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THE EXPERIENCE OF KNOWLEDGE: A POST-MODERN SOMATIC APPROACH

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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*****

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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

The modernization of Western societies was accompanied by a proliferation of basic belief systems, or paradigms. Paradigms, as defined by Thomas Kuhn, are sets of premises which dictate the way one perceives or understands the world (1962 Kuhn). Of the existing paradigms, positivism has dominated formal discourse in the physical and social sciences for the past four centuries (Guba and Lincoln, p.107). Consequently, Western social, economic and political institutions have been built on positivist logic.

Within the positivist paradigm, "an apprehendable reality is assumed to exist, driven by immutable natural laws and mechanisms (Guba and Lincoln, p.109)." Positivist epistemology is dualist and objectivist. It presumes an objective body of knowledge, fundamentally unaffected by values and biases (Ibid). (In other words, within a positivist paradigm, a chair is a chair.) Under positivist logic it is believed that "liberation" can be attained through the acquisition of knowledge; that individuals are oppressed only by veils of ignorance.

Other paradigms have challenged positivism and affected social thought to varying degrees. Postpositivist paradigms
support the existence of an underlying reality similar to positivism, but acknowledge differences in human interpretation of it. (Thus, postpostivism acknowledges that a chair looks very different depending on the angle from which one observes it.) Critical and postmodern paradigms strive to expose the constructedness and flux of reality. (Within these paradigms a chair happens to be a chair only because we have decided that it is a chair, and only to those who have decided it is a chair, and only when they decide it is a chair.)

A reason for the multiplicity of paradigms is that there is no way to ultimately prove the validity of one over another. Lincoln and Guba explain that,

> The beliefs are basic in the sense that they must be accepted simply on faith (however well argued); there is no way to establish their ultimate truthfulness.... Advocates of any particular construction must rely on persuasiveness and utility rather than proof in arguing their position (Lincoln and Guba, pp.107-108).

Thus, it is futile to challenge the truth of any given paradigm. It is, however, possible to challenge aspects of paradigms in order to identify their inconsistencies and consequences.

On these grounds, aspects of positivism have been challenged. In particular, critics have questioned the positivist conceptualization of knowledge because of its premise of value-neutral objectivity and its exclusiveness. Critics of positivism argue that power is intertwined with
knowledge. By feigning neutrality positivist knowledge fosters systemic oppression. Central to this argument against positivism is the relationship of knowledge to experience.

The body of knowledge constructed within the positivist paradigm is based on the experiences of the privileged and powerful. These groups have the power to legitimate their experiences and to build a body of knowledge true to these experiences. The logic of their experiences is institutionalized. One could say that these groups have internalized their knowledge, or more appropriately, they have externalized their experiences.¹

This body of knowledge is unrelated to the experiences of the underprivileged, who understand the world through their own oppressed conditions. The underprivileged are nonetheless required to learn this external knowledge in order to "liberate" themselves and to advance themselves within the power system. For the underprivileged, internalized experience and objective knowledge are separate.

This separation between internalized experience and objective knowledge is magnified as the proportionate number of individuals who identify themselves as minorities grows.

¹. I do not intend to imply that "privileged" and "oppressed" groups are mutually exclusive. Instead, individuals tend to identify with numerous groups, for which they experience varying levels of privilege and oppression simultaneously.
The separation is evidenced in the increasing failure of standardized testing and large scale socio-economic plans. As the falsity of "objective knowledge" becomes problematic it becomes necessary to rethink what is meant by the word "knowledge." The aim is not to change the content of what we "know," but to change how we define the role of knowledge within our lives.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the implications of such a reconstruction of knowledge for education. Within positivism, one becomes "liberated" from the shackles of ignorance through education (Bioland p. 523). Non-positivist paradigms are also concerned with liberation from oppressive conditions, whether they be economic, social, political or ontological; a process called "empowerment" in current discourse. Consequently, education is important to these paradigms. However, gaps remain in the application of these paradigms to education. The question which emerges is "who" will have the right to facilitate a reconstruction of knowledge emerges, and what biases will that reconstruction involve as it is applied to education.

A focal issue of concern in this debate is the role of the body and of physical experience. I suggest that a

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2. For the purposes of this study, "empowerment" occurs when knowledge structure and content supports one's lived experiences. "Liberation," as it is used within positivist paradigms refers to freedom from ignorance through the acquisition of pure, objective knowledge.
clarification of the role of the body would serve to bridge the reconstruction of knowledge with its application in institutional education. This belief has motivated me to investigate the ways in which individuals learn, and the role that embodied, physical experience\(^3\) plays in this process. I propose to explore the process of learning through an educational framework which draws upon the literature of somatics, post-modern critical theory and emancipatory education. These three literatures intersect in their critique of positivism and in their agreement that oppressive structures have been inscribed on the objectified body. I will construct a model of somatic education as an alternative to the dominant positivist models of education.

**Substantive Focus:**

This study is an analysis of the learning process and the role which embodied experience assumes in that process. It is an attempt to better understand the ways in which people make meaning out of their own physical experiences. This analysis forms previously uninvestigated connections between the literatures of somatics, emancipatory education and post-modern critical theory. These three bodies of literature share significant assumptions regarding the

\(^3\). When I use the phrase "physical experience" throughout this study, I am referring to the experience in a holistic sense, involving an integrated mind and body. I interchange the term "physical experience" with "embodied experience" and "living experience."
nature of knowledge and the importance of experience. By intersecting these three approaches I am able to explore gaps in the literature regarding the acquisition of knowledge and the role of physical experience. To explore this reconceptualization, I include a case study which examines the learning process as it occurs within a Social Dance that I instructed at The Ohio State University.

Guiding Research Questions:

My study is guided by the following question:

- Does the intersection of somatic, post-modern critical theory and emancipatory education literature lead to a more complete and practicable framework for a post-positivist theory of education?

Individual issues that emerge include:

- What and how do individuals learn through movement and physical experience?
- What does it mean to "know" something?
- How do individuals generalize their understanding of physical experiences in larger social contexts?

Objectives:

The underlying objective of this study is to better understand the learning process and the structure of knowledge in order to suggest an education framework which would empower individuals in their ability to know and to take responsibility for their realities. This would serve as an alternative to existing educational frameworks. I am using the term "framework" to indicate the way in which
person makes sense of a situation or concept. A framework determines the limits of a situation and those limits are set by the individuals who buy into that framework. In this study, constructing an educational "framework" means to create a new way of perceiving and understanding knowledge and the learning process.

Preview of Literature:

In this study I deal with literature from the fields of somatics, phenomenology, postmodern critical theory and emancipatory education. Here I will discuss each field as it relates to this study.

Somatics:

The relatively young field of somatics addresses the whole person, and is concerned with the experiences of the living body (1970 Hanna). The premises of somatics are not new; they are found in the philosophies of ancient practices such as yoga and martial arts. However, the delineation of these premises as a field of knowledge, mutually exclusive of other fields of knowledge, has occurred within the last century. According to Thomas Hanna, a founding somaticist, somatics is a reaction to the technological revolution:

...we have become self-conscious of being a technological society. We are now critically self-conscious, for the first time, of the misuse and abuse of technology and are taking sides against it in favor of the earthly environment which for so long we have fought to control and conquer (1970 Hanna, p.17).
This process of taking sides with the earthly environment is
described by Hanna as a "new consciousness" of ourselves,
not as distinct mind-body dualities, but as embodied somas.

Somas are you and I, at this moment and at this
place we are in, beings whose evolutionary history
has brought us to the revolutionary stage of
realizing that the brave new world to be
discovered is no longer "out there" but is the
here and now of our immediate organic being. The
brave new world to be explored by the twenty-first
century is the immense labyrinth of the soma, of
the living, bodily experience of human individuals

Don Johnson, a somatic practitioner, describes the
frustration that occurs with the prevalent positivist
dualism which underlies the structures and institutions of
the Western world.

The technology of alienation accustoms us to sense
a void between "I" and my flesh, and between "I"
and "you." Because we are led to feel that we are
not in immediate contact with the palpable world,
we sense that we need experts who understand that
world enough to tell us what to do. Feeling that
we are disconnected from each other, we require
outside mediators to resolve our inevitable
disputes (Johnson, p.154).

He advocates a somatic shift which:

requires diverting our awareness from the opinions
of those outside us toward our own perceptions and
feelings. I say [this process is] "deceptively"
simple because those of us who have received a
lifelong education in forgetting our senses need a
long and arduous process to recover the simple
abilities of touching and seeing (Ibid).

With this shift individuals regain an internal (in place of
an external) sense of authority and responsibility. This
internalization or somaticization of consciousness carries
with it implications for knowledge that are useful for this study.

**Phenomenology:**

Because of its emphasis on the living experience, much of somatics is rooted in a phenomenological perspective. Phenomenology is concerned with how our lived immediate experiences form our consciousness of the world. It gives primacy to this "life-world" since everything in the objective, scientific, pregiven world is accessible only through the subjective experience (Husserl, p.126). By emphasizing experience, phenomenology creates the space for an investigation of embodied experience, relevant to this study. Phenomenology also "...assumes that there is an essence or essences to shared experience (1981 Patton p.70)." This essence is based on a fixed general structure (Husserl, p.139). The relationship between somatics and phenomenology, regarding essentialism will be further elaborated.

**Post-modernism:**

Post-modern theories also value the living experience. But, whereas somatics and phenomenology emphasize the embodied living experience, post-modernists emphasize imposed structures which influence and frame this experience (1977 Foucault, 1984 Lyotard, 1987 Weedon). The body is perceived as one of many malleable structures (for Foucault the body is completely malleable, 1977 Foucault p.153). For
post-modernists, shared experience does not carry an underlying essence. Experience is fluctuating and tentative; and one single individual’s reactions can change substantially from moment to moment. For this reason post-modern positioning is often accused of falling into a solipsistic subjectivity. In other words, where reality is completely subjective there is no grounded basis for action. This very subjectivity makes post-modern critical theory particularly useful for the purpose of rethinking the ways in which knowledge is constructed.

Emancipatory education:

Emancipatory education recognizes the systemic oppression perpetuated by modern education. Its basic premise is that those who are in power determine what constitutes valid knowledge (1970 Freire). The powerful will support knowledge structures which reify and legitimize their privileged position. In an honest way the knowledge structures they uphold are based upon their own lived experiences and make perfect sense. Thus, it is not the goal of emancipatory education to change the content of knowledge, but to reconstruct knowledge and its relation to our consciousness in the world. Emancipatory educators, such as Paolo Friere and Seth Kreisberg, explore the implications of this reconceptualization of knowledge for the process of education. Emancipatory education avoids solipsistic subjectivity by placing the reconceptualization
of knowledge into context, and by using it as a premise for teaching. These efforts to both reconceptualize knowledge and practice it are relevant to this study.

What follows is an investigation of embodied experience, in order to better understand the relationship between embodied experience and the construction of knowledge. The inquiry begins with an in-depth conceptual analysis of somatics and its implications for phenomenology, postmodern theories, and emancipatory education (Chapter 2). Following the conceptual analysis is a practical examination of embodied learning in the form of a qualitative field study (Chapter 3 and 4). In chapter 5 I draw conclusions and clarify the issues raised within this study.
Chapter 2
CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Modern Perspectives:

The transition from traditional to modern society was characterized by a major ontological shift from religious faith to faith in reason. Positivism, the predominant paradigm of modern societies, rests on the premise that there are universal truths that can be discovered through reason. These universal truths constitute an objective body of knowledge which precedes and exists separate from human perception, grounding positivism in a subject-object dualism. The acquisition of this objective knowledge is the "basis for the emancipation of men and women from the bonds of ignorance associated with stagnant tradition, narrow religions and meager educations," and promises "freedom, equality, justice, the good life, and prosperity (Bioland, p.523)." Positivism is grounded in a humanism which declares all individuals equal. The combination of human equality and objective knowledge results in the positivist premise that access to knowledge and emancipation is within the means and responsibility of each individual (Germino, p.9). Taken to the logical extreme it follows that, in
modern societies, individuals are responsible for their own success and privilege, as well as for their own "failures". This rationale is used to justify oppressive economic and social conditions which persist in Western society.

While positivist thought has predominated in Western society it is not the exclusive paradigm. Numerous reactions to positivism were based on the observation that modern positivist thought serves as a basis, not only for democracy, but for facism, nazism, and communism. Even in democratic states, many forms of oppression flourish. In this chapter I explore how somatics, postmodern theory and emancipatory education have reconsidered positivist premises regarding knowledge, experience and agency. I am interested in the ways in which these fields intersect and complement each other, and how they can be integrated into a new framework for education.

Somatics:

Somatics has been described by Thomas Hanna as a reaction to the alienation and subsequent new self-consciousness experienced as a result of the modern technological revolution (1970 Hanna, p.17). Hanna asserts that the dualist consciousness of positivism is no longer useful.

With the inevitable discovery of a new awareness of ourselves, there will come an inevitable loss of a central feature of our old awareness: the ancient and tenacious notion that man is a
composite of mind and body, of spirit and flesh... For millennia it has been of practical advantage for individuals of the human race to emphasize and place value upon that aspect of their behavior which they have called mental [modern] or spiritual [traditional]; but what has now come to be discovered is that the so-called mental and spiritual aspects of our bodily being are only one aspect of our human possibilities - and an aspect which has, moreover, constrained men to remain in an unbalanced and peculiar stance toward their environmental world. (1970 Hanna pp.34-37).

Hanna provides a concise description of somatics; he described it as living through the literary first-person (1970 Hanna). Hanna contrasted this with the prevalent practice of viewing the world and people through the third-person, in other words, as a field of objects to be talked about and analyzed, separate from one's own self and reality. Thus, for Hanna, living experience becomes the primary source of knowledge and validation, outweighing other, "third person" sources such as text and discourse. This does not imply that third person sources are insignificant. Rather, text and discourse constitute the framework which surrounds, informs, and integrates with one's living experience.

Somatic Implications for Knowledge

The field of somatics is currently at a constructive point in its development. Although one can identify leading philosophers and practitioners who have done much to promote somatic practice (including, among others, F.M. Alexander, Irmgard Bartenieff, Thomas Hanna, Bonnie Bainbridge-Cohen, Seymour Kleinman), somatics has resisted precise verbal
definition. The fact that somatics resists definition is not surprising. A unique characteristic of somatics, which distinguishes it from other philosophies, is that its significance lies in its practice rather than in its narrative description. Most somaticists are known for their "practices" rather than for their writings. As a result, those interested in somatics are challenged, by the field itself, to engage in a process of critical and flexible exploration, regarding its very definition.

Many aspects of somatics defy verbalization and rely solely on experience. This carries with it implications for a somatic construction of knowledge. The knowledge obtained through somatic practice is not externalized into an objective body of knowledge. Instead knowledge is created within each individual as they relate to their world. While it is possible to verbally share aspects of an experience, one is not able to completely communicate their experience with others through language. Knowledge is not a thing that can be externalized, fixed through language, nor completely imparted on others. Nonetheless, verbalization, action, and reactions all inform one's own as well as other's experiences. As we never stop "experiencing" our knowledge base never stops developing. Knowledge is a constant state of flux. It is continuously created and recreated for each individual through their experiences of and interactions with the world.
Somatics and Education

Seymour Kleinman addresses the difference between somatics and "philosophy" as he advocates a new form of education:

...philosophy is, and always will be, a cognitive discipline. Physical education and sport, on the other hand, is capable of offering us a more holistic approach through the development of what may be called a "kinesthetic phenomenology." With experience, wholeness, cultivation, practice, and achievement as our guides, I would like to propose a sport and physical education for the future, a Somatic Education for the 21st century (1988 Kleinman p.9).

Kleinman somatically expands education beyond the cognitive realm to encompass the whole "living experience." For Kleinman, education does not refer to a body of comprehendable knowledge but to an embodied process of coming to know the world. The phrase "kinesthetic phenomenology" encompasses those experiences, mentioned above, which evade verbal description.

