self that allows humans to be "self-aware" or "self-conscious" and also allows humans to be reflective and to be able to choose their behaviors. The Self enables humans to have "agency" and to make conscious decisions about their behavior, once they become aware of the context and consequences of their behavior. Blumer (1966) describes Mead's views of the Self as follows:

He saw the human being as an organism having a self. The possession of a self converts the human being into a special kind of actor, transforms his relation to the world, and gives his action a unique character. In asserting that the human being has a self, Mead simply meant that the human being is an object to himself. The human being may perceive himself, have conceptions of himself, communicate with himself, and act toward himself. As these types of behavior imply, the human being may become the object of his own action....In short, the possession of a self provides the human being with a mechanism of self-interaction with which to meet the

world—a mechanism that is used in forming and guiding his conduct. (Blumer, 1966, p. 535)

Blumer (1966) was also quick to point out that Mead thought of the Self not as a structure, but as a process, which is expressed and unfolds through social activity. Blumer points out that this interaction begins internally, with an internal social dialog with the Self, which we typically refer to as “reflection” or a reflection process (Blumer, 1966).

Reflection and agency are part of what distinguishes humans from animals. Blumer describes the reflexive process and its relation to human action:

We can see this in the case of the reflexive process that Mead has isolated in the human being. As mentioned, this reflexive process takes the form of the person making indications to himself, that is to say, noting things and determining their significance for his line of action. To indicate something is to stand over against it and to put oneself in the position of acting toward it instead of automatically responding to it....With the mechanism of self-interaction the human being ceases to be a responding organism whose behavior is a product of what plays upon him from the outside, the inside, or both. Instead, he acts toward his world, interpreting what confronts him and organizing his action on the basis of the interpretation. (Blumer, 1966, p. 536)

Mead’s theory of the Self views humans as reflective entities coping ecologically with the world, mapping and creating their actions with agency, in order to solve problems of survival. In Mead’s terms, the “natural Self” situationally adjusts to the social environment, and is, in turn, shaped by it in the process. This perspective makes humans more active (and pro-active), rather than passive and reactive to their environments. Humans do, however, filter the world through their perceptions, and thus interpret the meaning of what they observe in selecting their actions. Blumer describes Mead’s perspective in this way:

Human action acquires a radically different character as a result of being formed through a process of self-interaction. Action is built up in coping with the world

instead of merely being released from a pre-existing psychological structure by factors playing on that structure. By making indications to himself and by interpreting what he indicates, the human being has to forge or piece together a line of action. (Blumer, 1966, p. 536)

In this respect, Blumer, using Mead's writings, builds a case for human agency, as a result of self-interaction, which gives human action implied intent, purpose, and meaning. This means that human action is self-directed and goal-oriented, it has meaning, it is interpreted by Others, and it is adaptive, depending on the feedback received. To be clear, however, Mead does not see humans as merely responding to Others and the environment (as simple reflexive stimulus-response behavior), but rather as deliberative in thought and action. This means that humans are not "a mere medium or forum for the operation of the factors that produce the behavior," but rather active organisms dealing with their environment (Blumer, 1966, p. 219).

Action is seen as conduct which is constructed by the actor instead of response elicited from some kind of preformed organization in him. We can say that the traditional formula of human action fails to recognize that the human being is a self. Mead's scheme, in contrast, is based on this recognition. (Blumer, 1966, p. 537)

When humans interact with each other, Mead distinguishes between two kinds of social interaction, non-symbolic interaction and symbolic interaction (Mead, 1925, 1934). In non-symbolic interactions, humans simply react directly to the gestures or actions of others, without deliberation; but in symbolic interactions, humans will interpret and mediate the meanings implied by gestures or actions (Blumer, 1966). The former would be without reflection or meaning, whereas the latter would imply communication of meaning, intent, and consequences. Mead's work was primarily focused on symbolic interactions; i.e., those

that require reflection, definition, interpretation, and meaning of the actions of others (Blumer, 1966).

Mead goes on to say, “human interaction is a positive shaping process in its own right,” rather than a “neutral process,” and it is a continual, ongoing process (Blumer, 1966, p. 220). Studies of social organizations are not substitutes for studies of social interactions themselves, for it is the interpretations of these actions that are crucial for understanding social life and its evolution over time.

Because of this symbolic interaction and the resulting interpretations and definitions that are involved, trajectories of action (“lines of conduct”) must be coordinated or fitted together in order for humans to co-exist. These coordinated lines of conduct can form established patterns of behavior, but because of constant re-definition, these patterns may change and adapt as needed, depending on the social feedback received.

The fitting together of the lines of conduct is done through the dual process of definition and interpretation. This dual process operates both to sustain established patterns of joint conduct and to open them to transformation. Established patterns of group life exist and persist only through the continued use of the same schemes of interpretation; and such schemes of interpretation are maintained only through their continued confirmation by the defining acts of others. (Blumer, 1966, p. 538)

It is the fitting together of these lines of conduct and the resulting relationships that form group life and create social patterns. As these patterns build on each other, we perceive the development of social organization, which leads to the development of norms, customs, and culture. This perspective or scheme that Mead theorizes can be used to describe all manner of human behavior from cooperation to conflict, and identity to indifference, covering the full range of human interactions (Blumer, 1966).

Mead uses the term “social act” (for which Blumer uses the term “joint action”) to refer to coordinated activities, or as Blumer describes the term, it “refers to the larger collective form of action that is constituted by the fitting together of the lines of behavior of the separate participants” that is manifest in everyday life in society (Blumer, 1966, p. 222).

It is easy to understand from these remarks why Mead saw joint action, or the social act, as the distinguishing characteristic of society. For him, the social act was the fundamental unit of society. Its analysis, accordingly, lays bare the generic nature of society. (Blumer, 1966, p. 540)

For Mead, the essence of what we call society is, in fact, based on “an ongoing process of action” rather than a pre-defined “structure of relations” (Blumer, 1966). In order to understand society, we must be able to understand it based on human action. Also, the essence of society is seen as an ongoing process of joint action, not just the action of individuals working in a group, but rather fitting their action trajectory together and coordinating them together (Blumer, 1966). Also, each of these joint action ventures has a trajectory, a history, or a “career” of its own (Blumer, 1966). People who participate in joint actions share a common set of definitions that allows them to communicate and coordinate their actions and to repeat these actions, forming the bases of norms, standards, and culture (Blumer, 1966).

The caveats of joint action are that joint actions must be initiated, and once started, they may be interrupted, abandoned, or changed; participants may have different ideas concerning agreed-upon definitions, or may be derailed into another definition, or by new situations, or other forces (Blumer, 1966). The important points to remember regarding the study at hand, is that joint action must be initiated, it is based on action, and involves individuals fitting different lines of conduct together. Using the components of the Self, the

Act, Social Interaction, Objects, and Joint Action (or Social Act), Mead (as described by Blumer), builds an image of society.

From the foregoing discussion of the self, the act, social interaction, objects, and joint action, we can sketch a picture of human society. The picture is composed in terms of action. A society is seen as people meeting the varieties of situations that are thrust on them by their conditions of life. These situations are met by working out joint actions in which participants have to align their acts to one another. Each participant does so by interpreting the acts of others and, in turn, by making indications to others as to how they should act. By virtue of this process of interpretation and definition joint actions are built up; they have careers....Mead saw human society in this way—as a diversified social process in which people were engaged in forming joint actions to deal with situations confronting them. (Blumer, 1966, p. 541)

This perspective of society—one composed of and based on joint action—deserves reiteration, because it is a departure from other common perceptions of society as being based on certain predetermined social structures. Instead, Mead sees humans as beings with agency, and society as dynamic and responsive to changes in the environment.

Commonalities become based on shared experiences, rather than beliefs, values, norms, roles, or ideologies (as described by Durkheim [1984], for example, who saw values and norms as being the cohesive factor in society, rather than joint action). These latter commonalities emerge as a result of activities and interactions with other humans and an interpretation of these interactions. Instead of these abstract beliefs preceding the formation of community, they may very well develop as a result of pragmatic, instrumental, repeated interactions with others.

Joint actions, according to Mead, do not emerge from social roles, but rather the reverse. Joint actions carve out and shape various social roles and give them meaning. This change of perspective results in certain implications about how humans come together to

form communities and group life. This perspective is also reflected in the writings of Berger and Luckmann that “social order...is an ongoing human production” (1967), and the institutionalization of social processes grows out of “habitualized activity” (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 52).

In summary, socialization shifts from an internalization of norms and values to role cultivation; social control becomes more an issue of self-control through self-discipline; social change emerges from the process of social interactions, rather than external forces; group life is a process that is more a “work in progress” rather than a completed structure; social action has its own history, trajectory, and consequences, which must be appreciated in order to be understood; and social disorganization is seen as a lack of cohesive action, rather than a breakdown in social structure (Blumer, 1966). This summary highlights the interactive nature of Mead’s view of the development of both the individual and social life in general.

This perspective of the world also has implications for research. Since interactions are indeed based upon actions (rather than responses or structures), qualitative empirical research would be most useful. Observing actions, interactions, and joint actions, and taking the perspective of the actor engaged in activities with other participants, are useful research tools.

On the methodological or research side the study of action would have to be made from the position of the actor. Since action is forged by the actor out of what he perceives, interprets, and judges, one would have to see the operating situation as the actor sees it, perceive objects as the actor perceives them, ascertain their meaning in terms of the meaning they have for the actor, and follow the actor’s line of conduct as the actor organizes it—in short, one would have to take the role of the actor and see his world from his stand-point. (Blumer, 1966, p. 542)

This approach to research is also reflected in the views of Becker, whose perspective is that participant observation adds insight and meaning to the research, when the researcher has a first-hand understanding of the phenomena under investigation (Becker, 1958). The research can then be validated through triangulation and confirmation with other research methods.

Again, according to George Herbert Mead (1925, 1934), humans cannot develop normally without social interaction with other humans. Social interaction is crucial for the development of the Self (which Mead associates with “personality”), and for development of “social consciousness,” which are both essential for development of community and a cohesive society at large. It is our interactions with others that allow us to become truly human, to reach our full potential as fully formed, completely developed human beings. This full potential of human-ness includes (but is not limited to) language acquisition, communication skills, cognitive processes, sensory development, intelligence, perceptions of the outer world, social skills, culture, and behavior. To Mead, the organization of the Self was dependent upon the organization of society, and vice versa (1925, 1934).

Mead uses the behavioral examples of play (unstructured activities and role modeling) and games (structured play and roles with rules, policies, and guidelines) as activities that socialize humans into social consciousness, teach communication skills, allow them to learn the expectations of society, and allow the Self to develop to its full potential (Mead, 1925, 1934). Mead uses specific examples of children’s games, baseball, and the actions and interactions of boxers to illustrate his arguments.

Sociological Concepts Supportive of Mead's Theory of Self

Mead was not alone in theorizing such concepts about the Self. Classic sociologists have theorized concepts similar to those of Mead. Along the same lines as Mead, Durkheim, one of the founding fathers of Sociology, referred to “collective consciousness” as the system of beliefs common to a community/society, which gives people a sense of belonging and obligation to the group (Durkheim, 1984). As societies “mature” into more complex, “organic” societies, groups develop divisions of labor and complex interdependencies comparable to organs interacting and functioning together within an organism (Durkheim, 1984). These groups fit together in a symbiotic relationship to form a larger entity that we refer to as society. To Durkheim, a shared culture was the glue that allowed these groups to fit together and function as a single social entity.

Bourdieu also theorized concepts similar to those of Mead that supported the interactive nature of Self. Bourdieu developed related concepts of “field” and “habitus” and “cultural capital” that add nuance and detail to the process of socialization and enculturation of humans (Bourdieu, 1977, 1989). The concept of habitus captured the idea of being, acting, and behaving in social situations, which predisposed one to make certain social choices. These processes may operate below the level of conscious awareness (Bourdieu, 1977). The concept of “field” refers to the different social arenas in which humans interact (Bourdieu, 1977). To Bourdieu, the concept of capital in general involved investment, but he considered “cultural capital” to be primary among the different forms of capital that he describes (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986). This cultural capital is primary because it involves an investment of time, energy, will, and life-force of cultural practice in the individual body and

one's very being (Bourdieu, 1986). He goes on to say that cultural capital can be leveraged into other forms of capital (social, economic, political, and symbolic), but it is never completely transferable from one person to another. Cultural capital can only be transferred in an abstract manner, which causes it to lose potency (Bourdieu, 1986). For example, an accomplished musician may attain social and economic capital because of the investment of cultural capital through the study of music. Conversely, a wealthy person who does not have the ability or patience to invest time in the mastery of music may attain a form of symbolic capital by supporting the musician or a music program; in essence, attaining a second-hand association with cultural capital.

Bourdieu further describes three sub-categories (or forms) of cultural capital, as embodied (body), objectified (cultural goods), and institutionalized (e.g., education) (1986). Obviously, cultural practices may involve different combinations of all three.

Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the institutionalized state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 47)

The primacy of cultural capital lies in the fact that it is linked to the cultivation of the human body over time, which involves a great deal of investment of time, energy, and mastery (Bourdieu, 1986).

Most of the properties of cultural capital can be deduced from the fact that, in its fundamental state, it is linked to the body and presupposes embodiment. The accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of what is called culture, cultivation, *Bildung*, presupposes a process of embodiment, incorporation, which, insofar as it implies a labor of inculcation and assimilation,

costs time, time which must be invested personally by the investor. Like the acquisition of a muscular physique or a suntan, it cannot be done at second hand (so that all effects of delegation are ruled out). (Bourdieu 1986, p. 48)

Bourdieu also points out that this enculturation requires a great deal of personal cost in terms of investment of time and life-force energy.

The work of acquisition is work on oneself (self-improvement), an effort that presupposes a personal cost (on paie de sa personne, as we say in French), an investment, above all of time, but also of that socially constituted form of libido, libido sciendi, with all the privation, renunciation, and sacrifice that it may entail. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 48)

The investment in embodied cultural capital can be converted to some extent into other forms of capital, but the conversion is never quite complete, and may be problematic in terms of value, measurement, and/or social/political position.

This embodied capital, external wealth converted into an integral part of the person, into a habitus, cannot be transmitted instantaneously (unlike money, property rights, or even titles of nobility) by gift or bequest, purchase or exchange. It follows that the use or exploitation of cultural capital presents particular problems for the holders of economic or political capital, whether they be private patrons or, at the other extreme, entrepreneurs employing executives endowed with a specific cultural competence (not to mention the new state patrons). (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 48).

Robert D. Putnam also discusses the value of cultural capital in relation to the development of social capital (Putnam, 2000; Putnam & Feldstein, 2003). Putnam focuses the idea of social capital specifically on the measure, numbers, and density of social networks themselves, rather than as a measure of economic and social resources in general. Putnam points to all the benefits of social networks to health, social connections, assistance, happiness, and subjective well-being for individuals, and to the health and well-being of the community itself (Putnam, 2000).

Howard S. Becker (1974) also discusses the value of cultural capital in the development of social capital by looking at the process of creating art as a social process. He points out that this social process is a made up of collective action with a purpose. Becker has an axiom that guides him in research: “social life is collective action” (2005, p. 57). Becker also points out that the study of Sociology investigates these collective behaviors as its focal interest: “One definition of sociology is that it studies how people do things together” (1989, p. 280).

In his landmark book, *Art Worlds*, Becker explores the making of art as more typically a collaborative effort with a large group of participants and supporters, rather than a solo effort of an individual artist (1984a, 1984b). Becker also points out that sociological study of artistic collaborations could be revealing concerning how social organizations develop, their processes, and how they change over time (1984a, 1984b).

Becker also points out that in studying art from a Sociological perspective (Sociology of Art), he is less concerned with aesthetics and more concerned with group behaviors and collective action.

I am less concerned with the relevance of these arguments for aesthetics than for the sociological analyses, which take works of art to embody and reflect fundamental values or emphases of culture, so that their analysis can reveal the culture, and can simultaneously show that society, in the largest sense, affects their fundamental emphases and character. (Becker, 1984a, pp. 366-367)

The reason for less emphasis on aesthetics to Becker is first, that aesthetics may have little to do with the quality, history, popularity, or durability of the work; rather, other forces may be in play. Some works of art are revered simply because they are remnants of a bygone era and have historical value to the culture.

One doubt arises because art works last for other reasons besides being universally appreciated. Many works continue to enjoy high repute, not because anyone actively appreciates them, certainly not because large numbers of people actively appreciate them, but rather because they are historically important. (Becker, 1984a, p. 367)

Interpretations of art aesthetics to reveal cultural and social values may be flawed by the selection process of artworks to be preserved, or by the serendipitous manner in which the art survives. To truly investigate the social and cultural values of a society as reflected in its artwork, it would be important to look at all the art produced in that society, by all types of artists, in all forms of media. More populist art forms (such as Hip-Hop dance and Rap music, or works considered more “craft” than “art”) may be considered too “low-brow” to be representative of the society at large.

Theories which find evidence of a society’s values and cultural emphases in its art, then, really find that evidence in the art which survives a complicated and historically variable process of selection and reputation making. Would such theories find the same result if they considered all the art made in society? Perhaps. But that proposition needs to be explored rather than accepted on faith (Becker, 1984a, p. 367)

Becker presents another way to study the relationship between art and society—one of examining the social processes involved in the creation of the artwork. Instead of focusing on the product (the artwork), or the individual producer (the artist), Becker prefers to look at the social process of art creation, viewing that process as a collaborative project, as collective action.

There is another way to think about the relation of between art and society. What I have said here about art worlds both arises from a more general theoretical orientation toward the study of society and contributes to the development of that orientation. What I have said about art worlds can be said about any kind of social world, when put more generally: ways of talking about art, generalized, are ways of talking about society and social process generally. (Becker, 1984a, pp. 367-368)

To Becker, by focusing on a specific artistic work or process, the investigation can reveal how humans socialize, interact, collaborate, and participate in that process. That information can tell us much about how humans create norms and conventions and create communities, and how those communities can stay cohesive, yet change over time.

If we focus on a specific art work, we can usefully think of social organization as the network of people who cooperate to produce that work....They organize their cooperation by referring to the conventions current among people who participate in the production and consumption of such works....Conventions make collective action simpler and less costly in time, energy, and other resources; yet they do not make unconventional work impossible.....Change can occur....Thus, conventional modes of cooperation and collective action need not persist. (Becker, 1984a, p. 368)

Becker emphasizes that art is a social process, regardless of its form, and it necessitates networks of people working together for the artwork to become manifest. Some might even say that artwork results from an investment of cultural capital in the community. Becker points to the study of art from a social perspective as a rich resource for comparative social theory exploration.

To say all this goes beyond the assertion that art is social and beyond demonstrations of the congruence between forms of social organization and artistic styles or subjects. It shows that art is social in being created by networks of people acting together, and proposes a framework for the study of differing modes of collective action, mediated by accepted or newly developed conventions. It puts some traditional questions in the field in a context in which their similarity to other forms of collective action can be used for comparative theoretical work. (Becker, 1984a, p. 368)

Looking at art as collective action invites an analysis of the process as a social organization. By looking at an art-related event, one can ferret out the social network required to produce the event: how its members coordinated their efforts in order to manifest the event.

The discussion of art as collective action reflects a general approach to the analysis of social organization. We can focus on any event (a general term which encompasses as a special case the production of an art work) and look for the network of people, however large or extended, whose collective activity made it possible for the event to occur as it did. We can look for networks whose cooperative activity recurs or has become routine and can specify the conventions by which their constituent members coordinate their separate lines of action. (Becker, 1984a, pp. 368-369)

Becker points out that the terms “social organization” and “social structure” are used metaphorically to refer to social networks and their activities. Because the collective action generally recurs, the members of the network may work together repeatedly and may overlap in producing other events in the community. As new people are introduced into the network, new roles may be created or old roles may be assumed by new people. Thus, the network may grow, adapt, and change over time.

We can use such terms as social organization or social structure as a metaphorical way of referring to those recurring networks and their activities....When sociologists speak of social structure or social systems, the metaphor implies (though its user neither proves nor argues the point) that the collective action involved occurs regularly or often (the qualifier, being implicit, is nonspecific) and, further, that the people involved act together to produce a large variety of events. (Becker, 1984a, p. 370)

Becker underscores that collective actions and their resulting events are the basic unit for Sociological investigation. As such, social organizations and structures are not only theoretical concepts, but concrete, tangible, empirical observations that can be studied first-hand.

Collective actions and the events they produce are the basic unit of sociological investigation. Social organization consists of the special case in which the same people act together to produce a variety of different events in a recurring way. Social organization (and its cognates) are not only concepts, then, but also empirical findings. (Becker, 1984a, p. 370)

Becker believes that these findings can be generalized from artistic activities to human behavior in other social settings where cooperative networks may be used. Thus, we can learn about social networks, social conventions, social change, and collective action in general by studying the processes involved in the creation of artwork projects.

To pursue the general version of the theory developed for artistic activities, we can study social organization of all kinds by looking for the networks responsible for producing specific events, the overlaps among such cooperative networks, the way participants use conventions to coordinate their activities, how existing conventions simultaneously make coordinated action possible and limit the forms it can take, and how the development of new forms of acquiring resources makes change possible. (Becker, 1984a, pp. 370-371)

Becker concludes that, in this respect, the world of art can be said to reflect the social processes of the world at large. As art is shaped by society, so art reflects that society. “In this way, we might say (with rather more warrant than it is usually said) that the world of art mirrors society at large” (Becker, 1984a, p. 371).

Mead might add that the relationship between art and society is more dynamic and interactive. That is, as art is shaped by society, so art shapes the individuals within that society. How that shaping is manifested, however, can depend on how the individual perceives the artwork. For Mead, these processes are immediate and dependent upon constant and continual social interaction. They are also experienced by the organism (the human) in an embodied manner.

Embodied cultural practices are important to human development over the lifespan because of the ways humans relate to each other, the way we interact, and the perspectives we have about the world around us. Our perceptions are colored by our experiences, and our “categories of mind” are shaped by our physical perceptions of the world.

In Cognitive Science, theorists present arguments that bodily experiences become the metaphors upon which we base our thinking process (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Johnson 1990, 2008). Our bodily experiences shape how we see, perceive, and think about the world around us, and as a result, how we respond and communicate in our relationships with others.

In fact, how we perceive our own bodies is greatly shaped by how we interact with others, as well as how we interact with the environment. This ecological feedback creates a mental map of what we consider “me” and “not me,” which is well documented in developmental studies (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969). These mental maps adapt over time to what we are regularly in contact with, and influence how we interact with space, environment, and others. For example, losing a limb may alter the mental map of the body, just as donning a prosthetic again changes the perception of the body (Blakeslee & Blakeslee, 2007; Ramachandran & Blakeslee, 1999; Sacks, 2008). Using a tool regularly can lead to the tool being an extension of the body, and can even become identified with the sense of Self. For example, a policeman may feel “incomplete” without a gun, or a musician may feel “naked” without their instrument close at hand. Martial artists often encourage trainees to think of their weapons as an “extension of the body” rather than a separate entity (Lee, 1975/2011).

A similar process occurs in dance when performers dance with various costumes, props, tools, and weapons, and must consider the environment, dance space, and physical surroundings. Interestingly, this awareness and body mapping also extends to others with whom dancers interact and perform. In other words, one’s dance partner becomes a

modified extension of one's own body. The physical awareness of "presence" is extended beyond one's own body to include the presence of the other person, the partner with whom the dance moves are coordinated. This physical awareness and extension of body is not limited just to the partner or the person who may be in direct physical contact with the dancer (as in holding hands in a circle or line), but can extend to the entire dance space, especially with continued practice and contact with the dance. In order to perform the moves, one is aware of not only one's own body movement, but the movement of the others in the group. It is my belief that it is this hyper-vigilance and hyper-awareness that develops as a result of the practice of dance that give dancers the feeling they are at once an individual performing but in the context of a group whole, creating a sense that they are participating in something "bigger" than themselves. They are actively participating in synchronous behavior with the rest of the group, creating a unified entity, all moving together as one.

This argument refers to the previously discussed theoretical frameworks, which point out that physical connections to culture can have a profound effect upon our perceptions, attitudes, communications, and how we relate to others in the world. Culture is experienced as physical phenomena that are carried and stored, not just in the brain, but in the entire body. Looking across cultures, languages are shaped, compared, contrasted, connected, and categorized by words that describe the human body (e.g., the parts of the body, "head" of household, "heart" of the problem, "guts" of the issue, and "brains" of the gang). Other examples include legwork, footmen, and handmaiden. Enculturated attitudes we have towards the body shape behaviors and customs, and vice versa. They reinforce each other.

What we describe as “mind” is not only what resides in the brain, but the entirety of what we experience with our bodies.

Thus, our minds and concepts are shaped by bodily experiences, and the attitudes we have towards the body are shaped by the way we enculturate the body. It is a reciprocal relationship. Many of these embodied experiences are attained through family activities, ritual events, and community practices.

Self, Embodied Learning, and Communities of Practice

The concept of embodied experiences shaping learning through participation in social activities is echoed in the work of Lave and Wenger on Situated Learning, Legitimate Peripheral Participation, and Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Focused specifically on learning, anthropologist Lave and technology co-author Wenger expand their research on apprenticeship learning to include “learning communities” (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Their key points include the evidence that learning is fundamentally a social process (not just information in the learner’s mind), that learning occurs as an element of participation in situated activity with other people, and that participation involves the whole person physically acting in a real, concrete world (Lave & Wenger, 1991). “In contrast with learning as internalization, learning as increasing participation in communities of practice concerns the whole person acting in the world” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 49). As participating members of a community move from peripheral participation to more central, full participation and mastery of practice, learning occurs in the context of social interaction and cultural activity (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The working assumption, similar to Mead’s concept, is that the day-to-day world that people experience is socially constructed.

Briefly, a theory of social practice emphasizes the relational interdependency of agent and world, activity, meaning, cognition, learning, and knowing. It emphasizes the inherently socially negotiated character of meaning and the interested, concerned character of the thought and action of persons-in-activity. This view also claims that learning, thinking, and knowing are relations among people in activity in, with, and arising from the socially and culturally structured world. This world is socially constituted. (Lave & Wenger, 1991, pp. 50-51)

Since learning takes place in a social context, it can be said that knowledge is acquired through social interaction and is mediated by those social interactions. The perceptions, attitudes, and value that we attach to what we learn are colored by those social interactions; i.e., by our perceptions of what has meaning in the course of the activities we do in interaction with significant, important others in our lives—loved ones, families, friends, peers, leaders, and teachers. Our relationships are reinforced and/or redefined in the course of the activities we do together and the perceptions we have of the history we share of doing that activity.

Knowledge of a socially constituted world is socially mediated and open ended. Its meaning to given actors, its furnishings, and the relations of humans with/in it, are produced, reproduced, and changed in the course of activity....In a theory of practice, cognition and communication in, and with, the social world are situated in the historical development of on-going activity. (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 51)

Harking back to Mead and Becker, the social interactions in the course of activity—of cultural practice with others—creates a shared history and a sense of cyclical community, as active children grow up to become participating adults, leaders, teachers, parents, organizers, and administrators; i.e., collaborators in the cultural practice, who each train their successors and replacements in the process. “One past displaces and abrogates another as inexorably as the rising generation buries the old. How many different Caesars have crossed the Rubicon since 1800?” (Mead, 1934, p. 95).

In this respect, the group also passes along and reprocesses its narratives, teachings, and social history, as an ongoing process of cultural remembering. The Community of Practice becomes the conduit and repository of the group's local cultural memory, which is mediated over time through social interaction and reconstruction. Lave and Wenger add nuance to the idea of cultural remembering and present a useful model to describe the dynamics of the process (1991).

Analysis of Social Dance from Meadian Theoretical Framework

The primary theorist and theory used for this analysis of dance is that of G. H. Mead, including some observations from contemporary Meadian theorists and researchers. Mead's theory are also elaborated, supported, and/or extended by several theorists with related views that can add more detail and more clarity to the analysis of dance as a social act, community process, and a cultural tool for cultural remembering. These theorists include such notables as Dewey, Blumer, Becker, Shils, Durkheim, and Bourdieu.

Different Definitions of Dance and How Dance Is Viewed in this Study

In beginning my Meadian analysis of dance, I would like to expand the reader's view of what dance is. Our own view of dance tends to be rather narrow, ethnocentric, and based on limited experience. In studying dance across different cultures, one becomes more aware of not only the universality of dance, but the variety of forms of dance, as well as a variety of forms of presentation of the dances.

There are a number of working definitions of dance in Dance Studies (and other disciplines that study it), each with its own history, setting, culture, and purpose. Earlier we touched on specific definitions of dance, discussed in the context of different cultural

perspectives of dance. To reiterate, in this study, dance was viewed as an embodied cultural practice that conveys social information and social feedback.

For the purposes of this study, we look at dance as both an embodied, physical activity and as a social activity; that is, dance as a cultural practice done in the company of other humans, as a group, even if it includes some sort of solo performance. In this study, dance is viewed primarily as synchronous physical action, done in coordination with others, done at social events and involving collaboration with others in order to accomplish the act.

The ancient Greeks considered music to be a means to learn about the Universe. To the ancient Greeks, music “created order” in the mind, which was part of its appeal, and it was calming to the soul. Music created harmony within, with others, and with the Universe. Additionally, music demonstrated the subtle mathematical relationships in the world. For example, harmonics have a mathematical relationship, and understanding this fact enabled one to have a deeper understanding and appreciation of music and of the Universe.

In most cultures, music and dance are seen as interconnected, with little distinction between the study of one and the practice of the other. The ancient Aztecs had one word that referred to the activity of dance. This word also referred to what we would call song, music, prose, poetry, military drill, ritual performances, sports, and gaming (Stanford, 1966). In our culture, these activities would be grouped differently into, for example, the arts, sports, entertainment, recreation, and military drill. Except for the latter perhaps, most of these activities would be considered “leisure activities” or “recreation,” but they would not be considered as important cultural activities that relate to survival of the individual or the community. To the Aztecs, however, these were all considered to be a related set of skills by

which one learned to become wise, cultured, and connected with the universe. Ritual performances and festivals included all of these skills, including ritual music, ritual dance, and even ritual gaming. These skills were considered to be essential for the survival of the individual, the culture, civilization in general, and for the world. Being connected to the universe was important for life to continue. In this way, what we refer to as “dance” was considered much more important to the Aztecs and to other cultures, than it is today in our culture in the U.S.

The connection between dance, music, gaming, and ritual performance is not unique to the Aztecs, which can be easily demonstrated by linguistic comparisons of different cultures, and even in our own American English language. As mentioned earlier, we “play” a game, but we also play a musical instrument, play a part in a project, play a recording, play odds, play roles, or go to a play in a theater.

I point out these connections because in our culture we tend to parse out these activities to be treated, supported, and rated differently in importance, which is not always useful to do and may actually block some forms of research or creative solutions to some of the sociological questions we try to answer. As a result, it may be more productive to think of these activities in general as embodied cultural practices, rather than as individual activities.

The particular connections I focus my analysis on is dance (but with a recognition of the connection between music, dance, gaming, and other cultural practices), in the process of social action, formation of community, and for perpetuating cultural remembering. Research on dance from a sociological perspective is meager. There is a bit more

concerning sociology and music, but there is much more sociological and psychological research on gaming and play. Thus, these connections are useful to keep in mind for a similar analysis of the activity of dance.

One difference that could be pointed out between the activities of dance and those of sports and gaming has to do with goals. Generally, the primary goal of a community-based dance is participation, with perhaps mastery and excellence as secondary goals. With most games and sports, the primary goal is generally some kind of “win,” and the odds of that win will greatly determine who gets to participate and how, and what positions one can play. Although dance can easily become competitive, in community-based dance and social/folk dancing, participation is more important than competition, until one reaches more professional levels, which are more competitive by their very nature.

Within the dance itself, however, regardless of amateur or professional status, there is a goal of creating a pattern, a collaborative project that has an existence greater than just oneself. One can have the experience of both being an individual, while simultaneously being part of a synchronous moving group. This creates a synergy with others that is not easy to reproduce in other social contexts.

The form or genre of dance for this analysis is the general class of “Social Dances,” which include folk dances, court dances, ethnic dances, ballroom dances, square dances, and popular dances. These dances may be studied and performed professionally, but they have their origins in ritual, festival, and recreational dances performed by amateurs in community settings. They may be performed as groups, couples, or individuals, depending on the setting, the purpose, and the “rules” (conventions) of the particular dance. Although my

examples in the study may pertain to observations of particular forms of dance, these observations could be generalized to most forms of dance with which I have had experience.

The point of this study is to examine dance as a social process in community settings, rather than as an individual activity. Regardless of the type of dance, it is done as a collaborative, social activity, in much the way Howard S. Becker describes in his treatise on art communities, *Art Worlds* (1984a). Even in a performance group featuring soloist dancers, the presentation is a collaborative event, and the dancers are part of a dance community, performing for the community at large.

There are, however, certain social structures and hierarchies that form around certain dance and art communities, that may at once support and conflict with these communities as they become more “professionalized,” more formal organizations, and more competitive for limited resources. For example, a business or corporation or non-profit organization may become superimposed over an art/dance community of practice for reasons of sponsorship and/or profit. These additional social structures should be considered separately from the community of dancers who actually practice and do the work of dance.

Dance as Process of Self and as Social Act/Joint Action

To begin this analysis of dance, we examine Mead’s view of the development of the Self and apply it to the analysis of the interaction of dance and the development of Self. This initial part of the analysis is phenomenological, and assumes the construct of Self as described by Mead.

According to Blumer, it is important to note that “Mead saw the Self as a process, and not as a structure” (Blumer, 1966, p. 535). Also, Mead asserted that the human being

has a Self, which “simply meant that the human being is an object to himself” and is able to thus interact with one’s Self (Blumer, 1966, p. 535). In some academic traditions, this would be akin to being “self-aware,” having an awareness of Self, that is reflective and deliberative.

At a basic level, dance makes one aware of one’s Self, by making one aware of one’s body placement in time and space, in relation to other objects in the environment (including other humans). At this level, dance (or dance-like games) requires a person to take into account the location of their body in space and in relation to others in that same space. One constantly must readjust and update one’s mental map of one’s body position, as well as the positions of others close by.

Additionally, the use of mirrors, and/or “mirroring” movements, in order to learn steps (as needed for partnering and group formations) also requires this adjustment of bodies in space and updating the mental map. These mirrored movements serve as cues for both planned and unplanned movements, as the mental maps adapt to interactions in progress.

Although this is a basic and physical/sensation level of perceptions/experience, it goes into our mental image of what we perceive to be our “Self,” not unlike the infant’s learning of what is “me” or “not-me” by interacting with the physical world. By participating and interacting with others, one learns and has more understanding about who they are, who they can be, and where they are in relation to others.

Dance creates a space, an “arena” of sorts, in order to work out aspects of the Self in time and space and in relation with human Others, other objects, and the environment. This

is an ecological adaptation that is constant and ongoing and persists throughout life, even though it recedes to a level below conscious awareness once we move beyond infancy.

We generally think of this process as something that an infant works out when learning about the world (e.g., what is “me” and “not-me”); however, we build on this as adults; it is a continuous process throughout life. We are continually affirming the Self and our existence and redefining the Self as our abilities, resources, and roles change over time. Reorienting ourselves continually with positions in space and time constantly reaffirms our existence. Yet, we tend to take this continual orientation of Self in time and space for granted until something goes wrong. For example, PTSD or the loss of a limb in an accident or a head injury alter the perception of one’s “body map.” Then we become more conscious of this ongoing process of redefining the Self based on physical experience.

These continual reorientations of Self in time and space result in a body awareness that contributes to a more cohesive sense of Self. Because a healthy constituted Self, a cohesive Self, is more robust and more aware of surroundings, the cohesive Self is in a better position to cope with the environment. And by extension, more cohesive Selves are able to better connect with other Selves. Connecting cohesive Selves together then results in a cohesive community, better able to engage in joint action. The coordination with Others also requires a coordination of the Self, in order to fit these joint actions together. In essence, this is repeated in layers to create society, in Mead’s view, and it can be perceived as training for participating in community. One has to adjust and adapt one’s Self to the physical surroundings, including human Others, within the same space.

For example, in *The Nutcracker*, young dancers of different sizes, ages, and heights must coordinate their movements, both individually and in formation, as well as keep time to the music and cover the appropriate floor space. Despite their differences, they must maintain the appropriate space between them, in order to allow sufficient room to execute the steps, yet keep the formation crisp and cohesive. This formation must be maintained as the children traverse the stage space, in order to hit their marks, while also keeping in time with the music. Each child has a place, a path, and a role to play in making the presentation work. Taller and shorter children must adjust their stride so they all appear to move together as a group. This movement together also gives the illusion of “group-ness,” i.e., of belonging to a wholistic pattern. This requires that the child be aware of both their own body placement as well as that of their peers, while maintaining a perception of the group as a whole in formation.

The body map created in the mind thus has to account for not only the individual body, but the peer formation with kinesthetic sense. The Others in the formation become an extension of one’s own body, and vice versa. A direct connection is perceived between the individual dancer and peers within (and with) the performance space. This ecological connection becomes part of the dancer’s perception of the world and a guiding force for joint action and coordinating with others in other activities outside of the dance.

Another theory supporting the concept of embodied learning comes from the surprising field of Artificial Intelligence and Robotics. During the 1990s, Rodney A. Brooks presented a new theoretical approach to robotics and artificial intelligence (AI). Up until his innovational perspective, the typical approaches to these fields were top-down,

based on computation and cognition models (Brooks, 1989, 1991). Brooks' approach involved a bottom-up, sensory-behavioral model, which is not under a central control, and which he referred to as “embodied intelligence” (Brooks, 1990; R. Brooks, personal communication, Summer 1997). Using animal and evolutionary models as guides, Brooks created a series of robotic prototypes based on insect and reptilian life forms (Brooks, 1999; R. Brooks, personal communication, Summer 1997). These models are based upon the idea that to be intelligent involves behavior embedded in *embodiment* (i.e., having a body and body awareness), and having that body situated in the environment (Brooks, 1999). Thus, the robot learns from sensory-motor actions, as it interacts with the environment using proprioceptive senses (Brooks, 1990). Brooks posits that the higher learning processes and abstraction are embedded in this bottom-up, embodied learning process as an entity learns to negotiate its environment. This perspective dovetails with many other parallel theories of embodied-based learning.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL DANCE FROM A MEADIAN PERSPECTIVE

G. H. Mead's Analysis of Game-Play Applied to Dance

For the next part of this analysis, I employ concepts that Mead used in reference to games and play, but I apply them to dance. Gillespie nicely summarizes Mead's concepts and theory as applied to games (2006), pointing out that perspective-taking is fundamental in Mead's theory for the development of the Self and its relationship to the Other, and thus is necessary for society to function. But the mechanisms for explaining perspective formation have largely relied on cognitive constructs to explain perspective-taking (rather than physical, embodied processes, emotional processes, or social processes), which can be inadequate, in that they do not fully take in the importance of physical experience, social interaction, and cultural context.

It is widely acknowledged that perspective taking is fundamental to the development of the self, the development of the individual's ability to interact meaningfully with other people, and to the successful functioning of society. Attempts to articulate the mechanisms underlying perspective taking have relied upon internal cognitive mechanisms; the child can imitate (or internally simulate) the perspective of others by virtue of identifying with the other or internalizing the perspective of the other... A satisfactory explanation must have recourse to social interaction, either to the interaction context in which the innate ability was selected for, or to the social interactions that extend these innate, but very rudimentary abilities, into elaborate forms of perspective taking. (Gillespie, 2006, pp. 87-88)

Gillespie goes on to define a "'position exchange' as a novel dimension of social interaction" and "perspective" as the view (or attitude) perceived as the result of a particular social position (2006). In my interpretation, a change of social or functional position may also correspond to a physical change in position, as determined by time and space. At a

concrete level, a change of physical position creates a different physical perspective, as described by the early Gestaltist researchers. These embodied concrete experiences become the conceptual tools—the metaphors—that shape our way of thinking about the world around us (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

A social act is more specific than social interaction in which two Deweyan acts interact. A *social act* refers to a social interaction that has become an institution, with established positions (i.e., buyer/seller, teacher/student, parent/child, boss/subordinate) which are stable over time. The introduction of both time and social structure is a breakthrough. Although the perspectives of self and other within any ongoing social act are necessarily divergent, if one takes into account time and a stable social structure, then it is possible that at some previous point in time, the positions of self and other were reversed. (Gillespie, 2005, p. 27; italics added)

Gillespie further writes, “Social positions...are functional positions within institutionalized patterns of interaction, or, what Mead [1925; Gillespie, 2005] calls ‘social acts’” (2006, p. 88). Examples of these functional social positions include giver/receiver, buyer/seller, parent/child, and teacher/learner. Gillespie details the relationship between perspectives and social positions and the fact that they can change (2006).

In order to use this distinction between *perspectives* and *social positions* to understand perspective taking, two assumptions must be made. Firstly, each social position, given its social and structural configuration of affordances and constraints, sustains a *perspective*. The social position patterns the occupant’s experience.... Secondly, people frequently exchange social positions within social acts. (2006, p. 88; italics added)

Gillespie (2006) further points out that in play, a child will take the social position of various others, repeatedly, and that these position exchanges are embodied. As a result, the Cartesian duality of mind and body is bridged, because this social position exchange does not require mediation or interpretation by non-material mind (Gillespie, 2005, 2006). It is possible that these changes in social positioning are associated with concrete, embodied

experiences of position changes in time and space, and the perspective changes become a seamless, concrete juxtaposition in experience that makes cognitive mediation unnecessary.

When the child, during position exchange, takes the social position of the other, the child cultivates the perspective of the other because each social position sustains a distinct perspective....Through taking the social position of many others, in play and actuality, the child cultivates the diverse perspectives that are sustained by social and institutional structures. The child becomes, in an embodied sense, a buyer and a seller, a care-giver and a cared-for, a teacher and a learner, a doctor and a patient, and so on. Thus, the Cartesian gulf is bridged; all children within the same society and moving between the same social positions will cultivate a similar matrix of perspectives....The key mechanism is again position exchange within a social act. (Gillespie, 2006, p. 88)

It is the repeated and frequent social position changes (e.g., giver/receiver and vice versa), that lead eventually to an integration of these two differentiated perspectives (Gillespie, 2006) that enables the child to see from the perspective of the current position (Self), and simultaneously include the perception of the alternate position (Other). By putting one's Self in these alternative social positions through position exchange, one is able to integrate the perspectives simultaneously. Again, this position exchange is experienced as an embodied physical change in time and space, which is also layered with social meaning.

Repeatedly and rapidly moving from the social position (and thus the perspective) of the recipient to the social position (and the associated perspective) of the giver could, potentially, differentiate and integrate the perspectives of the giver and receiver. Having thus integrated these two differentiated perspectives, the child is able to take the perspective of the receiver while being in the social position of the giver and vice versa [Gillespie, 2005]....In the foregoing review I have tried to emphasize "position exchange" because it is both fundamental to Mead's theory, and because it can make a significant contribution to the literature by highlighting a new social dimension. Traditionally "the social" has been theorized in terms of social interaction without position exchange. (Gillespie, 2006, pp. 88-89)

Gillespie goes on to apply these nuanced Meadian concepts in an analysis of a child's game of Hide and Seek (Gillespie, 2006). For the purposes of this study, we apply this same framework to the observations of community-based dance.

