



Dance in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective

NDA Scholar/Artist Award Lecture 2005

Delivered by Anne Green Gilbert in Chicago, April 16, 2005

How will dance evolve during the 21st century? How does the dance landscape appear in 2005? What will dance look like in 2105? A hundred years ago in 1905, a beautiful and intelligent young lady named Margaret H'Doubler was finishing high school in Madison, Wisconsin and preparing to enter the University. H'Doubler's philosophy and writings about dance influenced educators in dance and physical education throughout the last century. H'Doubler's formative years are described by Judith Gray and Dianne Howe in a fascinating article written in 1985 for *Research Quarterly*.

"Margaret H'Doubler believed that dancing represented creative self-expression through the medium of movement of the human body. She was concerned with a type of dancing that exemplified educational activity, rather than an outer acquisition of simulated grace, and was convinced that dance as an art belonged in the educational process. H'Doubler believed that dance was a vital educational force since it was entirely geared toward the total development of the individual. She articulated these ideas as early as 1921 in her first book, *A Manual of Dancing*, after having taught dance for only four years at the University of Wisconsin.

"H'Doubler remained committed to this philosophy throughout her career as a dance educator. To her, teaching was a sharing of knowledge through vital experience so that the student would come to understand the relationship between the physical- objective and the inner-subjective phase of experience. The method used to attain this self-knowledge was creative problem solving rather than the imposition of stereotyped movement patterns." ¹

Margaret H'Doubler graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1910 with a major in biology and a minor in philosophy. Her studies were to define her teaching for the rest of her career. Her favorite prop was a skeleton. She started classes lying on the floor and believed that certain exercises were fundamental to motor control and motor control was fundamental to expressive movement. She believed in technique, improvisation, composition, anatomy and kinesiology. H'Doubler started a student dance group at the University of Wisconsin and named it *Orchesis*, a name since adopted by many colleges and high schools for their student dance companies. She established the first formal undergraduate university dance major - and later master and doctoral degrees

- in America. Her program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison was to become a model for most of the university and college dance departments across the United States.

Margaret H'Doubler was an important person in my life. My high school dance teacher was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and my daily dance classes for four years were highly influenced by H'Doubler's philosophy. In 1967, I spent my sophomore year in college in Madison at the University taking science courses not available to me at my alma mater, Sweet Briar College. Margaret H'Doubler, age 77, came to teach for a few days, skeleton in tow, and her enthusiasm, intelligence and ability to engage students in a deep learning experience was a revelation to me. I wanted to be a teacher just like her.

I have been blessed throughout my working life to have a career that has given me so much variety and fulfillment. I started teaching in 1970 as a 3rd grade classroom teacher. I leaned

heavily on my K-12 and college arts infused education to integrate the arts into the classroom in order to create an inclusive and engaging curriculum. That brief experience planted the seeds for my fascination with how children learn and my first book, *Teaching the Three Rs Through Movement*, which I wrote in 1975. A short stint as a children's librarian on the South Side of Chicago in the winter of 1972 allowed me to use my fifteen years of eclectic dance studio experience to start experimenting with creative dance for children.

In the Fall of 1972, I was offered a job that would change my life. I was hired by the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle to teach Ballroom Dance, Folk Dance, PE for the Classroom Teacher, Dance for Children, Modern Dance and direct Orchesis, the University Modern Dance Company. The last two charges were not problematic for me as I had spent my high school and college years studying and teaching modern dance as well as choreographing and directing numerous performances. But the first four courses were an enigma. This experience started me on my path as a life long learner. I read as many books and articles as possible on folk and ballroom dance, creative dance for children, and the "new" physical education, which was based on movement education, educational gymnastics, and cooperative games.

In the Fall of 1973, I found myself transplanted to Seattle, Washington as the result of my husband's career. I was fortunate to land a position at the University of Washington teaching similar courses to the ones I had taught in Chicago. For the next four years in Seattle, I taught undergraduates part-time at the University of Washington, and children at Cornish College for the Arts and Dance Center Seattle, as well as performing in a semi-professional modern dance company. These four years shaped my teaching philosophy. It was an amazing opportunity to actually teach children as I was teaching future teachers how to teach children. I continued to read and study on my own. It was a time of much experimentation and growth.

I left the University of Washington in 1977 to focus more time on teaching children and training teachers across the State. Arts in Education has been a popular concept in Washington State since 1975. Due to my recently published book, *Teaching the Three Rs Through Movement*, and a successful nationally funded grant project that showed language arts test scores could be raised significantly through dance experiences, I was asked by the State Superintendent to write standards for dance education, train classroom teachers, and motivate principals to include dance in their schools. I often carried out this mission with a baby in one arm and another on the way, much to many principals' dismay!

I had joined AAHPERD in 1972 and was asked in 1980 to be the first VP for Dance in Washington State (AAHPER added the D for Dance in 1979). This gave me an opportunity to start the WAHPERD Dance Newsletter and work toward a strong voice for dance education in Washington. The outgrowth of this initial venture was the Dance Educators Association of Washington, which I founded in 1990.