Kleinman then describes the principles of a somatic education. The basic elements consist of "movement and awareness" (Ibid). Furthermore, "life is a state of continuous creation and moving is a universal manifestation of this creativity (Ibid)." He then compares life with art and creative acts. Kleinman concludes that:

...it becomes incumbent upon education, particularly to somatic education, to provide opportunities to create good art, to help us live our lives as good art in theory and practice (1988 Kleinman p.10).
Life and reality become social and individual constructions.
By establishing the creation of "good art" as a goal, Kleinman alludes to the subjectivity of structures, ethics and practices. (Dewey is dualist: he believes that there are subjective and objective conditions and his big contribution was that he subordinated the object to the subject rather than the reverse, but he did not deny the object (Dewey, p.41)).

**Somatics and Agency**

Somatics does not preclude legitimacy of criticism and action. Instead, a somatic approach encourages heightening awareness through critical thinking; a critical thinking based on individual experience, RATHER THAN on existing structures and discourses. While somatics does not deny that thought and awareness are affected by structures and discourse, it asserts that there is an element of individual experience that affords human agency and critical thought. This element is the alignment of internalized knowledge based on one's own embodied lived experiences with that which is generally and relationally validated as knowledge. In other words if knowledge is recognized as partial, fluxuating, and subjective, rather than as existing somewhere outside of human perception, then one's internalized knowledge is validated. This legitimation is the basis of empowerment and agency. This process is not solipsistically subjective, because it does not deny the
existence of legitimate knowledge; it redefines it. Somatics does not throw all standards and values out the window; it grounds them in individual and inter-relational experience.

Somatics and Accountability

Somatics emphasises the lived experiences of the individual. The concept of "individual" in somatics does not imply solitude or isolation. The somatic individual only exists relative to her/his context and recognizes the world as integrated, holistic and full of relationships. The "context" also exists only relative to each individual's experiences and therefore is never fixed. Thus, within a somatic paradigm the world is characterized by a holism which resists totalizing structure. Individuals do not exist independently of their context. Through this somatic recognition of interdependence, the element of accountability is introduced. (For Dewey there exists a fixed context, separate from the individual. When an individual perceives of themself somehow separate from the whole then they are capable of action that is based only on their individual whims without a sense of accountability.)

Negotiating Fields: Phenomenology and Post-Modernism

Somatics is rarely thought of as a paradigm, although it is grounded by certain premises which define the way the world is perceived. This is due, in part, the fact that
somatic practices are not yet legitimated within the traditional Western institution of higher education. Because the somatic perspectives conflict with the highly verbal, rational, and linearly progressive structure of academia, somatic practitioners are more comfortable outside the limits of these institutions. As a result somatics is developing independently of fields which share similar concerns, perpetuating the fragmentation between disciplines. This study is an effort to reconcile disciplines which share similar concerns and premises in order to form a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary somatic framework for education. The remainder of chapter two engages the literature of post-modern critical theory and phenomenology to inform the somatic perspective of this study. The sections are organized into topic areas relevant to education and to the construction of knowledge.

Experience and Essence:

The first issue regards experience. Phenomenology brought the body back into philosophy, emphasizing the primacy of "our living body, which is never absent from the perceptual field... (Husserl, p.107)." Phenomenology, therefore, is based upon that which individuals experience, through their physical senses. Edmund Husserl's phenomenology is described as follows:

(Husserl's) most basic philosophical assumption was that we can only know what we experience by attending to perceptions and meanings that awaken our conscious awareness. Initially all our
understanding comes from sensory experience of phenomena... (1981 Patton p.69).

Phenomenology is consistent with somatics in its emphasis on experience and of meaning-making through living experience. The living body/mind is central to both. However, phenomenology diverges from somatics on a crucial issue. Phenomenology presumes "that there is an essence or essences to shared experience... (1981 Patton p.70)." Husserl defends the existence of a "pregiven pure life-world" which exists prior to scientific objectivist truth (Husserl, pp.140-141). People are "relatively bound" to this pregiven life-world through their senses (Husserl, p.139). Humanly constructed truths will vary depending on individual purposes or goals which influence human interpretation of the life-world. These interpretations vary from person to person and culture to culture. Still, Husserl maintains a basic essence that is attainable by all:

...the life-world does have, in all its relative features, a general structure. This general structure, to which everything that exists relatively is bound, is not itself relative. We can attend to it in its generality and, with sufficient care, fix it once and for all in a way equally accessible to all. As life-world the world has, even prior to science, the "same" structures that the objective sciences presuppose in their substruction of a world which exists "in itself" and is determined through "truths in themselves" (this substruction being taken for granted due to the tradition of centuries); these are the same structures that they presuppose as apriori structures and systematically unfold in a priori sciences, sciences of the logos, the universal methodical norms by which any knowledge of the world existing "in itself, objectively" must be bound (Husserl, p. 139).
Maurice Merleau-Ponty also describe a "real world" to be defined through shared experiences. Merleau-Ponty asserts that "The real has to be described, not constructed or formed (1962 Merleau-Ponty p.X)." He states that reality can not be dismissed as mere interpretation or reflection:

If the reality of my perception were based solely on the intrinsic coherence of 'representations,' it ought to be forever hesitant and, being wrapped up in my conjectures on probabilities, I ought to be ceaselessly taking apart misleading syntheses, and reinstating in reality stray phenomena which I had excluded in the first place. But this does not happen. The real is a closely woven fabric ( Ibid).

Phenomenology not only places an essential quality on the real world, but also on the relationship between the individual and their encounter with the real world. In other words, since we are all relating ultimately to the same "real world" our perceptions and descriptions of this world will be similar. Merleau-Ponty acknowledges that reflection, meaning-making, interpretation and representation are processes that distance humans from the real world (1963 Merleau-Ponty p.XVIII). But he maintains that before these cognitive processes occur, humans relate to and live through the real world. Through this more immediate interrelationship, we are "in communication with the world" (1963 Merleau-Ponty p.XVII).

If Husserl’s fixed life-world and Merleau-Ponty’s real world exist then humans necessarily become objects within this world. Husserl states:
Among the objects of the life-world we also find human beings, with all their human action and concern, works and suffering, living in common in the world-horizon in their particular social interrelations and knowing themselves to be such (Husserl, p.146).

If humans become objects within the life-world then it is logically possible to know ourselves through an objective third-person perspective. This logic conflicts with knowing the world through the first-person, as somatics presumes that we do.

Husserl’s phenomenology is ultimately dualistic. This is clear in his following discussion of the human body:

The kinestheses are different from the movements of the living body which exhibit themselves merely as those of a physical body, yet they are somehow one with them, belonging to one’s own living body with its two-sided character (internal kinestheses, external physical-real movements) (Husserl p.161).

Pragmatism is a perspective often compared to European phenomenology. John Dewey, prominent pragmatist and philosopher of education based on experience in the United States, similarly emphasises the lived experience. For this reason he is often referenced as a proponent of somatic education. However, like Husserl and Merleau Ponty, Dewey is also dualist. He believes that there are subjective and objective conditions. While Dewey subordinated the object to the subject (rather than the reverse), he did not deny the object. He exhibits this in his statement that:

...the notion that experience is truly experience only when objective conditions are subordinated to
what goes on within the individuals having the experience (1963 Dewey p.41).

A somatic perspective does not presume a "real world" and is not dualistic. Within a somatic perspective there is no difference between the lived experience and reality. The following excerpt from my reflective journal illustrates my struggle to find an essence in somatic experiences.

I had set as my goal - finding what students learn in a physical education class other than skills. I was hoping to uncover something "there", an essence common to everyone's experience. However, as I collected and reviewed my data over the course of the quarter, I found that my influence as the instructor clouded my vision, and obstructed the visibility of the "there" that I searched to find. I began to question the existence of a "there" (Personal journal, Spring 1995).

I realized that my very presence influenced and changed the meaning that students put into their experience. The fact that the "essence" of a social dance experience could not withstand even my presence, led me to question the stability of this "essence". Any essence that I would discover, quickly changed or dissappeared when I reworded my questions or solicited the perspectives of outside observers. The focus of my study, at this point, changed from searching for an essence, to exploring the discursive reality constructed through my relationships with the students.

In order to do this I examine the treatment of reality and essence in post-modern writings. Frederick Erickson is a scholar of post-modern research whose insights are applicable to the general issue of experience:
The object of interpretive social research is action, not behavior... Because such actions are grounded in choices of meaning interpretation, they are always open to the possibility of reinterpretation and change (1986 Erickson p.127). Erickson changes the emphasis in "living experience" from phenomenologically perceived "essences" to post-modern "action". Since it is only possible to construct generalizable facts on events that have already happened, there is no way to ultimately prove laws of human behavior. Post-postivist and post-modern research, as evidenced in Erickson's writing, abandons this futile goal, and becomes interested in the processes of human action based in living contexts.

Chris Weedon similarly prioritizes the act:

...experience has no inherent essential meaning. The individual is both the site for a range of possible forms of subjectivity and at any particular moment of thought or speech, a subject, subjected to the regime of meaning of a particular discourse and enabled to act accordingly (1987 Weedon p.34).

Somatics is similarly concerned with action and the active living process. This process is constantly grounded in choices of meaning interpretation, and therefor open to the possibility of reinterpretation (Ibid). Furthermore, during this process, throughout each action, we affect and help create our environment, changing it. This runs counter to Merleau-Ponty's assertion that "this does not happen" and that "the real is a closely woven fabric (1962 Merleau-Ponty p.X)."
Not only are individuals subjected to a range of possible interpretations, but they may be influenced by more than one at a time. Thus, individuals can place numerous, conflicting meanings into one particular situation. This is illustrated through my personal experience of the lead/follow phenomena in social dance, documented in my reflective journal:

I can understand and enjoy the process of "following" and submitting to the flow of kinesthetic communication. I appreciate and enjoy this.

On the other hand, I will not teach the traditional man-lead/woman-follow phenomena. I do not enjoy having to play the submissive role. This is not what social dance is about. It is an equal communication.

I cannot reconcile these two statements. Both are true.

Sally Peters describes a similar situation in her experience of social dance:

One of the most difficult aspects of ballroom dance for many women is not strictly technical, but seems to be gender related. In learning to follow the lead unhesitatingly, women typically encounter a stubborn problem - to move forward with uninterrupted vigor...But his body blocks the path and the female, reluctant to push him out of her way, hesitates ever so slightly. She must overcome this inhibition, learning to dance aggressively even as she follows the male's lead, fulfilling her prescribed, apparently passive/feminine role. That is, ironically, she must be aggressive precisely in order to appear non-aggressive and pliable (1991 Peters p.153).

Such conflicts are embraced by post-modernists. Lyotard writes that "...society does not form an integrated whole, but remains haunted by a principle of opposition (1984
Lyotard p.13)." Kvale believes that "Human subjects exist as a tangle of discourses...(and the contradictions, elisions, and fissures contained therein) (1989 Kvale p.154)."

Thus, somatics negotiates the phenomenological and post-modern views of experience through the following question: What comes first - the "real world" phenomena or the human experience of it? A somatic approach would assert that action creates reality and meaning concurrently, as our body-mind experiences it. In other words, the phenomena and the human experience of it happen at the same time, and the "essence" of the real world is immediately mediated by the individual.

Knowledge/Power/Discourse:

My discussion of experience found somatics more closely aligned with post-modern process, change and subjectivity, than with phenomenological essentialism. However, before I align somatics with the post-modern paradigm, it is necessary to examine how the fundamental concepts of knowledge and discourse are managed.

I will begin with Michel Foucault, a prominent post-modern philosopher. Foucault relates knowledge to power:

power and knowledge directly imply one another;...there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations...In short, it is not the activity of the subject of knowledge that produces a corpus of knowledge, useful or resistant to power, but power/knowledge,
the processes and struggles that traverse it and of which it is made up, that determines the forms and possible domains of knowledge (1977 Foucault p.28).

In post-modernism there is no absolute or underlying truth, knowledge becomes a function of power. Furthermore, power is not something that belongs to one group or individual to the exclusion of others. It is an entire system that penetrates society and which, in modern times, manifests itself in every individual. It does not oppress or obscure truth. Rather it is the basis for truth. In Power/Knowledge Foucault clarifies this understanding of power:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression (1984 Rabinow p.61).

For Foucault, power systems penetrate each individual through "discourse." Discourse, as defined by Foucault is the way we verbalize, textualize or symbolize social reality (1977 Foucault).

Discourse plays the primary role in defining and organizing society. It establishes a system of relations between social practices and institutions. The resulting unity is what allows a society to function coherently. Dreyfus paraphrases this as the:
claim that discourse unifies the whole system of practices, and that it is only in terms of this discursive unity that the various social, political, economic, technological, and pedagogical factors come together and function in a coherent way (1982 Dreyfus p.65).

Discourses, are not individual endeavors, but are co-created and legitimated through social relations, and eventually exist outside of individual experience, subjugating individual experiences to their own logic. By engaging in social discourse individuals internalize oppressive power systems thereby legitimating them as they are subjected to them (1977 Foucault).

Foucault calls the process through which power is inscribed on the physical body, bio-power. Bio-power is the way in which discipline has been internalized through discourse (1982 Rabinow p.17). Most importantly, Foucault does not believe that this disciplining is a result of the living experiences of a subjective body. Instead, he asserts that the body has been objectified and has been turned into political terrain. Rather than being capable of significant experiences, the body is inscribed by discourse:

Refuting humanist ideology, Foucault's genealogy was established on the premise that human nature is a social construction that possesses no essential features... According to Foucault, knowledge itself is not organically grounded in the human subject but is a secular product of social intercourse between human agents; it is the human by-product of powerful social forces (1993 Andrews pp.154-155).
Embodied Knowledge/Agency/Discourse:

Other post-modernists reject Foucault's complete objectification of the body. For instance, Chris Shilling supports the view that discourses surround and symbolize bodies. However, for Shilling, those discourses are located within concrete relationships between people. This is elaborated in her definition of structuration theory:

Structures are not external forces which constrain social relations, but sets of 'rules' and 'resources' which actors draw on, and hence reproduce, to facilitate social interaction. Structural rules and resources, then, are both the medium and outcome of social action. However, these 'structures' do not determine human action and are themselves open to change. Structuration theory recognizes the ability of humans to act in ways which do not conform to dominant social norms and which influence processes...(1991 Shilling p.666).

Shilling thus preserves the legitimacy of living experience.

On these grounds, Foucault's definition of discourse, which limits it to text and verbal or symbolic communication, has also been challenged. By limiting discourse, which he equates closely with social reality, he subjugates experience to its textual or verbal description. He is thus criticized for taking the "practice," or in other words the individual lived experience, out of social reality (1987 DeLauretis p.38).

Chris Weedon expands Foucault's definition of a discursive field from verbal communication, text and symbolic documentation, to:
...an attempt to understand the relationship between language, social institutions, subjectivity and power. Discursive fields consist of competing ways of giving meaning to the world and of organizing social institutions and processes (1987 Weedon p.35).

Based on this expanded definition of discourse, it becomes possible to reconcile post-modernism with somatics by including, within the field of discourse, embodied and incorporated practices and experiences. The usefulness of this expansion became evident in the early stages of my study of social dance. In my reflective journal, I noted:

...that communication consists, not only of language, but of all acts and reactions (including physical motion and posture, nonverbal compliance and other non-linguistic events) which occur within sets of rules, structures and institutions. Consequently, the definition of discourse I will use for the purposes of my study will include all of these communicative practices and structures.

The inclusion of such practices is implicitly encouraged by the writings of Paul Connerton, Norbert Elias, Mark Franko and other theorists concerned with the physical movement of people. For instance, Connerton describes how the body "knows":

...the phenomenon of habit should prompt us to revise our notion of 'understand' and our notion of the body... Habit is a knowledge and a remembering in the hands and in the body; and in the cultivation of habit it is our body which 'understands' (1989 Connerton p.95).

