



Masculinity, Intersectionality and Identity

Why Boys (Don't) Dance

Edited by Doug Risner · Beccy Watson

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Masculinity, Intersectionality and Identity

“Beyond access. Beyond singular story. Beyond our conditioned response. These on-the-ground reports demand that the dance field function beyond duality. A paradigm shift is long overdue.... especially in dance education. We know how to be fluid and yet we hang onto historical categories and identities. Our future needs all dancers to be safe, feel welcome, and flourish within our studios and stages. This book presses us forward with elegance and intelligence regarding “normative” behaviors and curriculum.”

—Susan Kirchner, *Professor of Dance in the Department of Dance,
Towson University, USA*

“International in scope, this evocative book allows the reader to delve into the complexities of why boys and men are often discouraged and prohibited from dance. By tackling intersections of gender, race, and class, the book skillfully situates male dancing bodies in diverse dance contexts. It reflects the brilliance and persistence of Risner’s scholarship, offering hope through engaging narratives that inspire the kind of spaces where boys can just dance.”

—Julie Kerr-Berry, *Professor of Dance, Minnesota State University, USA*

“Doug Risner and Beccy Watson’s edited collection is critical and timely, demonstrating how dance contributes to the way in which gender identity is understood and, significantly, eliciting the scope and application of intersectionality. The collection speaks to a broad range of interests, from instructors, practitioners and dance academics, is international in scope and context, and includes, crucially, new and emerging perspectives on dance that challenge dominant positions both within and beyond dance scholarship.”

—Sharon Watson, *Director and Principal,
Northern School of Contemporary Dance, UK*

Doug Risner • Beccy Watson
Editors

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ISBN 978-3-030-89999-8 ISBN 978-3-030-90000-7 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-90000-7>

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The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland



FOREWORD

It is a great honor for me to be invited to provide the preface to this new book, *Masculinity, Intersectionality and Identity: Why Boys (Don't) Dance*, edited by Doug Risner and Beccy Watson. When and wherever it happens, dancing and non-dancing males and masculinities are still asking complicated social and intellectual, and even timeless, questions. I am extremely encouraged by seeing new writers engaging with these issues through their practice as teachers, activists, and researchers. Authors in this volume also continue to probe old and new areas of cultural inquiry, and especially artistic, ethnographic, community, and educational dance traditions and radical practice.

One question that I have always been interested in—and having read material in this volume, it reemerges—is if male dancers, whether they are present or not, embody a social justice question? For a volume such as *Why Boys (Don't) Dance*, this positive question always makes me read more carefully. Of course, I may be accused of needlessly “stirring the possum,” particularly in a book’s preface, but I think that this social justice question can be useful especially for readers of this volume. Certainly, this superb collection of new works is an example of writers who approach the crucial social justice questions differently.

Many years ago, when I was drafting my PhD research findings and transcribing conversations with male dancers, it struck me that whether they were modern, ballet, or improvisational dancers, men wanted a different form of life. That is to say, when I analyzed interviews with male dancers in Australia, their language described dance as a form of

“freedom.” They might have each used different terms; dance might have been a “ticket” from a boring to a “glamorous” life, or an escape from “masculine sport,” or the chance to change one’s identity every time the curtain went up, or to connect one’s choice of movement with one’s sexuality. There is no problem here, but are we talking about male dancers’ *bodily freedom* or are we talking about something else? Are we talking about social justice as a code phrase for “employment”?

Following the employment versus freedom concern, I wondered about how we can dance in one’s house, or at a friend’s place, or at a nightclub, and to some extent, in open, public spaces. To put it more simply, why do we put so much attention on dance as a form of employment rather than, say, other spheres of one’s “dance” life? To push this point even further back into my early adulthood, I would go to inner-city pubs in Sydney, often to watch new and emerging bands which, at this time, often meant there was not a huge crowd. But even here, I would see men going wild, dancing by themselves on what was then called a dance floor, a space to move freely. I want to emphasize that dance, whatever form it took, was not normally seen as “cool” behavior. Having thought about this issue previously, and working with post-graduate students now, a haunting question appears to me: why shouldn’t everyday dance be more popular?

