

My project on dance pedagogy was an assignment in Professor Kristin Smiarowski's course, *I Am, therefore I Dance*. We were directed to write a research paper on any aspect of dance, culture and society, and to incorporate at least five scholarly sources outside the required readings and at least one additional source included within the class. Also permitted were interviews or presentations, live performances, dance events, films and similar media related to dance.

As a dancer drawn to teaching, I have sought to expand my understanding of dance pedagogy and educators of the past 50 years, as well as artists who employ dance as a vehicle for social change. Notes from previous courses could help me draw from live and videotaped performances, documentaries and workshops, which would contribute to this project. Additionally, I was inspired by presentations from ContraTiempo, a dance company that addresses urgent social issues; and Bill T. Jones, a choreographer who works with audiences facing challenges or adversity. I hoped to show that dance pedagogy has emerged in our time not just as transmission of skill, but a distinct artistic expression in its own right – a key idea in helping me define my purpose in dance, beyond the studio or stage.

I began with a visit to the research librarian. I explained my intentions and shared ideas for diving more deeply into the field. I described media and performance materials that had been valuable before, and discussed ways to incorporate live material from ContraTiempo, Bill T. Jones, and a presenter on Dance for Veterans. From there, the librarian helped me locate initial sources, using catalogs and the OneSearch function to narrow the field.

In particular, Dance LibGuides expanded my search to new resources. The JSTOR database yielded multiple scholarly articles; advanced filters allowed me to narrow results to peer-reviewed journals, ensuring sources would meet my stated criteria. Creative experimenting with key terms (dance + pedagogy, modern, American, Laban, eurhythmy, pluralism, kinesiology and more) led to material that had not appeared in the initial search, especially pertaining to elements of kinesiology and social change. Another fruitful source was Dance Online Videos, offering interviews, documentaries and performances, with or by artists who were key subjects of my research. This is critical in my field: Unlike other disciplines, dance occurs only in the moment it is created. By capturing those moments, videos greatly deepened my insight and helped ground conceptual terms in living movements and conversations, even among artists who are now long gone.

Another invaluable resource was the ILLiad inter-library loan system. Often, our databases yielded abstracts or bibliographies; through ILLiad I was able to request full materials, especially books, located at other universities which were shipped to Hannon for free. Any article arriving in digital form was placed on the ILLiad website, where I could download it at no cost.

Undoubtedly the most valuable resource at Hannon was the librarians themselves. I had learned that starting with the research desk would not only save countless

hours but generate ideas I had not considered before. Librarians also directed me toward the stacks: There I perused books on dance by revered dance artists and scholars – and in walking, saw books on near-by shelves, prompting connections I could never have made without that personal, hands-on approach.

This research did not yield deeply divergent views; each artist or educator extended my understanding of dance in a new dimension. My challenge was in selecting which materials to include. Fortunately, I began with a research question and a clear outline, and was disciplined in following it. Priority went to sources generated or recorded by noted dancers and educators, and then to artist-scholars with relevant observations. Primary sources from the 20th century were important, but secondary sources focused mainly on the past 15 years. Finally, to cite materials correctly in Chicago format, I religiously accessed the OWL at Purdue University, available through LMU library connection.

As I reflect on this experience, I realize how much it taught me not only about productive methods of research, but about the pleasure in finding sources and interconnections I had not anticipated. My senior thesis, describing strategies for teaching dance to underserved children, will benefit enormously from this work.