Connerton makes a distinction between inscribing practices and incorporated practices of knowledge. Inscribing practices are those mechanisms for storing and retrieving information, such as "print, encyclopedias,
indexes, photographs, sound tapes, computers, all requiring that we do something that traps and holds information, long after the human organism has stopped informing (1989 Connerton p.73)." Incorporating practices are bodily activities that impart information intentionally or unintentionally such as a handshake, smile, gesture (Ibid). Connerton emphasizes the significance of the ways in which the body "knows". For instance, the political ideology of an individual is largely dependent on the body's knowledge:

...political ideology must be understood 'not as an independently premeditated beginning for political activity,' but as knowledge, in an abstract and generalized form, 'of a concrete manner of attending to the arrangements of society; that ideologies, ...can never be more than abbreviations of some manner of concrete behaviour; and that a tradition of behaviour is unavoidably knowledge of detail, since 'what has to be learned is not an abstract idea...but a concrete, coherent, manner of living in all its intricacy (cited from Oakshott).’ (1989 Connerton p.11).

Elias describes how the notions of Western "civilization" and "kultur" actually exist in our physical embodiment of them, particularly in our manners (1978 Elias). Elias' explanation of manners is not unlike Foucault's "internalized discipline". Elias bases the existence of manners within the evolved concept of "shame". However, unlike Foucault, he does not limit the incorporation of manners within the bounds of social discourse. For Elias, the body/mind (my wording) does not
only reflect, but also chooses its embodiments (1978 Elias p.56).

Franko describes the significance of lived experience in reference to movement that exaggerates or distorts established discourse; movement that he terms "grotesque."

Citing Bakhtin, Franko states:

Even an imperfectly realized grotesque...frees human consciousness, thought and imagination for new potentialities (1993 Franko p.7).

By broadening our range of embodied experiences we broaden our ranges of understanding. The realization of this possibility creates the condition for expanding and altering our discourses. Thus, lived experience is not only significant, it also creates the condition for human agency.

Significantly, these three views of embodied knowledge do not depend on essentialism. They do not preclude post-modern principles of opposition, conflict and flux.

At this point I will return to Patton's citation of Husserl:

His (Husserl's) most basic philosophical assumption was that we can only know what we experience by attending to perceptions and meanings that awaken our conscious awareness. Initially all our understanding comes from sensory experience of phenomena... (1981 Patton p.69).

By integrating Husserl's phenomenological centrality of experience, with post-modernist constructions of social reality, somatics negotiates living experience, embodied (as opposed to cognitive) knowledge, and human agency, as well as conflict and flux into its framework. Somatics can thus
integrate the post-modern concepts of process, change and subjectivity, without rejecting phenomenological significance of living experience.

**Emancipatory Education**

A reconceptualization of knowledge, grounded in embodied experience, holds significant implications for modern education. In the field of education, an area of literature has emerged as a response to the increasingly evident power discrepancies embedded in Western education of the Third World. This area of investigation is called emancipatory education. Emancipatory education developed independent of post-modernism and somatics, and yet shares many similar ideas. The significance of emancipatory education is that, like somatics, it is grounded in practice rather than in theory, and thereby offers practical alternatives to modern education. In this section I consider the similarities between emancipatory education and somatics, particularly in their use of knowledge/power and experience.

**Knowledge Within Emancipatory Education**

Any theory of education must, at least implicitly, hold basic assumptions about the structure and purpose of knowledge. For instance, a positivist approach assumes a rational and objective world with a body of knowledge consisting of objective truths. A positivist education
would therefore most basically consist of the transmittance of these truths and the search for more truths.

The positivist approach dominates the current practice of teaching, as well as the current practice of learning. Donald Oliver, an education theorist, explains:

Modern teaching commonly begins the process of "coming to know" from the outside. Skills, concepts and subjects are objects, so to speak, outside the student, possessed by the teacher, and "given," as it were, to the student... Such a construction of teaching/learning is based on our predominant modern mode of being - the sense that the world is made up of sentient minds and hard objects (1990 Oliver p.68).

Paolo Freire, a leader in emancipatory education theory, illustrates this through the following situation:

They [the students] call themselves ignorant and say the "professor" is the one who has knowledge and to whom they should listen. The criteria of knowledge imposed upon them are the conventional ones. "Why don't you," said a peasant participating in a culture circle, "explain the pictures first? That way it'll take less time and won't give us a headache." ...Almost never do they realize that they, too, "know things" they have learned in their relations with the world and with other men. Given the circumstances which have produced their duality, it is only natural they distrust themselves (1970 Freire p.49).

A student in my Movement and Self Awareness class, journaled a similar concern regarding movement explorations intended to provide them opportunities to examine their own experiences:

The explorations are interesting, but it would help if you would spend more time explaining what they mean (1994 Excerpt from student journal, Movement and Self Awareness elective class).
Freire asserts that the positivist framework perpetuates itself through oppressive power relations. It is in the interest of the powerful to reify the "truths" which legitimize their power. Freire’s citation also implies a second reason for the pervasiveness of positivism: that it takes "less time and won’t give...a headache (Ibid)."
Placing the responsibility of knowledge on some external, objective force, saves the trouble and the responsibility of exploring and determining knowledge for oneself. The drawback is that the supposed ‘objective force’ is consequentially and inevitably appropriated and controlled by the powerful. In any case, the positivist framework affects both those who are learning as well as those who are administering and teaching.

Emancipatory education proposes alternative education frameworks. Freire alludes to what he considers the source of knowledge -- individuals "in their relations with the world and with other men (Ibid)." Oliver echoes the assumption that knowledge is formed through relationships. He provides a description of reality as:

...pattern, or the multiplicity of dynamic relationships that define happenings or "occasions" (1990 Oliver p.64).

Oliver shows how this would apply to education:

A more adequate way of thinking about learning knowing, perhaps requires that there be moments when the separate participants in an occasion - teacher, students, material, classroom - "collapse in an interaction," as happens when a photon of
light and a green leaf participate in photosynthesis (1990 Oliver p.69).

In the work of these theorists, knowledge is a social construct which is created in relationships, interactions and experiences. The positivist "unitary body of knowledge" is reconceptualized as fluctuating, multitudinous, social construction. On this issue, emancipatory education theorists concur with the postmodernist theories regarding knowledge discussed earlier in this chapter (Foucault, DeLauretis, Lyotard, Weedon).

Freire acknowledges that a reconstruction of knowledge is not enough to avoid the appropriation of knowledge by certain privileged groups or systems. In non-positivist paradigms, the powerful are still able to impose the legitimacy of their truths onto society as a whole. Seth Kreisberg enlists Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony to elaborate this process. Gramsci defined hegemony as the process through which privileged groups impose their construction of reality on a whole society. Consequently,

Domination is perpetuated through the ability of those who dominate to gain the consent of the oppressed without the awareness of the oppressed that they are participating in their own oppression (1992 Kreisberg p.14).

This process is similar to Foucault's internalized disciplining. This domination pervades text and verbal discourse as well as embodied experiences.

...hegemony works on both the individual's mind and body (1992 Kreisberg p.15).
[social reality is]...shaped by the patterns and daily routines of our everyday lives (1992 Kreisberg p.16).

We tend to act in the ways we see and experience others' action...Experience solidifies into habit. In fact, hegemony is most encompassing when a dominant ideology reflects and is expressed in everyday experience and in a range of social practices and structures in a society (Ibid).

Knowledge is possessed within our bodies, in our habits and manners, as well as being conceptually known, verbalized and documented.

While domination and appropriation of knowledge are possible in any system, emancipatory educators point to the possibility of human agency in non-positivist paradigms. Contrastingly, positivist paradigms systematically deny the possibility of changing what they consider to be the truth.

Herein lies the fundamental conviction of emancipatory education. This is the conviction that the hegemony of privileged knowledge can be challenged in an educational context. For Freire, the process occurs though the validation of individual lived experiences. He developed a process of education which involves telling stories based on one's own perceptions and experiences and critically co-examining these stories with one's peers (1970 Freire). For Kreisberg, the challenge lies in redefining the concept of power from "power over" to "power with" (1992 Kreisberg). This concept is fostered through the co-creation of knowledge through communication. Emancipatory education has restored agency to individuals in the structuring of
knowledge. However, Kreisberg identifies a significant gap in the application of emancipatory education theory. In the next section I explain this gap and attempt to resolve it within a somatic context.

The Facilitation of Student Empowerment

Traditionally, knowledge and power are constructed for preservation and legitimation of existant privileged groups and individuals within societies. Emancipatory education theorists propose the possibility of empowerment of all members of a society. Their proposal is based on a reconstruction of power and knowledge. In this section I describe this proposal as well as a crucial gap in the applicability of this proposal. I then suggest a solution involving a somatic perspective. I begin by describing the relationship between power and action.

Power and Action:

The concept of empowerment is determined by its root word "power." Modern theorists tend to define power as a negative concept, and in terms of "power-over" (1992 Kreisberg chapter 2). In modern Western society this power is ubiquitous. Foucault explains:

...it is the apparatus as a whole that produces "power" and distributes individuals in this permanent and continuous field. This enables the disciplinary power to be both absolutely indiscreet, since it is everywhere, and always alert, since by its very principle it leaves no zone of shade and constantly supervises the very
individuals who are entrusted with the task of supervising...(1960 Foucault p.192)

Kreisberg offers another point. Enlisting the idea that no concept exists without its negation he argues:

...there seems to be no imposition of domination that does not simultaneously create forms of resistance...Resistance is readily apparent in most situations of domination. While the mechanisms of hegemony are powerful, they are not all-encompassing, and they are always characterized by contradictions and conflict (1992 Kreisberg pp.16-17).

Kreisberg then reconceptualizes power to include its positive elements. He defines "power-from-within" and "power-with" as positive aspects of power based in community and relationship (1992 Kreisberg chapter 3). He then developed his work around the concept of "power-with.

Power-with is derived from synergistic interactions between individuals (1992 Kreisberg p.79). In other words, power results from a cumulative and dialectic, progressive creation of knowledge between individuals. In Kreisberg's study, the implementation of power-with in administrative meetings usually resulted (successfully) in consensual agreement. The research participants expressed a sense of power. Kreisberg found that his research participants were equating the positive element of power with having a voice. According to one participant "...having power meant being listened to (1992 Kreisberg p.134)." However, another added, "You don't automatically get power just because you have something to say (1992 Kreisberg p.136)." They
concluded that power was dependant on creativity, commitment to community/social relationships, and lastly, wisdom and experience.

Significantly, these three defining requisites for power are consistent with post-positivist requisites for the construction of knowledge.

Power is also intimately dependant on action. One of Kreisberg's participants defines empowerment as:

...the combination of feeling strongly about something and caring about it - thinking about it and acting. All that is combined and never any one happens in isolation. So I can't just think strongly about something and feel empowered, usually, unless there is an action piece of it too... nor do I feel comfortable just acting on something without continuing to think about it (1992 Kreisberg p.108).

Herein lies the particular strength of physical education in facilitating student empowerment. Issues that are addressed in physical activity necessitate physical involvement and embodied participation immediately (at least within the classroom). Reflecting upon these issues then can place the issues in larger context. If these issues are explored, challenged, enacted - empowerment occurs.

For example, an issue systemic to social dance classes is that of gender. Men and women learn different steps and have different responsibilities in the same class. When dancing together they must negotiate a relationship, a communication, and a sharing of power. Many students enter the class with the familiar stereotype that the man leads
and the woman follows. This stereotype can be seen in the larger context of society itself. The prevailing goal, however, is to make the dance "work." As students strive to make the dance "work" as well as possible, they explore variations of, alternatives to, and the limits of the man lead/woman follow dynamic. Their physical relationship and communication is synonymous with the larger context of "relationships" and "communication." Through student journals I have learned that:

One woman felt that being thrown about (led) like a rag doll was counter productive. The dance was not as smooth. It was like arguing with someone who does not let you get a word in.

One man found it was easier to "listen to" and "hear" a partner when they were more assertive.

It was uninteresting for one man to make decisions without equal input from his partner. It was less creative. (Reworded excerpts from student journals, Winter 1994).

These experiences with the practice of gender relationships led the students to individual reflection and meaning-making. I believe that to some extent, students were empowered in the process. They had critically and actively challenged former assumptions and as a result had creatively constructed new knowledge. They did this by listening, being listened to, and by enacting their ideas throughout the process.

A Gap in the Process

Kreisberg discusses the concepts of hegemony, knowledge and power, as well as how they become structured into social
reality. He also asserts that with education society can redefine these concepts through their embodied experiences. However, Kreisberg's methods do not overcome the initial structures. He himself acknowledges that his methods were successful within the particular mid-to-upper middle class settings, but questions their relevance to the homeless, the politically or racially discriminated, and the hungry (1992 Kreisberg p.196). He concludes that power-over might be a necessary requisite to construct a setting conducive to power-with. This conclusion was substantiated by examples in his research. Kreisberg found that participants had to exert power-over, by imposing and enforcing a democratic environment, in order to maintain a setting conducive to consensus.

Consequently, the question that remains is: where, and in what is empowerment based? Can I empower my students, or would this imply that I am powering-over them? Kreisberg left this dilemma unresolved. Freire also resorts to power-over in initiating education. He relies on the privileged liberators, who empathize with the oppressed, to initiate the educational process.

One weakness of Kreisberg's concept of power-with may lie in its over-reliance on consensus. He assumes that through dialogue and communication consensus will be achieved. In doing so he assumes dialogue is a pure representation of human thought, meaning and desire, and
that individuals are free to express these thoughts, meanings and desires in dialogue. Kreisberg relies on this assumption although he recognizes the actual complexity of power dynamics within groups. He asserts that "...one is never purely empowered or disempowered, for the reality of our lives is infinitely more complex (1992 Kreisberg 194). If power-over exists to some extent in every situation, then individuals must search for empowerment, not in relationships with their oppressors, but within themselves. The significance of relationship is not dismissed; but the individual experience of this relationship is emphasised and legitimized.

Power-From-Within: A Somatic Resolution:

I was particularly drawn to a concept which Kreisberg mentioned briefly but then left alone, that of "power-from-within." Initially coined by peace activist, Starhawk, this concept involves:

...an attitude and spirit with which the individual engages the world...a sense of competence and joy at one's unfolding capacities...defined by ...one's sense of self and sense of connection to the world (1992 Kreisberg p.68).

This attitude can survive a power-over situation because it is not dependent on relationships or consensus, but instead draws strength from the self and its appreciation of connectedness to the world. This attitude is consistent with somatic philosophy which is grounded in the individual as experienced from within.
Kreisberg has acknowledged that equality and consensus can not occur instantaneously. I believe that their facilitation may be based in the integrity of dignity, which is founded on power-from-within, and which persists even in a power-over situation. Dignity is based on a personal knowledge. This personal knowledge is similar to how the body "knows" in Connerton's model. In other words, power-from-within can be developed out of a critical communication between one's incorporated knowledge and the discursive knowledge that occurs through relationships. The new self-knowledge needs to be trusted more than externally imposed structures of knowledge. This is the reason, for instance, that it is possible for a student to fail an examination without losing their dignity and worth. Power-from-within is also found in the dignity of homeless, unemployed, discriminated, or other distinctly oppressed individuals (these situations do not promote dignity, thus its presence is uniquely powerful).

Moreover, this does not release individuals from the responsibility of eliminating oppression around them. The responsibility lies in each individual. The uniqueness of this model is that it can be facilitated without imposition. Instead, it is facilitated through one's individual acceptance and enactment of it. This process is captured in the common knowledge proverb that one can only respect others by respecting oneself. In this situation power-over
is not a prerequisite to the creation of empowerment. The requisite is only that individuals themselves live through such a framework, thus setting an example of, and opening opportunities for, cooperative knowledge (power-with). In the context of a learning environment, this means that the facilitator/instructor creates the freedom for student exploration and creation (rather than transmittance) of knowledge. By enacting one's own exploration and creation of knowledge and avoiding the implication of an underlying truth as a facilitator/instructor, students are given the possibility to do the same. Their living experiences are legitimated and incorporated into their construction of knowledge. They are not forced to memorize and internalize information that does not make sense to them.  