I do not want to be accused of backgrounding social justice questions. In this volume, there are chapters addressing important prejudice and cultural questions between people and between cultures. Of course, there may be readers who might see that all questions boil down to social justice issues. If so, no problem, but there might be some interesting debates about the meaning of social justice. From my position, however, I want to make three interconnected points for the readers of this volume.

First, I am drawn to chapters in this collection that are written by those who, at least in part, are educating young males and, therefore, also young females. As an old physical education and dance teacher in schools, I can see that there is something “special” about early experiences: the connection and sometimes troubled relationships with, say, styles of movement, music, clothing, and lighting, even if one doesn’t want to go into areas of sexuality. In other words, education should also be about pleasure.

Second, the division between artistic dance and social or educational dance is often not talked about or constructed in a dominant/inferior frame; so, it is great to see work focusing on important and even radical

educational experiences with boys' dance and technology. At least from the reader's perspective, the intriguing intermingling of everyday "safety" and "risk" are in play no matter where one's motivation takes them.

Third, dance is, amongst other things, a moment. Do we then think of dance moments as forms of social justice? For me, dance moments of pleasure are probably not an outcome in and of themselves, but are still worth it. Writers in this volume are all engrossed deeply in dance pleasures; sometimes obvious, sometimes obscured, but they are always there. Enjoy the many reading pleasures throughout this book, but notice also, through contributors' writing, the moment by moment pleasures that dance can give.

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Michael Gard

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Introduction

Beccy Watson, Doug Risner, and Sukina Khan

Dance spans education and professional training, performance and choreography, recreational and community participation, competitive dance and commercial provision, and dance therapy. Across twenty-first-century popular culture and television broadcasting in particular, dance evidently has a high level of appeal, from “Dancing with the Stars,” “Strictly Come Dancing,” and “The Greatest Dancer” to “Dance Moms.” Across its many and varied contexts, dance represents dynamic circumstances in which gender relations are constituted, challenged, and reworked. Dance is simultaneously an embodied practice through which gendered identity is informed by discourses of normativity and where those norms can be confronted, disrupted, and altered. Masculinity can be understood as an

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expression of gendered identity that, as a regulated practice in and of society, is represented and formulated in different ways and with varying consequences. Responding to the statement “why boys (don’t) dance” therefore requires attention be paid to how and why masculinity retains significance and meaning.

Dance represents something of a conundrum for masculinity; it offers the potential for reimagining identities and yet it also reflects historically and socioculturally rooted aspects of power and privilege. As such, to talk of masculinities in a plural or “fluid” sense requires careful analysis of claims of diversity and difference. The popularity of ballroom dancing on TV screens around the world, for instance, demonstrates how bodies are distinguished and demarcated by binaries of female and male, femininity and masculinity, and how discourses of gender are framed and reframed every day. Our engagement with the concept of masculinity is deliberate; while it is beyond the immediate scope of this collection, the contribution of feminism as a political movement for the eradication of gender-based inequalities is implicit.

Deconstructing masculinity is happening in and through dance practice, far beyond the normative and normalizing frames of our TV screens (see, e.g., Owen and Riley, 2020; Richardson, 2015). However, acknowledging and understanding masculinity as a gender configured by socioeconomic class, racialization, ableist discourse, and interrelated discriminatory impacts require critical consideration if we are to reach a place where we can abandon the language of hegemonic and subordinate forms of masculinity. As a rich context for the embodied articulation of identity, engaging with difference and the expressive potential of the “Other” is emergent and expedient in dance; new scholarship represents an exciting opportunity for empirical and conceptual analysis of masculinity and identity, with intersectionality central to this endeavor. Some scholars have outlined diminished homo-hysteria (e.g., Anderson, 2009) as indicative of inclusive masculinity. We argue, however, that this requires further scrutiny because, as new research evidence presented in this collection shows, persistent inequalities remain, reproducing homophobia, albeit in multiple and complex ways.

