

THE CHOREOGRAPHY OF THE CLASSROOM: PERFORMANCE AND EMBODIMENT
IN TEACHING

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2016

Urbana, Illinois

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ABSTRACT

The body is central to all human interaction and is literally the instrument through which teachers communicate. The topic of embodiment has increasingly been addressed in the literature on Education and more broadly in the Social Sciences, however there are few accounts of what embodiment looks like in actual teaching; how it enhances communication of the curriculum, and shapes teachers' relationships with the students. Using a multiple case study methodology, I examine the embodied teaching styles of two university professors to investigate the intrinsic complexities that arise in the practice of teaching.

The literature on corporality often characterizes the body as a text to be "read" by scholars prioritizing a static approach to embodiment focused on issues of identity. Little has been offered on the physical dimension of embodiment focusing on the sensory experience of *being* a moving feeling human being. This study offers new perspectives on the performance of teaching through a choreographic framework that emphasizes the role of the body in performance, as well as adding new insights into the relationship between the design of a course, and how it is orchestrated in the live performance space of the classroom.

Three distinctive yet interrelated themes emerged during this study: the embodied, the structural, and the relational. Each theme contributed to create the implicit curriculum of the class, and offers distinctive insights into the tacit dimension of communication that is both ubiquitous and difficult to articulate.

The first set of findings relates to the ways teachers embody and communicate the curriculum, examining the common gestures, movement patterns, pacing, and energetic dynamics used to animate their lectures. To honor embodied ways of interacting and communicating, it was essential to develop a method that could analyze movement data. Skills and techniques to study movement from dance were used to explore the everyday movements of

teachers and bring to the forefront the specific ways each communicated concepts with the body. Attention to the embodied highlighted the qualitative and sensory dimension of teaching. For instance, I was attuned to how each teacher reacted to the attitude and energy level of the students and adjusted their tone of voice, pace of the class, or entire lesson plan to engage students in learning.

The second set of findings investigates the relationship between the structural design of a course and how teachers orchestrate the planned curriculum within the classroom. A choreographic frame broadens the scope of the study to examine the aesthetic dimensions of the classroom. For instance, how each teacher chooses to vary the pace, energy, and focus of the class to communicate concepts and ideas to the students, as well interweave multiple streams of information through their embodied communication, the content of the lectures, power point and visual illustrations, etc. In this chapter, the role of the teacher as a designer of the educational experience is explored in relation to how they make the curriculum come alive in the performative space of the classroom.

The third set of findings draws explores the relational aspects of teaching and examines how each teacher conceptualized and enacted caring in the classroom. This section investigate the ever-present challenge teachers face; how to build a relationship of trust and understanding with students, while concurrently offering challenges that will encourage them to grow and flourish.

This study address issues integral to teacher education including the relationship between the planned curriculum and the way it is implemented in the classroom, as well as the relational dynamic developed between teachers and students. The performing arts provide a framework for understanding artistry in teaching highlighting the convergence of the performative, the creative

design and orchestration of curriculum, and the relational aspects of teaching to make vivid the rich sensory world of the tacit dimension and how it creates the ambience for learning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Perhaps the most helpful advice/analogy I received at the beginning of the dissertation writing process was to think of it as a marathon—a grueling race that requires sustained effort and is just as much about mental fortitude than physical stamina. There have been many people throughout this process who have run along beside me for a few miles and imparted invaluable advice, thoughts, and support. Arguably they deserve an entire chapter dedicated to their wisdom and commitment to this project, but I will trust that their voices are embodied in the dissertation itself. Yet, I am compelled to publically acknowledge in a shortened form my gratitude to a handful of the many companions that joined me on this journey.

First, I would like to thank my committee not only for their guidance, but also for emulating the curiosity and vigor that is at the heart of thoughtful research. Bob Stake commented on an early draft of the dissertation that I had a “magnificent obsession,” and I credit him for opening my eyes to the world of qualitative research. One of the good fortunes during my graduate study was taking a course in case study methodology with Professor Stake in my first semester of graduate school. The deep observation and meticulous care for words that Professor Stake instilled in his students made visible to me the artistry in research, and ignited this magnificent obsession for which I am very grateful.

Writing a dissertation can be an insular process, and many people, in an attempt to support your efforts, invite you to talk about your progress or ask you how it is going. At times it can be difficult to escape from the looming presence of a seemingly never-ending workload. I will forever be grateful to Margery Osborne for suggesting wonderful non-academic reading, joining me for movies, and reminding me of the exciting world of ideas outside of my dissertation. Our conversations and outings were a welcome reprieve from thinking about the

dissertation, but also nourished it ways that directly talking/thinking about it never could. She also listened attentively to issues I didn't know how to deal with in the dissertation and made suggestions on literature or ways of handling the complexity of developing and maintaining relationships with the teachers that were part of this study.

I am deeply grateful to Jan Erkert who has witnessed and supported my transition from a career in dance to becoming an educational researcher. Her broad view of dance and its relevance in contemporary society inspired me to find new ways of exploring the intersection of dance and education. Throughout my years at the university, Jan has offered me many opportunities to share and explore my research, while concurrently finding ways to support my study financially. She and her husband Bernt have opened up their home to me on numerous occasions and have become a home away from home. I would also like to thank their two dogs, Sugar and Spice who sat at my feet and reminded me that breaks for long walks in the park and belly rubs are an important part of the process.

And last but certainly not least, I would like to thank my adviser Liora Bresler for all the playfulness, levity, and curiosity she consistently brought to this project. In the darkest hours of wondering if I would ever finish this project, I was sustained by Liora's belief that I had something important to say. She taught me how to apply meticulous and rigorous standards to research, but more importantly to be as vigorous in following my passions and developing a rich intellectual curiosity. The opportunity to study with someone that values wisdom above all else has been an experience that will reverberate in all that I do henceforth, and I feel immense gratitude to have found a mentor in scholarship and life.

This project would not have been possible without the steadfast support of Joseph Squier who provided a rich laboratory for me to explore the art of designing curriculum and hone my

skills as a teacher. The heart of this work was born from long conversations about the mysterious nature of making art, creating experiences, and the power of embodiment. There are not words to express my appreciation for the unwavering companionship.

The richness of the two classes I observed offered a wide range of issues to explore. I am very thankful to the two teachers that agreed to be part of this study. Both were generous with their time and fully invested in the project. Beyond the study, I consider both to be friends, and I have grown immensely in my own teaching practice due to the observing their mastery.

I have been blessed with a deep bench of friends who over the course of working on this dissertation have bestowed wisdom, home cooked meals, and reminded me that laughing is essential. There are too many to list, but a few who went above and beyond and deserve mention. A big thanks to Maria Cynthia Anderson who never faltered in the ability to say just what I needed to hear, exactly when I needed to hear it, and generously dolled out “you got this girl” when I wanted to lay down and roll over; the Salon for Major Works in Progress members who shared the miseries and elation involved in getting a Ph.D.; Deborah Pfeiffer for listening, bringing sparkling pens, and encouraging me make the process easy and fun; Shannon Doyle Pope who has been my rock in stormy seas and brought immense sunshine to my life; Rebecca Walters for being a compassionate cheerleader and a never ending supply of witty retorts; Linda Lehovec for her mentorship and sharing a yoga practice that nurtured both body and soul; Michael Scoville who persuaded me to apply for graduate school and provided a model of what careful scholarship entails; Maria Lux and Tanja Hodges for listening and reading messy drafts over decadent sweets and being a constant source of delightful conversation; and Patrick Nowlan for providing a sanctuary of relaxation during the final push towards the finish line.

In closing, I would like to thank my family for having faith in me and this project especially on the days I couldn't muster it. I credit my father Charles for teaching me to dream big, and my mother Jan for showing me the delights of being firmly rooted in a world full of ideas and opportunities. I couldn't have gotten through this experience without the unconditional love and support of my sister Holly, an experienced marathoner, who was the best cheerleader a girl could ask for and sent a puppy dog calendar just when I needed it most.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The place: a dimly lit basement. The time is 2:30 p.m.

I roll on the floor slowly extending my legs and arms out and then drawing them in contracting my muscles, all the while counting out eights under my breath. I imagine if I did this sequence four more times that my core (stomach torso area) would feel warm, and my limbs slightly tingling after the reaching. I get up off the floor and reach for my notebook to quickly read what I wrote down last week, “feet sloppy; jumps—heavy landing; class was too slow—need to get them moving across the room early.” I look at the clock, realize there is much to do and go into work mode. I start with what will be done at the end of class and create a movement phrase that travels across the floor. It begins with a simple pattern of steps that has complicated rhythmic weight shifts. Then, I add in two slow steps forward—the dancers will step on their tip toe, balance, and then gently lower the heel, articulating the foot slowly into the floor. Next, I add in some small leaps that are quick, precise, and work the feet. I had anticipated ending the combination with a big leap at the end, but after working through the phrase, I am not sure that one leap will allow the students to work on landing softly, so instead I end with a slide and roll into the floor.

I don't do the movements full out in my small basement apartment, but “mark” them with my body. Marking is a term dancers use when they do the movements but with half the energy and range of motion. It is like a type of shorthand for the body that allows the dancer to work through transitions, and track the sequence without doing the movements full out. Although I am physically marking the movements, I am noting how the body feels at each juncture asking questions like, what parts of my body feel shaky, fatigued, stiff, or warm, strong, and ready to be

challenged. I am relying on years of previous experience, and the thousands of dance classes I have taken to inform my choices about what comes next.

Now that I have the ending phrase, I work backwards. Most of the material needed for the rest of the class is already there. I can use the across the floor rhythm pattern earlier in the class after doing some preparatory foot and leg exercises. I like this idea of introducing a moving phrase earlier to the class. It is the middle of the semester, and it will change things up. I quickly add an exercise that works on articulating the feet and devise a combination that is simple but can be repeated many times to make sure that the dancers jumping muscles are warm and supple. I am contemplating adding a short floor combination that uses a roll and slide at the end of the phrase, but the clock strikes 3:30 and I am off to teach the class at 4:00 p.m.

The Structural and Sensory Pedagogy of Dance

The opening vignette blends many memories of planning dance classes in the small apartment spaces I lived in for most of my professional dance career. My recollections of preparing dance classes always happen in a dark room and my vision is somewhat hazy even though this was not always the case. The hazy darkness comes from cutting off the visual senses to more deeply get into what the internal body feels like. Dance is a visual art form that demands great precision and attention to the lines of the body, but when planning a class for others, it is really about gauging the interior of the body and allowing it to guide you as to what it needs.

In a dance class, it is imperative that teachers understand the relationship between the concepts one desires to explore with the students and the exercises/combinations of movements designed to investigate these concepts. Jan Erkert (2003) in her book *Harnessing the Wind: The Art of Teaching Modern Dance* discusses the importance of defining a key principle for the class and then creating strategies “that promote understanding of the movement principles” (p. 30). For instance, Erkert describes a class focused on the principle of breath, and creating movement

combinations that accentuate its rhythmic quality in order to explore the relationship between breath and movement. In addition, the sequencing of one combination of movements into the next is of the utmost importance. The consequence of missing a phase in the development of a principle can result in more than an intellectual misunderstanding, but instead an actual physical injury. The tangibility of the human body and its limitations are at the heart of dance pedagogy; hence, a clear understanding of how to structure and sequence a class is essential.

Teachers of dance must also consider the embodied dimension of learning by taking into consideration how the body feels at any point during a class. For instance, are the muscles of the legs warm enough to sustain a deep lunge, or have the feet been articulated fully so that one can land a jump softly? Included in the embodied dimension is the connection between the mental and physical aspects of dancing. For instance, after giving a rhythmically complex pattern of footwork, a dance teacher may give a simple combination of movement, so that the students can focus more intensely on alignment and the sensory dimension of the movement. In dance training, the mental and physical are intertwined to the extent that one is rarely separated from the other; the art of dancing is a divine synthesis of sensing, moving, analyzing and refining the movement in the moment.

Although I rarely teach dance classes or choreograph anymore, the embodied and performative nature of the art form permeates my thinking on teaching, curriculum, and research. It has conditioned me to look at the relationship between the sensory and the structural, and to ask questions that probe the aesthetic and the qualitative dimensions of the classroom. Erkert (2003) stresses the necessity of creating strategies that answer a key question, “What are the steps that will lead the class there—to the other side?” (p. 31). In this study, I will look at the unfolding of a curriculum in the performative space of the classroom to investigate how teachers

designed and orchestrated curriculum in the classroom in order to get the students to the “other side.”

Objectives

My objective is three fold. First, I investigate the ways teachers embody and communicate the curriculum, looking specifically at the common gestures, movement patterns, pacing, and energetic dynamics used to animate their lectures. Integral to this exploration is the devising of an embodied methodology that seeks to address what Leder (1990) calls “the absent presence” of the body in everyday life (p.3). Using techniques from dance pedagogy to analyze and explore movement, I bring to the forefront the ways in which the body communicates information, as well as adds to the qualitative dynamic of the classroom.

Second, I examine the relationship between the structural design of the course and how teachers orchestrate the planned curriculum within the classroom. I draw on my background in the performing arts as a choreographer to investigate the aesthetic dimensions of the classroom—how each teacher chooses to vary the pace, energy, and focus of the class to communicate concepts and ideas to the students. A choreographic frame broadens the scope of the study to look at each class as a mini-performance within the grand performance of the entire semester to examine how multiple streams of information—embodied communication, lectures, power point materials, etc.—coalesce to create a learning experience. The embodied performance of a dancer is an important aspect of choreography as an art form, but it is the overall design of the performance, which includes music, lighting, costumes, and movement, that distinguishes a dancer from a choreographer. In this study, I use techniques from the study of dance to explore the teacher as a performer, as well as how their embodied expressions add to the whole choreography of the class, and how it is orchestrated.

Third, I examine the relational dynamics between the teacher and students to explore how trust is formed and caring is expressed. Unlike performance, teaching is typically more interactive; students have the opportunity to ask questions, or teacher's lead discussions as part of the learning process. Although the relational dynamic relates to the structural, aesthetic, and embodied, the teacher student relationship is unique because there is a clear delineation between a teacher's responsibilities in the overall venture of learning and the student's participation in the learning process. In this section, I will specifically probe the student teacher relationship.

Significance

This study is significant in two areas. First, there have been many discussions in the field of education on the importance of embodied teaching, but few actual accounts of what it looks like in practice. This study offers new perspectives on the performance of teaching through a choreographic framework that emphasizes the role of the body in performance, as well as adding new insights into how aesthetic qualities contribute to creating an environment for learning.

One strength of using choreography as a framework for looking at teaching is its focus on the physical experiential body *in action*. I highlight in action because much of the scholarly research on the body, corporeality, and embodiment has focused on a static, almost photographic representation of the body. The body is seen as a snapshot of identity that is both crafted by the individual and written upon by societal norms. There certainly are fluctuations as identities and cultural norms shift, but the body is looked at predominately through a photographic framework—or a static image rather than a thinking, feeling, moving body. Philosophers looking at the body make an important distinction—we both have a body and simultaneously are a body. I am interested in exploring the latter—the flesh and bones experience of a moving.

Another strength of a choreographic framework is that it accommodates more than just movement. The word choreography is used in many domains outside of dance to acknowledge multiple elements coming together. For instance, I recently heard a winter storm described as a perfectly choreographed event for massive snowfall, noting that all of the elements came together to make something unique. Choreographers certainly use movement as a medium for expression, but many other elements are at play in a dance piece, like music, lighting, costumes, etc. Looking at the teaching through the framework of choreography enhanced the role of movement in communicating, while also attending to all of the other elements that contributed to looking at teaching in a holistic sense.

In this study, I specifically explore methods to better understand movement and the ways it can be presented and translated for readers and audiences. Many of the studies done on embodiment have focused on observational methods. While deep observation is essential to qualitative research, I believe that examining movement through a physically engaged method of study honors the body as a source of knowledge with its own unique expression. Movement communicates in a different way than language, but is no less complex. Many excellent qualitative studies have been done of physical activities like boxing (Wacquant, 1995), taiko drumming (Powell, 2004), and glass blowing (O'Connor, 2007), in which the researcher participates in learning the physically embodied activity. However, participatory methods have rarely been undertaken in activities or fields that are not explicitly physical (Thomas, 2003).

In this study, I have developed a method for examining the role of the body in teaching based on the ways movement is studied in the field of modern dance. Dancers spend hours in class studying the intricacies of movement to gain a more sharply attuned body that can articulate great nuance. I used theories developed in dance for understanding the basic qualities

of movements, in combination with my own embodied analyses of each teacher's movements to better understand how the embodied qualities of each teacher communicated in the classroom. It is important to note that these methods were used to *study* the movements of teachers, not as the starting point for a dance based on my observations as might be done in arts based research.

Dance provides an interesting vantage point from which to explore embodiment in action because of its explicit concern with the body and movement. We live our lives through our bodies; yet, we rarely self-consciously bring our attention to movement unless we experience some ailment that requires one to pay attention to habitual body patterns (Leder, 1990). Any kind of training or exploration of a physical activity, like sports, offers an opportunity for one to think more specifically about the body. For instance, learning the proper angle of the arm and hand placement on a ball in order to shoot a basket, or feeling the burn of the quadriceps when doing repetitions of deep knee squats in football practice will bring awareness to one's body. However dance is unique because it is an art form that actually explores the body with such rigor and creativity that movement languages are created. In most sports, the body is explored to fulfill specific tasks important for the game, like scoring goals or defending opponents. Certainly there can be great beauty and grace in watching athletes, but a basketball player doesn't get extra points for pointing his or her toe when slam dunking the ball. In dance, how the movement performed is the focus, rather than an external goal like scoring a point. Certainly dance has goals—a dancer works to perform a flawless triple turn—but the overall goal of dance is not to win a game no matter what the movement looks like, but rather it is the movement itself that is explored as a form of expression.

Theater is another avenue for investigating the expressiveness of the human body. Actors, like dancers, train to have a better understanding and control of the body so they can

transform into characters. Additionally, actors work more extensively with the voice and facial expressions to add meaning to the text they are speaking. In many ways, acting has a closer connection to teaching because both use language and variations in the voice as a medium of communication. Yet, because dance training focuses on the body, it offers a richer vocabulary to analyze embodied communication. In addition, variations in speaking and facial expressions are embodied. Although dancers may not get specific instruction in these areas, tools that are used in the training of dancers can be applied with great success. For instance, when studying the vocal patterns of each teacher, I brought an embodied awareness to how the muscles of my throat constricted to create similar intonations in my own voice. Whereas a theatrical focus might highlight the narrative flow and content of the class, I was more interested in looking at the tacit dimension of communicating that is conveyed through the energetic ambience a teacher creates in the classroom.

Dancers spend years becoming more nuanced in their understanding and control of the experiential body, and dance teachers become experts in looking at bodies in motion to understand how alignment, energetic force, and muscular imbalances effect the efficient and artistic expression of a movement. This develops not only a highly detailed understanding of the physical body—like being able to distinguish if the weight on the foot is balanced more on the big toe side or the little toe when standing—but also an expansive language to describe the gestalt of movement. For instance, if you asked an experienced dancer to “spin” and then “turn” you would most likely see two different movements—the “spin” being uncontrolled with multiple revolutions, and a “turn” more controlled with a clear preparation and decisive ending. Or the dancer would, at least, ask you to clarify what kind of turn you wanted them to do, or if you had any further instructions for the spin. However, most likely if you were working with a

dancer, it would be most effective to show them your spin or turn, and they could then attempt to translate that movement into their own body. Although language is part of learning to dance, it is not the dominant way of communication. The majority of dance is learned through watching others (teachers, choreographers) perform the movement and then trying it in your own body. By exploring the movement patterns of classroom teachers through a moving methodology, I address embodiment through a physically engaged analysis process before attempting to translate it into written descriptions.

Using an embodied methodology highlighted the moment-to-moment interactions—the subtle shifts in tone of voice, how the teacher stands in front of the classroom, and the pace of how material is delivered. The embodied focus drew me to look at teaching in action, and using choreography as a framework for looking gave me tools for studying and analyzing the ephemeral nature of teaching. Rather than doing a detailed analysis of one class period, this study embraces what I have come to call the *all-at-onceness* of teaching and looks at how the gestures, voice, and movements of the teacher intersect with the content of each class including the day of the week, the time of the semester, and even how the weather can effect the context for learning.

Rather than isolating one aspect of teaching, such as gesture or tone of voice, I chose look at it as a performance, or an evolving work of art that spans the semester. The opportunity to observe classes for an entire semester allowed me to see the patterns and rhythms of teaching and to continually probe certain aspects while not losing sight of the holistic quality of classroom.

The Classroom Through a Choreographic Framework

Both teachers studied had their own embodied style, which communicated both specific concepts that related to what the teacher was talking about as well as more generalized qualities

that created the ambiance for learning. The vignette below highlights three different ways movement communicated in the classroom: movements used to convey a general attitude or style, and specific gestures used to reinforce a point, and common gestures used in situations with a similar context.

Julie lectures holding her coffee mug for the majority of the class. She passes it back and forth from one hand to the other as she saunters from the center of the room to the podium to change the slides. Her steps are relaxed and you can hear the scuff of her boot on the floor because she doesn't fully pick up her feet with each step. At one point she rolls up her shirtsleeves while lecturing not self-conscious about fumbling to unbutton her sleeve as she continues to lecture.

Occasionally Julie uses her hands to make specific gestures. For instance, when talking about creating a firewall so information wasn't leaked to the press, she turned her hand sideways and moved it up and down in front of her torso to denote a boundary being set. But in general, Julie's gestures are more musical—they follow the tone of her voice. When her voice dips and dives as she contemplates "this or that" her body follows and one hand becomes heavy as it flips from the wrist joint to be palm facing up and then down; the upper body follows by bending slightly to the right and then the left.

There are also common gestures that roughly accompany certain kinds of information. Julie often performs a gesture I fondly call the "shaky tree." She bends her elbows in close to the body, places her hands palms out in front of her shoulders and does a little shake of the hands like leaves quivering in the wind. This gesture is usually done to convey skepticism. For instance, she employed this gesture as she described a CEO that said he was "so sorry" [insert shaky tree gesture here] but future actions were not in line with his statement. In this particular case, Julie accentuated this action by also pulling her chin back as she twisted one lip down in an expression that signaled doubt.

A teacher's movements could create drama or excitement in the class. For instance, Alexandra often found ways to punctuate concepts with the body.

Alexandra asks the students if the market would widen or narrow depending on a particular intervention made by a company. The students stare at her blankly. Alexandra says "come on guys, this isn't rocket science." She then moves her hands out to the side palms facing one another a little bit wider than her torso and stomps her foot on the floor as her hands move in a few inches on each side, and says "the market narrows." She stomps again and brings her hands a little bit closer together as she says "narrower." She does this pattern two more times—stomp, "narrower," stomp, "narrower"—and on the fifth stomp her hands are very close together, and she says in a high-pitched tiny voice "and then it gets v-e-r-y narrow."

Alexandra used this stomping gesture twice during the entire the semester. It was notable for it's drama, as it seemed aimed at waking the students up and used a sound to punctuate her movements.

Yet other movement patterns were common and seemingly unplanned but at the same time somewhat choreographed. For example, Alexandra used the entire “stage space” at the front of the classroom and moved from one side of the room to the other throughout the class. Often, she timed the changing of a power point slide perfectly with this pattern.

Alexandra often travels a path from the podium to the projector screen to direct students' attention to particular information. She crosses her legs one in front of the other as she walks, so she can keep her body facing forward towards the class. Sometimes she lingers standing in this cross-legged pose, one hand resting on her lower back. She glides back and forth across the room and is usually standing right next to the podium in time to change the slide. The dance back and forth seems to be well integrated and graceful, yet not planned.

Looking at the classroom as a work of choreography brought movement to the forefront. While analyzing how teachers used the body in coordination with words, I became aware of the multilayered ways the body is used as a tool for communication. Movement seemed to be the subtext to the content being described, as the teachers reported not being aware of the specific gestures they used, but the body was adding to what the was being expressed nonetheless.

Why Embodiment Matters

This study merits close examination because of its approach to looking at the embodied dimensions of teaching. Languages are not just verbal/written expressions, but can take many forms, and hence can say unique things. Dewey (1934) affirms this when he writes, “Because objects of art are expressive, they are languages. Rather they are many languages” (p. 110). And this is one of the difficulties of studying embodiment—we know much more than we can say.

(Polanyi, 1966, p. 4) Ross (2004) in her essay *Instructable Body: Student Bodies from Classrooms to Prison* eloquently conveys “That the experience of knowing more than one can say is familiar to everyone, yet so too is the less often acknowledged truth that our bodies can demonstrate an understanding or confusion that anticipates and at times outstrips our capacity to verbalize.” (p. 179) The need to translate embodied realities into language is one of the key difficulties in bringing a physical, flesh and bones description of the body into scholarship. Because the body has historically been understood as subservient to the mind in the West, it has not been considered an entity worth transcribing into language.

This is evidenced in Tauber and Mester’s (2007) book *Acting Lessons for Teachers*. At the end of a chapter on bodily animation, the authors include student statements about teachers that were particularly performative. One reads as follows, “Mr. S., my geography teacher was very dramatic. He always used some interesting gyration of his body to emphasize a certain point that he wanted us to remember.” (p. 42) Often words like “dramatic” and “gyrate” are used as broad categories to describe something more nuanced. For instance, a dramatic teacher might, without warning, quickly spin around, stop abruptly facing the classroom with one finger in the air, raise his eyebrows and say, “aha!”

The body has traditionally been ignored; hence, it can be challenging to find words that describe embodied actions. Choreographers have a fluency with movement that is similar to speaking a foreign language; yet, they often translate movements into the verbal in order to direct dancers to embody the affect they are aiming for. Using a rich variety of movement words and poetic images, choreographers draw on both the body and the verbal to communicate. Not all expressions conveyed in mediums outside of written/verbal languages can easily or accurately be translated into words, and it is the experts in these mediums that have a greater ability to make

the translation. When translating a text from one language to another, it takes an individual well versed in both languages. In this study, I will use my fluency in the domain of movement to translate the embodied dimension of teaching into written language.

Focus of the Study

This study is an investigation into the everyday practice of teaching. It is grounded in examining the complexities of standing up day after day and communicating with students; for instance, how to interact, show care for, and keep sleepy undergraduates awake while meeting the learning goals identified at the beginning of the course. Because this study spans the time frame of an entire semester, it looks at the ebbs and flows and how a teacher reacts to the needs of their particular students. Although it is small in scale—focusing on two teachers—it has depth in regards to looking carefully at the embodied teaching styles of two teachers, and how they evolved and changed over the semester.

The participants were selected specifically for their contrasting styles; hence, they offer two compelling archetypes of ways to approach teaching. By illuminating their everyday experiences, each teacher offers parables that are familiar to all who endeavor to teach—how to appeal to students' interests without losing sight of the goals of the course and animate abstract ideas in the classroom. Yet, the embodied approach adds new insights into the way the body, movement, and the overall aesthetic design of a course contributes to teaching.

By using a choreographic framework that honors the ephemeral and present-ness of teaching, I became attuned to the moment-to-moment changes in how a teacher communicates with a classroom full of students. Teaching and performing are based in practice. Actors, dancers, and teachers gain a deeper understanding of artistry through regular practice. Artistry is

not a byproduct of trial and error, but of experiencing and reflecting. This study is an investigation into the daily life of teachers and how they evolved and refined their artistry over the course of a semester.

Implications to the Field of Education

This study touches on issues integral to teacher education, like the relationship between the planned curriculum and the way it is implemented in the classroom, as well as the relational dynamic developed between teachers and students. Attention to the embodied highlighted the qualitative and sensory dimension of teaching. For instance, I was attuned to how each teacher reacted to the attitude and energy level of the students and adjusted their tone of voice, pace of the class, or entire lesson plan to engage students in learning.

There has been significant work in the field of education and embodiment undertaken by scholars that have a keen understanding of the importance of the body as holistic part of learning. Ross (2004) points out,

The body has been the hidden student in American classrooms. It has been absorbing lessons we weren't even aware were being taught. Responding in ways direct and obvious and hidden and recondite, it has shown itself as a product of academia, a product few were aware was being produced...Understanding how the body learns is a critical first step in making these inadvertent lessons of America's classrooms conscious and deliberate. (p. 169)

Many of us experience the embodied excitement of new thoughts, ideas, and revelations. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (2009) writes, "To think is first of all to be caught up in a flow of thought; thinking is itself kinetic. It moves forward, backward, digressively, quickly, slowly, narrowly, suddenly, hesitantly, blindly, confusedly, penetratingly" (p. 30). In other words, thoughts are embodied, yet in traditional schooling the body has been silenced in order for the mind to be the focus of education. Embodied responses to thought, such as a student jumping up and down when they know the answer, is often seen as "bad behavior" and discouraged. Hence, the body

becomes disciplined and the embodied reflection of thought is not allowed. Ross (2004) observes, “The body informed by knowledge, the instructed body, is obedient, disciplined, quiet and still. The body of knowledge that fills it is invisible” (p.172).

Yet in a strange reversal, teachers are allowed to embody their knowledge in the classroom. Ross (2004) points out, “In most classrooms bodily movement happens when sanctioned by the teacher. She is generally the one who stands and performs ‘thinking’ and its expression by writing on the chalkboard, talking and moving around the room” (p. 173). One might ask the question, how do teachers come to understand the embodied role of thinking, if it was discouraged or unattended to for the majority of their learning process? Do they intentionally use their bodies to emphasize the performative nature of teaching? If so, have they cultivated a style throughout their teaching practice, or are they doing what comes naturally? These, and many more questions influence the study.

Acknowledging an Embodied Lineage

In closing, it is important to acknowledge that this work comes from a lineage of thinkers, movers, and creators that have influenced my body of knowledge both intellectually and physically. Many of the thinkers will be acknowledged in the text and reference pages of this paper because their contributions have been in the form of writing. However, there are many whose influence and knowledge is not quotable in text because it is shared and expressed through movement. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge three individuals that have contributed greatly to my own body of knowledge. First, Candi Baker, a dance educator who helped me understand the language of space, time, energy, and shape as the foundations for seeing the dance in everyday life and giving me the opportunity to use this framework to teach people of all ages the joy of expressing themselves through movement. Second, Susan Warden

who taught me the art of choreography, and how to meticulously understand the nuance of even the smallest gesture. And third, Jan Erkert a dancer/choreographer/teaching artist who showed me her bridge between artistry and teaching and mentored me to build my own. These embodied experiences are the foundation of my questions, research, and the way I see the world.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

As someone who has spent most of my professional career encountering the dichotomy between the mind/body divide in our culture, I find it necessary to chart its course and understand its history. Since entering academia, I have met many scholars from various fields that look at me with a puzzled face when I tell them that I “study dance.” I often get the response, “you can get an advanced degree in that?” Hence, I feel it necessary to set the stage, so to speak, for the academic context within which my work is situated. Much of my early journey in becoming an academic has been trying to understand why the mind/body divide is so contentious when in my own field of study the connections between thinking and moving, body and mind, are fluid and interconnected.

The review that follows will go from broad to narrow looking first at the body in social science scholarship and then more specifically to the body in education. I feel it is important to give such an expansive view because I see this study as having ramifications beyond the field of education. The body literally rubs up against everything we know and understand; yet, this is often dulled by the insistent pitter-patter of thought that spirals through our consciousness. With that, I invite you to take a minute to close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, listen to the waves of air as they expand your chest and experience that moment of silence right after the air rushes from your lungs and the next breath begins.

The Body: Everywhere and Nowhere

The body is foundational to all interactions; yet, it has had an absent presence in Western thought and scholarship. Leder (1990) says, “While in one sense the body is the most abiding and inescapable presence in our lives, it also essentially characterized by its absence” (p. 1). How

does one go about reviewing a topic like the body that is both everywhere and nowhere? Like the vapor of breath that is only visible on cold days, one must create the conditions for seeing the body in everything that one reads and find it between the lines of the text. To use a metaphor, the body is blank paper, or rather the material that we inscribe our experience upon, and the closer the words ring to the actual true lived experiences, the closer one can get to seeing the blank spaces in between the text.

O'Loughlin (2006) notes two distinctions in regards to embodiment—that we both *have* a body while also concurrently *are* a body. She concludes that, “At present the idea that I have (am the owner of) a certain kind of body seems to have assumed a peculiar prominence in contemporary social life” (O'Loughlin, 2006, p. 1). This idea of “owning” a body in contemporary culture has generated a collection of scholarship focused on representation. A common analogy used is to equate the body with text. The body is described as a *blank slate*, and culture *inscribes* itself on the body, which can then be *read* by scholars. Thus, the body has been identified as a discursive space—to be talked about—rather than an experiential space. I am interested in looking at the empty spaces between the words to illuminate the flesh and bones experience of embodiment.

Much of the research done thus far on embodiment has been focused on what John Wagner (1993) characterizes as a *blank spot* in social theories. He describes, “Materials relevant to questions already posed can be seen as filling in the blank spots in emergent social theories and conceptions of knowledge” (Wagner, 1993, p. 16). Chris Shilling (2007) in his introduction to the anthology *Embodying Sociology: Retrospect, Progress and Prospects* identifies several factors that have contributed to the rise in studies on the body in the social sciences—many of which are rooted in the idea of the body as a discursive space. He notes that feminists have

opened doors to looking at the representation of gender; technology has probed scholars to consider how the body can be altered through plastic surgery and genetic therapy; the rise of consumerism has made evident the centrality of controlling ones individual appearance; and scholars in varying fields use embodiment as a conceptual resource that can assist them in advancing their particular subject. In other words, the body has been seen as important to answering or further conceptualizing concepts within a field of study.

This study falls within the realm of what Wagner (1993) describes as a *blind spot*, or “Materials that provoke scientist to ask new questions illuminate blind spots, areas in which existing theories, methods and perceptions actually keep us from seeing phenomena as clearly as we might” (Wagner, 1993, p. 16). Scholars that work within a broad range of research that falls under embodiment have conceded that a primarily discursive and objective approach has often failed to acknowledge the physical presence of the body in everyday life. Shilling (2007) is concerned that “This has the effect of making the body recede and slide from view, while undergoing a series of metamorphoses that render it unrecognizable from one incarnation to the next” (p.10). Or as Williams and Bendelow (1998) point out “as a consequence of these very developments, the body is both everywhere and nowhere” (p. 1).

The majority of the research done thus far has addressed the blank spot in the scholarship on the body, but few have addressed what new methods may need to be developed to address a physical understanding of embodiment. The research *about* the body fills a notable blank spot in Western scholarship, yet, many have begun to question where is the experiential body, and more importantly, how can we study it.

In this literature review, I will begin by discussing notable research that has been done on the body that is largely discursive and objective in its scope. This will set the stage to question

what current theories and methods have obscured in regards to looking at an experiential understanding of embodiment. Next, I will discuss theories and concepts like tacit learning and the performance of teaching that help illuminate the experiential realm of embodiment. In closing, I will discuss the similarities between choreography and teaching, and how a choreographic lens brings the bodily dimension of teaching to the forefront.