In 1981, after a five-year collaboration with Bill Evans, during which I directed the children's program for his Seattle-based company, I started my own nonprofit organization, Creative Dance Center, and my children's dance company, Kaleidoscope. For the past twenty-five years I have been teaching dance to babies through adults at the Creative Dance Center, presenting residencies in public schools in the United States, and training teachers around the world. I also continue to direct Kaleidoscope and choreograph for my dancers and other dance companies. I am so fortunate to have a career that challenges me, continually teaches me something new, and allows me to witness the magic of movement daily.

Margaret H'Doubler brought the magic of modern dance into the university system a century ago. Who will bring the magic of dance education into the K-12 school system in the 21st century? I think it will take a village this time rather than one person because the world is a bigger and more complicated place.

I believe the arts in education, and perhaps arts in general, are at a crossroads. We live in conservative times where the arts and freedom to explore them seem less valued than ever before and advances in technology are occurring at an exponentially phenomenal rate. Daniel Catán, born in Mexico in 1949 and a composer of three modern operas writes, "No other century has dehumanized people as much as the twentieth. Man has become a political animal, a tireless technological wizard or representative of scientifically deduced historical trends; he is seen as a member of a social class, a spokesman for the sexual group he belongs to, an example of success or a victim of society; a producer, a consumer, a number. The individual, the person that feels, that smiles, that hurts, has been all but forgotten by a world obsessed with statistics."²

Although technology has created a world that can be connected instantly through space and time, human beings still seem bent on separating one another through gender, race and religion. The arts, however, have always defined and celebrated diversity in a nonviolent way while giving us the opportunity to feel, smile and hurt.

Inventor and author, Ray Kurzweil, theorizes that in twenty years, advances in technology will allow humans to achieve immortality. He envisions a world where microscopic "nanobots" will keep one forever young by swarming through the body, repairing bones, blood and organs.³ Would the idea of immortality destroy man's fear of death? Would the destruction of this fear destroy man's need for power, property and religion? If people knew they would live forever would they be forced to work together to create a global society of sharing and acceptance where the arts were as highly valued as in the Golden Age of Greece? Only time will tell.

Advances in technology have already had an impact on the arts and this evolution will certainly continue. Visual Arts media has evolved, musical instruments have evolved, the human body and brain are evolving. What will dance look like in one hundred years? What will it look like in twenty years?

Before trying to form suppositions about these questions, let's take a global view of what dance education looks like today.

As I travel around the world teaching and talking with dancers, I discover that we have very similar problems. Most countries do not have full time dance programs in schools. The majority of dance instruction takes place in private studios. Rather than dance specialists, physical education teachers, classroom teachers, and music teachers are the professionals called upon to offer dance experiences for school children. Some countries provide dance specialists for residency programs. Other countries have conservatory high school programs where the primary dance form is ballet with extra offerings in modern, jazz, and hip-hop. We all seem to share the same issues: not enough boys in our programs, poor pay, lack of school or government support, few certification programs, and lack of training in creative dance, appropriate teaching methodologies, or child development.

Last autumn I asked my fellow National Representatives from the Dance and the Child International Advisory Board⁴ to answer questions about dance education in their countries. I am indebted to them for taking the time to respond. I think you will find that these responses from around the world have a familiar ring.

Jennifer van Papendorp writes about dance in **South Africa**. An introduction to dance through an Arts and Culture class is compulsory for all students up to grade 9. However, few teachers are adequately trained to deliver this instruction which would expose every child to dance. Primarily, generalist teachers are responsible for the Arts and Culture class and therefore the standards of achievement are low to non-existent. When a specialist teaches it is usually through the art form with which they are most familiar.

In the Western Cape area of South Africa extra-mural dance teachers may be found in primary schools. Some are expected to teach every student in two different schools per week. Others take self-selected students out of classes mainly for ballet instruction. Few high schools offer dance as an elective. Students in high school may have had dance since primary grade or encounter instruction for the first time as a 10th grader. There are few tertiary dance programs in South Africa. The emphasis, as it is here in so many American colleges, is on technique and performance. Teacher training takes on a minor role.

South African dance educators are grappling with the same issues we have in the US: how to create standards and assessments mandated by the government when there are so few dance specialists trained for teaching in public education and when class size may be so large and varied in level and experience.⁵

Sonia Schulz explains that in **Germany**, there has been little dance in public schools for the past twenty years. Most classroom teachers do not feel confident to teach dance although time is available. Dance is primarily studied in private studios. Amateur groups are formed in all styles of dance outside of the public school setting. However, due to a European study called "Pisa-Studie" in which German students appeared to be behind other European countries in their educational level, there may be a new interest in bringing movement and dance into the public schools. Where to find dance specialists trained to teach in public schools is another issue.⁶

Although Croatia, like Germany, has a strong and diverse adult dance culture, this country also offers little dance for children in the educational setting. There are no dance high school programs or dance departments at universities so there is no possibility of receiving a dance diploma in dance teaching.