The empirical basis of the research in Doug Risner’s pivotal text *Stigma and Perseverance in the Lives of Boys Who Dance* (2009a) informed clear conclusions showing the pervasive ideologies of gender and sexuality that shape and limit various contexts of boys’ and men’s involvement in dance training and beyond. The book, a key impetus for our call to

authors, established how heteronormativity underscored dance culture and perpetuated gay male stereotyping for boys who dance. Significantly for this present collection, Risner's analysis indicated that dance scholarship requires further engagement with the multiple facets of identity that intersect with gender, including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age, and how these influence the interrelationships of dance and masculinity. Since then, Wendy Oliver and Doug Risner (2017) acknowledged—in their edited collection of empirical studies of dance and gender—that more work needs to be done to attend to the ways in which racism and sexism coexist in dance. Responsively, dance education has moved intersectionality more to the fore by emphasizing the convergence of identities and the unique outcomes. Most recently, Risner and Pickard (2020) edited a special, themed edition of the journal *Research in Dance Education*, which resonates with the rationale for the collection of work presented here: namely, to assess what is happening in dance pedagogy, to understand if and how new pedagogic trends are engaging with difference and challenging gender inequality in and through dance, and to inquire how multidisciplinary fields inform dance studies (Oliver and Risner, 2017). More explicitly, Beccy Watson (2018) drew on intersectional frameworks to analyze the dynamics of embodied and spatial relationships in recreational dance, highlighting it as a sphere of negotiated gendered agency for young people.

However, we need to broaden our repertoire of understanding, including the intersecting aspects of identity as expressed in dancing bodies associated with masculinity (Fisher and Shay, 2009). We therefore acknowledge and embrace Risner and colleagues' (2018) recognition that there is not a homogeneous category of boys/men who dance, that we need to continue to gather more data about the professional and recreational experiences of boys and men in dance, and that ongoing and further examination of gender equity needs to be addressed. Collectively, this scholarship seeks to challenge gender inequalities, assess innovative and inclusive dance praxis, and inform ongoing theorization of gender difference. Surely it is possible to claim that there is less homophobia than there was a decade ago and that dance is a dynamic context for these changes, not least as a result of critical feminist pedagogy. In dance praxis, feminist analysis remains critical (Risner and Oliver, 2017; Watson, 2018). In this introductory chapter we draw on recent and established research to contextualize the chapters that comprise this edited volume. We hope this book adds to broader debates and theorization of masculinity through the lens of

dance. Three overlapping contexts underpin the following review of literature: praxis and critical pedagogy, the dancing body and masculinity, and difference and intersectionality.

PRAXIS AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

For many dance scholars, gender is indisputably embedded within dance education. Traditional approaches to teaching and learning in dance are entrenched within masculinist imperatives while the feminization of dance trivializes and marginalizes the discipline more broadly (Risner, 2008b). The hidden curriculum of gender in dance, initially developed by Susan Stinson (1995, 1998, 2005, 2010, 2016), highlights how heteronormative masculinity is maintained in dance education through didactic and autocratic methods of teaching that perpetuate gender stereotypes; young male dancers are encouraged to show high athleticism and take physical risk, whereas young female dancers are encouraged to be silent and submissive. Traditional teaching and learning, influenced by a “male-dominated society” and “cultural aesthetic,” fosters “separation and competition” (Stinson, 1998, p. 29). Dance educators have themselves been compliant in reproducing this status quo (Stinson, 2005). In formal teaching (classroom and studio) and via *informal* teaching (rehearsing, choreographing, mentoring/coaching), and especially through language (embodied and verbal), dance educators subconsciously transfer their own beliefs and values about the social world as well as any potential bias toward gender.