Inscribing the Body

Descartes, the father of modern philosophy, declared “I think therefore I am” and this credo has done much to shape Western views about the mind and body. One needs only to conjure an image of a classroom to see rows of students sitting quietly and *thinking* to see the repercussions of a hierarchical stance between mind and body. Gilbert Ryle (1949) characterized Descartes view as one in which the mind is the central control unit and the body responds to these commands. Although few would fully agree with Descartes’ view—we now understand the dialogical relationship between the body, mind, and environment—the traces of this view are at the very core of a Western conception of the body and its role in thinking and learning.

In the late 1970’s scholars in the social sciences began to question the absence of the body and started a new subfield of study broadly concerned with understanding the role of the body in human interaction. Scholars looked to challenge Descartes’ credo and find new theories and ways of understanding the body as an integral part of social life. This interest in the body is sometimes referred to as the *corporal turn* in scholarship largely because it spanned many different academic disciplines like sociology, psychology, and anthropology and had a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary character. The corporal turn in scholarship continued to flourish reaching its zenith in the 1990’s and early 2000’s (Farnell, 2012; Thomas, 2003; Shilling 2007).

The lack of explicit attention to the body historically has spawned a diverse set of questions, perspectives, and orientations. For instance, feminists have looked at the gender binary and its relationship to the mind/body split, sociologists have investigated the representational qualities of the body in relation to culture, and anthropologists have explored the phenomenological or sensory dimensions of ethnographic research. The field of embodiment is also multidisciplinary; thus, scholars have incorporated ideas from neuroscience, physiology, philosophy, psychology, and many other disciplines to establish a basis for their own explorations.

Research in education on the body is similarly multidisciplinary. A notable addition to the scholarship on the body in education is Bresler's (2004a) book *Knowing Bodies Moving Minds: Towards Embodied Teaching and Learning*. The book is divided into two sections—the first is a series of essays that deal with theoretical issues in regards to the body, and the second empirical studies focused on the embodied dimension of teaching and learning. This diverse and insightful collection of essays includes scholars with many different perspectives from early childhood education, to music, dance, visual arts, and philosophy to name a few. These essays have informed my thinking greatly, but also revealed that few have studied the actual embodied performance of teaching.

The body is present in all learning, knowing, and experience; yet an experiential account of the body in education has been absent. O'Loughlin (2006) writes,

Although discursive analyses of large-scale social and institutional power upon developing individuals have added an important dimension to our understanding of the functioning of disciplinary techniques on school populations, nonetheless such discussions fail to do justice to the subtlety and complexity of the embodied activity that constitutes learning episodes which we all undergo on a daily basis. (p. 62)

O'Loughlin (2006) suggests that many educational theorists have been uncomfortable with the body due to its brute force, and see it as an embarrassing disruption to thinking (pp. 16-7). This is part of a long-standing belief that the body must be quieted so that the mind can learn (p. 62). Hence, the body does have a role in education; students have been trained to sit quietly, raise their hands to get attention, walk in single file lines down the hallway, and keep one's hands to oneself. O'Loughlin locates the body in the implicit curriculum and believes the common corporal lessons of schooling have been enacted without question.

The body as a source of knowledge was recognized in Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences under the domain of kinesthetic knowledge. He argues that kinesthetic knowledge is present in students that can perform great physical feats in sports, dance, or other corporeal domains. Donald Blumenfeld-Jones (2012) in his essay *Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence and Dance Education: Critique, Revision, and Potentials for the Democratic Idea* questions if limiting bodily or kinesthetic knowledge to exemplar performances inhibits a broader understanding of embodiment that infuses all experience, not just explicitly physical domains. He draws on his experience as a professional dancer to propose a more expansive definition of kinesthetic knowledge that goes beyond highlighting great physical feats. For instance, he suggests that, "If dance were defined as paying attention to one's motion, then no matter what motion is being done, by paying attention to it one is dancing" (Blumenfeld-Jones, 2012, p. 176). This kind of broad definition of dance as "paying attention to one's movement" could mean that everyday movements or interactions, such as walking down the hallway and gesturing while speaking, could be considered an act of kinesthetic knowledge. He believes that expanding the definition of kinesthetic knowledge to include movement awareness would promote the process

of self-actualization through movement rather than emphasizing that the end goal of kinesthetic knowledge is becoming an exceptional athlete or choreographer.

Blumenfeld-Jones (2012) also points out that Gardner's understanding of kinesthetic knowledge is one of an outsider looking in and uses his experience as a dancer/choreographer to question Gardner's categorization of kinesthetic intelligence. For instance, he questions if Martha Graham, the great twentieth century modern dance choreographer, is correctly identified as being an exemplar in kinesthetic intelligence. He suggests that Graham's spatial awareness—or ability to create pattern, shape, and spatial designs on the stage—might be more integral to choreography than the kinesthetic. It is true that choreographers use their bodies to create movement, but the art of choreography is much more than devising movement. This is the kind of nuance one can get from including the knowledge of performers and practitioners of embodied knowledge, or insiders of a specific field, into scholarship.

In the next section, I will focus on what methods have been used to study the embodied dimension of experience and some of the challenges that come from using language centric ways of translating movement into words.

A Body of Knowledge

Polanyi's (1966) book begins with "I shall reconsider human knowledge by starting from the fact that *we can know more than we can tell*" (p. 4, italics original). Polanyi refers to this as the tacit dimension and ascribes its invisibility to existing between two realms, the interior experience and its actions on the outside world. Polanyi (1966) writes,

Our own body is the only thing in the world which we normally never experience as an object, but experience always in terms of the world to which we are attending from our body. It is by making this intelligent use of our body that we feel it to be our body, and not a thing outside. (p. 16)

The embodied experience is one that lives somewhere between our internal visceral sensations and the actions the body enacts on the outside world. This internal world of embodiment is a sensory world and its complexity often challenges the linear and categorical nature of language.

In disciplines where the tacit dimension of knowing is predominant, it can be difficult to articulate how one understands a concept. Often, knowing is embodied or felt and expressed through action rather than articulated through words. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (2012) makes this point when she states “Kinesthesia is not like anything. Experientially, it is what it is: a qualitatively felt kinetic dynamic” (p. 191). One of the difficulties that researchers encounter when studying embodied knowledge is that it is ubiquitous to the practitioner; they know when something “feels right” but often cannot verbalize how they know it.

Helen Thomas (2003) describes the ubiquitous nature of the tacit dimension in her study of college dancers engaged in the reconstruction of *Water Study*—a dance choreographed by Doris Humphrey in 1922. She notes that in the first few rehearsals, the dancers had a difficult time acclimating to a new style of dancing that differed from their more contemporary training, but after a few more sessions the dancers began to get a feel for the rhythm and weight of the movement. She describes,

When this group was asked how they now knew they had incorporated the required movement into their bodies, they indicated that they did not really know how they knew, or perhaps could not bring it into verbal language. They implied that it was a kind of bodily sensibility, similar to the notion of ‘bodily intelligence’... (Thomas, 2003, p. 119)

Language can sometimes pose a limitation to understanding embodiment. In her book *Apollo’s Angels*, former dancer and historian Jennifer Homans (2010) describes the differences in styles of ballet “were not merely aesthetic: they *felt* different” (p. xviii, italics original). Her impetus for writing a comprehensive book on ballet history came from her questions about why

taking a ballet class from a teacher steeped in the French ballet tradition felt so different than a Russian teacher. Her book is an attempt to excavate the historical and geographic factors that influenced the different styles of ballet as they developed throughout Europe and later around the world. Understanding the embodied and sensory differences of each ballet style was integral to her investigation. In the process of writing her book on ballet history, Homans (2010) “went back to the studio and tried to perform what we know of the dances—I did the steps myself and watched them performed by others in an attempt to analyze and understand what dancers thought they were doing and why” (p. xxiv). It is not that embodied experiences cannot be *described* by language, but it is important to understand that description is not *translation*; or rather, the experience of embodiment lives outside the realm of language. Homans (2010) captures this sentiment beautifully when she describes ballet “as an art of memory, not history....Thus ballet repertory is not recorded in books or libraries: it is held instead in the bodies of dancers” (p. xix).

This raises an important question that Shilling (2007) and Williams and Bendelow (1998) alluded to earlier: How can we connect with a knowledge that lives within the sensory dimensions of the body?

Sociologist Nick Crossley (2007) proposes that ethnographic studies focused on physical disciplines like martial arts, sports, and dance would provide insight into the experience of being embodied. He suggests that if we want to understand embodiment, perhaps our best method for doing so is to observe the learning process. He uses the example of observing a Muay Tai (Thai boxing) class to describe the merits of this approach. He points out, “Because a student doesn’t always ‘get it’ the teacher is forced to find ways to make ‘it’ more explicit. They are forced to be more reflexive. And researchers therefore have a greater chance of ‘getting it’ too” (Crossly

2007, p. 88). Crossly believes that embodied learning environments like the martial arts, sports, and dance provide a window into how bodily knowledge is gained through practice.

Other researchers have taken a participatory approach to understanding the embodied dimensions of particularly physical domains such as boxing and drumming. For instance, Loic J.D. Wacquant's (1995) became an apprentice boxer and eventually gained the skills to spar with professional fighters while studying boxers on the South Side of Chicago. Erin O'Connor (2007) offers a detailed account of learning how to blow glass and struggling to become proficient in the craft. He highlights the challenges of understanding the practice of blowing glass both corporally and cognitively, as well as the importance of apprenticeship in embodied forms of learning. A third example is Kimberly Powell's (2006) study of Taiko drumming. Initially, Powell intended on basing her study on observations of the drummers, but they insisted that she participate in the physical experience of drumming. She says, "In effect, they required virtuosity in the sense of deepening my knowledge and appreciation of the skill and techniques involved in Taiko" (Powell, 2006, p. 41). In all of these studies, the researchers embarked on learning from what Powell describes as the "inside-out." Not unlike Homans (2010), the researchers called upon their own embodied experiences as part of the study.

Polanyi (1966) introduces two concepts that are important in understanding embodied learning activities—dwelling and interiorization (p. 17). Dwelling is the act of being present to one's physical action. For instance, during a dance class a teacher might dwell or attend to how they are doing a sequence of movements. Students who are observing dwell with the teacher but from an outside perspective; they have yet to try the movement, but as they watch they are sensorially connecting to what they are observing. Interiorization is the process of the student going from an *observational* dwelling into their own understanding that results in *experiential*

dwelling. Homans (2010) uses a quote from ballerina Natalia Makarova to illustrate this process of interiorization. Markarova described the process of interiorization as, “dancers are trained...to ‘eat’ dances—to ingest them and make them part of who they are.” (Homans, 2010, p. xix) Knowledge is gained through this process of observing, mimicking the dwelling of an expert, and eventually interiorizing the action into one’s own embodied understanding.

Embodied learning environments, like the martial arts, sports, and dance, provide a window into the realm of embodied knowledge. Studies focused on physical disciplines, like the ones mentioned above, add an important element to the literature on embodiment because they explore ways of knowing that are expressed through physical action. Yet, Helen Thomas (2003) points out that, “Close analysis of visceral, kinesthetic experiences of dancing, from performers’ and viewers’ perspectives, however, has seldom been undertaken outside the confines of dance scholarship.” (p. 93) Despite the explosion of interest in the body, few researchers have chosen to study physically embodied fields.

Studies of embodied learning spaces would add greatly to the blank spot in the literature on embodiment, but it doesn’t necessarily address the blind spot of developing new methods or ways of understanding the experience of being embodied. To study inherently physical domains—like sports, dance, or marital arts especially through participating in an embodied practice—would expand embodied understandings, but it still limits the study of the body within the binary of a mind/body approach. Not unlike Gardner’s characterization of kinesthetic knowledge, an approach that seeks to understand the body only within the confines of explicitly physical activities does not add to the nuance and importance of the body in general. In other words, the body remains absent in the mundane aspects of everyday life.

Polanyi's (1966) points out that even when learning more intellectual activities, such as chess, players learn through rehearsing the games of masters in order to get a *feel* for the way experts think. We cannot visually see the inner workings of the mind; therefore, learners must find a way to interiorize or dwell in the master's knowledge. Polanyi (1966) suggests, "It brings home to us that it is not by looking at things, but by dwelling in them, that we understand their joint meaning" (p. 18).

Polanyi's (1966) theory of the tacit dimension is important because it is often not attended to in the learning process and has far reaching implications on education. He believes that "...tacit thought forms an indispensable part of all knowledge" and fears that "...the ideal of eliminating all personal elements of knowledge would, in effect aim at the destruction of all knowledge" (p. 20). The tacit dimension of knowing is part of the air we breathe. We are always in a state of perceiving and taking in information that gets incorporated into our understanding of the world. In other words, we learn much of what we know through observing those who are more knowledgeable than ourselves.

In school, students learn not only the content provided in class, but also interiorize the attitude, thought process, and style of the teacher. O'Loughlin (2006) registers concern that if the embodied or tacit dimension of learning is not addressed then we run the risk of instilling actions and reactions to others unconsciously. She writes,

These values and categories also encompass activities undertaken to form corporeal habits but end up being much more than corporeal habits. Since their entry into the individual is not by means of the presentation of ideas and concepts, but instead by means of direct bodily intervention, they in fact bypass consciousness, becoming ingrained as basic orientations towards the world. A cognitive paradigm unfortunately denies the body's active intentional capacities. (O'Loughlin, 2006, p. 69)

This begs the question, what are students gleaned from their teacher's embodied attitudes, gestures, and the ways in which they communicate ideas in the classroom? Are teachers encouraged to dwell in the process of teaching and be aware of how they perform and embody learning? And finally, how can one begin to understand and study the tacit dimension of teaching—what we know but cannot tell?

Artistry in Teaching

Elliot Eisner (1979) makes an important distinction between curriculum and teaching.

He writes,

In the simplest terms—too simple to be sure—curriculum is the content that is taught and teaching is how that content is taught. This simple difference is important because all curriculum planning, insofar as it precedes its actual use in the classroom, requires a transformation of a set of plans or materials into a course of action. This transformation is what we call teaching. (p. 163)

Although there is a distinction between what he later terms the “intended curriculum or the curriculum in vitro” and the “actual activities employed in the classroom” or the “curriculum in vivo,” the lines between the two are blurred, meaning the content of the class and the act of teaching are intertwined (Eisner, 2002, 149). This is even more visible in college level teaching. Whereas teachers in a K-12 public school environment are sometimes given a detailed curriculum to use in the class or have specific learning standards and testing requirements to meet, college teachers are typically responsible for the design of curriculum, as well as transforming those plans into learning experiences. Although Eisner makes a distinction between curriculum and teaching, he thinks they are enmeshed. He writes,

How one teaches something is constituent with what is taught. Method or approach infuses and modifies the content that is being provided. Thus, teaching becomes a part of curricular process, and curricular processes, including their content, become part of teaching; you can't teach nothing to someone. (Eisner, 2002, p. 150, italics original)

In this study, I am particularly interested in the relationship between the *what* and the *how*, focusing primarily on how curriculum is translated into the performative realm of the classroom space through the way a teacher embodies the curriculum. Yet, as Eisner points out, the design of a class and how the materials are orchestrated are interrelated, and it is the relationship between the two that is central to understanding the artistry of teaching.

Related to the above distinction between the *what* and the *how* of teaching, are three levels of curriculum in the classroom: the explicit, implicit, and null curriculum. (Eisner, 2002, pp. 158-9) The explicit describes the *what* or the materials and intended learning outcomes; the implicit includes the “classroom ambiance, school norms, modes of assessment” and these operate on the tacit level; and the null curriculum encompasses what is not being taught or is absent from the educational experience (p. 158). This study looks primarily at the implicit curriculum, especially the embodied dimensions of communication in teaching illuminating what O’Loughlin (2006) terms as “the body’s active intentional capacities” (p. 69). To focus on the implicit curriculum, I chose to look at the classroom as work of choreography because it could both highlight the embodied aspects of teaching—how a teacher moves and uses the body to communicate—as well as how the design and sequencing of each individual class contributed to the ambiance of the classroom.

The arts and teaching share many things in common. Not unlike a director that aims to transform a script into a staged production with actors, sets, and lights, a teacher must orchestrate a curriculum in the time and space allotted for the class. Eisner (2002) believes, “One of the marks of professionalism in teaching is precisely being able to make the adjustments or to create the improvisations that will render the materials effective,” and it is this ability—to be sensitive to the unique dynamics of each classroom—that marks excellent teachers as artists (p. 149).

Eisner (2002) has a chapter titled *What Education Can Learn From the Arts* where he details how the qualitative sensitivities that artists cultivate could apply to the field of education. Three of his suggestions relate directly to this study.

First, he reiterates that the relationship between form and content matters. He writes, “Another lesson that education can learn from the arts is that the way something is formed matters” (Eisner, 2002, p. 197). In the arts, the aesthetic and qualitative are tools to imbue meaning and relevance to the content or subject one is exploring. For instance, the way a dancer circles the shoulder could be read as a coy gesture to tease the audience, or a shrug of indifference. The form, or how something is presented, is relevant to how one shapes the educational experience of students. For instance, the teacher whispering that today’s lecture is on “insider trading” inserts an element of mystery and perhaps notes it is a taboo subject. The form of teaching relates directly to how teachers communicate and imbue the materials of the class with meaning.

Second, Eisner (2002) points out that the design or structure of a class matters—specifically to relationships between the components of the class. He writes, “In the course of teaching, matters of pacing, timing, tone, direction, the need for exemplification are components whose relationships need to be taken into account” (p. 202). This relates more specifically to the structural aspects of choreography. Although there is a narrative thread in teaching that is necessary to convey the curriculum and content of the class, a choreographic frame allowed me to look more intensely at the energetic composition of the class—the pace, tone, and general vibrancy of the class. As Eisner points out, the relationship between the content of the class and the way it is performed by the teacher is interrelated. Looking at the design of the class with a choreographic framework allowed me to analyze how the class unfolded in real time. In other

words, the choreographic framework was helpful for looking at the ephemeral nature of the teacher's daily performance in front of the classroom, especially the relationship between the design of each class and how the voice, gesture, movements and dynamic energetic range brought the curriculum to life.

Another value education could cultivate from the arts is the importance of relationships, especially being attuned to the qualitative dimensions and visceral nature of teaching. Eisner (2002) writes, "Judgment depends on feel, and feel depends on a kind of somatic knowledge.... The body is engaged, the source of information is visceral, the sensitivities are employed to secure experience that makes it possible to render a judgment and act upon it" (p. 201). Eisner points to the way artists attune to the relationships between parts, and they do so not through a strictly analytic engagement of ideas, but with the visceral and somatic. Those in the performing arts know that every performance is different because the audience is different. The weather can change the feel of a performance, as well as the general mood and disposition of the director on a particular day. Actors, dancers, and musicians actively cultivate an embodied awareness to help them make judgments of how to react to qualitative stimulus with great sensitivity. One of the characteristics of artistic teachers is their ability to react to and improvise on their class plans in order to meet the needs of the students—whether that be changing the agenda for the day because students are not understanding fundamental concepts needed to move forward, or choosing to stand motionless at the front of the classroom in order to quiet students rather than shouting to get their attention.

Eisner's background in the arts is focused on the visual arts. Although his descriptions of what education can learn from the arts applies generally, a more pointed view of the relationship

between the performing arts and teaching is offered by Seymour Sarason (1999) in his book *Teaching as a Performance Art*.

Sarason, like Eisner, identifies many similarities between teaching and the performing arts and believes that education can learn much from the performing arts. Two themes are particularly relevant to this study. First, he points out that performers are encouraged to evolve their artistry through critique and self-reflection. He identifies two motivations built into the culture of the performing arts. First, performing artists do not want to be one-dimensional; thus, they engage in consistent training and coaching aimed at becoming more diverse in the dynamics and range of their performance. The second motivation is related to the first. In the performing arts, diversity and the ability to play different roles is the mark of a good performer. Actors, dancers, and musicians are expected to and often thrive on the challenge of learning new roles, choreography, and scores because each requires the performer to expand their craft. Both of these themes relate to craft and the necessity for artists to be constantly practicing and training to become better performers with more range.

This relates to an important structural difference between the cultural of the performing arts and education. Within the performing arts, it is expected for artists to continue to change and grow through a practical engagement with their craft rather than a theoretical one. For instance, professional dancers attend dance class daily to refine and explore their technique under the watchful eye of a teacher who during the practice will make suggestions, critique, and most importantly offer an outside eye to give the performer perspective on their progress over time. Additionally, performing artists hone their craft through taking on different roles, and learning from directors who are skilled in both seeing the whole of the production, but also coaching each individual performer on how to become part of the whole.

In comparison, Sarason (1999) describes the role of a teacher as being the “lonely ruler” (p. 63). Teachers are largely alone in the classroom and left to their own devices on how to change and improve practice. When teachers are observed, it is to be evaluated by someone higher up, like the principal, not as means to offer supportive critique aimed at improving practice. New ideas and changes in education usually come from above in the form of new curriculum or “best practices” that are imposed on teachers. Although many teachers are encouraged and required to take classes in professional development, or attend in-service workshops, these avenues of cultivating craft are done in isolation from the practice of teaching.

An area that has been underexplored in the literature on the relationship between performance and teaching is looking at how tools and techniques from the performing arts might influence the practice of teaching. With some exceptions, few scholars in the field of performance and teaching have attended rehearsals or trained in the performing arts. In Sarason’s (1999) work, the parallels and differences discussed are informed by an outsider’s perspective of looking into the performing arts rather than having an embodied understanding of what it is like to be a performing artist. Eisner (1979 & 2002) speaks to the visceral and somatic nature of art making, but few have explored how to cultivate that awareness outside of artistic training. What seems to be missing from the discussion is an insider’s view of the embodied, visceral, and performative nature of teaching. Looking at the classroom as a work of performance art through the eyes of a trained performer has the potential to reveal the relationship between the practice or craft of teaching and how that transforms into artistry.

The Choreographic Frame and the Three Levels of Looking at the Classroom

The classroom is the stage in which the teacher performs their work of art. Some may stand at the podium reading from lecture notes, while others move around, gesture to power

points, and call on students. Although there are many ways to bring the materials discussed in class to life, the literature in education has few explorations on how teachers can transform curriculum into the performative dimension where space and time are the mediums of creation.

In this study, I will look at how teachers use space and time on three levels. First, I want to look at the classroom as a performance space. I seek to illuminate each teacher's performative style by creating a thick description of the movements, gestures, and energies that they utilize when teaching. Second, I will look at the dynamic variations and embodied strategies used by teachers to set the tone for each class. This frame will be helpful in understanding the relationship between the teachers actions and how they relate to the concepts they are discussing in class, as well as interactions with students. The third level is to look both at individual classes and how those relate to the entire semester to track the dynamic changes of energy over the course of the semester, as well as the design of the curriculum in relation to how it is performed.

My hope is that looking at classrooms through a choreographic lens will enhance the embodied elements of teaching, such as how teachers move through the classroom space, play with pacing and energetic tone, as well as use gestures and body movements to communicate. On a larger scale, I will look at the entire semester as work of art and examine how each teacher creates a sense of a consummation through the design of the curriculum. In a strange twist of fate, it will be my job as the researcher to then translate the performative world of time and space back into the logic of pages and words, but using the rich vocabulary and insights that a choreographic framework potentially provides.

In Closing

In my previous career, I was both a dancer—an artist that embodies and performs materials created by a choreographer—and a choreographer that weaves multiple elements

together to design an experience for an audience. As a choreographer, my goal was to create viscerally dynamic dances that generated an ambience for the audience, and as a dancer to embody qualities of movement that clearly communicate. This study will challenge me to attune to the embodied dimension of teaching and to observe with both the analytic mind of a researcher, as well as with an astute body informed by years of practice.

In many ways, this study attempts to make the intangible, visible by looking at how teachers create an ambience for learning. One of the challenges of this study is articulating the embodied world of feelings into language. The invisible or the blind spot in research on the body requires new methods or ways of looking at and communicating the embodied dimension. In the coming chapters I will discuss the development of a method for investigating the embodied dimensions of teaching, and how using a choreographic framework not only highlighted the embodied but also the tacit interactions in the classroom.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Preface: Ways of Seeing

We see the world from our unique vantage points. One's subjectivity is difficult to detach from qualitative observation. This aspect of qualitative work was brought to the forefront after reviewing field notes with a fellow classmate in a qualitative methodology class. We had both attended a music festival at the local performing arts center. My notes were filled with how people moved through the space—how close they stood to one another, their body postures, and the movements the musicians enacted while playing their instruments. Her notes were filled with how people interacted, conversations she overheard, as well as exchanges she had with her partner and other people in the audience. Her background is in theater and mine dance. As we continued to share our ideas, it became clear to me how my background as a choreographer and dancer influenced not only *what* I saw but also the *quality* or the *how* with which I looked.

As the class continued to share notes and ideas, I realized that my field notes were different than my fellow classmates. Whereas many of my peers focused on interactions between the audience and the musical performances, I was looking at the event as a choreographer—the crowd was an ever shifting landscape of bodies in motion, people responding to the music through postures, movement, or an absence of movement, and the overall event as a series of activities happening simultaneously, some choreographed and others improvisatory. I failed to see some notable things my classmates wrote about, like what the musicians said to the audience, as well as the gender and racial dynamics at the event. It also didn't occur to me to interview or talk to audience members, nor to attend the concert with a companion to process the event with. I went alone and spoke to few people because there was so

much to observe within the realm of the embodied interactions and the fluidity of movement as the crowd shifted during the event. By looking at the event through a choreographic lens, I focused on the tacit dimension of the event—how people embodied and navigated the music festival and physically responded to the music, one another, and the shared space of the festival lobby.

In this chapter, I will discuss the methods used to study the embodied dimensions of teaching. I will begin with a discussion of why I chose a case study methodology and the scope of the project. Next, I will discuss research questions and the data collection methods used to address each question. In the following section, I will describe my findings from the pilot study and how those have informed the research design and the selection of the two participants. Then, I will discuss my strategy for data analysis, and the themes that emerged during the study. The last section will be focused on the ethical issues as they pertain to the project, and the criteria I used to assess my interpretations throughout the study.

Why a Case Study

In this study, I was most interested in investigating the day-to-day life of teachers and how the body is used as a tool for communication in the classroom. This prompted me to ask, how does one study the physically embodied dimension of teaching? It seemed that a script or detailed movement analysis of a teacher's every movement might serve as an interesting exercise in dissecting the gestural language used in teaching, but I didn't feel that level of analysis would help answer larger questions about the embodied dimension of teaching. In other words, I wanted to make sure that the observed embodied interactions could be seen within a broader understanding of the body in teaching in general.

In the performing arts, the performer is one part of a much larger whole. Liora Bresler (2012) in her essay titled *Experiential Pedagogies in Research Education: Drawing on Engagement With Artworks*, describes the performance of music as having “*tri-directional* relationships: 1. Connection to the music one rehearses and plays, which propels 2. a dialogic connection with oneself, drawing on ideas and emotions. This dialogue is enhanced by 3. communication (actual or anticipated) with the audience which adds an embodied aesthetic space of the public dimension” (p. 61, italics original). The performance of teaching has similar tri-directional relationships between the teacher and the material they intend to teach, and how they feel they can best communicate this material to students in a classroom. However, teachers do much more than perform; they often create the script or music themselves. As discussed in the literature review, I was interested in the relationship between composing the content for class and the performance of this material by the teacher. I found it more compelling to use the broader framework of choreography to look at teaching. This led me to think about the three levels of looking:

- The teacher’s individual style of teaching and how they perform their knowledge in front of the class
- The teacher as a rehearsal director that sets the tone and directs student learning/performance
- The teacher as a choreographer of the dynamic and sequential structure for the entire semester

Using a choreographic framework to explore teaching has yet to be explored, to my knowledge. In Bresler’s (2004a) book *Knowing Bodies, Moving Minds: Towards Embodied Teaching and Learning* there are several empirical essays that explore topics like the intersection

of the body and learning including: the lack of conscious embodiment in schools (Davidson, 2004), the importance of embodied activities like dance in education (Ross, 2004; Bresler 2004b), and the important lessons one can learn from embodied forms of knowledge (Powell, 2004; Stinson, 2004). Yet, my interest in using a choreographic framework was to study something different—to look at how a teacher uses the body as a tool in the classroom, specifically, what are the movement dynamics, gestures and spatial patterns performed by the teacher and how do these effect the communication of the material. In addition, a choreographic frame highlighted the structural development of a class throughout the semester.

In this study, I was interested in exploring what a choreographic framework can illuminate in teaching not just metaphorically, but to actually apply some of the basic principles of choreography and dance to teaching. Foster (1986) writes in her book, *Reading Dancing: Bodies and Subjects in Contemporary Modern Dance*,

Literacy in dance begins with seeing, hearing, and feeling how the body moves. The reader of dances must learn to see and feel rhythm in movement, to comprehend the three-dimensionality of the body, to sense its anatomical capabilities and its relationship to gravity, to identify the gestures and shapes made by the body and even to reidentify them when they are performed by different dancers. (p. 58)

She concedes that, “None of these skills is easily acquired. Perhaps the most direct access to them is provided by a dance class” (pp. 58-9). My background as a former dancer and choreographer puts me in a unique position to not only observe the embodied dimension of teaching, but also offers tools to analyze how the body communicates in the classroom.

An inherent question that scholars of embodiment must consider is, how can one communicate embodied data through written discourse? Bresler (2012), drawing on the work of Ong (1982), asks a similar question in her essay on developing an embodied approach to narrative inquiry:

Why is the embodied and oral character of language so much more marginalized in scholarship than the verbal? We communicate in many ways making use of our all of our senses, touch, taste, smell, sight, and hearing (Ong, 1982, pp. 6-7), with gestures and body language featured extensively. (Bresler, 2012, p. 47)

A central concern of this study was to develop methods that honor the embodied nature of communication, while at the same time offer findings in a written analysis that would make the work accessible to a broad scholarly audience. In this study, I will be looking at the classroom space and the movements of the teacher as an embodied narrative, as well as what methods are useful in translating and communicating that narrative. In essence, I have translated the experience of physical embodiment into language that attempts to render a vivid portrait of the embodied dimension of teaching.

I chose a qualitative case study methodology to explore embodiment in teaching because of the exploratory nature of the study. Quite literally, I don't know, what I don't know. The case study approach allowed me to see what issues arose during the study and direct my attention to evolving themes throughout the duration of my fieldwork. Because my questions were focused on understanding the embodied dimension of teaching, the case study is instrumental in nature (Stake, 1995, p. 3). In other words, the case is driven by questions related to embodiment and teaching, rather than issues intrinsic to the individual classroom's studied.

I chose to look at university teachers—specifically those that teach larger lecture classes between 40 to 200 students—because of the performative nature of such classes. In comparison to smaller classes where there might be more time devoted to group discussions or activities completed in class, the large lecture format is focused on the teacher performing their knowledge. University teachers are also unique in that most have complete responsibility for creating their own curriculum. They are both the choreographer and performer of the content that will be explored in class.

I studied two university professors for the entirety of a semester for two reasons. First, in order to understand the dynamic changes in both the teaching and overall pacing of the course, it was imperative that I attend the majority of classes over the semester. Second, because the physically embodied dimension of teaching is a blind spot in the research, it took time to develop an understanding of what I was looking at, and what methods might work best to study it.

In his book *The Art of Case Study Research*, Stake (1995) writes,

The real business of case study is particularization, not generalization. We take a particular case and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different than the others but what it is, what it does. There is an emphasis on uniqueness, and that implies knowledge of others that the case is different from, but the first emphasis is on understanding the case itself. (p. 8)

I chose a small participant pool of two teachers because I needed a sustained observation period to develop new ways of looking and understanding. The choice of two participants was a decision of economy. Attending two classes for the entirety of the semester was all that my own schedule of teaching would allow, and the participants chosen taught classes that did not conflict with my own schedule. Stake (1995) suggests the benefit of a case study approach is that it focuses on understanding not generalizations. As discussed in the literature review, teaching styles vary widely. The aim of this study is not to generalize about how teachers use their bodies in the classroom, but rather to describe richly how particular teachers use their bodies to communicate ideas in relationship to the content they have created.

Pilot Study

As I began to design and develop my ideas for the study, I observed a selection of classes in various academic disciplines. I began by contacting professors that had won notable teaching awards on campus. I also solicited suggestions from undergraduate students and colleagues, asking them for the names of teachers they felt shared their passion for teaching with their

students. Out of the twenty professors I emailed, eight responded, but I was only able to set up classroom observations with six professors due to scheduling conflicts. Three of the professors I observed once, and the other three professors I observed for three class periods.

These preliminary observations were helpful in developing research questions, but more importantly helped me refine my thoughts on ideal candidates for the study, how many to include, and how to further define the scope of the study.

My first observation was of a professor in political science. He taught a 200 level class with approximately 40 students in attendance. The professor was quite dynamic; he regularly moved from one side of the room to the other, walked up the stairs to call on students in the back row, and had visually interesting power point slides. Within the first 40 minutes of class, I had fairly detailed notes on his general movement patterns and performative qualities, but wasn't sure how these observations were relevant to my broader questions, like the sequential design of the course, the dynamic variations from one class to the next, and the changes in a teacher's demeanor in response to the students. I began to wonder if this particular professor was as gregarious in his moving and gesturing during the first couple of classes of the semester, and if he would interact with the students differently during their upcoming optional field trip. During my first field experience, I realized that observing a dozen teachers a few times throughout the semester would not address my research questions. I decided to limit the study to observing a few professors over the course of the semester in order to explore how the embodied performance of teaching related to the curriculum being presented. In addition, it allowed me to observe how teachers built relationships with students over time, and how the changing relational dynamics were initiated and reflected through embodied interactions.

In a subsequent class, I observed a professor that had recently won the Provost's *Excellence in Teaching Award* and found that her excellence was concentrated in course design. The professor had a lovely classroom manner—she was soft-spoken but articulate, hence the few jokes that were made seemed especially funny—but the range of her movements in class were limited. She tended to stand in one place and recited the information on the power point slides. Yet, the content of the course appeared to be well designed. Students were taking notes in a spiral bound notebook with the power point slides in them. I asked a student about the notebook, and she told me that students were instructed to buy them at the beginning of the semester, which suggested that all of the lectures had been prepared in advance of the semester. The teacher referred to a mini-lecture they were supposed to have watched online before class, and students responded to questions she asked in relation to the video, which signaled they had done their homework. I was intrigued by the choreography of the content for the course because it seemed to be very thorough, but realized I needed participants that used their bodies as a tool for communication with more frequency to better understand the performative nature of teaching. In other words, this class had a well-developed script, but lacked a strong sense of performing or orchestrating the curriculum in a dynamic way.

The largest lecture I observed was a microbiology class the Friday preceding Thanksgiving break. I anticipated attendance to be low, and was surprised to see the immense auditorium quite full. I asked the student sitting next to me if she could estimate what percentage of the class was present, and she suggested more than half, so close to 250 students. This was the most theatrical space that I observed; the teacher stood on an elevated stage, and the power point projections were cinematic in size. The teacher's presentation was flawless, as if he had memorized and recited the entire lecture and timed the changing of the slides to perfection.