This approach is inherent in the experiential process of somatic practices. Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen describes her teaching approach in this way:

But the techniques and principles themselves are not the material - it is more the awareness and understanding of how and when to use them, or how to invent one's own. The important thing for each person to learn how it is that they learn, to trust their own intuition, and to be open to the unique styles of others (1993 Bainbridge Cohen p.1).

Furthermore:

In BMC we are the material, our bodies and minds the medium of our exploration. The research is

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4. I use the phrase "make sense" deliberately. Making sense implies corresponding to one's sensuous, sensory, or embodied experiences.
experiential as is the material. We are each the study, the student, the teacher (1993 Bainbridge Cohen pp.1-2).

Moreover, the manner in which we come to understand our body and movement, is the same manner in which we come to understand the world around us. Thus, a somatic approach is not limited to the context of "somatic practices" such as Body Mind Centering, but can also apply to more traditional classroom situations. For instance, in my social dance class, I try to explore, question, critically encounter and practice the material which I present. I encourage the students to pay attention to the experience of their physical involvement in the material. I discuss my own questions regarding the issues encountered and exhibit the fact that I am not limited to any one answer. I listen to other answers, acknowledge their legitimacy and incorporate them into my knowledge and experience as appropriate. I do not force students to collaboratively create knowledge. They are free to choose to remain uninvolved. This places me at risk of being criticized and questioned by my students, who are more accustomed to instructors who "tell them how it is." As a new instructor, this makes it difficult to maintain authority. On the other hand, I see their confidence in my approach and in themselves grow throughout the quarter. They confirm this in their journals. These experiences are intermittent. They do not occur with every student, and I do occasionally resort to power-over
when I feel that my class is getting out of control (in the
case that a student decides to learn dance sitting down).
Nonetheless, I suspect that empowerment is closely related
to their growing self confidence. The confidence, I
suspect, is based on the students' and my own ability to
"know". This ability is grounded in power-from-within, or
what I might also describe as somatics. In John Dewey's
words this relies on:

...the notion that experience is truly experience
only when objective conditions are subordinated to
what goes on within the individuals having the

Somatics and its underlying principles, therefore, may
help to fill in the missing link left by emancipatory
educators. It does so by basing empowerment on the
relationship between an embodied knowledge and its
interaction with social discourse. The empowerment is
facilitated by leaving space for everyone's experiences.
Knowledge should make sense to those involved in it. My
preliminary research on my social dance classes supports
this possibility. The case studies which follow are an
attempt to enact and elaborate a somatic approach in
fostering empowerment in a classroom.
Chapter 3
METHODOLOGY

What follows in chapter three is an explanation of my research methodology with an emphasis on the interrelationship between the conceptual and fieldwork portions of the study. Included in this chapter are my research strategies and rationale, an elaboration of my own paradigmatic positioning, my role as well as my research participants' roles in the study, my specific data collection techniques and analytic procedures, and a defense of the validity of this work.

Strategies and Rationale:

Lyotard asserts that "today more than ever, knowing about...society involves first of all choosing what approach the inquiry will take (1984 Lyotard p.13)." The form of my research question is exploratory. I will intersect three conceptual frameworks in an effort to generate hypotheses regarding the influence of living experience on learning. I will concurrently investigate the process of learning as it occurs within a social dance class in order to check my emerging conceptual hypotheses. This is not a linear
process. Rather, my conceptual and practical studies will inform and affect each other as they progress.

The most appropriate research strategy for a project of this nature is qualitative. A qualitative study best accommodates my fluctuating emergent hypothesis. Frederick Erickson explains that in qualitative research

...induction and deduction are in constant dialogue. As a result, the researcher pursues deliberate lines of inquiry while in the field, even though the specific terms of inquiry may change in response to the distinctive character of events in the field setting (Erickson p.121).

Moreover, qualitative, post-positivist inquiry is most conducive to research that is "..exploratory or descriptive, that assumes the value of context and setting, and that searches for a deeper understanding of the participants' lived experiences of the phenomenon (1995 Marshall and Rossman p.39)." My study assumes that changes in understanding and knowledge (beyond skills) cannot be adequately explored through an approach which glosses over subtle differences in favor of finding general trends, particularly when the process of learning is at issue. The complex relationship between experience, deeply held beliefs and values, and the acquisition of knowledge, demand an indepth, long-term approach. As my participants engage in learning, they base their learning and their actions on their own understanding of reality. I chose to explore those realities in a way that only a qualitative study would permit.
Paradigmatic Positioning (and the role of the researcher):

Having chosen a qualitative approach it is my responsibility to acknowledge my own paradigmatic positioning and the effect that it has on my study. In doing so I acknowledge that scientists hold specific beliefs which affect both the conclusions as well as the very structure of his or her research. This stand contrary to positivist claims of objectivity in research. Marshal and Rossman describe the role of the researcher in a qualitative study as being an instrument through which a certain issue or situation is interpreted:

In qualitative studies the researcher is the "instrument": Her presence in the lives of the participants invited to be part of the study is fundamental to the paradigm (1995 Marshall and Rossman p.59).

My role as both researcher and full participant allows me to better understand the complexities and inner meanings of learning processes. At the same time it becomes particularly important for me to be clear about my own paradigmatic perspective as I enter into, and thereby affect, the study.

In my research, I engage the work of somatic, as well as post-modern critical theorists. My own positioning reflects elements of both fields. I am firmly based in a post-positivist framework (this encompasses, but is not limited to post-modernism). Post-positivism in research assumes that individual interpretations and experiences
affect reality; and that multiple realities may exist at one time (1989 Guba and Lincoln). A post-positivist researcher focuses on the meaningful behavior of individuals and strives to understand the world from the individual's perspective (Ibid). In light of this, it is clear that my research is not an attempt to uncover a hidden formula for learning. Instead it is an attempt to better understand the ways in which my participants make meaning out of their own physical experiences. These will be affected by the contexts or "discourses" surrounding each individual (the nature of "discourse" was elaborated in the literature review).

Though I am firm in my post-positivist positioning, and place myself within a post-modern paradigm, I maintain a critical element in my research, similar to that of post-modern critical theory. Critical theory recognizes reality as a product of constructed meanings, but emphasizes the influence of unequal power relations upon these meanings (1987 DeLauretis p.38). Whose realities are legitimated, and in which social contexts are they legitimated? What kinds of assumptions do we base our actions upon? This facet of my positioning provides the basis for my participants and myself to actively critique how and what one learns through physical activity, in order to uncover unequal power relations. Herein lies the opportunity for empowerment.
Setting and Population:

Marshall warns that the site and population should be purposeful (1995 Marshal p.50). For Marshall, the ideal site is where (1) entry is possible; (2) there is a high probability that a rich mix of the processes, people, programs, interactions, and structures of interest are present; (3) the researcher is likely to be able to build trusting relations with the participants in the study; and (4) data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured (Ibid p. 51).

The purpose of my practical field study is to clarify and inform my emerging conceptual model of somatic education. The site that I chose consists of three Social Dance classes in the Winter of 1995 at The Ohio State University. I collected general data from all 180 students in the three classes, but relied primarily on an indepth analysis of the experiences of six individual students consisting of three men and three women. Choosing six students provided me with a male and female representative from each class while maintaining a manageable group for indepth investigation over a period of ten weeks. I include an equal number of men and women in my study because gender significantly determines what is learned in a social dance class. Men and women learn different steps and to some extent different roles in social dance. Marshall explains that in limited case studies, it is usually impossible to choose cases "exactly like all others," but it is important to choose cases that are "not atypical (1995 Marshall p.52)." Because my goal is to better understand the complex and
contextualized processes of learning, rather than constructing sweeping generalizations, the selection of six information-rich, and not atypical cases is most appropriate. I will be able to test the depth of information from these six students against the breadth of information from the general class.

The site I chose is uniquely illustrative of the phenomena that I am exploring because it affords students the opportunity to learn in an atmosphere emphasizing physical experience. The social dance environment is particularly relevant for my research because it touches base with such critical issues as gender, diversity, power and cooperative learning; issues of larger social significance. Furthermore, it touches on these issues through movement, providing the opportunity to examine the inscription of power structures on bodies.

My role as instructor of the social dance classes ensured my entry to the site. My prolonged contact with the participants helped to create a trusting relationship. The six participants of my study received an independent study credit for their time and cooperation in the study. Because grades are based on attendance, their grades were not affected by their research responses.

Data quality was enhanced by the fact that I was fully involved in the course. This involvement provided me with
an insider's perspective as well as with the depth necessary for a qualitative study.

**Conceptual Research and Data Collection:**

My research is exploratory. The methodology consists of two parts: a conceptual and a practical section. The sections developed concurrently, each informing the other. However, for the purpose of a written dissertation they are separated into two chapters.

**Brief Summary of What's Been Done**

The conceptual portion of this study began with a review of somatic theory. I discussed how somatics is grounded in a phenomenological framework and to what extent it also reflects and benefits from a post-modern framework. The primary issues attended to in this discussion involved the construction of knowledge, the construction of power, and the role of living experience in these constructs.

The second section of the conceptual portion of this study was a critique of education from the perspective of emancipatory education theorists, grounded in the work of Paolo Freire and Seth Kreisberg. Emancipatory education theory shares many basic paradigmatic assumptions with both somatics and post-modern critical theory and locates these in an education setting. In this section I investigated the gap Kreisberg identified, between the theory and the
application of emancipatory education. I then explored the contribution that somatics makes toward resolving this gap.

Lastly I showed that intersecting the field of somatics, post-modern theory and emancipatory education, resolves certain conceptual gaps and weaknesses of each, thereby creating the possibility for a new and complete framework for post-positivist somatic education.

Another Layer

The second portion of my research will involve an applied case study, illustrative of physical experience. While I have positioned myself within a post-modern paradigm, I acknowledge the importance of experience in my study. Patton defines a phenomenological perspective as one that assumes an essence in shared experience (1981 Patton p.71). He contrasts this with phenomenological study, which he defines as "one that focuses on descriptions of what people experience and how it is that they experience what they experience (Ibid)." I will engage in non-essentialist phenomenological data gathering techniques. My techniques will focus on understanding the experiences and perspectives of the study participants. However, remaining in a post-modern framework I will not attempt to base conclusions on consensus among my participants. Instead I will focus on consistency within discourse of each participant.

I used multiple data collection techniques: open-ended interviews; student journals; and my own reflexive journal.
In a pilot study conducted in the winter quarter of 1994 I experimented with various data collection techniques in order to assess which ones would provide me with the richest information. The information that I was most interested in obtaining is the students' perspectives of their own learning process. The clearest examples of this were found in narrative student accounts of what they were learning in the form of loosely structured, open-ended interviews and journals. The forms and questions which the students recieved and discussed are compiled in Appendix A. Specific survey forms and quizzes produced short, unelaborated responses from the students. I found that the more structured my data gathering techniques were, the more students tended to provide the responses I expected to hear. When I simply asked them to speak in a stream of consciousness, new issues appeared and students became more personally involved in their topics. As a result, a major goal of my data gathering process was to remain as quiet as possible in order to let the students frame and elaborate their own issues and perspectives.

Another issue involving my data is my dual role as both researcher and participant (instructor). Qualitative methodologists acknowledge the influence of the researcher on a study. This influence ranges from the way in which data is analyzed to the very way in which initial research questions are formulated. Rather than regard this influence
as a limitation I chose to integrate it into the very substance of my study. This approach is consistent with a post-positivist assertion that reality is constructed through relationships. My participation is an inseparable aspect of my study. Patton elaborates:

The uniqueness of heuristic inquiry is the extent to which it legitimizes and places at the fore these personal experiences, reflections and insights of the researcher. The researcher, then comes to understand the essence of the phenomena through shared reflection and inquiry with co-researchers as they also intensively experience and reflect on the phenomenon in question. A sense of connectedness develops between researcher and research participants in their mutual efforts to elucidate the nature, meaning, and essence of a significant human experience (1981 Patton p.72)

Although I attempted to minimize the rigidity of my data collection techniques, I do not deny my involvement in the construction and outcomes of my study. To clarify my involvement it is important to include, as data, my own thought processes, biases and perspectives. This will take the form of a reflexive journal documenting my own research process from the initial pilot study to the final stages of data analysis.

Lastly, it is very important that qualitative research be based in a valid contextual framework, and not solely in my own opinions. For this reason I will triangulate my own data with the observations of a peer who has observed my class, as well as with member checks by the participants of this study.
Data Analysis:

The first portion of my work was conceptual. It consisted of bringing together three fields of literature: post-modern critical theory, somatics and emancipatory education, in order to create a conceptual framework for education.

The next portion of my study involves the application of these concepts to students in a Social Dance I class at The Ohio State University. The data analysis strategy for this portion of the study involves a critical analysis of the discursive relationship between myself and the student/participants. I coded this data into subject categories as they emerged. The categories overlapped and changed as my analysis progressed. I present these categories in the participant's voices through the use of quotations. I then discuss the way in which their perceptions, constructions, assumptions both affect, and have been affected by, their learning in the social dance class. Lastly, I examine what implications are made toward resolving the gap in emancipatory education within the process of enforcing empowerment.

The two separate chapters of this study (conceptual, chapter 2 and applied, chapter 4) developed concurrently and informed each other. The goal was not to discover a generalizable pattern of embodied learning, but to explore the discourse around learning and embodied experience in
order to loosen patterned and structural limitations which students might experience. Although this goal is not traditional within Western academic convention, it is necessitated by the need to maintain the integrity of my topic and of the particular concepts at issue (such as the structure of knowledge). In this sense, the validity of my data does not rest upon traditional criteria of replicability and generalizability, but serves to disclose the complex, fluxuating interactions around a topic (1989 Guba and Lincoln p.231).

Validity:

The issue of validity assumes a tentative role in within a post-modern framework. Scheurich explores the source of traditional criteria of validity:

Validity practices are an instantiation of a primary Western philosophical, or even theological, dualism, but the tragic violence of this dualism is that it both represents "reality" as exclusively either/or (Same/Other) and reproduces the domination of one of the two sides over the other. In a world that we experience, however, as containing multiple ways of seeing and knowing, by race, gender, class, sexual orientation, or paradigm (among many other possible differences), in which all positions are shifting, temporal, and contradictory, a binary approach to validity, a binary approach to judgements of trustworthiness, seems not only critically inappropriate but also highly destructive (Scheurich p.20).

Despite the fact that validity has been exposed as a "policing function" (Ibid), it is part of the discourse of academic research and must be addressed as such.
The issue of validity is a separate and distinct issue in the positivist and post-positivist paradigms. Whereas within the former perspective, validity is a function of the research, in the latter perspective, it becomes an inevitable focus of the research. In other words, the criteria of validity change depending on the purpose, goals and paradigmatic positioning of the particular study. As post-positivists construct their "translation (Glesne and Peshkin p.153)" of reality, they must also demonstrate and support its validity. What remains constant in both positivist and post-positivist paradigms is the existence of a relationship between reality (or truth) and validity. But when:

...the domain of the social sciences is extended from the prediction of facts to also include the interpretation of meaning, the criteria and forms of validation change (Kvale p.88).

Validity is a constructed concept. It exists only by its definition within its particular paradigm. As a part of methodological discourse, validity needs to be addressed, but its essence is decentralized, just as the essence of reality is decentralized in a post-positivist perspective. Such a perspective acknowledges that individuals have very different constructions of reality, and that individuals themselves have more than one construction of reality, affected by social circumstance, community and experience.

Validity becomes a function of creativity. Kvale explains that, "When the positivist dichotomy of facts and
values is abandoned, aesthetics and ethics comes into the foreground (Kvale p.89)." Good and valid research is defined by those with the power to determine the constructed concepts of "good" and "valid", and it becomes crucial that they do so responsibly and ethically. The categories of validity which I have constructed for my research, are based in my positioning of reality as pragmatic, conflictual and fluctuating. Furthermore, I am aware that I incorporate my own values and beliefs into these categories of validity.