Transference of dance teachers’ sociocultural values to their students remains an ongoing issue. A study of female ballet teachers in the UK found that traditional dance pedagogies problematically reinforce a gender binary (Clegg, Owton and Allen-Collinson, 2018). Boys were perceived by female ballet teachers as naughty, disruptive, high energy, boisterous, and challenging to teach, while biological essentialism surfaced through teachers’ beliefs that boys inherently had wide flat feet unsuited to pointe work and were cognitively “slower” than girls (Clegg et al., 2018). When left uncritically challenged, dance pedagogies such as these foster and reinforce gender bias and marginalize boys’ experiences in dance (Gard, 2003, 2008). The persistent gender “norming” of femininity and masculinity through dance pedagogy reproduces broader social and cultural gender norms and relations.

We might well ask why *more* boys don’t dance, given the body of knowledge that has been accruing in dance scholarship and given the calls

for and establishment of critical pedagogies that would enable boys to freely participate in and enjoy dance (Gard, 2006; Risner, 2009a). Melissa Klapper's (2017) history of educational dance in the United States demonstrates how masculinity has been shaped within a broader sociocultural system that, in North America, has been characterized and idealized through aggression, competition, heteronormativity, and whiteness. The expressive and artistic nature of dance has been a perpetual tension for white masculinity and thus, unable to resolve the location of dance within early iterations of either physical education or arts curricula, dance was sidelined for boys and offered initially only to girls (Klapper, 2017).

A well-established critique challenges pedagogical approaches seeking to normalize men in dance through a comparison with men in sport (Adams, 2005; Fisher, 2007; Gard, 2008; Risner, 2005). When normalizing comparisons between dance and sport are made by dance educators, they tend to reify hegemonic, often essentialist, and heteronormative constructions of masculine physicality, strength, and athleticism (Risner and Oliver, 2017). Despite calls for new and varied role models outside the dance studio, dominant representations of masculinity persist, particularly by way of mediated platforms (Owen and Riley, 2020). Complex and contradictory elements are at play when we consider role models because stereotypes of supposed acceptable masculinities remain, inside and outside dance studios. It would appear that masculinity is represented and constructed in ways that reflect rather than counter sport-based rhetoric regarding male physicality, especially in how dance is marketed to boys. As Laura Feltham and Charlene Ryan (2020) demonstrate, the initial recruitment of boys into ballet relies on incentivization via subsidized tuition fees, but also hegemonic, heteronormative depictions of masculinity. For example, making ballet appeal to boys relies on normalizing dance by "showing boys videos of male dancers doing big jumps and tricks that would interest them" and through strategized marketing that depicts boys dancing in the media (Feltham and Ryan, 2018, p. 5). Elsewhere, the reliance on heteronormative and calculated marketing has been endorsed by culturally specific media in conjunction with prescribed narratives for masculinity. In Japan, manga comics and male-exclusive ballet magazines promote images of boys dancing whilst simultaneously offering them a "virtual, imagined community" where they can make friends (Monden, 2019, p. 164). Problematically, however, this strategized marketing has been shown to sanction "aspirational" and heteronormative masculinity and polarize the male dancer's sexuality as straight versus gay (Monden, 2019).

Evidently, heteronormative masculinity operates in the promotion and retention of boys' participation in dance. The question remains, however, how does the field respond to shifts in masculinity, both inside and outside of dance? Furthermore, how do dance educators recognize the changes in gender relations and adapt their pedagogical approaches? Critical feminist perspectives in dance education urge us to challenge gender constructs, enter into philosophical questions about identity and power in both the learning process and our personal expectations in teaching (Risner, 2008a), and examine "what defines dance and what constitutes dance education in the twenty-first century" (Risner and Barr, 2014, p.136).

While commonplace teaching and learning in dance focuses on refining and improving the dancers' body, biomechanical function, and kinesthetics awareness, social foundations of education must also be centralized within dance training and education with equal measure. We need to trouble the "methods-centric" formulae that standardize teaching and learning in dance but leave out vital aspects of an *education* in dance (Risner and Barr, 2014). Attending to this issue and invigorating the field of dance pedagogy, Risner (2021) has made calls for humanizing dance pedagogies.