Applying Mead's Analysis to Community-based Dance

In community-based dance, particularly as seen in folkloric and social dance, the dancers all have parts to play and thus have many potential perspectives. We first look at the simpler, rudimentary beginnings of how group dances can become self-organizing, forming various patterns, positions, roles, and perspectives. It is beneficial to describe some of the common patterns, shapes, combinations, and positions that are typically present in social, folkloric, and performance dance.

Dancing can be individualistic and often begins as such, but as the number of participants increases and certain steps become popularized, patterns are quickly formed. For example, in open forms of social dance, small groups may begin to cluster together, sometimes forming circles. Often these will be children and/or teens moving in synchrony to the music. The steps may not be identical, but the participants will start copying and mimicking others' moves. Another pattern that will often emerge is the lead/follow. Participants will often start to take turns going into the center of the cluster, which eventually evolves into a rough circle formation, and show off moves, and the others in the circle will quickly try to mimic the moves, making them their own, adding them to the group repertory, so to speak. Impromptu turn-taking develops as participants relinquish and/or take over the center "lead" position to demonstrate steps or moves in sync with the music.

This pattern is similar to the answer/call formation found in music, choral, and ritual performance.

Interestingly, this form of impromptu dancing in a cluster, forming a circle, and evolving into a lead/follow, or answer/call formation can be seen over decades and across cultures at various stages of development. It is conceivable that it may also stretch back into ancient times, as seen in ancient cave and temple drawings, as well as codices (Kurath & Marti, 1964). Many social dances today were popularized in this impromptu way (Rust, 2003). Examples are indigenous and tribal dances, folkloric dances (e.g., Russian, Balkan, Gypsy, and Middle Eastern), polkas, the Charleston and some “animal” dances of the early part of the last century, the Latin dances of the 1940s, the “hand dancing” of the 1950s, and the free-form Rock-and-roll dances of the 1960s, among others. Almost any party or festival dancing begins in this way.

The next development in complexity is the “circle dance,” the “broken circle” dance, “snake pattern dance,” “corridor pattern,” and the “line dance/row” formations. In these formations, the circle becomes more organized, often with a leader or “caller” in the center of the circle, to demonstrate the steps and to get the circle moving; then the leader may melt back into the circle. Many of the Balkan folk dances follow this pattern.

In line dances, participants may line up laterally across the dance space and follow a leader, who leads the step either in front of them or in some key, visible area of the dance space.

If there are a large number of participants, they may form several rows, or linear clusters that do not interact directly but all follow the music in synchrony. Examples of

these patterns include Country Western Line Dance, the Bus Stop from the 1970s, and the Electric Slide. Latin dances are often performed this way as well, when partners are not available (e.g., Salsa, Bachata, Cumbia). For variety, the group will repeat a certain combination of steps to the four walls, or in more traditional cultural dances, to the four cardinal directions of East, West, North, and South.

In dances in which the participants hold hands or grasp arms or shoulders, there may be a variation that combines the line and circle formation. Often when the circle or line of dancers, all grasping each other, becomes too large for the dance space, the circle may break, and a leader will start to coil the dancers inside (or outside) the existing circle. In the case of a line dance, the leader may curve the line around to accommodate more people. This formation is slightly different in feel, because there is a clear leader at the head of the line, whereas in a circle or simple line, there may not be a clear leader directing the flow of steps.

Different participants may take turns at the head of the line leading the dance steps. In some dances, this also becomes the opportunity to demonstrate “shine” steps or trick steps that the leader can show off. As an example, in Greek dances Syrto and Tsamiko, the leaders take turns at the head of the line and perform trick steps at certain points of the dance, and then melt back into the basic step of the dance, much like singing the chorus of a song. This allows the participants who lead an opportunity to perform a short solo within the context of the group dance.

Another variation is the queue pattern, often referred to as a “snake pattern dance,” in which the participants queue up in single file and the leader sets the pace, leading the queue in coils around the dance space, through tables, and even through the streets. The

coiling allows more people to participate in a small space. Examples of this pattern can be seen in the traditional Conga line, popularized during the Latin music explosion of the 1940s, or in a Samba line during Mardi Gras.

Another variation of the line pattern is a corridor pattern. In this case, two lines of participants face each other across the dance space, forming a corridor, doing a basic step to the music. Dancers at the head of the line (generally the “upstage” end of the lines), take turns coming down the corridor. They may come down singly, doing solo shine steps and demonstrating their mastery of certain difficult moves, or they may come down in pairs, coordinating their moves together, as informal partners. Sometimes the corridor is arranged so that males are on one side and females are on the other, creating a ready-made rubric for partnering. The classic example of this pattern can be seen on reruns of the 1970s TV show, *Soul Train*, in which couples would solo and duo down the corridor, demonstrating popular new dance steps.

Steps in these patterned social dances may not be identical, but similar enough to allow everyone to move in synchrony with the music. Although there may be general agreement as to the combination of steps to be done in the dance, people from different regions may do slight variations that look different but do not upset the flow of the whole group moving together. For example, in one region, people may use the right foot to kick, and in another region they may use the left foot to kick, but if the group moves all together at the same time, these differences are minor and do not prevent one from participating in the group dance.

Depending on the customs of community and culture, participants may cluster into groups that are separated by gender. For example, there may be one circle or line for females and one for males. Some cultures compromise by mixing the genders together but unmarried participants hold a kerchief instead of the hand of someone of the opposite gender. Sometimes, dancers may cluster together by region, family, or age, but this is less common. Generally, for group dances, all ages and levels participate, even if separated by gender.

The last pattern is the couples or partnered dance. Partnered dance can become very complex in movement. Couples dancing can involve choreography and arrangement of combinations of dance steps that are coordinated between two people. Although couples dancing can be gender neutral, as in pairs of Polka dancers, generally there is a pattern of lead and follow that is loosely associated with gender roles. In Ballroom dance, for example, the lead and follow pattern traditionally fell along gender roles, with the male doing the leading and the female doing the following. In recent years, the language has become more gender-neutral among dancers, with the terms “lead” and “follow” rather than “male” and “female,” and with partners taking turns in who leads and who follows (e.g., lead-lead and follow-follow, where the male and female take turns leading or back-leading).

Couples dance can be executed face to face, in which case the lead generally moves in a forward direction, and the follow moves in a backward direction (as in a Tango); or the couple can move together standing side by side while holding hands (as in a Court Dance, such as the Minuet); or partnered dancers can move one behind the other (as in Waltz, Polka, Put-Your-Little-Foot). Variations on the partnered couples dance can be seen as trios (as in a

Polka), or two or more couples interacting and rotating partners (as seen in Polka, Waltz, Latin Dances, Contra Dance, and Square Dance).

For the purposes of performance and presentation, adept dancers may combine different patterns and partnering to form an infinite number of variations to keep the choreography fresh and interesting. For example, the group dancing would likely orient itself towards the audience, forming various combinations of partnering, lines, circles, corridors, diagonal lines, and snake patterns to vary the appearance of the steps.

Combinations of formations can create more complex patterns, such as figure-8s, double-8s (with concentric circles), cascading patterns, star patterns, crossing patterns, weaving patterns, and braiding patterns.

Although this list and description of formations is not exhaustive, it can give the reader an idea of the patterns and permutations that are typically portrayed in social and folkloric dances. These same patterns also serve as the basis for performance, theatrical, and professional dance.

One can see that there are many opportunities for a participant to attain a position in time and space and subsequently change (or exchange) that position quickly and repeatedly with others. As with Gillespie's (2006) example of the game of Hide and Seek, the social group dance "clearly operationalizes the main aspects of Mead's theory, thus avoiding the need for artificial manipulations" in a contrived experimental lab setting (Gillespie, 2006, pp. 89-90). Dances can vary from simple to complex patterns, making it a useful resource for research on the processes of position exchange, role exchange, and perspective-taking.

There is a common saying about Fred Astaire that goes something like this: “Sure, he was great, but don’t forget Ginger Rogers did everything he did backwards...and in high heels!” (Thaves, 1982, n.p.). This illustrates that in partnering, one has to change behavior according to the position one assumes, and the partner has to be aware of the moves the partner makes and has to adjust accordingly. Both Ginger and Fred had to be conscious of each other’s moves, anticipate those moves, and adapt to changes in movement as needed. It is common in dance to learn the moves first-hand (e.g., the steps, positions, and roles) in order to teach or play the different parts that are needed (e.g., lead and follow, or male and female parts). If all the roles are not filled, then the remaining participants must still account for the missing parts when they move.

To illustrate, Fred Astaire did much of his own choreography, so he was choreographing not only for himself, but for Ginger Rogers (or other partner) as well. However, even in situations in which Astaire performed someone else’s choreography and did not have to learn his partner’s moves, he still had to match, adapt, and harmonize with the moves of his partner, even if he did not have to learn to go “backwards...and in high heels” in order to succeed in the project. He would have had to learn to compensate for the moves of his partner.

Even in choreographed pieces or group dances with predetermined step combinations, partners and groups have to adjust time and space to accommodate the participants, adapting ad hoc in real time and on the fly. What is not commonly known among non-dancers is that there are issues of momentum, timing, spacing, energy exchange,

resistance/inertia, and compensation that occur as a dancer responds to the environment and to other dancers.

Dancers may vary in size, shape, ability, experience, and energy, and as more participants join into the dance, the dance space may become more crowded. Similarly, in a performance space, performers may have to adapt to different size, shape, and space demands for the performance, and adapt their moves and steps accordingly as they maneuver around each other. Dancers have to be aware of their own body map, moving in conjunction with other bodies. That body map becomes extended to include the other dancers moving in synchrony and unity. Dancers often comment that a good partner or good troupe member has a mutual awareness of the movements, making them feel like an “extension” of one’s own body.

For example, in a crowded place, steps may have to be taken in much smaller increments, and as a result, the leg may be lifted higher, or in a more stylized manner, in order to compensate for the timing. When partnering with a smaller or larger or taller partner, adjustments may have to be made in step size or posture to allow time enough for the step to be executed properly. Steps may have to be simplified for a less experienced or less adept partner, and the partner may need extra guidance to execute the step.

In partner dance, the touch can be a source of communication, with a gentle push or pressure serving as a cue for direction. Some partners or peers may require more pressure and guidance than others. Resistance or inertia may signal that the responding partner needs more time or space to execute the dance move. When partners and/or peers execute steps

successfully in synchrony, however, there is a feeling of synergy and exhilaration of accomplishment and of being part of something greater than the individual Self.

Mead uses the example of boxers to illustrate how organisms, and specifically humans, learn to read, act, respond, react, and adapt to the actions of others, and that these responses may be below the level of conscious awareness, and not a cognitive process (bridging the Cartesian dualism) (Mead, 1934). Mead also uses other examples of unstructured play and semi-structured games to illustrate these same phenomena (1934).

Like Wiener, Gillespie points out that this feedback loop (Wiener, 1948) is common to all organisms and does not require consciousness (Gillespie, 2005). Consciousness occurs, according to Gillespie's description of Mead's theory, when humans become aware of the perspective of the Other, as well as the perspective of the Self (Gillespie, 2005). In game-play, as in dance, one typically must keep the perspectives of Others in mind in order to execute the required moves and to maintain synchrony with the group, the partner, and the music. The more roles and positions one assumes, the more perspectives can be integrated into the Self, which increases the understanding of and potential empathy for the Other. The integration results from the seamless awareness of different perspectives simultaneously (Gillespie, 2006).

The physical change of position in time and space gives one a different perspective physically, and according to Mead, this creates a precedence for understanding the change of position socially (Mead, 1934). This idea is also echoed in the theories of Lakoff and Johnson: that our concepts (or categories of mind) are shaped by our physical, embodied, concrete experiences (Johnson, 1990, 2008; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). When combined with

the constructs of body mapping and Gestalt perceptions, these embodied concepts make us think about Others and our surroundings in a different way; i.e., as separate, yet connected, coordinated. The dancing, and its use of space and Others, creates concrete feedback, which shapes our ideas of how we relate to Others and our environment.

To examine the dance process more closely, requires exploring concrete evidence. As examples of physical position changes in dance, we can look at any group dance that involves a pattern or formation. Even moving as a cluster, one has to adapt to the movements of others in order to share the same space. In circle dances, the circular movement is limited by the physical space and the size, ability, and energy level of the participants. As the participants move around the circle, perspective is constantly being adjusted physically and perceptually as the view changes. Moving in synchrony creates another perspective of the group as a Gestalt whole. Just as Wundt and the early Gestaltists found evidence that flashing lights can give the illusion of movement, things moving together are perceived as being part of a whole in human perception (Wundt, 1911/2012).

Other patterns of partner exchanges across the dance space, such as swinging the partner in a turn, or weaving in and out between other participants, also involve a change of location, physical position, and physical perspective. These changes are reinforced by the other senses in terms of touch, feel, and kinesthetic experience, such as inertia, resistance, and momentum, which are compensated for in the effort to make some collaborative motion.

Extending Meadian Perspective to Dance Group Dynamics

In the groups I studied for this project, the groups came together generally around periodic events that highlighted their dancing. These organized events gave purpose to the

classes, the meetings, and the choreography for the participants. Additionally, though these events and performances were often tied to annual holidays for most of the groups, they involved a collaboration with other kinds of groups to produce the event. This expanded the social network to include different types of artists and outside community members who might not take part in the performance directly. As a result, most of these events would offer different styles of dance and different opportunities for participation in dance.

For example, a Mexican-American folkloric dance group would perform for a “Cinco de Mayo” fiesta celebration in the Latino neighborhood as the featured act, but other music and dance acts would be presented, including Native American, Mariachi, Salsa, and Zumba dance groups. A dance space would be set up for the performers that would allow open dancing in between dance performances, either to live music or recorded music. The audience members and performers could jam, dance, sing, and participate in other dance forms presented along with their own dance forms. At these events, you could see the same patterns of people of all ages gradually migrating to the dance space in clusters and with partners, to dance as partners, in lines, in clusters, or in free-form as individuals.

In the Balkan community, the music most commonly heard was Polka, but all forms of Polka could be danced, including as couples, trios, two-couple boxes, as a circle folkloric dance, or as a line dance. Often at these Polka dances, a set or two would be devoted to teaching and performing Kolos, the line dances common to the Balkans (e.g., Syrto, Missourlou, and Alelune). People of all ages could participate in both open dancing and in the Kolos; often these dance events were where youngsters get their first taste of communal dance.

In other words, being involved in one form of organized dance can become a gateway to participating in other forms of dance. Once one masters a variety of polka steps in the Balkan community, or some of the Mexican footwork in the Latino community, adding other forms of dance becomes a natural extension of one's repertory. Thus, the dance groups may interlink with other dance groups or other music/art/craft groups, creating a larger social network and more opportunities to change physical locations, social positions, and perspectives.

One of the more common illustrations of a more formal position exchange in folkloric dance is taking turns as lead and follow. Leaders are typically found at the head of a line for a line dance (or broken circle pattern, or in other designated spots for other patterns), but this is not generally a fixed position within the dance. More commonly, participants take turns at the head of the line to lead the steps for the group. In partner dances, it is common for participants to exchange the responsibilities of leading, as more experienced dancers lead less experienced dancers. Lead and follow positions may also be mediated even when they represent gender roles, either explicitly by playing the part of a male (when gender numbers are uneven), or by "back-leading," which is a scaffolding technique to help males move in the expected direction.

In this study of folkloric dancers, it was common for the male and female teachers to know all the parts involved in a particular dance, even the male teachers coaching the girls on how to swish their skirts for the dance steps. Female dancers also often had to take the role of a male dancer when there was a shortage of males for a particular dance (see Appendix E).

Another observation across all types of dance is the position exchange of teacher and learner, or coach and student, or mentor and protégé. In almost any gathering of dancers for class or rehearsal, it is common to see numerous examples of participants teaching and coaching each other, with more experienced participants coaching less experienced participants, regardless of age, in a cascading manner, down to the youngest member of the group. For example, in the Mexican folkloric group, often the older, more experienced girls were seen coaching the younger students, with impromptu rehearsals during downtimes between classes and rehearsals (see Appendix E).

Another example was described in Chapter 5, in which a young girl who had just been taught the polka in turn taught it to a younger child. It is notable that the young girl had not been given directions or instructions to do this. Instead, it was spontaneous, impromptu behavior. The older girl took on the role of teacher and coach so the toddler could learn the polka step and they could dance together to the music (see Appendix E).

Similar behaviors can be seen at a community-based Ballet studio, in preparation for a presentation of *The Nutcracker*, and at almost any social dance setting. Dancers linger on the sidelines, and during unstructured moments, they will coach, rehearse, teach each other the moves, practice the moves together, and compare posture, arm-positions, head-angles, and other such activities (see Appendix E).

As these examples illustrate, through interaction with the dance, one experiences in an embodied, physical manner, different physical positions, giving different physical perspectives (different positions in the dance pattern). Layered on these physical positions are designations or meanings that have social significance, making them different social

positions (e.g., lead and follow, in a particular place in the dance pattern). These social positions and their expectations are easily exchanged, rotated, and assumed as participants gain experience and expertise. The social positions are changed often and repeatedly (as in turn-taking). Each of these positions entails its own particular perspective. In this respect, participants eventually come to share a similar matrix of perspectives.

In some dance events, some aspects of the dance are combined with aspects of a game to create more participation and engagement. For example, in various social dance contexts, certain practices deliberately shift partners so everyone has an opportunity to dance with everyone else, regardless of age, experience, ethnicity, or class. Different locales and groups have different names and conventions for the dance games, but they all share a method to mix up the partnering and social interactions within the group. There are some similarities to the children's game of "Musical Chairs," except in this case, it is "Musical Partners," and a new partner is introduced at each round of the music.

For example, a "John Paul Jones" version involves two concentric circles of people, one of leads (usually male) and the other of follows (usually female). One circle faces clockwise, the other faces counter-clockwise. The music is begun, and people move in time with the music in opposite directions. An added variation is that the leads and follows may weave in out of each other, grasping hands with each new person. When the music stops, your new partner is the person in front of you. A short song is played, where you dance with the new partner, and then at the end of the song, the process is repeated.

Another variation is the "Mixer," often used in teaching settings, where a pattern of several steps is taught that includes a final turn. The leads and follows are organized into

concentric circles, usually with leads on the inner circle facing out. The follows are in the outer ring facing in towards the lead partner. The music begins, and the partners execute the pattern of several steps that includes a final turn. At the final turn, the follow (usually female) is passed to a new lead partner (usually male). In this way, the leads rotate the follows around the circle (usually in a counter-clockwise direction), until everyone has had the opportunity to meet and dance with everyone else in the circle.

Another variation, usually done with children, is more similar in structure to the traditional “musical chairs,” except using the partners instead of chairs. When the music stops, everyone has to change partners quickly. Stragglers are pulled from the group, until only one or two couples remain and are declared winners of the game. The benefits of using this game to teach dance to children is that it builds upon a game structure with which they are already familiar (Musical Chairs), and it encourages children to collaborate in unconventional ways in order to continue to participate. Thus, children who would not normally play together will dance together and become more acquainted and friendlier with each other.

Variations on these games and patterns may include using lines instead of circles, or a figure-8 pattern instead of concentric circles. Another variation is one of a lottery, called a “Jack & Jill” dance, and sometimes this variation is used in competitions. For this variation, participants sign up for the event, and names are drawn randomly to form partners on the spot. These partners may compete with each other for a small prize.

As noted earlier, as these dance patterns become more complex and challenging, the interactions, perspectives, and position changes also become more complicated. By

tradition, leads and follows usually have fallen along gender lines (males as leads, and females as follows), but this is not always the case. More experienced dancers and teachers often switch positions in order to allow everyone to participate, so gender roles are seen as relatively flexible. But regardless of role or position taken, the other positions must be accounted for, even if they are not assumed as a role. This necessitates the awareness of the Self and the Other, their physical positions in space, as well as the social implications of the position and their expectations, as defined by their movements. Two people cannot occupy the same space and time, but people can coordinate time and space together through interaction and collaboration.

Using Gillespie's interpretation of Mead's theory, these positions are (in dance, just as they are in games), subject to social structures, social organization, social norms, social rules, and social expectations and guidelines (Gillespie, 2005). These positions (e.g., lead and follow) result in perspectives and attitudes that are complementary and incommensurable (2005). It is through the repeated experience of these divergent positions and resulting attitudes that the integration of these attitudes occur (2005). It is this integration of attitudes that enables individuals to become aware of the Self and Other, reflect on how their behavior appears to Others, to become Self-aware and Self-conscious and Self-reflective, which is essential to building and maintaining society, in Mead's theory (Gillespie, 2005). Although Gillespie uses the examples of play and games to illustrate these concepts (2005, 2006), they can also be easily applied to dance. In fact, in dance, the awareness of Self and Other in creating a perspective of the group as a whole, as a pattern, as a group in synchrony, is even more explicit.

In performing a dance sequence together, one has to be conscious, not only of one's own body in time and space, the ones next to you, but you have to be cognizant of the entire group pattern, in order to make the pattern work smoothly. Participants moving in synchrony can be perceived as moving in unison, in unity, as a Gestalt whole, and as a single entity, yet the pattern is made up of individuals. This synchronous movement in time and space, as well as the turn-taking in positions (both physical and social) creates a mental metaphor for social interaction. The more social interaction and synchrony that occurs, the more social bonding occurs, as participants begin to identify with the group with whom they regularly interact. As social positions give way to complex social roles, the dance group takes on the attributes of a dance community, i.e., a community of cultural practice.

If a child or adult stays within the dance community, a cyclical pattern can be observed, as participants become students, students become peers, peers become teachers and coaches, coaches become administrators and organizers, and all participants become supporters. What begins as a process of physical position changes with resulting perspective changes, builds in complexity to become social interactions, social acts, and social position exchanges, with resulting perspective changes. Participants develop shared perspectives with the other participants. Participants begin to self-identify as being part of the group and whatever that group represents. Dancers evolve from being on the sidelines, to active, committed participants, then from students to peer coaches, to teachers, to organizers, to administrators. Growing into each role allows the individual a greater variety of participation, and it also gives the rest of the group a fresh perspective. Along the way, participants develop skills of cooperation, collaboration, and empathy that contribute to

creating a community. The skills of cooperation and empathy learned through the dance process become more important as they grow into these new roles.

These behaviors of cooperation and collaboration evolve from more directed *helping behaviors*, as children (or adults, in an adult group), will guide and cajole peers into proper formations and directions as they master the work. These guiding behaviors can also become spontaneous cueing behaviors, as some of the children will act as a Dance Master or teacher, giving their younger peers hand signals about when to enter the performance, or not, to solidify the performance (see Appendix E).

Other examples of helping behaviors can be seen as dancers prepare for rehearsal or performance. Dancers can be seen spontaneously forming “daisy-chains” of assistance, as they line up behind each other to fix hair arrangement, lace up bodices, zip up costumes, and the like. Occasionally, the dancers may be directed to help each other, but more often than not, they jump in to help without being asked. The fact that even young children display these helping behaviors spontaneously and without prompting is noteworthy. These helping behaviors could be viewed as skills learned as part of a collaborative process, and as a basis for learning how to become part of a community. By learning to dance, children and adults learn how to cooperate and collaborate with each other in order to create a communal goal and manifest a vision of a wholistic pattern. Collaborating in a dance project lays the foundation for forming other community skills.

Dance as a Community

Becker points out that the study of Sociology investigates collective behaviors as its focal interest: “One definition of sociology is that it studies how people do things together”

(Becker, 1989, p. 280). In watching a dance performed by strangers, regardless of the genre, one can see individuals come together to begin to form a dance group. In other words, as people begin to participate in the dance, they form a dancing group, and a group that dances. This dancing group has embedded in it synchrony of movement, coordination of space and time, collaboration with others to form patterns, and the learning of conventions (or norms) to save time and energy and to minimize conflicts, both physical ones in time and space, as well as social ones, of with whom and when to partner, or not. Thus, embedded in learning the steps and moves of the dance are the fundamentals of group behavior, group expectations, group cohesion, and collaboration, which one begins to learn. By extension, as one becomes more engaged in the group and participates more often, one begins to learn the fundamentals of community.

As these groups coalesce into an entity, they may formalize the group's existence by giving it a name, a mission, and a location, and also they may also formalize the membership. The group may organize itself into a club, a social network, or a non-profit and align themselves with cultural events, activities, and goals. Once the group's structure becomes formalized, certain roles and responsibilities become apparent, and participants are pressed into service. This generally begins as an informal activity, such as coaching and leading rehearsals, but quickly can take a more formal position such as a teacher holding regular classes, creating choreography, and organizing performances.

As Becker (1984a, 1984b) points out, the creation of art works, regardless of the type, requires a concerted collective action to make it manifest. This collective action

coalesces the social networks created during the study of the art form, the time invested, and the necessary social interactions it takes to master a craft.

Using the language and concepts of Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1986), the time, energy, and resources invested in cultural capital by an individual can be transmuted into social capital through the social networks acquired during that investment, and into economic capital, as the individual can then use the skills acquired during the investment to develop other opportunities (Bourdieu). Putnam also considers an investment in cultural capital and the arts to be a valuable investment in social capital, and that social capital is a proven way to help solidify, maintain, and revive American communities (Putnam, 2000; Putnam & Feldstein, 2003). Collective action gives cohesion to community.

All of these perspectives demonstrate how involvement in the arts creates cultural capital, social capital, and community through the collective action that the arts engender. These perspectives can be seen in an examination of various cultural arts groups, including the dance groups in this study.

For example, in the Mexican-American community, some of the residents, such as Jaime Reyes and Maria Chaurand, had been trained in grade school in Mexico in the art of folklore, including history, myth, music, art, dance, and costuming. As adults, they attempted to recreate this cultural and educational experience for their peers and for their own children. They founded one dance group (Rose Marie and Jaime Reyes), then another (Maria Chaurand, later adding Jaime Reyes), in two different parts of the region (Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas), based upon this vision. They began performing for various holidays and cultural events in the late 1970s, riding the wake of the Civil Rights

Movement and celebrating the ideal of diversity. Then they became teachers, sharing their knowledge with younger students, which resulted in a program and the founding of a school. Family members and friends were pressed into service to both perform and to teach. Once the group was teaching and performing, the need emerged for new material, new choreography, new information, and new costuming. Community resources were scarce, so the group formed a network of parents and volunteers to organize fundraisers to buy costumes, teaching materials, and music recordings, to bring in professional teachers, and to send the local teachers and performers to conferences and competitions.

Thus, one of the founders of the groups, Maria Chaurand watched her relatives perform, led her own group, and trained her own children, who became performers and teachers as well. Now the grandchildren are being trained and are performing with a younger group. The mother has worn many hats over the years as a performer, teacher, founder, organizer, marketer, booking agent, promoter, manager, costumer, baby-sitter, and fundraiser. These roles have been passed on to her children and their peers and are constantly being shifted to various volunteers as they become available.

The dance group has had its own studio at times, but more generally, its classes, activities, and performances are done in public spaces, such as community centers, public schools, church courtyards, museums, art galleries, parks, and restaurants, as well as at cultural festivals, holiday fiestas. Costumes may be stored in the houses of the participants and then stored temporarily in a communal area (such as the community center) in preparation for a performance.

The dance group has successfully utilized the social capital engendered by performing and teaching, to bring in the parents and family members of the students they teach to support the activities of dance group. Parents may assist in a variety of ways, including giving children and students rides to and from grade school and dance classes and home, carpooling, running errands for the group, loaning needed equipment and/or physical labor, selling tickets, soliciting donations, taking attendance, cooking, cleaning, watching over children, managing phone trees, planning, and sewing, cleaning, storing, and repairing costumes. Parents may also participate by providing supplementary teaching. Much of the commitment to the group stems from the fact that the parents participated in the same group as they were growing up or in a similar dance group in their communities of origin.

Another example of utilizing social capital can be seen in the Balkan dance group. Until recently, when the group diminished as a result of attrition, they often held classes and rehearsals in church and school multi-purpose areas, and they often presented performances in public halls, parks, churches, schools, museum grounds, and occasionally in restaurants. Costumes were maintained in a similar manner and stored in the houses of participants, or in church and museum spaces. Similarly, the events usually centered around holidays and cultural festivals and were considered family-friendly activities with multi-generational participation.

Using Duquesne University's folkloric dance group as a model, Don and JoAnn Lipovac founded the folkloric orchestra and then began building a performance dance group with authentic Balkan costumes. It became an intergenerational community group that integrated live music, folkloric dance, and social dance together as family events. Instead of

the Lipovacs' own family forming the intergenerational ties, it was their peers, students, and their subsequent children who participated and supported the activities of the group. Again, it began as a neighborhood group that grew in expertise so the group traveled and competed with other similar groups at conferences and festivals. Parents, grandparents, and children would participate as students and performers or support the group in instrumental ways, just as they would in the Latino neighborhood.

Another example of dance creating community is the annual production of *The Nutcracker Ballet*, presented in a local community college by a suburban dance school. It is important to note that the teaching of Ballet and Classical Dance is more established as an institution, in terms of a physical permanent building, dedicated to the use of the dance school. The structures have more permanent attributes, such as mirrors on the walls and barres on the opposite walls for practice and warm-ups; they are often decorated with inspiring photographs of the students in performance, alums performing with professional companies, and posters of touring companies. Again, parents, grandparents, and children often team up to support the performances and school activities, beyond the lessons. Parents pitch in to help with fundraisers, silent auctions, and donations, as well as with carpooling and child care.

As children and adult dancers grow older and pass through life stages, their participation in the dance group may change, but the personal experiences and shared activities sow the seeds of cultural regeneration that can last, not only through a lifetime, but across several generations.

The students learn more than the dance steps and movements. They also learn valuable organizational, social, cultural, communication, instrumental skills, and problem-solving skills, etiquette, and self-discipline. These are important skills to learn, not only for individual feelings of well-being and good health, but also for success in relationships and in life. Assuming different roles and social positions within the dance group over time also broadens one's perspectives, not only creating empathy, but solidifying social bonds and community coherence.

Assuming and exchanging of roles (and perspectives) can be seen as part of an expanded apprenticeship model of learning (Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger 1999). In a community setting, the dynamics of this learning method can be visualized in the Lave and Wenger model of situated learning that they refer to as a Community of Practice model (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999).

An important aspect of the apprenticeship form of learning and the Community of Practice model is the concept of "center and periphery," which describes the behavior of the participants within the model. This is where participants may linger for a time on the sidelines before becoming engaged in the activity or practice (in this case, the dance). As they become more engaged in the practice, they assume more skills and responsibilities and become more central and more core to the group. The participants assume different roles and responsibilities as they are drawn more to the center of the group and its activities. As they move to the center of the group, increasing their mastery of the practice, they also become coaches, teachers, and disseminators of information about the practice. The dissemination stage is also important, as it is the stage that seeds the interest and attention of

new participants to become involved and regenerates the entire process (see Figures C2 and C3 in Appendix C for CoP model diagram image).

The dynamic of this model resembles one of a decorative fountain, where the water is pulled from a pool, drawn to the center of the fountain, then up and out, to rain back down over the pool of water (see Figure C4 in Appendix C). Another metaphor used by Wenger (1999) is one of a rolling “donut” or toroid shape, with the same dynamic of moving in toward center, then up and out over to the periphery. This image of a dynamic center and periphery is useful because it illustrates how a process (such as maintaining a dance group) can be sustained over time and across generations. Although Wenger (1999) defines specific roles in his vision of the Community of Practice model, in this study the model is more useful as an illustration of the dynamic of the group that becomes a Community of Practice, since roles in such community-based organizations tend to be more informal, flexible, and project-dependent, based on who might be available when.

This same dynamic can easily be seen to operate in all of the dance groups, but can even be observed at individual events. Observers on the sidelines of classes or performances become interested and start to mimic movements. As they become more engaged with the dance, they will drift more to the center of the dance space, expressing more commitment to the dance. Eventually, they become fully engaged, and then will bring others who are watching on the periphery into the dance space, drawing them closer to the center of the action. This dynamic can be seen at any dance event and will, over time, fill the dance space with people dancing. This could be seen as a microcosm of how a formal dance group forms and maintains itself (see Appendix E).

Different dance groups begin either with an emphasis on performing or an emphasis on teaching, but most successful dance groups start by integration and balance of some combination of the two. Performances raise the visibility of the dance group and serve to promote not only the group itself, but the classes the group teaches. The classes create new performers-in-training for the shows, which create an audience for the performances. Younger or less experienced students attend performances to see their mentors, and the friends and family of the performers turn out to help swell the numbers in the audiences. Friends, family, volunteers, and older performers may also take on the supplementary and supportive roles that enable the group to function and help promote the group's activities.

As described elsewhere, the roles and collaborate processes that make up a dance group are dynamic and cyclical, with layers of mentors and apprentices, in a variety of roles that can stretch over generations during the life of the group's existence. This cascading, layered, cyclical process can be illustrated by the fountain analogy in a simplified form, but also can create complicated interlocking cycles that creates a cohesive and dynamic whole.

This cyclical pattern that can stretch across generations also brings up another feature of a Community of Practice: it becomes a system of knowledge, a living resource where information is created, stored, retrieved, and disseminated via human interactions.

As an example, Jaime Reyes, one of the Co-directors of the Mexican folkloric dance group, is considered the ad hoc expert on folkloric history and authenticity. Because he studied folklore in Mexico and has researched the dances seriously through experience, studying books, attending conferences, and participating in performances, he is consulted concerning selection of appropriate costuming with music and dance steps. The next

generation of teachers, the Chaurand sons, have also studied and apprenticed with folkloric dance groups in Mexico, but their experiences were briefer, more recent, and more selective, so their perspectives on choreography and costuming are more informal and pragmatic. If certain costuming is not in the budget, the Chaurands may adapt what they have to make do for a particular show. The knowledge and experience they all bring to the table is extensive, but with slightly different perspectives that allow the group to adapt to varying circumstances of availability, resources, and finances.

Since the Chaurands form the core of their group, any questions about the group's activities generally are presented to them, including questions about history, music, steps, and costuming about the dances; but the inquiries may range to instrumental or organizational concerns such as calling trees, fundraising, and carpooling. Answers to these latter kinds of questions can be made quickly available through their social networks. Their social networks are one of their strongest assets. This social network even extends to ANGF (National Association for Folkloric Groups), an "upline" organization that holds Mexican folkloric dance and music conferences in both the U.S. and Mexico, which helps to distribute standards and conventions for folkloric performance, certifications, and competitions.

Similarly, in the Balkan group, Don and JoAnn Lipovac are the major local resource for authenticity, repertory, standards, and conventions in performance for the Strawberry Hill area. They have collected an archive of local lore, teaching materials, recordings, videos, books, and other materials, which they can refer to when needed. They also are connected to other folkloric performers around the U.S., as well as in Eastern Europe, where Lipovac

has studied and performed. The Lipovacs stayed connected to the Duquesne University performing group, which they used as their model for teaching locally. Lipovac not only has his own experience and archival materials to use as resources, but also those of his students, who have gone on to perform in their own groups.

Along similar lines, the American Dance Center, which specializes in Ballet and Classical Dance training, not only offers the training at a professional level, but serves as an information resource and social network for information and instrumental support. Students and parents can get advice and guidance from the directors and teachers, calling on their own experiences, archives, resources, and social networks.

In all these cases, the experience, archival materials, and resources from a previous generation supplement and support the newer generations' resources. The information may be updated and adapted over time to new needs and concerns, but it is based on the standards and conventions of the previous generations' contributions. These are not always smooth transitions, as each generation puts its own stamp on its contributions, but the embedded value that the work is important survives, even though it is adapted for a different way of life.

Each of these groups operates as a Community of Practice, within a larger, local community. In each case, the Community of Practice spans generations, offering opportunities for participation, learning, teaching, guidance, and as a system of knowledge based on archival materials, experiences, and social networks. Also in each case, it is the active participation with the group that guarantees membership. Active participation is also required in order to stay completely informed of the group's activities. To some extent, each

group may announce its activities via email, website, phone calls, texts, flyers, mailing lists, community calendars, or bulletin boards. But to truly know all the activities and all that is going on, one has to be engaged in the group's meetings, classes, and events. To be informed, one must be involved, and to be involved, one has to be engaged in active participation, even peripherally.

As these groups span generations of participants, adjustments often have to be made. It is remarkable that these groups continue to exist over time and that they adapt to changing times and surroundings. In the next section, these issues involving continuity, social remembering, and cultural memory are examined more closely in these particular groups.

In Wenger describes in his model of a Community of Practice (1999) how flatter, more informal, more dynamic structures can co-exist with more formal, hierarchical structures in business and corporate settings, which serve to refresh and stimulate the more bureaucratic structures in order to keep them more innovative and thus, more competitive. Wenger presents a plan to encourage Communities of Practice within these corporate structures in order to allow a space for people to interact, share ideas, be creative, cross boundaries, collaborate, and cross-pollinate projects with different perspectives. These innovations are difficult to do within the context of a bureaucratic, hierarchical structure, where (as Weber points out), social positioning within the structure is an important part of the daily process, and conformity and conservative thinking are a safer strategy for preserving social status within the bureaucracy (Weber, 1947).

These overlapping structures of a Community of Practice and a hierarchical bureaucracy can also be seen in the military, as the dynamics of everyday work in the

military may be informal, but issues of rank, pay grade, seniority, and responsibilities have a predetermined formal hierarchy that may have little to do with the actual work. Wenger uses innovation in technology as the practice that is studied in business settings, but similar cases can be made for professional sports, professional theater, and professional dance.

As dance groups become more organized and more ambitious, they often develop a supporting structure to deal with issues of financing, allocating resources, fundraising, bookkeeping, paying bills, tracking revenue, sponsoring events, purchasing costumes, renting venues, and possibly maintaining a regular dance school or program of classes. Usually these structures fall into a non-profit form of organization, but not always. Some groups are organized as for-profit organizations and tend to do less (and more selective) community outreach.

The organizational structure typically includes a Board of Directors who manage the finances and organize larger events. Under the Board are typically staff and volunteers who do the work of the organization (e.g., bookkeeping, database, and mailing lists). The teachers and dancers of the group sometimes perform these functions in addition to their teaching and dancing responsibilities.

Ideally, members of the Board and staff are former dancers who have participated with the group they represent. But as groups become larger, more ambitious, and more professionalized, frequently the Board is made up of socially prominent or wealthy members of society, often business people, or dilettantes of the arts, rather than the dancers themselves. As a result, a rift can emerge between the Board members and the dance community of practice, a detachment from the activity of the dance and its needs, which

causes a change of perspective and goals. Tensions may arise as the goals for the Board, the staff, and the dancers may diverge over time and evolve into different missions. Problems may arise if the Board, who are the decision-makers, and the staff, who maintain the bureaucracy, become too detached from the actual practice and community of dance. As with most bureaucracies, social positioning and protection of position becomes a major focus, as positions, roles, and jobs become more defined and brittle. In contrast with the Community of Practice, the organizational structure becomes more rigid, more hierarchical, more bureaucratic; more vertical, instead of the flatter, more flexible, more dynamic social organization of the dance Community of Practice.

With much larger organizations, the detachment may be so great that the dancers become objectified “baubles” for wealthy sponsors to show off at high-profile social events, not unlike show horses might be displayed for the admiration of all. This kind of objectification can also occur in other fields, such as sports, theater, and the arts and entertainment industry in general. It is mentioned here to illustrate how these different agendas may co-exist, overlap, and create mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationships, but may also be steeped in tensions because of differing perspectives and goals.

Ballet in particular, as a dance form, lends itself well to hierarchical organizational structures. Because of its historical roots as an aristocratic dance form of the French court of Louis XIV, Ballet became the dance form that physically embodied court hierarchy and was the single most important activity that defined social status among the nobility (Homans, 2010). Ballet also allowed, on the one hand, for nobility to “finesse” or adjust their social

positions in relation to the king, to learn etiquette in order to be more favored in court, and to potentially earn income without compromising their noble status (Homans, 2010).

On the other hand, Ballet became an entry portal for those of less nobility, and even talented commoners, to rub shoulders with, to perform, train, teach, and earn a living in the company of the nobility. Commoners who were talented in Ballet could travel and enjoy the pleasures of the life of the nobility, which was a rare opportunity for someone of their status and social station. Spreading eventually to other royal courts across Europe, Ballet became the dance and entertainment associated with the higher classes, even though versions of it were performed for all classes (Homans, 2010). The aristocratic bearing and hierarchical organization of the dance is also embodied in the movements, which presents an aesthetic that appeals to organizations concerned with hierarchy and social positioning.

Additionally, today's Ballet is a very disciplined, structured, and precise dance genre, and classes are tightly organized around levels, curriculum, and certifications. The tight, structured, hierarchical nature of Ballet is embodied into the aesthetic of the dance and is a good match for sponsoring organizations that are also hierarchical and concerned with social positions.

The structure of the company cast is also hierarchical, although Ballet companies today work more as more egalitarian ensemble groups than the vertical positioning common in the past. Company casts are typically organized around at least three tiers of performers, with soloists and principal dancers--the more senior dancers--at the top of the hierarchy, and the more junior dancers as the Corps de Ballet, and the apprentices (often unpaid students) at the bottom of the roster. These levels can be seen listed explicitly in the programs handed

out at performances of the dance company. The administrative head of the company is the Artistic Director, who functions as the manager of the company artistically, assisted by one or more Ballet Masters or Ballet Mistresses, who function as coaches for the company. It is the Artistic Director, typically a former dancer, who interacts with the supporting hierarchy (the Board of Directors and Board Officers) to represent the dance company's interests.

Even in Ballet, however, the actual Community of Practice formed by the dancers and their peers may operate on a more level playing field, concerned more with the day-to-day logistics of performing, teaching, practicing, and presenting the dance.

As an analogy, these larger hierarchical organizations and their interaction with Communities of Practice could be compared with the running of a large manor house in England during the 1800s. The Board of Directors could be compared to the nobles of the manor, the organizational staff with the household management staff, and the dancers with the workers in the kitchen, who are creating interesting, tasty cuisine. The Board of Directors are the moneyed decision-makers at the top, the staff carry out the orders, and the workers do the work. The social positioning generally is more important among the administrative staff levels (or the equivalent of middle management) and generally is most egalitarian at the level of the Community of Practice.

As in Wenger's (1999) model, the manor analogy illustrates how aspects of a flexible Community of Practice and a hierarchical social structure can interact, co-exist, and create symbiotic relationships. But because of the detachment from practice, the differences in perspectives, and differences in goals and missions, these two entities—structure and practice—can frequently be at odds with each other and create tensions. The original

mission of the Community of Practice may be redefined to be more aligned with the views of the decision-makers.

Disconnected agendas may often stem from both a lack of understanding of how the operations function (or not) for dancers, and the resulting values and priorities that come from those operations. For example, participation in an annual performance may be seen by the dance CoP as an important goal for students, teachers, and members. It is also important as a community holiday or religious event. In one meeting of a non-profit dance organization, there was discussion of the budget for one of these events, which was projected to cost several thousand dollars, and with a combination of grants, ad sales, and fundraising, there would be a small profit of approximately \$100. One of the Board members, who was not a dancer, but trained as a bookkeeper and relatively new to the organization, asked what was the point of the investment in time and energy for an event that had little or no profit. The point to the dancers, of course, was to be able to hold the event at all, to share it with others, to showcase work from the region, to engage the community, and to break even financially, rather than to put on the event for a profit. This is not to say a profit would not be welcomed, but merely that profit was not the major motivator for putting on the event.