Ivancica Jankovic explains an interesting paradox in **Croatia**: "The only students that receive the fundamentals of teaching practice (based on Laban's framework) are the graduates of the Ana Maletic School of Contemporary Dance in Zagreb (founded in 1954 by Ana Maletic, one of Laban's direct disciples). Though the A.M. School has in its curriculum (approved by the Ministry of Education) a Teaching Dance Course, the graduates are not certified in the field of teaching. This is understandable, the school being on a secondary level. On the other hand, with no Academy, they are the only ones actually qualified to teach! A few of the most prominent teachers from the A.M. School teach the fundamentals of Laban educational dance by means of seminars, lecture demonstrations, and workshops to kindergarten educators, primary school teachers and physical education teachers." Because of Laban's influence in Croatia, developing children's creativity should be an integral part of teaching. Ivancica notes that, unfortunately, repetition of movements in technique class and learned choreography, rather than creation of one's own choreography, may be more prevalent.⁷

Barbara Requa agrees that this is also a problem in **Jamaica**. She reports: "There are a few schools that have dance teachers but there are not enough trained teachers in educational dance methods. We have recently developed a school-leaving examination in Dance (CXC), however the Ministry has not set up satisfactory programs for delivery of the curriculum.

Although the college trains dance teachers, there are few jobs in the elementary and secondary schools that allow teachers to teach only dance.”

There are five to six dance companies of children that have annual seasons and perform in public. The standard is very high but Barbara complains that they tend to dance like adults. I believe we have a similar problem in the US, most often seen in some recitals and dance competitions. Most groups study only technique with little chance to learn choreographic principles or processes. In Jamaica, the exception to this is the Junior Department at the School of Dance, Edna Manley College, where Senior students are encouraged to choreograph.

Barbara finishes with this comment, “It is important to point out that Jamaica has a strong dance culture – much like the African culture where dance is a way of life. Children are exposed to our cultural forms – traditional and popular from an early age and grow up seeing the dances and doing them (particularly the popular forms of Reggae and dancehall). What Jamaica needs is to capture this experience and use it for educational purposes. The CXC program is designed to do this...unfortunately it is still in the growing process.”⁸

Japanese daCi members, Kumiko Mikami and Junko Nakatsuka, shared information about dance education in **Japan**. There is little experience with dance education in the schools but Japanese teachers are studying European and American models. Dance in Japanese schools is the primary responsibility of the physical educator who may have had some dance classes in college or in private studios. These teachers teach primarily folk dance and some “creative” dance. Junko writes: “I remember my high school days – in PE classes we decided a title and the music and we created dancing. We had a performance to compete with each other. The representative group of the school competed against other school groups.” There is no dance certification necessary to teach dance in the schools. Most of the dance instruction occurs in private studios and cultural facilities. The most common form of dance taught in Japan is ballet but jazz, tap, contemporary, and hip hop are also offered in the private studios. Traditional Japanese dance, such as Kabuki and Nihon, is usually studied one on one in a studio. There are dance competitions for children in Japan, as in America. Some schools offer choreography, especially in Modern dance classes.⁹ Kathleen Kampa Vilina, a daCi member teaching at Seisen International School in Japan, presents workshops in creative dance and folk dance as well as bringing teachers from America for master classes and inviting traditional Japanese teachers to share Japanese dance with her students.

In **China, Korea and Taiwan**, studio ballet is also the norm. However, there is an increasing interest in creative dance throughout Asia. My book, *Creative Dance for All Ages*, has been translated into Korean and I have had teachers from Taiwan, The Phillipines, Indonesia, South Korea, and China study creative dance teaching methods with me in Seattle. Marcia Lloyd has brought creative dance to Malaysia where her book, *Adventures in Creative Movement Activities*,¹⁰ first appeared and served as a guide for Malaysian teachers.

The situation in **Brazil** is very similar to the United States as dance educator Isabel Marques from São Paulo explained to me. Since 1997 dance has been included in the official national standards (Isabel had the privilege to write it) as part of the Art Program. However, it is not compulsory as not many teachers are in fact prepared to teach dance. There are many Physical Education grads teaching dance, as well as general Art teachers. There are many students graduating from university programs with a BA in dance but their diploma does not entitle them to teach dance in public schools, only students with a PE or Art diploma may teach dance. Dance education (teaching dance) is a separate course for those who have finished their BA in Dance.

In addition to these problems, the pay for dance teachers in Brazilian schools is very poor and most school administrators do not think there is much difference between a PE teacher teaching dance and a trained dancer teaching dance. As in the US, dance courses in higher education are very comprehensive in theory and in practice. They include history, music, anatomy, kinesiology, aesthetics, sociology, contemporary, ballet, Laban Studies, drama, modern dance, improvisation and composition, and production but no dance education or certification. Interestingly, there is no African and very little Brazilian repertory in higher education. Perhaps because these are an integral part of the culture and also taught in the studio setting.¹¹

Denmark, like most countries, has a strong tradition of classical ballet training. However, in 2000 a group of dance educators formed the association Dance in Education (DIU) which currently has approximately 250 members. For a country the size of Denmark, this is an encouraging number. According to the daCi National Representative from Denmark, Charlotte Svendler Nielsen, since this organization has formed, dance for children and young people has been expanding at all levels. I have been to Denmark on two occasions to train teachers in Creative Dance Teaching methods and I found the teachers to be very responsive. DIU receives economic support primarily from the Minister of Culture and to some extent the Minister of Education. With this support, DIU has been able to employ two full time dance consultants who plan dance projects, make political connections and arrange courses and seminars for professional dancers and classroom teachers. The membership of DIU is made up of primary school teachers, secondary school teachers, teacher training colleges, universities, and the artistic community. Current projects focus on teacher's qualifications to teach dance and strengthening existing ties to the professional community.¹²