Responding to pedagogical challenges, as a male dance educator himself, Isto Turpeinen (2012) has usefully harnessed feminist and critical values of plurality, embodiment, and community within his own liberatory method that he claims has a humanizing effect (Risner, 2021) among boys in the dance studio. The value of modernizing pedagogical approaches to respond to twenty-first-century dance education (Risner, 2021; Risner and Barr, 2014) is demonstrated through Feltham and Ryan's (2020) study of ballet teachers in Canada, where an "inclusive" pedagogical approach gave boys a greater sense of autonomy and better physically prepared them for the diverse professional landscape of dance. Notably, this inclusive pedagogy was modeled on a gender-neutral approach to teaching ballet technique, gender-neutral costuming, and feminist principles of inclusive language, personal choice, and the removal of competition in the classroom (Feltham and Ryan, 2020).

Pertinent to an examination of masculinity in dance is the illumination of how boys come to engage in dance and potentially go on to achieve careers in the industry, share dance knowledge, and retain a sense of joy and value in their own participation (Gard, 2008). This prompts further questioning around what "new" and "imagined" futures are needed for masculinity in dance. How is masculinity constituted across configurations of identities that are not merely ordered through gender?

MASCULINITY AND THE DANCING BODY

Representations of dance and masculinity in popular culture are key sites for analysis, particularly in a new era of social media “influencers” and the increasing online visibility and availability of different dance styles. Research by Craig Owen and Sarah Riley (2020), for example, explores young men’s emulation of Beyonce Knowles’ dance routines, citing examples of how men strive to achieve competence in and confidence to dance styles dismissed as effeminate. However, we need to assess narratives available in popular media and not simply acknowledge diverse engagement in dance that fails to recognize appropriation of different styles by participants whose privileges, including maleness and/or whiteness, remain intact (Rose, Barrick and Bridel, 2020).

While various tropes of masculinity have been problematized in multidisciplinary dance scholarship, the relationship between masculinity and the dancing body is complex. Although associations between sporting and dancing physicality remain problematic and often result in reifying hegemonic and heteronormative forms, the incorporation of dance into discussions about masculinity within sport studies is a potential means of disrupting dominant discourses that would otherwise go unnoticed and uncontested (Anderson and McGrath, 2020). Expressions of masculinity forged within dance are symbolic of male physicality in new ways, as opposed to simplistic and reductionist comparisons being made between sport and dance (Gard, 2003, 2008). The way masculinity is conveyed through dance practice resonates with broader social and cultural spheres, although as Anthony Shay (2014) has noted, there are relatively few histories of masculinity in dance, and notably in non-Western dance contexts. We can usefully draw from choreographic analysis that illuminates the dominant discourses of masculinity prevalent in dance. Ramsey Burt’s (2007) historical overview of the male dancing body provided a critical viewpoint from which the tension between persistent unacceptability of masculinity (masculinity under threat) and the necessity of subversive acts through performance (masculinity reimagined) can be harnessed.

Here, those interested in masculinity and dance have come to acknowledge the wider sociocultural parameters of gender and associated discrimination (such as homophobia), while acts of resistance—through performance and performative acts richly contextualized by Burt—are evidence of the potential for and possibilities of shifts in perception. His adaption of feminist analysis of the male gaze to the context of dance and

the interrelationships across choreography, performance, and spectatorship continues to inform ongoing dance scholarship inquiry. Asking whether masculinity in dance is more acceptable today, and outlining where subversion is still necessary, is an implicit question in Burt's concluding comments. While acknowledging difference within and between masculine identities as articulated and presented through choreography, Burt's analysis prompts further questions of identity markers imbued with power that intersect with sexuality. If dance has established progressive modes of-and-for masculinity, which identities remain marginal, and what are dance and dance education doing to address that?