This Board member also suggested cutting the smaller classes, until it was pointed out that one studio is very small and could only accommodate small classes, and that teachers are paid by the students, so there was no cost advantage to cutting small classes, leaving the small studio empty for hours at a time. In this case, some income was better than no income from an additional smaller studio. Also, students may rotate in and out of

different classes, based on their changing interests or work schedules, so a class that has high enrollment in one session may be less attended in another session, but this does not necessarily reflect the popularity of the dance or the instructor. Having the spectrum of dance types and levels available makes dance more accessible to students in general, and makes for a better rounded student. This vignette illustrates how a Board member, even one trained in bookkeeping, may be detached or unaware of how the operations of the dance school community of practice actually function.

The dancers consider what they are doing to be important community and cultural work for the enrichment of the community members in general. They consider what they do as giving back to the community that nurtured them and as enriching to the families that participate. They see the performances as akin to annual traditions passing on a cultural legacy to others and to future generations. They also view dance as a great gift to be shared with others, and that dance (as well as the Arts in general) encourages fitness, healthy living, subjective well-being, and good socialization. It also teaches social skills, self-discipline, encourages healthy brain development, promotes congenial social interactions, creates social networks, trains the body, promotes culture, supports community arts, and stimulates creativity and innovation. Dancers also see the practice of dance as an important cultural tool to convey cultural values, beliefs, history, narratives, and collaborative processes and to connect with the community at large.

At festival performances, Maria Chaurand would often say, “We are sharing our culture with others” or “We are sharing our history with our children” in describing the program and presentation. Teachers of all dance forms often comment that teaching dance

teaches self-discipline, etiquette, and social skills along with dance steps and dance formations. Dancing is also seen as a way of stimulating creativity, expressing feelings, building character, and for channeling emotional energy into constructive, productive activity. These perspectives are reflected in the scripts and narratives of well-known dance films, such as *Mad Hot Ballroom* (Agrelo, 2005), *Take the Lead* (Friedlander, 2006), *Marilyn Hotchkiss' Ballroom Dancing & Charm School* (Miller, 2006), *Dance with Me* (Haines, 1998), and *Strictly Ballroom* (Luhmann, 1992).

Additionally, when dance is taught, it is typically associated with particular narratives and historical perspectives. For example, Ballet is presented as the “dance of kings” and aristocratic associations; Mexican dances represent specific times and places in Mexican history when the dances were popular, and the music and costuming are explained in historical and cultural contexts. The Balkan dances are also presented with similar narratives and explanations of regional origins and ethnic associations, when teaching and performing dance. The dances, costumes, music, and moves often represent culturally and historically significant events and values that the community holds dear.

Many folkloric dancers consider what they do to be part of a cultural legacy to be passed along to the next generation, as well as sharing their culture with others in the community at large. That said, many of the cultural traditions and customs undergo tweaking and modification over time, based on pragmatic concerns, such as availability of resources, convenience, time, finances, logistics, politics, and geography. Mead comments on the renewal and evolution of traditions and cultural narratives in his writings. “One past

displaces and abrogates another as inexorably as the rising generation buries the old. How many different Caesars have crossed the Rubicon since 1800?" (Mead, 1938, p. 95).

The performances are a way of participating, renewing social bonds, and passing narratives on to others, and especially to younger generations. The performances are a way of reenacting narratives, images, and values that are important, but in a memorable, immediate, and embodied manner. In essence, the performance makes the historical event more immediate, timely, present, and within shared personal experience and memory.

CHAPTER 7

RESULTS: ANALYSIS OF DATA AS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Two levels of analysis are presented in this chapter. The first level of analysis focuses on the dance group as a Community of Practice, using the Lave/Wenger model based on a theory of Situated Learning. The second level of analysis focuses on the embodied elements and dynamics that are engaged during the same processes. Both of these perspectives fall within the general ecological theory framework and should not be construed as separate events, but rather as different views of the processes. The goal in this analysis is to unite these two perspectives as “two sides of the same coin.”

This study viewed dance as a cultural practice, as sublingual symbolic communication, as a creative activity, as performance, and also, as a social act. Dance as an activity or practice is interesting as a sociological topic of study in that practitioners report feeling a part of something, a group, that is bigger than themselves, giving them a sense of belonging, while at the same time allowing them to find their “artistic voice.” Dance is particularly noteworthy in that it centers around an embodied practice that is performed and is observable by others. In this regard, practitioners simultaneously express their individuality as well as their group membership in a physical activity. These associative practices can be performed alone or in conjunction with others. This simultaneous experience of the Self and the group is similar to the experience of the “I and Me” as described by George Herbert Mead (1934).

This experience is similar to other activities, sports, hobbies, or artistic/cultural practices in that one can practice as an individual and simultaneously feel a part of a group.

Yet the experience of dance is immediate and intense, with the instant feedback of synchronous behaviors and pattern formations, which can shape collaborative behaviors into a common goal of a good performance. The interplay of the individual with the group during the practice of dance helps shape the perception of the Self, both as an individual and as a part of the group, as well as direct cooperative behaviors into a shared goal that is phenomenological, visible, concrete, and tangible.

Brief Overview of Lave/Wenger Community of Practice Model

The term “Community of Practice” and its use as a research topic and as a specific strategy for teaching and knowledge management are relatively recent developments. The term was coined by social anthropologist, Jean Lave, and her associate, Etienne Wenger, a computer systems analyst (Lave & Wenger, 1991), to describe the social structure that was created in apprenticeship learning situations. They studied how apprenticeship learning depended heavily on social relationships and social interactions between practitioners, and also were grounded in actual practice, in a physical setting (Lave & Wenger, 1991). They termed this “situated learning” and “legitimate peripheral participation.” Among the groups they studied were Yucatan midwives, native tailors, Navy quartermasters, and meat-cutters.

The gist of their findings was that a socialization process took place that not only involved the mentor and apprentice, but a community comprised of both novice and seasoned practitioners, who served as a social support network and collective knowledge base. Novices would begin participating at the periphery of the group and eventually migrate to become members of the core group as they became more engaged, more educated, and more committed to the craft. Eventually, Lave and Wenger’s (1991) research

revealed that these Communities of Practice could spontaneously self-organize even without the overt use of an apprenticeship model to drive it.

Since that collaborative study, Wenger has continued and expanded the research of “collective knowledge” and CoPs in business settings, among technology groups, and in virtual communications (Wenger, 1999; Wenger et al., 2002). Wenger has created a useful model for analyzing these groups and their dynamics, grounded in empirical observation and supported by a variety of theoretical frameworks, including Ecological Theory and the Johnson/Lakoff use of real-world metaphor as embodied theory of mind (Johnson, 1990, 2008; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Communities of Practice are seen as organic, dynamic entities that constantly adapt and evolve to internal and external changes, just as they do in Ecological Theory. Similar to the Johnson/Lakoff (2003) theory of mind, there is also a collective consciousness and knowledge base that is created through real-world actions and interactions with others of similar interests, which have shared meanings based on shared experiences and information. These shared meanings and experiences become the basis of a shared knowledge base and are associated with an identification with the group. The meanings and knowledge ultimately are embedded in real-world, embodied, physical experiences and become the metaphors, categories of mind, and organizational principles that serve as the basis for new learning and new knowledge. Our socialization and embodied experiences literally shape our minds, our thoughts, and the way knowledge is created.

The Wenger model of Community of Practice (2007) is briefly described here, as it relates to the analysis of this study. The terms used in this analysis are those as defined by

Wenger for her model. Wenger defines a Community of Practice specifically as an interacting social group that revolves around a particular activity of interest (Wenger, 2007). The activity aspect of the definition contrasts the CoP with a Community of Interest, who may not necessarily be practitioners or have any expertise in the practice. “In a nutshell: Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger, 2007, p. 1). These CoPs can be informal and need not have an intention of creating a community around a particular activity. The community organically begins to develop in response to interest, engagement, interactivity, and practice.

The structure of a Community of Practice has three crucial characteristics: (a) a domain, (b) a practice, and (c) a community (Wenger, 1999). The domain is the delineated area of interest, a shared domain expertise that sets the group off from other people. (For the purposes of this study, this domain is folkloric dance.) The practice is the activity of interest that members engage in; i.e., the members are practitioners of the activity. The community aspect refers to the social relationships that members develop as they interact while engaged in the activity, or in pursuing further expertise in the activity. In terms of learning, the CoP becomes a “living curriculum”; i.e., an organic database of collective knowledge and wisdom for members to share and use as they expand their expertise.

Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) describe different levels at which members may choose to participate (or not), according to their interest, ability, and availability over time. The last level is implied in the discussion of CoPs but is not formally named.

Different levels of member participation include the following: (a) core members; (b) active members; (c) peripheral engagement; (d) invisible observers, unseen audience, or “lurkers.”

The term “lurkers” is my own addition to the basic theory model. The term was coined in the 1980s to refer to passive members on an email list or a newsgroup distribution list. They would read and follow the list, but rarely would post a comment or email. Frequently, these “newbies” would “lurk” on a list to get a feel of the kinds of discussions that took place before actually becoming involved or contributing. This group is worth noting because they provide indirect and often invisible support for the CoP in terms of contributions, communications, attendance at performances, and cultural appreciation. They are also important because they help provide a conduit for information transmission about the cultural practice beyond the confines of the CoP itself, into the community at large. This serves as an expression of value and aids in the recruitment of new participants, which are essential elements to ensure the continuity of the CoP (see Figure C5 in Appendix C for CoP model diagram).

The CoP is also characterized by three inter-related processes (Wenger, 1999): (a) Mutual Engagement, (b) Joint Enterprise, and (c) Shared Repertoire. In Mutual Engagement, members form collaborative relationships and establish norms of behavior that bind members together in a community. Next, through their interactions, members set goals and plan events as a Joint Enterprise, which give them a common purpose. Then, through collaborative practice, a shared collection of resources is accumulated for communal use, including symbolic meanings, which form a Shared Repertoire for the group.

With that brief introduction, we now explore how the Wenger CoP model fits within more traditional social theories. When using a newer theoretical model or framework, it is helpful to position it within a context of more traditional theories. This is also a useful exercise given that this study extrapolates the CoP model within an ecological perspective, including embodied experience. The CoP model implies embodiment in its discussions of theoretical contexts but does not specifically speak to the issue of body and embodiment as a crucial element in the model, although it is implied. This study seeks to extend the CoP model to include embodied elements by viewing CoPs in an ecological systems context. In this way, the body becomes another layer within embedded systems, interacting with the surrounding ecology (including the social and the physical). Using Wenger's (1999) theoretical context as a starting point, laying the groundwork for those connections is the goal of this section.

One of the assumptions of this study is the Gesture Theory of linguistics, which assumes that communication and language evolved from gestures, movements, and symbolic visual cues; i.e., non-verbal, embodied communications. In this context, dance becomes another form of cultural communication and literacy, which, when studied, can reveal a great deal about the community it reflects. As a result of these cultural gestures and moves that communicate and convey information, certain styles and aesthetics are created that serve both as signifiers of a particular subgroup and as signs to communicate cultural ideas and mores. As such, it could be argued that certain styles and aesthetics help to create the banner by which a group can be said to identify itself. By the same token, by adopting

these styles and aesthetics, individuals may display their allegiance with and commitment to a particular group.

Positioning the Model of Communities of Practice in Traditional Theory

Wenger (1999) posits a *social theory of learning* that highlights social participation as a way of learning and of knowing. Wenger lists the components of this social theory of learning as community, practice, identity, and meaning. The terminology of her social theory of learning could be listed under the category of Learning Components: (a) Practice: learning as doing; (b) Meaning: learning as experience; (c) Community: learning as belonging; and (d) Identity: learning as becoming.

Wenger situates the CoP theoretical model as an applied *social theory of learning* and places it at the intersection of several major theory traditions. Creating an axis of theory tradition ranging from the theories of social structure to theories of situated experience as its opposite, Wenger (1999) places this social theory of learning between these two poles. Wenger also situates this social theory of learning between theories of practice versus theories of identity. These axes could be shown as in Figure C6 in Appendix C.

In a more refined view of theoretical placement, Wenger adds two more axes to the mix, placing this social theory of learning between theories of collectivity and theories of subjectivity on one axis, and between theories of power and theories of meaning on the other (see Figure C7 in Appendix C).

In this respect, Wenger attempts to synthesize a new “learning-based theory of the social order” (1999, p. 15). Although Wenger does not directly mention the issue of embodiment, her concepts and CoP model include a systems perspective and an ecological

dynamic. Thus, these concepts can easily be extended to include an ecological view of the body as simply another system within the model.

It could be argued for the purposes of this study that the intersection of these two sets of poles could be in the experience of embodiment. The tension of the perception of the abstract and the concrete are ultimately felt at the level of the individual body, as a personal experience. Although much of this kind of research is concentrated on early childhood experiences, these embodied experiences actually define us throughout the lifespan, shaping our perceptions of ourselves, the world, and our connections with other humans within that world.

Communities of Practice: Stages of Development

In more recent writings, Wenger et al. (2002) expanded on the original model of the Community of Practice, to identify five stages of development and seven principles that encourage the longevity of CoPs. They describe issues relevant to each structural element (Domain, Practice, Community) which emerge at each stage (Wenger et al., 2002). These stages and principles are described briefly here and are used in the analysis of the research. These five stages of development and their related structural issues are as follows:

Stage 1: Identify potential and primary intent. This stage includes the following: (a) Domain Issue: Define scope of domain interests; (b) Practice Issue: Identify common knowledge needs; (c) Community Issue: Identify social networks.

Stage 2: Coalescing. This stage includes: (a) Domain Issue: Understand value of sharing information; (b) Practice Issue: Identify knowledge to be shared and how; (c) Community Issue: Develop trust among members.

Stage 3: Maturing. This stage includes the following: (a) Domain Issue: Defining the role of members; (b) Practice Issue: Sharing, organizing, and stewarding information; (c) Community Issue: Maintain group boundaries; maintain core purpose.

Stage 4: Stewardship. This stage includes: (a) Domain Issue: Find voice and relevance in community at large; (b) Practice Issue: Keep practice up to date, state of the art, excellence; (c) Community Issue: Keep engagement lively and fresh.

Stage 5: Transformation of community. (a) Domain Issue: Interests shift; (b) Practice Issue: Practice may change; (c) Community Issue: Membership changes. These stages help describe where a CoP may be in its evolution, and what issues it may be struggling with as a result. Although not always a perfect fit, these stages give a frame of reference for comparison and discussion.

This CoP model can aid in understanding and explaining the social dynamics within the dance group. This study attempts to build on this model and elaborate on it to better explain the social dynamics within the dance group, and ultimately, the relationship of the dance group with the community at large.

Principles for Longevity of Communities of Practice

Wenger et al. (2002) describe seven principles that encourage the longevity or “success” of CoPs in their expanded model of the Community of Practice. These seven principles to cultivate a healthy, optimal Community of Practice would encourage the following actions: (a) Allow for evolution and growth; (b) allow permeable boundaries for input from both inside/outside perspectives; (c) develop both public and private spaces for interaction; (d) recognize the value of the CoP and its activities; (e) combine stable, familiar

structures with exciting, creative activities; (f) create a rhythm of regular events and activities for periodic engagement; (g) invite different levels of participation that may change over time.

Although Wenger et al. (2002) present these stages as a “proscriptive” strategy for cultivating Communities of Practice by design, these principles are also useful for analyzing dynamics within an existing Community of Practice. Although they are not always a perfect fit, these principles can give a frame of reference for comparison and discussion.

Dysfunctions within Communities of Practice

The flip side to longevity principles are dysfunctional behaviors that may emerge that can undermine and distort the dynamics of a healthy Community of Practice. Wenger et al. (2002) associate these dysfunctions with the structural elements of the CoP (Domain, Practice, Community) and describe example activities that may pull a CoP apart. These activities could be grouped into the following categories:

1. Domain: Members may become over-zealous, imperialistic, or possessive of information and opportunities in the community; or at the opposite end of the spectrum, members might become detached, disinterested, or marginalized; members may drop out.

2. Practice: Practice rules and standards may become rigid and dogmatic; member participation and creativity may become stifled.

3. Community: Too much control over the membership may lead to rigid conformity and lack space for creative expansion. The group may splinter into subgroups, developing other interests and other directions.

Metaphor for Community of Practice

The nature of a Community of Practice is dynamic, organic, and adaptive. It is a good example of a specific model for the more generalized concepts captured in Ecological Systems Theory. It could be seen as a particular applied case in the ecological perspective. That said, it is often helpful to have a meaningful metaphor in mind to describe the dynamics of such a model.

Frequently, the diagrams and images used to capture the different elements and processes in CoPs resemble a flowchart, table, or circular design. A more three-dimensional figure suggested by Wenger (1999) was a *torus* or doughnut-shaped figure. In this study, I selected an outdoor decorative fountain to illustrate the social dynamics within the dance group (see Figure C8 in Appendix C). This particular metaphor seems to better capture the mobility and organic dynamic inherent in the observed phenomena.

The analogy works as follows. Newcomers to the CoP may begin as observers around the periphery of the group. They may become more engaged as they become more comfortable with the group in general. The more they become engaged, the more they participate. The more they participate, the more they learn. This process is continually repeated until the newcomers become “active members” and even “core members,” which situates them closer to the center of the fountain. In this process, they also share their learning with others in the group, and the information, support, history, narratives, and resources then become redistributed over the membership, to refresh and revitalize the entire group. This dynamic integrates newer members (and new information) into the existing

pool of members, so the whole process becomes revitalizing, reinvigorating, and renewing, and gives the CoP new life and longevity.

One must also keep in mind that CoPs can overlap, network, cascade within one another, or form a constellation of CoPs within the same organization. This model is simplified for purposes of analysis, but in real life, these groups may overlap and interact, forming more complex dynamics.

Using the Community of Practice Model for Analysis of Dance Groups in Kansas City

Using the Wenger CoP model, my intent is to organize the data from my observations, documentation, and interviews. Specific examples are used to illustrate the application of the model and to build my arguments that dance (and music) have special qualities that contribute to the process of building a community through embodied cultural practice.

Looking at Grupo Folklórico Atotonilco as a Community of Practice

For El Grupo Folklórico Atotonilco (often referred to by familiars as simply “Grupo”), the *domain* of this group as a CoP is Mexican Folklórico Dance, including its folklore, art, costuming, music, history, and cultural roots. The *practice* of the CoP is the performance, teaching, learning, rehearsing, and participation of the dance, including the other forms of support activities for the dance. The *community* for this CoP is primarily the Latino population in the Kansas City area, but particularly in the historic Latino neighborhood of the West Side. That said, the Grupo considers their audience to be much broader, as they share their culture and folklore across ethnic and geographic borders, performing regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Membership

Although there are ties with other groups in the area, the membership of this CoP is relatively stable along legacy lines (i.e., parents who participated in the group as children, in turn, bring their own children back into the group). However, the membership of the CoP can change radically from year to year. People may drift into and out of the group from year to year, depending on work, school, or family obligations. Some participants may take a long hiatus, even a decade or more, only to return later with family or friends in tow, adding fresh blood to the membership. This recycling quality of the membership can contribute to both the revitalization of the group and to the longevity and legacy of the group.

Core members. Core members center around the co-founders, Jaime Reyes and Maria Chaurand, and the Chaurand family members. The next layer of core members are the participants who become teachers, working with the Chaurands, but who are not family members. Teachers may stay for some years as core members, but may back off from teaching responsibilities due to family obligations, school commitments, job demands, and required work-related relocations, and then may drift back into the fold years later. Teachers choreograph, plan dance numbers, book shows, arrange class schedules, maintain costuming, and archive music, video, and photos. The dance events and other activities solidify the membership. Major performance events are the stimulating factor for the CoP to mobilize, organize, plan, create, practice, and otherwise take action. The entire group becomes activated and organizes around these events each academic year, including both active members and peripheral members. The cycle of peripheral participation and core membership is an embodied experience.

Active members. The Active members of the CoP are the children, youth, and adults who are involved in a particular year's performance schedule. The school children range in age from pre-school to high school, and several siblings may participate concurrently in different age groups. Female relatives (usually mothers, but often aunts or grandmothers) may wait and watch classes and rehearsals or come back several hours later to provide transportation. Some mothers are assigned duties similar to "den mothers" in scouting: taking attendance, making sure all children are present and accounted for, and that they are picked up afterwards. In this regard, the group could be seen as being "mother-centered," relying a great deal on the participation of mothers with children in the dance program.

As is common in community organizations, some people participate as active members for a while, then drop back to the periphery for a time, and then return to a more active role later, as life unfolds. This process could be seen as a cyclical process, as opposed to a linear process, which has helped support the longevity of the group.

Peripheral members. Less active or peripheral members are less engaged in the day-to-day or weekly activities but still participate periodically in some of the meetings, gatherings, and events. This less active role is still important, however, in order to maintain the group's social infrastructure (internally) and connections to the community at large (outwardly). Even if not actively engaged, peripheral members become a source of human capital and social networking when needed and plant the seeds for future resources. These members may pinch-hit, performing a variety of different tasks needed at a moment's notice. They may be pressed into service by relatives who are more active members doing similar jobs at a higher commitment.

Invisible observers. Another layer of the support of Grupo as a Community of Practice is that of the invisible observers. This is a layer of CoP that Wenger implies, but does not devote much detail to in her model of CoPs, but it can create a fundamental yet subtle support to any community effort.

As an analogy, those involved in the Internet before its commercialization often signed up for email distribution lists, online newsgroups, and electronic bulletin boards. Not unlike today, a small percentage of people involved would respond, comment, post, or otherwise participate. Similar to Wenger's CoP model, these active members were the most visible and energetic participants. Another larger group of peripheral members would contribute occasionally, but would still actively read posts and support the list. The largest group, however, tended to be the "lurkers," who were avid readers of the list who supported its efforts, but never posted a comment, question, or response. This did not mean they were not influential, for they would often pass the information they gleaned from the list into the workplace, school campus, local community, and to their friends and family. People would often fluctuate between different membership types depending on access, time, interest, and life events.

Similarly, Grupo receives more community support than what might be indicated by its membership alone. Outside of the immediate community, the Grupo serves as a symbolic shorthand for the West Side and as a cultural icon, a symbol of family activities, and a demonstration of community unity to the community at large. That is to say, the community at large takes pride in its traditional dance group, heralding it as a symbol of their cultural roots and heritage. As such, the group is often presented as a representation of the West

Side, and the Kansas City Latino population in general, in cultural events outside the confines of the West Side. The community sees the group as a symbol of cultural identity as a collective, and individuals take pride in the group indirectly, even if they are not direct participants of the group.

Countless times, I have been in light conversation with strangers in which my research has come up as a topic. When it does, often these strangers have asked if I was familiar with the Mexican Folkloric group on the West Side that they saw at some festival. They would go on to describe the dances and the work that Grupo does. They might not know the name of the group or the people involved, but they recognized the music, dance, and imagery as being representative and an aesthetic anchor of the West Side area. In other words, the “audience” for the group extends much further than a particular neighborhood or community. Both within and external to the West Side, the Grupo is a symbol of identity, family, and community.

Additionally, through this community outreach, Grupo further secures its longevity by creating a non-local audience that helps to support the group locally, by giving them paid performances, recognition, and advertising. This outreach is consistent with part of the Grupo’s mission to share Mexican culture and traditions, not only with community members of the West Side as a legacy, but also with those outside of the West Side, to a larger community, in an effort to educate and create tolerance for diversity.

In this respect, the invisible observers become subtle supporters of this Community of Practice and create more opportunities for the Grupo to perform and support itself financially. Supporters do not necessarily need to be actively engaged to feel the influence

of the CoP or to influence the ecology of the CoP. Much like in the fountain analogy described earlier, these “Lurkers” can create a potential well-spring of fresh ideas and resources for a CoP to draw upon. At the very least, they become a potential paying audience to serve as financial support, but they can also serve as part of the potential human capital and social network needed to keep any operation alive.

To review, the CoP is characterized by three inter-related process (Wenger, 1999): (a) mutual engagement, (b) joint enterprise, and (c) shared repertoire. For the Grupo, this mutual engagement, or collaborative relationships that bind members together, are the activities surrounding the folkloric dance classes that are presented as an after-school program for children and youth and as after-work rehearsals for young adults. The annual holiday shows create shared goals, the focus of collaborative planning, as a joint enterprise. The regional dances, steps, music, costuming, shoes, archival materials, photographs, scrapbooks, and iconography become some of the elements that serve as communal resources for the group, forming the shared repertoire in Wenger’s model of CoP.

Using Wenger’s Stages of Development for CoPs, Grupo would likely fall somewhere between Stage 4, Stewardship, and Stage 5, Transformation. Grupo has an important voice in the local community and has become an important icon beyond the confines of the local neighborhood to the area and community at large. As a result of this recognition, they acquired a sense of responsibility that included expanding and rotating their repertory and costuming to keep shows fresh. Their membership is stable enough that they continue to give good performances.

However, there are increasingly more challenges to maintaining the group's human infrastructure. Because of growing family and career obligations, a tight economy, changes in the neighborhood, and corporate pressures from outside the neighborhood coveting the real estate, families have become more dispersed throughout the city, making it more difficult to bring children to classes. Additionally, money is short, gas prices are high, time is at a premium, there are competing activities for youth, and since 2010, there have been cutbacks in civic festivals. These challenges are present for all participants, including core, active, and peripheral members. As a result, there have been fewer opportunities to "freshen" the repertory with new routines, choreography, music, or costumes.

In the past, Grupo sought to bring in professional teachers for workshops or travel to other workshops to learn new material and compete with other folkloric groups on stage, or send core members to specialized training in order to teach when they return. Due to the stresses in the economy and within the group, these activities have not been possible in the last few years. Grupo, however, still has much "good will" within the local community, and it may still adjust to changes in order to continue evolving.

Analysis of Data as Grounded Theory Method

As described earlier, the methodology selected for this study was qualitative research. Specifically, the qualitative approaches used were heuristic inquiry and Grounded Theory Method. The heuristic inquiry approach allowed me to use my own personal history and experiences as data, for insights, and to maintain an insider/outsider perspective to guide the research (Urquhart, 2013). Grounded Theory Method provided a procedure for examining, interpreting, and analyzing the data, as well as theorizing based upon the

observed patterns that emerged from the data. By combining the methods of heuristic inquiry and Grounded Theory Method, I was able to analyze the data collected in fieldwork, identify various patterns, develop an emergent theory of social cohesion based upon praxis, and use my personal experiences, reflections, and history to help guide the research (Urquhart, 2013).

Participant data came from three sources: documents, interviews, and observations, collected in fieldwork using a combination of heuristic inquiry and Grounded Theory Method. Validity and reliability of the research was kept in check by triangulation of data sets, the inclusion of negative or discrepant data, member checking, and peer review. Participant observations and informal interviews were conducted anonymously. All participation was voluntary for those participating in the study. The permissions for study were collected both verbally and in writing from the leaders and directors of the dance groups participating in the research. The dance groups participating in this research study were as follows: (a) El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco (Mexican Folkloric Dance); (b) Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans (Balkan Folkloric Dance); (c) City in Motion Dance School (Classical Modern & Ethnic Dance); (d) Culture through Ballroom Dance (Ballroom & Social Dance); (e) American Dance Center (Ballet Dance).

All the dance groups were followed from approximately 2006 to 2013. Initially, the primary group under investigation was El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco, a local Mexican Folkloric dance group, in 2007. Later, since I had been involved with the Don Lipovac Tamburitzans (Balkan Folkloric Dance), City in Motion Dance School (Classical Modern & Ethnic Dance), and the Culture through Ballroom Dance group (Ballroom Dance), they

seemed like logical additions for the study, to strengthen the reliability and validity concerns in the research. Lastly, the American Dance Center, focused on Ballet, was added as a comparative dance form.

The Difficulties of Doing Dance Research

One of the difficulties of doing dance research for the social sciences is selecting a particular approach to take in pursuing the research. One can approach the study of dance as a cultural practice, describing the aesthetics, the moves, and any ascribed meanings to them (e.g., Boas, Dunham). Another approach involves looking at the dance from a historical perspective and aligning the evolution of particular dances with the events, context, and zeitgeist surrounding the dances being investigated. Another approach is to examine a dance group as a social system or community, or to look at the activity of dance as a social activity (e.g., Becker, 2005; Rust, 2003). Yet another approach is to look at dance and its impact on individuals (e.g., dance therapy, dance biographies, dance education). The approaches to dance research could be summarized as (a) dance as cultural practice; (b) dance as historical practice; (c) dance as social activity; (d) dance as social system; and (e) dance as personal experience.

When the research began, the research questions were quite broad and general, focusing on how dance fits into community life. As the research progressed, other, more specific questions arose as behavior was observed and compared with those of other groups. Some of these questions were:

1. Does dance convey specific social/cultural information? If so, how?
2. Does dance have a direct impact on social interactions beyond dance? If so, how?

3. Does dance have any impact on social/cultural activity beyond the dance group?

If so, how?

4. Does dance practice help shape behavior, action, social interaction, the Self? If so,

how?

5. Do insights about dance practice tell us more about how other cultural practices

impact community? If so, how?

All of these approaches were explored initially, with the idea that one of the approaches would be sufficient for the research study. What quickly became apparent, however, was that each of these approaches had value, and looking at dance from all of these approaches simultaneously was even more revealing for the research as a whole, for the approaches do indeed complement and support each other. As a result, the research evidence presented touches on each of these approaches to dance research.

Archival Documentation Evidence

Archival documentation kept by each dance group supplied a great deal of helpful information in this study. Websites, programs, and printed materials were helpful in supplying the dance groups' history, narratives, testimonials, mission statements, goals, finances, participants, and Board members. These materials often included information about the dance form itself and the cultural context for the dance practice. Also included in the archival documentation were materials relating to previous public interviews, press releases, reviews, scholarship application essays, and descriptions of events and performances. Photographs and videos of classes, rehearsals, and performances were also part of the documentation.

The Ballroom Dance group provided survey data from several years of research. The questionnaires were distributed to dance students during the ending segment of a class period of the Ballroom Dance course that ranged in length from 8 to 15 weeks. One year of survey data is included in this study because of the relevance of the survey questions in validating and establishing reliability for the qualitative data. The survey year most relevant to the research in this study was 2010 (n=111, 56 females and 55 males, ranging from grades 4-10). Responses were selected from Yes, Sometimes, or No. The questions utilized in this study from the 2010 Culture through Ballroom Dance Student Survey (see Appendix A) were:

1. Do you feel like you have more self-confidence now? (Confidence)

2. Do you feel like you get along better with members of the opposite gender now?

(Gender-Relations)

3. Besides dance class, did you also practice dancing at other times during the week?

(Practice)

4. Did you teach the dance steps to anyone else, like family members or friends?

(Teach)

5. Do you think learning to dance was good exercise? (Exercise)

6. Do you now feel more respectful towards others? (Peer-Respect)

Included in the questionnaire were several open-ended questions, which were coded with responses as being Positive, Negative, or Mixed. These open-ended questions were:

1. Tell us about your ballroom dance experience

2. What did you like? Was there anything you didn't like?

3. How did you benefit by learning to dance?

Results of the Questionnaire are shown in Appendix A, Table 1.

The majority of students reported greater self-confidence (89%); better relations with the opposite gender (80%); practiced the dance skills they learned outside of class (54%); taught friends and family dance steps learned in class (58%); thought dancing was good exercise (82%); felt more respectful towards others (56%); and indicated that the dance experience was a positive one (57%-92%). These self-reported responses (secondary data) are relevant to direct research in this study because they support the observations and arguments presented here.

The most basic argument presented in this study is that the negotiation of physical time and space with other humans that occurs during the dance process serves to help socialize dancers into community life. Embodied cultural practices, and particularly dance, give concrete experiences of synchronized movement with others, shared goals of execution of formations and patterns, collaborative and cooperative action; they strengthens group and self-identity and confidence and engender better social skills. These assertions are supported by the CBD data collected for questions 1, 2, 6, and the open-ended questions.

Additionally, questions 3, 4, 5 support the assertions that embodied cultural practices, specifically dance, and the cultural information and social skills learned through the practice of dance, become distributed in a cascading manner, not only within the group, but also throughout the community at large in an exponential manner. Repetition, synchronized movements, peer coaching, partnering, and other skills of physical interaction

learned through dance were shared with others, not only within the confines of the dance group, but also with the community at large.

Grounded Theory Method Chain of Evidence

As described earlier, the participant observation research was done at dance classes, dance rehearsals, performances, and events. It was evident early in the observation process that certain actions were repeated across groups, rehearsals, classes, performances, and events. These actions could be seen across different ages and different levels of dance participation. What was interesting about these actions was that the seeds of these actions were learned related to the dance but quickly spread to other aspects of the group and their other activities. These actions were recorded informally in photographs and videos taken of the groups, and thus can be clearly seen in the archives.

Table 1 displays actions that were repeatedly observed in the dance-related events and were selected for coding. These dance-related actions and their associated attributes were selected because there was an observable trajectory from the dance into ordinary social life. Although many of these actions overlap, dovetail, or link together over time, it is useful to examine these actions separately to understand how they shape individuals, the dance group in which the individual is a member, and the community at large. Often, there was evidence of spillover or expansive effect that went beyond the boundaries of the group itself into the community at large. These actions are not mutually exclusive, and often are presented together in clusters. Yet these actions were distinctive enough to be identifiable across all dance groups within the study. Following Table 1 are the descriptions and

examples of these actions. Additionally, examples are described across the relevant social dimensions; i.e., the Self, the group, and the larger community.

Table 1

Movements/Behaviors Observed in Dance and Selected for Coding

1	Repetitive Actions
2	Discipline/Civility
3	Identity
4	Timing/Spacing
5	Energy-Flow/Energy-Resistance
6	Synchronous Actions
7	Mirror Action/Shadowing
8	Peer Coaching
9	Turn-Taking
10	Lead/Follow
11	Role Modeling/Role Taking/Role Flexibility
12	Gender-Roles/Gender-Flexibility
13	Cueing
14	Helping Actions
15	Patterns/Formations
16	Recognition
17	Bonding/Camaraderie/Cohesion

**Movements/Behaviors Observed in Dance Selected for Coding:
Creating a Taxonomy**

The following sections give more detailed descriptions of the actions observed within the various dance groups. Photographs related to each concept are found in Appendix E. These actions or action categories were found in all of the dance groups under observation; thus they indicate the similarities that stretched across the dance groups. Note that these action categories are based upon Participatory Practice.

Although often these actions overlapped or presented in combination with each other, there is value in looking at the actions separately. It is also worth noting that there seemed to be a “scaling effect” as simple actions became internalized and more spontaneous, then cascaded into more complex combinations of actions. These actions tended to build one upon the other, into increasingly more complex combinations, which were then shared with others. There was also a scaling effect based on population numbers, as actions expanded from individual to partnering, then from small groups to the dance group as a whole, and often cascading into the community at large.

Repetitive Action

In dance, certain actions are continually repeated as a part of the practice and as a means to learn and master the moves. Repeating the moves frequently leads not only to mastery of skills, but to a sense of confidence. Repetition allows certain procedural movements to become internalized, often below the level of awareness, so these learned movements and postures become part of the individual’s normal repertory of movements. Some of these repeated moves and postures are so distinctive that they can form a collective form of identification in themselves; for example, certain postures associated with Ballet or Hip-Hop make for easy identification.

In the study, the repetitive interaction of individuals was bonding, forming connections and cohesion within the group. Intimate actions of hugging, kissing, patting, touching, preening each other, and admiring words quickly develop in community dance groups where there is much repetition of steps together, particularly, steps in synchrony. Through repetition, the members of the group not only learned the moves from each other,

integrated into the physical Self, but with mastery, the learners themselves became teachers or coaches by example. With repetition, those with more experience became examples for those with less experience, contributing to a chain of skill building, mastery, confidence-building, recognition, and role modeling.

Dancers and students often remark that with mastery, they experience more confidence in their dancing, which can be clearly seen in their ownership and execution of the steps. The confidence they experience in the mastery of dance steps often translates into added confidence in life outside of the dance group context. This observation is often heard from the dancers themselves, parents of dancers about their children, and is also reflected in the survey data collected by Dr. Will Adams in the Culture through Ballroom Dance program (Culture through Ballroom Dance, 2010). In this case, 89% of the respondents (n=111) reported feeling that they had “more confidence” after having taken a Ballroom Dance course.

Repetition is the foundation for much more than physical skill building. With each repetition, there is more mastery of the moves, and the standards of excellence evolve. This creates a foundation for structures within the dance form and at the same time, a loose organization of the community. With repetition comes documentation of the dance moves and the archiving of these documents for future participants. Archiving dance resources can not only record this evolution of movement standards but also help shape the direction of the evolution of the dance and the group. This organization of the dance moves helps define different roles and duties for participants and may form a rudimentary framework for hierarchy later in the life of the group.

Ironically, another outcome of repetitive behaviors was the duality of ritual and innovation. Repetitive behaviors were characterized for the purpose of this study as being formal or informal (although often there were combinations of both within the same dance event). Formal repetitive behaviors often became ritualized traditions to be performed with great care and reverence, with little variation. These ritualized traditions would become part of what is referred to in this study as reified structures that would become the backbone of a particular dance group and contribute to the longevity of the group.

Informal repetition, on the other hand, would stimulate variation, evolution, and innovation, as mastery would “up the ante” on abilities and repertory. Even in traditional forms, such as Mexican Folkloric Dance or Ballet or Ballroom Dance, there was a constant drive to find new ways to combine, stretch, vary, and present the same set of repertory steps within the canon “rules.” Particularly in informal dance events, it was common to see individuals try to outperform each other with greater skill, innovation, or individuality.

In the images, the results of repetition can be easily seen as students become more in control of their bodies and their movements. As they learn regular warm-ups and barre-work, these movements become ritualized, to be repeated at the beginning of each class, and the structures are reinforced throughout the class. Expectations of movement and behavior are embedded within the rituals during class that become a part of a physical vocabulary and repertory within the dance, that can later be combined and recombined to express and communicate feelings, impressions, and concepts, or even form narratives (e.g., *The Nutcracker*, as a Ballet performance).

In choreography, these movements typically are highly structured and very specific. During improvisation, however, the repetition of movements can easily lead to innovation, novelty, change, and the development of more difficult material. Learned movements may be recombined in novel ways, or new movements may be created that stretch the dance beyond the standard repertory and into new territory. This innovation can also be seen in the photographs of dancers performing improvisationally (see Figures E1 through E4 in Appendix E).

Discipline/Civility

In order to master dancing, a certain amount of discipline and self-control must be cultivated. Usually the motivation to participate is sufficient to invest the time and energy to master the steps, and mastery of execution is sufficient to reinforce the investment. Mastery of steps first requires mastery of the body, which requires an intimate knowledge or familiarity with one's own body and how it moves through time and space.

At a primal level, one has to learn how to control one's limbs and movements in time and space, including how to start and stop, when to go and when to wait. Once mastered, these skills become largely unconscious, but they require a great deal of concentration at first. This requires the development of patience, tolerance, and concentration, to know when to go and when to stop. It also involves cultivating these skills in order to tolerate much repetition, allow time for mastery and learning, and to heal and grow beyond occasional obstacles or setbacks. Development of self-discipline and mastery also develops the sense of cohesive/continuous Self and confidence in that Self. The internalization of discipline and confidence can be seen in the carriage of the body and becomes a part of one's Self-

identification. Once mastered and internalized, the experiences gained in skill mastery become taken for granted and largely regress below the level of awareness. Once internalized, this skill mastery not only acts as a constituent of self-discipline and self-confidence, but also forms a framework for identity.

This self-discipline can be seen in photographs taken during classes, warm-ups, and rehearsals, and it is often remarked upon by parents and other teachers in other disciplines. Observations of self-discipline by other teachers can be seen in a series of interviews and surveys done in conjunction with the Culture through Ballroom Dance program in the Kansas City Public School system, in which teachers often expressed that children were “better behaved” after taking a dance class. One teacher remarked that she noticed a marked difference in the children’s behavior after they had taken the dance course, saying, “the children learn civility and tolerance through dancing with others” (Culture through Ballroom Dance, 2008).

A similar sentiment was expressed by another teacher in the same school. She also observed that there was less conflict between children of different genders, saying, “What I notice most is that the students are more polite to each other...and especially between the boys and the girls” (Culture through Ballroom Dance, 2008).

The children themselves also say they feel they have learned more self-discipline as a result of having taken dance classes. This can be seen in the dance students’ own words when they applied for dance scholarships at City in Motion’s Children’s Dance Theater program. The following excerpt is from a student’s scholarship application.

I have been dancing with CDT for five years. CDT has helped me build my leadership skills:

- Responsibility: Being in CDT has not only helped with my responsibility but has showed me how to insert it into everyday life.
 - Self-Control: CDT has helped me learn how to be more controlled when under pressure.
 - Cooperation: CDT has helped my cooperation by showing me that working together is what's best, and showed me that any idea is a good idea.
- What I have learned in CDT has transferred into everyday life....Without dance and CDT, I wouldn't be the strong, confident young girl I am today.

Dancing is everything to me, from expressing my feelings in a unique way, to helping me learn important life lessons.

This excerpt is representative of comments heard by students, teachers, performers, and parents regarding involvement in a dance program. Several teachers also commented on learning dance as a way of learning “important life lessons,” indicating that the various skills learned in the process of dancing translates directly into other aspects of life.

Students also related that dance was an effective outlet for emotion, upset, and stress. By learning the discipline of dance, emotions are not repressed, but rather channeled into socially acceptable outlets that are not disruptive to the collaborative process. The following quotes are representative of the comments expressed by dancers.

I would like to have a scholarship because dance is a way of expressing myself and my feelings and an outlet from everyday stress.

Dance has always been what I go to when I'm upset. All my life, it's been what makes me feel strong, powerful, graceful, and wonderful.

Dancers often express how dancing gives them strength, strength of character, and strength of discipline, which allows them to overcome illnesses, setbacks, and the stresses encountered in everyday life. In my own life, dancing has helped me cope with serious losses, debilitating illness, disabling injuries, and life's inevitable disappointments. In doing this research, I realized I was not alone in this perspective.

In working with different dance programs, I became familiar with competitive wheelchair Ballroom Dance teachers and the contests for which they train their students. One of these competitors described her feelings about the dance this way: “I just love dancing and competing...it make life worth living.”

In another dance group that I worked with in this study, one of the teachers pointed out a particular dance student and confided in me, “This student is mentally challenged...but her mother says she now does much better because of dancing.” At another event, a dance student was pointed out to me by a teacher. She said, “This student was diagnosed with [a psychological illness]... but her mom says the dancing has changed her life.”

In the images of the dancers in practice, the discipline and self-control needed to maintain the postures and execute the steps in unison is evident, in order to participate in synchronous action. Among non-dancers, the hours of work required to master the self-control to perform dance steps in conjunction with other humans is often underestimated. The precision indicated in the photographs requires hours of practice to master (see Figures E5, E6, and E7 in Appendix E).

Identity

As stated earlier, some of the repeated moves and postures are so distinctive that they can form a collective form of identification in themselves; for example, walking and standing in an acquired turn-out, along with an uplifted posture can mark one as a Ballet dancer. Another example, certain postures, gestures, and “attitude” are typically associated with Hip-Hop dance, marking one as a follower of this genre of music and dance. Posture, gait, carriage, and gestures can serve to identify one with a particular dance form (and by

extension, a particular dance group), and to identify one's Self as a dancer (and by extension, a particular kind of dancer).