Although I found this performance to be quite compelling, I had a hard time following the lecture due to my own ignorance of microbiology. Although the goal of the study was not necessarily to comment on the content of the class, I found that a basic understanding of the subject of the course was necessary.

Selection of Participants

Stake (1995) suggests “The researcher should have a connoisseur’s appetite for the best persons, places, and occasions. ‘Best’ usually means those that best help us understand the case, whether typical or not” (p. 56). The pilot study allowed me to identify three characteristics that were necessary to evaluate if the class and teacher are good candidates to be part of the study. First, the teacher must have a dynamic range as a performer and use the body as part of their instruction. Second, I needed to have a working understanding of the content covered in the class, so that I could see the relationship between the curriculum and how the body was used as a tool for communicating ideas and concepts. And third, it was important the teachers selected for the study had different teaching styles to add complexity and texture to the case.

The two teachers selected were part of the pilot study. I was drawn to Julie and Alexandra because they provided a distinct contrast in performance styles in the classroom, and each attuned me to different issues of how performance is used in the classroom. For instance, Alexandra had a clock with the hour, minutes and seconds projected on the screen along with *Bloomberg* television’s morning market report live streaming on her computer before class started. At the precise moment the clock turned to 9:30:00, she turned off *Bloomberg* and handed out a pop quiz. Once the tests were handed out, she started a new clock counting down the 10 minutes allotted for the test. In contrast, Julie could usually be found sitting on top of a table at the front of the room casually talking to a few students in the front row. She began class

informally by saying, “Hey you guys, we were just talking about the test after Thanksgiving break, and maybe pushing it back a day, so we could have a review session when you return. What do you think about that?”

In subsequent visits, it was clear Julie and Alexandra had distinctive embodied teaching styles and a dynamic range of activities included in their classes. I could see the contrast would widen the spectrum of the study and reveal the unique nature of each teacher’s approach. While there was little similarity between the courses, departments, and contexts of the classes studied, this study is not meant to compare and contrast particular ways of teaching a specified class, but instead to look at how teachers design, orchestrate, and perform in the classroom. In many ways, the different contexts for each class—the size, the students, and departmental contexts—added to the complexity and richness of the study, as well as highlighted issues that are central to teaching, like how to engage students in discussion, what is the relationship between the structure of the class and the performance, and how does a teacher both address the individual needs of the students while still adhering to the goals of the course.

Background and Context

The two teachers selected for this study were working within two distinct departmental contexts and had varying levels of teaching experience. In this section, I will detail their teaching situations to provide a window into the lives and disciplinary cultures that each teacher operated in. I will also provide a basic description of the focus of the courses I observed for the duration of the spring semester.

Alexandra began teaching at the university more than 20 years ago when her husband was hired as a tenured faculty in the business school. Before coming to the university, Alexandra worked in large financial institutions in Canada while she got her masters degree. She

completed her Ph.D. while living in another country as her husband attended another major university to finish his Ph.D., and her first child was born during this process. Alexandra followed her husband, who was hired at the university studied, and was offered an opportunity to develop a new course in the business school, Finance 300.

Alexandra and another colleague piloted the first section of Finance 300 in 1993. The goal of the course was to provide students an opportunity to practice engaging with financial tools. Alexandra described the conversation that was the springboard for the design of the class as, “You know what our students really need is some practical experience. Cause you know, all this book stuff; REALLY, this is business. Why are they learning business from a book?” For the last 20 plus years, Alexandra has been revising the class to meet the changing needs of the student population and responding to shifts in the financial world. She has a new “partner in crime,” Walter, whom she works closely with, and they have co-authored the textbook for the class.

Finance 300 is a required class for all finance majors and most accountancy majors take the class because it is recommended for those that want to apply for a masters degree. I observed Alexandra’s section on Tuesday/Thursday from 9:30-10:50, and the class had approximately 40 students enrolled. Many students take the class in their junior year, and it is a pre-requisite for most upper level classes. It is not uncommon for students to fail the class and take it again the following semester. The class has a reputation among students as being challenging, time intensive, and is often referred to as is as a rite of passage among business students; if you pass Fin 300, then you really are well suited to work in the financial world. There are typically five to six sections of the class offered per semester with a cap at 35 to 40 students. Alexandra teaches one to three sections of the course depending on the semester, her colleague Walter teaches a few

sections, and other professors in the business department fill in the remaining slots. All sections follow the same schedule and curriculum that Alexandra and Walter have developed in order to ensure fairness across the sections, and Alexandra mentors faculty new to teaching the course.

The Fin 300 teachers meet on an irregular basis. Alexandra said that mentoring usually happens informally around a communal coffee pot. She described the process as,

Everyone knows at 8:30 Walter and I are downstairs having coffee. We wrote the book together, and we have done other projects together. He has custody of the coffee pot, and at 8:30 we start the day with a coffee and figure out what idiot things are happening today, and then we go our separate ways. A lot of times they [new teachers of Fin 300] want to talk with someone off the record, and say ‘what do I do about this situation or that situation, or I’ll will get an email saying, ‘I’ve got this going on can we meet.’ If it involves everyone, we say, ‘Why don’t we have a Friday meeting?’ New teachers to Fin 300 especially need hand holding. We meet more often, have a cup of coffee to talk and walk through it [the curriculum] and show them how it works, listen, give a piece of advice.

Alexandra’s formal job title is Assistant Professor but with a stopped tenure clock, meaning that she has the status of being a professor rather than a lecturer and attends faculty meetings etc., but without the research obligations and without the possibility of moving up to Associate or Full Professor. In an interview, I asked her why she didn’t want a full tenured position and she said,

I maintain that a marriage with children cannot survive both partners working for tenure. My husband is now a full-chaired professor. I am still an assistant professor with a stopped clock. On the other hand, at 3 o’clock I was picking up my children from school everyday. I look back, and it was frustrating, but I don’t regret any of it. I was with them when they were not in school. So it was worth it. I went into it with my eyes open. I’d do it again.

Alexandra credited watching her own children’s learning patterns as contributing greatly to her own teaching practice. In several interviews, she acknowledged her son’s middle school jazz band teacher as being influential in developing her own teaching methods. She said this teacher taught her children,

...how to stand up on their own two feet. He taught them they will get out of it, what they put into it. He taught them transparency. If you think you deserve to be first chair, fine, let's have a challenge. Not behind closed doors but in front of everyone. Show us. There were no back doors, no favorites, and they respected themselves and each other.

Alexandra described that everyday she would ask her children on the car ride home, "what was the worst and best things that happened today," and that she learned a lot from these discussions about how to structure learning in her own classes.

Alexandra does publish research regularly, but not at the rate of a tenured professor. She also created a computer program that simulates trading on the New York Stock Exchange that is used throughout the business school as a training tool for students. The program takes data directly from the exchange, so students can see how successful they are with the imaginary money given to invest. Alexandra also created a financial literacy program that community members can access online and learn about investing in the stock market, as well as a High School curriculum on financial literacy that is used in many area schools. In addition to Finance 300, Alexandra developed and teaches two classes on financial modeling—one at the undergraduate level and one at the graduate.

Alexandra is a fixture in the business school. Her office is wall-to-wall books on economics and finance, and she keeps regular hours. We often met for interviews in her office, and she would make me a cup of tea. It was a cozy space with artwork on the walls and trinkets given to her by colleagues and students, including a jar of soybeans that a student who grew up on a farm brought her to use when she discussed trading in the commodities market. Now that her children are in college, Alexandra is typically in the office from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily. She regularly grades from home on the weekends, and when I asked what she does outside of work, she looked befuddled for a moment and said, "come to think of it, I don't do much but work." Then she retorted and said, "well I ride a few days a week." Alexandra was an avid

horseback rider. I grew up on a ranch, so she often used horses as an example to describe her views on teaching because it was an area of shared interest.

Alexandra is deeply embedded into the fabric of the business college. She developed a course that is one of the bedrocks of the finance and accounting undergraduate programs, and she continues to evolve and refine the class. Finance 300 is “her baby” in the sense that she has taken great care in the designing and evolving the materials used in the course for the last 20 years. The course functions like a well oiled machine that has been engaging students in the practice of doing business—from knowing how to price a bond, to understanding how the futures market works, and how to diversify a stock portfolio.

Julie began teaching at the university ten years ago as an adjunct professor. At the time of this study, she was a lecturer in the College of Media and was one of two professors with an expertise in public relations. The other professor of public relations is a tenured faculty member. Public relations is not a formal degree program within the college, but students can apply to be part of a certification program that requires taking a consortium of courses and completing a capstone project that will earn them distinction in this area of advertising.

Before becoming an adjunct at the university, Julie worked professionally in marketing, advertising, and public relations. She ran her own advertising firm in the area for several years before meeting her second husband. Together they moved to a larger city and started a family. Julie worked on her Master’s degree in Media Communications while raising her young children, and after a few years, they moved back to area when her husband was offered a tenured position at the university. Julie saw an opening for an adjunct to teach a Business and Technical Writing course, and jumped at the opportunity because it was “one of my favorite courses as an

undergraduate.” After teaching the course for a semester, she wrote a letter to the Dean of the College of Media and had a subsequent interview. Julie summarized her pitch to the Dean as,

Hey, my name is Julie, and I am a former advertising student from this university. I’ve been teaching this class [Business and Technical Writing], and a lot of your advertising students take it, but I noticed it is not cross-listed anymore. I think this is a really valuable class, and I am really disappointed it isn’t cross-listed, because I think your kids should be taking this class.

The dean referred her to the head of the advertising program, and after a meeting, Julie was offered classes to adjunct in the advertising department. Within a few years, she was offered a visiting lecturer position.

Julie typically teaches three different courses per semester, as well as one to two classes in the summer session. She has little input into which classes she will teach each semester, nor on her teaching schedule. Priority is given to the tenured faculty, and she picks up what they do not want to teach. During the pilot study, I shadowed Julie for a day and followed her as she began her day at 10 a.m. with a class of 20 students in course on public relations writing, then went to an 11 a.m. class of 75-100 students on issues in advertising. At 1:00 she had another hour-long class, which I did not attend. Because the distance between her 10 and 11 o’clock classes was too far to traverse within the ten minute changing period, she bought a kids push scooter to ensure she could make it to her second class on time. The scooter had a pink basket on the front for her purse, and she told me with a laugh that her pre-teen daughters thought, “the basket went too far” meaning it was too childish looking. Nonetheless, on the day I shadowed her, she scooted right into the lecture hall, greeted the class as she took off her backpack, and got the students ready to start their in-class presentations within missing a beat.

I asked Julie how she felt about her position as a lecturer, and she admitted that often she was asked to teach the classes no one else wanted to teach. She described conversations with the department head as,

[Department head says] “No one wants to teach summer classes will you do it?” And I [Julie] say, “Sure,” because I like the challenge, and I like learning new things.
[Department head says] “We don’ t have anybody to teach this class, will you do it.” And I [Julie] say, “Sure,” because I like to develop new things.

She described regularly being assigned to teach two sections of the public relations writing class because the tenured faculty needs to teach an upper level class, and this is challenging because the grading load is very high in this writing intensive course. I asked Julie if she ever felt like the department took advantage of her and she replied,

Actually, I am sure they do, and if I think about it too much, I might get bitter about it. But I choose not to because I love my job, not because I am afraid to lose it. I really enjoy doing what I do, so I am sort of okay with it.

I also try to see the greater good of the college, and I know—this sounds arrogant—but I am a pretty good teacher, and I don’t want to—this sounds so arrogant—deprive my students of the experience and knowledge that I have by saying, I won’t teach that. It sounds really cocky, but that is not how I mean it.

Julie’s energy and “can do” attitude towards her teaching schedule was admirable, but it did come at a cost. She admitted on one occasion that it was difficult to keep up with what was happening in each class. She described showing a video in class that she had showed the previous class session, and none of the students said anything until a few days later. She said, “It’s easy to get mixed up. I suppose they [the students] think I am really flakey, but teaching the same thing each semester, it is hard to keep track.”

I observed Julie teach Advertising 410: Advanced Public Relations. The class was a large lecture that met on Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 12:00-12:50. The majority of students in

the class were seniors in the advertising program, and the class was an elective. In an interview with Melissa, a senior in advertising, I asked her who took the class and why. She responded,

Mostly advertising students. People know she [Julie] is easier [than the other public relations teacher] and he requires more. Most of the people are juniors and seniors who need the class to graduate. There are few core electives that you have an option to take, and this one isn't as bad as the others.

In other words, students that took the class had the expectation that it would be relatively easy and enjoyable. Julie had a reputation of being an easier teacher, but also students noted that she brought in relevant current events to class and invited them to offer examples; hence, they felt more engaged in the class.

Outside of teaching, Julie spent her time raising middle school aged daughters, writing a regular marketing column for an online publication, and doing some consulting work. Oddly enough, she also had an interest horses, and ran a small boarding business at their home stables where they kept a few of their own horses. When I asked her about her work/life balance she said, "I have a pretty good balance. I would say, sadly for my husband 10% wife, 40 % mommy—but really 100% all the time—and 60% career, job, teacher." She amended this later to add "10% volunteering, so the total would really be 110%, but some of my volunteering is related to parenting and teaching, so perhaps it is 100%."

I met Julie in her office once. It was a bare desk with relatively little on the walls. We typically met at a coffee shop near her house for interviews. Julie preferred to grade and prepare for classes at home, or in coffee shops and typically commuted into campus for classes but didn't linger after she was done with her teaching and office hours.

The context of Julie and Alexandra's teaching situations are distinctly different, but with some similarities. Both Julie and Alexandra are primarily invested in teaching at the university without a large research responsibility. Both typically teach three courses per semester, and

share the role of parenting with husbands that are tenured faculty members. Yet, there are notable differences. Alexandra developed an essential class in the undergraduate curriculum, and has been refining it for the last 20 years. Although she is not able to move out of her official title as Assistant Professor, she does have tenure, which gives her more autonomy in the classes and times that she teaches. In contrast, Julie, as a lecturer, has a less stable position with less control over what classes she is assigned and her schedule. Julie's position was more tenuous, and due to major budget cuts at the university, her contract was not renewed for the recent school year. She is currently running a consulting business and writing for several online publications on advertising and marketing.

Students' expectations also effected the teaching environments studied. Whereas Finance 300 is legendary for its challenge and has the weight of being a critical requirement for students to progress through their degree program, Julie's advanced public relations class was an elective, and many of the students in the class were not part of the public relations certificate program, nor had serious interest in pursuing a career in public relations. Students in the Finance 300 class came prepared for a challenge and expected a heavy workload. The advertising students in Julie's class expected the class to be interesting, but fairly easy.

Julie and Alexandra fulfilled the requirements for participation in the study—both used the body as a tool for communicating content, taught subjects that I had a rudimentary background in, and embodied distinctive performance styles when teaching. Although the disciplinary and departmental cultures each teacher functioned within is not the focus of the study, it is important to keep in mind when understanding their teaching practices. This study aims to look at two particular cases of teachers whose approaches, struggles, and successes relate

to issues inherent to teaching. By looking at the particularities of Julie and Alexandra's classes, I hope to provide a window into the complexities of the day-to-day practice of teaching.

Research Questions

In this section, I will discuss the research questions that guided the study and how these were revised through the research process.

My first research question was: what tools, training, and methods are helpful in studying the physical embodiment of teaching in a university lecture setting? This question developed into a methodological exploration of how tools and techniques from my training in dance could be used to analyze each teacher's movements before translating the movements into written descriptions.

The second research question was: how do the selected university lecture teachers use their bodies to communicate and emphasize information and ideas to their students? This question was relevant to attuning to the tacit dimension of teaching. It wasn't that movements necessarily illustrated concepts, but the teacher's embodied attitude created an ambience for learning. It also drew my attention to how teachers responded to and engaged students in the class. For instance, sometimes Alexandra would take a position of repose, standing with her hands behind her back patiently waiting for students to calculate an equation; while other times she would slightly lean forward circling her arm urging students to hurry up and do the calculations. The teachers in this study often reported being unaware of their embodied performance and didn't plan out these reactions; they happened on a subliminal level. Hence, the study of the tacit level of communication and the body seemed very relevant to illuminate a dimension of teaching that is under acknowledged but ever present.

The third question was: what aspects of teaching and course design become more explicit when applying a choreographic framework that uses the concepts of space, time and energy? This question evolved to look at the relationship between the design of a course and how the plan was orchestrated in the classroom. The choreographic frame evolved to be broader than space, time and energy, and I began to look at each course as a work of art that evolved over time. This helped me to see the sequence and the structure that guided the teacher's performance. The embodied performance was an integral part of the choreography, but this question drew me to look at the creative design of the class in relation to the performance.

The fourth question was: how does a choreographic framework help us to see the embodied practices of teachers more clearly? What does this framework exclude? A choreographic frame allowed me to better see the tacit communication of the classroom and also the importance of a solid sequential design. What it did not account for was the interactive nature of teaching. By having a question that invited findings that did not fit into my initial framework, I was able to develop observations that were deeply related to the embodied dimension of teaching, but that a performance framework did not offer substantive help in understanding. This encouraged me to find new frameworks to better understand the relationship developed between teachers and students.

These questions were a valuable starting point and are the basis for the three findings chapters. Yet, the study itself honed and refined these questions into three interwoven topics: the embodied nature of teaching and how to go about studying it, the relationship between the structural and performative dimensions of teaching, and the student/teacher relationship.

The first section of findings, chapter four, focuses on the development of an embodied methodology that allowed for an in depth exploration and analysis of the teachers common

movements and gestures. It looks at the first question, regarding the tools and training needed to study the physical embodiment of teachers, as well as the second question—how they communicate and emphasize information in the classroom. However attuning to the embodied dimension went beyond the specific movements and gestures of the teachers, and into the realm of the tacit dimension in teaching. The embodied methods allowed me to tune into the ambiance and energy of the classroom. This brought my attention to, not only the intense focus of students during a timed quiz, but also the scattered attention caused by students surfing the Internet during class.

Chapter five relates to the question: what aspects of teaching and course design become more explicit when applying a choreographic framework that uses the concepts of space, time and energy. In this chapter, I explore the relationship between the design of the course and the teacher's performative styles through the lens of the performing arts. This chapter draws on the findings from the previous chapter on embodiment, as it looks specifically at how teachers make learning come to life within the performative space of the classroom, but goes further to look at the overall structure and sequence of each class and how the entire course unfolds over time.

The sixth chapter directly addresses the question, how does a choreographic framework help us to see the embodied practices of teachers more clearly? What does this framework exclude? Although there is an implicit relationship between an audience and performers in the performing arts, the teacher/student relationship is more complex and at the forefront of teaching. The choreographic and embodied drew me into the relational aspects of teaching at a tacit level, but it was necessary for me to look to other bodies of literature to better understand the nature of the student and teacher relationship. This led me to literature on caring, and the complex job teachers have in both addressing the particular needs of their students while also

keeping sight of the purpose and vision of the course. Although a choreographic framework did not shed new light on the topic, my attention to the embodied nature of teaching did help me identify the palpable tension inherent in teacher/student interactions. In chapter six, I look at the relational dynamics between teacher and students, specifically at issues of power and authority and the unique role teachers have in communicating caring towards students while concurrently motivating them to grow as individuals.

Data Collection

I collected three kinds of data for this study: observational field notes, semi-structured interviews, and documents from the classes studied (syllabi, assignment prompts, etc.).

I attended Alexandra's Finance 300 class and Julie's Advertising 410 class for the entire 15-week semester with the exception of exam days. I felt that my presences as an observer might be disruptive to the students focusing on the exam, and I did not want to draw attention in my direction as students were working on the test. During the classes I observed, I took extensive field notes, and I will discuss more fully the process and analysis method used with the field notes in the following section.

I interviewed Julie and Alexandra three times each during the semester for approximately one hour, and conducted an additional interview of 1.5 hours at the end of the semester. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. I also had numerous conversations before and after class with both teachers and documented these as closely as I could from memory in my field notes.

I used a semi-structured approach for the interviews (see appendix A for a list of sample interview questions). The interviews were conducted in the spirit of what Kvale (1996) describes as the traveler metaphor. He writes,

... the *traveler metaphor* understands the interviewer as a traveler on a journey that leads to a tale to be told upon returning home...The interviewer wanders along with the local inhabitants, asks questions that lead the subjects to tell their own stories of their lived world, and converses with them in the original Latin meaning of *conversation* as ‘wandering together with.’ (Kvale, 1996, p. 4, italics original)

He contrasts the *traveler* orientation to conducting interviews with a *miner’s* approach that seeks to find gems of truth waiting to be uncovered by asking just the right questions. I attempted to travel with the teacher’s studied as they journeyed through the semester. Although Kvale (1996) recommends the traveling metaphor for conducting qualitative interviews, he points out, “It goes beyond the spontaneous exchange of views as in everyday conversation, and becomes a careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge” (p. 6). The majority of my questions in the second and third interviews with Julie and Alexandra were based on specific observations from the class. By asking questions based on my observations, I was able to gain an understanding of the motives, philosophies, and rationales behind activities, policies, and the way they altered the structure or performance during the class.

When interviewing Julie and Alexandra, I tried to adhere to Harry Wolcott’s (1994) advice to “talk little, listen a lot” and reminded myself that the art of listening is important to conducting useful interviews (p. 348). Both Julie and Alexandra referred to our interviews as “teacher therapy” reiterating what Sarason (1999) described as teachers being “lonely rulers.” Both found the interviews to be helpful because it allowed them to process and articulate their thoughts and ideas on teaching. I found that my own teaching changed as a result of my observations and discussions with Julie and Alexandra, and I continue to meet with both of them at least once a semester to catch up on what is happening in their lives and classrooms.

Additionally, I interviewed a select group of students—two in Alexandra’s class, and four in Julie’s class—for 30 minutes to 1 hour. These interviews helped me to better understand a student’s perspective on the structure of the class and the performance of the teacher. Students provided not only contextual information about the department and the teacher’s reputation, but also important insights into the class. In Appendix B, I have included a preliminary list of questions I asked students. I inserted questions based on specific issues that arose in the class. For instance, students added a valuable layer of complexity to understanding how they perceived power and authority in both teachers’ practices.

Both Julie and Alexandra gave me full access to any documents (syllabus, power points, hand-outs, assignment prompts, etc.) used to convey the structure of the class. These materials were helpful in looking at the relationship between the planned curriculum and how the teacher orchestrated this material in the classroom.

I originally planned on capturing video to use for both analysis and future presentations on the study, but for many reasons I did not end up using it. There were three other specific suggestions frequently offered by colleagues, committee members, and friends as to how I could go about collecting data on embodiment in the classroom. I will discuss them below because, in many ways, my decision not to use these ideas directly shaped the method I did develop. I also believe that my peers shared many worthwhile ideas, and although they did not meet the goals of this study, they could be relevant for future work.

Gesture. While discussing my research with scholars in the Social Sciences (particularly colleagues with a background in psychology), the topic of gestures came to the forefront of the conversation. In an attempt to understand what I meant by the embodied performance of teachers, they would ask if I meant the gestures teachers’ use, like resting the chin into the hand

with the index finger touching the lips as a “thinking” gesture. Some suggested that by making a catalog of common gestures, and counting the amount of times that each teacher performed a gesture, I could make conjectures on the prominence of what certain gestures communicated to students. For instance, if a teacher regularly made a circular gesture with the hand, I could attribute that to signaling to the students that class would be “moving forward,” and suggest that if he or she used that gesture often that it signaled a fast paced class. This example is most likely a simplistic rendition of what my colleagues had in mind; nonetheless, I was resistant to the idea that cataloging gestures and ascribing meaning to them would illuminate the embodied performance of teachers.

Certainly gesture played a role in my investigation of embodiment and teaching. I did write down and then attempt to embody common movements of the two teachers studied; however, ascribing a specific meaning to these gestures seemed arbitrary. In any temporal art form, like performance, meaning is made through the accumulation of one idea/image after another. Every movement needs to be seen within the context of what preceded it. In other words, gestures have different meanings depending on the context of the conversation. Using the above example, a circular arm motion—a common gesture of Alexandra—could be done slowly and with a weighted downward accent signaling to the students that this was an idea to contemplate. In contrast, the same circular arm gesture could be used at a slightly quicker tempo, the accent of the movement on the upward motion, and this could signal a feeling of play and lightness with an idea.

Gestures do communicate, but they often accompany spoken language, facial expressions, and vocal intonations that work in coordination with gestures to make meaning. I

was hesitant to ascribe meaning to gestures taken out of the context from which they were embedded.

I was also tentative to put too much emphasis on gesture because typically people are not particularly conscious of what their body is doing while talking. On occasion, I would share with Julie and Alexandra common gestures I observed them doing in class, and they seemed surprised to have their movement mirrored back to them, and would respond, “I do that?” In general, gestures seemed to accompany what the teacher was talking about, but they were not the focus or even part of the conscious awareness of the teacher when doing them.

I did record common gestures in my field notes and use the embodied method, soon to be described, to analyze the movements. However, my investigations of gesture were aimed at being able to better understand the qualitative characteristics of each participant’s movements, and how these contributed to their overall teaching style.

Video. Another frequent suggestion was using video in the data collection process. Having a background in video production, I was aware that the presence of a video camera might disrupt the actual class, as well as being skeptical of the actual usefulness of classroom video. Barry Hampe, a documentary filmmaker pronounces, “The camera is not a vacuum” meaning it does not suck up human experience. Having taught documentary film production, I have seen this principle first hand. Shooting video that actually captures the qualitative dimension of experience is an art form in and of itself. To record such footage would require having two or more cameras set up around the room, and/or the researcher/videographer moving around to capture shots of the teacher that would be useful for later analysis or in the presentation of research.

An alternative would be to set up one camera at the back or to one side of the classroom and let it record for the duration of class. This footage could be used later for analysis. For instance, I could tally how often teachers made certain movements, break down common gestures by replaying the video multiple times, and make spatial maps tracking where the teacher moved.

I decided not to take this option for two reasons. One was touched upon above—this kind of footage rarely captures the essence, nor the nuance/detail of the actual classroom experience. The qualitative dimension of teaching—like the energy between teachers and students, the subtle facial expressions, and complexity of movements and gestures—often gets lost in video footage from a single camera positioned far away from the action. Second, I wasn't convinced that a detailed analysis of video taken in the classroom would help me to better understand the embodied performance of teachers. For instance, I could have made a detailed analysis of where the teacher moves in space based off of the video, but common movement patterns were just as easy to discern by attending class regularly.

Laban movement analysis. The third suggestion was using Laban movement analysis to create a movement score that could then be analyzed. Laban notation is a codified written form used in dance to transcribe movements into a score that can be recreated. My objections to using Laban notation are similar to the ones already mentioned above; I was not convinced that a detailed analysis of a teacher's movements would answer my larger questions about the embodied nature of teaching. I have a basic understanding of how to analyze movement through Laban's framework and used its basic format extensively to break down the movements observed, as well as articulate the qualitative dimension of moving into written language. However, the real power of a Laban score is that others that read the notation system can

reconstruct the movements. For instance, Farnell (1999) advocated using Laban analysis to score the movements that accompanied the stories of Native American's to analyze, document, and acknowledge the role of movement in storytelling. I agree with Farnell that Laban analysis requires that the researcher apply a rigorous and nuanced approach to movement, elevating it beyond just a byproduct of speech, but I didn't feel that scoring the classroom movements of the participants would help me to better understand how teachers perform and orchestrate the content of the class.

My interest was to devise a method in which the physical moving body became the instrument or medium for analysis. This study was an opportunity for me to further develop a technique I had used in an earlier study looking at an undergraduate dance class. In its initial phase, I described this process as creating *embodied transcriptions*. In the following section, I will discuss the process of further developing the embodied transcription technique into a method deeply embedded in a movement practice aimed at understanding embodiment from the inside out.

Embodied Transcriptions

In order to understand movement from a sensory perspective, I developed a method that uses my own body and expertise in dance to analyze field notes. The process begins with using my field notes that consist of words, rudimentary drawings, and detailed descriptions as the starting point to recreate movements I observed in class. Typically, I stand in front of a mirror and try to reproduce the gestures, movements, and affect of the person I observed. Numerous attempts are made until I feel my image in the mirror is as close as possible to what I remember based on my notes. Once I feel that my body can perform the movement, I try to describe from my own sensory experience of what is happening into words.

Embodied transcriptions take time, but gave me unique insight into the experiential dimension of embodiment that I have not found through any other method. The point of this transcription is not to say that I understand the participant's reasons for moving or can know their feelings by doing the movement in a similar way, but rather, they allow for a rich description that is based on what the body was actually doing. For instance, instead of saying the teacher looked displeased before class, by taking on the posture of the teacher, I can describe the action. Instead, I might say the teacher pushed her weight into the podium, leaning forward, as her eyes intensely scanned notes before class.

This method was particularly useful when observing movements and behaviors that were repeated and notable. For instance, if a teacher used a gesture often, or perhaps the opposite, did a movement or gesture that was unusual and outside of the range of their everyday classroom performance, then taking the time to do an embodied transcription was helpful in making vivid for a reader the specific gesture or movement sequence within the context of the situation.

I would also like to explore how embodied transcriptions might be used in the presentation of research. One's interpretation and understanding of movement is often visceral. For instance in a classroom observation during the pilot study, a teacher bolted upright in her seat during a student presentation and quickly directed her gaze to students talking in the auditorium. My own body reacted to her gesture by tensing a bit, and looking down at my notes. I looked down to avoid staring and drawing more attention to the students who were talking while the teacher was lecturing. By performing an embodied transcription, like reenacting the actions of the teacher bolting up in her chair, I hope to open up a space for conference attendees to experience a visceral reaction to a performed vignette. Ultimately, I think attuning researchers

and educators alike to their own visceral reactions will help draw attention to the embodied dimensions of teaching and learning.

Data analysis

In Robert Stake's (2010) book *Qualitative Research: How Things Work* he suggests, "Yes, qualitative research is disciplined common sense" (p. 37). In this section of the paper, I will discuss data analysis, or the disciplined practice of seeing, reflecting, and interpreting the data collected. My process and understanding of data analysis has been influenced both by classes in qualitative research and my work as a choreographer and documentary filmmaker. Art making and research are both iterative process that require a circular process of thinking, analyzing, creating, and then thinking again, making better/making more, refocusing, throwing away ideas that were once thought to be brilliant, and making again. The following discussion describes how I used tools and processes common in qualitative research to move into deeper levels of analysis.

Field notes. While observing Julie and Alexandra's classes, I took numerous field notes on movements, gestures, common speech patterns, and tone of voice. I also chronicled the unfolding of the class—how the activities of the day progressed. I typically took notes in a two-column form using the left side to keep a record of the sequence of events that happened in the class, and the right column was for reflections, questions, or sensory perceptions about the ambiance of the room.

Observing the aesthetics of the classroom and the way each teacher embodied the curriculum was essential for this study. The practice of observing the embodied and quickly finding some way to jotting this down in my notebook was challenging. I experimented with formats—sometimes drawing stick figures that resembled common gestures, or quick notes like

one hip side, arm behind back—and these were meant to jog my memory for writing more detailed analysis after taking notes during class. Fortunately, I observed many classes, and this allowed me to hone in on specific voice patterns and common movements to answer any questions I had about movements. However, I also used the right hand column of my notes to write about evolving themes, patterns, and ask questions that I would later ponder, transform into interview questions, or make assignments for further observation in future classes.

I found this level of looking and observing to be exhilarating. Through close observation, the familiar did become strange as Geertz (1973) suggests, and it required a kind of present engagement that was familiar from my years of taking dance classes and having to intensely observe a teacher's every movement. I believe that the depth of my engagement during class observations was one of the most important aspects of this study.

Contact sheets. In many ways qualitative research is process of data reduction. I used a contact sheet as an initial step in analyzing the field notes. Miles and Huberman (1984) describe the contact sheet as “a rapid, practical way to do first-run data reduction—without losing any of the basic information (the write-up) to which it refers” (p. 51). I have included the contact sheet I designed based off of Miles and Huberman's suggestions in the Appendix A.

I filled out contact sheets after each class observation for two reasons. One, they served as an index for what happened during each class, and I could quickly go back and look at something that seemed insignificant at the time, but later became a relevant pattern. Second, the contact sheets were a journal of my reflections on how the study progressed. Stake (2010) discusses the concept of progressive focusing in his chapter on evidence. He writes,

At the outset of each study we may prepare a list of foreshadowing questions that need to be answered, topical (as opposed to methods) questions that help clarify the situation. Along the way we will abandon the unhelpful questions. We mean to reshape the

questions to improve the data gathering from one research site to the next. (Stake, 2010, p. 130)

The contact sheets encouraged progressive focusing by providing a space for me to reflect on how the study was developing and to reshape the focus and research questions regularly.

Transcribing interviews. I audio recorded all interviews with Julie and Alexandra. I did not transcribe the interviews in full, but took copious notes while listening to the recordings and created a detailed index. Next, I listened again and did detailed transcriptions of discussions that were provocative and might be relevant to the study. I also listened to the interviews before conference presentations as a way to stir my embodied memory, so I could perform Julie and Alexandra's teaching persona's to give attendees of my talk an embodied sense of each teacher. Although my portrayal of their voices and movements is just that—a second hand translation—I found by listening, looking through notes from the embodied transcriptions, and practice that I provide the audience with a general sense of each teacher's embodied persona.

Vignettes. Harry Wolcott (1994) in his book *Transforming Qualitative Data* describes the importance of writing up notes early on. He says,

...I begin making detailed notes immediately upon initiating fieldwork.... Right or wrong as first impressions may be, I feel they should be carefully recorded as a baseline from which the work proceeds...Through them, researchers can introduce readers to settings the way they themselves first encountered them, rather than the presumably more discerning way they have come to see them through extended time for observation and reflection." (Wolcott, 1994, p. 350)

After filling out the contact sheet, I would write vignettes of notable interactions or activities in class. The vignettes generally fell within two categories. The first category involved using the embodied transcription technique described above to write a detailed analysis of the movements observed. The second were vignettes that related to the unfolding of events in the classroom.

For example, one day Julie confronted her class about their apathy and lack of participation in class, and from my field notes, I wrote a distilled version recreating the event for a reader. This vignette will be discussed in chapter six. The second category of vignettes were edited down to hone in on issues relevant to the study, but it was important to record notable events within a day or two of observing in order to preserve what Wolcott discusses above—the situations as they appeared at the time. In the paper, I use vignettes as windows into classroom life. These often become the basis to discuss issues relevant to the practice of teaching, but I have tried to describe, as richly as possible, events as they unfolded in the class.

Coding. Because the amount of data gathered in qualitative research is vast, coding is a necessary step in organizing data into useful categories. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest codes are “*retrieval and organizing devices* that allow the analyst to spot quickly, pull out, then cluster all segments relating to the particular question, hypothesis, concept or theme. Clustering sets the stage for analysis” (p. 56, italics original). They advise beginning with a set of “start codes” based on research questions that can be further developed later in the study as the issues evolve and the direction of the study becomes clearer.