Susanne Frederiksen, daCi member, author and dance educator in Copenhagen, sent me additional information. The School of Modern Dance, directed by Sheila de Val and part of the Danish National School of Acting, offers a one-year course in dance pedagogy. I taught a course there in Teaching Creative Dance. To enter the program you need to have a solid background in dance. Dance is not a compulsory subject in the Danish public schools, but can be taught through physical education. However, the teacher training courses in physical education offer dance courses only in connection with sport and other physical educational tools. Dance is also being taught in the big cities of Copenhagen and Århus through projects like Ung Dansescene, which Susanne conducts, and DIU. Ung Dansescene has offered classes in creative dance in the schools in Copenhagen since 1997 to the youngest students, ages 6 to 9, once a week for half a year. These classes are taught by dance educators who are professional dancers and choreographers. Also, artist in residence projects have been offered to interested schools for older students ages 10 to 14, running for about one to two weeks as a theme based teaching project. Ung Dansescene has been running the Junior Company since 1999 for young dancers 14-18 years old. Susanne feels that dance in education is growing in Denmark, but more qualified teachers are needed to continue the growth.¹³

Finland, like Denmark, has a very strong focus on dance in general and childrens' dance in particular. I have conducted three different pedagogy courses on creative dance in Finland over the past seven years. Dance and the Child International has a strong presence in Finland under the dedicated leadership of dance educators Eeva Anttila, Meri Tegelman, Satu Sihvoin, and Marketta Viitala to name a few. DaCi Finland presents workshops, courses and festivals for dance educators. Finland has a number of children's performing groups and a large population of boys in modern dance. There is excellent dance training in vocational schools

and studios for ballet, contemporary, and folk dance but like most countries there is no dance certification for teaching in public schools. The prestigious Kuopio Dance Festival, held every summer in Kuopio, offers courses for children, adults, and teachers as well as nightly performances by some of the best companies in Europe. The Full Moon Dance Festival showcases the best in Finnish Contemporary dance. Tango is another very popular dance form in Finland.

According to the National Dance Teachers' Association website,¹⁴ NDTA is a volunteer organization serving the **UK**. It is governed by a team of dance teachers, advisers, and lecturers from all phases of education. The NDTA was formed in 1988 in response to concerns arising from the Education Reform Act and the proposed national curriculum, which at that time did not mention dance. Since then the NDTA has been active promoting dance as an essential part of the curriculum.

The aim of the NDTA, which is similar to the National Dance Educators Organization in America, is to ensure that all young people in the UK have access to high quality dance education in schools. However, as in America, quality dance programs in K-12 settings are not widespread and dance is under the umbrella of Physical Education rather than the Arts. There are dance exams that may be taken at age sixteen (GCSE Dance exam) and age eighteen (A Level Dance exam), which are aimed at making dance a viable subject in the upper grades. There are strong dance programs in ballet and contemporary dance in higher education, but as in the USA, the focus is more on performance and choreography than on learning to teach children.

In **Australia**, the Australian Dance Council, known as Ausdance, is the country's professional dance advocacy organization for dancers, choreographers, directors and educators. Their mission is to be a national voice and provide leadership for dance in Australia. Ausdance provides a dance information network through services based in national, state and territory offices. Exploring their website, I saw little in relation to dance in education. I have been told that dance teachers do not necessarily have to be certified, but those with qualifications and experience are more successful at finding work. I have been contacted by a number of dance and music educators in Australia inquiring about courses on teaching creative dance for children outside of Australia, because of the lack of resources in their own country.¹⁵

Jannas Zalesky, daCi USA Chair, wrote about dance education in **New Zealand** in a daCi USA Newsletter after spending time in that country on a Fulbright Scholarship. "At Colleges of Education all students studying how to become teachers, learn to teach the arts – I do believe it isn't enough time but it is a beginning. So it is natural that the delivery of Professional Development and the creation of support materials needed for classroom teachers to incorporate dance into their teaching be handled by higher education. The Ministry of Education sets the tone with their Curriculum document, then puts out a call for the delivery of professional development in the six regions. By and large it is institutes of higher education that are contracted to deliver professional development. Each regional team is then available to all of the public schools in their region. The support materials (books & videos of classroom teachers teaching dance) are also created by institutes in higher education and are distributed countrywide. It is the hope that ALL students Pre-K to 12 receive quality, creative, hands-on dance experiences with dance making at its core."¹⁶ New Zealand has Standards and Assessments in Dance and they also have similar problems to the US. Professional dancers are given training and then they go out into schools and mentor classroom teachers who are expected to deliver dance education. What is different from the US is the level of support for the arts by the New Zealand government.