These repeated behaviors also become integrated into the identity of the Self of the individual, and became part of group identification. In the dance community, this Self and group identification can be seen in clothing, practice wear, totes and bags, jewelry, charms, hair accessories, and stickers that are associated with dancers (e.g., ballet buns, tutus, ballet/tap shoes, and leg-warmers). Some are emblazoned with images and words related to dance (e.g., "DANCE," "DANCER," "I Would Rather Be Dancing," "Proud Parent of a Dancer") or symbols of dance association membership (e.g., associations related to dance forms such as Zumba, Ballroom, Ballet, Tap, or Folkloric Dance).

With practice, repetitive actions become associated with the Self (self-identity), but also become recognized by others as part of the identification of the individual (recognition of identity by others). Throughout the process of socialization there is always the interplay of the Self with the group, as they shape each other. Individuals shape the course of the group, and the group shapes the course of the individuals involved. This shaping can actually be seen in the internalized carriage of the body.

This is reminiscent of "habituation" as described by Berger and Luckmann (1967), in which actions are selected and become routine and largely taken for granted. By selecting and building on habituated movements, however, other potential movements are de-selected and discarded, narrowing future choices of movement and action to a potential repertory of known movements and actions, further solidifying association and identification with a particular genre of dance, and by extension, a particular dance group.

For example, in one folkloric dance group, one of the teachers would repeatedly say that “we teach [ethnic] heritage, history, pride, traditions, and culture.” A mother of a dance student in the same group made similar comments, saying that the dance students were learning an “understanding and appreciation of [ethnic] culture.”

For those who have experienced physical traumas, dancing often presents an opportunity for coping with physical reactions of post-traumatic stress and finding comfort within one’s own body again. Reconnecting with the body often has the effect of a stronger sense of Self and of feeling “whole” again. For example, two students who had been sexually abused as children were able to use dance as a means to normalize relations with their own bodies and to reconnect with the physical part of their being. Dancing created a non-threatening space to explore their physicality safely. Both students said that dance had been instrumental in helping them move beyond the past abuses to have normal interactions with others without awkwardness or anxiety and to feel better about their bodies, and thus lower their inner stress.

Similarly, women who have experienced physical injuries, illnesses, debilities, or surgeries often suffer a period of body image adjustment, not unlike those who suffer physical trauma or abuse. Dance can serve as a safe zone of exploration to adjust the physical sense of Self to a new body configuration. For example, women who have endured illnesses such as cancer or amputation often seek out dance as a way to normalize feelings about the body and feel more confident about themselves in general. Some dance students shared their stories about how dance had helped them feel like “normal” women again, enhancing their sense of self-worth. One student who had experienced a double mastectomy

had sought out folkloric dance as way to reconnect with her body. She commented, “learning this form of dance has put me back in touch with my body again,” indicating that she felt much better about herself.

Additionally, females of all ages have expressed having more confidence and better body image as a result of taking dance. A series of interviews with adult dance students in one class indicated that they all had experienced considerable improvement in self-confidence and body image as a result of engaging in dance class. Some had even sought out a dance class just for those reasons: to explore greater confidence and better body image. They all commented that the confidence they had gained as a result of taking a dance class had carried over into other parts of their life, including work, relationships, and other activities. These women also commented that they carry themselves differently and had better posture, due to newly developed pride they acquired as a result of dancing and mastery of movement. They also self-identify as dancers or dance students. These acquired attitudes are evidenced in photographs, in performance, in clothing, and in accessories.

This increased confidence is also evidenced in the survey data from Culture through Ballroom Dance (2010). In Question 1, it can be seen that 89% of the dance students reported greater self-confidence as a result of taking dance class.

Additionally, similar comments were volunteered in the applications for scholarships to the Children’s Dance Theater (CDT) by City in Motion students. For example, the following segment was written by one of the students in 2013.

CDT has helped me build my leadership skills...when I dance, I feel free. Without dance and CDT, I wouldn’t be the strong, confident young girl I am today.

I like dancing at City in Motion for many reasons. I have been there long enough to really feel like a strong dancer there. They have helped make my character strong as well. Here I have learned Modern and Ballet so that I can dance with confidence.

In the photographic images, one can see the imprint of dance training displayed in the poses, posture, and body carriage of the dancers. Their movements, posture, and carriage reflect the repeated training and cultivation of body movement (see Figures E8 and E9 in Appendix E).

Timing/Spacing

Dance entails interacting with the immediate environment and with other individuals included in that space. Dance is ecological in that it is interactive and reactive, shaping and being shaped by the immediate surroundings. It is also phenomenological and ephemeral, sensitive to time, space, and patterns.

On a primal level, exploring time and space helps to establish the rudimentary sense of Self; i.e., what is “me” and what is “not-me,” often through trial and error. By exploring one’s surroundings and bumping into physical objects, one learns what comprises one’s own body and what does not. Mental maps are formed about the constituents of the body and how that body map, or body schema, moves through time and space. This sense of Self body mapping, often referred to as proprioception, overlaps with the kinesthetic sense to allow an individual to move through space and time and maintain a sense of physical Self. When working with props, such as swords, skirts, fans, veils, canes, hats, or prosthetics, one learns to include these props within a body map of the physical Self as extensions of body within the space needed for complete body movement. This extension of the body schema is colorfully described by Merleau-Ponty:

A woman may, without any calculation, keep a safe distance between the feather in her hat and things which might break it off. If I am in the habit of driving a car, I enter a narrow opening and see that I can “get through” without comparing the width of the opening with that of the wings, just as I go through a doorway without checking the width of the doorway against that of my body. The hat and the car have ceased to be objects with a size and volume which is established by comparison with other objects. (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 165)

When working with a partner, this body mapping also extends to one’s partner.

When working with another dancer or as a couple, one has to allow the time and space for the partner’s moves as well as one’s own moves. This added awareness is necessary to execute the partnered steps smoothly. As a result, there is an extension of the body mapping to include one’s partner, not just within one’s personal space, but as a literal extension of one’s own body, just as a prosthetic or costume prop might be. This sharing of body mapping, as well as sharing time and space, gives one a sense of a collective or partnered Self, as an extended body presence. Dancers often refer to this sensation as “being one with” the prop or partner.

In the photographs, the dancers can be seen coordinating timing and spacing with peers, partners, costumes, and props. These peers and props are manipulated as if they were extensions of one’s own body, through adapting the body perception and body mapping to include these extensions. As such, the extensions become appended to an enhanced perception of the Self, to include the props and other people (see Figures E10 through E15 in Appendix E).

Energy-flow/Energy-resistance

The concept of energy flow and resistance is familiar to dancers but is often difficult to describe outside of the dance experience. The simplest example is that of a couple

dancing as partners, such as in Ballet, Ballroom, or Folkloric Dance. Typically, there is a lead/follow pattern to partner dancing, but even when there is a structured routine, where the lead/follow pattern is less of an issue, there has to be a non-verbal communication between the partners to coordinate their movements smoothly. This non-verbal communication usually hinges around the flow (or resistance) of energy that the two bodies in motion possess.

For example, a toned, energized body is much easier to lift than a limp body. The former can actually assist with the lift by initiating the lift herself, with her own energy, whereas the limp body would be similar to lifting dead weight without assistance. Dancers who strain against their partner's moves or cues can wear each other out. Dancers who move together in smooth harmony can create a synchrony that is exhilarating.

This harmony, however, requires development of a sense of empathy for the other person. By trading roles, a dancer can see what it feels like to be on the receiving end of a particular move. This is particularly helpful in doing turns or lifts, in which a random or extraneous move can cause discomfort, pain, or even injury for one's partner. For example, by trading positions as lead or follow, the follow can understand how to help the lift by extending the body upward, and the lead can learn what holds are less painful for the person being lifted. This acquired empathy creates an atmosphere of greater harmony and synergy between partnered dancers.

Mediating energy flow is a skill of cooperation and collaboration with another body (or bodies). One learns control of one's own energy flow, and in cooperation with another. Partners who are in sync with each other can communicate their movements to each other

easily and even anticipate each other's needs. This is an efficient use of energy and creates a dynamic dance experience.

Dancers often speak of "being one" with their partners or peers as a requirement for an effective performance. The sensation of being one, or unity, is the result of a balance of energy exchange, often referred to as a synergy in performance. If a partner or peer pulls or pushes too much (or too little) for example, it can over-balance the couple. The energy flow and resistance has to stay in balance and be focused and channeled into the same direction and goals in order to be effective. When done successfully, the unified bodies can accomplish more together than they can separately.

Although this phenomenon can be described in words and concepts, it often has to be experienced as a physical sensation in order to be fully understood. Once learned, the lesson of "harnessed energy" can have applications beyond the dance, in other activities. Negotiating energy, along with negotiating time and space, can serve as a basis for learning how to collaborate and cooperate with others.

This can be observed by others as a synergy of movement, where partners economize energy by flowing with or counter-balancing against a partner's movement or momentum vector. It can also be seen as a melding or melting together of body movements, so the two partners seem to move together as one synergetic being. This synergy can be developed only by partnering with another dancer and experiencing the sharing and mediation of time and space, in real time, with the partner.

Dancers who learn multiple roles, e.g. both lead and follow, are more aware of their partner's needs and can help avoid collisions and injuries. Guiding, holding, lifting, and

turning all require coordination of both participants in order to be executed efficiently and successfully. Without empathy and coordination, there is a greater risk of collision, falls, and injuries.

The development of the sense of energy flow with a partner also heightens awareness of the Self, as well as the Self as a part of a partnership. Part of this sense grows out of the awareness of one's own body and the body mapping that occurs as one learns to move through time and space (see Figures E16, E17, and E18 in Appendix E).

Synchronous Action

In group or partner dances, it is common to have behaviors done simultaneously, or in synchrony. Synchrony differs from repetition in that repetition can be done individually, and need not be in synchrony. Synchrony may be repeated, or not, depending on the pattern, but specifically refers to moves done simultaneously with another. Often there are patterns to the dance-path, be it a circle, line, leader-group, or common direction (usually counter-clockwise).

Repeated synchronous actions created a strong sense of group identification (as a group), and identification with the group (as an individual). An assumption of identification, commonality, and affinity often developed among the participants in the dance. For example, in my experience during the study, after a rousing group Balkan dance, where I demonstrated a mastery of the repertory of steps, several times I was approached afterwards by older participants speaking Croatian (or other Balkan language), assuming that I must speak the language because of my participation in the intricate steps. In another example at several Mexican events, my partner and I were approached with a battery of petitions,

assuming that we were politically aligned with the other participants of the dance events. Occasionally, these led to some surprising reactions when expectations were not fulfilled.

Synchrony also created a strong sense of bonding and cohesion. Often groups that work together in synchrony in a particular dance event will work again together on other projects, both within the dance and outside of the dance group. With synchrony and repetition, individuals learn to work together, trust each other, and anticipate each other's moves. Synchrony creates order within the group as well as predictability, which is reassuring.

In the study, often students would come to class feeling stressed and would comment that they felt more relaxed after working with the group. Other common comments were that the dancers would feel "one" with the group while dancing with the group. The dancing created a situation that required one to be more alert concerning one's physical presence and movements, which served to distance them from daily anxieties.

Working in synchrony with others also created a collective awareness of the movements of other dancers in the group. Awareness of the movement of the group allowed one to "fall in" with the movements of the group. This sense of collective awareness (or in Durkheim's words, collective consciousness), gave a feeling of connection with the others in the group, even if there was not a physical connection with the entire group. This collective awareness was an advantage when performing intricate patterns. In order to see the collective pattern ("big picture") and the contribution of one's individual part of that overall collective pattern, it was helpful to have a sense of what the group was supposed to do and

supposed to look like, and thus adapt one's moves accordingly (see Figures E19 through E22 in Appendix E).

Mirrored Action/Shadowing

Similar to synchronous actions, mirrored actions are synchronized, but in opposition to another dancer, or to a reflection (in a mirror). This form of synchrony is more intimate, since it usually involved pairing with a specific person. The synchrony effect seems more intense when mirroring is involved, since greater care is needed to synchronize the movements more specifically with a partner. This mirrored behavior can also be used to describe or characterize partnering. This more intimate synchrony with partner or reflection also allows students to self-correct much more easily and efficiently. They can easily see what moves are expected versus what is being executed, creating more synchrony as a whole. This mirrored action also results in a certain amount of bonding and familiarity, even if the partners have little in common outside of the dance.

It was interesting in this study that many of these mirrored actions could be observed as impromptu rehearsing on the sidelines of the class or main rehearsal activities. Partners or peers would take it upon themselves to practice or coach each other spontaneously, in order to improve performance, not only individually, but as partners or as a group. This type of action was observed over a wide range of ages and dance types (see Figures E23 and E24 in Appendix E).

Peer Coaching

Peer coaching was another behavior that was common to all groups under investigation. Similar to mirrored behaviors, small groups of dancers would have

impromptu rehearsals on the sidelines or during breaks in dance classes and rehearsals where more experienced or more practiced dancers would coach peers informally to bring them “up to speed” on steps, moves, or changes in the choreography. This activity often served to put the more experienced dancers into an informal role of teacher, mentor, or coach to less experienced dancers that could persist over time. Once the less experienced dancers became more proficient, they assumed the role of a mentor. Even less experienced dancers create a “cascade effect” of information transmission and cultural practice/participation.

Peer coaching appears to present a pivotal moment or opportunity, in which the individual dancer reaches out to peers to mentor them into the fold. Without the peer mentoring, the performance of the group as a whole may suffer. Dancers have a mutual vested interest in improving the quality of the dancing by peers so all may look better as a group in performance. Many of the other helping actions among dancers seem to grow out of simple peer coaching activity.

Again, these behaviors were often spontaneous and unplanned, as dancers interacted while preparing for rehearsal of their respective parts. Peer coaching not only served to improve the performance of the individuals involved, but also of the group in general. It also served as a bonding process, in which dancers would look out for each other during performance, with guiding, prompting, or cueing less experienced dancers into the appropriate space or combinations of steps.

In one photograph taken during the rehearsal of *The Nutcracker*, three sets of peer coaching can be seen being done simultaneously and spontaneously, without instruction or

direction. One group is coached on the left, another couple is coaching on the lower right, and another couple of young girls are practicing side-by-side in the mirror, with the more experienced dancer coaching the less experienced dancer. This coaching was seen often and across all groups, yet it seemed to be overlooked by most adults until it was pointed out. It was so ubiquitous as to become taken for granted and almost invisible to the casual observer (see Figures E25 through E34 in Appendix E).

Turn-Taking

At some point during any dance class or routine, it is necessary to take turns in sequence, to share time or space. Through repetition one not only learns synchronous behaviors, but when to withhold movement, in order to alternate movements with others in an orderly dialog. During dance class, it is common to alternate students across the floor so each student has freedom of movement with maximum space to execute a combination of steps. This also allows the teacher to see the student's work individually and make appropriate corrections. If there are mirrors in the classroom, turn-taking also allows students to be able to see themselves moving without obstructions, so they can self-correct their moves. Turn-taking becomes embedded into the entire scope of dance activities, for example, from taking turns across the floor, to taking turns with different partners, taking turns for "shine-spots" or small solos within a group presentation, taking turns being fitted for costumes, taking turns lacing up costuming, or sharing costumes.

Taking turns becomes a natural behavior that is easily internalized and exhibited in other forms of actions. Taking turns involves a certain amount of self-discipline, patience, and tolerance, as one must wait one's turn to come around. Turn-taking often becomes

associated with concepts of equality, empathy, and fairness, where a violation of turn-taking becomes seen as unfair, unequal, and undesirable. Turn-taking is seen as a desirable behavior and may contribute to collaborative skills later.

In the photographs, various situations can be seen where turn-taking is evidenced. The turn-taking activity can take place with a teacher, as in a learning situation, with a partner, as in a dance dialog, as a student member of the class going across the floor (sharing space), or sharing costuming, props, or other resources (see Figures E35, E36, E37, and E38 in Appendix E).

Lead/Follow

Often associated with gender roles, dance couples or partners may have clear expectations of who is to lead the dance and who is to follow. However, in practice, these roles may actually be more flexible than gender expectations may imply. As described earlier, more experienced dancers (male or female) may lead the dance for a less experienced partner, until there is more mastery of the steps and familiarity with the partner. Then partners may share the responsibility of leading or alternatively, take turns leading.

This particular form of role flexibility, alternating roles, adds insight into partner expectations, communication, and empathy for partner needs. A partner who can both lead and follow is a more informed partner, able to anticipate the needs of the partner of the moment, as well as the needs of partners in general. This is particularly useful when teaching, coaching, or collaborating with others (see Figures E39, E40, E41, and E42 in Appendix E).

Role Modeling/Role Taking/Role Flexibility

One of the most common ways of learning dance in a dance group is through role modeling. Teachers and mentors model dance steps, combinations, and dance-related behaviors that are mimicked by students and participants. Teaching and learning are presented both as formal and informal activities. Frequently, formally taught material then spreads quickly through the group through peer coaching. Teaching and learning typically conform to an apprenticeship style of training, in which role-taking behaviors escalate as mastery and confidence in the dance material became manifest.

Not only are the roles of teachers, students, and coaches modeled for participants, but age-related roles and pragmatic roles associated with the group are modeled as well. Different dance behaviors are expected at different age levels, and often when dancers age out of the available roles, they assume other administrative or auxiliary roles within the group, such as teaching assistant, choreographer, publicist, manager, costumer, organizer, fund-raiser, driver, officer, or Board member. This custom of role evolution serves to create continuity and community within the group, guaranteeing a path of participation from infancy to elder years, which could involve and include all family members. Intergenerational interactions create more role modeling as well as bonding, strengthening the sense of group cohesion.

For example, in the study, younger dance students involved in an annual production of *The Nutcracker* could participate as mice when very young, and assume different roles within the production as they grew older, eventually participating as adults in the production or helping with auxiliary duties. This continuity of participation added to the stability of

each dance group, and dance groups that lacked this continuity suffered from deterioration. The lack of continuity was detrimental to the stability of a dance group.

Role flexibility also seems to help develop the skill of empathy. In class and rehearsal, a teacher or mentor often rotates role responsibilities purposely, in order to allow dance students to know what it feels like to be on the “receiving end” of a particular dance combination. This helps dancers understand what they can do to assist the execution of the dance combination regardless of the role assigned. This also helps dance students to anticipate the needs of other dancers. By interacting with different role types, one becomes more familiar with what the roles entail. By taking on different roles for a dance part, participants develop greater understanding of what the role demands. This understanding serves to increase empathy and bonding between different role types (see Figures E43 through E49 in Appendix E).

Gender Roles/Gender Flexibility

In addition to activity-based role modeling and age-related role modeling, there is evidence of gender role modeling as well. Stereotypical behaviors of gender are often embedded into dance activities, events, and roles. Typically, historically-based dances have specific costuming and dance combinations for males, females, and couples. Costuming for these historically-based dances follows cultural gender customs; for example, skirts and bodices for females, and trousers, shirts, and vests for males. Often female dance parts are graceful and soft, and occasionally, flirtatious. Male dance parts typically portray strength, virility, athleticism, powerful leaps, and mastery of difficult steps. Often ethnic cultural dances embody characteristics of expected gender qualities, captured in movement, gesture,

posture, and costume. In Ballet, females typically have sheer skirts, low-cut bodices, and pointe shoes, whereas males have peasant shirts, tunics, vests, and often boot-tops or pantaloons. Typically, males are characterized as leading the dance, with the female following the male's lead. Females are lifted, held, and posed by males during the dance. Similar gender roles are defined in other forms of dance as well (see Figures E50 and E51 in Appendix E).

Even as gender roles are characterized and defined in dance roles, they are also mediated and often transposed as needed or for creative purposes. Often there are different numbers of males and females than what is needed for partners or gendered roles. Throughout history there has been a tradition of cross-dressing against gender in performance according to need or for cultural reasons. This tradition persists into present day.

Historically, early female parts in dance and theater were performed by males, as it was considered inappropriate to have females perform in public (Homans, 2010). In more conservative parts of the Middle East, a similar custom was recorded of males dressing and dancing in female style (Dinicu, 2013), and a similar culture of such cross-dressing has a long history in Asian cultures as well, including Hindu and Japanese cultures. In the Western world, Greek and Roman theater performances also used men in female roles, as did early Shakespearean theater, which was often referred to as *travesti*, or “disguised” (Halliday, 1964; Hermann, 1989). Similarly, in performance of Western forms of dance, males would perform female roles, including in Ballet, up until the 1800s (Anderson, 1992; Foster, 1998; Garafola, 1985; Homans, 2010; Lee, 2002). In private performances, however,

women often performed female roles, although it might have been considered racy at the time (Homans, 2010). Eventually, women performed in public in Western and Middle Eastern and some Asian cultures (Dinicu, 2013; Homans, 2010).

In contemporary times, gender role switching has been as much for pragmatic reasons as for aesthetic or traditional reasons. Females often outnumber males in dance classes, requiring a number of relatively androgynous dance parts, or requiring females to assume male roles. In order to teach Ballroom Dance or Folkloric Dance professionally, it is required that teachers master both male and female (or in contemporary nomenclature, lead and follow) roles in order to truly become expert in these dance forms. The learning of flexibility in gender roles can give insight into what is required for each role and the expectations for each role.

Gender role flexibility examples include: teachers instructing across gender lines, couples alternately assuming lead and follow roles, dancers cross-dressing against gender type.

Alternatively, costuming may be unisex and dance roles may be androgynous, not indicative specifically of being either male or female. This latter strategy allows males and females to be interchangeable within the dance groups. Leads and follows may be detached from gender roles as well, and alternated according to the experience of the dancers, partner familiarity, or for novelty. For example, in informal social dance, the “lead-lead-follow-follow” pattern taught in some dance groups allows paired partners to alternate lead and follow roles in turn, not related to traditional gender roles, which adds to the variety and novelty of the dance.

In the photographs, in some Mexican Folkloric dances, what used to be specifically gender-defined roles are now androgynous, largely for pragmatic reasons. Also in the photographs, one can see teachers instructing the dance across gender lines; e.g., male teacher demonstrating the female choreography (see Figures E52, E53, and E54 in Appendix E).

Cueing

Cueing is related to Lead-Follow and Peer Coaching. Cueing is a signaling by a leader to followers as to when to enter, or when to initiate a particular move. A cue is given to make transitions smoother and to remind less experienced dancers about step changes. Generally, this action is modeled by a teacher or other experienced dancer to guide (or lead) less experienced dancers through a routine. In the study, what was particularly noteworthy was that dancers quickly adopted this action among themselves without prompting or other guidance from mentors.

This was often seen among dance students who were collaborating for a particular performance. The dancers would take this upon themselves in order to make the performance as a whole move forward more smoothly. After working on a performance for some time, they have a vested interest in the performance being presented in the best light possible. Once in collaboration, the dancers feel a sense of pride if the performance as a whole goes well.

During one Grupo Christmas performance, a group of younger dancers began to make their entrance too early (upstage right) and were signaled by an older dancer to stop and wait (from downstage left), and then he cued them to enter at the appropriate musical

phrase. This could be clearly seen on the video of the event. This was a spontaneous interaction that the young dancers quickly adjusted to, making the entrances and performance function together as a whole (see Figures E55, E56, and E57 in Appendix E).

Helping Actions

In this study, as with Peer Coaching and Cueing, actions that assisted the execution of the steps for the performance soon generalized to other auxiliary functions that also supported the performance (such as help with costumes, make-up, hair, and logistics and rides to and from rehearsals). Actions that would initially be modeled by a mentor or teacher were quickly picked up by the dancers themselves without direction, instruction, or guidance.

These more generalized helping actions related to performances were observed across all dance groups. Most common were the helping actions related to costuming and hair for performances. All of these helping actions and auxiliary assisting were invested in maintaining the dance group, the program of teaching offered, and ultimately, the performances. The collaboration needed to constitute the dance eventually expanded to other auxiliary duties needed to make the performance a success. These helping and collaborative activities also enhanced a sense of empathy, tolerance, and collectiveness, as each individual looked to the common goal of a performance, and helping each other, even anticipating needs, was a way of reaching that common goal (see Figures E58 through E69 in Appendix E).

Patterns/Formations

Another layer of complexity dance patterns and formations can be added to the concept of body mapping. Body mapping refers to the way the brain maps the human body in space, in order to maneuver through time and space (Gallagher, 2005). Also referred to as the body schema or scheme, body mapping in this context refers to the perceiving of one's own body in space, often referred to as proprioception in conjunction with kinesthetic sense (and often related to the perception of peri-personal space) (Gallagher, 2005). This body schema or mapping is adjusted when using tools, vehicles, props, costuming, and weapons, in order to allow these props to move through time and space without collisions (Gallagher, 2005). Once these items are added to the body repertoire, the working map must be constantly negotiated to accommodate these extensions in order to work effectively. In contrast, when a limb is lost, the body schema must be accommodated to adjust for the contraction of the body map; otherwise, the sensation of a "phantom limb" can interfere with controlling movement (Gallagher, 2005).

Proprioception, along with kinesthetic sensation, allows the brain to create a working map of the body moving through time and space, in order to have locomotion and to maneuver around obstacles (Gallagher, 2005). When working with a tool or prop, mastery is often referred to as "becoming one" with the tool, meaning that it becomes part of the mental map of the body and is used as an extension of the body. These extensions of the body can include other people.

When dancers partner as a couple, they try to move together as an energy-efficient physical unit. This same sensation, however, also occurs when working with a group. The

proprioception involved in the time/space sensation for Self and for partnering are similar to those involved when participating in the group in patterns and formations. This requires not only a sense of a physical Self in space and time, but also of the group (beyond the partnered couple) working together in time and space. This collective sensation is needed in order to make complex formations cohesive. The collective sense also requires a flexible sense of body mapping to extend beyond one's physical Self, beyond the immediate partner, to include an entire group, and to be able to picture the expected pattern forming and moving in space and time. This is necessary in order to avoid collisions, missteps, and injuries. When the group moves in synchrony through space and time to form a pattern, a collective momentum is shared among the group, propelling the group cohesively, which can be exhilarating.

These group patterns and formations carry mere synchronous movements into a more challenging dimension, for now group members have to maintain not only an awareness of their own body, but of the group as a whole. This heightened awareness now has a focus: creating the formation as a group goal. Individual behaviors in time and space are harnessed together to create a collective goal—one that cannot be achieved as an individual participant. This collective activity requires the development of the sense of a collective Self as a physical presence, with tangible, concrete, physical needs, in terms of energy, time, and space. As a result, a certain amount of bonding with the group develops, as well as a form of group identification.

Interestingly enough, even people who don't care for each other or who have little in common can still work together in formation and share pride in a successful outcome. The

skill of collaboration and formation can also extend beyond the scope of the dance group or dance event, into the community at large (see Figures E70 through E74 in Appendix E).

Recognition

Related to identity behaviors are recognition behaviors. By developing mastery of skill sufficient to participate in performance, one gains recognition for the work invested in the practice of dance. The recognition itself can be reinforcing, creating a positive feedback loop that encourages continued involvement with the dance group and increased motivation for more mastery of the dance. The reinforcement also encourages more internalization of the physical attributes, postures, and gestures associated with the dance, leading to further identification with being a dancer.

The recognition factor need not be connected only to formal presentations. In any gathering where the groups dance together, whether a formal performance, rehearsal, class, or informal social dancing, recognition becomes an acknowledgement of existence and participation. In group dances, especially line or snake dances that have people taking turns leading or improvising, even participants who are less experienced and less accomplished (such as the very young or the very old) are encouraged to take a turn as the center of attention. This acknowledgement adds cohesion and continuity to the group by reinforcing the concepts of inclusion and shared participation. Each person is acknowledged as participating and taking part in the group dance, at whatever skill level demonstrated.

The recognition factor creates identification with the group, loyalty, added participation, and sustained support for the group over time. The combination of participation and recognition creates a sense of affiliation and reinforcement that gives the

participants a vested interest in the continuity of the dance group. Participants who do the “dance spot” to show off their steps and are recognized for their participation typically display a certain excitement and exhilaration either in anticipation of their turn or after they have succeeded in taking their turn, or both. A certain amount of pride is exhibited for having participated, or in the case of a formal performance, being connected to someone who was involved in the performance, and thus participating indirectly.

Whereas the identity issue relates the individual with the group, the recognition aspect focuses on the group’s recognition of the individual’s participation. For example, within the study, in the context of a Ballet performance, this might be the recognition of mastery and much hard work and rehearsal involved to make the performance possible. In the folkloric dance groups, it might be an acknowledgement of mastery of particular cultural material, rather than the quality of the actual execution. And in general community dance, there may be a recognition merely of participation. The point is that individuals are recognized as a part of the dance group and are identified as a participant of the group. This recognition and identification are powerful reinforcers that encourage further involvement, engagement, and participation with the group in the future (see Figures E75 through E79 in Appendix E).

Bonding/Camaraderie/Cohesion

Related to helping behaviors and actions are behaviors and actions indicating bonding, camaraderie, and cohesion. In the study, dancers could often be seen clustering together, frequently on the sidelines of a class or rehearsal, having quiet side conversations. This clustering activity could also be seen before and after rehearsals and performances, as

dancers grouped together in close proximity to chatter, touch, primp, fuss, and adjust each other's attire, hair, or makeup. Working closely with each other, being in close proximity, and talking or touching intimately became a natural extension of normal dance activities. When addressed as a group or in opportunities for camera moments, dancers would group closely together, embrace, group-hug, and kiss without hesitation.

In the photographs, these behaviors and actions can easily be seen as the dancers have cross-conversations on the sidelines at rehearsals, clustering together spontaneously to chatter and primp with each other, and grouping together for camera moments, as if they were family members with long histories. In the photographs, it is apparent how the dancers cluster together into hive-like groups. The camaraderie and cohesion of the groups become tangible and palpable, often moving and reconstituting from one space to another, almost as a single entity. The group operates as a moving single network or matrix of interacting social beings. This clustering activity manifests often and repeatedly throughout these dance events, in classes, rehearsals, festivals, and performances (see Figures E80 through E88 in Appendix E).

Summary

The taxonomy terms were seen as overlapping and escalating indicators of how participation in dance can create a model of interactions that expands beyond the boundaries of the dance experience itself. For example, the helping behaviors and actions led to collaborative, cooperative projects that strengthened a sense of community. The behaviors are not necessarily mutually exclusive but are different ingredients that can be seen as combined into a collective whole.

These behaviors can be viewed as scaling up from individual behaviors, to behaviors shared with another person or a small group, and later with the entire group, and into the community at large. Many of the social patterns described here are also reflected in the literature for childhood development, but these social patterns are not limited to childhood; they can continue throughout the lifespan. For example, the kinesthetic sense, body mapping, and body sense all can be lost, changed, or developed over the entire lifespan. Bodies and abilities can change over time, resulting in adaptation and adjustment in the senses, and hence, in awareness.

Similarly, the collective sense involves a comparable concept of body mapping, in which the group itself is viewed as a single body or unit. Thus, as an individual, awareness reaches out beyond the Self to include the others in the group. And when dancing together, the group moves in synchrony as a single body or unit. There is a perception of the group in a physical formation and a shared goal of executing the steps within that formation. See the Meadian analysis of the dance process in Chapter 5 for more detail on this issue.

The Meadian perspective is noteworthy because the rudiments of a social structure are thus associated with a physical formation. The social order is quite literally associated with a physical order. The physical group formation can be seen as metaphor for social structure and even perhaps as structural hierarchy, depending on the formation and its function. For example, the solo performer in front of the corps in traditional Ballet is typically seen as a hierarchical relationship.

Certain patterns and formations, through repetition, can become reified and ritualized, to not only reflect social structure, but to perpetuate the social structure, shaping

participants into a particular social order. By sharing time and space with others, working in synchrony, creating formations, and collaborating for a common goal of execution, social cohesion is created and perpetuated. Through this interaction (or dialectic) of reified structures and informal practice, cultural communities of practice form, grow, and adapt. The natural tension between reification and practice keeps the group dynamic able to ecologically adapt to changes in membership or circumstances.

With these dance behaviors and phenomena in mind, one can see how these behaviors build one upon the other to form group cohesion, bonding, and communities of dance practice. These phenomena experienced in the process of participating in cultural practice also create a repertory of personal experiences that become metaphors for more abstract thinking and social interactions in everyday life. Interactions and problem-solving create paths and conventions of behavior that go beyond the bounds of the cultural practice itself, to lay the foundations of social structures. The skills learned within the dance, for example, form the basis for the group's social structure and organization. What is also interesting, however, is how these structures and behaviors extend beyond the boundaries of dance, into everyday social behavior, and beyond the boundaries of the group into the community at large.

Relationship of Selected Codes and Categories

The core category created by the relationship of these observed selected codes was increased Social Cohesion or community cohesion. The following is a description of the dynamic formed through the interaction of these behaviors. These dynamics are also presented in the form of a flowchart diagram.

Individual physical movements allow one to define one's own space and enable the formation of the Self. Continued interaction with others and the environment enables a cohesion of the Self, which enables one to interact with a collective, yet maintain individuality.

Physical movements done in synchrony with others, sharing time and space, when repeated, not only becomes a cohesive cultural practice, but also creates a bond between members. These repeated movements become codified, ritualized, reified structures, which contribute to the group's cohesion and enhance further the bonding among members. The cultural practice serves to mediate the relationship between the individual and the group.

These individual connections are confirmed and validated by parallel studies in other disciplines, as described in the literature review. The relationships can be seen in the flowchart illustrating the dynamics and interactions of these categories created by the selected codes (see the Figures C9 and C10 in Appendix C).

Relationship of the Individual with the Group

As previously described, the relationship of the individual with the group can evolve over time, from peripheral participation to being a core member, teacher, or administrative functionary. The relationship with the group can influence the individual identity, through physical and social interaction and identification with the group in general.

The relationship of the individual with the group can be diagrammed with a sequence of circles (see Figure C11 in Appendix C). When the individual is completely detached from the group, there is no group identification. When the individual is completely subsumed by the group, there is a risk of losing one's Self-identity, and the ability of seeing one's Self as

separate from the group. Through subsequent peripheral participation, however, individuals can find a balance in the tension between individuality and group identification, not unlike the balance between reified structure and practice. In dance, because of the nature of the physical participation in time and space, there is a simultaneous experience and interaction between the sense of the Self and the sense of the collective. This symbiotic interaction of Self and collective is part of the unique dynamic of dance and other similar physical, group cultural practices.

The Cultural Practice of Dance and Reified Structures

As mentioned elsewhere, the skills learned in mastering the cultural practice of dance became generalized into increasingly more peripheral social behaviors, including helping behaviors, turn-taking, lead-follow, coaching, spacing, formations, and role flexibility,. Through repetition and reification, these behaviors can become ritualized traditions and organized social structures that support and extend the scope of the original cultural practice.

In the case of dance, the cultural practice becomes organized into dance groups, or Communities of Practice. The term Communities of Cultural Practice (CoCPs) might be more accurate, because in this study, the practice of dance is considered a cultural practice, and the taxonomy and the models developed for the analysis may not apply to all CoPs. The Lave-Wenger model of Communities of Practice is a useful tool to explain the dynamics of the flow of information within such a group. This study, however, builds on that model to include recruitment of new memberships within the group, the dynamic of this model in building and creating reified structures, the impact of the group on other related groups, as well as the group's impact on the surrounding community at large.

The Lave-Wenger model is a two-dimensional model that builds on the concept of apprenticeship learning by creating a dialectic duality of practice versus reification and emphasizing the importance of peripheral participation in that learning process. The former concept (practice) refers to the physical pragmatic process of craft, whereas the latter (reification) refers to the rules, protocols, documents, codification, and structures created by repetition, ritual, and abstraction. See Figures C2, C3 and C4 in Appendix C.

For this study, a variation of the Lave-Wenger model was created as a three-dimensional dynamic model using a decorative water fountain as a metaphor. The dynamic can be described as the flow of water within the fountain. Still, peripheral water is drawn into the current at the center of the fountain and is distributed through the air (refreshing the water), is dropped over the pool of water, and the process is continuously repeated, which revitalizes the entire system. In a fountain, this continual movement of water, its exposure to the air, and distribution over the still waters, serves to refresh and recycle the water, keeping the water supply fresh and potable (see Figures C5 and C8 in Appendix C).

As a metaphor for a Community of Cultural Practice, peripheral participation accelerates with continued participation, drawing one into the inner structures of the group, and after a certain level of mastery, participants become teachers, coaches, and informants, spreading the cultural material across the membership, drawing in members, and serving to recruit even more new members. Cultural information is thus distributed not only across the existing membership, but also potentially into new populations. This circular dynamic and interplay of participation and reification gives the CoCP legs, by creating structures, organization, rituals, traditions, procedures, and codification through reification, as well as

innovation, fresh blood, and legacy through dynamic participation in physical cultural practice. This model also serves to explain the dynamic in cultural remembering (i.e., cultural memory), and how those memories can be distributed within a cultural group (see Figures C12 and C13 in Appendix C).

In the case of dance, the participation in repeated physical cultural practice evolves from simple synchronous behavior through the development of Self and group identity, to the formation of group memory, the reified documentation of that information, and shapes individual physical behavior done in synchrony with others. This can be represented as a linear feedback loop that represents how individual behaviors become group behaviors, which become organized, reified, and documented, which then shape individual behaviors, as the process folds in on itself. This feedback loop can be represented as a flowchart that corresponds with the CoCP water fountain metaphor.

As the dance group, or CoCP, becomes more sophisticated and expands its horizons, more support structures are created, utilized, and implemented. In a dance group, this usually translates into more formalized classes, repertory, curriculum, performances, rehearsals, costuming, and organization. As the group becomes larger and more active, more auxiliary assistance is needed, and this assistance develops into more formalized structures and roles. As horizons and goals expand, more funding may be required for collective needs, such as more sophisticated costuming, travel to conferences as a group, interactions with other groups, more complicated choreography, and larger productions. In a dance group, when the sophistication and aspirations of the group reach this level, the group often applies for non-profit status, creating a legal entity. This legal entity then requires a

governing Board to oversee its activities, organize fundraising, guide progress, and monitor finances. These administrative social structures serve to give the dance group, or CoCP, longevity, legacy, and stability.

Ideally, these administrative roles comprising these reified social structures are filled by participants or former participants from the dance group itself. If this occurs, then the cultural memory within the CoCP is perpetuated and nurtured and passed on to new members and posterity. Former participants in administrative positions are able to maintain continuity, documentation, and archival materials, and also serve as role models to other members, forming a lifespan perspective to participation in the CoCP. These former participants not only understand the process and functions of the cultural practice, but generally also have a vested interest in perpetuating the goals of the CoCP for the next generation. The ideal relationship of the administrative structures to the CoCP is one of support, resources, and infrastructure for the group. Using the fountain metaphor, this idealized relationship of administration to the CoCP would be comparable to the pedestal and mechanical features of the fountain that enable it to function optimally, to refresh and recycle the water.

In contrast to the idealized, optimized relationship between structure and practice within the CoCP, there can be a less optimal, more dysfunctional relationship between administration and participants. This generally occurs when the administrative function is no longer filled by former members of the CoCP, but rather by outside people who may have a particular specialty to contribute but have no connection to the cultural practice of the group. As the detachment from the cultural practice grows among the members in

administrative roles, goals become altered, even perverted from the original, more pragmatic ones, and instead the goal becomes to perpetuate the administrative function itself, and the CoCP is seen as a separate entity that serves as an engine to nurture the administrative tier. This is a reversal of the original reason for the creation of this social structure. The goals of the operation become focused inward, rather than outward, reversing the flow of energy and prioritizing administrative functions over cultural practice. The administrative subgroup becomes a hierarchical structure, one that sees the cultural practice as a resource to maintain and perpetuate the administrative hierarchy. Thus, the resource flow reverses, replenishing the administrative hierarchy, and starving the CoCP itself. Eventually, this can lead to deterioration of the CoCP, and ultimately, to its disintegration (see Figures C14, C15, and C16 in Appendix C).

When structure and practice are in sync or in balance, then this balance would support the CoCP, allow it to flourish, and ensure its continuity. When out of sync, if there is too little structure or too much structure, then the CoCP may lose membership and experience an early demise.

Relationship of Community of Practice with Community at Large: The Possibility of a “Cascade Effect”

The evidence suggests that there is a possibility of a “Cascade Effect,” in which the dance and social skills learned within the dance group Community of Practice may spill over into family interactions, other peer interactions, and into the community at large. This evidence was suggested by the informal interviews with parents, formal interviews with teachers, discussion with participants, participant observation at the dance group’s events, and the survey data from the students.

When the dance group CoP has been in existence for enough time to have created a distinctive identity within the community at large, it begins to have its own interactive relationship with the surrounding community through its members. Using the metaphor of the fountain, the water would cascade from the original water source into ever-expanding tiers, impacting the water flow in subsequent tiers. This cascading effect can magnify the impact or influence of a particular cultural practice of dance beyond the boundaries of the group's Community of Cultural Practice.

As in the fountain analogy, the CoP members circulate outside of the dance group into the surrounding community at large. Cultural material learned within the group is internalized and carried outside the group into the surrounding community through social interaction and during cultural/community events (see Figures C17 and C18 in Appendix C).

This expansion can be demonstrated at informal dance events, as dance patterns emerge outside the confines of the dance group meetings, classes, or events. Entertaining the public at events that include informal social dancing as well as a group performance creates an opportunity to disseminate cultural information and engage the public in the periphery of the cultural practice of the dance itself (see Figure E29 in Appendix E).

This expansion was also documented in the archives of some dance groups in survey information indicating the majority of Ballroom Dance students (n=111, Grades 4-7) shared what they had learned in class regularly with friends and family outside of class, and a similar number indicating they practiced what they learned at events outside the confines of the class situation (see Table 2 in Appendix A).

This student survey data validated the information observed and recorded in this study, indicating that the dances in general enhanced self-discipline, boosted confidence, improved relationships (particularly with the opposite gender), and improved respectful behavior with others. These observations were repeated often by teachers, parents, and adult participants in discussions about the practice of dance in general, and they were often mentioned in performances and lecture-demonstrations of the dance.

Additionally, these data support other observations in this study that indicated that the dance steps and cultural information learned in the group's dance classes is distributed to friends and family not associated with the dance group directly. This indirect distribution of the cultural practice of dance further validates the assertion of this study that the CoP model could be adapted to account for the cascading effect of cultural practice of dance that spreads outside the group and into the community at large. In this way, the lessons learned in dance class become distributed throughout the community at large and are not restricted to the group's participants exclusively.

The student survey data were also supported by a set of questionnaires and short interviews done by CBD in 2008 that was directed at the homeroom teachers of the students participating in the CBD program presented in the Kansas City public school system. In spring of 2008, there were seven homeroom teachers whose students were involved in the CBD Ballroom Dance classes. The questions and responses to the questionnaire are shown in Appendix A.

The teacher questionnaire had been inspired by random comments from various teachers that children in the dance program seemed to learn social skills and self-discipline

skills as a result of having taken the Ballroom Dance course. This questionnaire was constructed as a research tool to discover whether other teachers had had the same experiences with their students. In addition to the questionnaire, a short informal interview was conducted to allow comments and information to be added that could not be captured in the questionnaire.

Most of the teachers were supportive of the dance program, which may have influenced their responses. However, one teacher expressed indifference to the program, but still reported favorable feedback in the questionnaire. Although this was a small sample, it was a representative group of teachers participating in the program, and many of the teachers repeated participation in the program over the years. Table 3 in Appendix A shows the raw responses to the 16 questions asked on the questionnaire.

Not all teachers were available at the time of the survey, but all teachers who were asked to participate did indeed participate in the survey. Only one question was not answered, by only one teacher. All other questions were answered by all teachers.

Table 4 in Appendix A gives a summary of the responses that tallies the number of scaled responses to each question. The majority of responses fell into the favorable categories of three and four, indicating improvements in behavior identified by the questions in the questionnaire.