My approach to coding was inductive; I created codes that were tailored to the data collected rather than starting with a highly developed list of anticipated themes. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest that in an inductive method, “Data get well molded to the codes that represent them, and we get more of a code-in-use flavor than a generic-code-for-many-uses generated by a prefabricated start list” (p. 57). To my knowledge, a choreographic framework has not been used as the basis for looking at the embodied dimensions of teaching; hence, there are few known codes or issues from the literature to begin with.

Miles and Huberman (1984) cite the downfall to an inductive approach is that the data will need to be re-coded as new codes emerge, but added that the iterative process of going through the data several times is important for developing a deeper understanding of the case. This was the situation in my study. I started with the following loosely defined themes: ways the body was used (to entertain, engage, monitor), sequence and dynamics of the class structure, communicating concepts with the body, student interaction and participation, philosophies that undergird classroom practice, context of the case (departments, disciplines, situations), performance and storytelling, and the development of embodied methods. These themes were loosely developed as I went through field notes, contact sheets, interview transcripts, and vignettes. I began to move material that I thought related to a theme into a document with its title. This process of refining themes and moving data collected during the study under these themes was continuous. Vignettes that seemed to fall under multiple themes were highlighted to note they were in multiple sections. Although it is difficult to remember or articulate this whittling and refining process, I eventually identified three major themes: embodied methods, structure and performance, and the student teacher relationship.

I tried to take a interactive and playful approach to the development of themes, so rather than spending time defining and refining titles, I continued to cut and paste vignettes, folding one theme into another. I attempted to embrace the messiness of this process and prioritized reading through and engaging with the data intellectually above organizing it immediately. I trusted in my experience making art, that eventually things would begin to “feel” right and in the absence of that feeling, my priority was to continue to engage the material and know it like the back of my hand. In other words, I also needed to “eat” the material until it was part of my

understanding, and I was able to recall from memory scholars views, field notes, vignettes, and interview passages in conversations with others and myself.

It took several months to develop the three major findings chapters of the dissertation. Some of the biggest strides were made when I put a moratorium on reading through the data or literature and began to free-write on issues that emerged from the data. In his book titled *Catching the Big Fish: Meditation, Consciousness and Creativity* filmmaker David Lynch (2006) writes,

Ideas are like fish. If you want to catch little fish, you can stay in the shallow water. But if you want to catch the big fish, you've got to go deeper. Down deep the fish are more powerful and more pure. They're huge and abstract. And they're very beautiful. (p. 1)

Metaphorically, I swam in shallows of my data, moving it around, and developing themes until I had a firm grasp of the body of water I was immersed in, but it wasn't until I sat quietly at the bottom with my own thoughts that the really interesting issues became clear.

Criteria and Ethical Issues

A question related to data analysis is the criteria that a researcher uses to evaluate their interpretations and findings. How do we know that our interpretations of the case have merit and are trustworthy? In the following section, I will discuss criteria for evaluating my interpretations and ethical concerns related to the study.

In Wolcott's (1994) essay *On Seeking—and Rejecting—Validity in Qualitative Research*, he describes his own methods for ensuring the trustworthiness of his findings, as well as challenging the word validity and its relation to qualitative research. He suggests that the word understanding might be more apt as defined by Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary: "the power to *make experience intelligible by applying concepts and categories*" (as cited in Wolcott, 1984, p. 367, italics added). Wolcott's discussion of validity resonates with my own intentions

that multiple frames of understanding would be used in the study. Below I will describe some of the process and strategies I used as criteria to evaluate my work.

First, I designed the study to include *prolonged engagement* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This provided me with an opportunity to see activities and behaviors that are usual, occasional, and unusual. For instance, I had a researcher visit my class on a day the students were peer reviewing rough drafts of their projects. In the write-up of her study, the researcher stressed how much peer-interaction there was in my class. Although this was an accurate description of my class on the particular day she visited, there are only four days in the entire semester dedicated to peer review. Observing the class for the entirety of the semester allowed me to experience the range of activities that happened and see them in relation to one another. Prolonged engagement also gave me the opportunity to test my observations. For instance, when I observed Alexandra walk directly towards a female student to ask her a question, I then looked in subsequent classes to see if she regularly singles out female students and the frequency with which she does this action. In this case, I only observed that behavior once, making it unusual.

Second, I attempted to *triangulate*, or get multiple perspectives to add complexity to my observations. My primary method for triangulation was asking direct questions during interviews with the teachers and a select group of students based on observations. Sue Stinson (2004) in her essay *My Body/Myself: Lessons From Dance Education* cautions,

Assuming that everyone perceives an experience the same way I do is the ultimate arrogance. While I can use my kinesthetic empathy to try to feel what someone else is feeling, there is no guarantee that it will be the same. (p. 155)

Stinson's point is important given that the majority of the study was observational data. It was unrealistic for me to share all vignettes of classroom observations with the teachers and students during interviews, but I did select vignettes that were puzzling to me, seemed unusual, or that I

thought an inside perspective would greatly enrich my understandings of the situation. For instance during the pilot study, I observed a teacher with a rather dour look on her face as she was reviewing notes before class. Her usual smile to acknowledge incoming students was notably different that day. In a conversation, she revealed that she was nervous before class because she was not an expert on the topic and had restructured the lecture prior to class based on some questions from students via email, and in general felt unprepared. This is the kind of insight I could not get from observations alone.

The next criterion is *artful writing*. Artful writing should not be confused with writing fiction or embellishing the truth, but on the contrary, taking the time to carefully consider how to translate what I observed into language. Wolcott (1994) describes his process of “word checking” as “a literal sentence-by-sentence examination to check that the verbs are appropriate, the generalizations have real referents in what I have seen and heard and the points of conjecture are marked with appropriate tentativeness” (p. 355). The importance of writing is apparent in Wolcott’s process, as he suggests that it is necessary to record accurately and begin writing up the notes and speculative drafts of the study early in order to get feedback. He also describes the importance of letting the reader see for themselves and finding the balance between providing too much detail and too little analysis. He writes, “I would rather error on the side of too much [detail]; conversely between overanalyzing and underanalyzing the data, I would rather say too little” (Wolcott, 1994, p. 350). Artful writing was particularly important in my attempt to translate the performative world of the classroom into words that attempt to get the tone right as well as the specifics of what the actual movement looked like.

Wolcott (1994) suggests being candid, and “If circumstances call for me to draw implications or suggest possible remedies, I try to ‘change hats’ conspicuously” (p. 352). I have

attempted to be conspicuous by describing my role as a researcher, and when I need to move from description to making tentative conjectures about what I observed, I have tried to be transparent. Bresler (2012) writes,

Part of a postmodern scholarly process is the awareness of one's story and the ability to reflect on how it impacts one's choices of issues and lenses, and the ways in which one shares participants narratives. This process requires a degree of self-knowledge (not to be confused with self-indulgence or "navel gazing"...). (p. 52)

Throughout the process of the study, I tried to remain keenly aware of the importance of looking inward as well as soliciting outside feedback to question my interpretations.

Protecting participants. I have included a copy of the Internal Review Board proposal and approval letter in Appendix C, which details my plans to protect participants from harm. It should also be noted that the aim of the study is not to identify "good" or even "effective" embodied teaching, but instead to establish frameworks to better understand the embodied dimension of teaching. Nonetheless, the classroom is literally a live performance space and teachers must improvise on a daily basis; hence, I observed moments of brilliance, as well as interactions that seemed much clearer in hindsight than in the moment.

Both Julie and Alexandra were incredibly generous by letting me sit in on their classes, and making time to talk with me in formal interviews and informal conversations. I felt I had little to offer outside of supplying coffee, tea, and snacks at our meetings, but both identified two clear benefits they received from being part of the study.

First, as Sarason (1999) notes, teaching can be a lonely profession. My presence in the classroom provided both teachers with another adult in the room that understood the challenges of teaching, and they appreciated the opportunity to process their experiences with a fellow teacher. For instance, Alexandra fondly described interviews as "teacher therapy" and felt that our discussions gave her an opportunity to process, and at times, commiserate about interactions

in the classroom. She also admitted that it was flattering to have someone notice the intricate structure of the class and the nuance of her teaching—a life’s work that often goes unnoticed because students are too busy doing the work to acknowledge how well the class is put together and teaching is not as publically recognized at a research focused university.

Julie had a particularly difficult class of students during the semester I observed, and told me that my inquisitive and attentive presence helped support her while teaching. Interviews provided a space to process challenging classroom interactions. Although I have some critiques of Julie’s teaching methods, I attempted to be empathetic and generous during my observations, knowing how vulnerable teaching can be.

A second benefit that both teachers identified was that my questions and observations about how they used performance as a tool for communicating in the classroom offered them insight into their own teaching practice. Sharing my observations highlighted the implicit and tacit dimensions of their classrooms and gave them an option to explore and develop their teaching in new directions.

Both Julie and Alexandra agreed to have their real identities and names be part of the study. However, as I began to write the findings chapters, I was not confident that this was a good choice, as I wanted to use observations and vignettes that might reflect poorly on the teacher’s studied. These observations were crucial to the study, and any teacher reading the dissertation could likely see their own struggles within the stories of these two women, but I also felt it could single them out in negative ways. In order to protect both teachers studied and give myself more latitude with including vignettes of the “not so great moments” of teaching, I created pseudonyms for both teachers. However, I did not change their names in the process of writing the dissertation, and waited until the final draft to switch out their real names with

pseudonyms. I felt that by keeping their real names as long as possible, it made me more accountable to the complexity of their stories and situations. Rather than being characters in my dissertation with different names, they remained the two women that let me into their professional world.

The End is the Beginning

I will end this paper and begin this study with a quote from Bresler (2012) that is a reminder of ephemeral nature of research. She writes,

Narratives, aural or written, grand or small are occasions, and as such, are ephemeral. As we grow, so does our meaning making. Even when shared in honesty, narratives are, by definition, selective, reflecting our own perceptions, which are ever-changing as we change. It is with a sense of this ephemeral quality that we should treat them, recognizing that they can be powerfully illuminating, but are not to confused with the Truth that postmodernism acknowledged as impossible.” (Bresler, 2012, p. 63)

Bresler is speaking specifically about embodied narratives that encapsulate not just what we say, but also the essence of a fleeting moment in time. This is an apt quote because the nature of performance is also momentary. This study is an occasion for looking at the connections between artistry and teaching, and the role of the body in communicating ideas in the classroom.

CHAPTER 4

EMBODIED METHODS: A FULL-BODIED APPROACH TO QUALITATIVE OBSERVATION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I will discuss the development of an embodied methodology and the findings this yielded. The method developed draws on scholarship that enhanced my ability to articulate embodied ways of understanding, and a literal *body of knowledge* that has been cultivated from years of dance training. I will begin by discussing scholars that provided a foundation to examine embodiment and the role it plays in everyday interactions. Next, I will describe the development of the embodied methodology used to observe and analyze the movements of each teacher. Then I will share vignettes from the study that aim to make vivid how each teacher embodied their teaching style, and what they communicated in the classroom.

Embodiment as Practice

The idea that the body is a “text” did not capture the ephemeral nature of movement, nor did it encapsulate the wide range of expression that the body contributes in communication. The way scholars discussed embodiment didn’t resonate with my own understanding of the term from studying dance. In my experience, embodiment was tethered to a deep engagement with the physical body and the various modes of expression, feeling, and understandings that can come from a developed practice of thinking and moving concurrently.

I was also skeptical of the “reading” of bodies done by scholars. Having spent the first part of my career studying multiple styles of dance, I was aware that the human body has movement vocabularies that are as varied and as rich as the hundreds of languages spoken across the planet. I questioned if bodies could be “read,” and if so, what skills, criteria, and methods

were being used to do these readings, and more importantly, what had scholars steeped in a Western tradition that sees the body as an accessory to the mind missed.

I found my own experience of embodiment resonated more closely with an Eastern understanding of the relationship between the mind and body. Japanese philosopher Yuasa Yasuo (1997) describes the mind/body relationship in Eastern philosophy. He writes,

...in the East one starts from the experiential assumption that the mind-body modality changes through the training of the mind and body by means of cultivation (*shugyō*) or training (*keiko*). Only after assuming this experiential ground does one ask what the mind-body relation is. That is, the mind-body issue is not simply a theoretical speculation but it is originally a practical lived experience (*taiken*), involving the mustering of one's whole mind and body. The theoretical is only a reflection of this lived experience. (p. 18)

In an Eastern approach, an embodied practice is a necessary component of understanding. One doesn't acquire an experiential understanding without a method for cultivating this kind of knowledge, and if one doesn't engage the body, then understanding is purely theoretical.

This idea of needing a physical practice to cultivate embodied awareness was something I found lacking in the scholarship on corporality outside of a subset of research in the Social Sciences that used participatory methods to research explicitly physical activities. Kimberly Powell (2006) writes specifically about what her embodied participation in taiko drumming added to her study. Initially, Powell intended to observe the drummers, but they insisted she participate in the physical experience of drumming. The taiko drumming group had been studied before, and they felt that past researchers had failed to understand and articulate the embodied and physical nature of the art form. After several weeks of participating in the learning process, she stepped out of a participatory role in order to more clearly observe the context and culture of taiko drumming, but she found "...my participant observation in and of taiko required a new

theoretical framework that challenges the mind/body dichotomy present in all areas of our society...” (Powell, 2006, p. 38).

This idea that the body has its own unique form of intelligence that can be actively cultivated is elaborated on by philosopher Richard Shusterman. He uses the term somaesthesia to describe his investigation into the importance of bodily knowledge in our daily lives. He defines somaesthesia as “the critical study and meliorative cultivation of how we experience and use the living body (or soma) as a site of sensory appreciation (aesthetics) and creative self-fashioning” (Shusterman, 2008, p. 1). It is a meliorative study because this form of knowledge has often been under acknowledged and theorized. Shusterman (2008) alludes to this in his account of practical somaesthesia (one of three branches) when he suggests,

Virtually no attention is directed toward examining and sharpening the consciousness of one’s actual bodily feelings and actions so that we can deploy such somatic reflection to know ourselves better and achieve a more perceptive somatic self-consciousness to guide us towards better self-use. (p. 6)

Shusterman views the body is an integral part of our lives and its absence from not only scholarship, but also its lack of acknowledgement in our everyday experience, inhibits clear thinking. He suggests that in order to be able to think and write well, one needs to be able to sit comfortably with good posture. He advocates somatic training techniques like Feldenkrais and Alexander Technique as physical practices that are aimed at cultivating efficient use of the body and this will enhance one’s everyday life and existence.

Shusterman’s view emphasizes that the efficient use of the body is essential to clearer thinking, which is a powerful step forward in reimagining the role of the body in scholarship. However, he fails to acknowledge the body as having the capacity for its own unique form of intelligence. Although Shusterman’s view certainly embraces a more holistic relationship between the mind and body, the trace-marks of Descartes are present in his view as he suggests

that the one of the primary reasons for becoming more aware of the body is it allows for more efficient thinking. Shusterman sees the body and mind to be interwoven, yet there is still a whiff of the body being subservient to the important task of thinking.

This is evident when Shusterman (2004) states that the disciplines of dance and physical education would not adequately do justice to the theoretical side of somaesthetics because they lack the mental and reflective properties needed to sustain a practice worthy of exploration. I would argue that disciplines with an explicitly physical exploration of bodily intelligence—like dance—not only have highly developed methods for training an intelligent body, but also have the ability illuminate the ways in which bodily intelligence differs from a more analytical or theoretical approach to knowing. Crossley (2007) refers to this in his reference to the importance of studying the process of learning embodied activities like maui thai (Thai boxing). It is through observing a novice learning from an expert that the intricacies of embodied knowledge are revealed. Shusterman underestimates the amount of embodied reflection that is inherent in explicitly physical activity, like dance or sports, perhaps because the reflection is not only verbal, but primarily experiential and felt.

A key blank spot in the literature on corporality is the development of embodied practices that would train or cultivate an experiential understanding of embodiment. Many scholars that are highly aware of the body's importance in everyday activities, such as anthropologists, see the body as an essential part of human interaction, but don't see the necessity for an embodied method. For instance, when students asked anthropologists Csordas (1999) how to study embodiment, he responded by saying,

There is no special kind of data or a special method for eliciting such data, but a methodological attitude that demands attention to bodiliness even in purely verbal data such as written text or oral interview. (p. 148)

According to Csordas, applying a methodological attitude towards the body creates the conditions necessary to see the body. I agree with Csordas, that fostering an awareness of the body is a critical step in illuminating its role in everyday interactions, but I am yet to be convinced that this is more than a first step in acknowledging the importance of bodily intelligence. I was interested in what could be learned from participating in an activity, or as Crossley (2007) suggests, observing someone learning a physically embodied task to better understand how a teacher/expert helps break down complex actions.

In this study, I was drawn to look at the role of movement and the body in everyday activities like teaching, rather than explicitly physical activities like boxing, dancing, or taiko drumming. I was curious to explore what my body—one that has been trained in several different dance forms—might bring to one’s understanding of the embodied dimensions in activities where body is in the background, or not explicitly examined. I was equally interested in developing a method that could look at the body on its own terms—a participatory research model to illuminate the embodied aspects of activities that do not have explicit physical training requirements—like teaching.

What is a Body of Knowledge

In this section, I will discuss literature that related to and expanded my understanding of the present but often ubiquitous nature of bodily knowledge. Key to this understanding is Polanyi’s (1966) work on the *tacit dimension*. Polanyi (1966) begins his book *The Tacit Dimension* with “I shall reconsider human knowledge by starting from the fact that *we can know more than we can tell*” (p. 4, italics original). He uses the example of being able to spot a friend in a crowded room within seconds, but when asked to describe how one distinguished their friend from the crowd, it is difficult to articulate—the individual just knows their friend.

Polanyi's identification of the tacit dimension—a dimension of knowing that can elude articulation through language—is important because it illuminates an intelligence that is in use everyday but often isn't acknowledged.

Polanyi's idea that we can know more than we can tell resonated with my experience in the performing arts and teaching. It acknowledges a knowing that is not about careful and thoughtful analysis, but rather a knowing that is felt and expressed in the present. For instance, a teacher knowing when to use a big voice to grab students' attention and when a whisper is more effective, or in dance how long to hold the ending moment before stepping forward to bow. This kind of tacit knowledge is inherently embodied, and often when you ask people to analyze their actions, they respond with "it just felt right." As Thomas (2003) pointed out in her interviews with college age dancers learning a new style of moving, the students could feel their bodies learning and acclimating to this new style, but it was difficult to articulate. The dancers gauged their progress by how the movement felt in their bodies, and knew they had mastered it when it felt right. A bodily intelligence was actively being formed through the reflective practice of repeating the movements several times—each time getting closer and closer to what they had observed.

Dance scholar Sue Stinson (2004) brings an alternative way of understanding the "intelligent" use of the body. She came to understand through her experience of teaching dance that "dance is not what we do, but how we do it. It is a state of consciousness involving full engagement and awareness, attending to the inside" (Stinson, 2004, p. 158). Stinson identifies "attending to the inside" as integral to a state of consciousness that is necessary to dance. She highlights that the study of movement is premised on the "how" or the qualitative nature of movement. Stinson's quote above also suggests a method for studying movement—that one

needs to bring conscious awareness to the body in order to study an everyday movement. In other words, the body has an intelligence of its own that can be studied by attending to it. Unlike Csordas, Stinson sees the active engagement of the body as necessary to study movement, not just observation. She concludes that in her definition “the aesthetic experience of dancing can only come when we move with concentration and awareness; it is this which transforms everyday movement into dancing” (Stinson, 2004, p. 158).

Although an outsider often sees dance as a form of art that uses the body as the medium of expression, it is also a highly developed method for training embodied knowledge. There are many other ways of cultivating a nuanced understanding of the body, but Arnold (2005) recognizes dance as a unique form of training that educates an inner kinesthetic knowing. He writes, “It is in the doing (not saying) of the dance that sensory acuity is sharpened and kinesthetic flow patterns are refined. In short, it is by becoming educated as a dancer that the person finds and experiences her somatic self and with it an opportunity for aesthetic gratification” (Arnold, 2005 p. 62). Two key points in Arnold’s statement are: first, dance is a medium of expression that not only cultivates an inner awareness, but also develops a more nuanced understanding of the body, and second, dance operates in the aesthetic, qualitative dimension. Both of these aspects of dance were integral to creating an embodied methodology that would allow me to study the movement patterns of the teachers in the study, as well as be attuned to the qualitative aesthetics of the classroom.

The concept of the tacit dimension gives voice to this level of knowing that often is under-acknowledged in the research on embodiment and incredibly important in fields like teaching. It is the difference between a teacher who is responsive to their student’s facial expressions and slows down the lesson when she see frowns or looks of confusion, and the

teacher that delivers information to the students as if reading it from a list. Often times, embodied or tacit knowledge is attributed to a person having a good personality or is particularly talented and receptive, but it is rarely seen as a form of knowledge that one could cultivate. Dance, as well as theater, offers an interesting framework for understanding the tacit dimension because both work within the ephemeral performative world of the tacit. The performing arts seek to communicate not only through words, but also through the affect, tone, pace, and visceral language of the body in motion. In order to communicate in this form, dancers and actors must cultivate sensitivities to the ubiquitous realm of the tacit.

In this study, I wanted to apply the concentration and awareness of a dancer to uncover the physicality and nuance of everyday movement. In the following section, I will discuss the process of developing a method for studying the movement patterns of teachers and what the findings of these investigations revealed, not only about each teacher's movement style, but also the connection between the embodied and the aesthetic nature of each classroom.

The Body as a Medium for Studying Embodiment

I began to develop a method that used the physical body as a medium or instrument for processing field notes while studying a college level dance class. I found that in order to write rich descriptions of what I was observing in the class, I needed to do the movements with my own body. In other words, I needed to engage the body in studying the movements before I could find language that would describe what I was observing. I continued to use this method in qualitative research classes when assigned to observe non-dance spaces because it allowed me to engage my bodily knowledge and articulate the embodied interactions I observed in everyday situations; for instance, how close people stood next to one another at music events, their postures, and embodied reactions to the music. It also lured me into observing not only with my

mind, but also to attune to the tacit dimension full of aesthetic qualities that are difficult to parse and articulate. However, I found this process much easier when I was observing movement patterns because they attuned me to the qualitative realm.

This study allowed me to further develop and refine a method for using the body as a medium for analyzing embodiment. To understand the teaching styles of Alexandra and Julie, I needed to develop a movement practice that would allow me to learn from the inside out. I approached the study of each teacher as if I was a dancer, and tried to replicate, with as much precision as possible, the pacing, timing, and affect of their performative styles in the classroom.

The process of acquiring embodied knowledge is ubiquitous. Through repetition and reflection, the person learning a new skill begins to get the rhythm and feeling of an action. In the following section, I will detail a four-step process I call *embodied translations* in which I use the body as a tool for analyzing field notes into written language. The method was largely developed from my experiential knowledge from dance, but deepening my understanding of this process and articulating it into language was greatly helped by Polanyi (1966) and Eco (2001). Polanyi provided key concepts to delineate the two stages of learning embodied skills: dwelling and interiorization. These concepts mapped onto my experiences of learning dance, and provided a theory and language to undergird the experiential. Eco offered a description of the translation process as related to written and spoken languages that resonated with the challenges I faced when moving from the visceral expression of movement into the literal language of written text. Embodied translations are the result of moving back and forth through the four-part process of dwelling, and interiorization, centralized in the physical body and then moving into transcription and translation, which are rooted in the analytic and linguistic realms of communication.

Moving and Writing

Many embodied and oral learning traditions use imitation or mimicry in the initial phases of learning. For instance, the teacher performs a sequence of actions or sounds, and the student mimics what the teacher does in response. Powell (2004) points out that,

Typically, educators regard such teaching process as repetition and mimesis as outdated, Draconian pedagogy that yields little more than rote learning, as exemplified in the now common colloquialism, ‘drill and kill.’ But dance educators, music educators, and anthropologists conceive of these processes as critical to linking bodily experience to thought and action. (p. 49)

Imitation trains keen observers. As the learner moves from gross observations to more nuanced, they become more skilled in the movement language they are learning. Mimicking and imitation are the initial phase in learning in a skill or craft. By replicating the form observed as closely as possible, students begin to get the general structure or form of what they aim to later embody.

I began the embodied transcription process with imitation. While observing the teachers in the classroom, I would make notes to myself on common postures, gestures, and movement patterns, as well as specific movement sequences that enacted or in some way physically communicated a concept the teacher was explaining. For instance, Alexandra would use the distance between her hands to visually communicate when the gap in a margin call would widen or narrow.

Next, when writing up my observations, I would attempt to mimic what I had observed with my own body as closely as possible. Sometimes I would stand in front of a mirror to see how much my attempt at imitation looked like the teacher, but mostly I focused on getting the feeling—or the energetic flow, the postural shape, and the pacing down correctly.

However, imitation is only the first stage in embodied learning. Polanyi (1966) offers the term *dwelling*—the act of being present to one's physical action—as an essential first step in

embodied learning (p. 17). Dwelling suggests a deeper engagement of the learner becoming present or aware of one's action—a step beyond merely repeating what one has observed. In my own experience as a dancer, learning new movement combinations begins with mimicking what the teacher performed. Once I understood the basic form, I switched to dwelling in the movement by bringing awareness to how my individual body performed the movement.

Dwelling is a phase of translating the actions observed into one's own idiosyncratic physical body. For instance, one of my formative teachers was a petite man that could move with incredible speed. It was a challenge to translate his movements into my tall and lanky body while maintaining the same rhythmic timing. It is common in dance for the teacher and students to “co-dwell” performing the movement phrase together. This allows for a kind of kinetic osmosis as the student soaks up the affect of the movements by allowing the teacher's style to enter into their own body.

The classes observed challenged more traditional methods of embodied learning. In my dance training, I was able to experientially practice the movements with the teacher, but in a classroom where learning is done sitting in chairs it became more difficult. In the classroom environment, I could observe the teachers movements and take notes, but there wasn't an opportunity to “co-dwell” in the movement with the teacher.

In the first few classes I observed, I frantically wrote down descriptions of movements, vocal intonations, and drew stick figures to jog my memory. I had a hard time finding, for lack of a better word, the flow of the teacher's movements. My attempt at embodying their styles was mere imitation or mimicry. I couldn't embody the way that each participant used energy and weight in their movements, nor could I understand the pacing and timing of the way they moved.

One day during Alexandra’s class, I decided to quit taking notes and *watch with my body* or “co-dwell” as much as I possibly could while sitting in my seat and observing. Watching with the body entailed a shift in focus. Instead of observing and taking notes, I began to let my body connect kinetically with the teacher. This required “listening” with my upper body and chest area because this is the area of the body that most frequently moves or gestures when teaching. I would allow for the subtlest movements of the upper body—hopefully not discernable to those sitting around me—that would allow my body to respond to the weight shifts, pacing and get the general feel of how Alexandra was moving. I began to get “the feel” for Alexandra’s movements and vocal inflections through this process of *watching with my body*.

Polanyi (1966) identifies the next phase in embodied learning as interiorization, or the ability to put what one intellectually understands into practice. Polanyi (1966) cites math as an example writing, “This is why mathematical theory can be learned only by practicing its application: its true knowledge lies in our ability to use it” (p. 17). Interiorization is a process of moving from a conscious awareness of the details of a particular movement to one that is unconscious—the arms, legs, torso, head, fingertips, coalesce into a holistic movement that feels right. The next phase was to go home and process my observations by interiorizing the movements I had observed in my own body until I could find a version of the actions that captured the essence of each teacher’s movements. As ballerina Makarova suggested, I needed to “ingest” the teachers movements and “make them part of” who I am (Homans, 2010, p. xix).

It was helpful to move back and forth between watching with body, and writing notes on common gestures, sayings, or specific ways that each participant embodied their teaching. At home, I would meticulously reconstruct common gestures and movement patterns that specifically illustrated a concept discussed in class. In the process of reconstructing what I

observed, I often had questions that were unanswered from my notes that I could bring to the next class. For instance, one of my questions was, what is the position of Julie's head when she listens to a student? Over time, I began to interiorize each teacher's stylistic tendencies to the extent that I felt a connection between my performance and theirs.

This process of imitation, to dwelling, to interiorization is common in the apprenticeship model of learning. Polanyi's (1966) points out that even when learning more intellectual activities, such as chess, players learn through rehearsing the games of masters in order to get a feel for the way experts think. Polanyi perceives that tuning into the tacit requires more than observation, but requires dwelling—or what Stinson (2004) describes as focused awareness—that we begin to understand the tacit and embodied dimension of experience. It was fortunate that I could observe a full semester of classes because it allowed me enough time to fully dwell in the teacher's movements and to refine my own interiorization of their movement styles. Not unlike a chess player learning from a master, I was learning different ways to embody teaching through co-dwelling and analyzing the movements of Julie and Alexandra.

From transcription to translation. The time that I spent exploring my field notes and recollections through movement was integral to gaining a deep understanding of the teachers' embodied styles from the inside-out. However the result of my explorations needed to be expressed through writing, a somewhat dubious task, but one that is necessary to be part of an academic discussion. In the following section, I will describe the latter stages of the four-part method: transcription and translation.

I was greatly inspired by Jennifer Homans (2010) book *Apollo's Angels*. Her impetus for writing a comprehensive book on ballet history came from her experience of being a professional dancer, and her questions about why taking a ballet class from a teacher steeped in the French

ballet tradition felt so different than a Russian teacher. Homans describes the differences in styles of ballet “were not merely aesthetic: they *felt* different” (p. xviii, italics original). In the process of writing her book on ballet history, Homans “went back to the studio and tried to perform what we know of the dances—I did the steps myself and watched them performed by others in an attempt to analyze and understand what dancers thought they were doing and why” (p. xxiv). Her writing captured the aesthetic and stylistic differences between forms that honored the embodied traditions from which they came from. Homans captures this sentiment beautifully when she describes ballet “as an art of memory, not history.... Thus ballet repertory is not recorded in books or libraries: it is held instead in the bodies of dancers” (p. xix). Memories of a dance performance also live on in the minds of the audience, but a sensory understanding of the movements is housed in within the highly trained bodies of dancers.

In my own study, I wanted the writing to be informed by a rich engagement with the embodied styles of each teacher. Rather than describe what I observed, I hoped to gain an experiential understanding of the qualitative or aesthetics of each classroom studied. David Abram (1996) in his book *The Spell of the Sensuous* describes how articulating experience into language can abstract and distance oneself from the body. He writes,

By linguistically defining the surrounding world as a determinate set of objects, we cut our conscious, speaking selves off from the spontaneous life of our sensing bodies...If, on the other had, we wish to describe a particular phenomenon without repressing our direct experience, then we cannot avoid speaking of the phenomenon as an active, animate entity with which we find ourselves engaged. (p. 56)

Abram’s work directly speaks to the difference between a representational approach to embodiment that has brought discourse and theories from other fields to the body, in comparison to an approach that seeks to express direct experience through language.

My writing process evolved from transcribing to translation. Initially, I would work from my field notes to interiorize the movements described. Once I felt confident in my embodied performance of the movements, I wrote a detailed analysis. For instance,

The right arm hung from the shoulder, the elbow bent at a 90-110 degree angle, the palm facing towards the body but slightly up, fingers relaxed. The arm began to circle and the hand initiated the movement, but the actual circular motion comes from the movement of the elbow joint. The emphasis is on the upward movement of the palm with a quick action of the hand upwards and then a slightly slower controlled descent. The overall circling is small in range taking place in front of the abdomen moving from approximately the waistline at the bottom of the movement, to the sternum at the top of the circle.

After a few weeks of writing detailed descriptions, I began to question how I would actually use these in the dissertation. I wondered what a detailed analysis would provide a reader in regards to better understanding how teachers *use* movement in the classroom, and feared that these analyses were too detailed to provide a better understanding of what the movement looked like. These descriptions were not only tedious to read but also to write. I found the data produced by these embodied transcriptions met the same objections I had to other forms of analysis mentioned earlier, like a gesture catalog.

I continued to process observations by dwelling and interiorizing movements in my own body, but instead of writing detailed transcriptions, I worked to translate my experience and observations into language that would capture the *connotation* of what was communicated through movement.

My understanding of the difference between transcription and translation was influenced by Umberto Eco's (2001) discussion of the process of translation. He posits, "Good translation is not concerned with denotation but with the connotation of words" (Eco, 2001, p. 8).

Connotations are the non-literal senses of a word and often are closely tied to the culture for which it originates. Eco suggests, "...translating is not only connected with linguistic

competence, but with intertextual, psychological and narrative competence” (p. 13). Rather than trying to transcribe what I was observing, I attempted to write descriptions that encapsulated the feeling, tone, and overall affect of the movement within the context of the situation. The write-ups from my field notes began to read more like this,

Sometimes Alexandra punctuates a point by making a little 1/8 turn to stop. In this case she says, “let’s see if I am right.” She takes a few steps to the podium, makes a little spin and stops by bringing her two feet together and then with some aplomb hits the key to trigger the answer to appear on the power point.

In these translations, I tried to find language that expressed the intention, context, and energetic performance gleaned from my observations. I wanted to use words to, as best as possible, communicate the drama and performative aspects of each teacher’s style. This led me to explore poetic imagery and metaphor to help the reader visualize what I observed. For instance,

Alexandra’s hands have a gravitas. Not unlike Michelangelo’s sculpture of *David* they seem large in comparison to her body, but not as if they don’t belong. They are strong and articulate. They seem to follow the energy of her voice, but with a more grounded weighty quality. Her fingers often hold a gentle curve as if holding a melon. When she extends her arms, it is as if the air has some weight, or rather, she acknowledges the weight of her arms and body.

In contrast her voice is bright, fluttery, and at times explosive. She speaks from the front of the mouth, enunciating and hurtling every word through her teeth. Every word matters in her class and is clearly spoken hitting all of the consonants. Her voice seems to come from her throat rather than the belly, and at times it sounds strained as if her throat is constricted as she attempts to be louder causing a somewhat shrill tone to her voice.

She often stands with one or both hands placed on her lower back. This creates an open chest—confident, assured and also casual. As she lectures she stands for brief periods with one hand behind her hip on the lower curve of the spine, the leg turned in and the weight pressed back. She uses the other hand to gesture. There is an informality to this stance—a kind of ‘lets get down to work attitude’ that is conveyed through her posture. Alexandra is gregarious. You can imagine her on the trading floor shouting out numbers, or being hardball enough to be part of the boys club. She is not prim, she is powerful.

These descriptions seemed to capture the essence of each teacher and what it felt like to be in a classroom permeated with the perfume of their presence. In contrast to Alexandra's assertive, fast-paced style of teaching, Julie's teaching style was one of magnetism and connection.

When Julie enters the classroom, it is as if someone pulled the doors open for her. She glides to the center of room like an actress taking her spot in the light. Her smile is wide and radiant.

She sits on a table at the front of the class and swings her legs. As her eyes scan the room, she takes in the faces and gives little waves and smiles to students in the class that she knows. There is a quality of seeing, rather than just looking that Julie uses at the beginning of class. She lets her gaze rest for a moment on individuals with the slightest nod to acknowledge she has looked. When she is directing class, her presence is like an embrace—it draws you in, and you want to be part of her inner circle. But when she solicits students to talk she recedes into herself directing her focus on who is talking. Her face becomes less animated, and her head nods as she makes slight adjustments of the neck to respond to what the student is saying.