Ann Kipling-Brown, Chair-elect of daCi and professor at the University of Regina in Saskatchewan, **Canada** writes, "I can attest to the public school curriculum - certainly Saskatchewan, Ontario and British Columbia have placed dance in the Arts Education curriculum and other provinces have some dance through the Physical Education curriculum. In the public school system dance teachers must hold a teaching certification awarded through the province's department of education. In Saskatchewan dance may be taught by the classroom teacher, a specialist, or itinerant dance teacher. The Saskatchewan Department for Education mandated that dance be part of core curriculum and should be allocated fifty minutes per week for all students K - 9. Unfortunately, not all classroom teachers teach dance and there are no courses in the elementary programs that provide in-depth work in dance. Schools do not hire arts educators or dance specialists to teach in the schools. However, things are looking up - consultants are offering professional development in dance so that classroom teachers are beginning to include dance. And for the higher grades there are different possibilities - arts educators who have some experience in dance or dance specialists are being hired or invited to work in schools on specific projects. In High School some dance, mainly folk and social, may be offered through the Phys Ed curriculum or a dance specialist may be hired to offer dance."¹⁷

Having presented numerous workshops in British Columbia over the past fifteen years, I am aware of the strong interest in creative dance and dance in education in Canada. However, as in America, dance is still not a consistent part of the school curriculum.

Bobbi Westman, Executive Director of Alberta Dance Alliance, notes that "dance in this country [Canada] is driven by the commercial studio industry and competition when we are talking about dance and children." She goes on to say, "95% of children are not given creation/composition classes until they enter into college or university program. Many young choreographers just learn by trial and error and sheer talent. The government funding (as in America) seems to foster a great appreciation and access to professional dance artists especially in the disciplines of ballet and contemporary dance in this country. To this day, I know it has been a funding struggle for the best known and most toured children's companies in Canada." Bobbi finishes with a statement that I have heard echoed over and over by dance educators around the world, "It is hoped that in the future all provinces can have dance in the K-12 school systems and we can have funded and supported opportunities for youth dance in Canada."¹⁸

It appears that, in all the countries I mentioned, the biggest stumbling blocks to providing quality K-12 dance programs are the lack of teacher education, certification, and funding.

I believe it is the right of every child to have quality dance education from preschool through grade 12. During the past century, starting with Margaret H'Doubler, dance educators have written volumes on the values of dance for young people. This literature is articulate and persuasive. During the last twenty to thirty years, educators such as Paulo Freire,¹⁹ William Glasser,²⁰ and Howard Gardner²¹ introduced educational theories such as critical pedagogy, democratizing the classroom, and multiple intelligences. These theories have greatly strengthened the support for the inclusion of the arts as core subjects in schools.

During the last ten years, articles have appeared in scientific and educational journals on such topics as the rise of obesity in children; the increase in drugs prescribed, but often untested, for children with behavior and learning problems; the decrease in opportunities for unstructured play in early childhood; the detrimental amount of time young people are watching television, the escalation of violence in our youth; and the lack of empathy exhibited by young people. All of these problems can be diminished through weekly involvement in quality dance education programs.

Also in the last ten years, scientists have made great strides in understanding the biology of the brain and how we learn. This research proves that sensory-motor activities build the brain and that we learn best through a cycle of sensing, connecting, and acting. We know for certain that deep learning does not take place through the passive reception of information. We cannot teach to the test and when we do we “dumb down” and disengage our students.

National Dance Standards were written in 1994, providing an excellent guideline for teachers regarding dance content. The Opportunity to Learn Standards followed in 1995, offering valuable information concerning the conditions necessary for effective learning to take place in dance regarding curriculum and scheduling, staffing, materials and equipment, and facilities. “To Move Forward” is a document written in 2001 by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations that identifies accomplishments in a number of areas in arts education and suggests a reasonable number of *next* steps to advance student learning and move arts education forward.

The last century has provided dance educators with enough experience, theory, research, and documents to clearly demonstrate to policy makers and parents the overwhelming benefits and values that appropriate dance education offers to all children. But with only 4% of elementary schools in America receiving dance instruction by a dance specialist and 13% of secondary schools offering dance as a discrete subject,²² how *will* we make dance education for all students a reality in this century? And if dance education really can help solve so many current problems in society, why is dance not already a core subject in all schools?

One often overlooked reason may be that dancing does not require much in the way of supplies or equipment. The instrument is the body. All a teacher really needs are students. One of the reasons that 94% of public secondary schools offer music education may be that corporations that sell musical instruments, song books, band uniforms, sheet music, and music textbooks are powerful lobbyists for music education. These corporations help fund the Music Educators National Conference (MENC). With this funding the MENC has money to hire researchers, writers, and master teachers to promote music education in public schools. The National Dance Educators Association has no such corporate support. Just recently Sportime, a corporate supporter of AAHPERD, started supporting the National Dance Association Teacher of the Year program. Their support funds a few dance workshops around the country in return for promoting Sportime products. Perhaps, dance educators at all levels need to start demanding more equipment such as state of the art sound systems, rhythm instruments, dance videos for historical and cultural study, sprung floors, a variety of manipulative props, therapy balls, yoga mats, computers, digital cameras, CDs, and dance textbooks. If we had dance suppliers lobbying for dance in the schools, would we have more dance in the schools? Although this idea may seem farfetched it might work for dance as it has for music.