By tallying the threes and fours together, indicating improvement, it can be seen that the majority of the teachers involved in the program responded favorably to the 16 questions in terms of improvement in social behaviors after the dance class was taken (79.5%). Most teachers did not respond that improvement was seen in respectful behavior (Q2), but did

indicate improvements in social skills, cooperative behaviors, consideration of others, self-discipline, tolerance, and especially with tolerance of diversity of culture, ethnicity, and gender. There was pragmatic feedback that these improvements were made during an activity that the students actually enjoyed doing. In other words, there was no added effort on the part of the teachers or students in gaining these skills. They were additional skills learned in the course of practicing a cultural activity they already enjoyed doing. Although this was a small sample, and the questionnaire is not definitive evidence in itself, these data support other evidence gathered in this study from all the dance groups, regarding cooperative action and collaboration. These data also support the hypothesis that dance shapes social behavior and engenders the skills of collaboration and cooperation.

Comparing and Contrasting the Dance Groups

Until now, most of the research discussed has been focused on the similarities between the groups and the activities observed universally across all groups. Looking at differences between the groups, and contrasting them in various dimensions, however, can also be very revealing.

The participant observational research was focused on local community dance groups, all of which were originally based in local communities and had been in practice for several decades. Each group has historic roots in the neighborhood communities where they operate, and each group has had to adjust and accommodate to changes in their respective communities.

Looking at the histories, locations, composition, and mission for each group illustrates some of the differences between the groups. Several different genres of dance are

represented, including Mexican Folkloric Dance (El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco), Balkan Folkloric Dance (Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans), Ballroom/Social Dance (Culture through Ballroom Dance), Classical Modern Dance (City in Motion Dance Theater), Ballet (American Dance Center), and as an organizational comparison, the Kansas City Ballet School. Following is a short description and history of each dance group.

Mexican Folkloric Group, El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco (GF)

The first dance group of this research was the resident Folkloric Dance group at Guadalupe Center, El Grupo Folklorico Atotonilco, under the direction of Maria Chaurand and Jaime Reyes. This group includes local Mexican Folkloric dancers in the Kansas City area, primarily those in the Latino community, and is attached to established and recognized historic Latino community centers. The primary site for the research was the Guadalupe Center.

Founded in 1979, by Maria Chaurand, the group has up to 85 members, ranging in age from pre-school to the over-40 age group, although the majority of students and performers are grade-school children, teens, and young adults. Chaurand started this group on the West Side of Kansas City, which has been a traditionally Latino neighborhood since the early 1900s. Jaime Reyes migrated into this group and became the Co-director with Chaurand, sharing the duties of teaching, archiving, performing, choreographing, and staging the shows.

Chaurand's four sons eventually became the backbone of the group, teaching and performing, and bringing their own children into the group. The group has developed a reputation as being one of the best Mexican Folkloric Dance groups in the area the most

requested dance group on the Missouri Arts roster. The dance group has become a family business, with each family member participating as time allows.

Balkan Folkloric Group, Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans (Tams)

The second folkloric group researched was the Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans, under the direction of Don and JoAnn Lipovac. Although not as active as they were in the decades past, the Tamburitzans embrace Eastern European ethnic music, dance, costumes, and customs (including Croatian, Serbian, Slavic, Bulgarian, Russian, and other ethnicities from the Balkan area). Lipovac and some of his older students are now trying to resurrect the dance group, to pass on their traditions and teachings to a new generation (Don Lipovac, 2014; Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans, n.d.).

Research of the Tamburitzans took place in whatever community center was being used at the time but primarily in the recreation center at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Kansas City, Kansas as well as other church locations. Some of the research also took place at Don Lipovac's residence in Kansas City, Kansas.

Don and JoAnn Lipovac both of Slovenian heritage, grew up in the Strawberry Hill area of Kansas City, Kansas, which is well known as a Slavic immigrant neighborhood since the 1800s. He grew up surrounded in the Slavic/Slovenian culture and music. Inspired by the Duquesne University Tamburitzans, Don Lipovac taught his students the songs, dances, music, costuming, and culture of the Slavic people and the Balkan region of Europe.

After enjoying widespread popularity and a strong following into the 1990s, interest in the music, the dances, and the culture waned after the events of September 11, 2001. The Lipovacs found themselves in semi-retirement, without formal classes or a dance group.

Several years later, at the time this study began, interest in the music and dance had revived, and a younger Balkan music band had been formed. Joining forces with this younger group, the Lipovacs reorganized their Tamburitza dance and music group, supported by the organization's booster club, and have since helped to organize dance and music events for church, community, festivals, and fundraisers.

The Tamburitzaans include singers, dancers, musicians, and supporters. The organization also provides a range of functions in the community, including education, performance, cultural festivals, social events, and fundraisers. This group has maintained a family-based intergenerational membership for decades, and its events have traditionally integrated aspects of professional performance (with Lipovac's band), community performance (the student orchestra), traditional folkloric performance (Tamburitza dancers in traditional costumes), community folkloric dances (audience participation in circle and line dances), and couples social dancing (usually Polka or Waltz). This integrated format made the events family-friendly, and attendees included children, teens, young adults, mature adults, and older adults. The format served the group well up through the 1990s, as attendees would often number 500 to 800 people. Events were often held at the Kansas City, Kansas National Guard Armory. Additionally, regular rehearsals and appearances at Near Eastern and Middle Eastern restaurants gave the membership a reason to meet and interact over time. This integrated, intergenerational approach and membership lasted for decades and still survives to some extent today.

Although no longer as active as they once were, this was the only group in the study that ran the complete gamut of functionality (music, song, dance, education, performance,

festivals, and social dance) across the membership. Rooted in the Strawberry Hill neighborhood and within a folkloric cultural framework, the group maintained a high-profile but local presence. As the neighborhood changed and families migrated, some of the membership (and interest) in the group eroded. Yet the surviving members continued to be active. Don and JoAnn Lipovac channeled all their energies into their classes, teaching, performances, costuming, and the cultural practices imparted to the group. There were no descendants, so although there has been a legacy for the group, there has not been a clear path of future leadership.

Ballroom Dance Group, Culture through Ballroom Dance (CBD)

Founded in 2007 by Dr. Will Adams, his wife, Eleanor, and dance teacher Paula Marie Daub, this group has taken on the mission of bringing social dance into the lives of students of all ages. Will and Eleanor Adams taught and performed Ballroom Dance as a couple since their college days and taught Ballroom Dance for decades at William Jewell College, where they were academics. In 2006, the trio founded Culture through Ballroom Dance (CBD), first as a pilot project, which expanded their teaching from only college students, to the Kansas City public school system (Culture through Ballroom Dance, 2014).

Establishing their organization as a formal 501(c)(3) non-profit in 2007, the trio began to train teachers and students in the practice of Ballroom Dance. Inspired by the film *Mad Hot Ballroom* (Agrelo, 2005), the group created a program of classes to teach Ballroom Dance to grade school students. Part of that process was building a list of Board members, advisory board members, volunteers, sponsors, teachers, and schools. Using their college-level syllabi as a starting point, they developed a syllabus for training teachers. They also

adapted a syllabus that scaled the material to train student apprentices to teach the younger children (Culture through Ballroom Dance, 2014).

The program began with fifth grade students. After 10 lessons, 70 were able to perform on stage before an audience of several hundred people as part of the district's All City Music Festival. According to the group's website, "subsequent annual ballroom dance festivals have featured nearly 200 students each, who also performed for school carnivals, Cinco de Mayo celebrations, school assemblies, PTA, and senior citizen centers" (Culture through Ballroom Dance, 2014, n.p.). In May 2010, high school students became a part of the program, as well as students of various ages performing ballroom dance in wheelchairs.

To date, the group has provided Ballroom Dance lessons, including wheelchair dancing, to six public school districts, both elementary and high school classes. Ballroom Dance is presented as a way for students to learn more about different cultures and as an intergenerational and educational activity. According to the website, their "goal is for all students to have the opportunity to experience the benefits that ballroom dance lessons provide." Their mission statement is stated as the following (Culture through Ballroom Dance, 2014, n.p.).

Our Mission is to develop a positive foundation in children by building confidence, self-esteem, and interactive social skills through the artistic expression of Ballroom Dance. Our curriculum based arts-in-education in-school residencies give children the opportunity to learn the artistic components of ballroom dances of various cultures. In the process, they also learn etiquette, teamwork, and respect for others. (Culture through Ballroom Dance, 2014, n.p.).

In addition to maintaining the website, academic materials, photographs, video, and other archival documentation, the group has administered and collected survey questionnaires, interviews, and other data to track the progress and success of the teaching

program. This group's contribution to this study was particularly noteworthy because of the documentation and archives they made available, including the secondary analysis of survey and interview data.

Classical Modern Dance Group, City in Motion Dance Theater (CIM)

Founded in 1985 by Randy Barron, Kathleen Kingsley, Arielle Thomas Newman, Rick Hillis, and Jean Dickinson, City in Motion Dance Theater was envisioned as a laboratory for professional modern dance in the Midwest region. According to the website, "The company's first public performance was May 17, 1985, at Arts Fest '85 in Crown Center Square, before an audience of over 400 enthusiastic dance fans" (City in Motion, n.d., n.p.). The mission of the organization is "to foster the development of high-quality contemporary dance programming and expand the dance audience in the Kansas City metropolitan region" (City in Motion, n.d., n.p.). Since its inception, CIM has been an active participant in the local arts community. Its three-pronged approach of promoting dance in the region is through its professional dance company, juried dance productions, and school of dance.

The City in Motion Dance Company currently comprises eight professional dancers under the artistic co-direction of Andrea Skowronek, Dale Fellin, and Stephanie Whittler. Andrea Skowronek has danced with City in Motion Dance Theater since it was founded in 1985. She became an Artistic Co-director in 1995 and has since choreographed for the company.

City in Motion is also a juried presenter of dance, offering a free Dance in the Park showcase each fall, a choreographer's showcase each winter, and an annual company

concert each spring. The choreographer showcases are juried and attract applications from choreographers and dance groups throughout the region. In addition, it sometimes sponsors more impromptu performances around the community to promote the organization and its events.

The non-profit school of dance supports the professional company through its Children's Dance Theater program and Apprenticeship Company, which give serious dance students the opportunity to take professional training from age three to adult and serve as a feeder system for the professional company. The dance school also offers the widest variety of adult dance classes in the city. The following description of the classes is posted on the dance school's website.

Beginning to advanced dancers can enjoy instruction in classical dance techniques such as ballet, tap, jazz and modern dance as well as ethnic and folkloric dance forms, including West Afrikan, Belly Dance, Indian Manipuri, Flamenco, and World Dance Fusion. Club and ballroom dance styles include Hip Hop, Salsa, and East Coast Swing. Various other classes are offered such as Circus Skills and Clowning and Kung Fu. Instructors at City in Motion are all professionals in their fields. (City in Motion, n.d.)

City in Motion Dance Theater, Inc. is located in the Westport area of midtown Kansas City. Most of the observations for this study were made at the dance school and at various performances. At the time of this research study, the School Director was Regina Compernelle, who had held the position for almost a decade, in addition to teaching folkloric dance and drumming at the school and managing her own folkloric dance group in conjunction with her classes.

Community partners who help fund the various CIM dance events include the Missouri Arts Council, the Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund, the Arts Council of

Metropolitan Kansas City, United Missouri Bank, and the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. The organization is well known in the local arts community for supporting diversity and community outreach.

Advertising itself as a school that supports “dance for every *body*,” the school promotes a diverse offering of ethnic dance genres to non-professional community dancers in addition to professional dance technique classes. This strategy parallels that of many professional dance schools that support a professional dance company. The non-professional track supports the organization and creates a broader audience for the dance company. The professional track creates a feeder or farm system of talented, serious dance students who train hard and strive to become a part of the professional dance company over time.

Ballet Dance Group, American Dance Center (ADC)

The American Dance Center is a not-for-profit performance company and dance school based in Overland Park, Kansas, which is dedicated to presenting quality classical dance performance and training. Founded in 1979 by Dennis and Kathy Landsman, it has grown considerably under the current management, which is focused on classical Ballet instruction and a high level of training suitable for pursuing a professional dance career (American Dance Center, n.d.; American Dance Center, Academy of Ballet, n.d.).

Since 2007, the school has been under the direction of husband and wife team, Kristopher Estes-Brown and Jennifer Tierney. Both professional Ballet dancers, they act as managers, instructors, and Artistic Directors of the school’s performing group, the American Youth Ballet (American Youth Ballet, n.d.). Estes-Brown was trained at the American

Dance Center and was also a member of the original American Youth Ballet, which gives him a legacy perspective of the operation.

The dance students range from age 10 to 19, and these students work hard in order to dance in the pre-professional performances. The school maintains a high standard of teaching and performance and gives several major theatrical productions a year, including an annual colorful production of *The Nutcracker*. Other performances include a choreographer's showcase, in which professional choreographers are invited to set original works upon the students, and full Ballet productions, such as *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, and *Don Quixote*. They also collaborate with local artists and musicians to create polished performances in professional theatrical venues. Additionally, students perform for various fundraisers for the organization to support the program. The Directors often hire professional Ballet dancers from well-known companies around the U.S. to play principal parts, which enables students to work with these professionals and to learn from them. This sets up a mentoring network and learning scaffolding process that helps students strive for excellence. The studio is located in a wealthy suburb and has deep roots in the community.

Professional Ballet Dance Group, Kansas City Ballet (KCB)

Based at the world-renown Kansas City Conservatory of Music, housed on the campus of the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), the Kansas City Civic Ballet was founded in 1957 by Russian-born professional Ballet dancer, Tatiana Dokoudovska. Ms. Dokoudovska was asked to develop an academic program and professional Ballet company at the Conservatory for the Kansas City area. Up until the late 1970s, Ms. Dokoudovska led the city-based Ballet company, which often brought in high-profile

choreographers and soloists to collaborate on original projects, such as Zachary Solov, Melissa Hayden, and Jacques d'Amboise (Kansas City Ballet, n.d.). The company was referred to as the Kansas City Civic Ballet Company during her leadership as Artistic Director. During this time, the Ballet company was supported by the Conservatory Dance Program, where Ms. Dokoudovska taught, along with Ms. Shirley Weaver in the Ballet division. The Ballet students numbered approximately 80 at the time, and the school attracted potential students from around the nation, as well as talented dancers in the area.

During the 1976-1977 season, the company aspired to become a more permanent, more professional Ballet company, and did so by hiring Todd Bolender (who had the desired Balanchine training) as the company's new artistic director when Ms. Dokoudovska retired in 1980. Under Bolender's leadership, the company became more stable, more polished, and more disciplined, and the supporting dance academy grew steadily, with heavy support from the surrounding community. The students taking at the academy during this period numbered about 150 students.

Bolender retired in 1995, and William Whitner became the Artistic Director. Under Whitner's leadership, the KCB company became known for innovation, diversity, and collaboration. The company performed an array of traditional, contemporary, and original works. The dance academy continued to grow under Whitner's leadership and twice relocated to larger, more permanent locations in order to accommodate this growth. In 2011, the company moved into the spacious Bolender Center, located in a historic building designed and refurbished for them and located close to the Union Station, giving the

company, the academy, and their support staff a more permanent home. In 2013, Devon Carney became the new Artistic Director.

Currently, the KCB School accommodates approximately 500 students and maintains an auxiliary location in the suburb of Overland Park, Kansas. Additionally, the KCB offers community-outreach programs by performing in public schools, discounted tickets to matinee concert performances, and workshops at its studios. In addition, it presents 24-week class sessions in participating schools. The school has two divisions. One is the traditional academy that offers pre-professional training and requires auditions. The other division is comprised of the studio classes, which are open to all and to the public. This latter offering is more diverse and includes adult and novice students. This current structure of the school resembles the structure of the CIM school.

Comparing and Contrasting Dance Group Genres

The previous taxonomy emphasized the similarities between the various dance groups. The actions described were seen often in all groups and were documented in the photograph, video, and survey data archives. Not surprisingly, the similarities of the dance groups were related to the dimension of participatory practice. What the groups had most in common was the cultural practice of dance, regardless of the style or type.

In order to investigate the differences between the groups, however, a slightly different taxonomy had to be used, but again, this alternative taxonomy was based upon the basic concepts captured in the Lave-Wenger model of Community of Practice.

Extrapolating on the two orthogonal dimensions of reified structures and participatory

practice, one can see parallels in the structure/constitution of the dance genre or style and the structure/constitution of the dance group.

By looking at these orthogonal dimensions as separate, yet complementary, trajectories, one can create a working profile of each group, which can also be plotted and compared along a traditional X-Y graph (see Figure C19 in Appendix C). For the purposes of this study, the X-axis was described as the participatory practice dimension, which emphasized participation, pragmatism, a mentored style of teaching, and a concrete, embodied, informal, and hands-on approach. These qualities are associated with a flatter organization and a community-based, collaborative, inductive, bottom-up perspective that includes role-flexibility, diversity, and inclusion. The Y-axis was described as the reified structures dimension, which is more reified, codified, abstract, theoretical, cognitive, structured, inscribed, hierarchical, formal, competitive, role-inflexible, and exclusive with a deductive top-down perspective.

By having separate dimensions, it is theoretically possible to be high in both directions, although it is unusual. Generally, there are trade-offs between the dimensions, but in some groups or genres, it is possible that some aspects are formal and structured, and other aspects are informal and unstructured. It is how this unique mix is constituted that gives each dance group its particular group “personality” or temperament. It is also the unique balance between these two dimensions in each group which makes the CoP robust and healthy, and which potentially give it “legs” and longevity. The right balance for each group often depends on the unique blend of personalities, resources, the nature of the dance genre, and how it is applied.

Too much structure in a group can stifle creativity, spontaneity, and growth. Too little structure can result in repeated mistakes, lack of efficient use of resources, waste, and/or lack of direction/goals. The group may implode over time, or simply have members splinter off to create other groups that can adapt more quickly and efficiently to changing needs and trends.

With too little participation and practice, the group can atrophy and wither away through attrition. Through mentorship and participation, the lessons of the practice of dance (which cannot be entirely captured in codified texts) can be taught one-on-one. Although texts are important for continuity, consistency, legacy, learning, clarity, and communication, the embodied engagement of an activity with others, or a face-to-face mentorship (i.e., participatory practice) offers a completely different learning experience.

This dialectic of structure and practice can be seen as analogous to the Yin-Yang dynamic at the heart of the oriental philosophy of creation. Too much of one or the other creates stagnation and atrophy. Both are important for a healthy organization (or organism), but they must be kept in balance with each other. When in balance, they create a robust, dynamic, and adaptive creative energy. When out of balance, these dimensions can destroy an organization, causing implosion or dissipation. That said, an infinite variety of iterations can co-exist, each with a unique balance and constitution/constituency.

With that in mind, it might be helpful to plot aspects of each group on an X-Y graph to compare these various aspects between groups (see Figure C19 in Appendix C). It is possible to compare the aesthetic aspect and the practice aspect in the various dance genres under investigation with each other and rank them according to their reified structures and

participatory practice dimensions. Using general Social Dance (such as undefined “couples dancing” in public places) and Popular Dance (such as Hip-Hop) as a comparison with more structured dances (such as Ballet and Ballroom), we can create a ranking system. Table 2 shows a summary of the dance genres under investigation, rated in order of internal structuring and using Social Dance and Popular Dance as a comparison.

Table 2

Structural Ranking of Dance Genres

Ranked in order from structured/codified to unstructured/improvisational

(10) Ballet

(8) Classical Modern Dance (Graham, Horton, Taylor, Ailey, etc.)

(7) Ballroom Dance (Waltz, Foxtrot, etc.)

(6) Folkloric Dance (Mexican, Balkan, etc.)

(3) Other Social Dance (Bachata, line dances, country dance, swing, etc.)

(1) Popular Dance (Freestyle, Hip-Hop, Disco, Slam dance, etc.)

Notes: Rank from 1 (least structured) to 10 (most structured).

Not all numbers between 1-10 are used.

Structured is more formal; the improvisational is more informal.

This ranking was informally discussed with a number of the informants to validate that they held a similar conception of which dance genres were more structured and codified, and which were less so. Numeric ratings were assigned to ascertain the scope of the range of these rankings. Although my ratings and those of some of the informants might differ numerically, the rankings were basically identical, providing a way to compare the

dance groups with each other in terms of structure and other aspects related to the dance. The rankings and their application to the various dance genres in the list are explained in more detail below.

Ballet is easily determined to be the most structured of the dance genres observed. Ballet has a very distinct canon, a specific repertory of steps, defined postures, and historical documentation of the codification of the dance form over time. Each basic position has a specific name, with elaborations for elements such as direction faced, orientation, body placement, weight distribution, line of sight, whether the body is crossed or not. Over time, the codification and practice have become so specific that dancers now are often selected in a final cut of an audition by body type rather than by their execution of the steps, because competition is so high and there are so many good dancers. The canon for Ballet is so specific that there is little room for variation in repertory performances. Only in original choreography is there room for variation, but by the time dancers reach a point where they can create original choreography, they are often so shaped by the canon that variations may be challenging for them to create.

Classical Modern Dance was, historically speaking, a reaction to the structured format of Ballet and was presented as a free-form alternative to Ballet. Early pioneers in Classical Modern Dance based their dance structure on other cultural forms instead of using Ballet in order to create very different movement patterns. Using sculpture and visual arts of the ancient Greco-Roman dancers as an inspiration, for example, Isadora Duncan created a lyrical dance form. Ruth St. Denis (Oriental), Ted Shawn (Native American), La Meri (Oriental, Latin), and Katherine Dunham (Afro-Caribbean) all used ethnic and folkloric

forms from other cultures as a basis for their own particular dance styles. Because improvisation has always been a part of Classical Modern, it tends to be more flexible and less rigid than Ballet, but over time, each Modern Dance tradition has developed its own canon, which have become very structured in their own right (e.g., Katherine Dunham technique, Horton technique, Graham technique, and Ailey technique).

Ballroom and Folkloric dance forms can easily be ranked after Classical Modern Dance in terms of structure and canon, but comparing them with each other is more problematic. Depending on the level of skill the specific dances involve and how they are taught, both these genres can be very structured or not. The canon involved in teaching these dance forms has been more malleable during their evolution and thus the interpretation of these dances is more flexible. At a professional or competitive level, rules can be strict about what is correct movement, carriage, and costuming. That said, however, most settings for these dance forms tend to be more social or community-oriented, and thus more forgiving and more flexible in application, and more participatory than competitive.

According to some teachers, Ballroom Dance has made a point to structure itself as a more legitimate dance form and has spent over a century distancing itself from Folkloric and Popular dance. It has created its own canon emphasizing “proper” movements, control, position, posture, and “frame,” as well as strict roles of lead and follow, traditionally along gendered lines. Also, although people come together in a group and often trade partners, the dance itself revolves around an understanding of the genre as being a “couples’ dance” rather than a group dance.

Folkloric Dance as a genre became documented, codified, and structured more recently, and the presentation tends to be much more varied than in Ballroom Dance. However, when done in competition, the dance steps, their execution, style, music, and costuming are often highly regulated. As a general observation, Folkloric Dance offers more variation in interpretation, but depending on the specific folkloric dance examined, some are more structured and regulated than others. This flexibility allows dance segments that can include individual solos, couples' dances, group dances, various patterns, and artistic license in presentation. When performed as a community dance, there is a great deal of tolerance of style, patterns, and variations, even in group dances. Often, different levels of skill can easily co-exist without interfering with the group process or performance. As long as everyone is moving together in time, in synchrony, variations of foot or body movements become trivial. Thus, a great deal of individuality can co-exist within the group process. Additionally, many traditional dance forms allow for continued innovation within a traditional context. For example, Celtic, Hula, Flamenco, and Indian dances all have strong traditional forms, yet have demonstrated a great deal of innovation in creating contemporary forms that exist alongside the traditional, keeping traditional forms fresh and appealing.

Other forms of Social Dance, such as Merengue, Salsa, Swing, Bachata, and others are quickly developing their own codification but are still relatively free-form in application. In group settings, these dances have enough connection to their folkloric roots that they can be done as line dances, circle dances, couples' dance, and can even allow the possibility of solo spots. They are often included in Ballroom teaching, even though they are not yet part of the official professional Ballroom Dance canon.

Popular dances, such as Slam Dance, Disco Dance, Harlem Shake, Wobble, Twerking, Gangnam Style, the Dougie, and newer evolving forms of Hip-Hop are still relatively unstructured, idiosyncratic, and relatively free-form genres of dance. Even when done as a group or in a class, individual interpretations are the rule, and performances generally consist of individual spots in sequence, or some form of semi-structured improvisation. These trendy, popular dances tend to come into and out of fashion quickly. Other traits often associated with popular dance forms are not only the lack of structure or standards, but also the lack of discipline in the practitioners and in the execution of the steps. The dance steps tend to be informal, as are the practitioners. Until the dance and the practitioners become structured and disciplined, the dance form may never be codified and documented, and may soon be forgotten. This lack of structure may also be reflected in the teaching of the dances, where individual teachers basically teach their own style of the dance, and there is little or no consensus on how the dance evolved, what the basic steps are, how they are executed, what styles may reside within the dance or the range of acceptable movements for the dance.

Often the teachers themselves may be relatively unstructured in their teaching, unless they have other training to draw from. One Hip-Hop teacher commented that he thought many of his peers had not yet learned the discipline to teach the dance effectively. He attributed it to the fact that Hip-Hop dance was still relatively young, and its teachers were still relatively unstructured, undisciplined, and inexperienced in creating standards to teach Hip-Hop as an ongoing, evolving dance form.

This ordering exercise serves to demonstrate the range of structuring across different dance forms and gives a means of comparison when describing the individual groups. Ordering these well-known dance forms in terms of structure also offers a framework of structure to compare and contrast other aspects of the dance groups under investigation in this study.

It may also become apparent upon further perusal that there seems to be a correlation between the structuring of the dance form and the structuring of the dance groups that perform them. Although there may be variations based on the vision of the group leadership, how the dances are taught, the skill level of the students, and other such factors, the nature of the dance form can have a strong influence on how the dance group is organized, its mission, and how the practice is taught.

For example, Ballet tends to be hierarchical by nature. It evolved from court dances and the nobility at a time when carriage, posture, and position were considered synonymous with social status (Homans, 2010). During the reign of Louis IV, the nobility studied the proper posture and execution of steps, for one's position in the performance was, literally, one's social position in court (Homans, 2010). For this reason, Ballet quickly became codified, inscribed, documented, recorded, and taught as a curriculum and repertory. As a result, we have a clear history of the development of the dance over the centuries.

The remnants of this hierarchical social structure captured in the court dances can also be seen in the structure of the professional dance companies, where dance positions are highly structured and hierarchical, from ballerinas and soloists, down to the *corps de ballet*, interns, and often, a second-tier dance company. Additionally, since Ballet companies tend

to be demanding, highly disciplined, larger groups and more expensive to maintain, the support structure for these companies tends to be larger, more structured, and hierarchical, as well.

The more informal the dance, the flatter and more informal the dance group tends to be, with a correspondingly flatter and less formal (and less expensive) support structure. One can see that there is some correlation of dance structure to dance group structure and to dance group support structure. These structural differences between dance groups are challenging to quantify, as they are basically qualitative differences and may manifest slightly differently in each group.

Additionally, since these are two orthogonal dimensions, it is possible, theoretically, to be both formally structured and to do community outreach with participatory practice, although it is challenging. There is a natural tension between these dimensions, but they are not mutually exclusive. The composition and focus on structure or practice may differ from group to group. Much of these differences between groups involve how they originated, how are organized, their histories, resources, cultural influences, geography, and personalities of the participants. The key factor seems to be that each dance group finds an acceptable balance between the dimensions of reified structure and participatory practice that works for them. It is not a formula, but rather a dynamic balance that takes the various constituent ingredients into account, including resources, demographics, location, number of members, personalities, the surrounding community, and the dance genre itself.

Another complication can arise from the fact that even though the dance genre may be highly structured or unstructured, the way it is taught or applied in performance may have

the opposite quality. It is unusual for these to be in opposition, but there is evidence that this happens. For example, a youngish, professional Modern Dance group gave a performance and workshop at the Conservatory in recent years, which integrated Hip-Hop moves into its choreography and repertory. Normally, Hip-Hop is considered relatively free-form compared to more classical forms of dance. Yet in this case, the Hip-Hop choreography was codified, controlled, and hierarchical. Other younger professional dance groups are doing something similar by integrating Hip-Hop more and more into their mainstream dance curriculum and choreography.

As a counter-example, my mother felt it was important to teach Ballet to all students for purposes of “polish,” movement vocabulary, choreography, and communication. But because most of her students and performers were community dancers, not professional, she taught Ballet with a light touch. She tried to strike a balance between the structural aspects and actual practice of dance and always included an aspect of improvisation in her teaching.

It is important to note that there is not a “better” dimension, or “best” mix of the two dimensions. Both are important, and it is the balance of the two dimensions (reified structures and participatory practice) that is the crux of the issue. When these dimensions are in balance, then the dance group is more stable, yet more adaptable, more efficient with resources, more cohesive, with healthier interactions, and greater potential for longevity and legacy. The individual mix or proportions of these dimensions, however, may vary considerably from group to group.

It is possible to evaluate the various dance groups along common aspects of dance groups to see how they compare. The working list of aspects is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Aspects of Structure vs. Practice

Formal Reified Structures vs. Informal Participatory Practice

Private/Public: Private Performance Dance vs. Public Social Dance.

Performance/Education: Performance Mission vs. Education Mission.

Exclusion/Inclusion: Hierarchical Exclusion vs. Community Inclusion.

Formal/Informal Education: Structured Formal Education vs. Mentored Informal Education

Info Distribution: Inscribed Formal Information vs. Practice-based Informal Info.

Organizational Structure: Formal vs. Informal.

Aesthetic Direction: Upward (Airiness) vs. Downward (Earthiness).

Aesthetic Structure: Formal, Technical, precise, codified vs. Informal, Idiosyncratic, improvised, haptic.

It is useful to view these aspects of each dance group in relation to each other, rather than simply as a numeric rating. When checking with informants to confirm validity, it was more useful to speak to them in terms of ranking and ordering, rather than a numeric rating per se. That said, it is helpful and informative to establish a tentative scale to understand the scope of the differences. Each of these aspects will now be discussed in relation to each dance group. Numeric ratings, based upon a rating between 1 and 10, with 1 being the least, and 10 being the most, were assigned to help distinguish the differences among the dance genres. These ratings are also summarized in the appendices, and are graphed as two dimensions on an X-Y graph. Figure C19 in Appendix C shows a sample of one of the aspects from Table 3 to illustrate how the rating system was used in this investigation.

For the purposes of this analysis, the first six aspects are discussed together, because there are only minor differences between them. It was necessary to look at these aspects separately for each dance group. Once this was done, however, there was little added information by looking at each aspect separately. Thus, this analysis begins with the discussion of the first aspect, but folds the first six aspects together in discussing the differences between the groups. The aesthetics are discussed separately later.

In terms of being a dance group devoted mainly, for example, to private performances, such as concerts, or being primarily a group fulfilling a public social dance agenda, the groups varied, but strong parallels can be seen in the rankings according to the structure of the dance genre itself. As an example, the CBD Ballroom Dance group had annual presentations of students performing the Ballroom Dances they had learned, but this was considered part of the community outreach mission. Although the Ballroom curriculum was highly structured for teaching purposes, the style in execution of the steps was very tolerant. The emphasis was mainly on learning the material and participation, rather than some abstract mastery of “perfection” in the steps, as exists in Ballet. The students were not excluded or ranked in any way, and attendance and participation were encouraged, but not in a competitive manner. Alums were also encouraged to participate and the “recitals” were open to the public.

In contrast, the Mexican Folkloric group was exclusively generated to do public performances, especially for cultural festivals and events. Although they did not include social dancing within the performance or the group proper, the events they were involved with often included social dance as an added event, so a great deal of overlap occurred

because of the nature of the dance settings. The Balkan group was a mix of performance and social dance and was community oriented. The setting was often a cultural event, but just as often, an informal social dance and dinner event was the setting for the group to perform. The Balkan group was truly integrated, with a mix of live musicians, social dancers, group dances, and dance and music performance by students, all trained by Don Lipovac. The duties and roles of the participants often overlapped. The group was community-oriented, and in turn, was strongly supported by the surrounding community. Although they were not a professional performance group per se, their events often integrated both aspects of performance, as well as folkloric group dances in which anyone could participate: Ballroom Dances, other social dances, such as polkas and swing; and free-form popular dancing on the periphery. Whole families would attend these events and participate in the dancing.

In contrast, the CIM Classical Modern Dance Company, the ADC Ballet Dance group, and the KC Ballet Dance Company are all focused primarily on performance rather than social dance. Their respective community outreach programs are mainly educational in nature, rather than specifically social dance events, with occasional public performances. That said, these groups all depend heavily on community support for their respective agendas. Each has a supporting dance school attached to the performing group. The dance schools have their own concerts and recitals, in addition to the concerts given by the dance company itself. The sibling dance school then serves to create an audience for the professional-level dance company and may also serve as an informal feeder system for the dance company, if the students become professional dancers. The classes become relatively

structured by levels and formal curriculum, with a clear path for advancement as the students mature and gain skill and experience. Students must apply for coveted positions in the youth performance groups and must be accepted to the programs. Auditions are generally used to sort students into the appropriate levels and classes. Within this structuring, however, there are some differences. Again, these differences can be seen most clearly in relationship with each other, rather than as a simple numeric value, although a numeric rating can come close to quantifying the differences.

The CIM and ADC groups both depend heavily on direct contact and contributions from their members, their families and friends, and surrounding community. The intimacy with the participants and their families forms a closer connection that is much more informal than that seen at KCB. Parents and relatives of dance students may volunteer, contribute funding, attend events, assist with organizing performances, help with fundraising and costuming, and may also take adult dance classes. This level of participation, involvement, hands-on support, and intimacy resembles what was found in the folkloric dance groups, although in the latter, the participants were more intimately connected.

In contrast, in the latter institution, KCB, relations with students and their families are more formal, defined, official, and distant. Although students and families are often called upon for funding, class renewals, and support for performances, the relationships tend to be more distant and less intimate than in the other groups. Additionally, the training at KCB tends to be more formal, structured, hierarchical, and competitive. There are only a certain number of spots available in the academy, with even more competition for available scholarships.

In most of the groups, Board members had a direct relationship to the dance group, either as founders, founder family members, former members, parents or relatives of current members, through relationships with the founders, or being dancers themselves. Thus, the Board members often knew the students and participants well, and frequently by name. The KCB, a larger organization, had a greater number of Board members and other staff support who might not have connections to the members of the dance company. It would be unusual that they would know individual students by name or face, and they may never have met any of the dancers performing in the company. In fact, because it is a professional dance group, members of the dance company are often recruited outside of the Kansas City area and brought into the company as strangers. Thus, these recruited dancers are often not members of the local community. Many of the support staff may be former dance students, or lovers of dance in general, but may have never danced professionally or have any experience of dancing within a performance dance group.

On the whole, the more structured and hierarchical the dance group and the support staff, the more distance and detachment there was from the members of the group participating in the cultural practice of the dance. This detachment from the dancers can become problematic eventually, particularly if the Board and support staff make rules and policies in a top-down manner, without the experience or understanding of the needs of the dancers or of what is involved in the performance of the dance. This detachment and lack of coordination can also threaten the health and longevity of the dance group over time.

In general, the more structured and hierarchical the dance group is vertically, the broader the base supporting the group must be horizontally in order to stay in proportion.

Again, there had to be a certain balance between structure and participation. Too much structure without sufficient participation (or other supplementary resources) could result in the group's deterioration from within due to insufficient resources and members.

On the other hand, having many participants with little structure could also threaten the longevity of the dance group, through attrition, splintering, lack of common vision, and without a legacy of cultural memory to sustain its continuity. Without sufficient structure to hold members together, the dance group could dissipate and disintegrate.

It should be reiterated that the supporting organization for the dance group should be seen just as that: a grass-roots support system, and not as a management structure ruling over the dance group, as often happens. The energy and resources reside within the dynamic of the participant dancers, not in the organizational structure. When these priorities become confused, the dance group eventually suffers, and the whole organization becomes threatened. It is the dance practice itself and the members who participate who comprise the life-blood of the organization. When the structure becomes prioritized above the practice of the dance, the creative dynamic—and ultimately the entire organization— suffers.

The structure should be seen as below the practice, giving it support, rather than having the practice support the structure. When the structure becomes too prioritized, too unwieldy, it becomes a parasite that siphons off resources to support itself, (much the same as in any bureaucracy) rather than supporting the practice, the purpose for which it was originally created.

Again, the key factor to the health and longevity of dance groups seemed to hinge on the delicate, dynamic balance of reified structure with participatory practice. One was not

better than the other, for both dimensions are necessary for the health and well-being of the dance group. The particular balance required for each group seemed relatively individual, dependent upon the context, location, demographics, personalities, and the dance genre itself.

For example, the Ballroom group has been consciously building a support structure in order to create a legacy for itself. The goal of the group is to continue the teaching and community outreach by creating a legacy of cultural memory, support staff, teaching documents, curriculum, video recordings, and the like. Although the teaching has been relatively structured for some years, the supporting organization has largely been limited to the founders and adjunct support staff. In order to ensure continuity, the group needs to create new leaders and support staff to carry on the legacy and the mission of the founders.

Similarly, the Mexican Folkloric group has largely been led by the founders and the children of the founders. As these leaders are pulled away by their own families, careers, and priorities, the group has to cope with the resulting internal changes. Without a clear line of descent, the leadership of the group may come into question. But as long as it remains a family business, it will likely continue. The Balkan group had huge community support and participation at its height. However, the founders had no children or family members to continue the legacy. When the community became distressed in the wake of the September 11, 2001 tragedy, the group was left to fend for itself and suffered as a result. Later, when the community recovered, lack of cultural memory and continuity resulted in a splintering of resources and membership. As a result, the legacy is probably not as strong as it could have

been, had there been a clear line of descent of leadership. Intergenerational participation seems to be a key element in the longevity of dance groups.

The Classical Modern Dance group enjoyed relative success for about two decades, largely due to heavy involvement by the founders, continuity of membership within the performing group, and the engagement of the founders and members in management and board duties. Long years of participation and membership have helped the longevity of organization. However, again, without a clear line of descent for leadership, and with a constant turnover of participants over time, the group has been vulnerable to changes in the economy and community, which may prove threatening to the group in the future.

One of the Ballet groups, the KCB school and dance company, has enjoyed strong community support, generous funding from city leaders, and artistic distinction. Recently, the group was able to acquire a new, much larger location that was re-purposed for their use. Additionally, the group now has a large support system of paid staff and volunteers, which has enabled it to compete on the national stage with favorable recognition. Whereas in the past, support staff was more informal and more intimately involved with the organization's functions, with a newer, younger support staff, there have been many changes and additions. While this ensures the future of the group's home and consolidates many of the support functions, it has changed the nature of the group's context, constituency, and continuity.

That said, the organization is in danger of being unwieldy and bureaucratic, over-extending itself in economically volatile times, and not always making the participating dancers a priority. This is not meant as a condemnation of the organization, but rather as a potential parable of an unbalanced structure and practice relationship. The over-structuring

of the management system without the necessary expansion of its participatory base to support the group's future activities may prove challenging. The other extrapolation of this scenario is that the organization may end up draining the resources of other smaller dance groups in the area in order to support itself directly. It will be interesting to see how the group continues to evolve in this new setting, and conversely, how other groups in the area adapt to the new landscape of the dance community.

Of the dance groups investigated in depth, the ADC Ballet group seemed to have a good balance of structure and practice, including an intimacy with students' families, support of the surrounding community, and inclusion. The school and classes are structured, the students are good technically, yet the teaching is supportive and nurturing. Even within a competitive dance form, the directors attempt to be as inclusive as possible in classes and performances. The success of the group, however, is largely due to the efforts of the co-directors, who are professional dancers and a married couple, which may make them more aware of family connections. As such, they serve as role models for family participation in the organization's program and performances. Thus, the students and their families gain sufficient experience and insight to be active participants in the program, and the motivation and energy to see them manifest. Without a clear line of descent, however, it will be interesting to see how the group fares in the future.

Regarding this balance of structure and practice, there also seemed to be a relationship between the structural aspects of the dance genre and the structure of the dance group that evolved around it. The more structured the dance form, the more structured the

organization that supported the dance group. With this in mind, the aesthetics of the dance forms are now briefly considered.

Aesthetics of the Dance Genres/Forms

One of the challenges of classifying the various dance forms in this study was that each dance form has considerable range and variation within each form. Thus, this analytical discussion focuses on the broad strokes, using generalities within each form, to compare one form with another.

The two aspects of aesthetics considered here are those related first, to the structure or form of the body during the performance of a particular dance genre (including carriage, posture, and framing), and second, to the direction of the energy, dynamic, and orientation of the movement (see Table 4).

Table 4

Dance Genres by Aesthetic Structure

Dance Groups & Genres, Ranked by Structure		
Ballet, KCB	10/3	H/ML
Ballet, ADC	9/9	H/H
Classical Modern, CIM	8/8	MH/MH
Ballroom, CBD	7/8	MH/MH
Mexican Folkloric, GF	7/8	MH/MH
Balkan Folkloric, Tams	7/9	MH/H
Popular Dance	2/8	L/MH

In looking at a very structured dance, such as Ballet, the positions and directions are well defined and codified. Because of its early associations with aristocracy (Homans, 2010), the postures are upright, uplifted, and regal, with head, chest, and arms held high.

Movements are light-footed, elegant, and extended, often reaching upwards, with much vertical movement, and often representing ethereal creatures of the heavens, such as spirits, angels, birds, fairies, or ghosts (Homans, 2010). Embedded in the cultivation of the dance is also an emphasis on technique, mastery, excellence, and an ever-elusive pursuit of perfection (Homans, 2010).

If we use Ballet as the example of the pinnacle of structure as a dance genre and a dance aesthetic in both movement and posture, then we can use it as a reference point for comparison. At the other end of the spectrum, the improvisation, looseness, and idiosyncratic nature of popular dance would serve as a representation of an unstructured, practice-based dance genre. Often popular dances are “earth-bound,” performed with a low center of gravity, and with an idiosyncratic style.

The other genres discussed here would fit between these two example opposite poles. Again, as confirmed by informants, aesthetically, Ballet was considered the most structured, and popular dance the most unstructured. Next was Classical Modern Dance, although depending on the style or school performed, some of the movements can be earthy and heavy-footed. Ballroom Dance, from a competitive canon, would be next in structure, with a clearly defined posture, repertory of steps, frame, defined direction of movement, and stylistic conventions.

Generally, Folkloric would be ranked next in structure, being codified in style and step, but with more tolerance for technique in execution of the steps. Many folkloric styles are quite earthy, with a low center of gravity, horizontal patterns, stamping, and even a bent over posture. In the folkloric forms investigated for this study, most of the Mexican dances

were performed in a slightly bent-over posture that is common to the genre. Additionally, much of the emphasis and energy of movement was either downward stamping movements or horizontal and circular movements around partners or peers. The Balkan dances are generally performed in a more upright position, include a fair amount of stamping, horizontal movement, low center of gravity, and closeness to the ground, but with a high tolerance for idiosyncratic movement.