Julie's voice is melodic. She projects without being loud. Her words come out with feathery edges that smooth one sound into the next, but always clear and articulate. There is something calming about her voice. It is soft without being meek, steady but never booming.

Julie is both goofy and graceful at the same time—she is all smooth edges, supple, and full of sweetness.

The descriptions above were generated through a process of dwelling in the movements of the teacher until I could physically interiorize them into my own body. Next, I wrote meticulous reconstructions of the movements I had interiorized. It was not until I felt I could physically process my observations that I could move into writing translations that felt as if they captured the feeling of the movements. The process of doing an embodied transcription takes time; however, it was invaluable in gaining an understanding of the teacher's style, persona, and the ways they used the body to illustrate and communicate their ideas to the classroom.

To fully embrace the body as a source of knowledge, it is important to utilize the knowledge a body can bring—a visceral and feeling way of knowing that lives in the tacit

dimension. I found that through the process described above—from dwelling to interiorization which eventuated in written transcriptions and later translations—I built a bridge between the visceral and ephemeral realm of the tacit to the linguistic and analytic world of scholarship.

The Body as a Barometer

The time I spent developing methods to attend to the embodied dimensions of teaching in the classroom had additional consequences. Many other aspects of the relationship between performance and teaching called for my attention during the study, and utilizing techniques like *watching with my body* attuned me to what I began to refer to in my notes as the “barometric pressure” in the room. Not unlike walking outside and feeling the air heavy with humidity knowing that it will most likely rain soon, the classroom also had an atmospheric pressure—sometimes crisp and clear and other times heavy with fog. In the following section, I will describe how being attuned to the body lead me to findings that are relevant to how the atmosphere of the classroom relates to learning.

For instance, on the days that Alexandra would start the class with a 10-minute pop quiz, you could feel the intensity of direct focus. Students tapped their pencils and feet as they waited to get the quiz. Once the quiz began, the room had an energized stillness. It was as if nothing else in the world existed but the quiz—each student creating a little insular bubble of concentration as they hunched down staring hard at the paper. Sighs, sniffs, the rattle of fingers punching calculator keys, and pencils scribbling on paper punctuated the silence. Occasionally, a student would look up and shift their eyes to the quiz next to them only to be reminded that Alexandra makes two different quizzes so they are not tempted to cheat off one another. It struck me that in a world where so much information is at our fingertips, that taking a quiz is a unique experience, because it requires that each individual *know* the information, not just how to *find* it.

The pressure in the room during quizzes was palpable. I felt cautious when observing not to look around the room too eagerly because I didn't want to disrupt anyone's focus. It was as if my roaming eyes and thoughts might disrupt the joint concentration of the students. Once the quiz was over and the students were exchanging papers to grade one another's work, the tension would lift and the room would fill with light chatter as students made comments, little sounds, or facial expression to communicate how they thought they did on the quiz—sighs with raised eyebrows, heads shaking while looking down in dismay, and shoulder shrugs with sideways smiles.

The quiz is one example of my observations about barometric pressure. These sensory observations related to Polanyi's concept of the tacit dimension and seemed to be ever present in the classroom. Teachers respond to the general energy in the room improvising new plans on the spot to energize a class of sleepy college students, or in the case above, give students an opportunity to focus intensely. Pop quizzes served an academic purpose as well as an experiential; it was an opportunity for students to practice and find out if they truly knew the material well enough to use their own understanding to find the answers. It is this tacit dimension—the things we know, but don't always articulate through language but instead absorb sensorially—that sometimes is missing in accounts of classroom teaching because it is difficult to express through written language.

Being sensitive to the barometric atmosphere of the classroom also led me to observations that relate to general issues teachers face, like how to embrace technology in the classroom without it being a distraction. These are not new questions and many discussions and articles exist on the subject. Although this was not a focus of my study, my explicit attention to

the aesthetic and qualitative dimension of teaching illuminated the effects of being in a classroom with students web-surfing and the scattered attention that resulted.

For instance, I found it significantly more challenging to observe Julie. I would estimate that the majority of the students—75% or more—were on their laptops or phones during class on an average day. The flickering screens would sometimes divert my attention. For instance, one day I was distracted by three girls sitting in front of me; two were shopping online during the entire class and the third was doing homework for another class. For the first month of the study, I made a point to sit in different seats in the classroom, but I began sitting in the front to reduce being distracted by students sitting in front of me. Yet, I continued to find it difficult to hone in on the details of Julie's movements. I speculated two reasons as to why it was more challenging to observe Julie's movement style. First, in comparison to finance, which has numeric data that is easy to communicate through the body—hands widening or coming closer together to suggest the relative distance of numbers from one another—public relations was less quantitative, lending itself to less didactic gestures. Second, Julie's movement patterns were more melodic, where as Alexandra's were more percussive, making it easier to delineate one gesture from the next. However, a third, and potentially more powerful reason was discovered as I continued to probe this question in my observations.

Midway through the semester, Julie brought in three case studies for the students to discuss, and requested they shut their laptops. For me, it was as if the fog had lifted, and I was able to focus clearly on Julie. The room felt crisp and alive. When Julie asked a question you could feel the collective gears of the class thinking about the issue. The auditorium felt different when the class directed their attention to Julie. Rather than looking down at a laptop and only half listening, the students gave their full attention to Julie and the evolving discussion. It was

easier to discern Julie's movement patterns. I speculate that this was not only easier to see because of the lack of distraction, but also that Julie could be more intentional in her embodiment because she was receiving the student's full attention and could physically respond to them.

I had not fully understood the levels of distraction that web surfing brought to the class until it had stopped. The first level was the flickering of changing images on the laptops that caught my eye. However, it was the second level of distraction that was more ubiquitous and perhaps more insidious. You could feel the scattered attention in the room, as if the many conversations going on in cyberspace created a dull roar of ideas and voices not pertaining to class. It had the feeling of being on a crowded subway—there is a collective experience happening, yet everyone is trying to avoid concentrating or focusing on the present moment. It made me realize how much energy collective thinking can generate, and how the lack of it can diffuse even the most diligent observers focus.

Conclusion

There is a cartoon of a student sleeping with their head on a textbook and the caption reads something to the affect of, "you can't learn through osmosis." However, I found that dwelling was an integral aspect of soaking up the tacit dimension of the class and many of my embodied findings infiltrated my body not unlike the process of osmosis. Yet, this required experimentation with how to draw upon my literal *body of knowledge* gained from years of studying dance. My dance training provided tools and techniques to analyze and articulate the ephemeral and qualitative, drawing on the sensorial and visceral feelings of movement to write descriptions from the inside out. By attuning to my own embodiment the qualitative and

experiential dimensions of teaching came to the forefront. My body became a valuable medium to capture the tacit and qualitative aspects of class.

Further, the embodied aspects of teaching are deeply connected to issues at the heart of teaching including how teachers communicate through the body bringing the curriculum to life, and how they use the energetic information from students to inform their own reactions. Broadly construed, the embodied relates directly to classroom management, but is much more. The way a teacher uses his or her body to perform the curriculum greatly affects the students' experience of learning. As Sarason (1999) points out, "the teacher literally creates an ambience on the stage of learning" (p. 3). In the next chapter, I will explore the relationship between the performance of teaching and how that relates to the structural design of the class drawing connections between the *what* and *how* in teaching.

CHAPTER 5

FROM PAGE TO STAGE: THE ART OF ORCHESTRATING THE CLASSROOM

In Anne Bogart's (2007) book *And Then You Act: Making Art in An Unpredictable World* she writes, "The translation of page to stage is the translation of the logic of ideas and words into the logic of time and space" (p. 12). The elements of time and space are inherent to the performing arts. They are the canvas that directors, choreographers, filmmakers, and performance artists create upon. Teaching is a performing art in the sense that it is both temporal and spatial. The classroom is the stage in which the teacher performs or enacts their curriculum in front of a student audience. Some may stand at the podium reading from lecture notes, others move around, gesture to power points, call on students, but all must translate the goals, objectives, and lessons on the syllabus into the performative realm of time and space.

In this chapter, I will discuss how the teachers in this study orchestrated or translated the curriculum of the course into the space of the classroom. Rubin (1985) describes this as the "how" of teaching. He describes "what" as being related to the curriculum or class agenda and the "why" as the philosophy that informs the practice. The "how" is the qualitative or aesthetic dimension of teaching in action. Rubin characterizes teachers that have a mastery over the "how" of teaching as exhibiting artistry.

In order to better understand the aesthetic and artistic aspects of teaching, I used a framework that could accommodate for the dimensions of space and time, as well as the curricular structure of the class. Choreography seemed an apt choice for three reasons. First, unlike in theater where a director typically begins with a script, a choreographer, like a teacher, creates the structure of his or her class from scratch, especially in higher education. Second, a choreographic framework accentuates the role of the body in teaching. The basic elements of

choreography are space (the area in which the body moves), time (the speed or pace of how the body moves), and energy (the quality of the movement). The moving body is a central component of choreography and using it as a framework for looking at teaching provided a language to articulate and analyze the role that movement plays in the classroom. Third, choreographers oversee the entire aesthetic of a performance. Although many think a choreographer's primary role is creating movement sequences, they also select sound/music, lighting, costumes, etc. that support their artistic vision and create the ambience for the dance to flourish within. Hence, a choreographic framework allows one to see the multiple layers that influence teaching in the classroom like the relationships between the curricular structure, a teacher's performance, the power points and other media used to communicate ideas, and the responsiveness of students.

A choreographic framework allowed me to see both the performative dimensions of teaching, but within the larger structural goals of the class. This helped me distinguish good performance from the curriculum. To use an analogy from theater, it enabled me to determine the difference between a good play mired with bad acting, and conversely, an underdeveloped plot saved by the excellence of sensitive actors.

In this chapter, I will move from a discussion on the relationship between the performing arts and teaching, to what the artistic styles of Alexandra and Julie communicated implicitly to students. In the first section, I will discuss relevant literature that explores teaching style, or the ways in which teachers communicate the content of the class to the students. Next, I will provide a description of the first day of each participant's class to illustrate the performative styles of Alexandra and Julie. This will be followed by a discussion of the implicit curriculum and what was communicated through each professor's approach. In the next section, I will relate

observations from the study to Dewey's (1902) discussion of traditional and progressive education and the complex but interconnected nature of the curriculum and the performance of teaching.

Artistry in Teaching

In this section, I will discuss three approaches to exploring the relationship between the performing arts and teaching. This is not to be confused with teacher performance—a term used in evaluating the effectiveness of teachers—but rather, the actual act of standing up in the classroom and presenting information to the students. One view is based on the work of Sarason (1999) who compares the field of education to the performing arts, specifically looking at theater. He discusses the contrasts between the preparation and training of teachers and actors, the role of the actor and teacher within the institutional contexts they navigate, and what education could glean from the field of theater to address the performative nature of teaching. Whereas Sarason's work looks more generally at comparing the fields of education and the performing arts, the second view takes a more specific "actor" centered approach and aims to help teachers become better performers by making their classes more entertaining (Tauber & Mester, 2007). I will also discuss some of the objections to an actor-centered approach to teaching (Pineau, 1994). The third view is based on Rubin's (1985) work on the role of artistry in teaching. Rubin's approach was to study teachers that exhibit a level of mastery in the classroom that would be considered artistry. His work is rooted in observing several teachers and trying to identify what artistic teachers do in the classroom that makes them distinct. Rubin's work illuminates the variation in teaching styles employed by artistic teachers and the challenges in identifying one way to be an artistic teacher.

Seymour Sarason (1999) in his book *Teaching as a Performance Art* focuses on the practices and institutional structures of the performing arts in comparison to that of teachers and schools. He draws many parallels between being a teacher and a performer. For instance, both teachers and actors are bound by institutional decisions and are “directed” by higher powers. Performers and teachers share the broader goal of communicating to an audience, but also must help students and viewers alike connect to material. Sarason (1999) is concerned that education,

...glosses over the nature and complexity of the phenomenology of performing: How and why it requires a teacher to think, feel, intuit and flexibly adapt to students’ individuality, and to do all of this for the purpose of engendering understanding and as a sense of growth. When we say that performers seek both to instruct and *move* an audience, we mean that the teacher as performing artist has in some positive way altered the students’ conception of the relationship between sense of self and the significance of the subject matter, i.e., an increase in competence. (p. 48, italics original)

Sarason points to the lack of emphasis in education on the relational and performative nature of teaching and makes an important point about the necessity for teachers to *move* their students towards greater understanding—move indicating making the material personally relate to the student audience. Sarason makes vivid that teachers need to think about how to present material in a way that engages students in self-growth and discovery, rather than merely covering concepts in the syllabus.

One of the major critiques of focusing on the performance of teaching in education is that it runs the risk of becoming “edutainment,” or information presented in an entertaining way that lacks true substance. Pineau (1994) fears “the claim that teaching is performance will evoke nothing beyond the facile acknowledgement that a certain theatricality can help hold the attention of drowsy undergraduates in early morning or late afternoon classes” (p. 5). She suggests one of the reasons the field of education has been critical of an artistic or performance approach to education is because it has largely been based on comparing the role of a teacher to

an actor. She describes the actor-centered approach as “Performance is reduced to style, and further, to a particular style of enthusiastic theatricality employed to energize one’s communicative behaviors” (p. 6).

Pineua’s critique is apt given some of the literature that aims to develop the performance styles of teachers is laden with prescriptive advice towards how to use humor, dramatic readings, and role-playing to boost enthusiasm in the classroom. Tauber and Mester’s (2007) book *Acting Lessons for Teachers* identifies enthusiasm as the most important quality for teachers to express and gives a variety of examples on how a teacher might spice up their classroom performance. This type of discussion fails to recognize the wide variety of teaching styles that may not emphasize enthusiasm but be quite successful at engaging students. If taken at face value, books of this sort can simplify the role of performance in teaching to that of a cheerleader, rather than acknowledging the complex nature of both good performance and teaching. It accentuates the exterior veneer of performance, without an discussion of the context, audience interaction, and development of self that true performance training entails.

Louis Rubin (1985) in his book *Artistry and Teaching* looks specifically at what artistic teachers do. He provides many descriptions and criteria for artistic teachers such as, flair, originality, master craftsman, discerning judgment, and extraordinary perception, but boils it down to “artistry implies human accomplishment that is unusual in its proficiency and cleverness, and greatly superior to conventional practice” (Rubin, 1985, p. 16). Rubin acknowledges there is not one approach to artful and effective teaching. Although the skills common to effective teachers has been explored and articulated in the literature, not all teachers exemplify all of the characteristics on the list.

Rubin (1985) attributes four primary characteristics to the artistic teachers he studied. He writes,

...first, they made a great many teaching decisions intuitively; second, they had a strong grasp of their subject as well as a perceptive understanding of their students; third, they were secure in their competence and expected to be successful; and fourth, they were exceedingly imaginative. (Rubin, 1985, p. 17)

Rubin describes master teachers as individuals that can infuse teaching methods with a well-developed personal style. He reiterates throughout the book that style varies greatly from one good teacher to the next, but what is clear is that artistic teachers have developed their style through thoughtful choices about what methods, ideals, and information is important to provide for their students.

As Rubin (1985) points out, “The research on pedagogy describes the competencies and characteristics of skillful teachers. It tells us *what* should be done, but not *how* it should be done...The research on artistry...tells us a bit more about the ‘how’” (p. 91, italics original). This “how” or the aesthetic dimension of teaching can be challenging to articulate. As discussed in the previous chapter, the tacit dimension—what we know but cannot say—is an integral part of interactions and the way individuals understand the world around them. By using a choreographic framework, along with my work in embodied translations, I will focus on the “how” or the aesthetic style of each teacher studied. In the following section, I present vignettes detailing notable moments from the first day of each classroom to illustrate Alexandra and Julie’s embodied teaching styles. This is followed by a discussion on what can be gleaned from their performances in regards to the relationship between performance and the curriculum/design of the class.

First Impressions

The concept of teaching style relates to what Eisner (1979) identifies as the implicit curriculum or what is conveyed through the activates, structure, tone of voice, disposition, and the emphasis a teacher puts on certain aspects of class. In the following section, I will describe the first day of Alexandra and Julie’s class focusing on how each used their body to communicate with the students. I will move back and forth between the two classrooms in the narrative because the differences between the two examples illuminate the singularity of each participant. In the next section, I will discuss what each teacher is implicitly—or in some cases intentionally communicating—and its relevance to how students perceived the teacher.

Before the Class Begins

Alexandra sits casually leaning back in a tall office chair watching a live stream of Bloomberg Television on the computer monitor while the students see it on the projector screen. On the bottom half of the screen is a window with the international date and time counting up the hours, minutes, seconds, and right now it is 9:20:12 a.m. A handful of students, six or seven, are sitting near the front of the classroom at tables that seat two; some are watching the projection of Bloomberg, others are looking at their phones. Alexandra sits at the podium/technology cabinet on the right hand side of the room. She occasionally looks at her own phone, and smiles at a funny commercial. More students pour in until the class is almost full—about forty students distributed in five columns of tables that seat two. The room is relatively quiet; the students face forward bracing for what is to come. Finance 300 is notorious because it is difficult and students need to pass it before they can take other upper level courses.

At 9:29:30 a.m. on the international time at date clock, Alexandra stands, takes off her jacket and places it on the back of the chair, and at precisely 9:30:00 a.m. she hits a button on the

computer and the sounds of reporters squawking and ticker tapes running stops abruptly. The website for the class appears on the screen and class begins.

At 11:52 a.m. the lecture hall is full of chatter. Students stream in and greet people they know with smiles, waves, and hellos. The seats are partially filled with clumps of three and four students sitting together taking up about half of the approximately 200 seats. The hall is long and narrow 12 seats across and 17 rows back. There are no windows and wood paneling lines the walls partway up. At 11:55 a.m. the doors at the front of the lecture hall swing open and in walks Julie. She smiles, sets her stuff down on a table at the front of the room and scans the crowd. She gives little waves and says hello's to students she recognizes, and then sits on the table at the front of the auditorium and begins to swing her legs as she continues to scan the class. The room is full of chatter, but Julie catches the attention of the students in the first three rows when she asks if anyone went anywhere exciting over winter break. A student responds that she went to Mexico and Julie responds, "I love Mexico, but my husband never wants to go because he says it is too dangerous." She then leans forward to confide to a few students in the front row that she is "rockin' the hat" because she burnt her hair with a straightening iron and will be wearing hats until she can get it fixed.

She looks at her watch at 12:00 p.m., and says, "I'll give it a few more minutes," meaning she will wait to start class, because students might be late on the first day. At 12:02 p.m. she says, "Alrighty, let's get started" as she pushes herself off the desk and moves to the center of the room.

During the Class

At 9:30 a.m., the projector screen that once had Bloomberg Television playing now displays the course calendar. Every class session is mapped out with titles like “Financial Markets” and the accompanying power point can be clicked on to download. Deadlines for tests, group projects, and homework are noted on the schedule, and Alexandra carefully goes through each requirement: weekly homework, three midterms and a cumulative final, three group projects, and pop quizzes. The workload is daunting, and Alexandra tells the students that this class is “Finance through a fire hose, because the fun just keeps on coming.”

After systematically going through the calendar and basic guidelines for the class, Alexandra switches modes, and begins a section of the lecture she calls “eccentricities.” She explains that all teachers have expectations and pet peeves that are unique, and she wants to be up front about hers. First, she doesn’t accept late work and emphatically tells students that assignments need to be put in the mailbox on her office door, not in the general mailbox in the business building where anyone has access to it. Second, she doesn’t negotiate grades; they get what they earned. Alexandra then continues and gives them strategies for doing well in class. She suggests that students read the chapter before coming to class, and do the practice questions at the back of the book after class. Alexandra makes the distinction between “knowing” something and being able to “demonstrate” that you can do it, and suggests studying is not reading the book, but applying that knowledge through doing practice questions.

She ends her discussion on eccentricities by saying, “Class starts at 9:30. If you are late, please come in through the back door, so you don’t disturb your fellow classmates.” She also says, “if want to do something else, like surf the web or text on your phones, go someplace else to do it” because “ it hurts my feelings when you are not paying attention to me.” She says this

with an exaggerated frown mocking sadness. She ends by saying, “In finance, the fun never stops, so let’s get started,” and she begins a lecture on strategies for investing that takes up the final 45 minutes of class.

After getting off of the table, Julie takes center stage at the front of the auditorium and begins the class by asking, “How many of you have had a public relations course before,” and many students raise their hand. She asks a few more questions about what courses they have taken and then says, “Okay, what do you guys want to know?” She pauses for a second while looking out at the sea of students, and with a sly smile says, “No, I will tell you” indicating that she will go over the guidelines for the class.

But she doesn’t tell them just yet; she continues to ask them questions—what kinds of jobs do people in public relations do, and the definition of key terms, like what is a “public” and the difference between a “strategy” and a “goal.” She is quick to call on students as hands go up and leans on the first row of theater seats in the direction of the person talking.

She then asks again, “Okay so what else do you want to know?” She pauses, looks upwards, and nods her head as if checking off things she needs to let them know about the class. Then, she tells the students there will be two group projects—one based on building a P.R. campaign for clients she has recruited, and the second is a case study presentation. She advises students to email her if they want to be in specific groups, and she will assign the rest of the students randomly.

Julie says, “Okay, what else” and pulls out a piece of paper from her folder, scans it quickly, and announces, “Most of this stuff is on the class site,” but does not use the projector to show the students the class website. She then explains that if the weather is really bad, she might

not be able to make it into town because she lives in the country, but that rarely happens, but to check their email before class on bad weather days.

She asks students if there is anything they really want to cover. No one responds at first, and then a student says she wants to learn about the different agencies they could potentially work for, and Julie says she would be happy to Skype in alums and have them discuss their first jobs. She tells them she is “happy to bring people in and do what interests them as long as we can fit it into the schedule.”

She reiterates that everything they need—syllabus, group assignment prompts, etc.—are on the website, and they can look at it later. She then switches modes and says, “So here are some things you should know about me. I start out liking all of you. Some people say I have ‘pets’ but really the only thing you have to do is come up and talk to me, and I will like you.” She summarizes, “basically, don’t harsh my mellow.” Julie reiterates that she likes all of her students, but says, “If I catch you cheating, I will bust you” and her tone lowers and one eyebrow goes up as she looks out. Again she states, “Really guys, don’t harsh my mellow, and we will be fine.” Julie ends by telling the students that “you would have to be a total loser to fail this class,” and that if they come to class and do the work, they will do well.

In Hindsight

First impressions are just that—impressions. The first class is an important window into what is to follow, but certainly over the course of 15 weeks things can and do change. A student in Alexandra’s class would likely surmise that timeliness is important, and the due dates are fixed; she is no nonsense, the class will move at a quick pace, and each class will cover a lot of material. Alexandra spent the first half of the class period going through the structure of the class—the weekly homework assignments, protocol for pop quizzes, mid-term exam dates, group

projects, and final exam—carefully leading them through the website for the course pointing out where all of the information could be found.

Julie seemed to value student engagement, and used the first class to ask questions about what they knew about public relations. She references where students can find information about the course online and briefly goes through the group assignments, but doesn't project the class website to point out where to find specific information. She seems to be approachable, easy going, and interested in getting to know the students and engaging them in conversations before and during class. The first class was focused on finding out what the students knew about public relations previous to this course and putting them at ease about the class—the information is online, and if the students try, they should have no problem passing the class.

Both Julie and Alexandra alert the students to their particular dispositions: Alexandra describes, “eccentricities” and Julie says, “here are things you should know about me.” Alexandra emphasizes that class starts on time, assignments have clear deadlines, and is very specific that they should be put in her secure mailbox. She requests that if a student is late they should enter through the back entrance to not disrupt the class. She states clearly that she doesn't negotiate on grades, and if students want to surf the Internet, they should go elsewhere. Julie's “things to know” are more general. She tells students that she starts out liking them all, and wants to get to know them. She cautions that all will go well, unless they find ways to “harsh her mellow” and that the class is straight forward, so if student's try, they should do well, but they need to try.

The above vignettes are emblematic of each teacher's style. If one thinks of the first day of a class like a movie trailer—a short synopsis to give a potential audience member an idea of what the film is about—both teachers gave an accurate representation of the aesthetic of their

teaching style on the first day. Alexandra started every class the same way—*Bloomberg's* live streaming market show playing on the projector screen with a separate window displaying the international clock counting up the time until class officially starts. Like clockwork at 9:29:30 she stands, takes off her jacket, and with some aplomb hits the computer keyboard and the screen changes to the class calendar. Every lecture began with a brief look at the calendar, and Alexandra pointed out upcoming due dates for assignments and tests.

Julie typically sat on the desk in the front of the classroom swinging her legs before class started and made small talk with students. The class structure varied and included different activities like presentations from organizations the students were working with, a documentary film screening, entire classes dedicated to discussions on public relation topics in the news, and one day the entire class went to a wheel chair basketball game to support and do research on their main client for the group project. Relevant due dates for assignments were rarely discussed in class, and on one occasion, a student asked if there was going to be a review session for a test on Monday. Julie admitted that she forgot about the test and pushed it back to a Wednesday so the class could review material on Monday.

Observing Julie and Alexandra over the semester, I began to develop two paradigms that could describe the ways in which each approached structure and performance in their classrooms. I would characterize Julie's predominant approach as spontaneous and improvised, while Alexandra's was scripted. Both approaches had their advantages and disadvantages and in the following section, I will provide more examples from class to give the reader a fuller picture of each classroom, as well as reflections from Julie and Alexandra on the relationship between performance and teaching in their own practice.

Scripting an Experience

I would characterize Alexandra's approach to teaching as a scriptwriter because of the time she invests and the emphasis she puts on structure in the course. When observing Alexandra teach, you have the feeling that nothing was left to chance. Each lecture feels like a calculated performance that includes stories, detailed power points to visualize the concepts, and mathematical problems worked out in class to see if students understand the concepts. I had the opportunity to observe a few lectures twice (once in the Fall semester during the pilot study, and then again in the Spring), and although there was some variation, the lectures included the same stories to exemplify a concept. Watching Alexandra teach was akin to seeing an experienced actress play a role she has done many times, but yet, still finds ways to make it feel fresh each time.

Alexandra often begins class with a story or metaphor. For instance, when discussing portfolio diversification she asked, "Why is it bad to put all of my eggs in one basket." She mimed having a basket resting on her forearm and directing students to look into the imaginary basket to visualize the idea of having a basket full of things as she walked up one of the isles. She used this metaphor as the basis for the rest of the lesson on diversifying investments. Later in the semester, during the NCAA college basketball tournament, she asked students to bet on which team would win. She engaged the students in thinking through how someone could trust that if they put \$100 on a team, they would get their money. She went on to describe the role of a bookie in betting, and then related this to the futures market and the way a clearinghouse functions in a similar way.

Alexandra comes from a long line of storytellers. Her grandfather was a newspaper editor in the Netherlands. During World War II, he was known for cleverly using the Dutch

language to give the Nazi propaganda he was forced to publish a double meaning. Alexandra said that storytelling and writing is a part of her family lineage, and that it is common in her family to speak in parables. She described,

Whenever we want to get a point across, we always tell a parable. And I never noticed that, but my sister did.... When you are talking to people you tell them straight, but you give them a story, so they understand where it fits. And we've always been [storytellers] in our household. It's true, when we are trying to get a point across, we give the parable because it is much easier to say, "I get that because I see it," rather than I understand the abstract nature of it.

Alexandra's classes have a theatrical quality, not only because of her energetic performance, but also because of the tight narrative. Alexandra doesn't meander through topics, and she doesn't mince words. Her lectures have the quality of a script that was carefully written, and then enacted with sensitivity to the audience's reaction. In a student interview, when I asked what characteristics he would use to describe Alexandra's teaching, he replied, "She doesn't waste words." It is clear from the years of teaching this course that her performance is well rehearsed.

Creating Experiences on the Fly

Julie's style of teaching was more spontaneous and improvisational. I often wrote in my field notes, "fly by the seat of the pants," to describe her approach which, at times, was exhilarating. For instance, on the third day of class, she dedicated the entire session to leading a discussion on a burgeoning issue at the university. It was a subzero temperature day and many schools in the surrounding area had cancelled class, but this particular university did not and sent out an email advising students to be cautious getting to classes. Students began a twitter hashtag to respond to this, and some sexist and racially disparaging tweets about the chancellor were included. This incident made national news. Julie spent the entire class leading a discussion on how the university could deal with this from a public relations standpoint. A student in the class

was featured in a *Huffington Post* article two days later giving his take on the issue through a tweet. Julie recognized this publically by projecting the article on the screen before class and applauded him when he entered the classroom.

Julie brought many activities beyond lecturing into the classroom. For instance, she had guest presenters from the three organizations the students were working with for a group project assignment. One of these organizations was the wheel chair basketball team, and the students went to a game in place of class, so they could better understand the game and strategize possible ways to promote the team. She also had a recent graduate of the program discuss via Skype her job as a public relations and marketing adviser. Julie often began class with some public relations issue that was currently in the news. When she didn't have an example prepared, she would invite students to share issues related to public relations and on the spot pull up a video online related to the topic to watch and discuss.

Julie did lecture and used detailed power point slides that were available for students to download. They were essentially outlines from chapters in the assigned textbook. Julie often illustrated concepts from the textbook with public relations cases that served as practical examples, or she would make up scenarios to illustrate these concepts. There was always a sense of spontaneity to Julie's lectures over the textbook material. While lecturing, she typically turned her back to the students to look up at the power point slide with her index finger on her chin—a stature of thinking. She would quietly read the text to herself under her breath and nod as she took the information in. By the time Julie turned around, she had thought of an example that would showcase the concepts on the power point. For instance, one day she was talking about non-violent protests and said, “An example of this would be like if the Girl Scouts had a sit-in at the rotunda of the state capital on a day they were going to talk about STEM education

to make them [legislators] aware of the lack of women in science.” She stopped and smiled delighted with the thought, and said in a quieter voice, “That would actually be pretty cool wouldn’t it” as she directed her gaze to a few of the students sitting in the front of the class.

I asked Julie how she prepares for the course, and she said that she creates all of the power points before the semester begins. She said, “Pretty much, the foundation is ready to go at the beginning of the semester, so that I can do fun things or refine it during the semester.” I then asked about her daily preparation, or how she thinks about making the material come alive in class. She replied,

Some of them [lectures] I have done enough times, I know what I am going to say. If there is a current event going on, I can draw that in. I have some examples on my slides, but I usually come up with those on the fly. Some days are better than others. Sometimes we have these case studies [student presentations on a public relations cases]. I mean, usually there is something that we are talking about in the material and I can bring in something in from that [case study presentations] into the discussion.

She conceded that she likes to be flexible with her class plan, and that this “drives some student’s crazy,” but reiterated that this is the nature of public relations—things change quickly, and one must adapt.

Structure Embodied

The above characterizations of Alexandra as a scripter and Julie as an improviser were visible in the ways they used their body’s to communicate the content of the class. For instance, Alexandra’s movements tended to accentuate what she was saying—her circling arm gesture signals the forward movement needed to think through a problem, and when her arm outstretches to the power point screen it is to highlight a specific line of text or point on the graph not a general gesture in that direction. The precision of her scripted text was also mirrored in the specificity of her gestures.

Julie’s performance was less didactic and rhythmic than Alexandra’s. One movement flows into the next as the words cascade out of her mouth. She occasionally uses specific gestures to accentuate what she is talking about—like drawing her hands together in front of the body to signal getting “focused”—but usually, the gestures are more an indicator of her own bodily attitude at the moment. For instance, sometimes she stands with wide legs in the center of the classroom when she wants to demand attention, or puts a finger to her lips as she listens to a student and thinks about what they are saying.

A helpful analogy to describe the aesthetic uniqueness of Julie and Alexandra is music because it encapsulates the tonal quality of the voice in coordination with the energetic qualities of the movement. In general, Julie’s performance is more melodic and Alexandra’s percussive.

Julie projects her voice without being loud. Her words come out with feathery edges that smooth one sound to the next, but each sound is clear and articulate. There is something calming about her voice. It is soft without being meek, steady but never booming. The rise and fall of the tone of her voice reverberates through the room.

Julie’s postures are typically casual; she sits on the backs of chairs with her feet on the seat facing the students, leans against the wall, and occasionally sits on the floor in the isles during student presentations. There is a shuffle to her walk as she meanders up one isle with her “Mom” mug in hand. Julie attempts to simulate the feeling of an intimate conversation in a large lecture hall with her students. She is informal and invites conversation, just as she would in a one-on-one situation. The major difference is the sphere of her attention. Julie is able to expand it in a large classroom to embrace the entire room, and with ease, zero in on a student that is talking, and then widen it back out to the rest of the room. Her presence in the classroom is embraceive.

In contrast, Alexandra's performance is dramatic, punctuated, and has a pronounced rhythm. She hurtles words out of her mouth making sure to hit every consonant—tongue against teeth. Rather than a streaming melody, Alexandra teaches in cadences that shift from progressive rhythmic explorations, to sudden silence, and an occasional boom of the base drum. Her voice is full of tension, getting higher in pitch as she gets louder—a shrill trill when she gets excited or exasperated. She uses her gestures to illustrate concepts like widening the hands away from one another to show the market is growing and bringing them together to show it is shrinking. Finance lends itself to didactic gestures—markets move: up and down, grow and shrink, crash—and Alexandra illustrates these movements with her body.

Alexandra makes use of dramatic pacing in her speaking. She knows how to pause and dangle suspicion or explode into a faster pace. The body often reflects this pacing; at times, she stands in a pause position, holding her hands behind her back talking through a concept, and then glides over to the podium with a finger dangling in the air right before letting it fall down dramatically to set the power point into motion. Her pacing is significant. The pauses signal a space for students to process information before moving on, creating an ebb and flow of information with breaks in between. This was especially apparent to me as a non-finance/math person. Although I often didn't understand the mathematical equations, nor could I do the problems assigned in class, I usually understood the concepts discussed.

Both Alexandra and Julie have great range—they can be explosive, quiet, measured, casual, but these take on different qualities in each teacher. Alexandra is animated, has stories to tell, and appears to fully relish in divulging the information bit by bit; the class unfolds so students see the beauty of markets, numbers, and excel documents. The finance class is her stage and the performance has been thoroughly structured and rehearsed, but there is never a feeling

that she is merely “going through the motions.” Each performance is fresh and at 9:30 a.m. the curtain opens, and Alexandra is rip-roaring ready to go.

Julie is more like a talk-show host or the ringleader of the class. She is clearly the star of the show. She directs the conversations, poses questions, sets up situations for discussion, but the class feels improvised—the content of what is being discussed is perhaps less important than keeping the discussion going. She attempts to draw students out, by asking them questions like, “what do you think about this” inviting them to personally respond and this can take the class in many different directions. She speaks the students’ language regularly using slang words like chick, dude, lol, etc. Although Julie relates to the students as peer in her speech and attitude, she is clearly the host of the “show” in class responsible for calling on students and responding/redirecting the conversation.