The categories of validity which accompany my study are drawn from various post-positivist perspectives. The first of these is Guba and Lincoln's "ontological authenticity." Ontological authenticity is defined as:

the extent to which individual respondents' own emic constructions are improved, matured, expanded and elaborated, in they now possess more information and have become more sophisticated in its use (1989 Guba and Lincoln p.248).

I have defined empowerment as the situation in which knowledge content is supported by lived experience (page six). Thus, if the participants in this study have the opportunity to develop their individual knowledge and understanding of social dance based on their experiences, then they will be "more sophisticated" or empowered in their understanding and actions regarding this subject (social dance). Contrastingly, if life experiences do not support knowledge content, the result is a feeling of helplessness and impotence.

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Our engagement in the process of creating a discourse (rather than memorizing a predetermined discourse) within the classroom is our own empowerment. For the participants, theoretical and practical validity merge.

From ontological authenticity I derive another category of validity. This validity is measured by actions taken based on ontological changes in the participants. In other words, how does the participant’s new knowledge change the way they act in the world? Lather calls this "catalytic validity" and defines it as:

the degree to which the research process reorients, focusses, and energized participants in what Friere (1973) terms "conscientization," knowing reality in order to better transform it (1986 Lather p.67).

Guba and Lincoln use the term "tactical authenticity" defined as "the degree to which stakeholders and participants are empowered to act (1989 Guba and Lincoln p.250)." Steinar Kvale calls it "pragmatic validity" which is given as:

verification in the literal sense, "to make true" - the effectiveness of our knowledge belief is demonstrated by the effectiveness of our action. Knowledge is action rather than observation (1989 Kvale p.86).

In this categorical formulation of validity the question of "who" is ethically and politically problematic (Ibid).

Who is to decide the direction of change? There may be personal resistance to change as well as conflicting vested interests in the outcome of a study (Ibid).
However, the structure of physical education courses at this university allow room for, not only me, but the student-participants to become the "who." Assessment is based almost solely on attendance. Students know this with the result that they don't feel pressure to participate in a certain way. They are free to be honest about their views of social dance without the fear of this affecting their grade. This minimizes the influence of my power and the "who" is expanded to include all the participants.

My discussion of validity concludes with this warning from Kvale:

One danger of the focus on validity may be that it fosters an emphasis upon the verification of existing knowledge rather than the generation of new knowledge (Kvale p.90).

Validity is necessarily determined by preexisting criteria rooted in existant structures of logic. It is unavoidably conservative. This belief is inherent in my work.
Chapter 4
DATA STORIES

Choreographers have their fingertips on that world everyone else is afraid of...the world where there is no name for things (Balanchine as quoted by Jerome Robbins).

A Tale of Knowledge:

This study explores how people come to "know" and what role embodied experience plays in this process. It is an attempt to better understand the ways in which people make meaning out of their own physical experiences. This exploration is structured through the literatures of somatic theory, emancipatory education theory and postmodern critical theory, and through the discourses of a social dance class which I instruct at The Ohio State University. In this section I will deal with the topic: what does it mean to "know" something.

Within the above paragraph I have named/languaged three concepts which form the foundation of my research topic: "to know," "embodied/physical experience," and "meaning." None of these concepts have common, socially agreed upon definitions. In the context of my field study their meanings change from person to person and over time. How does this
affect the validity of my project? How can I begin to construct a coherent tale?

I did not attempt to define the concepts to my research participants. I chose to leave that up to each individual in an effort not to guide their responses toward my biases. Consequently, to "know," "embodied experience," and "meaning" are concepts which remain fluid throughout my study. I let the definitions present themselves as they unfold throughout the discourse. I warn the reader not to settle into or decide upon one specific meaning for any of these terms but realize them as fluid, contextual and relational. In my writing, my personal perspective will have an unproportionally large influence. For this reason I will briefly describe my use of these terms.

To "know" implies something that an individual feels certain enough of to act upon, and through which they construct their world. They may or may not feel that this "knowledge" is real or true in a positivist sense, but it is upon this knowledge that they base their actions and worldviews. In turn, these actions and worldviews affect the ways in which individuals come to know their world. This cycle avoids solipsism by grounding itself in the meaning given to embodied experience described below in the words of Teresa De Lauretis.

"Embodied experience" encompasses everything we do, think and live through. It is contrasted with the
predominant dualist perspective that our physical acts are separate from our mental thoughts. The use of the term "embodied experience" could imply that "unembodied experience" also exists. In this study I presume that everything is an embodied experience. The problem is that we rarely focus on the embodiment of the experience.

By creating "meanings" we make sense of a complex and multiply perspectived world. We base these meanings on embodied experience, and yet meanings are not set in stone. De Lauretis describes it through the following example:

...the chain of meaning comes to a halt, however temporarily, by anchoring itself to somebody, to some body, an individual subject. Thus, as we use signs or produce interpretants, their significate effects must pass through each of us, each body and each consciousness, before they may produce an effect or an action upon the world. Finally, then, the individuals habit as a semiotic production is both the result and the condition of the social production of meaning (1987 De Lauretis 41).

Other Frames of Meaning

Steinar Kvale proposes other interpretations of meaning and its relation to experience in the context of interviewing:

[1] Are interview statements to be considered simple verbalizations of immediate experience...
[2] Or do the interview questions lead to a production of meaning, the transformation of an immediate multifaceted experience into the structures of language, logic, and narrative...
[3] Or does meaningful experience have no presence prior to language; is experience linguistic from the outset? (1989 Kvale 82).
Another possibility I would like to include is the structuring of meaning through metaphor. In Richardson's words:

Metaphors organize sociological work and affect the interpretations of the "facts;" indeed, facts are interpretable only in terms of their place within a metaphoric structure (1994 Richardson pg.520).

Eisner presents a similar description of metaphor:

Scientific knowledge is seldom true in the literal sense... especially in the social sciences where metaphor, analogical reasoning and hypothetical constructs abound, literal truths are scarce.... When we use literature, for example to enlarge understanding, literal truth becomes an irrelevant criteria for appraising its utility. A piece of fiction can be true and still be fiction. Fiction, in the metaphorical sense is "true to life;" it helps us to perceive, experience, and understand what we have previously neglected (Eisner quoted in 1995 Sparkes 183).

Kvale's, Richardson's, and Eisner's explanations of how meaning may be created emphasizes the role of language and verbalization and comparison. They contrast the way in which I conceptualize meaning making through action. These linguistic descriptions of meaning evidence themselves sporadically in sections of my analysis. I view them as troubling instances because they interrupt my understanding of the learning process. They have more to do with language than with embodied experience.

The Data

What is my data? My study consists of both a conceptual exploration and fieldwork. My struggle was to somehow express the interrelatedness between the two in
order to avoid giving the impression that I am describing phenomena discovered in some detached "field." I have previously described "the field" as follows:

The field in which I work is not a place, nor a situation. Instead, my site is the construction of discourse involving an educative process. The site begins as the relationship between myself and my participants, and our construction of meaning. The site then expands to the relationship between the constructed meanings and the larger discourses of physical education. Finally, my site becomes the positioning of these relationships within the greater philosophical metanarratives of our society, particularly those regarding knowledge and power (taken from my reflexive journal, Ed. P&L 966).

Although this involved description has evolved, I continue to perceive the field as being located somewhere between myself and my research participants, rather than a location I visit.

As a result the data are comprised of interviews with student/participants in my social dance class and student journals as well as what I've called my own reflexive journal. This reflexive journal consists of my own documented ideas, thoughts, and significant reading quotes (a habit I developed as an undergraduate of keeping my thoughts and references on index cards as well as in my reflexive journal). By integrating my journal with the student/participant data I hope to expose the constructedness of the social dance class discourse, and the interrelatedness of conceptual and field work. Furthermore, my story is presented as only one voice within a polyphonic
reality (a combination of different and unrelated voices which sporadically and randomly fall into harmony).

Teaching Methods

Before introducing the students I will briefly describe my teaching methods. I perceive, and attempt to present social dancing as an improvisational dance form. Although I teach specific steps, I present these as a basis from which to explore their own style and creative processes. This method contrasts the more "objective" nature of competition-style ballroom dancing, in which there are right and wrong ways to dance, and in which stylistic details, such as the angle of placement of the foot and tilt of the head, are very important. The dances we learn are swing, waltz, foxtrot, tango, cha-cha, polka and hustle. I present these dances as a sliver of the many forms of social dancing that exist around the world and throughout history. I encourage my students and myself to recognize the circumstances under which the stylistic choices of these particular dances were made; for instance, why do all of these dances involve one man and one woman dancing together in an embrace, rather than dancing in groups or lines? I discuss the historical development of these dances as I teach them. I invite students to teach other social dances that they have experienced, by offering extra credit. I encourage them to create their own movements as they become comfortable moving
to music. I emphasise the "social" aspect of social dancing. Lastly, I encourage students to make sense of social dancing within the context of their lives and experiences. This occurs through classroom discussion as well as through an informal journal. The issues which surround these discussions and writings are listed in Appendix B.

This is a description of the way that I present social dancing to my classes and evidences my biases. My six research participants experienced more discussion and journaling than did the rest of the class. Otherwise, their experiences were the same as their classmates.

Introductions:

Rather than guess at what prior conditions most affected my participants, I asked them to provide a description of the formative experiences as they perceive them. In response to the following question which I gave them, my six participants: Devo, Hanna, Satchel, Jane, Page and Gandolf introduce themselves:

Please describe yourself. Provide a brief history and background, and the reasons that lead you to take this social dance class. (You may want to describe the factors in your life which, in your opinion, most shaped your ideas, values and worldviews. What in your life has made you who you are? This may include anything you feel is important: age, ethnicity, religion, economics, role models, parents, siblings, other relatives, events, trips, books, hobbies, other experiences.)

PSEUDONYM: (pseudonyms were chosen by the participants)
DEVO:
I am a second year undergrad student studying art. I consider most of my hobbies and extra curricular activities as energy releases. Those activities range anywhere from rollerblading to painting, to skiing, to attending concerts, to photography, etc. etc. etc. Starting at an early age my parents exposed me to all kinds of cultural and athletic activities and the lesson of living life to the fullest. That lesson became more important to me when I was 10 years old and my mother was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Within 2 years she lost total control of her lower body. While my fathers time became more consumed with taking care of her, he continued to emphasize living life and taking advantage of opportunities to do so. Taking social dance was an opportunity for me to learn more about a favorite pastime of mine. I greatly love to release stress while listening to music. I frequent the dance clubs on campus every week. Dance and music are an important part of my free time and taking social dance will hopefully expand my knowledge and appreciation for dance.

HANNA:
Being a Filipino, I was (and still am) exposed to many ideas, views and values growing up. Being a young adult and having a minority ethnic background helped me grasp and understand other cultures as well. I feel that my awareness of other cultures helped me become a better person and has made me open up to varied views and opinions.

I love dancing and I feel that dancing is a form of expression... An expression of thoughts and ideas. Being exposed to many cultural dances as I was growing up made me interested in taking up this social dance class. Filipino dances are a mixture of dances from varied cultures, mostly Spanish. My grandparents, who are of Spanish descent, loved dancing, and I was an avid viewer. I just watched them dance during parties or gatherings, and this was how I learned dances. When I grew older, I just easily picked up dance techniques and styles by watching them being performed. Although I never had any formal training, I feel that I’m a pretty good dancer. What makes me proud about my dancing is the way I can combine and execute several dances into one form of expression.

SATCHEL:
I am a single, 21 year old Caucasian male, and I enrolled in this class to learn how to dance like my parents and grandparents learned. I am very much a traditionalist. This is largely due to the fact that I have high regards for history and take pride in being very knowledgeable of it.

My family is upper middle class and Catholic. Because of this, coupled with my parents being very high on social
graces, I have very conservative views. This is my reasoning for respecting and enrolling in this class.

JANE:
I am a people-person. I like to be around others. I am very studious and responsible. I have always loved dancing to "dance" music, but I would never dance when people could see me. I liked to dance in the middle cuz I didn't feel like I was a good dancer. I've always wanted to learn how to dance - especially the formal dances. Several people have tried to show me while they would "lead." Basically, I'm taking this class for formal dance lessons. I would love to be able to dance at a wedding and feel good about it, not embarrassed. My schooling and my mother has shaped my ideas, values and world views. I went to a Catholic high school. This taught me a lot of morals and values. My mother has made me who I am. I think she is the most wonderful woman in the world, and I think she was a wonderful role model form me. She has allowed me enough "freedom" to make mistakes and learn from them, but in the process she was always there to guide me and help me out.

PAGE:
I'm a freshman now, and am 18 years old. I started school a year early, and I think that has affected me in that I'm used to being the youngest person in a group. I'm from a mixed ethnic background; mostly European with a little "Native American" thrown in. So as a result I don't really have a clear-cut ethnic identity. Economically, I've been from upper-lower to upper-middle class. I've experienced relative wealth to living "from paycheck to paycheck." As a result I intend to have a well-paying career, but I also know what economic insecurity feels like. I have an older sister, a younger sister, and two older half-brothers. I sometimes find myself following in my older siblings footsteps. I've lived in Midland, Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan and Westlake Ohio. I've never been outside of continental North America, but I have travelled throughout most of the United States. My hobbies are "working out," dancing and reading. I took this class because I wanted the credit. I'd like to take as much physical education classes as I can (I'd like to stay in shape), and I like to dance. This class seemed like one that would teach me skills that I could use for a long time. My family is matriarchal and my mother has a higher income than my stepfather does, so as a result I am a feminist and am both family and career oriented. I came from a mixed religious background, so I'm not very dogmatic. I've never been to the same school for more than 3 years at a time, so I can adjust to new experiences.
GANDALF:
i am extremely monogamous in nature, ever since i can remember - any relationship i ever had, any feelings i ever felt for anyone had not a drop of polygamy in them. i could not see beauty past the person i was involved with and i would get jealous and offended when my significant other would point out someone else who they thought was attractive. at this point in my life, i am engaged to a truly wonderful woman and the intensity of our commitment heightens, enhances the aforementioned characteristics and feelings i have concerning a relationship. due to my strong convictions in this matter, physical closeness is something i hold very sacred. i am not a touchy-feely person in general because i feel that touching another person’s body is a very intimate thing and should be respected.
i am also an artist. i write. i write poetry, short stories, novellas. i am a musician. i play guitar and drums fairly proficiently as well as piano, harmonica, bass, vocals; basically, if it makes a note, melodic or percussive, i am intrigued. i am a songwriter. i am familiar with photography and other visual artforms. to me, being an artist means attempting to express one’s inner feelings in a communicative form. this is a broad definition, but helps to encompass my perspectives ont he matter. i am always interested in learning a new form to express myself in and dancing is one i have had no real training in. therefore, i would like to learn.
i was involved in the martial arts for some time which helped me to hone my kinesthetic awareness - something which i feel comforts me in many situations. as a result of my training and devotion to perfection concerning my passions, i seldom feel clumsy or awkward and i try to embrace grace when i can.
i enrolled in social dance because it is an artform, and because my fiance took it last quarter and i would like to be her eternal dance partner. it is difficult sometimes to handle the format of the class, as silly as it may sound, because i don’t really care for touching anyone rather than loved ones, let alone complete strangers.
i have often wondered what shaped my intensely monogamous views on life as well as my artistic abilities/interests. i have, as of yet, not been able to come up with a reasonable source, my parents love each other very much and have been married for twenty five years. they have few friends outside their marriage and this may account for some of the monogamy i feel is necessary for my relationships.
i don’t know. i’ll try and sum myself up now, i guess:
i am an artist, a romantic, a monogamist, a male, a human, a manic-depressive, an agnostic, a lover. one half
The Story

With this said, I am ready to embark on my tale. I was interested to find what kind of things students learned in a social dance class setting; a setting which involves potent social issues such as gender, power, body, communication, and which focuses on embodied/physical education. As I immersed myself in this exploration my focus rapidly changed from discovering hidden learnings in a social dance class, to exploring how the discourse surrounding a site creates the space for learning to happen. Throughout this transition, I maintained my interest in the ways individuals came to "know" things through their embodied experiences. While we shared a discourse, each student described it differently.