A second deterrent to having wide-spread dance education programs has been confusion over *who* should teach dance. Dance in higher education in America was “born” by visionary female physical educators such as Margaret H’Doublor and has primarily remained in physical education departments to this day. It is only recently that dance has fought for its place in Fine Arts Departments on university and college campuses. Renowned dance educator, Elizabeth R. Hayes, wrote about this problem in a JOPER article in 1980. “The association with physical education was both good and bad. The unfortunate result of this association was and still is that dance has been looked upon by physical education administrators as just another physical activity, such as golf or swimming, and has been treated accordingly in terms of budget, faculty increment, and curriculum development. Dance as a performing art has been of little significance to most physical education administrators.”²³

Because dance and physical education both revolve around movement, it is assumed that all physical educators can teach dance and if need be, dance educators can teach physical education. This is an erroneous assumption. Dance is an art form and PE is a sport form. One is based on aesthetics and the other on athletics. Dance has its own curricular content, as does physical education. While teachers of each subject may integrate some concepts from the other, both subjects cannot reasonably be fully covered by one teacher. The same applies to music teachers, who may be the more appropriate choice for teaching dance, as they teach another art form. However, they have a comprehensive music curriculum to present. While they might include movement in their curriculum, they certainly do not have time to teach the full spectrum of dance concepts.

So, who should teach dance in K-12? As a tool to teach other subjects, movement may be used in all classes from math to music by generalist teachers and other specialists who have had training in this area. As a discrete subject, dance should be taught by properly trained dance specialists. I do not consider professional dancers or studio teachers to automatically fall into this category. When a dancer without teaching skills works in a public school, the program receives a major setback. It may take years to convince a school to try dance again after just one bad experience. On this subject Elizabeth Hayes writes, "On the other hand, if the role of dance education is to make every teacher an artist, it may also be the responsibility of education, insofar as dance is concerned, to make performing artists into good teachers. Certainly the majority of dance performers must teach to survive. Dance artists, though they are certainly able to inspire, often lack an understanding of the psychology of working with people."²⁴ We need dance educators in K-12 who understand learning processes, child development, critical pedagogy, dance techniques, choreographic principles and processes, somatic practices, dance history, cultures, and philosophy. We need teachers who want to spend a life time learning.

A third problem is who is responsible for educating these teachers? In 1961, Beatrice Richardson, professor at Scripps College wrote, "Unfortunately the efforts of both public and private schools to offer something more real to American childhood have been hampered by lack of adequately trained teachers in the field. Progress has been slow, too, because it has necessitated a change of attitude on the part of parents. That dance can be a very vital part of growth and education for all children is still not understood by many."²⁵

These problems have continued into this century. Currently the majority of colleges and universities do not train dance specialists who have a deep understanding of dance education for young people. Many dance teachers in higher education have had little or no experience teaching children, nor are they interested. They go into higher education because they enjoy working with an older population. This is perfectly understandable and reasonable but it means that they may not be the best people to inspire elementary and secondary school dance specialists.

Another problem is that many university and college funds to expand and improve programs have disappeared. Another rationale for not providing in depth teacher training at the university level is that it is perceived that there are no jobs for teachers in K-12 schools. One of the biggest challenges in this century will be to stop the vicious cycle of not certifying dance teachers because there are no programs in the schools and having no programs in the schools because there are no certified teachers!

Until more universities and colleges are able to offer comprehensive and well- rounded dance education programs, perhaps private organizations and individual master teachers will have to take on the training. This is not impossible and the last century provided models for this

very idea. With advances in technology, distance learning will become more and more prevalent. While this currently has some disadvantages for dance training, some of the coursework could be handled via the internet.

Another problem to be solved is certification. First there needs to be a reasonable national policy for dance certification that is recognized and reciprocated by all states. Qualified dance organizations and schools, as well as universities and colleges, should be accredited to offer dance certification. There are already a number of organizations such as the Language of Dance Center, Luna Kids Dance, Dance Education Laboratory, and Creative Dance Center, just to name a very few, that are offering excellent inservice courses for dance specialists. By partnering with local universities or expanding their curriculum, these organizations could be offering certification instead of certificates.

The second part of Richardson's statement speaks about the attitude of parents. Because I have been the director of a private studio for twenty-five years, I am well aware that the students' attitudes toward dance are what keep the studio thriving. If students of any age feel safe, happy, and engaged they tell their parents they want to keep dancing. Parents want their children to be happy. If we could make sure that students in public schools loved dance so much that they told their parents they could not do without it, we would have a powerful lobby behind us. This will not happen without good teaching.

A fourth problem has been arguments over *what* should be taught. It is only in the last ten years that dance educators have had the National Dance Standards to guide them. However, this document is necessarily general and open ended. I strongly support creative and modern dance as the foundation for a K-12 program. Martie Barylick, a 30- year veteran high school dance teacher in Mamaroneck, NY articulately states the case for modern dance. "Modern dance is inclusive. It accepts all movement as fodder for art- making, including the various established modern styles, ballet and jazz techniques, folk and ethnic dance movement, movement from popular culture, and the weird thing one of your students just discovered he can do while balancing on the proscenium molding. It does not discriminate or set up hierarchies based on technical achievement, body type or willingness to wear spandex or tulle."²⁶

I also strongly advocate a conceptual approach, rather than a steps-only approach. All the literature and research on best practices in education for the past twenty years have advocated a move away from receiving knowledge and replicating ideas (or steps) as the sole method of learning.