These are broad-stroke generalities, for within each of these genres there are choreographic exceptions and variations. For example, in Ballroom Dance, Waltzes are relatively light-footed and upward in emphasis, whereas Latin styles tend to be earthier and with a lower center of gravity, and performed in a heavy, flat-footed manner in order to emphasize the Latin hip-work. These variations still fall within the canon of an upright posture, frame, and controlled style of Ballroom Dance, illustrating how the variations are mediated according to the constraints of the genre. Thus, some license to use generalities is justified.

The point of this analysis of aesthetics is that the structural nature of the dance genre seems to have a relationship to the amount of structure the dance group assumes over time. The more structured the dance genre, the more structured the group's organization. There is a possibility that very structured training supports very structured hierarchical organization. Conversely, a tolerance for a certain amount of improvisation, variation, and idiosyncrasy may support a more tolerant, flatter, and adaptable organizational structure. Again, a balance of structure and practice seems to contribute to a more tolerant and adaptable organizational structure, which is generally healthy for the longevity of the dance group. It

is not that structure or practice are superior to each other, but rather that balance, the relationship between the two, seems to drive the creative dynamic, viability, and longevity of the dance group.

Summary of Attributes and Longevity of Dance Groups

Table 5 shows a summary of the attributes that sustain a healthy CoP and encourage its longevity. The balance of structure and practice sustains a dance group, but there are certain aspects or attributes that this balance entails that supports the longevity of dance group as a Community of Practice.

The first point that continues to manifest is that reified structures and participatory practice must be in balance. This balance, however, is relative to the individual dance group. The particular balance seems to depend upon an array of constituent features, including (but not limited to) the structure of the dance genre, the history of the group, the surrounding community, available resources, the form of leadership, and the personalities of the participants. The balance is also dynamic and may change over time, as changes occur in leadership, membership, the community, or political atmosphere. However other attributes manifest in the dance group, the balance between structure and practice seem key to the survival and longevity of the organization. These two concepts complement each other and must be in proportion with each other in order to stay dynamic. Much like the Yin-Yang concept, these concepts form a dynamic dialectic that stimulates creativity, adaptation, and an active form of homeostasis.

Table 5

Community of Cultural Practice Longevity Attributes Summary

Balance of Structure (Reification) & Participation (Practice): These dimensions complement each other; groups need both, but a balanced mix. Must be in proportion, depending on the needs of the particular group.

Participatory Practice: Shared activity; synchrony; repetition; bonding agent; if culture holds society together, it is cultural practice that is actual glue.

Light/Flexible Structure: Some social structure, but not over-structured.

New & Veteran Members: Infusion of new members, new generations, legacy for future; veteran members supply mentorship.

Levels of Participation: Flexible participation, different levels of participation for different levels of experience, interest, and stages of life; multiple roles.

Inter-generationality: Mix of ages; this guarantees stability, a history, and a legacy; informal cultural memory; mentoring; wisdom of experience; broad supporting base.

Diversity: Mix of experiences, backgrounds; more wisdom to bring to table; mix of classes; mobility; adds to diversity; skills available; adaptability.

Common Goals: common focus; common vision; common direction.

Traditions, rituals, festivals; purposeful events of display; formal cultural memory.

Leadership: Clear leadership with a clear line of descent/ascent, and clear legacy into the future.

Identity: Group and individual; identity based upon participation, not us-versus-them, that is based solely on token membership; participation defines membership.

Contact, Connections, Locality: Communication to inform membership and to interact with the community at large.

There must be a form of participatory practice for the group to perform. In this case, this study specifically investigates dance groups, but similar observations can be seen in other organized cultural activities (e.g., music, singing, sports, gaming, or cooking). The key point is that this is an embodied activity in which people physically engage with other humans. Dance further concentrates the experience of participatory practice with synchronous activity, coordinated in time and space, repeatedly, with other humans. This

repetition and synchrony create social bonding and lay the groundwork for expanded collaborations. It is often said that culture holds society together, but if this is true, then it is the cultural practices that act as the glue to hold people together, in spite of their differences.

The structures supporting the group and the participatory practice need to be light and flexible enough to allow the group to breathe and the practice to continue to develop. Too much structure can kill participation, create detachment from real needs, suffocate a group, and stifle creativity. Too little structure can cause anarchy, confusion, the diffusion of efforts, lack of cohesion, and wasted resources. The reified structures in a dance group include the codification of movement that occurs over time, the recording of repertory, the archiving of documentation, the accumulation of artifacts, and the formation of instructions, rules, protocols, traditions, and standards by which comparisons are made. These reified structures become central to how the organization evolves and how it utilizes its resources, including its goals, stated mission, and vision of itself in the context of the surrounding communities. These structures must be seen in the context of supporting the practice, rather than vice versa, as it is often portrayed in business settings. The practice is the energy that drives the formation of structure. Structure and practice operate best when interacting in a balanced context, supporting each other. If the structure becomes more important than the practice, it may risk becoming a detached, Kafka-like bureaucracy that seeks only to sustain itself, while ignoring the practice it was created to support. In order for a group to continue into the future, it needs enough structure to maintain organization and to keep efforts cohesive, but not so much that it stifles creativity in practice. An active practice, however, requires engaged participants.

In order for the group to continue into the future, there must be a mix of new and veteran members of the group. This mix is another key element in the longevity of the group. An infusion of new members is necessary so there is continued support, particularly as the membership may change over time, with some members aging out or dropping out due to family or career obligations. They may return to participate later if the opportunity is available. For this reason, it is helpful to have flexibility in the membership and in the forms of layers and levels of participation. By having a mix of veteran and novice members, there is a balance of energies that parallels the balance of structure and practice. The veteran members provide stability, training, vision, leadership, mentorship, and wisdom. The novice members provide fresh perspectives, youthful energy, raw talent, added resources, and instrumental support. Combined, the interaction of these members creates a line of descent, teachers in training, future leaders, and a robust legacy. For example, the CIM has a mix of ages in its different performing groups (Children's Dance Theater, Apprenticeship Company, and Professional Company), and offers classes for all ages, from pre-school to retirement age.

Having different, flexible levels of participation ensures that membership in the group is accessible and attainable, regardless of the level of expertise of the participant. Peripheral participation is important, for this allows people to engage in the group to the level that they are able, giving them access to the group, making the practice approachable, and creating opportunities for extended learning, mastery, and mentorship. Having levels of participation allows members to step up participation or scale it back, according to life demands, yet still be a part of the group and give the group support.

Related to the concept of levels is that of layering activities and allowing multiple roles within the group. As a participant, one can take on added duties and roles in order to sustain the group, and hence, sustain the practice. Having flexibility in role-taking allows the group to be more adaptive and yet maintain continuity. Role flexibility is also useful for informally training novice members through role modeling various duties needed by the group to sustain itself over time. For example, a participant may be a fundraiser or costumer in addition to being a dancer. As needs arise, flexibility in roles helps the group adapt to a changing landscape while maintaining its membership. Injured or disabled dancers, for example, may still participate in different roles, thus ensuring continuity and longevity.

Along these lines, inter-generationality, a mix of ages, is as important as having veteran and novice members. Having a mix of ages and generations is helpful for maximizing the use of resources and for sustaining a program of mentorship. Although we think of mentorship as going from the older to the younger, learning can actually go both directions. In some cases, the younger may have more expertise or may be veteran members, and the older members may be novices. The point of having a mix of ages, however, is that different generations can bring a broader range of skills, resources, and life experience into the group, which can strengthen the group's chances for longevity. A mix of ages gives a group more stability and support, even if participation is minimal or indirect. The mix of ages also guarantees a legacy for younger members, because of the appreciation of the value of legacy by the older members.

Similarly, diversity among the membership also gives the group more available resources, skills, and wisdom to bring to the table. Diversity allows the group to be more

adaptable, flexible, and creative. Diversity includes differences in backgrounds, ethnicity, skills training, life experiences, and family composition. Diversity also includes different social classes and income levels. Having a mix of social classes also helps the group to be more adaptable. Each income level has an awareness of instrumental skills, educational skills, and access to resources that can help with the continuity of group. Too much homogeneity can create “group think” and kill creativity, making the group less adaptive to changes and thus, short-lived. Diversity brings a variety of perspectives and skills to help ensure the dance group’s survival and its ability to thrive in the future.

In order to harness the advantages of diversity, group members need to share a common vision or set of goals. Because the nature of the dance groups is based on the participatory practice of dance, the practice itself creates a specific focal point. With repeated interactions, a common direction may emerge that can shape the group’s activities and their direction. Eventually, this focus and direction can become solidified and stated as more explicit goals, mission, and reason for being. Typically, these goals begin with an opportunity to perform and may serve to organize the group in service to that shared goal. A performance tends to narrow the focus even more, concentrating energies on manifesting the event and the instrumental tasks needed to make the performance happen. Another typical vision or mission for a dance group is education about the dance. Classes and performances can work hand in hand to support each other, as performances give students goals and stimulate interest, whereas the classes create the performers and the audiences for performances. The income from the classes can also serve to support the dance group, or at

least sustain the leaders of the group. Most dance groups are sustained by this duality of mission, that of performance and education.

Often performances begin with cultural festivals, community events, annual holidays, or ethnic traditions, but less commonly, they can also be community supported, organized entertainments for the public. Dance groups from a particular genre may periodically organize their own shows, festivals, or workshops in order to showcase performances and share ideas. Although open to the public, these kind of events may not be well known outside of the dance community that supports them. Some dance groups also create social events of their own that combine features of performance, impromptu lessons, and general social dance. These ad hoc events can themselves become their own traditions that unite participants, sometimes across different groups, allowing opportunities for participants to engage and interact in more specific ways.

Leadership, whether by a small group or an individual, is also essential for the longevity of dance groups. Usually, the leadership duties are distributed among two or more people, even if only one person is identified as the official leader. Often, there is a couple or husband-wife team with one person identified as a founder or leader, and the partner assuming a support role and auxiliary leadership tasks. This kind of arrangement is convenient, since leadership is clearly recognized, but the responsibilities are then shared. Also, with couples, there are often offspring or extended family members who can be pressed into service when needed to help with leadership or event responsibilities. Group leadership can be a mixed blessing, depending on how it is handled. The advantages are added support, resources, perspectives, and sharing of responsibilities. The disadvantages

may be politics, competition, conflicts, and differences in vision. Joint leadership works out best, however, if each group leader has a particular area of expertise and responsibility, making the roles slightly different. In this way, they still are able to overlap responsibilities when needed and maintain a common goal or vision, yet minimize conflict. This joint approach is also useful for creating leaders-in-training. A mentorship path for cultivating future leaders is also essential for the continuity of a dance group. It is also particularly helpful if the mentorship path ascension and the leadership descent are transparent to the rest of the membership. This helps unify the group, maintain continuity, and ensure stability of the group's activities.

For similar reasons, membership in the group is necessarily defined by participation and engagement in the practice of dance and its related instrumental, supportive activities. Self-identification becomes based upon one's own participation with the practice of dance. Identification with the group becomes based upon the interactions and engagement with the group in general. It is important to note that membership and identity based upon participation is different from token membership or self-identification without being vested in the activity. This sense of identity is embodied and integrated into the self-image of the individual, creating a much stronger bond than just a token association with the group. Also, because membership and self-identification are based upon participation and interactions, the identification remains more flexible, dynamic, and malleable than a simplistic "us-versus-them" perspective. Members self-select themselves into the group, or de-select themselves out of the group, based upon commitment, energy invested, and time available, rather than as a result of a hard and fast rule about membership.

That said, some groups are more competitive and professionalized and thus require an audition or periodic fees to continue official membership. This does not, however, eliminate the possibility of alternative forms of participating in the group. Participation defines the membership or type/level of membership. Regardless of the level of membership or participation, identification with the group is generally a point of pride for most participants, who often profess increased self-confidence as a result of the association.

Finally, a means of contact and communication with the participants is extremely important for the longevity of a dance group. Many of the groups depend almost exclusively on participation as the venue for contact with members, but this narrow form of communicating, although important, has limitations. Having contact with a broader range of participants at all levels, as well as past participants, helps to maintain a broader base of support for the group. Active members may come and go, depending on work and family obligations, necessitating temporary withdrawal from active participation. With websites, newsletters, mailing lists, fliers, emails, phone trees, and texting, peripheral participants can be kept informed of events and opportunities for limited participation. Frequently, these peripheral participants may again become more involved or may bring other friends or family members into the group. These peripheral participants may also be a source of funding in times of need. Communication also serves as a form of participation itself, further underscoring a sense of identification with the group.

Longevity Attributes of the Studied Dance Groups

Although this is not an absolute or exhaustive list of attributes, this taxonomy illustrates what qualities should be considered when looking at the longevity of a dance

group. Each dance group had these qualities in some respect or amount, at some time or another in their lifespan. How they manifested and juggled these qualities in relation to each other, however, was unique to each group, depending on their contexts, situations, resources, and locations. The following paragraphs describe how each dance group fares with each of these attributes.

Again, it is important to emphasize that it is primarily the balance of structure and practice that drives most of the dance groups' longevity. Also, each dance group creates its own profile of this balance that matches the needs, resources, type of dance, and personalities of the group members. These comparisons make the most sense when looking at the dance groups in comparison with each other, rather than with an absolute numeric measure.

With this in mind, the Kansas City Ballet is used as comparison group, based upon public documentation, press releases, website documentation, and public performances, as an example of a local, professional-level Ballet company. Informants seemed to agree that the KCB was a good representation of professional-level Ballet, both in practice and in structure. Thus, the KCB is a useful benchmark for comparison, as a dance form and as a dance organization.

Applying this taxonomy to the KCB, it is a highly structured dance form, and that structure is also reflected in the organization. The KCB was the largest and most professional dance group in the study, as well as one of the oldest. In its most recent iteration, KCB is very hierarchical as a dance company, as most professional Ballet companies are, and also very hierarchical as a dance organization. There are numerous

layers and levels in the group, both within the dance company and within the staff and operations of the organization. For an organization as large and structured as KCB, the vertical structure must be in balance with the horizontal base of the organization in order to support its programs and performances. As a result, the KCB has expanded its classes and programs to include greater numbers, and it moved into a larger facility in 2011 to accommodate its expanded goals. Over the years, KCB has also cultivated an auxiliary school in a relatively wealthy suburb, which now has a substantial enrollment, in addition to its base of operations in midtown Kansas City. The new facility houses the Academy students (whose position in the Academy required an audition), the regular studio students (who may be any age or level and may take a variety of classes), the KCB operations staff, the professional dance company, the artistic staff, the box office, and public relations personnel, all under one roof. The new facility has one large studio, which is usually reserved for the professional company classes and rehearsals, and which also doubles as a performance space. Additionally, it has five smaller studios, which are available for other classes.

The KCB has an opportunity for different levels of participation from members of the community, either directly in official staff positions, or as dance students, professional members of the company, faculty, administration, or volunteers. However, because of the size of the organization, many of the participants may never meet or know each other. Thus, a certain amount of detachment is embedded within the organization, even though there are also many long-time supporters who have a connection with dance.

The organization's mission and vision for the future is clearly posted in press releases, on the website, and in references within the facility itself, including photographs, displays, and other artifacts. The goals and mission are often paraphrased and reiterated at performances and dance events, giving the organization direction, cohesiveness, and focus for accomplishing these goals. The performances and programs afford opportunities for traditions and cultural memory within the organization, including a Fall concert, a Spring concert, the annual *Nutcracker* over the holidays, and abbreviated Summer programs.

Each season or semester offers dance classes for different age groups, although the majority of the students are young. The staff also has a mix of ages, although the staff has increasingly become younger and are often ex-dancers. There is some diversity (e.g., ethnicity, race, and social position), but not as much as in other types of dance groups. The organization is largely led by a small group of males in administrative positions and a large base of females in staff, faculty, and support positions, all predominantly Caucasian. Many of the funders and supporters are high-profile corporations, city leaders, and wealthy individuals, but there are many middle class supporters as well. There is a constant infusion of new members, who often outnumber veteran members, in the organization and the company.

The organization has good relationships with the media to promote dance events, and it maintains a large mailing list of supporters, which are kept up to date in both print and online. Promotional items are sold in the facility that self-identify the owner as a supporter of KCB, in general, and as a dancer specifically. Many of these promotional items (e.g.,

t-shirts, handbags, hair bubbles, and workout wear) are emblazoned with the KCB trademark, the word “dancer” or “Ballet,” in the traditional Ballet colors of pink and black.

There is formal cultural memory in the form of archives and recording, but informal cultural memory and mentoring may be intermittent and inconsistent. The classes and the company tend to be competitive for the participants (demonstrating exclusivity rather than inclusiveness), with an emphasis on auditions, a limited number of positions available, and a hierarchical standard of performance based upon the Ballet canon. The organization has strong leadership and a clear line of descent, but these are paid positions which are filled by staff selected by Board members and administration. Selection often done via a nationwide search rather than by utilizing local participants who have risen through the ranks. The professional dancers in the company may also have been selected by administration as a result of auditions that attract dancers from around the world. As a result, the dancers may have little connection with the locality and may not know each other well before working together.

Similarly, the American Dance Center dance group is relatively structured and relatively hierarchical, with a broad base of participation. However, this organization is smaller, more local, and more flexible in comparison to the KCB. The school offers professional training and a semi-professional experience in performance for its students, yet it maintains the intimacy and closeness of a smaller facility and hands-on participation by the leaders. The directors of the organization have local roots as well as professional dance experience. They thus can offer a great deal of first-hand mentorship and know their dance students personally. The directors assume a number of roles in the organization, including

administration, teaching, costuming, managing, choreographing, and producing events. The school is welcoming to families, with many of the family members participating in support roles for the school and the performances. Often siblings will take dance classes concurrently at different levels. Despite the competitive, structured, hierarchical nature of the dance (Ballet), the mood during classes and rehearsals tends to be nurturing, supportive, and inclusive, and classes often include stories from the directors' own experiences. The directors also make a point to connect lessons learned in dance with important life lessons and social skills, giving the dance students a broader perspective of the cultural practice they share. The ADC has a performance schedule similar to that of KCB, offering its own Spring, Fall, and Holiday concerts, including its own version of an annual performance of *The Nutcracker*, which is done in collaboration with the local suburban symphony. There is some diversity among participants, as reflected by the suburb where the school resides, but they are still largely middle class and Caucasian. Many of the participants stay with the school for years, although some new members are added each year. Rehearsal-wear is generally much more informal, compared with the KCB organization, and communications about the group are posted but not highly promoted, as they are at KCB. The organization has strong leadership in the directors and strong support from the families and friends of the dance students, and the organization's goals are shared by all. The directors also make a point to include several levels of students within each performance, creating a mentoring and ascension path. Peer coaching is common during rehearsals, and collaboration is encouraged. Communications and identity seem to be more dependent on participation, however, rather than solely by mailings or merchandise.

The City In Motion dance organization is a Classical Modern Dance group that often attracts local graduates of the Conservatory of Music and Dance as faculty, staff, and performers. The dance genre, curriculum, and choreography are not quite as structured as those of the Ballet groups, particularly since Classical Modern Dance has a strong tradition of improvisation embedded in the training, yet the professional company, the apprenticeship company, and Children's Dance Theater have a structured training that takes students from toddlers to adult performers in a smooth path of progression. Although not as structured as the other two groups previously discussed, CIM has a strong foothold in the local dance community, a history of three decades (since 1985), and it has been a leader in creating opportunities for local Modern Dancers to perform, choreograph projects, teach, and gain organizational experience.

CIM is also very "approachable" as an organization, offering classes to both serious dancers and non-dancers alike. Located in the middle of the city, the students and faculty tend to be more diversified in race, ethnicity, and income level than in the other organizations, and they try to do more with fewer resources. The school is greatly dependent upon the work of volunteers who may work in exchange for dance lessons, either for themselves or for their children. Despite limited resources, the school manages to maintain an accomplished faculty of approximately 25-30 teachers, and to teach around 200 students per week during most of the year. Additionally, the organization presents a number of annual performances, ranging from the dance company's professional spring concert, an adjudicated choreographer's showcase, the Apprenticeship Company concert, the Children's Dance Theater concert, several shows in the annual Fringe Festival, and a very popular free

outdoor dance concert held in a midtown park, featuring professional and popular forms of dance as a family event. CIM also offers the most diverse roster of classes in the area, in addition to its mainstream technique classes (e.g., Ballet, Jazz, Classical Modern Dance). The more diverse classes include adult Tap, West African, Flamenco, Salsa, Swing, Hip-Hop, Dance Exercise, Kung Fu, Belly Dance, East Indian Dance, Brazilian folkloric, and World Dance Fusion, among others. These “specialty” classes are advertised as being for teens and adults of all ages, using the catch-phrase “Dance for Every Body” to indicate that all levels, ages, and body types are welcome. These classes are often family-oriented and inclusive.

Structure and participation is relatively balanced at CIM. Although less structured than the two Ballet organizations, it still has a recognizable structured approach to the company, the auxiliary companies, the school, the curriculum, and the performances. It probably does not have quite the community support and outreach that are maintained by the ADC Ballet group or the folkloric group, but is likely much more engaged with the community directly and is more approachable and more inclusive than the KCB organization.

CIM has a clientele that includes a larger demographic of lower-income students compared to the other organizations, due to its location, modest studio facility, and small advertising budget, resulting in fewer resources and reserves. Because of the broad variety of classes, there is also more diffusion and diversity in the clientele, so it is often more difficult to focus advertising, marketing, and promotional efforts. Teachers often simply promote their own classes, and either pay a flat rental fee or take a percentage of the class

income. Approximately two-thirds of the school's income derives from these more diverse specialty classes, and one-third of the income is from the more traditional technique classes. The specialty classes often have a large turnover, whereas the students in the technique classes tend to return year after year.

The technique teachers are paid differently (per-capita pay rate) than the specialty teachers (percentage), and they are paid more often (every two weeks versus once a session). Their pay is guaranteed regardless of attendance or tuition paid, and often more money is paid out to the technique teacher than is brought in by the class tuition. Some teachers teach both kinds of classes and are paid for each class accordingly. Teachers, however, are given a great deal of latitude in the use of studio space and other such benefits.

The studio has a good reputation in the dance community for promoting quality dance to the public. All of these attributes makes the studio seem grass-roots, which endears the organization to its regular participants, but this makes efforts to gain resources rather diffused as well. Because of the diffusion issue, there is often a detachment between much of the clientele, the administration, and the goals of the organization as a whole. That said, the school promotes inclusive participation in dance, many levels of participation, flexible structures, visible traditions, some mentoring (in the auxiliary companies), much diversity, inter-generationality, and a mix of new and veteran members.

Although there are common goals that would benefit the entire organization, because of the diffusion issue, this common vision becomes weaker for the specialty teachers, who are not central to the organization. Leadership and communication tends to be intermittent, with lack of continuity from one leader to another due to the lack of resources. There is no

clear line of descent or training for legacy leadership into the future. Although the dancers have a high sense of identity with their respective companies, the diverse specialty classes do not. Often, the specialty students become loyal to an individual teacher rather than to the organization itself and may follow that teacher to another venue. The organization does remarkably well adapting to economic changes, and it is creative in making its limited resources stretch in order to pursue its mission of bringing quality dance to the public.

The Mexican Folkloric group, Grupo Folklorico, has made the dance group virtually a family business. The founder's sons and their families have managed to keep the group going for decades, serving as students, performers, and teachers. As a neighborhood dance group, there were close connections to the immediate community and a tradition of several generations of participants. As students grew up and had their own children, they would bring their children back to participate in the classes and performances.

Because it is a family project, the organization has a flatter structure, with students, their families, and the teachers all have intimate and direct relationships. Often the teachers know the students' families and may have shared the community with them for years. Many of the elderly family members of the students volunteer to help with instrumental tasks, which is an invaluable resource to the organization. The group collaborates closely with other groups in the neighborhood for fundraisers, cultural events, and community projects. The founder's family has also been involved in neighborhood and community activities and responsibilities, which indirectly creates opportunities for the dance group to perform and to gain financial support. The organization is probably stronger in participation and

community outreach than it is in formal structure, but the structure is sufficient to ensure the continuation of the group.

Opportunities for participation at various levels, inter-generationality, mentoring, and diversity are high. There are also many annual traditions and cultural events for participants to engage in, and there is a strong sense of identification with both the dance group and the cultural group. This is another group that has limited resources, but it has a devoted following. Communications tend to be intermittent, but as long as one is participating, one is informed. There is little formal information available, however, to those who are not participating in some way. Although the mission is not formal, the major focus of the group is to perform for cultural events and to maintain the group's activities. These goals seem sufficient to keep the group solvent and to maintain a strong base of supporters.

The Balkan group had the most integrated program, which successfully sustained it for decades. Like the Mexican group, it was deeply rooted in the neighborhood and local community, another ethnic enclave of immigrants interested in perpetuating the music, songs, and dances of the country of origin, and who viewed this cultural activity as a path to higher education. The group was spearheaded by the founders and run essentially as a family business. Similar to the Mexican group, families of the students were strong supporters at all levels, financially, politically, and instrumentally. There were a variety of annual cultural events that gave participants an opportunity to engage in and perform for the public. The mission was directed at sharing the cultural practice, educating students, and sustaining the group. Similar to the Mexican group, the organization was stronger in

participatory practice than in formal structure as an organization, with more emphasis on community outreach than hierarchy.

The Culture through Ballroom Dance group was also a multifaceted group, mainly based on the range of activities by the founders, which often overlapped to allow for cross-pollination of students and events. Although the organization, by name, is focused on a program of teaching children Ballroom dance in public schools, the founders of the organization also teach in colleges, community centers, and other venues, and their students range from teens to older adults. College-aged, older students, and former students become potential teachers-in-training for the children's program in the public schools. The founders make a point to overlap their events so students from various locations, former students, and their friends and families are all invited to participate in seasonal events, which are usually end-of-semester dances in which current students demonstrate their mastery of the material. Because of this overlapping, there is a mix of ages and generations, as well as a mix of levels of expertise in an open forum. Different dance activities or dance games are introduced in order to mix up the partnering of the participants so they all get to know each other. More experienced dancers also try to make sure that novice dancers are partnered and have an opportunity to take a turn on the dance floor. As a result, informal mentoring is engaged, with former students and experienced dancers coaching novice dancers, and making sure that everyone has the opportunity to participate.

There is a similar year-end demonstration for the children's program, which is held in conjunction with an area orchestra concert in which all of the area public schools come together to present their music. This demonstration gives the children in the CBD program

an opportunity to demonstrate the various Ballroom and social dances they have learned, and it allows friends, families, and school officials to see the children perform. The annual demonstration gives the young students a goal and a challenge to work towards, which heightens interest and excitement. For these children, many of whom are from low-income, inner-city homes with limited resources, this is the first opportunity they have to demonstrate mastery, to perform in public, and to be recognized for their efforts. Community members supportive of the program donate clothes and shoes for the children to wear during the demonstration, since many have few resources for appropriate dance-wear. Written feedback collected at this event from the students and their guardians indicated that both the children and adults found the experience exciting, educational, and worthwhile.

This brief overview of the dance groups in relation to the CoP Longevity Attributes is revealing, but the most informative use of the attributes is a comparison of the groups to each other, rather than on an absolute scale. For example, both Ballet groups have highly structured dance genres and hierarchy, but ADC seems to have a closer connection to the surrounding community, more informal, nurturing relationships with students, and a flatter structure than KCB. KCB is a much larger organization, but the growth of the organization has simply expanded many of the trends observed early in the organization, and the current mission and goals closely reflect the stated perspectives of the founder. By the same token, ADC operations tend to reflect the perspectives of the current directors, which may change as the directors are replaced, since there is no clear line of descent for new leaders.

Similarly, the CIM school has changed over the decades from an exclusive focus on Classical Modern Dance to a diverse array of dance classes. In fact, two-thirds of the

school's income is now derived from these diverse dance classes, and one-third of the class income comes from Classical Dance technique. This change reflects the perspectives of the school director, who has an appreciation of diversity and cultural dance. The dance company, however, remains one of the best known Classical Modern Dance companies in the area and is still considered a leader in the community. The commitment to community outreach has remained a constant, largely due to the continued participation of veteran members and their families. As these members continue to age out of heavy participation, however, future leadership may be at risk. The mentorship and training of future leaders and directors might be a wise consideration for both ADC and CIM, to ensure continuity. Since the KCB now competes on a national stage, it is likely they will continue to select upper administration from national candidates rather than local talent.

The Mexican Dance group has maintained high interest, support, and participation among family members and extended family, many of whom still live in the immediate community. Additionally, because it is an ethnic immigrant dance form, learning the dance is still considered an important cultural experience for the members of the community, and it is strongly supported by the surrounding community. As a family business, the group has enjoyed continuity in leadership, inter-generational participation, and a clear line of descent in leadership. Family members step up to help or lead, as needed. As members age out, relocate, go to college, or start new families, however, that continuity may be at risk.

Similarly, the Balkan group enjoyed strong local ethnic community support for several decades. Yet, through neighborhood changes through attrition, politics, economy, demography, and geography, that support waned in the last decade. Without an extended

family or clear line of descent, generational factors, combined with personality differences, disrupted the continuity of the group, causing a splintering of mission, leadership, and cohesion and resulting in separate groups with overlapping goals. These groups still work together, but the efforts do not seem to be as cohesive or as widely supported as was the case in the past, and often seem to “reinvent the same wheel” by duplicating the efforts of the past rather than building on them. This situation may, in time, however, work its way through into a new path for the future.

Conclusions of Grounded Theory Method Analysis

The conclusions of this extensive and extended study include confirmation of the hypothesis that participation in dance can and does shape social behavior and social action. Additionally, the structures of dance aesthetic or genre seem to shape the way the dance organization itself becomes structured. The more structured the aesthetic, the more structured the organization.

More broadly, it was apparent that these dance groups as Communities of Cultural Practice provided important yet overlooked and unappreciated social training. The interactions with others during dance helped to build social skills, at the very least. More importantly, however, the negotiation of time and space with humans, in the pursuit of a common goal of dance performance, quickly morphed into coaching actions, helping actions, and collaborative skills. This is not to say that these negotiations were always smooth, friendly, or even polite. But despite any conflicts or tensions, differences would be worked out and resolved, in order to move the performance forward. As participants became more experienced at working with each other, and especially with appropriate role

modeling and nurturing, collaborative skills improved, along with the dance skills, enabling more performances and smoother collaborations.

This informal training, especially in these community-based, culturally-oriented dance groups, creates an opportunity to build social skills, social support systems, collaborative skills, partnership networks, and an array of miscellaneous skill sets. CoPs such as these dance groups can be centering to the members, stabilizing for their surrounding communities, and a source of pride to the various levels of participants. These CoPs can create concrete laboratories for people to try out new activities, learn new skills, get job training, and develop organizational experiences. As much as we promote formal higher education, these informal learning communities offer an often overlooked resource of useful experiences and skills training, including collaborative and social skills.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Conclusions, Summary, and Review

This series of analyses attempts to demonstrate, through the embodied cultural practice of dance, evidence of the physical negotiation of time and space with others, and how these actions shape social interactions and social structures. These analyses range from the development of Self negotiating time and space and the interaction of the Self with others (both in the G. H. Mead theoretical tradition), to the interaction of dancers within an organized group as Communities of Practice, the shaping of interactive behaviors and social structures through the activity of dance, and ultimately, to a new theory connecting the structural aesthetics of dance with the social structure of the dance organizations.

To summarize, this dissertation examined the embodied cultural practice of dance among several groups in the Kansas City area that practice different types of dance as Communities of Practice, as outlined in the Lave-Wenger model of CoP. The Lave-Wenger model uses a dialectic of reified structures and peripheral participation to explain social learning and innovation within these groups. In this case, the form of CoP under investigation is a Community of Cultural Practice, i.e., dance groups.

The range of dance groups investigated included the dance genres of popular dance (Hip-Hop), folkloric dance (Mexican and Balkan Folkloric), social dance (Ballroom Dance), classical Modern Dance, and Ballet. Five dance groups, all in the Kansas City area, were investigated directly, and two groups were used as reference points, based upon archival documentation and informal interviews. These groups included El Grupo Folklorico

Atotonilco (Mexican Folkloric Dance), the Kansas City Kansas Tamburitzans (Balkan Dance), Culture through Ballroom Dance (Social and Ballroom Dance), City in Motion Dance Theater (Classical Modern Dance), American Dance Center (Ballet Dance), and Kansas City Ballet (Ballet) and a loosely-organized group of Hip-Hop dancers (Popular Dance). The two latter groups were used as a reference points for the other dance groups.

Because the activity under study was the embodied practice of dance and there were limited theoretical precedents in this area of sociology of dance, Grounded Theory Methodology based on qualitative data was deemed to be the most appropriate approach. Data were collected from participant observation, interviews, archives, cable TV shows, websites, and published materials. Archival documentation included photographic and video materials, as well as survey data available for secondary analysis. The investigator had a long history of experience with these dance genres and dance groups.

The major research question investigated in this study was whether or not dance can shape human interactions and social structures, and if so, how? Although dance was specifically investigated, many of the findings could be generalized to other embodied forms of physically-based cultural practices, such as drill, music, sports, and gaming.

By examining these dance groups, certain social processes were consistently observed, including:

1. Similarities in dance practice across groups led to similar social practices and processes.

2. The repeated negotiation of time and space with others served as a model of interactions between Self and others and developed a social skill set that enabled a system of mentorship and working on collaborative projects.

3. Differences in dance genre aesthetic structure were associated with different forms of CoP structure and organization.

4. Certain factors and attributes of the CoPs contributed to the dance group's robustness and longevity.

5. The balance of structure and practice were crucial to the health of the organization.

6. Repeated collaborations enabled the escalation of larger collaborations among the members of the group, both within the group and possibly beyond the group.

Findings included similarities across all groups based upon dance practice that resulted in a consistent progressive process of social interactions. Based upon observations, a taxonomy was created to classify and describe these social interactions. In brief, the negotiation of time and space required by the embodied practice of dance shaped individual social interactions into increasingly cooperative and collaborative activities. These processes were often, but not always, harmonious, but usually contributed to the acquisition of a social skill set that projected beyond the bounds of the dance activities and dance groups. These cooperative activities within collaborative dance projects included learning social skills, mentorship, role models, instrumental activities, social support, helping behaviors, and social bonding.

The findings also included differences among the groups regarding social structure and organization of respective CoPs that corresponded to dance genre. As was the

taxonomy, these findings were based upon Grounded Theory Methodology and revealed the differences between dance groups. Findings indicated that the more structured the dance aesthetic of the dance genre, the more structured and hierarchical the organization of the dance group tended to be. The structure reflected the composition of the dance group.

Another set of findings indicated that certain components and attributes of the dance groups were associated with the dance CoP's robustness, innovation, growth, stability, continuity, and longevity. In addition to the particular attributes, a key finding was that the balance of structure and practice within the dance group CoP was crucial to the group's robustness and longevity, but that balance was relative to the individual group's particular needs and composition.

What Was Learned from the Research

This research was made challenging by the need to document subtle shifts in behavior and actions that were often overlooked by casual observation or taken for granted as trivial, that accumulated into dramatic changes in how people interacted with each other over short periods of time. What is being taught in the dance groups is, ostensibly, dance practice, yet what is being learned is much more; i.e., an efficient system of interactions that is perpetuated, not only within the group, but more broadly, into the community at large.

The CoP model effectively describes a system of mentorship, peripheral participation, and information transmission that explains both how cultural memory is transmitted, as well as integrating innovation within traditions to keep it fresh, relevant, and adaptable. This research was intended to expand the model into more dimensions (e.g., through time and space and scaled from individuals to groups), as well as to present a

taxonomy of components by which a CoP could be analyzed in more detail. It is hoped this taxonomy will also be useful to others in studying groups and cultural practices.

Shils theorized that traditions, rituals, and shared experiences helped to create civility and social cohesion even if these traditions or rituals were manufactured or created artificially to suit a public service or goal (Shils, 1957, 1958, 1971; Shils & Janowitz, 1948; Stolzman, 1974). Putnam (2000) put forth a similar theme, including simple local activities such as bowling, sports, and day-to-day activities, along with large-scale traditions, in defining social cohesion in order to sustain community, and lamenting their loss in an increasingly technological world. This research attempted to add a means to document and analyze “traditional” and community activities into measurable components that can be tracked and recorded for further study, to determine what works to create social cohesion, how it does so, and why.

Sherif (1966; Sherif et al., 1954/1961), in the Robbers Cave Experiment, the famous series of studies of conflict and cooperation, demonstrated that working in cooperation with a rival group towards a common goal could dramatically change interactions and relationships, counteracting previous rivalries and prejudices. This dissertation research attempted to define the dynamics by which this shift in relationships occurs and to systematize them in a measurable way, to aid future research.

These previous scholarly works did not address the detailed aspects of negotiating time and space of an individual with others within a social ecology, including the aspect of mentorship. Information transmitted without this combination of factors is much less effective, making the lessons learned much more shallow. The negotiation of time and space

makes lessons learned more relevant and concrete, even if they are below the level of conscious awareness. Much of our communication is symbolic and metaphorical, based upon the concrete and mundane experiences of everyday life (Johnson 1990, 2008; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). These metaphors of life may be so common that they escape conscious awareness, unless we pay particular attention to them. The fact that these metaphors may lie below conscious awareness does not detract from the power of the concentrated information they carry. In fact, their subtlety may add to the impact and hold they have over humans, how they communicate, how they identify themselves, and how they communicate that identification (Johnson, 1990, 2008; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

Dance is a multi-modal, integrated form of learning. It is very concentrated, combining aspects of the majority of the senses (visual, aural, tactile, spatial, and kinesthetic), as well as concrete and abstract modes of thought. Because of this combination of factors, learning through dance can provide subtle yet important lessons concerning the social ecology of life. It can create reference points and a foundation for further learning that may appear totally unrelated to dance. Many of these lessons provide powerful social learning, but other lessons may be of a more abstract nature. For example, layered upon the lessons learned from the negotiation of time and space to create formations and patterns with others, younger students may learn more abstract lessons related to numbers, counting, arithmetic, symmetry, geometry, and aspects of calculus (e.g., distance, time, rate of speed, working in three- or four-dimensional space). Students may also learn about history, cultural context, and genealogy. Older students may learn about technology, physics, leverage, and tools in order to prepare for a performance. Older and younger students may also learn

practical skills pertaining to business, community, advertising, promotion, writing, budgeting, planning, and logistics as involvement with the dance group continues. This was true in my own life and was also apparent in the lives of many of the other dancers with whom I interacted during the study.

The activity of dancing changed the interactions and relationships of the participants. Through dancing, participants learned a system of interactions and social skills that enabled them to cooperate and collaborate in larger scaled projects, ranging from a single piece of choreography, to performances, to community-wide festivals, including the instrumental tasks required to produce such events. Social structures were put in place to support the group and these efforts. Typically, these social structures were shaped along the same lines as the aesthetic structure of the genre of dance.

This is not to say that everyone got along all the time as dance participants, but rather that people learned to collaborate for a common goal, despite their differences with others. This is not to say that similar lessons cannot be transmitted in other ways, via other activities or other interactions. Similar cases can be made for ritual, sport, gaming, music, military-style drill, and even online interactions. However, based on this dissertation research, I would argue that dance (particularly social and community dance) has the potential for transmitting and teaching the skills of collaboration much more effectively than these other activities for several reasons.

The negotiation of time and space is a physical, embodied experience that creates a concrete reference and a metaphor for future interactions and communications. This embodied negotiation of time and space is also important in the development and cohesion

of the Self, as described by G. H. Mead (1925, 1934) and Piaget (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969). Dance not only is useful in defining the Self, but also in defining the group as an extension of the Self. In studies of peri-personal space and body schema, the body image can be extended to include tools within its field of perception, including other people. In dance formations, it is common to simultaneously experience the dance both as an individual participant and as a group focused upon a common goal. This experience of dance as “greater than the Self” is part of what makes formations work. This shared goal is not typically a competition (although it can be for specific events), or a win/lose proposition such as in most sports, military-style drill, or gaming situations. Rather, participation in the dance is a shared, synchronous, physical, concrete experience.

The negotiation of time and space in dance defines the Self in concrete terms, not only in relation to the immediate environment but in relation to the Group. The Individual Self and Group Self need not subsume one another, but rather can strengthen and support both Self and Group identification and cohesion, simultaneously and without conflict, through interaction. Dancing allows time and space for individual existence and expression within the support of a group activity. The flexibility of dance roles enables the flexibility and cohesion of Self.

Working with a community of dancers enables participants to be, literally, connected with every other person in the group. The social structures that arise from such connectedness tend to be more effective and relevant to the longevity of the dance group. When connectedness deteriorates and detachment occurs, the structure becomes more bureaucratic, more hierarchical, more oppressive, and less effective, often leading to

inequalities and conflicts. These conflicts may ultimately lead to the demise or splintering of the group.

The point is that this connectedness is based upon an embodied experience of literally physically connecting with other humans, negotiating time and space with them, sharing time and space with them, and creating a collaborative goal of synchronous movement with them. The cultural practice of dance becomes the medium and the place in which the Self is continually refined, where relationships are honed, collaborative social skills are taught and learned, and social roles are adapted as needed. In these community dance groups, people ostensibly come to learn dances, but they also learn life lessons that have much broader application and importance. These are the life lessons that enable us as humans to survive, nurture, adapt, and perpetuate as a species.

What Is Unique about Dance? Why Is this Important?

Dance is a physical, embodied cultural practice that gives an immediate, phenomenological, multi-sensory experience that leaves a powerful impression upon the body, mind, and psyche. Through the negotiation of time and space within the social ecology, one learns profound lessons of physical and social connection that shape the Self, form schema, create peri-personal space references, communicate social and cultural information, and create a vehicle for multi-modal and integrated learning.

Music and dance entail physical, concrete connections with other humans, creating affiliation. They not only reconnect us to the Self, but to Others as well, by the very act of performing. Music and dance create order in the mind, body, psyche, and group, in order to manifest the practice. Because of the rhythms and formations, dance is self-organizing,

becoming a self-fulfilling goal and laying a foundation for a protocol for human interaction. Learning is not just about information delivery; it involves how the information is used, how it is implemented, and how it relates to other things and other individuals. Dance creates a canvas for forming protocols for human interactions and relationships. The act of dance then becomes a process of socialization, of ecological interaction.

Dance involves a set of social schema, which create reference points for social interactions, communication, collaboration, and community. As described in Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1976, 1985, 1997), these schema lay the groundwork for future interactions and subsequent learning. Dance can serve a function, not only as a cultural practice, but also as a vehicle for building schema for idealized social interaction.

As a cultural practice, dance is inherently a mentored activity, both inter-generational and intra-generational, with peer coaching. This is a powerful learning tool, for students not only learn dance and cultural context, but skills of social interaction and collaboration. These lessons are adapted over time, just as the dance changes with experience, and as social roles change over the lifespan. These experiences typically expand to include supplementary skills that are useful and apply to many different walks of life besides the world of dance. The skills learned in dance are easily transferable to other careers. Using the concept of dance as a metaphor or as social role training for social interactions over the lifespan is supported by a number of theories and therapies, including Role Theory (Mead, 1934), Dramaturgy (Goffman, 1959; Lemert & Branaman, 1997), Psychodrama (Moreno, 1947), Gestalt and Drama Therapy (Perls, 1969a, 1969b), as well as related therapies. These theories and therapies use a variety of day-to-day metaphors, including theater, games, play,

and movement, to convey how phenomenological experience shapes individuals and their interactions in groups. The experience of dance can work in a similar way to shape individuals and group interactions.

