



## DANCE RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES: ETHICS, ORIENTATIONS, AND PRACTICES

edited by Rosemary Candelario and Matthew Henley. 2023. London and New York, NY: Routledge. 452 pp., 15 illustrations. \$ 42.95 paper. ISBN: 9780367703073. doi: 10.4324/9781003145615. doi:10.1017/S0149767724000093

Dance research has found its place in academia. Across the globe, a multitude of Dance Departments have emerged in both public and private universities. Despite these gains, we are still in need of methodologies that allow novice researchers to approach and succeed in their investigations. The diversity of this field requires a bigger outlook, as it can be analyzed in relation to the education, the fine arts, the humanities and the social sciences, to name a few. The anthology *Dance Research Methodologies: Ethics, Orientations, and Practices*, curated by Rosemary Candelario and Matthew Henley, mirrors that interdisciplinarity. Authors include performing arts and dance scholars, choreographers, dancers and educators from various backgrounds and geographical locations. This volume not only fills a gap in providing the necessary guidelines for conducting research, but also enhances the lines of inquiry initiated by Fraleigh and Hanstein's pioneering book *Researching in Dance* (1999) that have been recently discussed in the anthologies edited by Thomas and Prickett (2020), Dodds (2019), and Giersdorf and Wong (2019).

The book is organized in seven parts. The Introduction focuses on the communities of practice of its readers. Chapter 1 illustrates these cohorts effectively by means of an imagined dance department that showcases the aforementioned interdisciplinarity. Candelario and Henley explain how each dance science, dance education, dance studies and dance practice member represents the different subdisciplines that shape this field. They are based on the multiple dimensions that configure the three disciplinary cultures proposed by Kagan (2009): the natural sciences, the humanities and the social sciences. However, the authors note that these areas of knowledge seem rather restrictive for integrating dance into academia. They propose developing "the performing and

visual arts as a fourth culture" (12) in order to enable practitioners to fully use the body as a research tool. Chapter 2 delves further into these approaches, using a chart to depict the commonalities among and differences between these four practices in terms of the ways that they set up the research, generate of data, assess connections among data, perform analysis, and share results. Each of these approaches is the topic of Parts 2 through 5, which are introduced by a leading scholar who identifies their methodologies and trends in the field.

*Dance Practice* accomplishes the task of positioning movement as a form of research. Vida Midgelow opens her chapter with the notion of Practice-as-Research (PaR). A dancer's body embodies knowledge; in the not-so-distant past, such choreographic thinking was not accepted as legitimate in academia. Fortunately, this perception has changed substantially since the 1990s. At present, several universities such as the University of Roehampton, Middlesex University, Paris 8 University, University of the Arts Helsinki, Temple University and Texas Woman's University currently have doctoral programs that showcase how extensively PaR has permeated academia. In her chapter, Jo Pollitt uses PaR as a tool that enables dialogue between of dancing, writing and feminism. Aurelia Chillemi and Victoria Fortuna speak of two community dance projects that share the same model, despite being based in different contexts such as the US and Argentina. John-Paul Zaccarini focusses on a Swedish funded initiative that provides a space to develop new ways of thinking creatively about Blackness. Eiko Otake joins Candelario in a conversation in which they discuss creative methods in depth. Particularly interesting is Otake's reluctance toward the use of the word research: "We do a lot of searching, but why call it research? What 's wrong with working?" (94). Her choreographic practice drives her acquisition of new knowledge. Paradoxically, Otake's perception both reinforces the proposed fourth culture and highlights how dance practice still needs to find suitable structures and languages.

*Dance Studies* has established itself as a new discipline within the humanities. Thomas F. DeFrantz opens Part 3 with this strong

statement. As he recounts, in the mid-1990s, dance history scholars engaged with cultural studies and integrated its methods and theories (as Morris (2009) describes), forming an interdisciplinary field. The chapters presented here provide an overview of several foundational texts in dance studies as well as current intersections with critical race theory. Harmony Bench, J. Lorenzo Perillo, Cristina Fernandes Rosa and Candelario establish a dialogue about the role of decolonial processes in choreographic analysis based on Foster's *Reading Dancing* (1986). The semiotic approach in this pivotal book is a valuable source for anyone interested in studying the meanings and imaginaries generated by choreography. Ana Paula Höfling delves into the conception of archives and emphasizes the importance of acknowledging the innovators and artists that shaped the history of capoeira, instead of focusing merely on the scholar's embodied knowledge. Such approach is not always present in Global South histories. MiRi Park explores archives from a different perspective. Her intervention allows us to comprehend the power of oral communication in hip hop dancing. Finally, Nigel Stewart showcases how phenomenology, advocated by Edmund Husserl, can be translated as a five-step methodological tool to "follow the dance back to the motion through which it produces itself" (176).