By listening to the students I realized how the discourse itself largely determined what the students allowed themselves to learn through movement. The following excerpt from my reflexive journal is an example of the frustration I felt, and the influence of a student on the larger discourse of this class:

I had set as my goal, finding what students learn in a physical education class other than skills. I was hoping to uncover something "there", an essence common to everyone's experience. However, as I collected and reviewed my data over the course of the quarter, I became frustrated with the way that my influence as the instructor clouded my vision, and obstructed the visibility of the "there" that I searched to find....
Finally, after reading many journal entries and becoming more frustrated, it hit me ("it" came in the form of a student’s journal entry):

"I was skeptical at first about the things that Katja said we would encounter in this class. But Katja has convinced me of what I am learning. I feel this is a valuable course for any college student. I have learned about myself and about how to think of the world differently (student journal)."

If this is something my student learned specifically due to his interactions with my class and myself, is it invalid? If he attains a learning experience that extends beyond the basic skills and participation that make up his grade, simply because I "convinced" him, am I guilty of bad teaching and research? (excerpt from my reflexive journal).

I began to comprehend the extent to which the instructor helps to determine what is learned (in the sense that one can, but does not necessarily, learn more from a boxstep than just a boxstep), and that I would not find any innocent, untarnished "discoveries" in my classes. At the same time I became more conscious of my power and consequent responsibilities as the instructor of the class. Critical thinking needed to be acknowledged as an important element of learning for the students.

As I conducted and then transcribed the interviews with my student/participants and suggested journal topics, I struggled to avoid the dilemma of the "leading question." Thus, although I was clear with them about my intent to better understand what and how they were learning in the social dance class, I avoided asking them specifically about
"embodied experience" or "meaning making" or the structure of "knowledge." We often ended up around these topics, anyway, because once they touched upon them, I would ask them to elaborate. This conscious effort to hear about "my" topics within their frames was partially successful. However, the students might not have chosen to give so much time to these topics without my prodding.

Framing Knowledge:

This particular story revolves around the ways in which students frame knowledge and what/how they know. I never directly asked my student/participants what they mean when they say "I know...," or how they came to that point (if I were to interview again I might focus on these questions). They did, however, describe structures of knowledge. Within each student's frame, a common trend developed. The trend consisted of differentiating the kind of learning that happened in social dance classes from other kinds of learning. It was most typically differentiated from more "serious" science classes and math classes, and compared most closely with art and writing classes. In addition, social dance was sometimes grouped with the kinds of knowledge found in sociology, history, political science and English classes.

These are the words of my student/participants describing kinds of knowledge (pseudonyms are used):

The difference is in science you don't really make a mistake and laugh about it and learn from it...
They tell you the right way to do it from the start. In social dance you learn from mistakes.... The atmosphere in a science class is more rigid. There are things that you HAVE to do. You have standards that you have to meet (Jane, interview).

I’ve always been interested in English but I think that’s the kind of class where there should be a certain amount of socialization, to know your audience and the people you’ll be sharing ideas with. But physics is not open to criticism. You can’t dispute the facts. You have to learn the facts. Only maybe not at the highest level of theory. But how many undergraduates are at that level? ... Hands on experiments and experience in physics is still not creative. It’s just another way to get to the facts (Satchel, interview).

The differences between the structures of each kind of knowledge were often not elaborated. Some inconsistencies were left unresolved. For instance, one student decided that the subject matter of social dance could be taught as rigidly as a science class, but did not feel that science could be taught like social dance:

I also think that if I had a different teacher in social dance, one who made a big deal about the right way to do a step there would be more pressure here. If they said you have to do this, this and this, then it would be more boring and more frustrating. But science, you have certain things you have to do (Jane, interview).

Other differences are described in the following segments from student interviews regarding the form and value of, as well as reactions to respective types of knowledge:

The sense of satisfaction from science is less significant than in social dance because in dance its something you do, something you create. In science its just something you have to do and
there is only the correct way to do it (Jane, interview).

In a dance class your success is something that everyone can see. In science you may accomplish something but no one really notices, so it doesn’t feel so good (Jane, interview).

When you think about dance you think "style." When you think about science its not about style, its about facts (Gandolf, interview).

I think its important to balance what you’ve been taught and what you feel inside. And the people that are worried about making sure the dance is performed exactly the way its supposed to, they experience a certain type of accomplishment, I would imagine, in that they can do something quote/unquote "perfect." But for me, without bringing something of yourself into a situation all you’re doing is movement that’s been done before you (Gandolf, interview).

Are there situations in which a more rigid learning structure is more appropriate (my question)?: Something that’s not a subject to be laughed about, if the teacher takes it lightly then I think they must not really know. I don’t think that’s a proper environment (Satchel, interview).

It’s much easier to learn the facts in a strict environment without distractions. I went to an all boys high school. It was much freer to learn in an environment where everyone was kind of the same. When you’re in school with all guys you can just learn, you know you’re not so sensitive, there’s no political correctness... Its like its own unique environment.... You don’t have to worry about... being a slob, you just go to school to learn. We also had the relative benefit that the socialization was the same, you know upper class, you couldn’t really offend anybody... If you were in a class with more strict structure and less leeway it wouldn’t matter because you’re there and only there to learn general rules and principles that don’t change (Satchel, interview).

I think the strict kind of learning is more the atmosphere that I learn best in. Not only memorizing but learning why and how. And the class, the way you teach it, is kind of a release
from that. And that's why I think its worthwhile (Satchel, interview).

Do you think a relaxed atmosphere facilitates learning (my question)? Oh yeah, in this class. Not in chemistry. But in this class definitely (Page, interview).

Making Meaning: How do we come to "know"?

While the students had similar ideas regarding the nature of knowledge, they differed in their experiences of knowledge, or the ways in which they gave meaning to their experiences. Some described their experiences as if they were very obvious and real. Some found it easier to understand what happens in social dance in a comparative or metaphorical way. Others felt that they learned more than basic skills only because I told them to; or that I drew it out of them. The ways in which they presented what they learned often did not coincide with my initial assumptions. I call these "troubling instances." By making these troubling instances the focus of my attention in this story I hope to avoid the danger of explaining them away. I found that it was possible to divide these learnings into the categories of meaning making Kvale described, with the addition of Richardson’s category of meaning through metaphor. Below are examples of students’ descriptions of what they have learned divided into Kvale’s and Richardson’s categories.

1) Are interview statements to be considered simple verbalizations of immediate experience...(1989 Kvale 82)
What I learned about... is how truly unique people are. People have their own style in how they move, and how they carry themselves... It was easy to see who was shy and nervous, and those who were confident and showy with the moves (Jill, journal).

2) Or do the interview questions lead to a production of meaning, the transformation of an immediate multifaceted experience into the structures of language, logic, and narrative...(Ibid)

The whole society role kind of thing. Traditional! There, that's a good word for it - that I can explain myself without feeling like a sociological case study. Here I'm paranoid, for the tape. That it would be "traditional" for the man to lead... You could raise about a thousand sociological points on that. (Satchel, interview).

3) Or does meaningful experience have no presence prior to language; is experience linguistic from the outset (Ibid)?

It's like when you go to write a paper and you have no ideas but then as you write you begin to make sense of it and I start noticing that I know things. Well, honestly I don't go home and think, "hey this is about cooperation." I mean I am summing up what I said without really knowing it. Earlier I said there should be a definite lead and follow and then it evolved into cooperation. But I didn't think of it until I started talking about it (Satchel, interview).

I didn't think anything about actual learning, but then when you talked about it at the beginning of the quarter it was like, "Yeah, you can learn if you pay attention to it." (Hanna, interview).

4) Metaphors organize sociological work and affect the interpretations of the "facts;" indeed, facts are interpretable only in terms of their place within a metaphoric structure (1994 Richardson 520).
In class, I noticed that I dance much better with people (women) who are confident or aggressive. I guess it’s easier to understand the non-verbal communication when the other person isn’t whispering (Chris, journal).

A good thing about this class is that it taught me how to talk to somebody without actually saying anything (Drew, interview).

The above citations could also fit into my frame of "meaning" worded by De Lauretis as that upon which we base our actions (see page 68). However, they fit more comfortably in these other frames of "meaning". Does this mean that my frame is too vague? Is the concept "meaning" too vague to work with at all?

There is some satisfaction categorizing the students’ ways of knowing, however randomly. In what ways does this bring me closer to understanding how students come to "know" things through embodied experience? In what ways does it take me further away?

The following tales are explorations of what and how my research participants learned and how their own constructions of knowledge and meaning might have impacted their learning. In an attempt to counter my biases, I critically examine my interpretations through self-reflexive inserts in the body of my text.

What is Being Learned: Embodied Experiences?

I came to this project with the specific intention to explore what and how people learn through embodied
experience. Methodologically my perspectives and goals have changed substantially throughout this study. I have begun to appreciate the complexities involved in the ways in which knowledge and learning are structured and evidenced. Rather than expecting to uncover commonalities I am interested in the process by which we made sense of social dancing in this class. Factors which influence the structuring of knowledge for individuals include apriori experience, perceptions of reality, internalized disciplining within academic and social systems, and my influence as instructor. My concern is how to communicate this complexity in a written format.

What follows is a story voiced by students, about the issues which surfaced during social dance class. It is an attempt to answer the question "What and how do individuals learn through movement and physical experience." I have organized their words into categories which emerged over the course of the quarter. In order to legitimate this attempt at making sense of my students, this story is countered by a corresponding critical commentary which exposes my concerns, limitations and problems which arise in the construction of the story (in bold).

As I entered the "field", I was by no means innocent. I had been dancing and teaching dance most of my life. Through my own experiences I developed an appreciation for the kind of learning that can occur in a situation involving physical movement.
My understanding of the "field" changed substantially throughout this process. It is almost nonsensical to talk about entering a field innocently. The "field" is constructed through the discourse of its actors, each of whom are loaded with their own prior experiences and expectations. No actor enters as a tabula rasa; and to attempt a discussion of that field as if you are somehow not a part of it is a futile exercise, since that field without you no longer exists. On the other hand, it is equally impossible to understand or make sense out of each individual's prior experiences. Moreover, attempting to do so can result in the danger of explaining away and discrediting individual beliefs (he only believes that because he had a bad experience with it before and therefore his opinion does not count).

Expectations:

Within social dance certain "obvious" issues arise. I constructed an apriori list of possible issues that I expected to arise within the social dance class:

- Learning steps
- Learning dance styles
- Non-verbal communication
- Diversity
- Stress release
Gender
Collaborative learning
Social activity
I present this list in order to expose my biases and expectations as a dance instructor. Although it would be impossible to avoid influencing my students I never gave them this list and was careful not to coerce discussion toward these issues.

I am troubled by the "obvious" since it did not reflect the experiences that students talked about. Students actually seemed to bracket the "obvious" from their actual experiences: "I guess you could raise about a thousand sociological points on that (Satchel, interview)."

Sometimes the personal experience merged with the structures of the social "obvious", but not consistently. Nevertheless, we could all talk about the "obvious" in a certain standard manner; and this had nothing to do with embodied experience.

Emergent themes:
This section of data analysis consists of three themes which emerged within the discourse between myself, the students, and the context of the social dance class. Though I did not attempt to sway the students in their interviews, my expectations (and particularly the above list of issues)
undoubtedly have affected the way in which I frame their voices. The three themes are:
Emerging Theme #1: Control/power (societal gender issues)
Emerging Theme #2: Touch
Emerging Theme #3: Kinesthetic Knowing
Control/Power/Strength

In my first data story I describe how each student and I framed knowledge differently, and I imply that this affects how/what each student learns. I was similarly impressed, throughout the quarter, at how important the wording and framing of an issue becomes in the context of analysis. In the following sections I struggle with how to most accurately re-present the students' voices. While I am careful to avoid falling into the researcher's trap of explaining the "false consciousness" of my participants, I am hesitant to give exclusive attention to the students' words for fear of mis-representing them.

My somatic perspective influences my distrust of words and language in adequately presenting knowledge. I find that language is limiting and words are often disconnected from embodied experience. The process of verbalization is like building a bridge from one island (embodied experience) to another (verbal communication). Often the bridge is not equipped to carry everything across. I don't believe that this is the same as assuming false consciousness on the part
of my participants. Instead I am trying to represent them more holistically. I am trusting my intuitive sense of what the students were communicating to me in their interviews. Their words were only part of this communication. Similarly, I expect my readers to read between the lines of this study, to intuitively come to individual conclusions about the sense of this study and to also appreciate the limitations of my words.

In social dance the word "lead" refers to the man and the word "follow" refers to the woman. Beyond this the words lead and follow are defined very differently by teachers and students of social dance. In this section I will investigate the various meanings of lead and follow, what implications they have for control, power and strength, and how this might affect each student’s learning.

While some students perceived the lead-follow relationship to be a relic of the past, nobody stated any offense to this aspect of social dance. When asked to "describe some things you may learn about or encounter in a social dance class other than the specific dances and steps," not one of the six research participants mentioned issues concerning the lead-follow relationship (the primary responses were learning about one’s own style and expression, improvisational skills, kinesthetic learning, contact with and learning about different people, patience, openness to
new ideas). Leading and following was described as a necessary component of a dance form that evolved in a more patriarchal era. While the research-participants believed society has progressed, they usually stated that they did not mind physically assuming the lead and follow roles for the sake of participating in social dancing. Students indicated that the rules of social dancing are flexible and have changed as society has changed, but they did not challenge the need for leading and following. When I asked them to specifically discuss how they feel about the lead and follow relationship they responded in these ways:

It represents the way society used to be, with the men leading and women following. Society has changed, but in social dance someone has to lead or else it would be confusing (Hanna, interview).

I think my job traditionally is to lead. But now many women like to, and are often better at, leading (Satchel, interview).

I think its fine if the woman wants to lead sometimes. Its nice not to have to make all the decisions (Devo, interview).

I don’t mind (the lead-follow relationship), but with different partners I have different experiences (Hanna, interview).

I had hoped that the lead and follow relationship would spark interesting gender discussions among the research participants and that they would have strong opinions about it. I was surprised to find that none of the students brought up this issue. They talked about leading and following only when I specifically asked them about it.
Even then I had the impression that their answers were rattled off with a matter of fact manner as if to imply that we should not waste time talking about something so obvious. They seemed very disconnected from their answers. Rather than prod them on a topic which they seemed uninterested in, I allowed the students to steer away from this topic.

However, as we discuss concrete experiences students began to voice preferences in terms of the assertiveness or passivity of their partners, strength, roughness and sensitivity. These situations sometimes related back to the issue of lead and follow. In discussing concrete situations the students expressed more complex and thoughtful understandings of leading and following as it relates to social dance. Satchel, who describes himself as "very much a traditionalist... due to the fact that I have high regards for history and take pride in being very knowledgeable of it," frames his understanding of lead and follow in terms of tradition:

It's the whole society-role kind of thing. Traditional! There, that's a good word for it - that I can use to explain myself without feeling like a sociological case study. Here I'm paranoid, for the tape. That it would be "traditional" for the man to lead. So I think in this arena, a truly good woman social dancer makes a poor or bad male dancer look like a good lead. Like my mom. My mom makes it look like I'm leading but I know that she is really leading. (Satchel, interview).
Satchel distinguishes between what is really happening and what appears to be happening. The structure of the social dance form should be maintained for the sake of tradition, even if it has become outdated.

I think my job traditionally is to lead. But now many women like to, and are often better at, leading (Satchel, interview).

