

Editor's Note

This special issue of *Dance Research Journal* contains a number of current readings in the area of women's health and dance. The topic crosses a number of disciplinary fields and provides critical analysis in diverse scholarly disciplines.

The issue began with a call for papers on the topic. Articles were selected after the manuscripts were sent out for peer review. For this reason, the issue is delimited by the areas selected by the reviewers and editor. Although there is a breadth of work in this issue, it by no means covers all cultural perspectives or theoretical developments regarding the topic. Therefore, the issue is a limited snapshot of some of the work done on the topic of women's health.

A number of themes, methodologies, and foci emerge from the issue. Some authors present ethnographic work and narrative data displays. One author offers an autoethnography. Other articles include critical analysis of topics such as eating disorders and injury. One piece discusses performative action, roles, and medical conditions. The writings are strung together by a focus on women's health. Since there are so many women and young women participants in dance, gender plays a role in health issues; this focus is reflected in the articles.

The first article is a pedagogical ethnography by Sylvie Fortin, Catherine Cyr, and Martyne Trembly, "The Act of Listening to the Art of Giving Voice: Creative Alternative Practices in Writing About Health in Dance." The authors offer an alternative discourse through a poststructural display of data about how dancers construct notions about their health. The textual and poetic representations from the data provide a balance/tension between docility and resistance. The authors communicate the findings through narratives, poems, and diary entries.

Mary E. Edsall offers another type of narrative in her essay, "Moving Out of the Black and Into the Blue: The Cross-referencing of Performative Metaphor in Dancing, Psychotherapy, and Writing." As a participant-observer, with herself as subject, Edsall explores health through an experiential mode. She takes the reader through the therapeutic process, with her[self] as the subject. This autonarrative utilizes dance, performance, writing, and research as interactive strategies for working through body and health issues.

In "Reading the Ballerina's Body: Susan Bordo Sheds Light on Anastasia Volochova and Guenther," Wendy Oliver explores the issue of diet and eating in ballet. Through the work of Susan Bordo, she traces the body as a signifier of deep unspoken societal values. However, like Fortin, Cyr, and Trembly, she recognizes the complexity

of the issue, acknowledging both the external forces apparent in the training of ballet bodies, and the agency acquired through body mastery. While claiming that beauty is not neutral and bodies are socially constructed, Oliver acknowledges the inner power of dance, suggesting not an either/or positionality, but rather an and/both perspective.

Anna Aalten also addresses health issues regarding bodies in ballet; she explores how ballet dancers work toward an idealized body. As an anthropologist, Aalten situates herself within the sociology and anthropology of the body, with an emphasis on the study of health practices in relation to social structure and cultural beliefs. Her ethnographic study—based on formal and informal interviews with ballet dancers, and professionals such as nutritionists, physiotherapists, and doctors specializing in dancers injuries—provides a particular glimpse of the injuries and pain of ballet dancers. She theorizes the meaning(s) of pain in the context of ballet culture, while suggesting that injury can be a good thing because it helps dancers acknowledge the body's presence.

In the last article, "Moving Bodily Fantasies: Medical Performances and Modes of Communication," Petra Kupperts casts a performative light on the topic. She investigates the relationship between movement, communication, and medical presentation in three contemporary dance performances. Her analysis encodes the multiple perspectives, roles, and narratives played through a cultural context, deconstructing the notion of a unified body. Kupperts provides a deconstructivist phenomenology where pain is not presented clearly, but seen as a social and cultural problem tied to a sense of otherness. She communicates a fluidity of subject and object reformulating bodily difference as generative rather than hierarchical. In doing so, she disrupts knowledges about bodies and realms of experiences.

With this issue, I complete my three year term as co-editor of *DRJ*. I found the experience engaging, exciting, and rewarding. I enjoyed working with wonderful scholars from many areas and locations. There is a particular sadness that follows me as I move on to other projects and leave *DRJ* behind. I will always treasure the experience and recognize the many strengths of the journal including its quality, rigor, and openness to diverse areas of scholarship.

There are so many people to thank for making my job possible and doable. First, of course, I thank Ann Dils, for bringing me on board and working with me through the editing and publishing processes. I could not have participated in this process without Ann. I learned a great deal from her and I respect her great dedication, wisdom, thoughtfulness, and ability to work with both scholars and business people. *DRJ* readers and authors are in good hands with Ann. I wish her luck in her continuing role as editor.

Julie Malnig is a treasured editorial board chair. As the former editor, she was familiar with the role. While taking on the job as editorial board chair, she provided advice and gave much of her time to help in the publication process. I thank Julie for her generosity, intelligence, great wealth of experience, tact, and accessibility.

In addition, I want to thank Mary E. Edsall and Cara Gargano, past and current *CORD* presidents for providing support and making sure *DRJ* ran smoothly and

efficiently. I had the pleasure to work with an outstanding reviews editor, Rebekah Kowal, who provided excellent book reviews for publication.

Moreover, I want to thank the excellent staff who made this work possible: copy editors Barbara Palfy and Nadine Covert, proofreader Cory Stephenson, graphic designer Chris Crochetière and BW&A Books, Inc., and my exceptional graduate assistants Julia Edwards, Susan Haines, Lacy James, Julie Mulvihill, and Madeleine Reber, and CORD office administrator, Ginger Carlson, for her tireless work on behalf of *DRJ*. Additionally, I would like to thank the members of the *DRJ* Advisory Board for their service and support of *DRJ*.

Finally, thanks to all the outside readers and evaluators who helped make *DRJ* a stellar journal. So much time was spent reading, reviewing, and mentoring authors through the writing process; I am grateful for the generosity the reviewers demonstrated through thorough, thoughtful, detailed, and provocative comments.

Jill Green