Teacher’s Viewpoints on Performance and Teaching

Julie and Alexandra reported that they did not specifically cultivate a performative style of teaching, however both had insights about the connections between the performing arts and teaching. In interviews, I had the opportunity to ask both teachers to think about the ways in which they moved, used their voice, and the energetic dynamics of the class, and how that related to the way they planned and orchestrated their lesson plans.

I asked Alexandra if she did anything to prepare for teaching, and she declared, “I always think ‘yeah, I have three performances today.’ I think of it that way. You put on a show.” She continued, “We’re entertaining the children. Yes...” with a hearty laugh. She added, “A good strong cup of coffee helps.” Alexandra described that before each class, it was important for her to try to get into the mindset of her students, and think through what questions students were bringing into office hours, as well as what in the lesson might be boring. She identified that

finding a good starting story or example to begin the lesson helped to create a narrative that would carry the class forward and connect the points she was trying to make.

I also observed two class sessions of a graduate level financial modeling course Alexandra teaches to see if her approach changed. In this class, she took on more of a mentorship role asking questions, listening to student discussions, and soliciting comments from students. When I asked her if she could describe the different roles or ways in which she approaches performance differently in each class she said,

I think in Fin 300 I am more of a performer—an entertainer—that manages to slip information in there almost accidentally. Because you almost have to set it up so they learn it. If you make it too intellectual they put up their barriers, where as if you try to entertain them a little bit it's like *Sesame Street*. Right. They learn things because they are being, not so much entertained, but there are entertaining parts... You have to think about a different pace [changing the pace of the class]. You have to think about giving them some information, and then letting them play with that information, then you test them over the information. So it's much more of a teaching—almost more of a manipulative environment—get this information into their heads before they realize we are trying to teach them something.

She described taking on a mentorship role in the graduate level modeling class because the context required a different approach. Whereas Finance 300 is a required class, the modeling class is an elective and the graduate students want to be there. The graduate level class also encouraged more dialogue because students were creating their own models, in contrast to Finance 300, which is based on building skills and gaining an understanding of basic concepts students will use in future classes. In an interview, Alexandra said,

I also find that one of the things that irritates the hell out of me when I am on the other side [a student], is when the teacher asks a question, and we know that she knows the answer, and she knows that we know the answer. She is just trying to get us to say something. Whereas if somebody asks my opinion, where I am actually contributing to the conversation, then I am much more engaged. That is so hard to do that with this class [Finance 300] because I am not interested in their opinions. If you've got a bond, you have to learn how to price it. This is mechanical. It's boot camp. And so getting them involved in understanding what is going on is totally different from in my modeling class when it is at a different level. They [financial modeling students] are expected to bring in

their own styles and their own opinions about what is a proper way to communicate this concept to a client, or to a boss, or to an audience. Fin 300 is 2+2 is 4. There isn't much opinion that goes into that. And so it is a different kind of class.

When I asked Alexandra if she felt self-expressed through teaching she said, "I think I am a good teacher. Let's face it; none of us would be in this business if we didn't like to hear the sound of our voice. But yeah, I like communicating what I know to other people."

Julie began doing community theater in her 20's, and although she rarely got major roles, she really enjoyed being part of the productions. Julie attributed part of her love for teaching to a similar affection for theater. She said,

I think there is a piece of me that loves performing.... I don't do community theater anymore.... I think part of it is that I miss being in front of—and I never, don't get me wrong, I never had like big roles when I was in theater—but I just enjoyed doing it.

Julie was taking guitar lessons with one of her daughters, and told me one of her goals was to get good enough to do an "open mic" night at a local music club. She also attended and sang karaoke at a local club in town regularly.

Julie's theatrical training was most apparent in her voice and her level of comfortably in front of the class. She has the ability to project her voice without yelling or distorting the soft melodic quality. Often, you can hear the strain in a person's voice when they attempt to be heard in a big space. The voice rises in pitch and can become shrill, but Julie's voice fills the room with ease. Even when she shouts out for affect or to get the student's attention, it has the booming quality of an actor's voice, rather than the piercing tone of someone yelling.

Julie also appears to be completely comfortable in front of her audience of students. She sits on tables, the backs of chairs, leans against walls, etc. She drinks coffee from a mug while sauntering around the room and seems to be as comfortable in the classroom as she would be walking around her house. There is no pre-tense of "acting" in her teaching. She is animated but

that seems to be congruent with her personality. When I asked Julie about her pattern of sitting on top of tables, the backs of chair, etc. she said,

It was funny, I had a piece of feedback on my ICES [student evaluation] form that said something like ‘She’s as comfortable standing behind the podium, as she is sitting criss cross applesauce on top of the table,’ and I thought that was really true. I always sit like that. I sit like that at home when I work, which I probably won’t be able to do much longer [implied due to age]. But while I can, I’m going to do it. It’s just really comfortable for me. But I don’t think about it.

When I asked if she had a “teaching persona” or if any parts of her personality came more to the forefront when teaching. Julie responded,

No, it’s just who I am. I’ve had a similar question, which came from students who say, ‘you kind of have this maternal thing with us, and they ask do you consciously do that?’ And I say no, I don’t think it is conscious at all. It is what I do at home, and it is who I am.

In my first interview with Julie, I was interested to see if she would be as animated in a one-on-one situation as she is in class. And in general, she was, but on a different scale. When you sit down to talk with Julie, you feel that you are the only person in the world that exists for her. She makes eye contact, asks questions, watches your face for reactions and then reacts back. She is incredibly relational and a delightful conversationalist in the sense that one subject leads to the next smoothly, and topics can range far and wide.

In an interview, Julie discussed really loving her job because she likes the students, her field, and “I think part of it is just enjoying performing, so to speak, and I like to make them laugh, and I like to get their attention, and I like to do goofy things that they don’t expect.”

Both Alexandra and Julie acknowledged the performative aspects of teaching, but neither felt they self-consciously tried to “act” a certain way in class. Instead their teaching styles seemed to be an extension of their personalities, dispositions, and aligned with what they wanted to accomplish in the class.

Dewey and the Teacher as a Guide

In this section, I will explore the aesthetic dimensions of each teacher's classroom through a Deweyian framework making connections between his writings on art and on education. Dewey saw similar characteristics between aesthetics and education—both offer opportunities for an *experience*, a foundational concept in his work. Because my study is focused on the relationship between performance and teaching, I will primarily draw on *Art as Experience* and then relate that to his article *The Child and Curriculum*.

In his book *Art as Experience*, Dewey (1934) characterizes an aesthetic experience as leaving an audience with a feeling of “consummation rather than cessation” (p. 37). In an aesthetic experience, there is a seamless flow of ideas that is continuous and all parts of the experience are integral to the unifying whole. In regards to teaching, it is the difference between covering key concepts in order to check them off the list, to weaving the same concepts together to tell a broader story of their relevance.

In the essay, *The Child and Curriculum* Dewey (1902) clarifies his views on traditional and child-centered learning. He rejects the idea that the child and curriculum exist on two poles, but rather they are intricately intertwined. He says, “The child and curriculum are two limits which define a single process” (Dewey, 1902, p. 11). The child, curriculum, and teacher form a triad in which each contributes to the learning experience. Dewey argues that the role of the teacher is essential in guiding students through the learning process. He says,

To see the outcome is to know in what direction the present experience is moving, provided it move normally and soundly. The far-away point, which is of no significance to us simply as far away, becomes of huge importance the moment we take it as defining a present direction of movement. Taken in this way it is no remote and distant result to be achieved, but a guiding method in dealing with the present. The systematized and defined experience of the adult mind, in other words, is of value to us in interpreting the child's life as it immediately shows itself, and in passing on the guidance or direction. (Dewey, 1902, p. 13)

Dewey suggests that to create a meaningful educational experience, a teacher is not only a companion in learning, but designs a pathway that leads students towards an outcome that is meaningful. Teachers who create a curriculum or identify key concepts that undergird the class can be attentive to the present needs of the students and can better orchestrate learning in the moment seeing both the present and what is coming in the future.

Julie and Alexandra provide interesting cases to examine the relationship between preparing and designing curriculum in relation to how each embodies and orchestrates that curriculum in the classroom. I want to make a distinction between “preparing” for a course and designing a curriculum. Preparation is a necessary aspect of teaching, but ultimately is an exercise in cessation, or creating the necessary assignments and tests that define if the students have learned what was intended. Both Julie and Alexandra prepared before teaching by creating syllabi, power point presentations, assignment prompts, and exams before the beginning of the semester. In other words, the outcome or direction of the class has been defined. Where the two differed was the energy invested in designing a learning experience. Designing a curriculum denotes attention to consummation—there is a structured order to learning that culminates into a holistic understanding of a subject. It is the difference between playing scales on the piano and learning a piece of composed music. Scales will teach you musical skills, which are necessary to play a composed piece, but does not give one an understanding of music in a holistic sense, nor how to apply those skills in a broader context. Julie’s class was based on a preparation, but not consummation. The assignments related to the materials being discussed in the class, but there wasn’t a sense that all the elements of the class were building towards a whole. In contrast, Alexandra’s class was based on skill building, but towards a larger goal of understanding major concepts fundamental to being in business.

Julie's class is what I refer to as a "buffet style" of learning; there are many wonderful offerings, and for those students who know what they want or need from the class, there is much to choose from. However, it is quite different than having a meal that has been designed by a chef so that the dishes and flavors compliment one another. In contrast, Alexandra's class is a carefully constructed meal in which the chef might come out of the kitchen and test you on how the flavors intertwine. In Alexandra's class, one activity builds on another and themes emerge and resurface again in new contexts. She has a clear point of view and way of understanding finance that she seeks to instill in her students.

A buffet style of learning is not necessarily problematic, but it didn't meet the needs of all students. For example, Marilyn was interested pursuing a career into public relations and expressed frustration that the class didn't prepare her for what she believed her future job would entail. Midway through our interview she said,

Now that I think about it, no one was connecting things. We are too busy doing the work. She (Julie) was all over the place. I can see how things were kind of connected, but students are not going to sit in a room and wonder how this is all connected; they will just do it.

I had a similar observation. Julie rarely discussed the relationship between the terminology and concepts discussed in class, and the semester long project of designing a public relations package for a non-profit organization. Occasionally, she would use student case study presentations as examples to illustrate concepts in the lecture. The most succinct connection between what was discussed in class and the assignments was the multiple-choice tests that were based on information in the textbook and power point lectures. Marilyn reported that the tests were difficult for her. Although they were fairly straight forward, she struggled with memorizing the material. She described studying for the tests as cramming in information, rather than fully understanding the concepts and being able to use them.

Yet, the buffet approach to learning did meet the needs of some students. When I asked Melissa, another student in the class, if she was going to pursue any public relations work in the future she said,

No. I knew I would enjoy the class because she (Julie) uses real life examples, and I thought it would be enjoyable, and I will learn, but if I were to be doing that (public relations) I would expect more. The other teacher is more strict and rigorous, and I would go to him because he would teach a better class.

Whereas Melissa felt satisfied with a fun class that wasn't too difficult, Marilyn felt cheated. She said, "It's not the most difficult material, but I wanted to be engaged and working on things and growing ourselves. This is an advanced public relations class and where is the advancement?" Dewey (1902) makes a direct comment to Marilyn's frustration. He says,

Continuous initiation, continuous starting of activities that do not arrive, is, for all practical purposes, as bad as the continual repression of initiative in conformity with supposed interests of more perfect thought or will. It is as if the child were forever tasting and never eating; always having the palate tickled upon the emotional side, but never getting the organic satisfaction that comes only with digestion of food and transformation of it into working power. (p. 6)

This is what Marilyn longed for from the class. A guide that would allow her to digest or synthesize the assignments, projects, lectures and tests so that she could better understand the whole. Rather than memorizing the information on the study guide, she wanted to apply her understanding of the concepts discussed in class towards choosing the best answer. In contrast, Melissa said she often could use common sense on the tests to select the right answer. This class filled a requirement, and she found Julie to be an engaging professor that tried really hard to engage the students by asking their opinions and, in general, made the class fun.

Melissa points out one of Julie's most endearing qualities as a teacher; she regularly attempts to engage the students in conversations and solicits or brings in current events that might capture the students' attention. When I asked Julie how she prepares for each individual

class, she described keeping an eye open for good stories in the news as she was getting ready in the morning or driving to school, but that she didn't invest a lot of time into looking up things. She found that what the students bring up in class is more engaging to their age group, and elicits more responses and dialogue.

One of the critiques that Dewey (1902) articulates in regards to a child-centered learning is,

Nothing can be developed from nothing; nothing but the crude can be developed from the crude—and this is what surely happens when we throw the child back upon his achieved self as a finality, and invite him to spin new truths of nature or conduct out of that.
(p. 7)

Often, the examples students brought to class, such as an evolving scandal with two of the participants in the reality television show *The Bachelor*, seemed inconsequential and not suited to deep analysis. Julie did her best to try to tease out how issues offered by students related to the concepts discussed in class, but there was not always sufficient complexity to develop a discussion that went beyond celebrity gossip or a simple taking of sides. That is not to say that something deeper couldn't be explored, but it would take some time and research to guide students to see the deeper layers of the issue.

Julie's improvisatory style of teaching had many admirable outcomes. I found the class to be inviting and at times quite engaging. There was a sense of vitality as Julie made up examples on the spot and responded to student's comments. She had no reservations about going on a tangent and spending upwards of 20 minutes discussing something that students were interested in talking about. Yet, the improvisatory style made it difficult for Julie to fully guide students to go beyond initial conversations and observations. It was also challenging to understand the relationship between tangents and the structured materials covered in class. Students like

Marilyn were left wondering what the larger mission, themes, and goals of the class were. In essence, the class lacked a feeling of consummation.

Dewey (1902) references a map as a helpful metaphor to describe the role of a teacher in guiding students' explorations. He notes that a map is constructed after an explorer has thoroughly traversed an unknown area, but that each person that uses the map goes on his or her own individual exploration. He writes,

The map is not a substitute for personal experience. The map does not take the place of the actual journey...[it] serves as a guide to future experience; it gives direction; it facilitates control; it economizes effort, preventing useless wandering, and pointing out the paths which lead most quickly and most certainly to a desired result. (Dewey, 1902, p. 20)

Dewey believes it is important for teachers to have a level of expertise and knowledge in a subject so they can create a map that can guide students to areas of interests and provide information that will help them achieve the goals of the class.

But when does a map go from guiding students into experiences, to dictating a prescribed route without exploration? Alexandra's class offers an interesting example to puzzle through what a detailed map offers students, but also what it lacks.

Alexandra's love of maps runs deep. In an interview, she discussed that history was her favorite subject because she would draw maps and outline when and where events happened. She related this to her love of making excel spreadsheets and creating power points that visually illustrate a concept. Alexandra's classes are tightly scripted—she has stories and characters that return from one lecture to the next. And thoroughly structured—at the end of class she goes through practice questions at the end of the chapter that will show up on a pop quiz and in homework assignments with a slight variations. She knows the material like the back of her

hand, not only because she has taught it for 20 years, but also because she has continually shaped and revised the class from year to year.

Alexandra attributed many of the modifications to the curriculum of Finance 300 to meeting the needs of a changing population of students. In an interview, she discussed adding power points to her lectures because students didn't know how to take notes anymore. She added a mandatory weekly homework assignment because students needed more frequent opportunities to get feedback on their progress. She described being able to "profess" in her early years of teaching the Finance 300 course, but in the last ten years, she has learned to "teach" because students no longer know how to learn on their own. They need concepts to be broken down and frequent assignments that allow them to put their knowledge into practice. In other words, Alexandra's map has become more detailed and less exploration has been left to chance.

Alexandra admits it is difficult in a course like Finance 300 to involve students because it is based on learning skills. Yet, she maintains the experiential journey for students to some degree. At least once per class period, she asks students to get out their calculators and figure out the answer to a question saying, "Studies have shown that students that use their calculators during Finance 300 have less of a chance of falling asleep." It is a running joke in the class; nonetheless, the students interviewed reported this was helpful in engaging them in the learning process. Alexandra also has students grade one another's pop quizzes in class. Students exchanged quizzes and then wrote answers on the white board. Students could cross out answers they thought were incorrect and these quizzes often revealed what concepts students didn't understand. Alexandra would then work through the quiz problems helping students understand where they made mistakes.

Another way Alexandra engages students is through giving them parts to play in the stories she uses to illustrate concepts. For instance, she will tap on a student's desk and say "You are going to be the mortgage broker" and then taps on another and says, "You are a real estate investor." Then she instructs the mortgage broker to call the real estate investor and signals that the students need to use their hands to mime holding a phone. Students rarely need to contribute to the story by giving answers to questions. Instead, they are placeholders for the action, but nonetheless they have a role to play in the evolving story.

However, students were reluctant to answer questions posed to the class. As mentioned by Alexandra above, there are few opportunities for students to voice their opinions in class, so her questions usually had a right and wrong answer. When I asked student interviewees why they personally did not respond to questions in class, they reported being worried about giving wrong answers and didn't want to be embarrassed. I never witnessed Alexandra react negatively to an incorrect response; yet, students did not readily offer to answer questions in class.

The map for Finance 300 was detailed and there was little space for exploring topics outside of the ones outlined. Every class had a clear topic, and Alexandra led them step-by-step through the concepts—like how mortgages work, why they exist, and how to use formulas to figure out how to accurately price or assess the risk in a financial situation. But I would argue students had many opportunities to explore concepts through the assignments. For instance, one of the group projects was to invest fake money in the stock market. She required them to try certain kinds of transactions—like a short sale, and at least one investment in a foreign company to learn about computing currency exchanges—but largely the student groups were able to explore how investing in the stock market worked without penalization if they lost money. They

had three reports to turn in during the semester on their investments but were graded on the quality of the report, not if they made a profit.

Although some might look at Alexandra's class as regimented and focused on the acquisition of skills rather than exploration, there was a clear map, and at the end of the semester, there was a unifying whole. Dewey suggests "The map orders individual experiences, connecting them with one another irrespective of the local and temporal circumstances and accidents of their original discovery" (Dewey, 1902, p. 20). Finance 300 is in many ways a rite of passage in the business program. It is known to be one of the more challenging classes, but one that marks students as ready to deal with the complexities of their future profession. It has the necessary quality of consummation rather cessation.

Conclusion

Artistry in teaching is complex because there are many variables to contend with: the curriculum, the students, the classroom space, the time of day the class is offered, the teachers energy level, and sometimes even the weather makes a difference. Finding ways to use all of these elements in the classroom to engage students in learning is a form of choreography, and on the good days, everything seems to move towards consummation. Eisner (2002) points out the connection between the curriculum design and how the teacher in the classroom expresses it. He writes,

How one designs a lesson or curriculum unit matters, and the design of such plans and activates depends every bit as much on attention to relationships among their components. In the course of teaching matters of pacing, timing, tone, direction, the need for exemplification are components whose relationships need to be taken into account. The ability to do so constitutes a part of the artistry inherent in excellent teaching. (Eisner, 2002, p. 202)

Looking at the classroom as a work of art through a choreographic frame allowed me to see the variations between Julie and Alexandra's approach to structuring the course and how they communicated and implemented that plan in the class.

This chapter highlights the importance of a thoughtful design in directing student learning. Although Julie had ample skills in engaging students in discussions, she struggled to synthesize the spontaneous contributions of students or her own tangents into a broader vision of what the class aimed to teach. Dewey (1902) affirms the importance of a map in learning—a sense of direction that can help guide the present moment. Julie had good instincts when it came to engaging students in topics that excited them, but without a clear vision of the foundational learning goals of the class, it was challenging to take spontaneous suggestions and develop them in ways that enhanced student's understanding of public relations.

This study also reiterates Pineau's concern that an actor-centered approach to the performance of teaching is flawed. Artistry in teaching comes from an integrated approach that includes the design, implementation, and classroom performance of teachers. A teacher might be entertaining and students enjoy the class, but offer little information that expands students. Alexandra provides an interesting example of a teacher that uses parables, stories, and dramatic pacing to as she says "entertain the undergraduates," yet these are always done in the service of what can be learned. Her stories and passionate performance enhances the concepts discussed and bring life to mathematical concepts and equations. Alexandra does use her embodied performance to infuse the class with a sense of levity and drama, but her class is not merely entertaining. It is also quite challenging and stories, parables and her dramatic pacing are in the service of engaging students in challenging material.

Rubin suggests that there is not one way to become an artistic teacher, but in this case study it is apparent that a thoughtful design and ability to synthesize concepts so the students see how the materials of the class coalesce is imperative. An engaging performance is not enough, and it takes a thoughtful course design as well as finding ways to translate that plan into the time and space of the classroom.

CHAPTER 6

DEVELOPING A TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP: THE ROLE OF CARING IN TEACHING

An aspect of teaching that a performative framework did not illuminate was the student-teacher relationship. One of the key ways teaching differs from the performing arts is that it can be, and is often expected to be more dialogical. Audience members rarely raise their hands to ask questions during a performance, nor are discussions between performers and the audience typical. There are certainly exceptions, as it is common to explore the boundaries of the audience-performer relationship in the arts, but if we stick with conventional understandings of the performing arts, the audience is typically in a listening, watching, and absorbing mode. However in the classroom, it is common for teachers to interact with students by soliciting or posing questions and asking for opinions or ideas regarding a topic being discussed. Rubin (1985) suggests,

For all the parallels, one very important difference separates school and stage. Although a theater audience may become intellectually and emotionally involved, they remain observers, witnessing rather than entering into the action. In the classroom however, the student is a cop performer rather than a vicarious onlooker. Moreover, while the actor follows the script, the teacher continually revises it to fit the learners' response. (p. 115)

The degree to which this engagement with students as “co-performers” is fostered varies widely from one class to the next. For instance, there is the stereotypical teacher that stands in front of a college classroom of hundreds and lectures without ever asking the students a question, or in contrast a teacher that rarely lectures and instead leads a discussion with students on topics related to the course materials.

There is a deep relationship between a teacher's performative style and the ways in which they engage in and interact with students. For instance, Julie's uses of colloquialisms like

“chick” or “lol,” and the way she sits on tables and the backs of chairs signals that the class will be casual, and responses to questions need not be articulated in academic or formal speech.

Alexandra creates an atmosphere of intensity through the tight narrative of her lectures and the volume of information conveyed in each class. Students often have to be coaxed into responding because most of the questions are based on math equations and have a distinct “right or wrong” answer, and a wrong answer might disrupt the flow of the lecture or reveal that they don’t understand.

Rubin (1985) believes, “Teaching is a performing art for the simple—but compelling—reason that the desire to learn is strongly affected by the teacher’s behavior.... They take advantage of spontaneity, nonverbal communication, and role playing to ensure that learning goes beyond inert understanding” (p. 117). Yet, as Rubin points out in the earlier quote, teaching has a relational dimension that is different from that of performing artists. In this chapter, I will discuss issues that arose during the study that related to, but were outside the framework of performance.

My investigation into the literature on the student-teacher relationship was initiated from observations in Julie’s class. During the course of the semester, attendance began to drop and participation in discussions was low. She addressed this issue with the class and made some significant changes to the grading and structure of the class as a result. I was puzzled by the relational dynamic Julie had with the students because she made many attempts to appeal to their interests and clearly wanted to engage them in conversation, but this was not always reciprocated. I was drawn to look more closely at the relational aspects of teaching, especially the concept of caring primarily in the work of Milton Mayeroff (1971) and Nel Noddings (1984 & 1986) to better understand the nature of the relationship between teachers and students and

this notion of caring as being an important aspect of building a successful relational dynamic in the classroom.

Why Caring

The concept of caring is dependant on the situations in which the caring derives. Noddings (1986) describes “A relational ethic remains tightly tied to experience because all of its deliberations focus on the human beings involved in the situation under consideration and their relations to each other” (p. 218). This is a major challenge in teaching because the relational dynamic is cultivated every day, in every interaction, and is dependant on a student population that changes each semester or year. As discussed in an earlier chapter on embodiment, the *barometric pressure* changes daily in the classroom—for instance, a feeling of levity the day before spring break, and lethargy towards the end of the semester. Teachers build relationships in the present moment as they respond to students’ attitudes and energy, but also through the expectations and structure they set up for the class. In this sense, the relational is connected to the two previous chapters on the role of embodiment in teaching, as well as the importance of the design and orchestration of material in the classroom. Yet, the dialogical nature of teaching needed to be illuminated through a clearer understanding of the implicit and explicit responsibilities that come with being a teacher.

Van Dempsy (1994) describes that the *human* or relational factor of teaching has often been overlooked in education. He writes,

Given the long history of romanticism surrounding our ideals of good teaching, it sounds almost trite to suggest that good teachers are the ones ‘who care’ or have ‘good relationships’ with their students. Yet in research and reform efforts of the past decade aimed at both informing and improving the ranks of teaching, little attention has been paid to the role of *human-ness* in teaching—to the context of connection and relationships between children and teachers in classrooms. (p. 89, italics original)

In this chapter, I will look at the connections cultivated between the students and teacher to further explore how caring is expressed and developed in the classroom. As Noddings suggests above, caring is best explored in the actual situations from which they derive rather than a hypothetical situation in which one answer is deemed correct. Noddings work was influenced by a shift in the understanding of morality from one based on abstract principles to one focused on the relations between individuals. This shift in thinking was influenced by the work of psychologist Carol Gilligan (1993) and her investigation into gender and its role in moral development. She writes,

When one begins with the study of women and derives developmental constructs from their lives, the outline of a moral conception different from that described by Freud, Piaget, or Kohlberg begins to emerge and informs a different description of development. In this conception, the moral problem arises from conflicting responsibilities rather than from competing rights and requires for its resolution a mode of thinking that is contextual and narrative rather than formal and abstract.” (Gilligan, 1993, p. 19)

Gilligan’s work spearheaded a movement of looking at morality and an ethic of care from a feminine point of view in which abstract situations lacked the information necessary for deliberation and sensitivity to the individuals concerned.

Noddings further developed this idea—that a feminine ethics of care is rooted in sensitivity to specific situations—in the area of education. Noddings (1984) writes,

Faced with a hypothetical moral dilemma, women often ask for more information. We want to know more, I think, in order to form a picture more nearly resembling real moral situations. Ideally, we need to talk to participants, to see their eyes and facial expressions, to receive what they are feeling. Moral situations are, after all, made in real situations; they are qualitatively different from the solutions of geometry problems. Women can and do give reasons for their acts, but the reasons often point to feelings, needs, impressions, and a sense of personal ideal rather than universal principles and their application. (p. 3)

In Noddings (1984) description of caring, the tacit or embodied dimension is a necessary component of caring—that one needs to “see their eyes and facial expressions to see what they

are feeling” (p. 3) In other words, caring has many dimensions, and is difficult to conceptualize in absolutes. Not unlike the tacit dimension—what we know but cannot say—the display of caring, or how a teacher orchestrates or embodies a sense of caring in the classroom is somewhat in the ether of the room. Using a feminine approach to the concept of caring requires attention to the tacit situations from which care derives, hence attention to embodied interactions is essential for understanding the complexity of how teachers develop relationships with students.

Noddings work has great breadth, but at its source is a desire to develop concepts that are foundational to an ethics of caring while concurrently questioning and exploring these through the lens of real life situations. Her work also draws on that of Milton Mayeroff (1971) who generalized the basic principles that undergird caring, as well as how caring gives humans a sense of purpose. In the introduction to his book *On Caring*, he writes, “Much that is important about man cannot be illuminated by these concepts, but I believe they can help us understand something of what is most important” (Mayeroff, 1971, p. 2).

The conceptual frameworks developed by Mayeroff and Noddings examine the distinctive roles and motivations for caring. In turn, I believe that Julie and Alexandra provide interesting real-life situations to further question, refine, and understand how these concepts play out in actual relationships. In this chapter, I will use concepts developed in the caring literature to illuminate the ways in which Alexandra and Julie cultivated relationships with their students and the effects of their respective approaches.

The concept of caring is also reflected in my ethics of care as a researcher. Over the course of the semester, I developed relationships based on caring and trust with Julie and Alexandra. Both commented during interviews that at times it felt like “teacher therapy” and appreciated the opportunity to discuss not only their general feelings and philosophies on

teaching, but also specific situations that happened in the classroom they wanted to process with a fellow teacher. As a researcher, I was both an observer and companion—a role that I actively cultivated out of my respect for both Alexandra and Julie as colleagues and fellow teachers. The reverberations from this project go beyond this paper, and I continue to meet with Julie and Alexandra to discuss issues related to teaching but also our goals, aspirations, and personal lives.

The ethics of caring comes to the forefront when my role as a companion and fellow teacher meets my responsibilities as a researcher. Noddings (1986) suggests,

Problems of fidelity arise with special force in qualitative research on teaching. Researchers sometime find themselves between honoring the relation of trust upon which their access was predicated, and their perceived responsibility to the clientele, that supports, evaluates, and depends on public education. (p. 507)

Noddings advises that the roles of researcher and trusted companion are not diametrically opposed and soliciting teachers to read and comment on the researchers findings often strengthens research. Yet as Bresler (1996) points out “Qualitative research conducted in a private and semi-private settings and aiming to disclose personal beliefs and values, renders public that which is typically private and in essence juxtaposes these two realms in a new and distinct way” (p. 19). Both Julie and Alexandra were exceptionally generous in their commitment to this project, which speaks to their dedication to the field of education and wanting to contribute to the scholarship on teaching.

Anyone who has ever been brave enough to stand in front of a group of students and teach knows there are good days and bad days. The classroom has a sense of privacy that allows a teacher to experiment and explore new ideas and methods for engaging students. I was allowed into that private sphere to observe what worked and what did not. As a researcher, I feel responsible to share what I observed, even the inevitable moments when things didn’t go well because they reflected struggles that many teachers face—how to build relationships with

students while at the same time hold them accountable for learning the material of the class. I also had the privilege of attending class for the entire semester, and was able to see the ebbs and flows of the semester—the days of brilliance, and the not so brilliant days.

In regards to my own ethics of care, I feel it is important to disclose my own process of deciding how to discuss and write about some of the difficult moments in teaching. First, I have attempted to disclose my own potential biases as a researcher as well as make it clear when I am relating personal reflections and reactions. I hope this helps the reader better see my limited frame of reference and at times short sightedness. Second, in interviews, I asked questions aimed at providing Julie and Alexandra a space to decompress and discuss challenging moments in order to get their point of view. Third, I have attempted to give a holistic portrait of the classroom by sharing the struggles and the successes. Bresler (1996) suggests, “Data collection procedures—in-depth observations and unstructured interviews—are built on emotions of trust (on the part of the participant) and compassion (on the part of the researcher)” (p. 19). I have attempted to be critical in my analysis of the data, as well as compassionate in composing this chapter. I see the struggles of Julie to be common in the field of teaching, and my desire to share them in the public forum of a dissertation is to make real the messy, but at the same time rich dynamics of teaching. I see my own struggles as a teacher in the experiences of Julie and Alexandra, and I ask readers to lend a compassionate eye towards these accounts as well.

Setting the Stage

In this section, I will share a vignette from Julie’s class in which she directly approached students about their apathy and lack of participation in the class. Although there were many other situations that occurred during the semester and relate to the concept of care, this incident was particularly dramatic and sets the stage for a larger discussion on the role of caring in

teaching. I repeatedly returned to this vignette during the analysis phase because it was notable, and in my mind, necessary to discuss, but it didn't fit within the performance framework I had initially set out to use for the dissertation. Thanks to the guidance of my committee, I began to look outside the original scope of the paper into the relational aspects of teaching. The literature on caring provided a helpful framework to better understand the complexity of the student-teacher relationship and gave me insight into the following vignette.

Apathy and Attendance

On March 5, 7 weeks into a 15-week semester, Julie sends out an email 20 minutes before class suggesting that attendance is important on this particular day. Regular attendance at this point in the semester is about half of the students. I would approximate that two thirds of the class is in attendance on March 5.

Julie walks into the class and writes three words on the board Apology, Attendance, Apathy. She tells the students that in the shower this morning she was thinking about this class and settled on these three words to summarize the issues she is struggling with. Then she points to the first word and says, "Oops, I meant to write Apathy" and crosses it out and writes Apathy next to the crossed out Apology. She then suggests something to the affect of "I know I make the class too easy, but it is because I want you to learn the material." Julie points out she is talking about the class as a collective not at specific individuals because she knows many do attend regularly and they are not the problem.

Julie goes on to describe the general apathy of the students in this class—a lack of discussion and participation—and the low attendance. The pitch of her voice is slightly higher and the singsong of her natural voice is gone. It sounds like the air is constricted in her throat, which gives her voice a halting quality. Although she appears to be somewhat upset—her voice

is pinched and face flush—a row of students in front of me continue to surf the web without noticing. About six sentences into her discussion, Julie sharply says “shut your laptops, now” with a brief pause between each word for effect and glares at the students. The students don’t immediately respond, and she has to reiterate her point by saying, “I mean it, shut them now.” The students shut their laptops and all of the attention has shifted to Julie. She goes on to say something like “I am tired of looking out and seeing heads down facebooking or tweeting or whatever you are doing while I am up here. It is rude and disrespectful to me.” She reiterates again that she means the collective you and not individuals.

She then tells students that things are going to change from now on. They will not have access to the power points online, there will be rewards for those that actually do good things, and repercussions for those that don’t attend class regularly, and there will be no more in-class reviews for tests.

She asks students if they have suggestions, and says, “I am serious about getting your suggestions because I am tired of talking to the tops of your heads.” She walks up one aisle. Approximately 10 students raise their hands. Most of the comments are focused on asking Julie to keep the power points available for download online. Some argue it is not fair because they didn’t have a warning that their lack of attendance would result in not having access to the slides. Others suggest not putting so much information on the power point slides so students will have to take notes to fill in the blanks, and this will require them to be more active and attentive in the classroom. Julie is quick to call on students with hands raised, and she listens to each one, saying things like “that is a good point,” and sometimes responding to student’s requests by telling them why that won’t work because of potential ways some students can cheat the system.

She stands in the middle of the aisle on the left hand side of the room addressing questions from the middle and back section of the class where most of the students tend to sit.

This is the most the students have participated since the first week of class. As the suggestions keep coming in, Julie says, "Would you mind emailing Sarah (her graduate assistant) all of these suggestions for me to look at and consider." After about 10 minutes of suggestions, a student raises her hand and says something like, "I think if class is just fun and the topics are interesting, people will want to participate more." I have a knee jerk reaction to this, because a few of the recent suggestions have been pointed toward, "you could try to involve us more." I have a strong reaction to this because Julie regularly poses questions and solicits student's thoughts and opinions on various topics, but few respond.

I shoot my hand up in the air, and briefly introduce myself as a researcher from the Education college, and that I have been observing the class for the entire semester. I explain to the students that I have written in my notes several times that Julie attempts to get the students involved, and they don't respond. I say, "Many of your suggestions are good, but I can't stand by this one. I don't think this is a failure on Julie's part, but something you don't take advantage of." I wonder if I have overstepped my bounds, but I couldn't be silent. The apathy of the students is quite astounding to me, and although I agree that Julie makes the course easy for students to be apathetic, I find them flagrantly rude in their constant web surfing and talking to their neighbors during class.