Satchel then describes the subtlety of leading:

It is not a push or pull, it is just a subtle palm thing and it actually does not work if you dance with a girl who is submissive. It is most effective when you get a girl (as a partner) who is not submissive, but is a good dancer. I guess you could raise about a thousand sociological points on that (Satchel, interview).

Satchel’s statements indicate that he believes that the lead and follow relationship is more complex than just leading and following and that it can often contradict itself. He was very careful to distinguish what is implied for the sake of tradition and what is really happening.

Page and Hanna found that social dancing was more enjoyable if their partners were not overly rough or controlling. When asked about lead and follow Hanna responded:

I had one (partner) last week and we were doing the swing and he really dominated leading me and I felt that I was being thrown everywhere. I didn’t like that feeling as much because I felt like a rag doll. But then again I have had others where the lead pulls me in and I don’t have to think: "alright, what is he doing?" He is pulling me into what our next step is, so I don’t mind the lead as long as its strong enough that I know what he is doing. But I don’t like a lead where I’m just being dragged around and where they’re going
a lot faster than I am. A more strongly dominant lead I don’t like as much (Hanna, interview).

Hanna does not like being thrown but appreciates a partner who clearly communicates what the next step will be. Hanna describes her reaction when the partner is not clear:

Usually I’ll try to go with what they’re doing. But I’ve come across a couple where I’m not sure and they’re not sure. And sometimes I catch myself trying to lead almost. Trying to teach them. Or other times I just, like, stop and try to feel what they’re doing. It all depends on the partner. It depends, if I can tell they really do not know what they’re doing, I almost try to lead them into it. I don’t know if it’s working well (Hanna, interview).

Hanna occasionally found herself leading. In these descriptions Hanna explains what she means by leading:

We were still kind of going around, I think we were going around too long. We’d done more than eight steps. And I kind of let go, and tried to move that way, you know, before the man swings me out. I try to move that way and then he would just follow (Hanna, interview).

For Hanna, leading is not about force or roughness but about clarity in movement. She uses the word "strong" to describe a good lead, but "strongly dominant" to describe an unpleasant lead. In describing her own lead she emphasizes her own movement rather than attempting to adjust her partner’s movement.

Page also did not verbalize any problems within the lead and follow relationship in terms of power.

Power. I can’t really think of any power things. I haven’t really encountered any situations where people argue over who will lead. Generally the man leads, unless its something where you have to
talk ahead of time, in which case its 50/50 (Page, interview).

However, when questioned about specific examples of what makes a good dance partner, Page framed her response in terms of roughness. Page finds a rough lead to be more distracting than a subtler lead:

I think a rough dancer is more difficult to dance with. I can’t keep up with them and we get out of sync. It just isn’t any fun... It’s tiring. I don’t have a chance to think and don’t have the time to do my own steps (Page, interview).

She did not attribute this to the institution of leading and following, nor did she make any implications that her partners wanted to be in control. Instead she relates the roughness of a lead to an individual’s personality:

There’s something not so graceful about them in their personality. A rough personality would most likely be a rough dancer (Page, interview).

In contrast, Jane preferred dancing with a stronger partner. Jane described a good partner as one with whom you "click."

When I asked what she meant by "click" Jane responded:

I think if they’re stronger and more apt to lead you, then it clicks. If they aren’t leading then I begin to lead, and I get all messed up and mess them up. I think that’s it for me (Jane, interview).

When asked to talk more about instances in which she finds herself leading Jane said:

If I can’t read the next move, I just guess and start leading. It could also be that you don’t know each other yet and your shy (Jane, interview).
The commonality between Jane, Hanna, Satchel and Page's responses is that although the terms, strength and power, are used, each individual is voicing the need for more clarity in communicating what steps (turns, twinkles, courtes) to dance.

What I am hearing is that the students are concerned about successfully engaging in a smooth dance, and will accept whatever leading, following, or cooperating role that requires. Satchel discusses the complicated role-reversing relationship in leading, following and making the dance look like it is traditionally supposed to. For Hanna, Page and Jane the main concern is figuring out who will be leading, and although they seem to give the male partner the first opportunity to lead, they accept the role of leading when necessary. At this point the socio-political implications of their actions are not as relevant as their commitment to "good dancing." Nonetheless, the words they use to describe their experiences carry clear socio-political connotations. The question that remains is whether these connotations eventually affect their perception of social dancing and their engagement in it; or if it remains a paradox accepted for the sake of tradition and form, described below by Sally Peters:

One of the most difficult aspects of ballroom dance for many women is not strictly technical, but seems to be gender related. In learning to follow the lead unhesitatingly, women typically
encounter a stubborn problem - to move forward with uninterrupted vigor...But his body blocks the path and the female, reluctant to push him out of her way, hesitates ever so slightly. She must overcome this inhibition, learning to dance aggressively even as she follows the male's lead, fulfilling her prescribed, apparently passive/feminine role. That is, ironically, she must be aggressive precisely in order to appear non-aggressive and pliable (1991 Peters p.153).

Touch

The significance of framing or context of an issue becomes evident again as the students talk about "touch." In social dancing students are required to dance in a closed position with their partner. This means that they are within arms distance from one another, holding each other around the waist and shoulder. The students are in this position by the end of the first class, usually with someone they have just met on that day. Students show varying amounts of difficulty with this. Touch ranges from an issue of personal space and levels of intimacy, to an alternative human medium for communication, to a detached and strictly utilitarian function of social dancing.

Gandalf came into the class with strong opinions regarding the meaning of touch. His purpose for taking the class was to be able to dance with his fiance, who had previously taken the same class. He describes in detail his "intensely monogamous views on life (Gandalf, self description)," and relates this to touch:
Due to my strong convictions in this matter (monogamy), physical closeness is something I hold very sacred. I am not a ‘touchy-feely’ person in general because I feel that touching another person’s body is a very intimate thing and should be respected (Gandalf, self description).

Gandalf deals with this issue by reframing touch in the context of a learning environment. However, he admits that this is not completely successful:

...I don’t feel awkward moving in general. But moving with another person, THAT is something that I’ve had to balance. Specifically in social dance class, at least for me, I have to separate dancing from touching another person. So I don’t think that takes away from the class. But it’s a completely different environment. You have to go into the situation knowing that you are not responsible to your partner at all... I guess it still bothers me (Gandalf, interview).

I try to approach it as kind of a teaching thing. Now I know if I’m dancing with someone who I normally wouldn’t dance with I see it as a teacher-student thing. I’ve made some friends in the class but I guess I’m still uncomfortable (Gandalf, interview).

After discussing with Gandalf other kinds of social dancing, such as circle or line dances in which a group of people hold hands only, Gandalf made it clear that his issue was with all forms of touch, not only closed position social dancing:

It’s not necessarily proximity, it’s the touching thing in general. For me, even touching hands means something special. So regardless of how close you are to the person or how much contact there is, the idea is still there. But that’s a personal thing. But in general most people don’t have any problems with that at all and some have completely different problems (Gandalf, interview).
Gandalf finds touch to be an uncomfortable necessity for learning social dance and opted to take social dance anyway. However, he places much meaning into the touch aspect of social dancing and is concerned that this touching can lead to miscommunication between partners. In Gandalf's case the communication of "the touching thing in general" had been predetermined. Comfortable touch implies intimacy. Gandalf knew this when he came into the classroom.

Hanna also discusses the unique communicative nature of touch in social dance. She describes it as a more immediate context through which to adapt to other individuals. She repeatedly refers to the adjustments individuals make toward others in social circumstances.

Social dancing can not be too strict or closed because the dance is always different depending on the partner. You are always incorporating the other persons moves with your moves. For instance, that's the way he moves so this is the way we'll move (Hanna, interview).

Dancing with this person a few times, I have learned more about his personality, and of course, the way he dances... People have their own personal grace and style, and when you dance with a partner, you have to incorporate your style with your partner's. As for what I have learned about myself, I find that even though I'm a quick learner and my partner is not, that I can slow down the pace or pick up the pace to suit my partner (Hanna, written research question 1, see appendix).

Hanna compares the physical communication that occurs in social dancing to the communication that occurs in any social setting. However, she finds that the physicality of communication in social dancing causes it to be clearer.
It is different from communicating with a study partner because it is more obvious. Study partners have to first voice their ideas before they can figure out how to adjust to each other. Even then you sometimes misunderstand what they're saying. In social dance you have no choice about adjusting because your bodies are attached. You have to be in tune (Hanna, interview).

Hanna concludes that "general communication is accelerated by the intimacy of dancing; getting to know their personality (Hanna, interview)." For Hanna, what is communicated is not predetermined, but is instead dependant on each individual.

Devo similarly describes dance a means of communicating. He emphasized the significance of social dance as an alternative medium for expression which he relates closely with both art and communication:

You can tell a lot about a person by the way they dance. Everybody has their own interpretation of a song. Dance is very expressive. I'm an art student and I consider myself pretty cultured. Dance is another form of art. It's a medium, like photography or art. It's learning to work with a medium (Devo, interview).

Satchel, Jane and Devo discussed the implications and effects that the touch issue has on social relationships. Jane described as an important aspect of this class the "interactions you have with people you'd otherwise never meet (Jane, interview)." She explains:

Because we are actually dancing and touching each other we get to really know each other. For instance, if I saw someone from class on the street I would go up and talk to them. This doesn't happen as much with people in my other classes (Jane, interview).
Satchel describes the implications that dancing or not dancing with someone might have on social relationships:

I think people tend to be kind of nervous when they are finding a partner to dance with. You get scared of rejection. Like when you were a kid. You don’t want to get stuck without a partner (Satchel, interview).

For Jane and Satchel, coming together in a social dance indicates the formation or rejection of a social bond with that person.

Devo indicated that he was surprised at the power of social dancing in the break up of social preconceptions and discrimination. He noticed that some students who had signed up for this class with friends tended to dance primarily with their friends. However, he stated that among those students who entered the class without a group of friends, students mingled freely and did not seem to stick together on the basis of ethnicity, race, or age. Regarding discrimination in the classroom:

It [discrimination] seems possible. I mean it is possible. But I haven’t noticed it. In fact, I’ve been surprised often to see certain people dancing together... You come in and you have these little preconceptions of people based on what you’ve heard or seen from far, but you don’t really know for sure. Society’s just like that - everyone stays in their own little click, in their own group. But that’s what’s good about class. You’re not dealing with a group of people. You deal with individuals and you learn what each person has to offer (Devo, interview).

Page assumed the most utilitarian approach to touch in social dancing. Physical contact was not given much social meaning but was discussed as a means to an end. When asked
to describe whether social dance is a form of communication, Page responded:

Yeah, I suppose you do talk some in social dance. But mostly before and after the dance. When we’re dancing we mostly just talk about the steps (Page, interview).

When I asked her if she learned anything about her partners by dancing with them she stated that:

I suppose if someone has a wild streak in them they would tend to be more wild dancers, and if someone is reserved their dancing would be more reserved (Page, interview).

However, when I asked her to describe certain characteristics that she feels are important in order to click with a dance partner, Page listed height as the most important factor and described in detail which steps are more or less difficult with a taller and shorter partner.

When asked why social dancing was relevant to her and why she signed up for the course, Page responded that she has always been an active person. She thought the physical activity in social dance would improve her physical fitness and health, boost her energy level, and thereby reduce stress.

What I notice in this section is how prior experiences and expectations (in this case the framing of touch) affect students’ learning in a situation. When Devo and Hanna perceived touch as communication they explored the issue of communication and the expressive potential of moving with
someone. When Jane, Satchel and Devo related touch to social structures, they discussed the implications on maintaining or breaking through social barriers. When Gandolf perceived touch as an intimate act, he discussed dancing with partners as a necessary but unpleasant component of learning social dance. Lastly, when Page perceived touch as a utilitarian aspect of a physical activity, she discussed the functional aspects of dance partners (size, height).

Thus, in the case of touch, prior expectations and experiences largely determined what is learned, whereas in the case of power relationships, students allowed their opinions to change based on embodied experiences.

 Kinesthetic Knowing:

Finally, all participants made references to learning which specifically involved physical understanding. I use these references to explore how the participants perceive what I call embodied or kinesthetic learning.

Page spent very little time discussing embodied learning. Page’s goals in social dancing involved physical fitness and health issues. When I asked if there was anything unique to learning with full physical involvement, Page stated:

It becomes more instinctive. I guess that comes with repetition. The movement becomes patterned (Page, interview).
Satchel likewise did not talk about the embodied learning experience. However, in his description of dancing together with a partner he related his experience of non-verbal communication. He said "it's really about listening to each other (Satchel, interview)." When I questioned him about the relevance of what he was learning in social dance, particularly about leading and following, Satchel explained that he usually would not relate embodied classroom experiences onto the larger social picture unless they were analyzed verbally and thereby given meaning. His attitude toward kinesthetic knowledge is consistent with his framing of knowledge in general. Satchel was most explicit in his distinction between the common or "obvious" knowledge of social discourse encompassed by social theories and "factual" knowledge learned in the hard sciences. The former is a creative social endeavor (also encountered in other humanities). The latter is a matter of facts and is not impacted by social factors.

Hanna and Devo described kinesthetic learning as intuitive, creative, and adaptive. Devo, when asked to describe embodied learning, gave the following explanation:

At first I tried to be a very technical dancer, but as I became comfortable with the dance moves I began to relax and loosen up. My moves were smoother and I've slowly begun to modify and be creative with what I know (Devo, Research question 1).

You just know, after a while, what's right or wrong. You just feel it. You begin to know by perception if it looks right, feels right...
Knowing the basic idea is important, then you get a feel for it (Devo, interview).

When I asked him to compare this to different types of learning, Devo related his definition of embodied learning to what happens in science classes and labs. Devo works as an assistant in a science lab on campus.

It's similar to the kind of learning that happens in science. Science just has more boundaries. But you also begin to get a feel for it and then you can be more creative with your methods. In science nothing is ever completely correct. You can't prove anything, you can only disprove (Devo, interview).

Some people think too hard. It's easier if you just relax and dance. Looking into it too much can be a problem. It's the same as in science. You don't have to overthink everything. Yeah, it exists (certain rules or information), but it doesn't always concern us (Devo, interview)

Devo then discusses the significance of creativity to both types of learning:

Trying to learn moves technically suppresses styles and personalities. You learn better when you are allowed creativity. This works in the lab too (Devo, interview).

Hanna describes her first experiences with dance:

My grandparents, who are of Spanish descent, loved dancing, and I was an avid viewer. I just watched them dance during parties or gatherings, and this was how I learned dances. When I grew older, I just easily picked up dance techniques and styles by watching them being performed (Hanna, self-description).

She credits kinesthetic learning as being immediate:

Because of the physical contact you automatically incorporate that persons move with your move. It is different from communicating with a study partner because it is more obvious... In social dance you have no choice about adjusting because
Your bodies are attached. You have to be in tune (Hanna, interview).

Creativity is an important aspect of embodied learning for Hanna:

It is important to not always have rules. This inspires creativity and confidence. You stay more open to new ideas (Hanna, interview).

What makes me proud about my dancing is the way I can combine and execute several dances into one form of expression (Hanna, self description).

When I asked Hanna if she applied these statements to her perspectives on the world she replied:

I didn’t think anything about actual learning, but then when you talked about it at the beginning of the quarter it was like, "Yeah, you can learn if you pay attention to it." (Hanna, interview).

While Hanna and Devo both expressed an appreciation for intuitive and relatively unstructured learning Jane preferred to begin with more structure when learning movement. She described her learning preferences as follows:

It’s a different kind of teaching/learning. I had a friend who tried to teach me how to dance by leading me through it. But it’s a different kind of teaching and learning; just doing it versus actually learning where it comes from. Because if you just dance with one person and they just lead you through it, it’s not the same as when you are shown that this is the basic step and here are ways you can do it… If I could go back now and dance with that one friend… I’d learn more (Jane, interview).

Jane also admitted that "you learn that set steps can be turned into improvisation (Jane, Research question 2)."