*Dance Education* highlights the importance of observing the constantly evolving world of dance pedagogy. Lynnette Young Overby looks back into a study she conducted on American public K-12 education in the 1990s to introduce this section. Two themes emerged from this research that currently shape the discourses of current studies: Alfdaniels Mabingo discusses the need to bring a multicultural perspective beyond the Global North, exemplified in his decolonial approach to Indigenous African systems of knowledge. Ojeya Cruz Banks follows this point of view in the Pacific, West Africa and the US. The search for new methodologies constitutes the second line of inquiry. Overby and Henley propose a seven-step quantitative method to answer questions on generalizability and causality. In another chapter, Henley suggests the use of mixed methods that combine quantitative and qualitative analyses to expand results. Ilana Morgan presents her own experience teaching for youth in detention centers by means of a self-study approach "that bridges

the theory/practice gap often prevalent in dance pedagogy research" (245). In doing so, the classroom becomes an artistic laboratory.

*Dance Science* is perhaps the most established of all dance research practices. There were dance educators who were analyzing the body as early as the 1930s. We can trace its actual roots in the 1970s when medical practitioners were looking for answers to the specific conditions of professional ballet dancers. Many organizations focusing on the treatment of injuries and the well-being of dancers emerged internationally. In her introduction, Margaret Wilson emphasizes the scientific method and methodologies launched in *Researching in Dance* (1999) for "an analytical approach to understanding dance movement viewed as a creative process" (282) further in the selected chapters. Wilson speaks with Edel Quin about his transition from dancing to becoming a dance science researcher. Gregory Youdan Jr. explores the use of statistics, by means of a holistic approach, used as a tool with the potential of transforming researchers' ways of thinking. Tomoyo Kawano presents her dance/movement therapy (DMT) inquiry interviewing Japanese and Euroamerican women. Lastly, Merry Lynn Morris delves into her own journey by analyzing, designing and implementing devices that extend the movement of dancers with disabilities.

Finally, Part 6 *Dance Research beyond Disciplines*, considers the impact of dance outside its communities of practice. The ongoing growth of the discipline highlights the need to expand existing boundaries that limit the incorporation of further dance-based research in academia. Hopefully, future editions of this book will amplify the proposed methodological possibilities. Janet O'Shea suggests that dance can become an intersection between the humanities and the sciences. Adesola Akinleye explains her own interdisciplinary research with many other fields, understanding movement as a common lingua franca. The last section, entitled *Creative Workbook*, provides the reader with a variety of tools related to the ethics, orientations and practices of researching dance that can be introduced into the classroom.

Overall, *Dance Research Methodologies* encompasses the broad spectrum of practices that shape this discipline. This volume acknowledges the myriad ways in which a researcher can delve into the diversity of dance "to encourage a

perspective that frames research design and methods as porous, creative, and fluid” (5). It will be of interest to faculty, emerging scholars, and especially to those graduate and undergraduate students who are engaged in the initial stages of their research projects. This anthology will become a pivotal source for them. I highly recommend this book to any novice researcher who wants to acquire the necessary guidelines for conducting their inquiries, and by doing so, strengthen this field by jointly embodying theory and practice.

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### **LA DANZA: CUERPOS EN MOVIMIENTO A TRAVÉS DE LA HISTORIA.**

By Idoia Murga Castro. 2023. Madrid: Cátedra. 336 pp. 23,50 EUR. ISBN 9788437646398. doi:10.1017/S0149767724000081

Writing a comprehensive dance history book is a very difficult task. Yet this publication type is an important part of our knowledge

re-production, providing insight into dance as a specific and unique art form with its own genesis and evolution. Before writing a dance history book, many queries await the author: What geographical span to choose? What period to start with and what period to end in? For whom will the publication be intended? Which sources to choose? What level of detail of historical context to report? What images to provide the reader? These are just a few of many possible questions, with no definitive answers, which remain the personal choice of the author, and are always open to interpretations. Spanish dance historian Idoia Murga Castro has offered her own answers in *La Danza: Cuerpos en movimiento a través de la historia (The Dance: Bodies in Movement Throughout History – Cátedra, 2023)*. Her large expertise, which enabled her to take on the challenging task, are proven by her previous publications, which include historical scholarly studies, books, book chapters and exhibition catalogues.

*La Danza* is a 336-page Spanish-language dance history book that spans from ancient Greece to the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century. The author’s focus is mainly on Euro-North American dance culture with occasional references to other geographical contexts, most often the Spanish-speaking countries of South America. A specific place is given to Spanish dance culture, in which Murga Castro does a great service to local dance historiography by placing domestic events in a global context. In this book, she adopts a chronological approach, and although Murga Castro covers a span of some 4,000 years in ten chapters, the distribution across them is not and cannot be even. The first five chapters deal with events up to the end of the 19th century and the last five chapters deal with the 20th and 21st centuries. The chosen chronological approach is particularly better suited to the first half of the 20th century, in which styles, trends and movements are relatively easy to distinguish. As the author moves closer to the present, however, there is sometimes a lack of distance from the historical period analyzed; due to this, for the last few decades the author opts for a more thematic approach, which she fully develops in the last chapter (“*La danza actual y sus fronteras difusas/Current Dance and Its Diffused Borders*” – the word current is used here to separate the contemporary from the actual).