In *The Art of Changing the Brain*, James Zull describes a learning cycle that engages the *whole* brain, providing deep and balanced learning.²⁷ First, the student has a **concrete experience** relating to input from the *sensory* cortex in the forms of touch, position, vision, hearing, taste, and smells. Next, the *back* integrative cortex of the brain is activated as the student **reflects** on this experience, making connections and meaning from sensory input. In the first two parts of the cycle the learner is passively receiving information. This relates to the part of dance class when students replicate steps, read about dance history, hear a lecture on bones and muscles, or view a video on cultural dance, for example. A transformation must take place from receiving knowledge to using knowledge in order to move to the third part of the cycle. Now, the *frontal* integrative cortex is activated as the student generates new ideas through **abstraction**. During this third part of the cycle, the student develops plans for future actions, compares and chooses options, and manipulates images and language to create new (mental) arrangements. The last part of the learning cycle takes place as the student activates the *motor* cortex in order to **actively test** the new ideas generated during abstraction.

Students may take action through writing, speaking or dancing. The cycle would begin again as the student hears, sees, or feels the teacher's response to her actions. Zull relates this cycle to the four pillars of learning: information, meaning, creation, and action. This idea ties in perfectly with the Arts Education Standards that focus on Knowing, Perceiving, Creating, and Responding.

Zull discusses the lack of balance in our educational system, in which the first half of the learning cycle, receiving knowledge, is emphasized over the second half of the cycle, using knowledge. Dance teachers who only teach steps and routines, or lecture on dance history and anatomy are asking their students to use only the back part of the brain cortex and be passive learners. But Zull also cautions educators not to focus solely on the last two parts of the learning cycle. Dance teachers who ask students to improvise, choreograph, discuss or write about dance without experience in or an understanding of technique, dance concepts, history, culture or aesthetics stress abstraction and action without information and scholarship. These students use only the front part of the brain cortex and their actions or products lack meaning or substance.

Teachers provide a balanced and in depth curriculum by including concepts (dance vocabulary, history, anatomy, etc.), technique (steps, patterns, fundamental movement, etc), improvisation or choreography, and verbal or written feedback and reflection (by students and teacher) in every dance class. Each class may focus more on one aspect than another, but rather than segregate or compartmentalize these four areas I advocate including all four parts in an age appropriate way in every class. Of course, in order to accomplish this, dance teachers of the twenty-first century have to be trained differently than those of the twentieth century.

The other important factor in learning is the role that emotions play. Zull explains: "Emotions influence our thinking more than our thinking influences emotion" (p.74). "There are two fundamental things that our brains want: to be safe and happy" (p. 49). "Feelings always affect reasoning and memory" (p.86). Zull talks about emotions being the mortar that holds everything together. In the past, dance teachers in private studios have often used fear and criticism as a way to "inspire" students. This may be another reason that we do not have dance in schools across the nation. While a few dancers may accept abusive behavior from their dance teachers as the norm, the majority of students eventually drop out of class because they do not feel safe or happy. I have encountered numerous adults who recount stories of traumatic dance experiences. If we want parents and administrators to promote dance in the schools, we need to find ways to heal these traumas; assure these adults that we will not teach their children as they were taught; and train the next generation of teachers to value the role that emotions play in learning. This includes an understanding of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Humans may first be lured to a subject through an extrinsic reward such as a trophy. But ultimately, intrinsic rewards such as receiving positive and immediate feedback, being in control of one's learning, and feeling passionate about a subject, is what creates a lifelong desire to learn.

Malcom Gladwell in *The Tipping Point* talks about what causes ideas, trends and norms to "tip" - to become popular, turn into a fad, or spread like an epidemic.²⁸ Since I read the book in 2003, I have been asking myself, "What might be the tipping point for dance education?" How can we use this information to create an epidemic in which everyone is infected with the dance bug? I believe that we might attack the problem on several fronts.

Gladwell's Law of the Few suggests that there are exceptional people that he calls connectors, mavens and salespeople that are capable of starting epidemics. We have articulate leaders in dance around the world who believe in quality dance education for all young people. There are master teachers in exemplary dance education programs in public and private

schools in the United States. Now it is time for us to do what we so often ask of our students – collaborate. We need to move beyond territorial instincts and just surviving to a place of collegiality and sharing. We must reach out to create a wide network of educators with common goals who can effect policy changes at all levels.

Another way Gladwell says that epidemics spread is through the stickiness factor. He believes, “There is a simple way to package information, that under the right circumstances, can make it irresistible” (p. 132). With all the philosophy written and research conducted over the last twenty years about the necessity and power of the arts, I think we might package arts education in a very alluring way. In fact, one of my concerns is that Arts Education K-12 *will* tip without dance, spreading through the schools in the next ten years and dance will be left behind because there will be too few qualified or certified dance educators to fill the positions.