Implicit in this statement is Jane’s order of learning; improvisation happens after set steps are learned. Jane
preferred to know exactly what the basic step is and where it comes from before she felt comfortable experimenting on her own.

Gandolf spent the most time talking about what I’ve called kinesthetic or embodied learning. He begins the interview by talking about being "integrated as far as physical things (Gandalf, interview)," and relates this to his father having been a gymnast. Gandalf describes a "psychological freedom that I feel that I have when I move (Gandalf, interview)." He defines this freedom as follows:

I guess when I lift my leg and I hold my leg out. Some people feel kind of weird about making their body do things that seem awkward because they’re not everyday things to do. I’ve always been into trying new things... I like the way you approach the class...allowing for improvisation. Because I think that in and of itself is essential for all aspects of life. Obviously nothing works out exactly the way anyone plans. But specifically for dance, if two dancers get off the beat or don’t execute a move the way it was taught, I feel the freedom myself to just kind of improvise and to do something else. And as long as it fits in with the theme of the dance... then the dance remains intact. So you wouldn’t feel embarrassed if you allow yourself that freedom (Gandolf, interview).

Gandolf applies his understanding of physical and psychological freedom to society in general:

I think that movement and anything you do that’s physical is just one aspect of a person’s mind. I think it’s directly related in that sense. I think that the way people think is one way that people exhibit who they are (Gandolf, interview).

The freer a person feels with their body, and I don’t mean, um... To use free that sounds like strange... The less inhibited a person is with like actually moving parts of their body like
moving their arm up in the air or performing a
kick in karate, being able to just kind of relax
when you dance and not be rigid. To a certain
extent you can tell if that person is comfortable
with their environment (Gandolf, interview).

I think a lot of times if a person could just
relax, even if they're not necessarily moving but
just being, knowing that their body is there in
the movement. It's kind of like a tool to express
yourself. Yeah, I think you can become more
comfortable with yourself if you become more
comfortable with your movement (Gandolf,
interview).

Gandolf has studied karate for about a year and has given
thought to the significance of freedom in movement before.
He makes connections between karate, social dance, movement
in general, social situations and personality. For Gandolf,
what he learns in social dance extends beyond skills and
steps. This reflects the fact that he perceives knowledge
as the integration of an individual's thoughts and physical
actions.

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As I reread this section of data analysis I most
consciously see my influence as instructor and researcher.
I have written the entire section called "kinesthetic
knowing" about how each student participant framed the
process of learning within the social dance setting. It is
clearly not coincidental that exploring the learning process
happens to be the conceptual topic of my dissertation.
However, my original intent in this study was to discover
relevant issues that are explored through social dance.
I am surprised that the issues which I listed at the
beginning of my study, including diversity, gender, dance styles and stress release did not surface more prominently. These are the issues which I expected to arise for my students. I am not sure if I changed the topic of my dissertation based on my student participants' responses, or if changing the topic of my dissertation steered them in this direction.

In either case one thing became clear: Discussing what one learns through physical activity in this study led to critical examination, by myself and my student participants, of what it means to learn and what kinds of things can be learned.

Finding an Ending

The two issues most prevalent in these interviews were that of knowledge, and how we learn about social dance. Other topics which students discussed were touch, power, and kinesthetic learning. The students wove their prior expectations/experiences with their new embodied learnings and shared discourses. In some cases their experiences changed their opinions about social dance and about what they could learn through social dance. The most common of these shifts was from expecting to learn a movement form to acknowledging that they were learning about broader social and educational issues.
In other cases, prior experiences colored how they perceived social dancing. An example of this is the way in which Satchel describes a good female dancer as one who makes the male look as if he's leading, because these roles are traditionally set. He came to this conclusion despite (or as a result of) his many experiences of being led by women.

In some cases student’s ideas seemed to conflict. For instance Devo discusses freedom of movement and its close relationship to "psychological" freedom at length. He considers himself a free mover. At the same time he discusses his aversion to moving while touching another person. Devo has not put freedom of movement involving touch into the broader context of freedom of movement. He expressed no desire to become more comfortable moving with others and did not feel any contradiction between this and his strong belief in comfort of movement, despite the fact that both issues surfaced within the same discussion.

Satchel was investigating significant issues of gender and power, yet he maintained that one learned better when gender and social differences were not part of the learning environment. I could say that in these cases the students have not "thought it through." What exactly would that imply? On what do we base our actions if not on our thoughts and knowledge? How important is consistency in knowledge structure when we act. What are we fulfilling
through our actions if not our worldviews? Does the knowledge and the worldview come after our actions, as a simple justification of our actions? Would this be a dualistic separation of action and knowledge?

On the other hand, when ideas did not seem consistent with each other, were they consistent with separate experiences the student might have had? The experiences themselves might have been inconsistent. In this case, the embodied experiences carry more meaning than do the ideas, and it was not important for the students to find consistency in the verbalization of their ideas.

In other instances, the weaving between prior experiences/expectations and embodied learning was more consistent. In all cases students applied the ideas which they were investigating to other areas of their life. Moreover they were personally and holistically invested in these ideas, which were based on a collage of prior and present embodied experiences rather than on a predetermined body of knowledge.
Chapter 5
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter I reflect upon my exploration of somatic education in the context of six social dance students' experiences. Issues that I address in this chapter are whether my data analysis fulfilled my methodological goals. Did I adequately explore the conceptual issues presented in chapter two? What is the relevance and applicability of my work? What are its limitations?

Summary of Findings:

The structure of my research project is not conducive to making grand conclusions or generalizations, but there are findings that I can assert. The most significant of these is that the outcomes of this project were very different from my expectations. I found myself unable to discover issues inherent in social dancing without feeling that I was manipulating the field. I decided to incorporate myself into the process rather than try to deny my influence or feign objectivity. My response was to change the focus...
of my study to explore how discourse and physical experiences affect what we learn in a social dance class.

Secondly, my student participants became involved in this exploration of the learning process and of the structure of knowledge with me. Their major focus was not on the issues that I expected to see in a social dance class such as gender relations, diversity, styles of dancing. Instead they were more interested in discussing those specific issues within the larger context of how they learned and what "knowledge" consists of.

For each student how and what they learned was different. In some cases, they exhibited inconsistencies in their own perspectives. In all cases their perspectives reflected a weaving of prior experiences and expectations with new embodied experiences. By the end of the quarter their knowledge of social dance supported their collage of experiences. This knowledge included their technical proficiency with the movement as well as their ability to make sense of social dance in a larger social context; how does social dance feel? when are we dancing well? what implications does the form hold? how does it fit into our society?

The students were able to make relationships between what they had learned through social dancing and other aspects of their lives, particularly regarding knowledge and how we learn, but also including issues of gender, touch,
power. Whether they apply this knowledge outside of the classroom was not determinable. This represents a limitation of this study, and also a possibility for future research.

In this dissertation my roles as social researcher and teacher merge. Frederick Erickson describes the close relationship between the two:

The results of interpretive research are of special interest to teachers, who share similar concerns with the interpretive researcher. Teachers too are concerned with specifics of local meaning and local action; that is the stuff of life in daily classroom practice (1986 Erickson p.156)

Furthermore, the post-positivist method of research itself holds profound implications for teaching and education:

Paradoxically, the chief usefulness of interpretive research for the improvement of teaching practice may be its challenge to the notion that certain truths can be found, and in its call to reconstrue fundamentally our notions of the nature of the practical in teaching. Interpretive research on teaching, then, is not only an alternative method, but an alternative view of how society works and of how schools, classrooms, teachers and students work in society (1986 Erickson p. 158).

The process indicated by this statement was paralleled in my investigation of social dance. My research methods and my teaching methods informed each other. This process changed both my and my student participants’ perspectives, and no doubt changed the findings of my work.
Validity:

In chapter two I explain that criteria of validity are dependant on the goals of a study. In this dissertation I define knowledge and meaning by their relationship to action. Knowledge and meaning are determined by the actions which they elicit. I am interested in how this study may have changed my student participants, as well as myself. The criteria by which I measure the validity of this work are (from chapter three): ontological authenticity (did it change the way they understand something?), catalytic, tactical or pragmatic validity (did this change in understanding affect their actions?).

Ontological authenticity is verified by the student participants' engagement in the process of creating a discourse around social dancing. We made sense of social dancing based on our prior experiences, expectations, physical experiences and classroom discussions. We did not limit the learning to a predetermined body of knowledge.

The catalytic, tactical, and pragmatic validity are more difficult to determine. The student participants attested to the fact that they learned more than they expected to learn because of the discourse we created around learning and social dance: "I was skeptical at first...[but] I have learned about myself and about how to think of the world differently (Devo);" "I didn't think anything about actual learning, but then...it was like, yeah, you can learn
if you pay attention to it (Hanna)." The act of involving oneself in a discourse rather than simply memorizing or doing what one is told is a significant verification of catalytic validity. However, whether what they have learned in this class will affect their learning in other classes, or their interactions in the world is indeterminable.

On the other hand, my actions clearly changed. I changed the entire focus of my dissertation as well as my paradigmatic positioning in general. These are indications of the catalytic validity of the research project.

The Implications and Influence of Silence:

Throughout the interview process I remained as silent as possible. My intention was to allow the students to choose their own issues and to discuss them with as little of my (teacher's) influence as possible. It is important to recognize the other side to this approach: the tremendous influence of my silence. What issues did my students experience, but not raise during the interviews for fear that they might be inappropriate or unwelcome. By remaining silent I allowed the free flow of ideas within the realm of mainstream social issues. Conversely, by remaining silent, I might not have communicated my willingness to listen to and support more personal or "taboo" issues such as same-sex sexuality. Though I tried to create the space to freely discuss anything, what would motivate or deter each student
to share ideas regarding more personal topics, or topics for which they may have experienced discrimination in the past? Why would they care to trust an instructor who they've known for less than ten weeks and who is still responsible for grading them?

In reading this study it is important to pay attention to the silences and undiscussed topics, and to acknowledge that within the limits of this study, many things were no doubt left unsaid.

**Applicability:**

Kreisberg describes his concern regarding the applicability of emancipatory theories of education. I proposed (chapter 2) that by grounding learning in embodied experience, thereby allowing students to literally "make sense" of their knowledge, we can avoid the authoritarian imposition of more equal learning structures. This process of grounding learning in embodied experience is somatic. It coincides with what Kreisberg calls finding "power-within (chapter 2)." It is facilitated, not through imposition, but through individual engagement in this way of thinking by the teacher/instructor. Students, along with the instructor, are constantly exploring, reflecting, and changing their ideas through the process of learning.

In the context of my study, I actively explored what can be learned in a social dance class other than steps. My
student participants saw that I was trying not to impose a predetermined body of knowledge on them. They responded by joining me in the exploration of social dance. As a result they created their own knowledge. Thus, this study demonstrates the possibility of co-creating knowledge despite the inherent power structures existing in the student-teacher relationship. Embodied experience emphasized by a somatic approach may resolve the barrier of applicability described by emancipatory educators. It does this through its emphasis of process and its de-emphasis of a set goal or correct way of knowing.

This approach is not limited to physical education classes. The physical education context is particularly conducive to somatic learning because of its inherent emphasis on process and the evident uniqueness of each individual experience. Nonetheless, embodied experience is not confined to specific physical tasks. We are never without our bodies. Whether we choose to learn in a way that supports our whole somatic experiences, or one that does not support this, is an important issue in any classroom. Herein lies potential for further research. In what ways can somatic learning be incorporated into classes with a more defined "body of knowledge" such as math or biology? Certain philosophies, such as John Dewey's pragmatism, have attempted to teach through experience while maintaining the ultimate existence of objective truths. These attempts have
met with limited success because of their essentialist biases which ultimately promote one way of knowing and one view of the world. Is it possible to teach all subjects in a non-essentialist somatic manner, one which ideally would not discriminate against different ways of knowing?

**Implications:**

Through this study I have explored the relationships connecting embodied experience, knowledge and power. The ontology of somatic practice was situated within the literatures of post-modernism, phenomenology and emancipatory education. It was then explored in the context of a social dance class. This process found the holistic somatic ontology to be both conceptually and functionally relevant in dealing with issues of power and oppression current in discourses of social research. The integration of living sensory experience into every facet of education, and into the very framework of what it means to "know," frees individuals from systemic oppressive social structures. While oppressive acts will not immediately disappear, their social legitimation will. The implications of this study for the practice of education and the relevance of the embodied experience are dramatic. On a fundamental level it calls for changing dynamics of interactions in the classroom. On a practical level it is evident through the growing demand for somatic practices,
yoga, holistic health, environmental concern, that a new philosophy of consciousness, grounded in our own embodied experiences is at hand.
SELF DESCRIPTIONS

Please describe yourself. Provide a brief history and background, and the reasons that lead you to take this social dance class. (You may want to describe the factors in your life which, in your opinion, most shaped your ideas, values and worldviews. What in your life has made you who you are? This may include anything you feel is important: age, ethnicity, religion, economics, role models, parents, siblings, other relatives, events, trips, books, hobbies, other experiences.)

PSEUDONYM: __________________________
Research Questions 1 and 2

Pseudonym: _______________________________

1. Please choose one person in this class with whom you have danced a few times. Answer the following three questions regarding this person. Do not give me the name of this person. They shall remain anonymous.

   o Describe what you have learned about this person.
   o Tell me what you have learned about social dance by dancing with this person.
   o Tell me what you have learned about yourself.

2. In a few words, describe some things you may learn about or encounter in a social dance class other than specific dances and steps.
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

My basic guiding questions were as follows:

1. What are/were your initial preconceptions of social dance and what lead you to these ideas.
2. How has this changed in the course of this quarter?
3. Tell me about social dance.
4. Tell me about whatever movement experiences you've had in your life and their effects on you.
5. Tell me what you do. How does social dance relate to you?

These questions guided my interview. However, I allowed the discussion to move in an organic direction.
APPENDIX B

JOURNAL TOPICS
SOCIAL DANCE JOURNAL TOPICS: 1994-1995

(These topics were suggested and discussed during the quarter in which my research took place.)

This is a list of possible paper topics. Feel free to discuss the topics that are most relevant to you. Do not limit yourself to this list, but use it as a guide.

This is an informal paper and can be written in the form of a journal. Feel free to be creative. It can be handwritten if your handwriting is neat.

1A. What were your preconceptions of social dance. What were your expectations from this class. Why did you enroll in this class. (Setting expectations and personal goals.)

1B. How have your preconceptions and expectations of social dance changed over the course of the quarter? Have you accomplished your goals? What kinds of things did you learn OTHER than specific steps and dances? (Self assessment and reflection on learnings.)

2. How is social dancing like a conversation? How is it not like a conversation? What is your personal style or voice in social dancing? (What are you learning about yourself through social dance?)

3. What is meant by the terms "lead" and "follow" in social dance? The relationship is much more complex and involved than the terms imply. How do you make meaning of these terms. How do you feel about them. (Think about the social implications of social dance.)

4. People have different styles of moving. How do you learn movement? When does social dancing feel good or right? (Think about kinesthetic awareness.)

5. Physical education is not only about skills. It is the opportunity to experience certain "rules of life;" to put to practice theories that we study in school. What kind of issues are present in the social dance class setting. (Reflection on social issues such as gender, diversity, power...)
SOCIAL DANCE JOURNAL TOPICS: 1996

In approximately three typed pages discuss:
A. The kinesthetic (physical) experience of social dancing.
B. The social/cultural experience of social dancing.
C. Where or how the physical and social/cultural experiences overlap.

Possible issues to consider within this paper include (but are not limited to):
How do you learn movement?
What is meant by the terms "lead" and "follow"?
When does social dancing feel good or right? Why?
Gender...
Diversity...
Expression...
Communication...
Body...

*** If you have a completely different topic that you are interested in investigating about social dance, discuss it with me.
REFERENCES:


Oliver, Donald. "Grounded Knowing: A Postmodern Perspective on Teaching and Learning," in Educational Leadership (September 1990).


* Reference was also made to student journals, gathered between January and March, 1994.