Cognitive Behavior Modification, both in theory and therapy, also supports these assertions (Beck & Beck, 2011). All of these therapies involve the shaping and reshaping of actions and forming social behavior skills and strategies to enable development of a healthy Self and healthy interactions with others. In Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), strategies are cultivated for modifying social behavior patterns to help individuals cope, control, and adapt to the situations they encounter. Similar to the previous therapies mentioned, there is an emphasis on developing the Self and accomplishing a series of goals to master social roles and patterns of behavior. The latter therapy also adds the concept of self-talk as a form of self-communication. This combination of communication and action is part of what makes CBT so effective (Beck & Beck, 2011). Dance can operate as a non-verbal way of communication, not only with others but with the Self. Dance is not the only activity that communicates these concepts, but as a cultural practice based upon human connections through space, time, and movement, it is very effective. The act of dance becomes training for social roles, human interaction, and participating in community.

Many of the participants in my study volunteered that dance deeply impacted their lives. Many described their experiences as “transformational,” “passionate,” healing, joyful, as an important means for expression, or as an effective coping tool. Ultimately, dance remains important to dancers throughout their lives, even when they are unable to perform. They may continue to participate in supplementary support roles or as supportive audience

members. For most dancers, dance remains the highlight of their lives, and they shape their day-to-day lives around the goal of dancing and/or performing.

Although not all individuals feel this devoted to dance, the point is that embodied cultural practices such as dance can have a profound effect upon the lives of individuals, in shaping their concepts of Self, in learning roles and schemas, in shaping social interactions, in physically connecting them to others, and in mastering a whole system of social skills that can teach and enhance collaboration. Through embodied cultural practices such as dance, we can learn tolerance, cooperation, cultural memory, traditions, community, and civility. The shared experience of embodied practice transcends differences. Differences need not be a barrier to collaboration or community; rather, these differences can become skills that are taught and learned.

Applications of the Research

Part of the excitement of doing this research was in seeing all the possible applications of the research. Much of this research would apply directly to the fields of Sociology, Psychology, Education, and health care.

For example, the benefits of learning the social skills of collaboration and cooperation through embodied cultural practices such as dance can be useful in teaching both children and adults how to function effectively in groups. By participating in group dances, one learns how to work together with others for a common goal or event. This form of teamwork is mutually supportive rather than directly competitive, and it encourages group focus, even across social groups that may otherwise be antagonistic towards each other.

Additionally, the social support created in participating in these groups can be a lifeline to people who have suffered losses in their families or social groups. These dance groups often form strong social support systems among members that far surpass the boundaries of the original agenda of the dance group. These strong social support systems can be helpful for new immigrants trying to adjust to strange surroundings, to families adjusting to a loss of extended family support, to elderly members of a community who have lost family and friends over the years, and to isolated community members who have lost instrumental support in their neighborhoods.

Informal evidence associated with some arts-based or culturally-based programs in prisons indicate that inmates have stronger social support systems and better chances of avoiding recidivism if they are involved in cultural practice programs during incarceration. Unfortunately, as I have learned from experience by being involved with some of these programs, they are difficult to implement and maintain under current penal system policies. However, some examples exist from other countries, such as Asia, where dance programs within the prison population have been found to be enriching to the inmates, lower the number of conflicts and violence within the prison population, and create a social bridge to the surrounding community by offering performances. Locally, a similar program in choral singing has had similar results (Friedman, 2013).

Dance therapy studies indicate that dance programs are particularly helpful for those experiencing autism, schizophrenia, and dementia. Dance becomes a non-verbal way of communicating among participants and among those who may have limited verbal skills. The mind-body integration that dance offers can be healing to those who have either

experienced physical trauma or have experienced a mind-body schism that interferes with normal social interaction. Dance (and similar embodied cultural practices) can model appropriate social behaviors, which can be helpful those who are socially challenged. Studies indicate that dance is an activity that is highly associated with resilience to dementia, favored over other recommended activities such as crossword puzzles or music (Powers, 2003; Vergheze et al., 2003).

Related to these studies are findings that physically abused or distressed individuals benefit greatly from embodied activities done in conjunction with other individuals. Because the body can carry memories and triggers related to distressing physical experiences, physical activities can create an outlet for dealing with the symptoms related to abuse and PTSD in a safe, socially-supported setting. Dance offers an opportunity for multi-modal integrated learning, which can bring dis-integrated bodies and minds back into synchrony.

Moving in physical synchrony and establishing embodied cultural traditions can create Self-identity and group and community cohesion. Additionally, learning the skills of collaboration can reinforce social cohesion and allow groups to accomplish community-wide goals beyond the spectrum of the dance group.

More difficult to measure, but no less important, is learning other social skills related to collaboration, such as negotiating, mediation, tolerance, and teamwork. As demonstrated by the Robber's Cave study (Sherif et al., 1954/1961), just contact with other groups or individuals that are considered "out-groups" rather than "in-groups" is not sufficient to create qualitative changes in social interactions. Alienated groups are better served by

participating in embodied projects requiring team effort and collaboration focused on a mutual goal, in order to change antagonistic relationships to more productive, even friendly, relationships. These skills, however, require training, mentorship, and a practice to serve as a means for transmitting the knowledge in an embodied manner.

Finally, pursuing socially beneficial and engaging cultural practices can enhance general social well-being, self-cohesion, and physical and emotional health. These programs can also be supported and maintained relatively cheaply, making them an effective, efficacious investment of public resources.

Future Directions

The implications of this study for future research touch on a variety of disciplines. One of the most obvious implications is in the area of education. Many of the educational programs available for children in public schools have been eliminated, including those with an emphasis on dance, music, theater, debate, visual arts, sports, fitness, and domestic skills. Perhaps these need to be reconsidered, since it appears that a great deal of informal and social learning takes place in these types of embodied cultural activities. Instead of thinking of these programs as optional, separate, and unimportant, it might be more useful to see the teaching of cultural practices as a concrete way to teach other academic skills.

In some countries, such as Mexico, these cultural practices are required for a well-rounded public education. Traditional cultural practices come under the rubric of “folklore,” which serves as a connective direction of study that integrates diverse disciplines, such as history, music, dance, art, fashion, film, political science, geography, economics, sociology, government, language, literature, and more. For example, when students learn the music

and dance of a particular region, they learn all about that region, including where it is located, what it is known for, its history, politics, economics, its people, their languages (many are indigenous), the literature, how they dress, their agriculture, and how all these subjects come together in history. This helps student learn more broadly and understand their world in context and more comprehensively. Cultural practices create concrete reference points that later ground more abstract learning. For example, learning cultural practices of cooking and food preparation can create a strong foundation for more abstract subjects, such as chemistry, physics, and biology.

Instead of eliminating the teaching of cultural practices in public schools, perhaps a better approach would be to consciously connect cultural practices to more abstract subjects, such as the much-sought-after disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. More importantly, the informal and social skills learned in the pursuit of cultural practices is invaluable, and it is often difficult to reproduce in a mass-teaching approach to learning. If we wish to nurture collaborative skills, teamwork, creativity, innovation, social justice, and community, perhaps supporting programs that teach cultural practices would fit the goal, and do so inexpensively. This idea is in line with a number of other educational approaches with similar goals, including using the concept of Flow to leverage learning motivation to include more peripherally-related topics (Csikszentmihalyi, 1994, 1998).

As mentioned in the literature review, a variation of the classic study of the Robber Cave from Social Psychology could use cultural practices and projects as a means for teaching tolerance, collaboration, and cooperative behaviors. In a global economy, it is even

more important that we learn to work with others, even those very different from ourselves. Researching the teaching of cultural practices within the context of a CoP may provide insights for those pursuits.

In a society where the population of elderly adults is increasing, fitness and health are now important issues. Because there is a need to maximize limited resources, the health-related issues of social well-being and the economics of collaboration are under scrutiny, promoting programs that teach and support cultural practices and their CoP may be efficient, cost-effective ways to improve day-to-day living for a large portion of the population. Similarly, using embodied cultural practices such as music, dance, sports, gaming, and theater can be useful in a variety of therapies, especially those that manifest physical symptoms, such as sexual child abuse and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Ideally, future research could explore the relationship between embodied cultural practices such as dance in relation to learning, longevity, overall health, resiliency, social well-being, and optimal aging. Other research might include investigating the relationship of these practices with mental acuity, creativity, innovation, learning technologies, community development, and even social structures.

As humans, our very survival depends upon our ability to collaborate, cooperate, innovate, and adapt. If nurturing the teaching of embodied cultural practices and their CoP settings could possibly enhance these survival skills in a timely, effective, cost-efficient manner, it would only make sense to pursue such research. The drawbacks are trivial, and the benefits are potentially huge,

Future Considerations for Research

This research has applications in a number of fields, including general education, arts-based education, dance studies, mediation studies, community studies, organizational psychology, business, health studies, and therapy, including dealing with resiliency, coping skills, social well-being, PTSD and/or personality disorders. Some of the studies that I hope to see done in the future include my original study proposed to Dr. Bernard Lubin to study health and well-being of social dancers across the lifespan. Anecdotal feedback indicates that social dancers stay healthier and more content with life longer, due to the physical engagement of the dance and the social support created by participating in the dance community. Deeper discussions, however, with dancers often reveal how dancing has helped individuals cope with death, loss, long-term illnesses, depression, loneliness, and trauma, by creating a bridge for coping and adapting, either directly or as an experiential metaphor. Dancers often refer to dance as being a cultural imperative, a “life-line,” as restoring hope or joy to life, as being healing, creating a reason for living, as an outlet for emotional distress (or joy), as nurturing, often as important to their lives as food or air. There are many examples in this study that could be seen as a starting point for future research in this area.

Another study might be working with traumatized individuals, especially where traumas included physical abuse or damage, such as battered women, children, or soldiers returning from battle experiences. Engaging such individuals in synchronized activities, such as drill, dance, sport, cultural practice, work, or gaming that create the same benefits that have been observed in dance, could be powerful, yet inexpensive, tools for healing.

Any studies of dance and similar activities that could include more objective measures, such as psychological testing, surveys, or brain scans, would also be worthwhile to pursue.

Ultimately, investigating the benefits of embodied cultural practices in general, not only for individuals, but for society at large, could reveal much more than previously imagined regarding how society and social structures develop through physical and social interactions between humans and their physical environment. The skills we take into the world at large may have their beginnings in the simple, embodied cultural practices we learn in the social ecological soup of everyday life. Through the mediation of time and space in conjunction with others, in a physical environment, we lay the foundations for society and civilization.

APPENDIX A

CULTURE THROUGH BALLROOM DANCE QUESTIONNAIRE DOCUMENTS (Culture through Ballroom Dance, 2008, 2010)

Student Questionnaire

(n=111, 56 females and 55 males, ranging from grades 4-10)

Responses were selected from Yes, Sometimes, or No

1. Do you feel like you have more self-confidence now? (Confidence)
2. Do you feel like you get along better with members of the opposite gender now?
(Gender-Relations)
3. Besides dance class, did you also practice dancing at other times during the week?
(Practice)
4. Did you teach the dance steps to anyone else, like family members or friends? (Teach)
5. Do you think learning to dance was good exercise? (Exercise)
6. Do you now feel more respectful towards others? (Peer-Respect)

The following open-ended questions were coded with responses as being Positive, Negative, or Mixed.

1. Tell us about your ballroom dance experience
2. What did you like? Was there anything you didn't like?
3. How did you benefit by learning to dance?

Table A1

Ballroom Dance Student Questionnaire Responses

Questions:	Yes	Sm	No	Yes%	Sm%	No%	Y&S%
Q1-Confidence:	49	50	12	44%	45%	11%	89%
Q2-Gender-Relations:	61	28	22	55%	25%	20%	80%
Q3-Practice:	34	26	51	31%	23%	46%	54%
Q4-Teach:	60	4	46	54%	4%	41%	58%
Q5-Exercise:	91	0	20	82%	0%	18%	82%
Q6-Peer-Respect:	25	37	4	23%	33%	4%	56%
	Pos	Mix	Neg	Pos%	Mix%	Neg%	P&M%
Open-Ended:	63	39	9	57%	35%	8%	92%

Note. (n=111, Grades 4-7)

Table A2

Culture through Ballroom Dance Student Questionnaire, Summary of Student Self-reported Attitudes after 8-15 Weeks of Dance Course

Q1: More Self-Confidence	99/111	89%
Q2: Relate better to opposite Gender	89/111	80%
Q3: Practice dance outside of class	60/111	54%
Q4: Teach dance outside of class	64/111	58%
Q5: Felt dance was good exercise	91/111	82%
Q6: More respectful of others	62/111	56%
Q7: Positive comments on dance	102/111	92%

Note: n=111, Grades 4-7

Teacher Questionnaire

Please rate your students' behavior after participating in dance class on the following 4-point scale. (Circle the number that best represents your observations):

Ratings:

- 1: Deteriorated
- 2: No change
- 3: Slight Improvement
- 4: Large Improvement

- Q1: Children demonstrated improved social skills.
- Q2: Children demonstrated more respectful behavior.
- Q3: Children liked the dancing class.
- Q4: Children liked the activity.
- Q5: Children were more able to cooperate with each other.
- Q6: Children were more considerate of each other.
- Q7: Children got along with each other better.
- Q8: Boys and girls got along better with the opposite gender.
- Q9: Children of different ethnic or racial groups got along better.
- Q10: Children demonstrated more self-discipline.
- Q11: Children were respected of those of the opposite sex better.
- Q12: Children were more tolerant of other cultures.
- Q13: Children learned more about other cultures as a result of dance class.
- Q14: Children in dance class were more engaged in learning.
- Q15: Children in dance class were less likely to miss days in school.
- Q16: Children demonstrated more teamwork in group projects.

Table A3

Culture through Ballroom Dance Teacher Questionnaire, Responses Only: Part I

Rec#	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q1	4	2	3	4	3	3	3
Q2	4	2	2	2	3	1	2
Q3	NA	3	4	4	3	3	4
Q4	4	3	4	4	3	3	4
Q5	3	2	3	3	3	2	3
Q6	3	2	3	3	3	2	3
Q7	3	3	2	3	3	2	2
Q8	3	3	4	4	3	2	4
Q9	3	2	4	4	4	2	4
Q10	3	2	3	3	4	3	3
Q11	3	3	3	3	4	2	3
Q12	3	3	3	4	4	2	3
Q13	4	3	3	4	4	3	3
Q14	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Q15	4	2	3	4	4	2	3
Q16	4	3	4	4	3	2	4
TOTAL Response Cells:				111/112			

Table A4

*Culture through Ballroom Dance Teacher Questionnaire Summary of Responses
Only: Part 2*

Resp#	1s	2s	3s	4s	TOT	3s+4s	%
Q1	0	1	4	2	7/7	6/7	85.7%
Q2	1	4	1	1	7/7	2/7	28.6%
Q3	0	0	3	3	6/7	6/7	85.7%
Q4	0	0	3	4	7/7	7/7	100%
Q5	0	2	5	0	7/7	5/7	71.4%
Q6	0	2	5	0	7/7	5/7	71.4%
Q7	0	3	4	0	7/7	4/7	57.1%
Q8	0	1	3	3	7/7	6/7	85.7%
Q9	0	2	1	4	7/7	5/7	71.4%
Q10	0	1	5	1	7/7	6/7	85.7%
Q11	0	1	5	1	7/7	6/7	85.7%
Q12	0	1	4	2	7/7	6/7	85.7%
Q13	0	0	4	3	7/7	7/7	100%
Q14	0	0	6	1	7/7	7/7	100%
Q15	0	2	2	3	7/7	5/7	71.4%
Q16	0	1	2	4	7/7	6/7	85.7%
TOT:	1	21	57	32	111/112	89/112	79.5%

APPENDIX B

INFORMED PERMISSION STATEMENT

Nicole English
816-444-8420
EnglishN@umkc.edu

RE: Research Study on Dance as a Community of Practice (CoP)

Greetings and Salutations...!
:)

This memo is to follow-up on our conversation about my research project. As described earlier, I am an Interdisciplinary PhD student in Sociology at UMKC, doing research in Dance as a Community of Practice (CoP). Part of the PhD process is to do a research project in the area of our interest.

My interest is in dance (including its music), and the in cultural and community aspects of dance. After the research project is completed, (which commonly takes one to two years), the results of the research are written up and become the basis for the dissertation. The dissertation is then published as an electronic academic document, and shared with other academics as shared knowledge.

As I mentioned in our conversations recently, I was hoping to follow your group as a part of that dissertation research. For this project, I would be the *Principal Investigator* (PI), i.e., the person responsible for doing the research project.

What this would involve is my doing is a type of academic research method referred to as *qualitative, ethnographic research*. This means that I would merely be a participant and observer of the dance group's activities. As part of the group, I could participate just as any other member or volunteer, attending some meetings and events.

For example, I could help out in instrumental ways, such as setting up chairs, doing errands, or perhaps as one of your archivists, helping you to document your activities for the legacy of the group.

Any other archival or historical information or resources that you might be able to suggest, (such as local library resources, museum resources, school resources, scrapbooks, photos, etc.), for historical perspectives, also would be much welcomed for my research. Archival information would help give an historical perspective regarding the group and the surrounding community. Any information collected or accumulated would be shared with you and your group.

Later in the research process, some interviews with founders, long-term participants, leaders, new members, etc., would help put the information into sharper focus. When that time approaches, I might ask a handful of people (all adults) if they might want to participate in the interview process, and I could impart more information, at that time, about what all that entails. The interviews would be focused solely on facts about the dance, the music, dance-related activities and events, and experiences with the dance and the dance group. Any information gleaned from these interviews would be used anonymously and/or confidentially, with permissions.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at any time before or during the project. Of course, you, the group, or any participants can decline to participate at any time. There are no obligations on your part. (All the obligations are on my part.)

Because it is a formal project for my academic program, all I need from you (at this point) is acknowledgement that you are aware of my research project, that it is OK to do the research, and that I have permission to participate in the group, and to do the research.

If this is all acceptable to you, please respond that you agree to the following?

- * Read this memo.
- * Understand that I will be doing research.
- * Given your permission for me to do the research with your group.
- * Any information garnered as a result of the research, will be shared with you and the group.

Thanks so much for your consideration...!

:)

NE...

Nicole English

816-444-8420

EnglishN@umkc.edu

APPENDIX C
MODELS AND DIAGRAMS

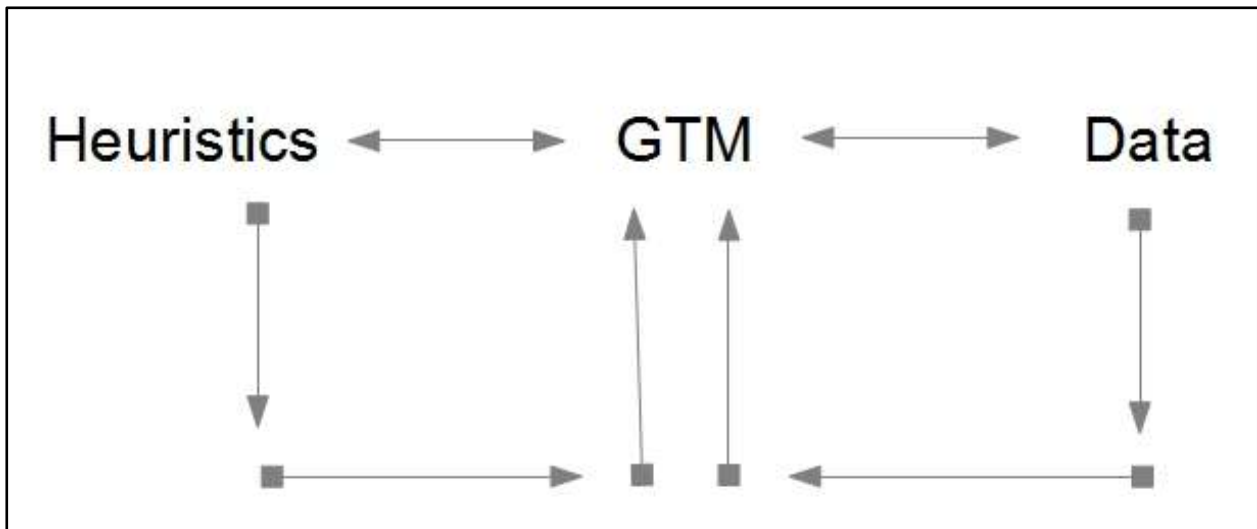


Figure C1. Flow chart of Heuristic Inquiry and Grounded Theory methodology (GTM), which were integrated to guide and validate research. Feedback loop develops, checking on both sides of GTM equation. Feedback from data and from heuristic inquiry served to shape working theory.

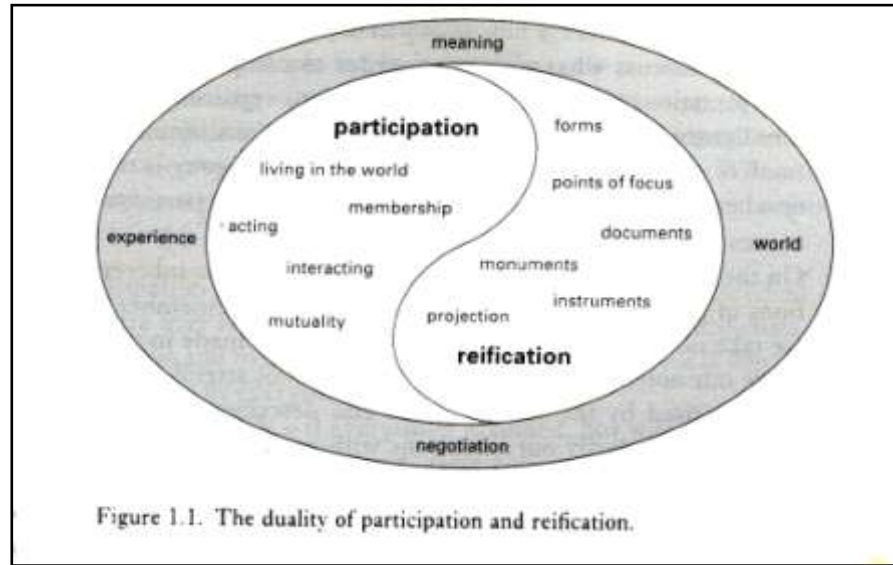


Figure C2. Wenger model image 1.1 Cultural practice (dance) and reified structures (Wenger, 1999).

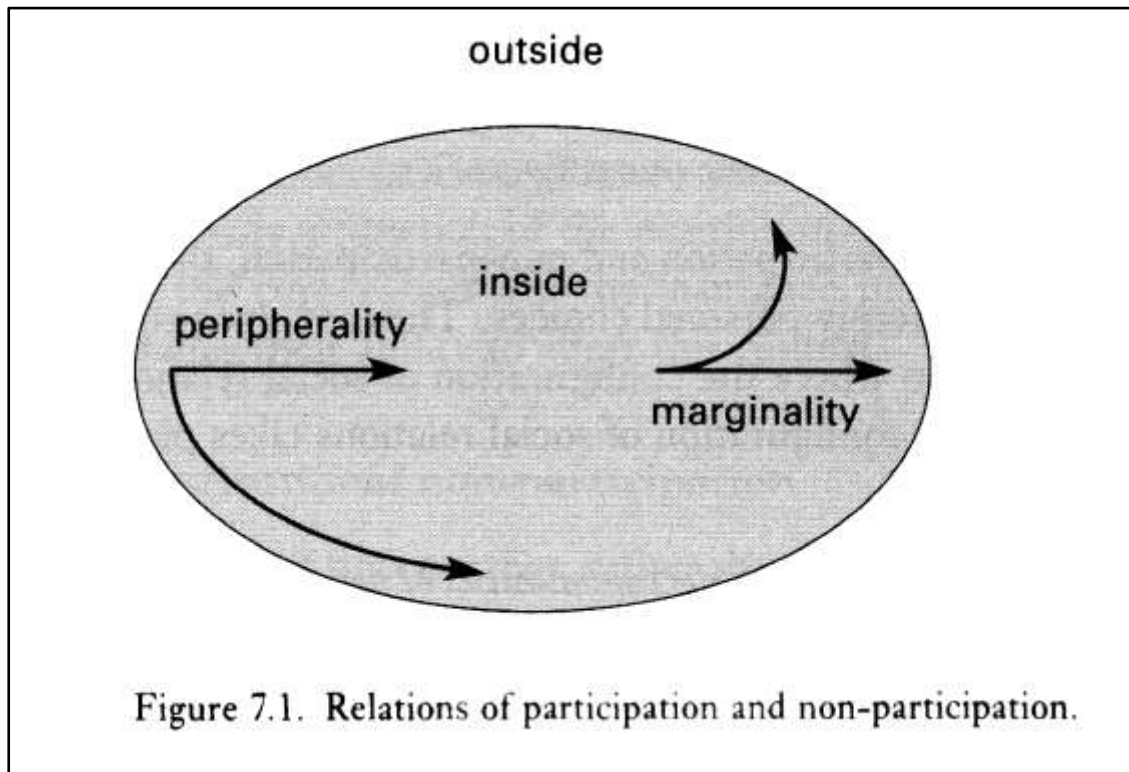


Figure C3. Wenger model image 7.1. Cultural practice (dance) and reified structures (Wenger, 1999).

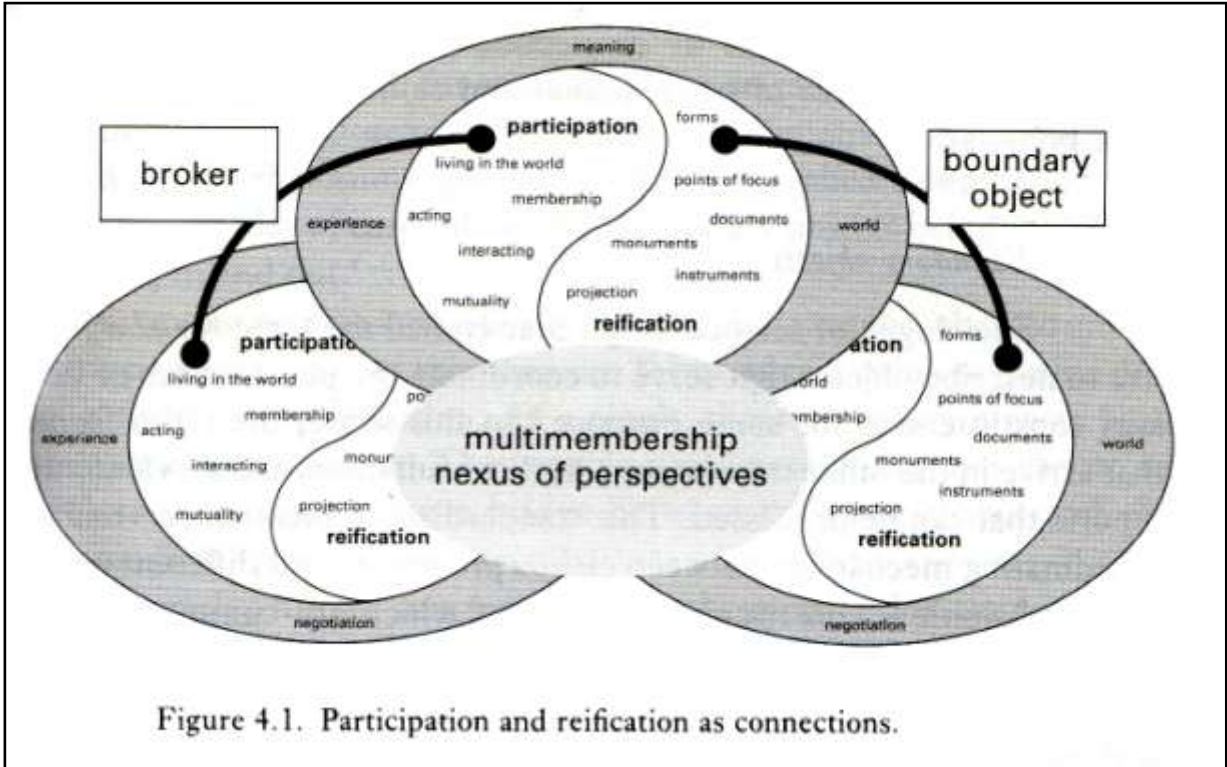


Figure 4.1. Participation and reification as connections.

Figure C4. Wenger model image 4.1. Cultural practice (dance) and reified structures (Wenger, 1999).

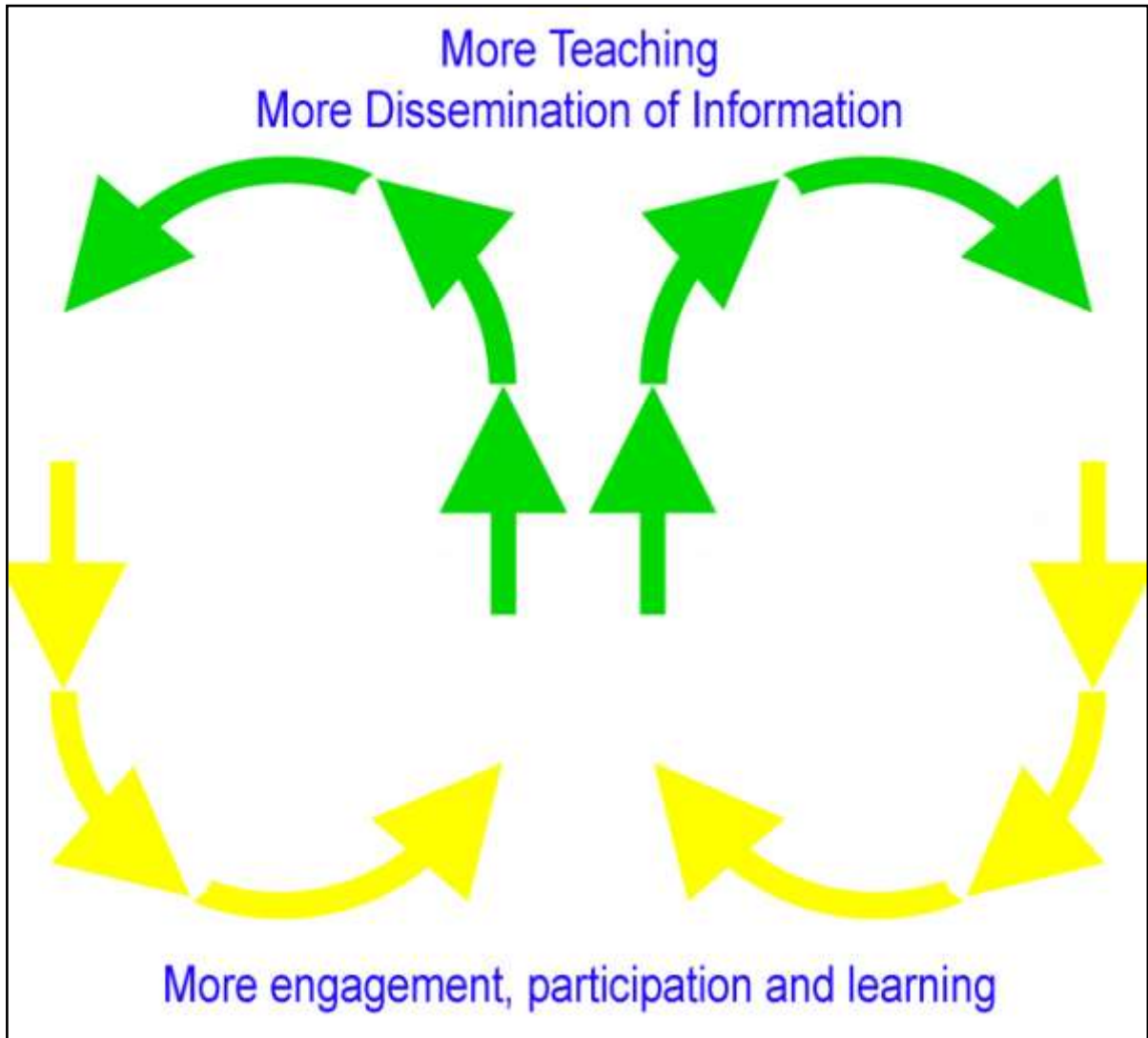


Figure C5. CoCP water fountain dynamic. Cultural practice (dance) and reified structures (Strong, 2015).

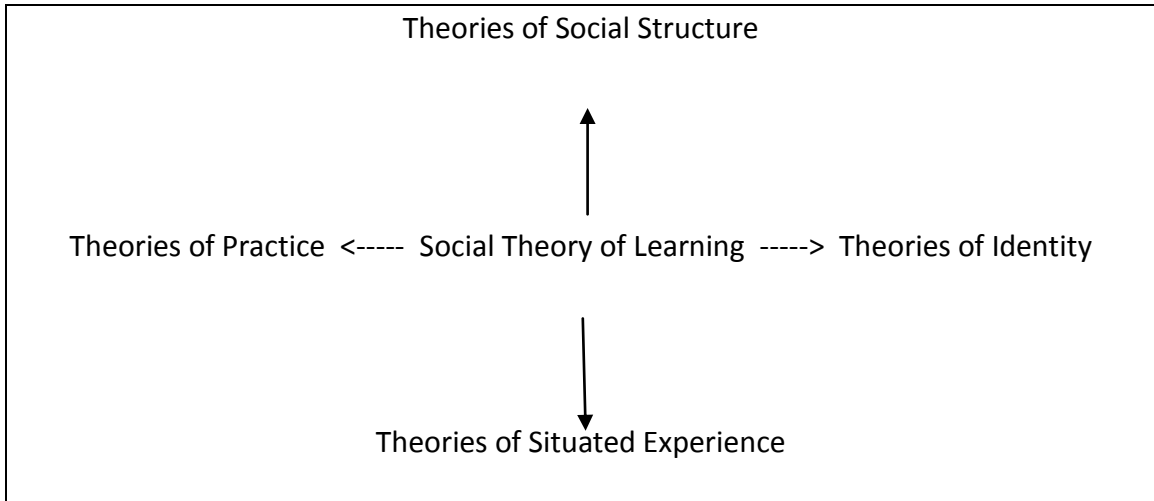


Figure C6. Situating CoP model in relation to other social theories of learning.

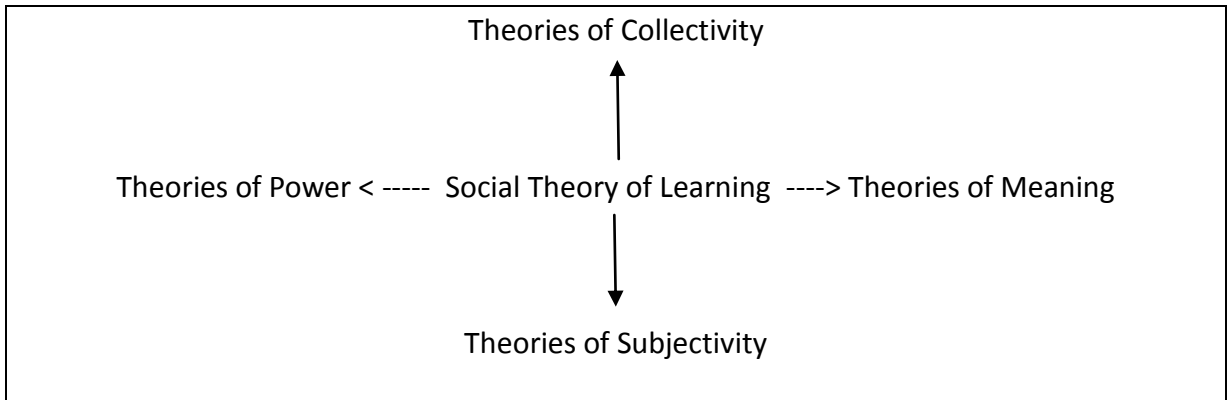


Figure C7. Situating CoP model in relation to other social theories of collectivity and power.

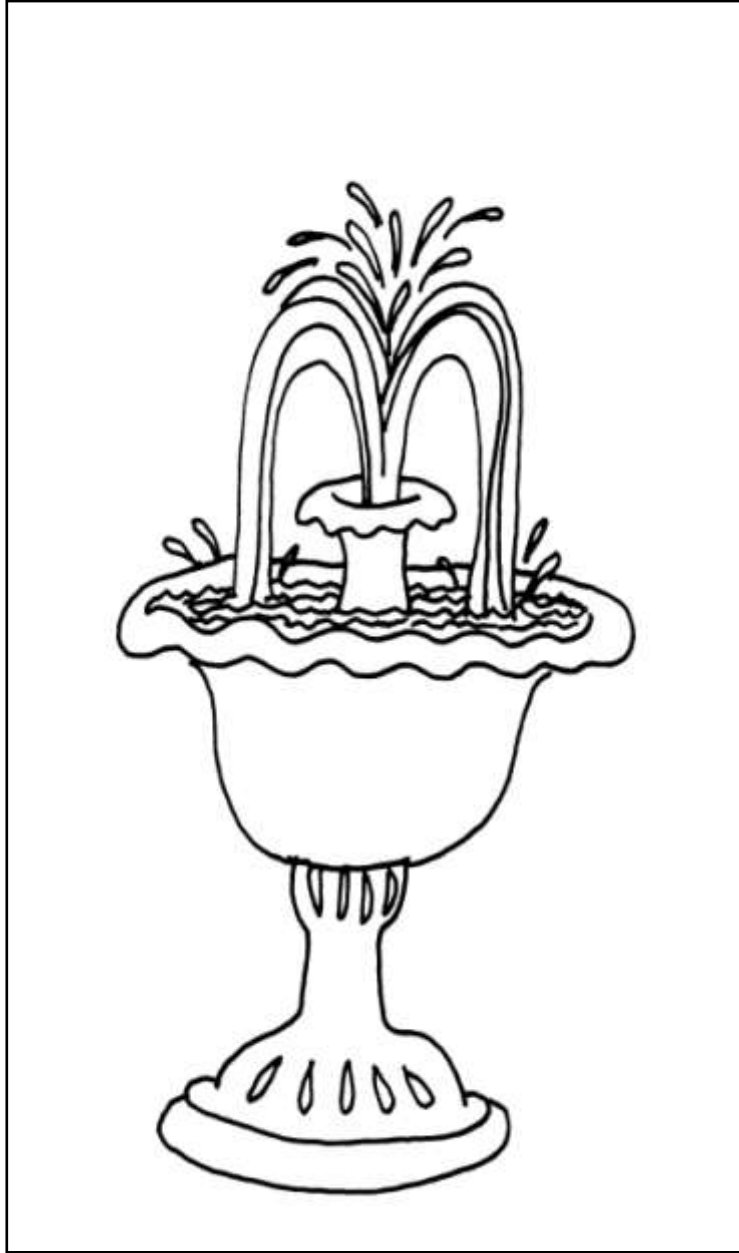


Figure C8. Simple water fountain image. Cultural practice (dance) and reified structures (Compernelle, 2014).

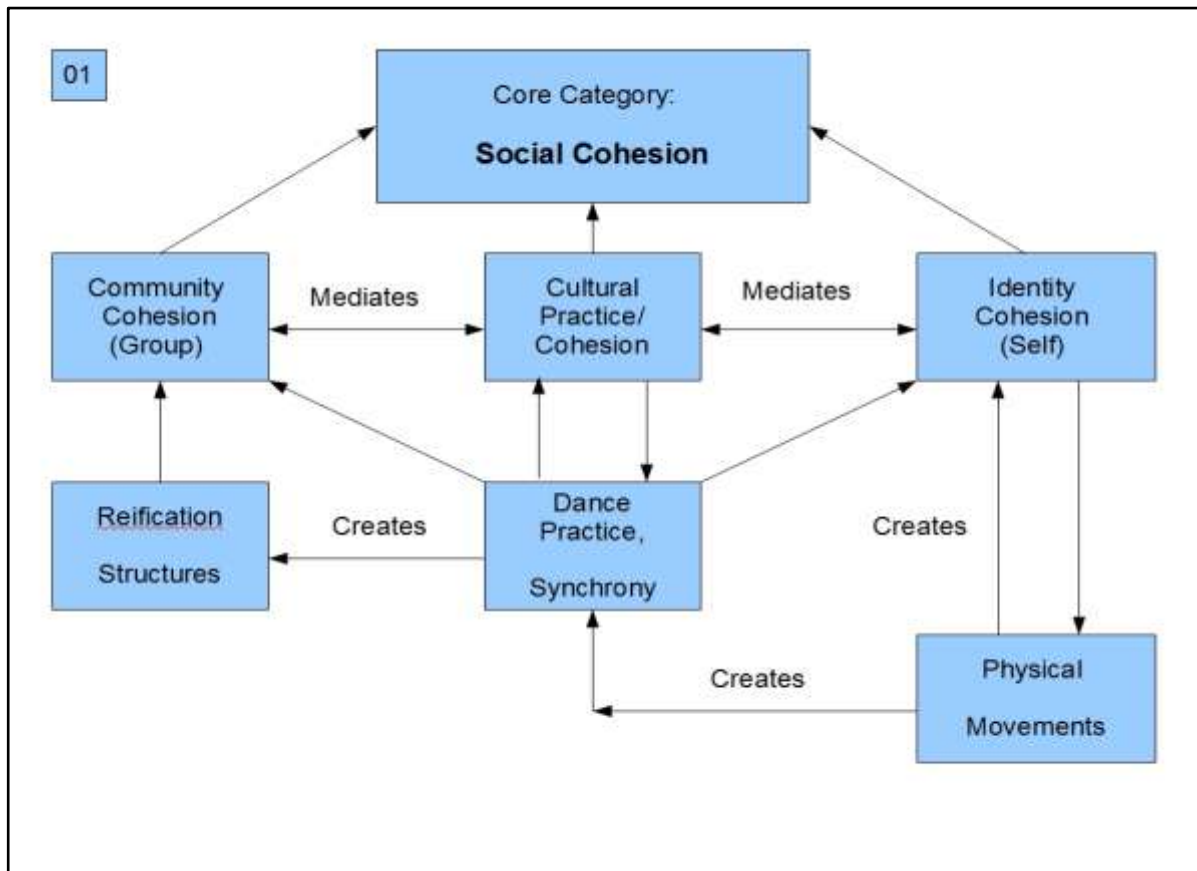


Figure C9. Social cohesion flowchart. Relationship of selected codes and categories.

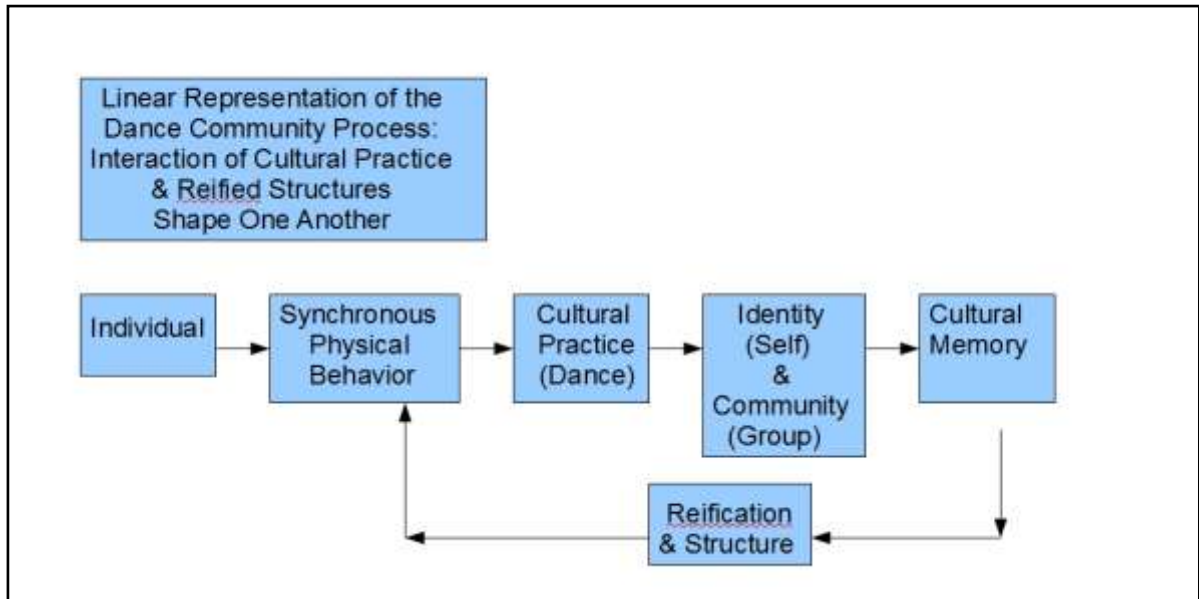


Figure C10. Linear representation of dance CoCP process.