We cannot allow this to happen. We must:

- Come to a consensus of what is the K-12 dance curriculum. Can we agree on dance vocabulary, content, style, and assessment?
- Package all the documents (standards, research, philosophy) that we have been writing for decades into one irresistible document and disseminate it to policy makers. How can we use technology and the internet to market ourselves?
- Create a strong lobby of dance merchants and parents who demand quality dance education K-12. How might we encourage the supporters of dance competitions to support dance for ALL children in public schools?
- Form partnerships between institutes of higher education, private organizations, and schools to educate and certify many, many more dance specialists who have the tools to teach brain-compatible dance classes K-12. How can advances in technology help in this pursuit?
- Collaborate by sharing research, ideas, and networks. Will dance educators around the world work together to demand that all children receive comprehensive and developmentally appropriate dance education?

I truly believe that if dance educators speak with a united voice we can change government policies. In the 21st century, the arts will be more important than ever because when the arts suffer, people suffer. William Blake said, “Degrade first the arts, if you mankind degrade.” We are at a critical point in our history. The government appears to undervalue the arts as reflected in diminishing financial support for the arts. If this continues, the dehumanizing process that Daniel Catán speaks of will accelerate.

Alternatively, through the collaborative efforts of arts educators, parents, and policy makers the arts could “tip.” Comprehensive arts education programs world wide would change the face of education and, therefore, society. I envision a world in which people feel, make connections, and creatively solve problems - a society that is engaged, enlightened, reflective, and inclusive. Dance *must* play a leading role in the 21st century.

Endnotes

- ¹ Judith A Gray and Dianne Howe, "Margaret H'Doubler: A Profile of Her Formative Years, 1898-1921, *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, Centennial issue, 1985, pp. 93-101.
- ² Jonathan Dean, Spotlight on "Floencia in the Amazons," © 2004 Seattle Opera.
- ³ Associated Press, "Inventor Preserves Self to Witness Immortality," CNN 15 February, 2005.
<http://www.cnn.com/2005/HEALTH/diet.fitness/02/15/one.mans.immortality.ap/index.html>
- ⁴ Dance and the Child International (daCi): <http://education.uregina.ca/daci/>, daCi USA: www.daciusa.com.
- ⁵ Jennifer van Papendorp, "The pathway to inclusivity, redress and value in dance education. Is this the right direction." Paper prepared for the Conference: Confluences IV "Dance in Education – Shaping Change" University of Cape Town, July 7-10, 2004. Email correspondence, 5 September, 2004.
- ⁶ Sonia Schulz, Dance and the Child International National Report, 2 July, 2004.
- ⁷ Ivancica Jankovic, email correspondence, 22 September, 2004.
- ⁸ Barbara Requa, email correspondence, 8 October, 2004.
- ⁹ Junko Nakatsuka and Kumiko Mikami, email correspondence, 5 October, 2004.
- ¹⁰ Lloyd, Marcia L, *Adventures in Creative Movement Activities: a Guide for Teaching*. Bethesda, MD: NDEO, 1990.
- ¹¹ Isabel Marques, email correspondence, 10 March, 14 March, 2005.
- ¹² Charlotte Svendler Nielsen, Dance and the Child International National Report, June, 2004.
- ¹³ Susanne Frederiksen, email correspondence, 28 February, 2005.
- ¹⁴ National Dance Teachers Association, <http://www.ndta.org.uk>, and interviews with Anna Mansbridge, February, 2005.

-
- ¹⁵ Email correspondence with Cressida Bradley, Ausdance Victoria, 20 September, 2004, <http://ausdance.org.au>.
- ¹⁶ Jannas Zalesky, "Dance Education in New Zealand," *News from daCi USA*, Fall 2001.
- ¹⁷ Ann Kipling-Brown, email correspondence, 14 September, 2004.
- ¹⁸ Bobbi Westman, email correspondence, 14 September, 2004.
- ¹⁹ Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogy for the Oppressed*, New York: Seabury, 1970.
- ²⁰ Glasser William, *Schools without Failure*, New York: Harper & Row, 1969.
- ²¹ Gardner, Howard, *Frames of Mind: Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, New York: BasicBooks, 1983.
- ²² Hanna, Judith Lynne, *Partnering Dance and Education: Intelligent Moves for Changing Times* (p.187- 188), Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1999.
- ²³ Elizabeth R. Hayes, "The Education, Training, and Development of Dance Educators in Higher Education," *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation*, October 1, 1980, p. 59, 61-62.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Beatrice E. Richardson, *Bare Feet: A Pamphlet for Parents on Children's Dance*, Claremont CA: College Press, 1961.
- ²⁶ Martie Barylick, "Three Philosophical Imperatives for an Integrated Arts Program," *Journal of Dance of Education*, Volume 4, Number 4, 2004.
- ²⁷ Zull, James, *The Art of Changing the Brain: Enriching the Practice of Teaching by Exploring the Biology of Learning*, Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2002.
- ²⁸ Gladwell, Malcom, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, New York: Back Bay Books, 2000.