As the conversation goes on, three to four students share their own personal preferences for how to take notes in class and ways that Julie could make that easier for them as such posting audio recordings of the lectures to listen back to and highlighting key terms that will be on the test in specific colors. Julie pushes back and says something to the effect of, "I can't worry

about that, and every one of you will have to figure out how to make it work for you, that is part of learning.”

She lets them know that with every suggestion she has to consider how students might take advantage of it to cheat the system, and then says, “I basically have the attitude that just like haters gonna hate, cheaters gonna cheat,” and the class laughs at this expression. This moment breaks some of the tension in the room. She also says, “I want you to be adults, but can’t make you be adults. I don’t want to be the police. I want you to take responsibility.”

She walks over to the other side of the room, and everyone has to shift in their seats to see her. There is some gentle laughter from students because the entire room collectively shifts en masse. Julie begins discussing her struggles as a teacher and says something to the effect of “I am tired of the way things are, and I want you here. And damn it, I’d like to think I am somewhat entertaining.” She tells them that she appreciates their suggestions, but this is not a democracy but a nice autocracy. Then she says, “Is that right? Isn’t that when one person has supreme power—an autocracy? Where are the political science majors in here?” A student responds, “maybe a monarchy?” Julie laughs and says, “yes, this is a friendly monarchy where I am the queen—a benevolent queen.” She lets the students know that she will consider their suggestions, but in the end, it is her decision.

She says something like, “If I didn’t like you guys, I wouldn’t be doing this. I love to teach and I want you to learn—that is what I really care about is that you learn. I like all of you. I like all of my students. I even like the students I haven’t met yet, and I love my job.”

She does a quick pole of the students and asks, “how many of you own the book for the class.” About 25% of the students raise their hands. This helps explain why there was push back from the students on taking the power points away; they would have to read the book rather than

get the summaries provided by Julie via power point. Then she says, “and how many of you read it,” and most of those students leave their hands in the air. She exhales and nods knowingly, but doesn’t comment.

The class time is dwindling and she says, “there is a lot to cover in this chapter before the test, but I thought it was more important to spend the day caring about attendance and general attitude, so you might have to look up some of the material on your own, but I thought this was more important.” She ends by saying, “I will sincerely take your suggestions into consideration and compile them. I notice you and see who is participating, and I want to reward that. I will try to come up with a way to accomplish these goals and reward those that are doing well.”

In the Wake of Change

Julie did make some changes to the structure of the class. Most notably she took attendance everyday either by having students fill out a scantron (fill in the bubble form) at the beginning or end of each class, or alternatively by giving an impromptu quiz based on information provided during case study presentations. She altered the grading system to reflect that attendance was now 10% of the grade and the daily attendance points were the basis of this 10%. In order to ensure students did not fill out a scantron form or hand in an extra quiz for a friend that didn’t attend class, Julie had the students turn in these forms and quizzes in person to her or her assistant Sarah, one at a time, so no one could give her more than one.

Asking students to take short quizzes based on the case study presentations was perhaps the most successful intervention. It required students to pay close attention and many took notes during the presentations. Julie’s quizzes were usually five questions long and included some detailed information that students would need to be paying attention to not to miss—things like where was the location of the *Denny’s* that fired an employee based on racial discrimination—as

well as questions that were less serious. For instance, after a presentation on a public relations case involving actor James Franco sending inappropriate texts to an underage girl, Julie's final quiz question was, "In your opinion, how does Franco rank on a pervert scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest."

She did keep the power points available for students to download, but did not hold a review for the final test. Another interesting development was an occasional change in the class structure. Two days after her confrontation with the students, Julie came into the class with three printed out case studies in her hand and requested everyone shut their laptops. The entire class was dedicated to discussing the three cases. The discussion started out slow, with Julie coaxing them along and allowing for long swaths of silence until someone decided to contribute, but by the end of the class there was a rich discussion/debate about the public's responsibility and corporate liability in public relations.

Julie also made an effort to walk around and lecture from the isles of the room rather than the front. This allowed her to be closer to where the majority of students sat, and she could see what students were doing on their computers. She never asked a student to quit surfing the web during class, but she did glance down at computers as she was lecturing, especially in the two weeks after confronting the class about their apathy. I also noticed Julie was less willing to "save" the students in discussions. When she posed a question to the class, she would wait silently for a response, rather than answering the question herself. This caused some uncomfortable silences in the class, but it did encourage students to participate—particularly a group of 20 students that contributed regularly.

The vignette of Julie addressing student apathy is ripe with issues, and many are central to the challenges of teaching. McDonald (1986) addresses the complexity of teaching when he writes,

I want to call special attention to two thematic threads...One is that the experience of teaching involves a struggle for complex and ultimately tenuous, control. A second is that as a result of this struggle there is an inevitable and morally legitimate tension between teachers and students. I believe that this struggle and its tensions are at the heart of ...the uncertainty of teaching, its messy practicality, which theorists generally sidestep. (p. 377)

As MacDonald points out, the teacher-student relationship is often messy, in part because caring in action is complex—it imbues every part of teaching from the structuring of the syllabus to the way teachers embody and communicate not only the curriculum, but also their personal philosophy on teaching. In other words, caring takes on many different forms each with their own particular ramifications in the teacher-student relationship.

The differences in Julie's and Alexandra's approaches provide a broad spectrum to consider the complexities of developing a relationship with students, while at the same time exemplifying the messy practicalities that teachers experience on a daily basis in the classroom. In this sense, they function as powerful archetypes to reflect upon when thinking about issues related to caring in the classroom. Julie and Alexandra's classes became laboratories to see what happens when the "rubber hits the road," or rather to see how the concepts explored in the literature on caring relate to what I observed in the classroom.

Authority, Power and Tension in the Classroom

In this section, I will explore the role of authority and power in the classroom. There is an inherent power differential in the student-teacher relationship that effects the kind of caring relationships that are cultivated between teachers and students. Palmer (1998) makes an important distinction between authority and power in the classroom. He writes,

In a culture of technique, we often confuse authority with power, but the two are not the same. Power works from the outside in, but authority from the inside out. We are mistaken when we seek authority outside of ourselves, in sources ranging from subtle skills of group processes to that less than subtle method of social control called grading. This view of teaching turns the teacher into the cop on the corner, trying to keep things moving amicably and by consent but always having to recourse to the coercive power of the law. (Palmer, 1998, pp. 32-33)

When faced with apathy in the classroom, Julie chose to assert power by imposing new grading policies that were punitive to students that didn't attend class. This technique did succeed in rewarding students that went to class. For instance, Melissa, a student that rarely missed class, said the new policy really didn't matter to her because she was coming to class anyway and was glad to get the points for being there. She also said the quizzes given to track attendance caused her to focus more during case study presentations. Yet, Trent pointed out that the new policy changed his motives for coming to class, but didn't necessarily effect his attitude or learning in the class. He reported,

It was really nice before, because if you missed there were no consequences. It didn't really change anything for me. I think before I went to most of the classes. I usually missed once a week, and now it is about the same. Before, if I was hung over, I wouldn't go to class and would just go over the material and look at the slides [on his own outside of class]. Now if I am hung over, I go [to class] just for attendance. When I don't feel like going, my motivation has changed for going.

Hence, Trent was motivated to come to class to get the points, but not because he needed to go to class in order to understand the concepts or engage in the process of learning.

Attendance did improve in Julie's class after the new policy was put into place, but this alone did not increase participation, and some students expressed some hostility to the changes. The most outright example of this was during a lecture two weeks after Julie approached the class about apathy. She asked students to close their laptops while she gave a lecture on information not in the book. She let students know that she would post the power point after class was over, so they would have the information for the test.

During the lecture, many students participated in the discussion, especially those seated towards the front. I was sitting in the back of the classroom and noticed a few students texting on their phones, a group of three students sitting next to me were whispering to one another consistently throughout the class, a woman behind me kept sighing as if being tortured by the slow passing of time, and the gentleman next to me would not stop fidgeting and packed up his bag 10 minutes before the end of class ready to bolt as soon as the class was over. Julie sensed the students' scattered attention and asked, "Are we about out of time, because everyone is so restless." She checked her watch and announced there were 10 minutes left until the end of class. She asked, "Any suggestions?" A student raised his hand and asked, "How are you taking attendance today?" implying he wanted to know if he would fill out a form or be quizzed. She replied, "Why? Are you worried about that?" He said, "I need the points." Julie narrowed her eyes, tilted her head to the side and glared at the student for a moment. He seemed to be testing her to see if and how she would follow through with her new policy on keeping track of attendance. Julie responded coolly saying, "Okay, before I forget, take out a piece of paper and put your name and student ID on the top and write down four things you find surprising about this lecture." The student next to me who was packed up ready to leave, borrowed a piece of paper from the person sitting next to him, and quickly wrote a few things down on the paper. By the time he was finished, the sounds of students packing up and zipping their bags filled the room. Julie cleared her throat and said, "We have two minutes left to finish this up," but the majority of the students were sitting with bags in hand ready to leave. She quickly went through two more points on the slide and dismissed the class a few minutes early.

Julie addressed the issue of attendance by attaching it to student's grades. Yet, neither strategy seemed to address the apathy of some of the students. As the description illustrates

above, techniques and policing were successful in getting students to attend class, but did not address the root causes of the lack of attendance and apathy.

This brings me to the question, what could Julie have done to address apathy and low attendance from the inside out, rather than asserting power from the outside in? Palmer's (1998) offers a window into the source of authority in teaching when he writes,

Authority is granted to people who are perceived as authoring their own words, their own actions, their own lives, rather than playing a scripted role at great remove from our own hearts. When teachers depend on the coercive powers of law or technique they have no authority at all. (p. 33)

Techniques and scripts are tools, but are not sufficient to manifest a teacher's vision for what students will need to succeed in their future endeavors. As discussed at length in the previous chapter, Julie's spontaneous teaching style did not convey to the students that there was a grand vision of the class and some did not find attendance to be necessary as it didn't add to their overall understanding of the material. When Dewey describes the importance of a map to guide the journey of learning, he is not negating the spontaneous as a valuable part of learning, but stresses instead the need for teachers and students alike to work towards a culminating experience rather than checking off a series of assignments and rules that lack an explicit connection to the vision for the class. Palmer's definition of authority coming from authorship reiterates the importance of a clear vision that gives a teacher true authority—one based on expertise in a subject and helping students gain a deeper understanding of their field. Julie cared for the students as human beings, but it wasn't clear to me how the assignments, lectures, and tests coalesced into a vision of what students would need to grow as future professionals in the field of advertising and public relations.

In the next section, I will look specifically at the tension between a teacher's responsibility to both understand the needs of the particular students in their class, while also keeping their attention on the vision and goals of the class.

Seeing With Two Eyes

Noddings (1984) emphasizes the necessary mutuality of caring when she writes, "Caring involves two parties: the one-caring and the cared-for. It is complete when it is fulfilled by both" (p. 68). Noddings makes a distinction between the roles of the one-caring, which in this case is the teacher, and the cared-for, or the students. To have a caring relationship, both parties—student and teacher—must acknowledge there is a relationship. She writes,

The first member of the relational dyad (the carer or "one caring") responds to the needs wants, and initiations of the second. Her mode of response is characterized by engrossment (nonselective attention or total presence to the other for the duration of the caring interval) and displacement of motivation (her motive energy flows in the direction of the other's needs and projects). She feels with the other and acts on his behalf. The second member (the one cared for) contributes to the relation by recognizing and responding to the caring. (Noddings, 1988, pp. 219-220)

Although many caring relationships are characterized as reciprocal in nature—such as a husband/wife, or colleagues at work—in teaching and parenting, Noddings (1984) points out that the distinctions between the one caring and the cared for take on a greater importance because they are not equal in regards to effort or responsibility. She writes,

...in parent-child and teacher-student teacher relations the meetings often are not equal. The child may like, even love, the parent or teacher, but he is incapable of the motivational displacement of caring and, usually, incapable of perceiving or understanding what the parent or teacher wants for herself. (Noddings, 1984, p. 70)

The role of the teacher is to be devoted to the growth of the student, and while there is a sense of mutuality in the relationship—the student needs to respond to the teacher's caring—it is not reciprocal. In other words, a student's responsibility in the teacher-student dyad is to focus on learning and growing, and the teacher's role is to direct their energy and focus to that end.

In this section, I will look at how Julie and Alexandra conceptualized their role as caregivers in the classroom, particularly the balance between the two characteristics Noddings associates with care—engrossment and motivational displacement. I will begin with excerpts from interviews that describe Julie and Alexandra’s general characterization of their relationships with students. Next, I will examine how each attempted to balance being engrossed in the students’ needs and desires, while concurrently detaching oneself from the student’s wishes to see what might serve them best as learners.

Julie described her relationship with students as one built on mutual regard. In an interview, she said,

It’s a partnership. I’m going to teach you, but you have to try to learn. You know, it’s a partnership. Facilitator. I feel like sometimes I would like to be more of a facilitator than a teacher or lecturer.... It goes both ways, it is a mutual process.

Julie saw the relationship between a teacher and students as give and take. Julie was offering ideas, questions, and information to the students, and it was their responsibility to engage with that material and be part of developing the class. She wanted to facilitate their growth rather than dictate the direction of the course.

Julie acknowledged she straddled the line between being the teacher of the class and also wanting to develop a personal relationship with students built on mutual interests and often characterized her relationship to be “friendly” with the students. She was transparent in her desire to have a personal relationship and on numerous occasions told the students that she “liked them” including the day she confronted the students about their apathy saying,

If I didn’t like you guys, I wouldn’t be doing this. I love to teach and I want you to learn—that is what I really care about, is that you learn. I like all of you. I like all of my students. I even like the students I haven’t met yet, and I love my job.

Julie saw her students as adults and wanted to connect with them beyond teaching the materials of the course. She desired a relationship based on friendship where care is reciprocated between the two partners. Yet, as Noddings points out, the teacher student relationship is not based on reciprocal caring. Julie acknowledged the tension this occasionally presented. In an interview, she said,

I like the fact that I am friendly with some of them, because they are people and they are supposed to be grown-ups... I like them. I want to be friends with them. It's kind of like the parenting thing again. I want my kids to like me, and enjoy spending time with me, and I want to have a fun time with them, but sometimes I have to be the parent. I want my students to like me, and spend time with me, and feel comfortable talking to me, but I also have to be the teacher... But when it gets down to brass tacks just because I like them, I'm not going to give them a pass on something. I'm not going to let them get away with something—that's the teacher part.

This philosophy was also evident in her discussion with the class on their lack of attendance and apathy. She asked students for ideas on how to engage them more fully in the class, but also made it clear that she was the “benevolent monarch,” and would consider their suggestions, but the final decision was hers.

Julie's approach to relating with students was premised on reciprocity. To facilitate, she needed students to invest in participating and sharing with the class. In order to create an environment of mutual care, Julie aimed to be friendly with students, but when they did not meet her halfway and were despondent to her calls for participation, the relationship could not be fulfilled. The tension between having a friendly relationship with students while also being in a position of authority was alive in Julie's class. She felt personally hurt when students didn't respond to her questions and reciprocate caring. When students did not participate, Julie could not fulfill her role as a facilitator and instead took on the position of benevolent monarch, which separated her from the students in a way that didn't allow for the friendly environment she desired.

Alexandra took a very different approach and saw herself as a leader rather than a facilitator. She is an avid horseback rider and often connected her experience with horses to her approach to teaching. She said,

Kids are like horses. They are.... Horses are bigger and much more powerful than us, and we can walk into a herd of horses and take over because you have to be able to get their trust. Not, 'oh trust me. Tell me what you want.' They will kick you to death if you do that. But I am strong. I will lead you. I will get you water, I will get you food, and I will keep this herd strong. The kids are looking to somebody who will allow them to succeed and so a lot of times the things they think they want—I want an easy A—if you give them an easy A they hold you in contempt because they know at some level that they haven't learned anything.

Alexandra took full responsibility for leading the class and required little from the students in terms of reciprocation. In class, she often had students take on roles in the scenarios she created to illustrate a concept, but she did most of the narrating and students had minimal responsibility for contributing their own ideas or responding to questions. She clearly delineated the roles between teacher and student; it was her job to teach, and the student's to learn.

Alexandra had a different view of students. Whereas Julie saw students as adults and friends, Alexandra saw them as adolescents that needed clear boundaries. She said,

These are kids away from parents for the first time in their life, and you have a certain responsibility to help them grow up. In the future, they will be dealing with authority, bosses, and working in groups where whether they get or lose a client will affect the group collectively.

Alexandra believed one of her roles was to help students mature and become responsible adults that are ready to work in a competitive environment. She was adamant that the teacher-student relationship was not based on friendship, and found that new teachers struggled with the tension between being a teacher and a friend. She observed that new teachers to Finance 300

...tend to go overboard and go to all the professor help sessions and get all the touchy feely stuff the teacher educators tell you to do, like tell them something personal about yourself to feel a connection with you. This is bullshit. They [the students] have friends.

They don't need another friend. You are not their friend; you are a professor. If there isn't a sense of distance and respect then how are you going to deal with a problem? If you tell them that—no, you can't cheat, or no, you are not going to pass this exam if you do not study. You can't tell that to a friend because a friend will pass you [give you a good grade] anyway...

Alexandra did not seek to cultivate personal relationships, but instead focused her attention on the students' relationship with the subject and materials of the class. She was invested in the students' success in their future careers and that guided her decisions on how to care for students in the classroom.

In summary, Alexandra's caring was expressed through the high quality materials and well scripted lectures, while Julie's was based on developing relationships with students based on their interests and a sense of mutual regard for one another. Hence, the ways in which a caring relationship could be fulfilled were different. Alexandra was engrossed in students' needs as they pertained to learning the materials of Finance 300, and the relationship was fulfilled when the students used those resources to succeed in the class. In contrast, Julie was engrossed in understanding students' interests and using those to engage students in the learning process. The caring relationship was fulfilled through the students sharing their views with Julie and developing a reciprocal relationship based on friendship with the students.

Julie's approach to caring in the classroom was the more complicated of the two because she vacillated between having a friendly relationship with students and being a leader in charge of learning. In Noddings terminology, Julie had difficulty balancing the two roles of the caregiver—engrossment and motivational displacement. Noddings discusses the challenges of being the one-caring in an educational environment because the teacher must see the relationship with “two pairs of eyes” (p. 70). The first eye attempts to see the world through the student's point of view, or what Noddings terms as engrossment. The second eye Noddings refers to is a

broader horizon—the teacher who sees the students within the larger goals and vision of the class and acts on behalf of what is best for their growth.

Alexandra points out a common issue for teachers, especially at the beginning of their career; they want to cultivate a relationship with students built on mutual regard and have a difficult time maintaining authority while also seeming friendly and approachable. Julie provides a compelling example of a teacher struggling to find a balance between being engrossed in understanding the point of view of her students, while simultaneously making choices that are unpopular with students but ultimately help them to learn and grow.

This was evident in a discussion I had with Julie about her thoughts on the use of laptops in the classroom. When I asked Julie if she had ever considered banning laptops in the class to encourage more discussion and participation, she thought the students' response would be, "Oh my gosh, she's that person that doesn't let us have computers." Julie feared she would be seen as an "old school" teacher and pointed out that she required students to hand in work electronically. She said, "Realistically, I think the expectation is that we are going to do all of our stuff digitally now." She summarized by saying, "I guess I want to be current. I think there would be a misperception and it [banning laptops] would hurt me more than help me." Yet, she agreed with me that on the days she did not allow laptops in the class the quality of the discussion and engagement was higher, and she enjoyed teaching more on those days.

Julie characterized one of her traits as being "realistic," and said "I know students don't do the reading, that is why I give such detailed power points because I want them to learn the material." In this sense, Julie prioritized engrossment in her student's lives. Noddings (1984) describes engrossment as,

Apprehending the other's reality, feeling what he feels as nearly as possible, is the essential part of caring from the view of the one-caring. For if I take on the other's reality

as a possibility and begin to feel its reality, I feel also that I must act accordingly; that is, I am impelled to act as though on my own behalf, but on the behalf of another. (p. 16)

Julie was adept at knowing the disposition of students—many would prefer to do as little work as possible to achieve the grade they desire. She understood that reading textbooks can be tedious, and that this generation of college students prefer to be immersed in their electronic worlds where they feel most at home. But Nodding points out in her definition of engrossment that one must be “impelled to act as though on my own behalf, but on the behalf of another” meaning that even when immersing oneself in the realities of being a modern day college student, a teacher must act on behalf of the students, or do what is best for their growth. Julie admitted to the class on the day she confronted them that “I know I make this class too easy, but it is because I want you to learn.” Julie’s realism and acquiescing to the students’ desires had the effect of separating students from the rigors necessary for learning to occur. Her engrossment in the students’ lives was not balanced with the “second eye” of teaching that prioritizes growth and expansion.

Alexandra’s engrossment in students’ lives was focused on what they needed as learners. Alexandra discussed how the student population has changed over the years and this has required her to change her teaching—like using power point presentations as a tool to help students learn how to take notes. However, I did not get the impression she had lowered the standards of the class to meet the needs of students that might find the material challenging. Alexandra believed that a rigorous engagement with the concepts discussed was integral to student learning, and it had effects beyond knowing the material. She said,

You cannot give someone self-respect, you can only give them the opportunity to earn it and then recognize it. So giving A’s to kids in a class does not give them anything worthwhile because they hold that A in contempt; they know how easy it was to get it. They want it because they want the GPA. It’s currency. But they have no respect for it....You can earn an A in Fin 300 but EARN it. That’s what we have been working on.

Alexandra wanted the students to not only learn the material of Finance 300, but also to experience the pay off of working hard to get something they desired. Alexandra summarized the essence of the tension inherent in the teacher-student relationship. She said,

Yes, they [students] will be unhappy if they don't effortlessly get an A, but we are not here to keep them happy. We are here to educate them. And I think we forget that from time to time. They are not customers; they are trusted beneficiaries. And it drives me crazy when I see good students become lazy entitled brats because we don't ask them to be anything else.

In an effort to be engrossed in the needs of students and forge relationships, one can fall into the consumer model of education Alexandra describes above. To give students the experience they want means the teacher has the potential to receive the accolades of a student's affection and to be liked. Rather than the teacher-student relationship being fulfilled through the growth of the student towards his or her goals, it becomes a reciprocal relationship that is satisfied by mutual regard and more like a friendship. Alexandra operates from the philosophy that teachers are experts in a subject, and students get the benefits of their knowledge and experience by taking a class designed to help them grow while fully acknowledging that the learning process is challenging. She also points out that challenging students to reach a potential they cannot see from their limited vantage point can mitigate the apathy and laziness of students.

The "first eye" of teaching is engrossment and the "second eye" is a concept Noddings terms motivational displacement. She writes, "that my caring is always characterized by a move away from self" (Noddings, 1984, p. 16). In a teacher-student relationship, the flow of energy and attention moves in one direction—towards the needs of the student. She identifies a key issue that arises when students are asked to think of the needs of the teacher, rather than focus on the learning process. She writes,

If, however, the student were to attempt inclusion with respect to the teacher, to discern her motives, to concentrate on what she is trying to accomplish, he would be distracted

from his own learning task.... Instead of concentrating on the objective elements of the problematic situation in, say, mathematics, the student focuses on what the teacher wants. (Noddings, 1984, pp. 70-71)

When students are asked to turn their focus towards the teacher's needs, it distracts from their learning process. This was evident on the day Julie approached students about their apathy and decided to spend the entire class discussing the issue rather than covering material for the test. She said, "there is a lot to cover in this chapter before the test, but I thought it was more important to spend the day caring about attendance and general attitude, so you might have to look up some of the material on your own, but I thought this was more important." Caring became the subject of class rather than a subtext that undergirds the student-teacher relationship. Although Melissa had a favorable opinion of Julie in general, she was critical of the time devoted to discussing apathy and attendance. She said,

I think the discussion was important for her to state her opinion, yes... I think it would have been a less waste of time had she done it quicker, demonstrated her feelings and then sent an email [for suggestions from students] because at the end of the day she definitely expressed what she wanted and that on our end [the students] we had kind of failed. On one hand, her 40-minute discussion about it, I was just sitting through it, and on the other, the students complained, and I don't know. She could have taken 10 minutes and it would have had the same effect, and then we could have gone on with class also. I think the students just totally flopped on their responsibility, so I understand it.

Melissa touches on two important points. First, students *do* have responsibility in a caring relationship—to be engaged learners. Second, it is not the students' responsibility to devise mechanisms and policies that promote engagement, and by making caring the focus of the class, it took time away from what students needed—a discussion on material that would be on the test.

By soliciting suggestions, Julie was asking the students to step out of the role of being a learner and think about what would make the class more engaging. In the conversation that followed, students offered suggestions that would be pleasing or make their lives easier—like

keeping the power points available so they would not need to read the book. They also gave suggestions on how their personal learning preferences could be addressed, to which Julie responded by saying, “I can’t worry about that, and every one of you will have to figure out how to make it work for you, that is part of learning.” This is what students should be focused on, their own unique ways of grappling with the material, not what the material of the class should be, or how to make it engaging.

In other words, students lacked the perspective to see what would engage them more fully in the class, and many of the obvious suggestions, like having a laptop policy and taking attendance on a regular basis, would not be popular ideas to put forth because it would ruin the “easy” course that many, but not all, of the student’s desired. As Noddings points out, the very nature of a caring relationship between teacher and student is one-way because students lack the ability to fully see from the point of view of the teacher, and when they attempt it, it has negative consequences for their learning.

Another consequence of asking students to take on the concerns of the teacher is that it changes the relational dynamic into one of friendship. Noddings (1984) writes,

In the event that inclusion becomes actual [meaning students are asked to see from the point of view of the teacher], the relation is converted, as we have noted, from that of teacher-student to one of friendship. This may, of course, happen, but even if it does, when the teacher assumes her function as teacher, the relation becomes again, temporarily unequal. (p. 71)

Julie wanted to cultivate friendly relations with students, but these two roles were often in conflict. For instance, Julie solicited students’ input on how to make the course better, but let them know that she would ultimately make the decision. The role shifting between being the teacher and then a friend made caring a topic of conversation in the class. Coming to class and participating became more about pleasing Julie or honoring a personal connection with her than

about learning the material of the class. I asked Trent if he felt that class was more interesting if more people attended, and he said, “Not necessarily for me personally. I just kind of feel bad for her if people don’t come to class.” The wavering between playing the role of the teacher and one of friendship made it difficult to discern the motivations behind both Julie and the students’ actions. For instance, were Julie’s choices motivated by wanting to be liked by the students, or because she wanted them to grow in their knowledge? And did the students come to class because it was necessary to understand the information, or because it was required, or they didn’t want to hurt Julie’s feelings.

Alexandra’s approach to the student-teacher relationship was less complex; hence, it was in the background of the class. Had I not been concurrently observing Julie’s class, I don’t know that I would have identified caring as an issue to explore in Alexandra’s class. The richness of looking at these two teachers is that they challenge conventional wisdom about how caring is manifested in the classroom. If someone walked into the classrooms of Julie and Alexandra for one day only, I think they would leave thinking Julie was the more caring teacher because of her warmth and desire to connect with and engage students. Alexandra would be described as a passionate and eminently competent teacher, but not one that prioritized bonding with students; yet, caring was present in her class through her actions.

Caring in Action

In this section, I will explore different ways of *enacting* care in the classroom. Gilligan (1982) envisioned an ethic of caring based on specific situations; hence there is a difference between abstract caring and enacting care. For instance, I may say that I “care about” homelessness, but when encountering a homeless person on the street, I may not show care in the

way I interact with the person. Mayeroff (1971) makes a distinction between caring intentions and caring in action when he writes,

We sometimes speak as if caring did not require knowledge, as if caring for someone, for example, were simply a matter of good intentions or warm regard. But in order to care I must understand the other's needs and I must be able to respond properly to them, and clearly good intentions do not guarantee this. To care for someone, I must know many things. I must know for example, who the other is, what his powers and limitations are, what his needs are, and what is conducive to his growth; I must know how to respond to his needs, and what my own powers and limitations are. (p. 9)

Mayeroff makes an important point—a feeling of caring or expressing that one cares is not the same as enacting care which requires, in this case, a deep engagement and knowledge of students. In other words, it is not enough for a teacher to profess that they care about the students, but rather what actions embody caring in the classroom.

Alexandra and Julie both expressed care, but in fundamentally different ways. In general, Alexandra's care was exhibited in the materials she prepared for the class, and Julie's approach was aimed at forming a personal relationship with students. In the following section, I will look at the ways Julie and Alexandra expressed but also enacted caring in the classroom.

Alexandra never used the word “caring” in interviews, nor was it ever a topic of discussion that came up in class, but it was evident in several ways. First, the time Alexandra spent preparing the materials for the class showed a reverence for the subject of finance, as well as a concern that it was accessible for students at a level they could understand. Second, the passion and energy she exerted during the lectures signaled a desire to engage students. Third, Alexandra cared that students gain the skills needed to be successful in their future jobs.

Finance 300 is a challenging course, but there were many resources available to students to practice, get assistance, and ultimately succeed in the class if they are willing to work hard and avail of the help provided. Alexandra's materials were carefully constructed to support students

learning the curriculum for the course. The book, which she co-authored, elaborated on material in her lectures, and each chapter had numerous practice problems with an answer key, so students could work through problems on their own to test their knowledge. Alexandra also held special sessions outside of class on how to set up a complicated excel spread sheet needed for completing group projects. She told students there were instructions “in nauseating detail” in the book, but in addition she held sessions for those that preferred direct instruction and wanted to ask questions. Alexandra built in several mechanisms to get feedback on what students did and did not understand. One strategy was giving pop quizzes 10 times throughout the semester. The quizzes were graded in class. Students traded exams and one at a time went up to the board to write down one of the answers from the quiz they were grading. Once all the answers were up, students could cross out answers they thought were incorrect and add an additional answer. This was an opportunity for Alexandra to see what areas the students were struggling with. On the spot, she would go work through the problems on the board taking questions from students. If students struggled with a problem, Alexandra would say, “Okay folks, you better review this, because I can guarantee there will be a problem like this on the test.” The pop quizzes gave Alexandra immediate feedback on what concepts students were struggling with, as well as provided an opportunity for students to see if they could apply formulas discussed in class to solve a complex word problem that related to a concept—like figuring the dividend of bond based on its yearly yield schedule.

Alexandra’s care was rarely directed towards individual students. For instance, she knew few students by name. This was evident when she handed tests back to students. She would call their names out one by one and have them come forward and pick up the test but didn’t seem to recognize or acknowledge students personally. She rarely called on students by their name in

class. Yet, Alexandra did respond to students' needs as a group of learners and attempted to engage them with examples relevant to their age group. For instance, the parables she used at the beginning of the class to introduce a concept were often on topics students might relate to, like buying pizza, transporting beer from one town to another to make a profit, and betting on a college basketball tournament.

One of the most stunning examples was the day she asked students to take part in a "play" the day before spring break began. She cajoled students into taking on roles like "mortgage broker," "summer intern," and "Norwegian mayor." The play was a power point created to explain the cause of the financial crash of 2008 through rudimentary stick figures and bubbles with text. The play had about seven characters, and she warned the two students playing the mortgage broker and the Norwegian mayor that they needed to be comfortable swearing out loud. The power point play illustrated how the mortgage market crashed the entire financial system affecting even a small village in Norway that had purchased United States stocks, through simplistic speech and quite a bit of swearing. The play ends with the Norwegian mayor and the mortgage banker shouting over the phone, "Fuck you" back and forth. The students were laughing uncontrollably at the end of the play. Partially due to the humor of the power point, but I speculate that some of the laughter was due to the context. Alexandra is a no nonsense teacher, but I wouldn't describe her as prim. She often engages students in participating in the parables she devises in class, but this power point was far more explicit than her dramas. It included a kind of humor that college students might appreciate, and also showed that she was not immune to what they might find funny. Alexandra ended the class by saying, "This is the most simplistic and accurate account of why the 2008 crash happened. Have a great Spring Break." In an

interview with a student a few weeks later, Lim said it was a memorable moment in class because it was unexpected and “pretty cool that she brought that into class.”

When I asked Lim to tell me what he thought was important to Alexandra as a teacher, he replied,

I think she really wants us to learn the material because she genuinely cares for the students.... She goes through concepts fast, but is willing to take the time to help you understand. So caring would be one of the words I would use to describe her. She is also pretty passionate. She doesn't raise her voice, but the effort she puts into [power point] slides shows she is passionate, and I enjoy that.

Alexandra exhibits care through preparing materials that support the students learning and by sharing her own passion for the subject. Although outward caring directed towards individual students is not one of the abiding characteristics I observed in her class, it seemed to be a guiding principle in her teaching.

To explore an embodied analogy, Alexandra's caring is at the heart of her teaching, meaning it is a steady rhythm that undergirds all that she does; yet, it is interior, subtle, and ever present. The role of the heart is to circulate blood to the interior system of the body, and although Alexandra has taught this class many times, there is clearly a passionate alive beating heart pulsing fresh energy through a well developed vascular system/curricular structure. In contrast, Julie's caring is located in the lungs and respiratory system. She exudes caring towards students through every breath, letting her feelings disperse throughout the room. Her caring is exterior, and with each breath there is an exchange—she exhales her internal desire to show caring and inhales whatever energy is in the room. This quality makes her permeable and alive to the give-and-take of the room and it also more vulnerable.

Caring was central to Julie's approach to engaging students in the class. In an interview, she said,

I'd like to think that if I can get them, despite how good of a teacher I am or how good of a student they are, if I can just get them to care about me, about the class, the material, hopefully the other things follow suit.

Julie showed caring by getting to know individual students, and soliciting ideas and opinions in class. Her goal was to draw the students into the class through the material or a personal connection and these could be interchangeable and mutually exclusive. For instance, a student could care about Julie, but not have an interest in the class, or vice versa.

Julie strove to get to know the students in her class. Even though the class was large—approximately 75 students—she knew several of the student's names. I asked her how she did this, and she said, "Some of them I know from having them in class before, and I look at their names when they hand in stuff at the end of class and get to know some of them that way." Of the students that she knew from previous classes, she often remembered details from their lives, like what their major was, and what they wanted to do after college, etc.

Julie embodied caring in her individual interactions with students. For instance, when a student raised their hand in class, she would focus on this student and listen intently. Julie often leaned in the direction of the student talking and would nod her head as she took in what they were saying. After listening to their thoughts, she would typically ask a follow up question, or summarize what the student had said to make sure she had heard them correctly. When Julie focused in on an individual, it was as if no one else existed in the classroom, and she gave the student her undivided attention.

In terms of materials, Julie both solicited suggestions from the students and brought in clients and case studies she thought might engage the class. For instance, the three clients she selected for students to work with—the local food bank, an organ donation non-profit, and the university wheel chair basketball team—were all chosen because Julie thought they were good

causes a student could relate to. Julie also allowed groups to choose which client they wanted to work with, and the majority of students chose to create public relations campaigns for the wheel chair basketball team. Julie believed students were more motivated and did better work when they were emotionally invested in the organizations they were creating public relations strategic plans for, whether that be raising awareness about the local food bank, the benefits of organ donation, or increasing the visibility of the wheel chair basketball team.