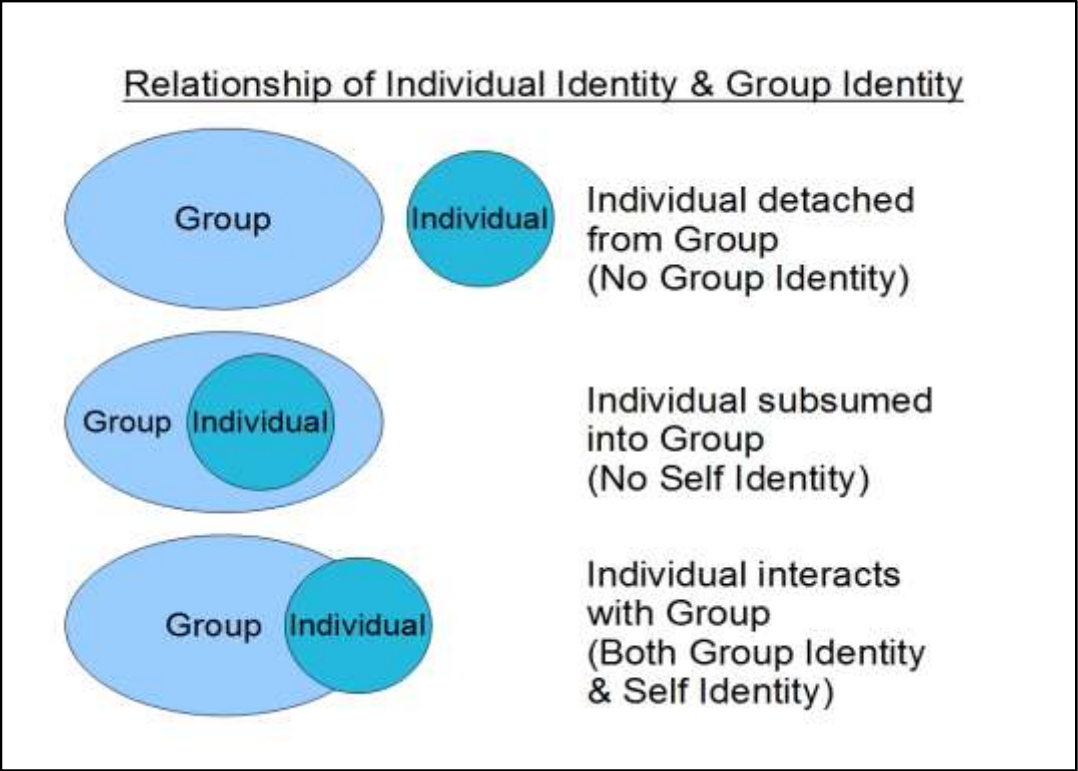


Figure C11. Relationship of individual identity and group identity. Relationship of individual with group (CoCP).

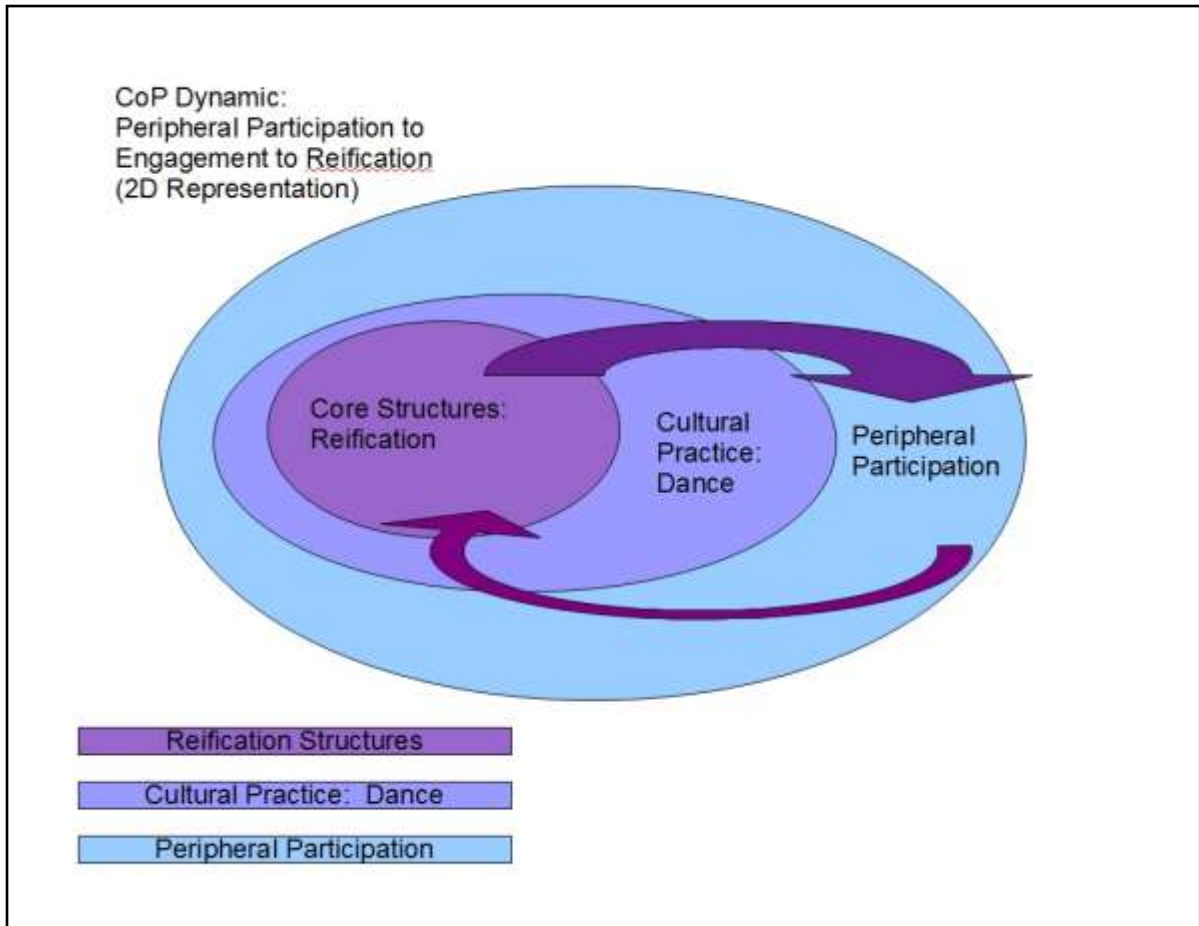


Figure C12. CoP dynamic, from peripheral participation to engagement, reification, 2D

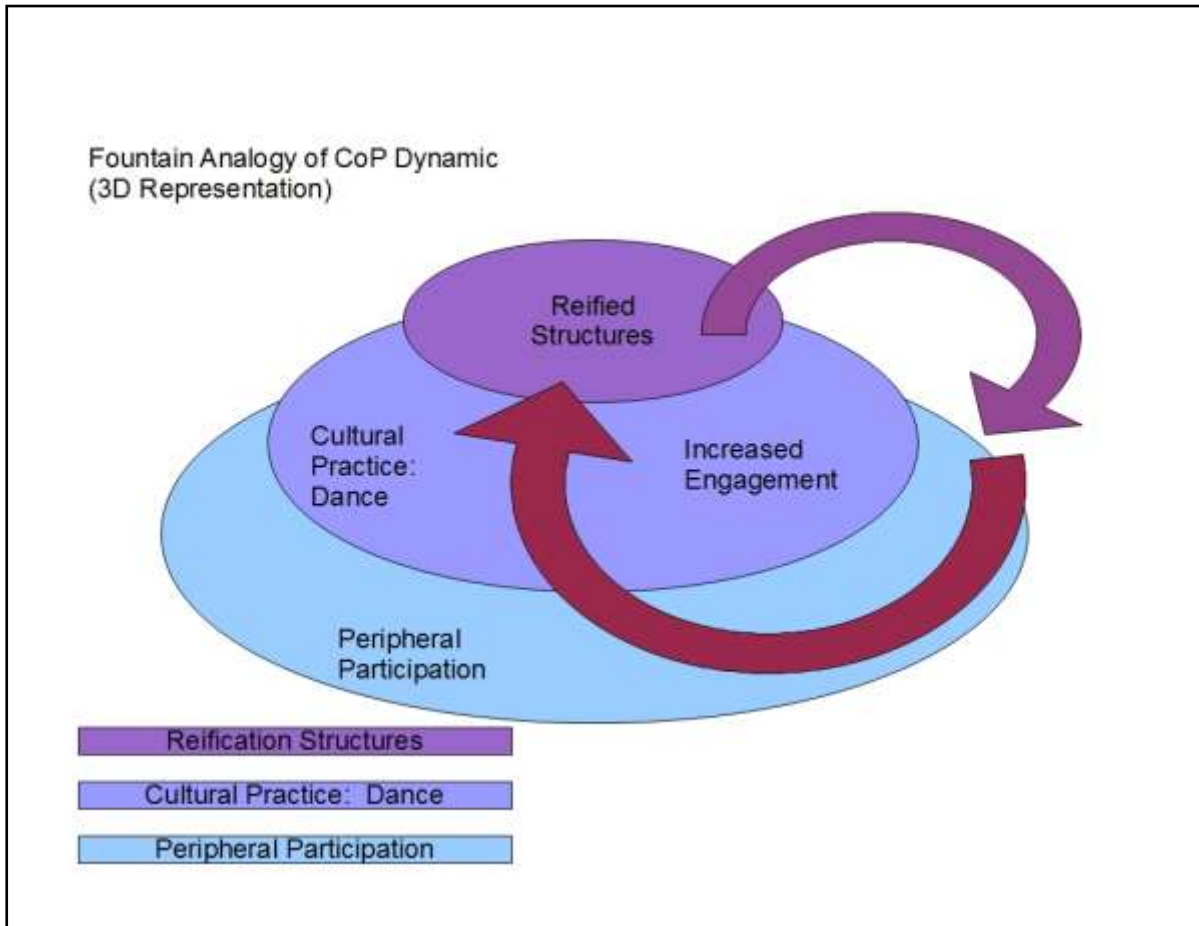


Figure C13. CoP dynamic, from peripheral participation to engagement, reification, 3D

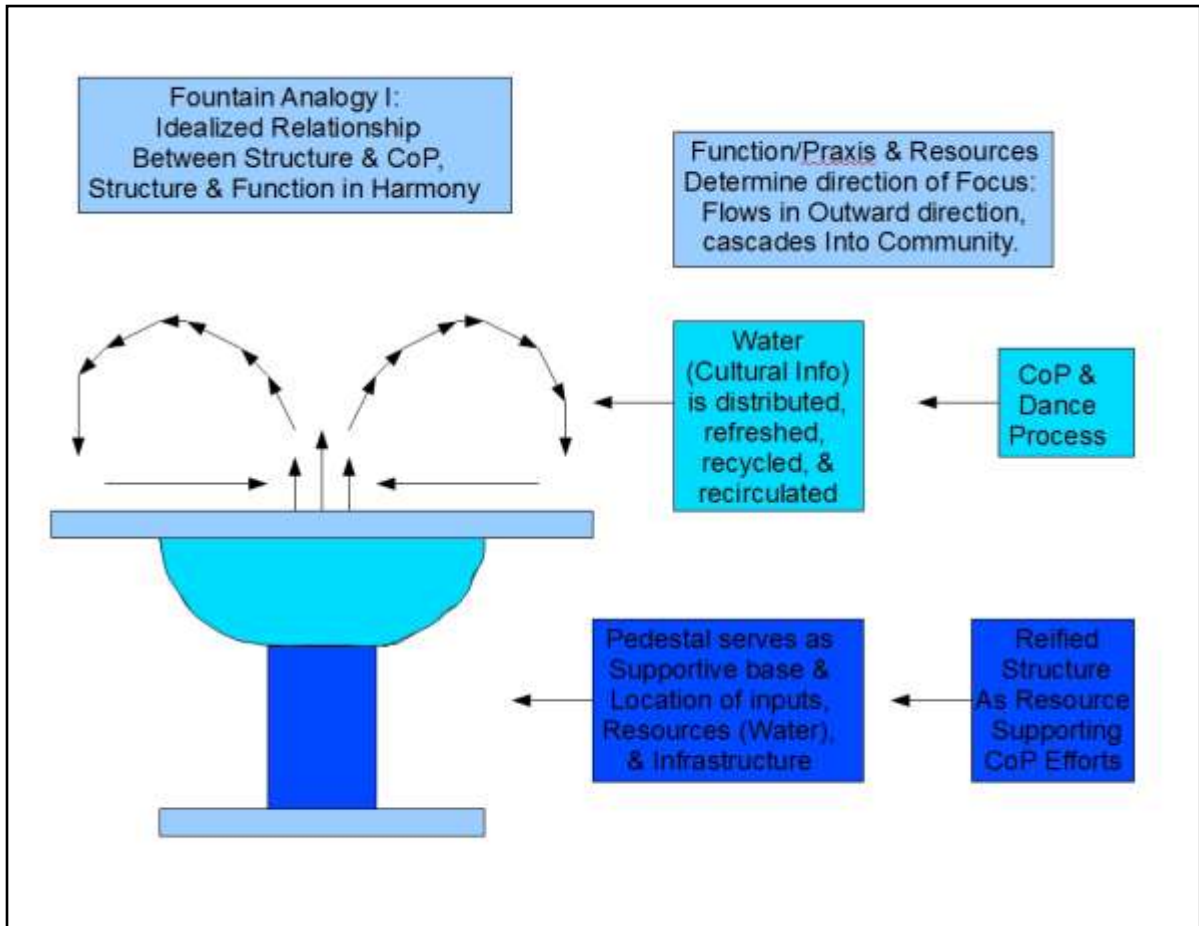


Figure C14. Fountain analogy I: Idealized relationship between structure and practice, in harmony.

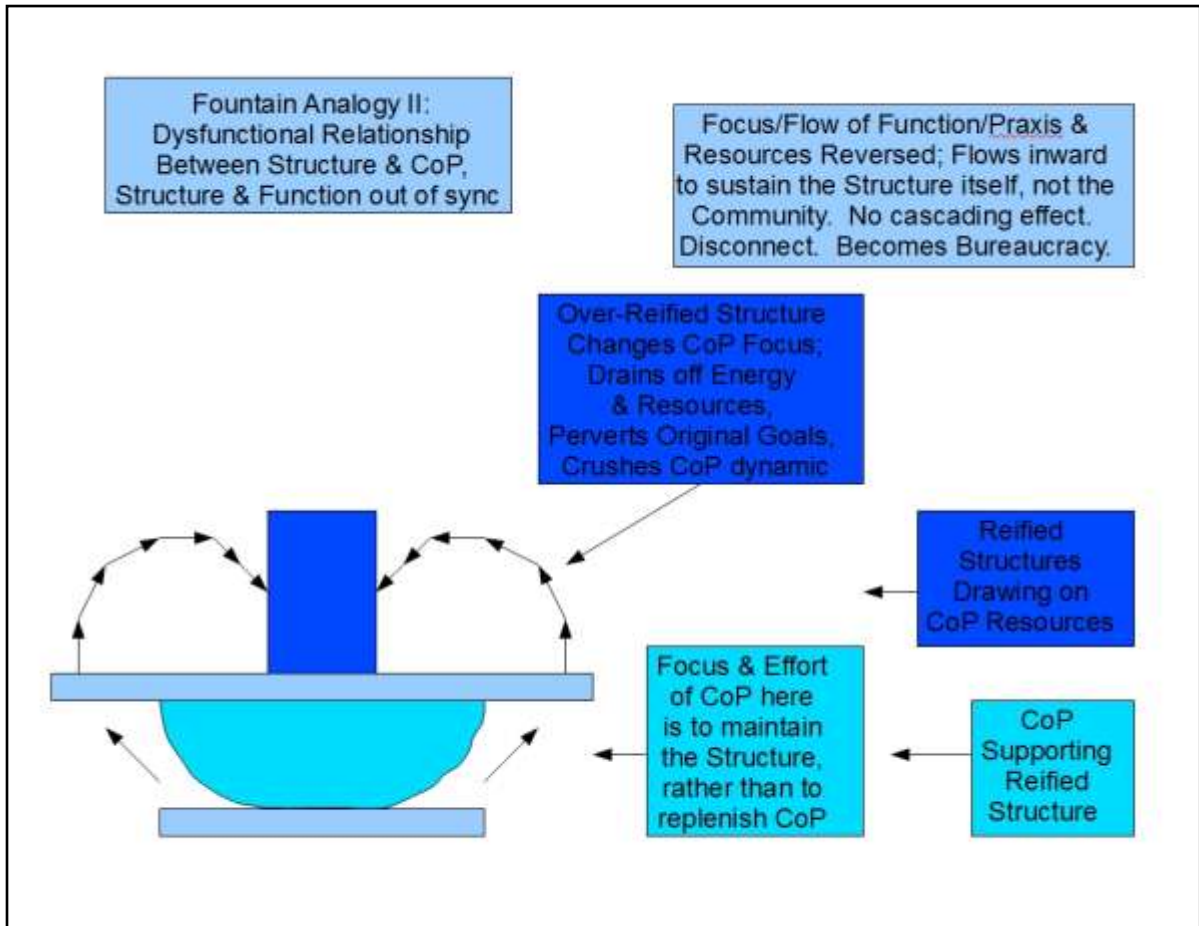


Figure C15. Fountain analogy II: Dysfunctional relationship between structure and practice, detachment, out of sync.



Figure C16. Fountain analogy II: Dysfunctional relationship between structure and practice, detachment, out of sync (Comperolle, 2014).

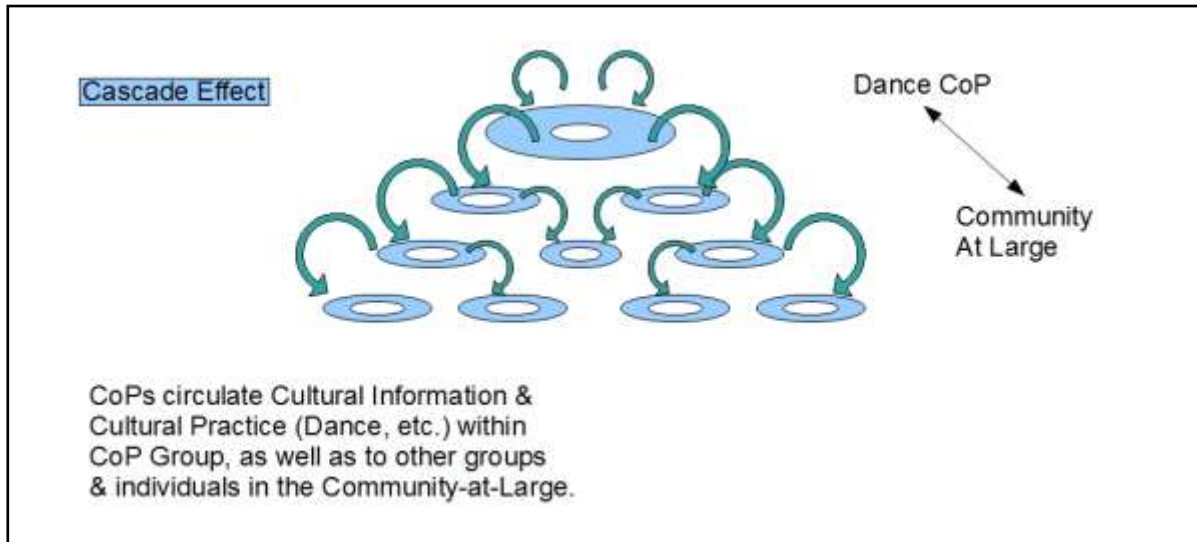


Figure C17. Cascading pattern. Relationship of CoCP with community at large.



Figure C18. Cascading water fountain. Relationship of CoCP with community at large (Compernelle, 2014).

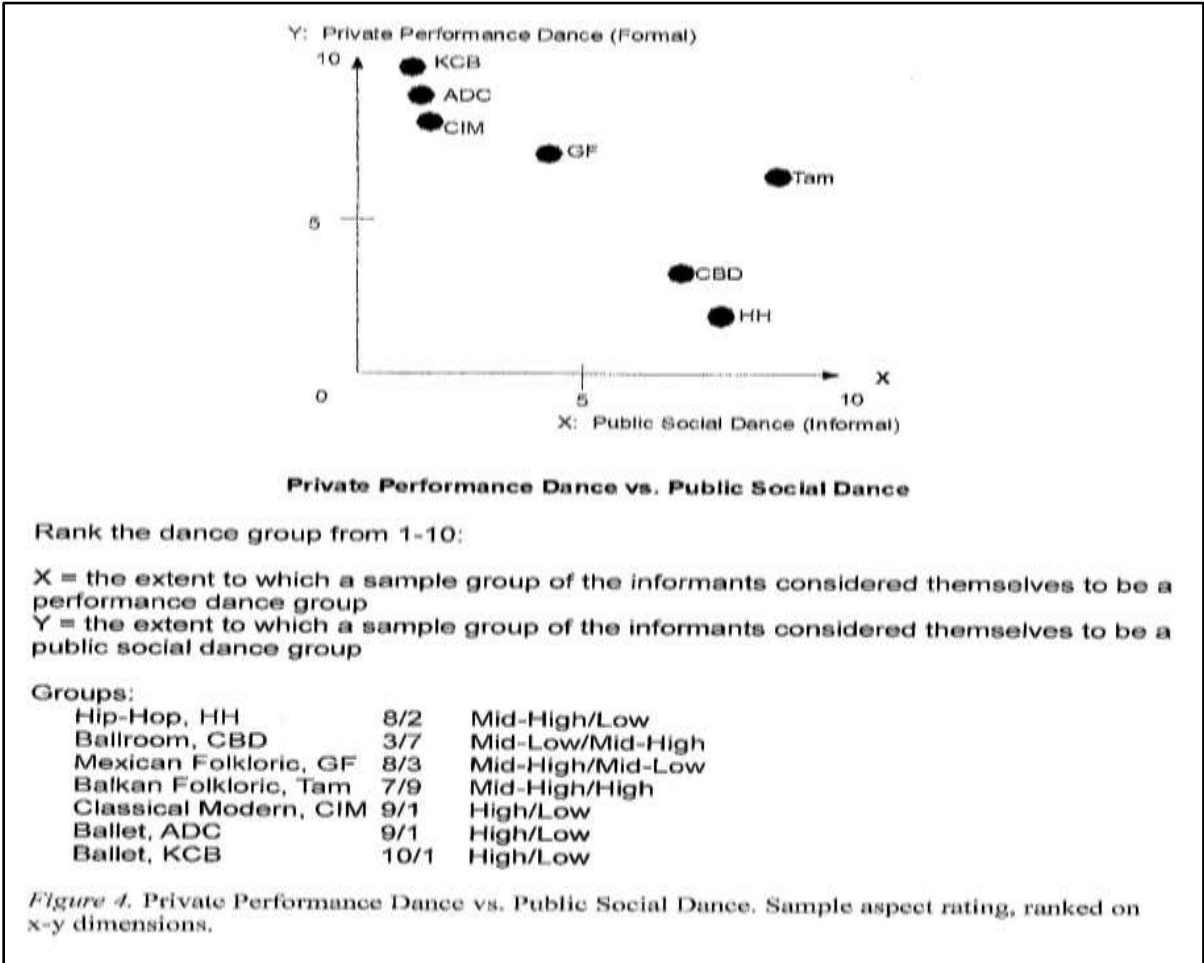


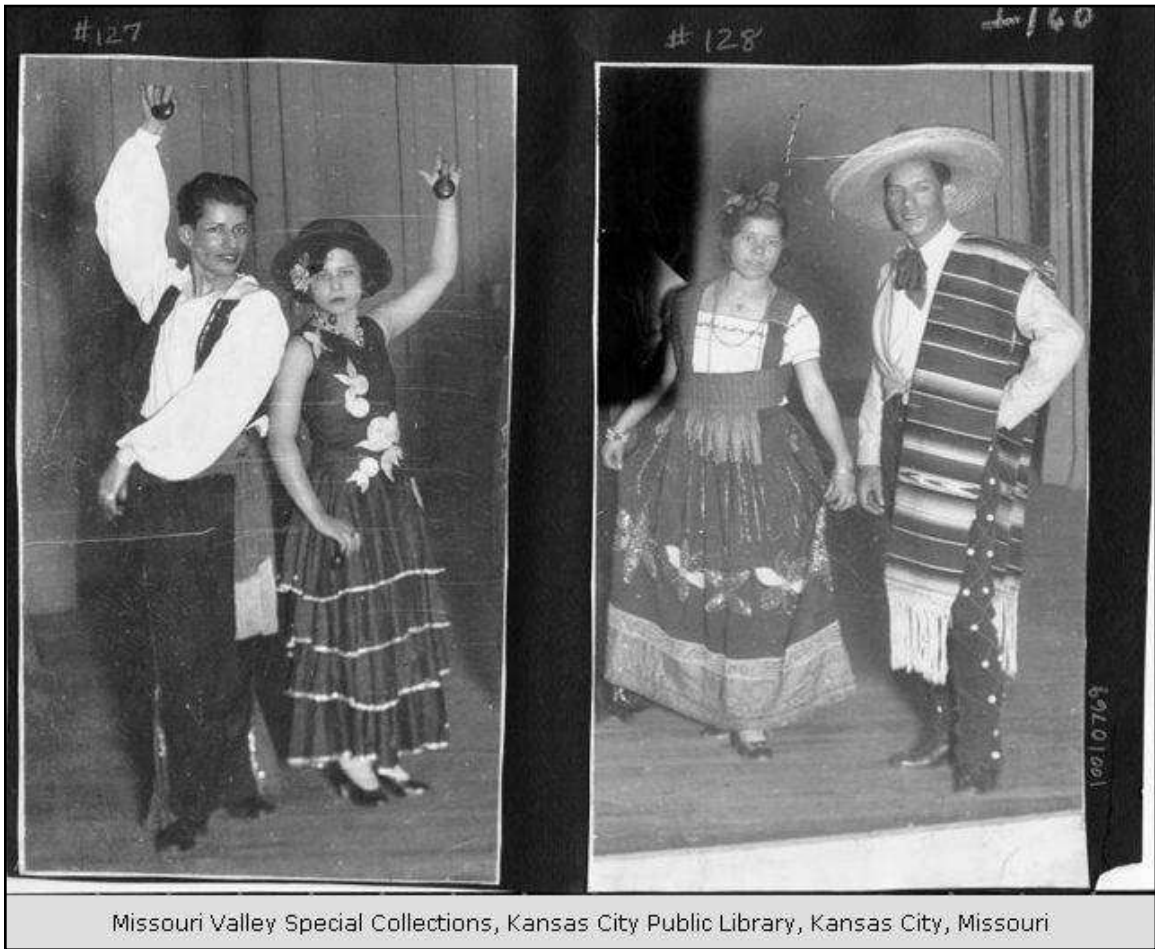
Figure C19. Private performance dance vs. public social dance. Sample aspect rating, ranked on X-Y dimensions.

APPENDIX D
HISTORIC DANCE PHOTOGRAPHS



Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri

Figure D1. Guadalupe Center Dance Group performing Mexican folkloric dance.



Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri

Figure D2. Guadalupe Center Dance Group performing Mexican folkloric dance 2.

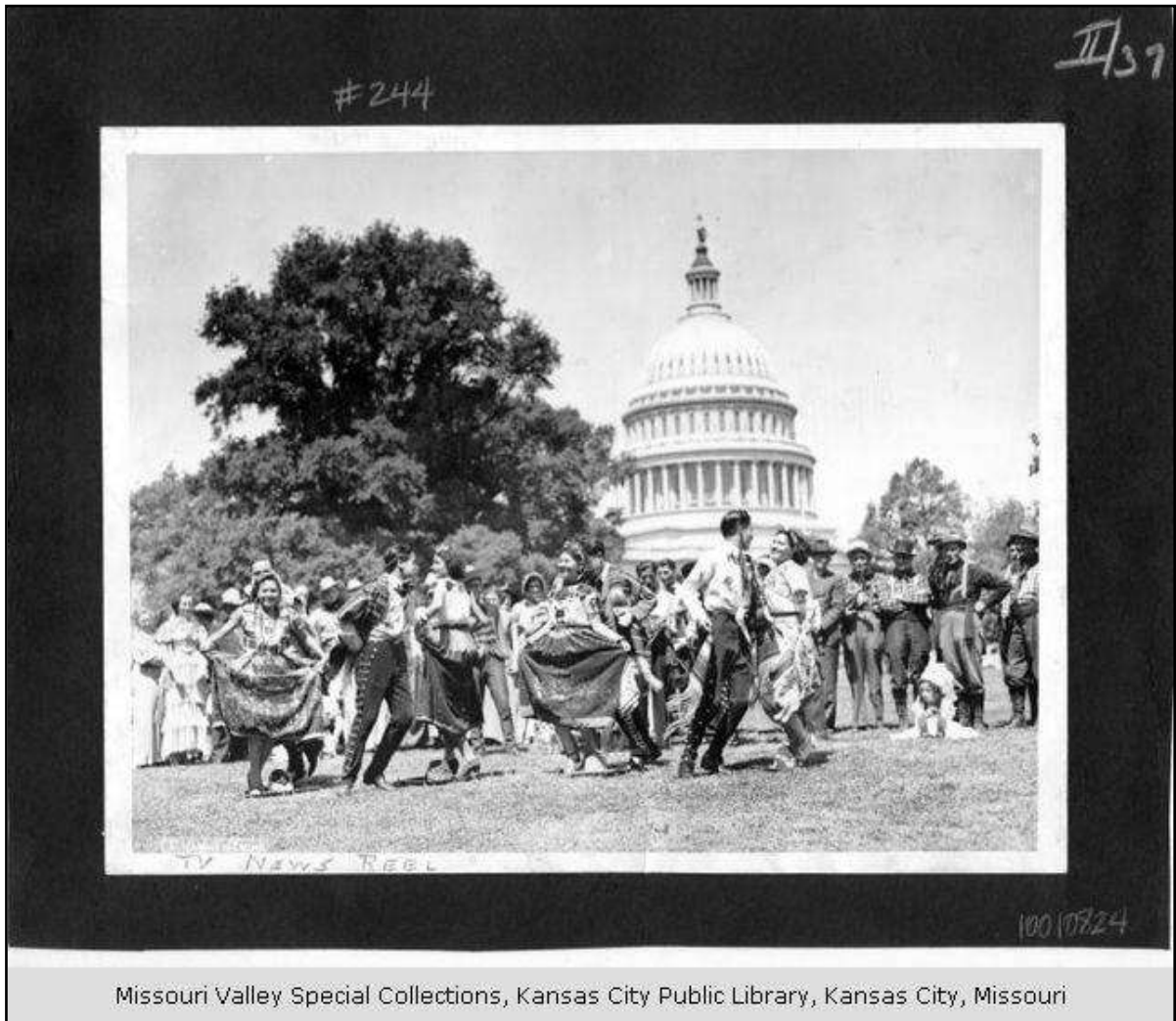


Figure D3. Guadalupe Center Dance Group performing at the White House in 1938.



Figure D4. Guadalupe Center Dance Group performing at the White House in 1938 2.



Figure D5. Jarabe Tapatio, “Mexican Hat Dance,” as performed by Pavlova in toe shoes.

APPENDIX E

PHOTOGRAPHS ILLUSTRATING TAXONOMY

All photographs by M. Strong (2007-2015).

Numbers in parentheses indicate coded movements/behaviors in the taxonomy as enumerated in Table 1.



Figure E1. (1) Repetitive behaviors. ADC, barre-work, discipline, mastery. Ritual.



Figure E2. (1) Repetitive behaviors. Seto, Hip-Hop, Breaking Pinatas. Innovation.



Figure E3. (1) Repetitive behaviors. CIM, class, Andrea and students. Repetition, mastery, ritual.



Figure E4. (1) Repetitive behaviors. CIM, Fringe, structured improvisation to contemporary music.



Figure E5. (2) Discipline. ADC, Nutcracker, pre-show, barre-work.



Figure E6. (2) Discipline. ADC, Nutcracker, pre-show, barre-work 2.



Figure E7. (2) Discipline. ADC Fundraiser. Dancers warm up individually.

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Figure E8. (3) Identity behaviors. ADC, Ballet dancer tests pointe shoes; Internalized posture, Self-identification.



Figure E9. (3) Identity behaviors. ADC, Nutcracker 2011. Dancer poses with flowers, mimicking signature moves from Clara in Nutcracker.



Figure E10. (4) Timing/Spacing. ADC, Nutcracker, performance, partnered dance.



Figure E11. (4) Timing/Spacing. ADC, Nutcracker, performance, partnered dance 2.



Figure E12. (4) Timing/Spacing. ADC, Nutcracker, rehearsal, Oriental Dance, veil dance.



Figure E13. (4) Timing/Spacing. ADC, Nutcracker, rehearsal, Oriental Dance, veil dance 2.



Figure E14. (4) Timing/Spacing. ADC, Swans (Cygnet), Performance, Quartet.



Figure E15. (4) Timing/Spacing. Grupo, Cinco de Mayo, Skirt swirls.



Figure E16. (5) Energy-Flow/Energy-Resistance. ADC, Nutcracker, Oriental dance.



Figure E17. (5) Energy-flow/Energy-resistance. CBD, couples, Throw-out.



Figure E18. (5) Energy-flow/Energy-resistance. CBD, couples, Dish-rag.



Figure E19. (6) Synchronous behaviors. ADC, Swans (Cygnet), Swan Lake.



Figure E20. (6) Synchronous behaviors. Tams, circle dance, Kolo dance night. Synchrony.



Figure E21. (6) Synchronous behaviors. Tams, circle dance, Kolo dance night. Synchrony 2.



Figure E22. (6) Synchronous behaviors. Tams, circle dance, Kolo dance night. Synchrony 3.



Figure E23. (7) Mirror behaviors/Shadowing. ADC Fundraiser. Teens rehearsing before show.



Figure E24. (7) Mirror behaviors/Shadowing. ADC Nutcracker. Students rehearsing before performance.



Figure E25. (8) Peer coaching. ADC, Nutcracker Rehearsal. Peer coaching near mirror.



Figure E26. (8) Peer coaching. ADC, Nutcracker rehearsal. Peer coaching for role of Clara.



Figure E27. (8) Peer coaching. Grupo, class/rehearsal. Girl in 4th position. Girls in back Peer coaching. Jaime coaching.



Figure E28. (8) Peer coaching. Grupo, class/rehearsal. Girls peer coaching.



Figure E29. (8) Peer coaching. Grupo, fundraiser, new steps, peer coaching.



Figure E30. Peer coaching. (8) Series, seen as film strip. Tams, picnic. CoP process.



Figure E31. (8) Peer coaching. Film strip detail. Tams, picnic. CoP process. Adult and child on left, Polka lesson.



Figure E32. (8) Peer coaching. Film strip detail 2. Tams, picnic. CoP process. After Polka lesson, child runs off to right.



Figure E33. (8) Peer coaching. Film strip detail 3. Tams, picnic. CoP process 3. Older child returns with younger child and continues Polka lesson with younger child.



Figure E34. (8) Peer coaching. Grupo, during performance.



Figure E35. (9) Turn-taking. ADC, turn-taking in rehearsal.



Figure E36. (9) Turn-taking. ADC, turn-taking across the floor.



Figure E37. (9) Turn-taking. ADC, turn-taking with costumes.



Figure E38. (9) Turn-taking. Grupo, turn-taking as group in class.



Figure E39. (10) Lead/Follow. Grupo, Cinco de Mayo.



Figure E40. (10) Lead/Follow. Grupo, library demo, Juan Carlos and partner.



Figure E41. (10) Lead/Follow Flexibility. CBD, Student and partner.



Figure E42. (10) Lead/Follow Flexibility. Tams, leading the line.



Figure E43. (11) Role Models/Role Taking/Role Flexibility. ADC, *Nutcracker*, backstage, adult and child interact, preparing for performance.



Figure E44 (11) Role Models/Role Taking/Role Flexibility. ADC, Nutcracker, cast on stage during performance of party scene. Many roles.



Figure E45. (11) Role Models/Role Taking/Role Flexibility 2. ADC, Nutcracker, cast on stage during storytelling at party scene. Many roles.



Figure E46. (11) Role Models/Role Taking/Role Flexibility. ADC, *Nutcracker*, cast on stage during performance of party scene. Many roles.



Figure E47. (11) Role Models/Role Taking/Role Flexibility. ADC, *Nutcracker*, rehearsal. Younger as older. Role flexibility.



Figure E48. (11) Role Models/Role Taking/Role Flexibility. Grupo, rehearsal as family activity.



Figure E49. (11) Role Models/Role Taking/Role Flexibility. CIM, Dance in the Park, free lesson.



Figure E50. (12) Gender Roles/Gender Flexibility. ADC, *Nutcracker*, Clara and partner. Gender roles.



Figure E51. (12) Gender Roles/Gender Flexibility. Gender roles.



Figure E52. (12) Gender Roles/Gender Flexibility. Grupo, cowboy dances, androgynous dance parts. Gender flexibility.



Figure E53. (12) Gender Roles/Gender Flexibility. Male teacher guiding female pupils in their female dance parts. Gender flexibility.



Figure E54. (12) Gender Roles/Gender Flexibility. Male teacher guiding female pupils in their female dance parts. Gender flexibility 2.



Figure E55. (13) Cueing. ADC, Nutcracker, rehearsal, older dancers prompt and cue younger dancers.



Figure E56. (13) Cueing. Grupo, Cinco de Mayo, young dancers prompt and cue each other.



Figure E57. (13) Cueing. Grupo, Christmas show, older dancers prompt and cue younger dancers.



Figure E58. (14) Helping behaviors. Grupo, adult helps child with costuming.



Figure E59. (14) Helping behaviors. Grupo, Latino Festival, Jaime helps boys.



Figure E60. (14) Helping behaviors. Grupo, Cinco de Mayo, Vanessa helps girls.



Figure E61. (14) Helping behaviors. Grupo, Latino Festival, volunteer with girls.



Figure E62. (14) Helping behaviors. Grupo, Latino Festival, Jaime with girls 2.



Figure E63. (14) Helping behaviors. Grupo, Latino Festival, Whitney fixing hair.



Figure E64. (14) Helping behaviors. ADC, fundraiser, pre-show, costuming assistance by teacher, lacing bodices.



Figure E65. (14) Helping behaviors. ADC, *Nutcracker*, rehearsal, peer costuming assistance, adjusting tutus.



Figure E66. (14) Helping behaviors. ADC, *Nutcracker*, rehearsal, peer costuming assistance, lacing bodices.



Figure E67. (14) Helping behaviors. ADC, Nutcracker, pre-show, peer costuming assistance, hair and skirt.



Figure E68. (14) Helping behaviors. ADC, *Nutcracker*, pre-show, peer costuming assistance, checking hair.



Figure E69. (14) Helping behaviors. ADC, *Nutcracker*, pre-show, peer costuming assistance, adjusting hat.



Figure E70. (15) Patterns/Formations. ADC, *Nutcracker*, rehearsal, Dance of the Flowers. Formations.



Figure E71. (15) Patterns/Formations. Tams, circle dances. Formations.



Figure E72. (15) Patterns/Formations. Tams, circle dances. Formations 2.



Figure E73. (15) Patterns/Formations. Tams, Rumanian Stamping Dance. Formations.



Figure E74. (15) Patterns/Formations. CIM, Fringe Festival, Brazilian Dances.



Figure E75. (16) Recognition. ADC, Nutcracker, post-show. Camera moment.



Figure E76. (16) Recognition. ADC, Nutcracker, post-show. Gift of flowers, poses in her role as Clara.



Figure E77. (16) Recognition. ADC, fundraiser, post-show. Camera moment.



Figure E78. (16) Recognition. Guadalupe Center, Dia de los Muertos, indigenous dancers, camera moment.



Figure E79. (16) Recognition. CIM, CDT concert, final bows.



Figure E80. (17) Bonding. Grupo, Cinco de Mayo, pre-show gathering.



Figure E81. (17) Bonding. Grupo, Cinco de Mayo, pre-show, hats.



Figure E82. (17) Bonding. Grupo, Class time rehearsals.



Figure E83. (17) Bonding. ADC, Nutcracker rehearsal. Side-chats. Author looks on.



Figure E84. (17) Bonding. ADC, Nutcracker, pre-show, practice.



Figure E85. (17) Bonding. ADC, Nutcracker, pre-show, chattering.



Figure E86. (17) Bonding. ADC, Nutcracker, pre-show, clusters.



Figure E87. (17) Bonding. ADC, Nutcracker, pre-show gathering.



Figure E88. (17) Bonding. Grupo, Fiesta Hispania, Barney Allis Plaza. Children Cluster.

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VITA

D. Nicole English was born on October 24, 1963, in Harlingen, Texas. She is the daughter of Mary Gloria Chynoweth-English of Chicago, Illinois, and Dwight Lincoln English, of San Antonio, Texas.

Ms. English attended Penn Valley Community College, where she earned an A.A. in Psychology/Philosophy in 1985, and an A.S. in Business Management and an A.S. in Data Processing in the following two years. She graduated Phi Theta Kappa, Honor Roll, with awards in Psychology and Journalism.

After graduation, she was accepted into the SERS Internship program with the U.S. Department of Energy at Argonne National Labs in the Chicago area, doing computer work in the Reactor Analysis Division. There she developed a Gaussian random number generator for testing the artificial intelligent sensor program for the breeder reactor at Argonne West in Iowa. After completing the internship, she returned to the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) to complete her studies. She was hired by UMKC's Computing Services and worked full time while pursuing her degree. She graduated as an Honors Scholar, with Honors and Distinction, Phi Kappa Phi, with three Bachelor of Arts degrees, in Psychology, Philosophy, and Communication Studies, as a member of Psi Chi, Golden Key, and Alpha Kappa Delta honor societies from the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) in 1998. That same year, Ms. English received an NSF Fellowship, which she declined due to family illness. The following year she was hired by the Computer Science department to develop online teaching materials for Web-based courses, and later, as an instructor in multimedia on the Web. She developed courseware and new classes, including

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Ms. English currently teaches classes for UMKC’s Program for Adult College Education (PACE), including computer literacy classes and “The Impact of Technology on Society.” She also teaches classes in Sociology and Psychology for UMKC and other institutions.

A second-generation professional dancer, trained in classical, folkloric, and ethnic forms, she continues to teach dance and perform for various cultural and community events.

She plans to continue her career in academia and to pursue research interests. Ms. English is a member of the American Psychological Association (APA) and the American Sociological Association (ASA).