Julie also tried to appeal to students through the examples she used in class. At the beginning of class, Julie asked students if they had seen anything in the news or on social media that was related to public relations. If a student mentioned something, she would find it on the Internet and they would watch the video, advertisement, news clip, etc. and then have a brief discussion. For instance, one day a student mentioned that an advertisement by the big box retailer *Target* had photo shopped the inner thighs of their swimsuit models to make them look thinner than they actually were. This was being discussed on the news because the photo editing was extreme and poorly done. It raised larger questions about the portrayal of unrealistic bodies marketed towards young women. By asking students for their input, Julie engaged students in discussions about topics they found relevant.

She also made caring a topic of discussion in the classroom. For example, in the vignette at the beginning of this chapter, Julie prioritized a discussion on apathy—or the lack of caring—instead of going over materials relevant to the test. Julie expressed her caring intentions regularly, but they were often disconnected from enacting care. Returning to an earlier statement, Mayeroff (1971) suggests in order to be a caring individual, “I must understand the other’s needs and I must be able to respond properly to them, and clearly good intentions do not guarantee this” (p. 9). Julie faced a dilemma that many teachers encounter—that one can feel a

deep sense of caring for students and desire for students to engage in the learning process, but concurrently find it challenging to manifest that feeling in tangible ways.

This was evident in a conversation initiated with students about a book she was reading titled *What the Best College Students Do* by Ken Bain (2012). She described to the students the four modes of learning, and that she wanted them to become what Bain terms “deep learners” by immersing themselves in the learning process. Julie told students she cared about their learning and was reading this book because she is always trying to improve her teaching. Yet, informing students about the characteristics of “deep learning” is not the same as devising ways of submerging students in a rigorous learning process.

At the end of the semester, I interviewed a student named Marilyn that was hoping to launch a career in public relations. She pointed out the discrepancy between Julie’s caring intentions, and her actions. She said,

I know where she was coming from when she approached us about not coming to class. And I thought it might be a good thing because she [Julie] would give us more dense material, but instead she just focused on people coming to class.

Despite Julie’s desire for students to become deep learners, Marilyn reported that it was difficult to immerse herself in learning because she couldn’t see the connections between the materials given in class, and felt that many of the activities were similar to what she had done in the 200 level public relations class. She said,

It is not the most difficult material, but I wanted to be engaged and working on things and growing ourselves. This was supposed to be an advanced public relations class and where is the advancement? Where am I pushing myself? It was frustrating.

In conclusion, Marilyn suggested, “She [Julie] doesn’t uphold herself to certain standards, and then decided she wanted to up hold us to standards” meaning that students were held accountable

for coming to class, but Julie did not take actions to make the class more rigorous so that attending class was necessary or added to their understanding of public relations.

Caring was at the surface of Julie's teaching, but she struggled to take actions and embed caring into the structure of the class. Yet for some, she her approach to developing interpersonal connections with students did have its strengths. I asked Jasmine, a student who participated regularly in class, why she rarely surfed the web while so many other students were busy multi-tasking in class. She said, "It's just a respect thing with Julie. I really respect her, so I wouldn't wanna be vicious, since I know how passionate she is about getting our attention." When I asked her how Julie gained her respect she said, "I have had other classes with her, and she took the time to help me. She didn't need to do that. I didn't make an appointment, she didn't need to take the time, but she did." Jasmine went on to tell me that in the past she had approached professors after class about a question, and they had told her she needed to come to office hours because they didn't have time to answer the question. In contrast, Julie helped Jasmine after class, even though it was not her official office hours. Jasmine said, "If she makes time for me, I am going to respect her."

Jasmine was a first generation college student, and in the interview she discussed how important it was for her to have a personal connection with her professors. She felt that when classes were hard and the professors were not nice or inviting, she didn't feel comfortable asking for help and sometimes dropped the course. I could see how a teacher with Alexandra's lack of outward concern for individual students might alienate and intimidate a student like Jasmine. Yet, students that went to her office hours reported that Alexandra was patient and helpful. I did not observe Alexandra in office hours, but I did see her interact with a student after class who had not done well on the pop quiz and was visibly nervous, switching his weight from one foot

to the other while wringing his hands, because there was a midterm exam in two days.

Alexandra counseled him in a quiet soothing tone of voice to “Find a quiet place and go through the problems at the end of the chapter and compare them to the quiz questions.” She paused, took a breath with him and said, “Take your time, don’t panic, and go through them methodically.” She paused again and said, “If you are still having problems, come see me in my office hours, and we will figure it out.” She spoke to him slowly reiterating vocally the calmness he should try to embody in his own study. I had not heard her use this soft tone in class, and it seemed to have a positive effect on the student.

At the beginning of this section, Mayerhoff (1971) points out that caring requires knowing the individuals that you desire to care for—both their needs and limitations and what might help them grow. You cannot personally will a student to grow, but you can create the conditions for expansion. One of those conditions could be exuding care towards students and developing relationships that prompt students to engage in the class, but this alone may not absorb students in the learning process. What Alexandra brings to the forefront is a sometimes overlooked aspect of caring that pertains to the design of the class. Enacting care is finding ways to engage the particular students one is teaching in the learning process, as well as being sensitive to the changing needs of the student population. Noddings (1986) points to the connection between the interpersonal needs of students in relation to teaching methods. She writes,

To suppose for example, that attention to affective needs necessarily implies less time for arithmetic is simply a mistake. Such tasks can be accomplished simultaneously, but the one is undertaken in light of another. We do not ask how we must treat children in order to get them to learn arithmetic but, rather, what effect each instructional move we consider has on the development of good persons. Our guiding principles for teaching arithmetic, or any other subject, are derived from our primary concern for the persons that we teach, and methods of teaching are chosen in consonance with these derived principles. An ethic of caring guides us to ask, What effect will this have on the person I

teach? What effect will it have on the caring community we are trying to build?
(Noddings, 1986, p. 499)

Caring for students requires a synthesis between knowing students' needs and addressing those through enacting new methods of teaching that will allow the students to grow as a whole person. Alexandra points out earlier in the chapter that in workshops teachers are often advised to make a personal connection with their students by sharing details of their lives, and this very well might be good advice, but in the absence of discussing other ways of manifesting care in the classroom, it could be interpreted that interpersonal care for students is enough, rather than enacting actions that help students evolve and grow in their knowledge and understanding.

In a student-teacher relationship caring is one directional—towards the student's needs. It requires that a teacher see with two eyes, both being sensitive to students' needs but within the broader horizon of the growth each student has the potential to obtain. As MacDonald (1986) points out at the beginning of the chapter, it is a messy process full of tension as teachers negotiate the students' desires with what they see to be the goals of the educational experience. Julie and Alexandra offer two points on a broader spectrum; yet the counterpoint is nonetheless illustrative of the potential "messy practicalities" of caring in the classroom.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION: EMBODIMENT AND ARTISTRY IN TEACHING

This study looks at the embodied and performative dimensions of teaching through a choreographic framework that accommodated for the convergence of the many different forms of communication teachers use in the classroom. To call on a term used at the beginning of the dissertation, my goal was to study the *all at oneness* or the present tense nature of teaching in the classroom. Yet, in order to understand the complexity of the moments observed, I chose to thematize issues that were in need of more intense looking and analysis. In chapter four, I focused on the physically embodied nature of teaching and the development of a method for studying movement that honored the body as a valuable tool for understanding and analysis. In chapter five, the focus shifted to look at the relationship between the curricular design of a class and how a teacher implemented and animated the curriculum in the classroom. In chapter six, I looked at the relationship between teachers and students, and the ways teachers show caring and build a relationship of trust and mutual regard. In this chapter, I hope to bring the embodied, the structural, and the relational into a holistic vision of how methods from the performing arts could address some of the complexities of teaching.

The performing arts offer a compelling parallel to examine the practice of teaching because they share many similarities. Rubin (1985) clearly articulates these similarities when he writes,

Teachers need considerable skills in interactive improvisation—the continual refining of the pedagogy to correspond with the situations that evolve. Thus teachers must function as playwrights, directors and actors. They emulate playwrights when they organize a lesson; they behave like directors when they orchestrate the various components of the instruction; and they become actors when they execute the teaching itself. (pp. 115-116)

Rubin (1985) points to a critical similarity between the performing arts and teaching—both are practices that include improvisation and constant refinement. Teachers and artists spend many hours outside of the performance space of the theater or classroom preparing—creating, designing, and gaining a better understanding of their subject matter—but once they enter the performance space, they are engaged in the practice of being present to the needs, desires, and energy in the room. The performance space is alive with challenges, and teachers and performers are dealing with them in the present moment. For instance, a dancer misses an entrance because a shard of glass somehow got embedded in his foot and his partner must now turn their duet into a solo finding ways to augment the choreography on the spot. Or a teacher plans to discuss a chapter from the book, but when a student brings up an evolving issue on campus, opts to lead a discussion on the issue weaving in concepts from the chapter into the discussion. Teaching and performance both include a “live studio audience.” Rubin acknowledges that practice is important to refining the skills of performers and teachers. One could read hundreds of books on performance and teaching, but those are not substitutes for being in the classroom and practicing one’s craft.

Rubin’s description of the similarities between the theatrical arts and teaching mirrors my own thematic analysis. In many ways, teachers share more similarities with theater artists than choreographers because both use narrative and language as the primary mode of communication. Yet, what a choreographic frame offered that the theatrical did not was two fold. First, a choreographic framework brought the embodied and sensory dimension of teaching to the forefront. In chapter four, I discussed the process of *watching with my body* to study the movements of each teacher, and one result of this embodied listening and observing was a heightened awareness of the energetic exchanges in the classroom. I could observe and sense the

focused concentration during quizzes, the scattered energy and attention that web surfing created, and the daily rise and fall of student's liveliness throughout the semester.

Second, choreographers typically create, direct, and occasionally perform in their own work. Although there are many productions in theater where the writer is also the director, it is not as common. Choreographers, like teachers, are responsible for the creation of the dance piece, as well as directing the dancers, and occasionally they perform their own work. Hence, a choreographic frame highlighted the interconnectedness of the design, orchestration, and performance of teaching. This is particularly significant when looking at Higher Education because professors typically have full autonomy to create the syllabi and learning goals for their courses, whereas K-12 teachers are usually given a standard curriculum or clear guidelines on what students will be assessed on.

In this study, themes like the embodied and relational emerged, and they seemed more illusive, or for lack of more tangible word, subterranean. The qualitative dimension of how a teacher moved and subtly responded to the students in the classroom seemed to undergird the narrative sequencing and content delivered through spoken language. In other words, the structure, curricular design, and narrative sequencing floated at the surface of the performance of teaching, but underneath there was a way of being in the classroom that was singular to each teacher and created the ambience of the classroom. The interconnected nature of narrative communication and the embodied mirrored the nature of water—ripples reverberate through the depths and the surface—hence, a shift in the embodied and relational effects the narrative communication and vice versa. In this case, a striking and easily identifiable difference between the two teachers was Alexandra's love for structure in the classroom, and Julie's spontaneous

approach to teaching. Yet, this observation that rests at the surface of the class also has implications on the tacit levels of teaching.

For instance, Julie's lack of a clear structure had ramifications in the relational. Without a clear map, students could not see how the activities and lectures in the class eventuated in something meaningful—or rather, the class lacked a feeling of consummation. This affected the relational dynamic between Julie and the students. Julie's buffet approach to the structure of class—having many activities and assignments but the synthesis or overall vision was not explicit—encouraged students to take a similar approach in their attendance; they came whenever they felt like it, picking and choosing depending on what they wanted. When Julie made attendance part of the grading criteria for the class, it changed the friendly nature of the previous mode of interactions between the two. In her attempt to keep the friendly relationship, Julie asked students to contribute ideas on how to encourage attendance and participation, but made it clear that it was ultimately her decision. In the end, students could still take the buffet approach to coming to class, but not without the consequence of losing attendance points that affected their grade; yet, the structure of the class wasn't enhanced in such a way that made it necessary for them to come to every class. In other words, some student's expressed that if they could no longer come and go as they pleased, they expected more than a buffet approach to learning.

This also effected the embodied. For a few weeks after the intervention, Julie no longer sat on the desk before class swinging her legs and talking to students. Instead, she sat or stood looking at her phone in the few minutes before class began. During lectures, Julie walked up and down the isles lecturing from the middle of the classroom where most of the students sat and directed her focus to students' laptops as she spoke. Her gaze and face were no longer wide,

warm and expansive, but instead her eyes were focused and darted around the room policing student behavior with pursed lips. Students also had an embodied reaction. The class went from one where they could half pay attention and surf the web, to one in which they had no choice but to be present to the discussion in the classroom. Once the web surfing was curtailed or more sneakily hidden from Julie's policing, some of the students reacted by fidgeting and sighing out loud in their seats because they were not accustomed to sustaining a long engagement with ideas or conversations. For the first two weeks after the intervention, I sensed a feeling of tension and a twinge of hostility on both sides. Eventually, Julie softened into more friendly and open patterns of embodiment, but with some notable changes. She continued to walk up and down the isles while lecturing, but with less of a patrolling eye on the students' computers, and she eased back into talking with students before class. Students seemed to also slip back into patterns of web surfing, but more strategically and self-consciously. They participated in class when Julie refused to provide examples and required they add to the class discussion.

What Julie offers is an example of a teacher that has considerable skills but the gestalt of the relational, embodied, and structural are not in harmony. Rubin (1985) asserts something similar when he writes,

Teachers do specific things to accomplish their goals. It is not acting, per se, nor salesmanship, nor communication, nor entertainment, nor pedagogical jugglery which account for performance. It is the gestalt of these—molded into a personal style, built around individual attributes, and energized by genuine commitment and an educated mind—which account for teaching that takes students beyond the confines of their interests. (p. 163)

I would suggest that Julie felt deeply committed to the relational aspect of teaching and wanted to cultivate a friendly learning environment for students to express their ideas. Yet, this seemed to outweigh her commitment to the vision and design of the class. Julie was an engaging teacher. Her spontaneity and fun loving nature could make the classroom feel alive with a sense of “what

will happen next.” She made students feel at ease, created a space full of warmth and acceptance, but what was missing was a grand plan to take students beyond their own understanding of public relations to something greater.

Alexandra provides an interesting counterpoint because she had a clear vision—an alignment of the embodied, the relational, and the structural. Which is not to say that there are not critiques to be made of Alexandra’s teaching. Students that thrive in a learning environment where their personal interests are encouraged and find that personal relationships with teachers help motivate learning might find Alexandra’s teaching style challenging. Yet, the transparency and consistency in her teaching vision and methods was unwavering, so students knew what was expected from them on day one. There was a harmony between the design of the curriculum, her embodiment of the ideas, and most importantly the grander vision of what this class had to offer students. Alexandra sees her role as preparing students to work in the world of business where personal issues are best kept out of the office. She also believes it is her responsibility to give students the skills they will need to be successful in their future careers. She reported getting emails from alums saying they purchased the textbook for Finance 300 once they began their jobs to review formulas and concepts needed to perform their work on a daily basis. In an interview, she told me that this is what got her through the “bad days” of teaching.

In my assessment, Alexandra embodies a caring teacher because of her love for the subject, commitment to preparing students for the future, investment in the practice of teaching, and constant refinement of the course. She personifies Mayeroff’s (1971) description of the holistic relationship between caring and how that is reflected in one’s actions. He writes,

In the context of a man’s life, caring has a way of ordering his other values and activities around it. When this ordering is comprehensive, because of the inclusiveness of his carings, there is a basic stability in his life; he is ‘in place’ in the world, instead of being out of place, or merely drifting endlessly seeking his place. Through caring for certain

others, by serving them through caring, a man lives the meaning of his own life. In the sense in which a man can ever be said to be at home in the world, he is at home not through dominating, or explaining, or appreciating, but through caring and being cared for. (Mayeroff, 1971, p. 2)

Alexandra didn't seek personal relationships with students, but I do think she felt great pride in their success in the class. For her, students' recognition of her usefulness served as an acknowledgement that her caring had been received and was valuable. Her goal was not to be liked by students, but respected for her knowledge and ability to help students grow in their own understanding and skills.

My investigation into the embodied, structural, and relational yielded findings that point to the holistic nature and vision needed to be a master teacher. Mayeroff's quote above alludes to the personal commitment necessary for true caring to be enacted, and in turn, how a natural ordering or personal vision begins to take shape. Using a choreographic framework allowed me to see embodiment in not only the teachers' movements but also in how they communicated their philosophies, commitments, and knowledge.

Using a theatrical framework to look at teaching has some benefits, but also some pitfalls. Rubin's description of the similar functions teachers and theater artists fulfill as part of their job—scripting/making class plans, directing/orchestrating curriculum, and acting/communicating ideas—are a helpful assessment tool for identifying areas in which teachers might feel challenged, but it does not give insight into how the three interrelate. For instance, Julie had ample performance skills, but needed a stronger script to work from and this, in turn, would have helped her direct learning with more focus and perhaps participation from students. Choreography frames performances in a slightly different way, and looks specifically at the interweaving of many different streams of information coming together to form an experience.

Rubin (1985) found that a theatrical approach had other limitations in the practice of teaching. In his investigation into how theatrical training might help teachers enhance their classroom performance and create active learning experiences in the classroom, he tried two separate interventions. First, he paired theater artists (actors and directors) with teachers to devise ways to make the content of the class more playful and presented in creative ways. Some teachers found this process meaningful, but others reported the activities created were too elaborate, and it wasn't clear students were learning substantive material, even if they were enjoying the process. In the second intervention, teachers took a workshop with a theater artist aimed at providing basic dramatic skills to enhance a teacher's performance in the classroom. Again, this was met with mixed reviews. Some found it to be very helpful, while others dismissed these classes as being too actor-centric and felt it didn't help them authentically present the material.

A theater performance approach to teacher training has some issues that are hard to avoid. First, a theatrical performance is premised on the transformation of an actor into a specific character, or becoming someone else. Rubin (1985) makes a distinction between actors and teachers writing, "actors create characters, and teachers personify characters" (p. 161). I would clarify further and describe teaching as a personification of self. As teachers don't transform into something they are not, but rather become a more animated version of themselves. In interviews with Julie and Alexandra outside of the classroom, they were both passionate and animated but within an interpersonal scale. In the classroom, their gestures, voice, and energy grew to fill the size of the space. I would argue that artistic teachers have the ability to express their personality, commitments, and vision through the design and performance of self in the classroom. A broader sense of artistry beyond theater would switch the focus from becoming a

“character” in the classroom to one that prioritizes the development of a artistic vision that is expressed through the embodied performance of self in the classroom, as well as the creative design of materials and an ethic of caring that guides how to interact with students.

Rubin (1985) offers insight into how teachers develop artistry and highlights the importance of reflective practice. He found when teachers tried new activities in the classroom that inspired creative learning methods, they often didn’t work the first time. However, the teachers that reflected on what went wrong, refined the activity, and tried it again, eventually were successful. Over time, Rubin (1985) found,

As the teachers tried one device and then another, they developed, bit by bit, a feel for the kinds of things that worked best with particular classes. And by degrees, they sharpened their conceptions about instruction. The continuous instruction experimentation seemed to unravel some of the mysteries regarding success and failure in learning. (p. 108)

Rubin highlights the importance of learning through the practice of teaching, and that it is necessary for teachers to be engaged in exploring new ideas and reflecting on how to make them better. It is also notable that teachers involved in Rubin’s study had a supportive community checking in to see how their process was evolving.

From his research, Rubin concludes that the development of artistry is singular to each individual teacher. Although there are some shared characteristics artistic teachers embody, each uses those qualities in varying amounts. He stresses that there is not one easy way to become an artistic teacher and reiterates the importance of practice in the development of artistry. He writes,

Student teachers, of course, need to observe artistic teachers in action, if only to become aware of what is possible. They may even need to copy a few maneuvers and imitate until their confidence and competence rise. Eventually, however, they must begin to test their own theories, find their own paths, fashion their own procedures, and draw upon the energy which stems from keen interests. (Rubin, 1985, p. 169)

This points to a clear difference in the training of teachers and artists that both Rubin and Sarason allude to; artistic training is centered on cultivating a distinctive and individual voice. Building skills and technique is important because artists need to clearly express their ideas through a desired medium. For example, a dancer needs to gain the necessary strength and control of the body to express a wide array of movements, but these skills are cultivated to contribute to one's greater artistic vision. Sarason (1995) makes a similar argument and writes,

Like it or not, and some do not like it, the teacher as performing artist is faced with a terribly complex and difficult task that all those in the conventional performing arts confront: How do you put yourself in a role and then enact it in ways that instruct and move an audience, fulfilling the expectation of the audience that they have in some way learned something about themselves and their world? They have been moved, they seek more such experiences. Teachers are not born, so to speak with such attributes. It requires a kind of training which no preparatory program I know has taken seriously, if at all, which is why these attributes play no role in the admission of candidates to these programs. And when to that you add the fact that the size structure, and culture of schools are the opposite of conducive to the display of these attributes, it is truly a case of adding insult to injury, which means of course, that both the teachers and students are the victims. (p. 54)

Many savvy teachers figure out through trial and error and a dedication to improving their own practice how to become better at leading students through a learning process that invites curiosity and growth. Yet, I agree with Sarason that a lack of acknowledgement or a training process that addresses the performative nature of teaching puts both students and teachers at a disadvantage.

But what would such training look like? And how could one resist falling into the “actor-centric” approach that Pineau (1994) and others are critical of. I will begin by discussing the differences in the culture of education and the arts to provide insight into the barriers that exist within the disciplinary culture of education. Next, I will discuss the implications of studying embodiment in teaching and what potential values and applications it has on the field of education.

Sarason makes two interrelated and apt critiques in regards to the differences in the preparation of teachers and performers. First, performers spend more time developing their craft. Musicians, dancers, and actors take daily lessons or classes aimed at developing their skills and technique. Second, performers actively seek to expand their repertoire and this creates a culture of supportive mentorship and direction. He writes,

They [performing artists] are motivated to learn more and to change; they do not want to feel or be perceived as one-dimensional. In part that motivation is built-in because the directors of artistic productions exert such pressure, they are not content merely to accept what the artist does, their self-interest demands that they help the artist develop and change. (Sarason, 1995, pp. 62-63)

Performing artists engage in life-long learning that is supported and guided by mentors, teachers and directors. Sarason describes the pressure to evolve, but also explains that it encourages a culture where personal growth is championed. In the performing arts, critique, mentorship, and peer review are integral parts of the field and performers expect to be challenged, as well as supported in the development of their artistry.

In contrast, Sarason describes schools as having a culture that doesn't support critical engagement with the practice of teaching, nor is there an assumption that teachers need to evolve their practice. He writes,

There is little or nothing in the organization of and culture of schools that spur a teacher to regard change and development as necessary, personally and intellectually rewarding, and *safe*. I emphasize safe because in the culture of the school the teacher who seeks help or coaching from others is one whose competence is also called into question. (Sarason, 1995, p. 63 italics original)

He notes most faculty development in K-12 environments happens during in-service workshops, and when someone does come to observe teaching in the classroom, it is typically to evaluate the teacher rather than to nurture their growth. In a university setting, it is assumed that experts in their subject will somehow know how to make it accessible to students, and it is rare to have a

colleague observe class in order to give feedback. Most university teachers that want to improve their teaching attend workshops based on cultivating skills in curriculum design, facilitating discussions, designing assignments and assessment rubrics, etc. Yet, rarely within the field of teaching is there a robust system of observation and mentorship in the day-to-day practical engagement with teaching unless specifically sought out.

Both Sarason and Rubin acknowledge that teaching lacks a culture that supports a sustained investigation of self in relation to what they teach, how they enact learning, and why they chose one method over the next. Rubin (1985) identifies that master teachers

...must have clarity of aim and a desire to help others understand. Thousands of teachers know their subject matter, command good methods, and have effective skills. Yet they fall short of artistry. Either they do not value their craft, or they underestimate their potential, or,--for all of their knowledge and ability—teaching does not offer internal satisfaction. Their professional preparation failed them in these regards. (p. 164)

Courses that focus on building skills and techniques in teacher training are necessary, just as artists need to develop their craft, but what seems to be missing is engaging teachers in the process of self-growth and developing a singular vision on what they have to offer students. Mayeroff (1971) illuminates the role that caring plays in finding an order to one's vision and purpose in life drawing a clear connection between artistry and the ways in which a teacher expresses care in the classroom.

The interrelated nature of the relational, structural, and performative dimensions of teaching was made vivid to me by using a choreographic frame. As I reflect on the study as a whole, the abiding theme that undergirds the findings is the importance of both the physical body and the role it plays in communicating, as well as a deeper connection of embodying one's vision and manifesting that through the way one teaches in the classroom. I believe that further investigations of the role of embodiment in teaching could provide a gateway for understanding

and exploring the tacit dimension of experience in education and offer insights into how to cultivate artistry in teaching.

In chapter four, I discussed *watching with my body* as a mechanism that allowed me to sink into a prolonged period of dwelling with the teacher. I found that I absorbed more information about the tacit dimension from observing Julie and Alexandra teach than I could through other means. I believe one of the implications of this study is the potential effectiveness of observing master teachers as an essential aspect of teacher preparation. Noddings (1986) makes a similar connection when she writes,

By working with master teachers whose fidelity is to persons, new teachers, will have the opportunity to learn that this fidelity is to induce a drive for competence, more and deeper learning, responsible experimentation with instructional arrangements, considered suggestions for structural changes in the school, and exercise of imagination in resolving conflicts. All of this is guided by fidelity as a way of being, and no goal is allowed to become detached and pursued merely for its own sake. (p. 504)

By observing master teachers, one can see teaching in action and caring within a situational context that includes embodied and energetic information. Noddings (1986) describes “fidelity as a way of being,” and I would argue that observing master teachers, and even not so masterful teachers, could be just as valuable as going to workshops aimed at enhancing teaching skills, especially if one is seeking to gain insight into how to relate with students and perform in the classroom with ease. At the beginning of the dissertation, I discussed Polanyi (1966) and his belief that through dwelling in the knowledge of a master—he uses a chess player as an example—one can understand not only what the master does, but also more importantly to get a feel for the game. Co-dwelling in the space with master teachers might help teachers in training get a feel for different ways to approach embodiment in the classroom.

Observing teachers would not be aimed at mimicking their movements. I found specific gestures repeated by the teachers took on different meanings depending on the context. For

instance, the “listening intently” gesture Julie enacted when listening to individual students was notable for the intensity of focus on the individual, not the gesture. What was meaningful about being attuned to the body was that it immersed me more deeply within the sensory and energetic dimension of the class—the difficult to express tacit realm of experience.

During this study, I witnessed firsthand the nuance of the energetic action and reaction happening in the class. It functioned not unlike the nervous system of the body. An impulse from the environment is perceived and a whole chain of reactions is set forth in an instant—hormones are released and muscular actions initiated—without the conscious control of mind. In the classroom, teachers reacted to student stimuli in an instant. Alexandra would walk over to one side of the room and stand a few feet away from a student that was nodding off, and Julie would step back away from the empty seats in front row and take a wide legged stance signaling the current discussion was over and the class would be moving onto new topics. Often these decisions were made without conscious thought. It was not uncommon for me to ask Julie and Alexandra questions about their specific embodied reactions to students and have them reply, “Really! I did that? I don’t remember.” For instance, I demonstrated for Julie the way she held her finger over her lips, leaned in, and nodded her head, when listening to individual students during discussions. She looked at me with disbelief, and then tried the gesture herself and said, “Yeah, I guess I do.”

I believe that some kind of systematic understanding of the body and its capacity for movement would be essential to any foray into examining the embodied dimension of teaching. Having taught beginning yoga and dance to adults of all ages, I have found that individuals without any previous training in embodied activities like sports, dance, the martial arts, etc., have little awareness of the body and its capacity to move in different ways. I have witnessed in my

classes that people are amazed at the range of movement in each joint and the complexity and nuance of what can be expressed and felt. The body goes from one solid block, into a three-dimensional and multi-faceted tool for expression, sensation and communication. For researchers interested in investigating the embodied and tacit dimensions of teaching or practicing teachers who want to build a more dynamic range of expression in the classroom, I believe some sort of engagement with exploring the physical body in motion is necessary.

I want to be clear, that gaining an understanding of the body is not undertaken for teachers to do “dance like movements” that entice their students to pay attention, nor is to find ways to “dance” research findings. The point of engaging teachers and researches in an exploration of the physical body in motion is to acknowledge the kinesthetic as a particular kind of knowledge or way of knowing that is only accessible through being physically engaged with movements. For instance, one can learn many things about writing from reading, but it is the actual process of writing that truly gives one a sense of the commitment, skills, and unbelievable patience writing requires. In turn, one can learn many things about embodiment from observing people move, but actually studying movement through the physical body lends insight that goes beyond observation.

I advocate for some movement awareness to be part of teacher education for three reasons. The first is a practical reason; teaching is a physically embodied activity. Having spent the early part of my career dancing for hours on end, I find that teaching requires a similar physicality and my dance training has greatly assisted in my stamina and ability to be present in the classroom. College professors that teach large lecture classes or even small discussions are tasked with being present and fully engaged with students for a sustained period of time. K-12 teachers stand for hours, particularly elementary school teachers, and direct learning. I believe

that engaging teachers in exploring the body would take into account the very physical nature of teaching and address issues of stamina and how to direct learning over a sustained period of time.

Second, teaching is a practice that requires sensitivity to the tacit dimension. To develop a rapport with students and respond on the spot to their energy, attitudes, and thoughts, teachers work within the present moment to act on and respond to what is needed. In this study, I found that attuning to the physical body also provided insight into the sensory dimension of teaching. I was aware of what I described as the *barometric pressure* of the room. I believe that most reflective teachers develop a similar sense over time, as Julie and Alexandra seemed to be sensitive to it in their own classrooms. However, an embodied engagement would offer an opening to discuss and explore this difficult to articulate but very presently felt aspect of teaching.

Third, and perhaps the most important reason that exploring embodiment in teaching, is that we live our whole lives within our bodies, and an exploration of embodiment is essentially an exploration of self. Parker Palmer (1998) in his book *The Courage to Teach* declares, “we teach who we are” (p. 2) and goes on to write,

In fact, knowing my students and my subject depends heavily on self-knowledge. When I do not know myself, I cannot know who my students are. I will see them through a glass darkly, in the shadows of my unexamined life—and when I cannot see them clearly, I cannot teach them well. When I do not know myself, I cannot know my subject—not at the deepest levels of embodied, personal meaning. I will know it only abstractly, from a distance, a congeries of concepts as far removed from the world as I am from personal truth. (p. 2)

Embodiment is the manifestation of self into a physical form that communicates something to the outside world and is at the core of artistry and teaching. I believe investigations grounded in developing a more robust understanding of embodiment have the potential to enliven a deep

sense of artistry in teachers. Aligning one's vision with the way one embodies and expresses it to the external world is no easy task, but is one of the central concerns in the development of artists. An approach to engaging teachers in developing a sense of artistry would require a considered look at the self, and how one can embody their ideals in the structure of a class, the methods used, the choices made when interacting with students, and how they physically communicate to students. This study provides a framework for understanding artistry in teaching through the lens of choreography highlighting the convergence of the performative, the creative design and orchestration of curriculum, and the relational aspects of teaching to make vivid the rich sensory world of the tacit dimension and how it creates the ambience for learning.

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APPENDIX A

Contact Summary :: Choreography of the Classroom

Date	Location
Time	Class
	Teacher

Describe the activities performed during class

List notable movement sequences that could be potential vignettes

In 5-10 words describe the tone of the class

Describe notable changes in the dynamics within the class and/or from the previous class

Describe your own embodied presence during observations (tired, energized, etc)

What did you observe today that relates to research questions

What did you observe today that does not relate to the research questions

What questions arose in the observations today

What issues to you want to look at in future observations

What are some codes or categories that would describe your observations today

APPENDIX B

Note: The following are sample questions that I anticipate asking participants, but because this is a qualitative study, the questions will evolve as the conversation unfolds. The following will provide a sense of the scope and types of questions that will be asked

Professor Interviews

1. How long have you been teaching [name of class]?
2. How has your teaching style developed over time?
3. Can you reflect and recount any moments in your teaching career that caused you to change what you do or value in the classroom?
4. Can you describe some of the influential teachers you have encountered in your own educational past? What characteristics would you ascribe to them?
5. What skills and knowledge do you want students to leave this class knowing?
6. When you are constructing the syllabus for this class, what strategies do you use to organize the content?
7. When you come into the classroom, and students are slumped in their seats, what is your first reaction?
8. What “tools” have you gained, or even perhaps a “bag of tricks” that you have developed during your teaching career?
9. When you finish a class with the feeling that things went smoothly, what are some of the characteristics that would describe the class? In contrast, when you finish a class, and it felt lackluster, what are some of the characteristics that would describe that class?
10. When preparing for class how much do you “plan” and how much do you leave up to classroom interaction?
11. What motivates you to move around the room and use arm gestures during class? (this question will be used more specifically when reviewing video footage)
12. How would you define embodied teaching? And when you feel embodied in class, what words would you use to describe this feeling?

Student Interviews

1. What drew you to take this class?
2. Did you know anything about the professor before signing up?
3. On a scale of 1-5 –one being the lowest, and five the highest—how would you describe your level of engagement? Would you say that number is largely due to your overall interest in the content of the course, or instead due to the teacher of the course?
4. What do you think are the main points the professor is trying to communicate to the class? Do you see any overarching goals, or ideas that he or she wants you to know when leaving this class? How does he or she emphasize these concepts?
5. How often do you attend this class? What keeps you from, or draws you to coming to this course?
6. What are some qualities that you would use to describe your professor?
7. How engaged do you think the professor is in helping you understand the material lectured on in class?
8. If you were to describe some common body postures, vocal styles, or specific phrases your professor uses frequently, what would they be?

9. How is this class similar and/or different than other lecture classes you have taken at the university?

APPENDIX C

January 13, 2014
Liora Bresler
Curriculum and Instruction 311 Educ Bldg
UIUC Campus Mail,
M/C 708

RE: *The Choreography of the Classroom* IRB Protocol Number: 14350
EXPIRATION DATE: January 12, 2017

Dear Dr. Bresler:

Thank you for submitting the completed IRB application form for your project entitled *The Choreography of the Classroom*. Your project was assigned Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol Number 14350 and reviewed. It has been determined that the research activities described in this application meet the criteria for exemption at 45CFR46.101(b)(1).

This determination of exemption only applies to the research study as submitted. Please note that additional modifications to your project need to be submitted to the IRB for review and exemption determination or approval before the modifications are initiated.

We appreciate your conscientious adherence to the requirements of human subjects research. If you have any questions about the IRB process, or if you need assistance at any time, please feel free to contact me or the IRB Office, or visit our website at <http://www.irb.illinois.edu>.

Sincerely,
Dustin L. Yocum, Human Subjects Research Exempt Specialist, Institutional Review Board c: Kimber
Andrews