For this edited collection, less attention is given to whether or not gender codes exist in dance, but more so *how* they operate, and where and how they may be changing. Assessment of the dominant ways masculinity is articulated and expressed through movement and dance challenges popular myths that being a male dancer signifies being "gay," regardless of individuals' sexuality. Emphasis on masculinity and dance that focuses solely on this question marginalizes and suppresses other features of identity. Nonetheless, the stigma of being read or labeled as gay is a lived experience that includes bullying, harassment, and violence, as documented in key dance literature (Risner, 2002a, 2002b, 2007, 2009b, 2014a, 2014b). Jennifer Fisher and Anthony Shay (2009) additionally identified choreophobia and effeminophobia, alongside homophobia, through narratives of male dancing bodies and the diverse (geopolitical) contexts of dance, in order to explore different features of the ways in which masculinity and dance are perceived and experienced as problematic.

As in many other areas, gendered power relations result in discourses that are not always entirely deterministic and not easily disrupted. Male dancers have attempted to distance themselves from "gay" stereotypes by holding reverence for esteemed professional male dancers whom they perceive as "strong and powerful," in turn helping normalize their embodiment of perceived feminine behaviors. Here, they receive encouragement and additional support from dance educators and choreographers, yet "dominant notions of masculinity and homophobia, both internalized and overt, still exist within the professional ranks of Western ballet and modern dance companies" (Polasek and Roper, 2011, p. 189). However, the interplay between acceptance or rejection of tropes of masculinity that male dancers navigate and adopt in the world of dance is not a simplistic one. Being a dancer does enable new configurations of meaning to develop, not least through the friendships that develop and that dancers

rely upon, regardless of gender identity and sexuality (Polasek and Roper, 2017). Boys indicate that solidarity and social constructs such as friendship are significant to them within dance environments, and not just when dancing.

Further exploration of the embodiment of gender and interrelated identity markers as they are expressed through dance is necessary (Risner, Blumenfeld, Janetti, Kaddar and Rutt, 2018). Informed by Risner's (2009a) work, Andria Christofidou's (2017) empirical study from a European perspective on male dancer experiences in professional training and theatrical dance presents an interesting juncture for "performances" of masculinity and identity. Christofidou's findings highlight the contradiction of persistent stigmatization of the gay dancer alongside recognition that the gay stereotype acts as cultural capital and a form of "currency" in ballet for heterosexual male dancers. Straight male dancers often perform the "gay-stereotype" rather than evade it, arguably an expression of subversive gender identity (Butler, 1990); Christofidou explores these tensions further in her chapter in this present collection.

Critical dance praxis questions the implications and outcomes of shifting expressions of masculinity and gender performance. For instance, we might ask what value systems operate within different dance cultures and genres, or what the valorized and valorizing identity categories of the male dancing body are. By doing so, we recognize that identity is not simply a performative choice or that expressions of sexuality and sexual desire cannot necessarily be categorized in an effort to create labels or designate meanings that convey the overarching themes attached to masculinity (Peterson and Anderson, 2012).

At the same time, masculinity for the Black male dancer leaves him objectified by the white gaze, both male and female. Lawrence Jackson (2011) explains that in concert theater, where there are prevalent stereotypes about the "Black" male dancing body, "there are also physical stereotypes about the black man's body, consequently causing them to be viewed sexually by the white gaze" (p. 78). The exotified and sexually demarcated body of African-American dancers is well documented by Brenda Dixon-Gottschild (2003). Burt (2007) documented ways in which choreography both reacted to and informed identity politics debates in the 1970s and 1980s, highlighting the emergence of new articulations of the male dancer and racialized identity. By acknowledging gender as relational, constructs of race and masculinity in dance can be analyzed more meaningfully in the context of difference. This is echoed by Shay (2014),

who noted that relatively limited writing in dance scholarship foregrounds cultural context and racialized identity ahead of gender as the main identity feature of masculinity. In focusing on masculinity in dance, dance educators, theorists, and scholars need to engage with critiques from Black dance studies that challenge the very ground of aesthetics in dance (Dixon, 1990; Dixon-Gottschild, 2003). A legacy of critical aesthetics infuses debates around gender and whiteness in dance education (Atencio and Wright, 2009), exposes a “monocultural focus” in dance education that suppresses non-European African diasporic dance forms (Amin, 2016; McCarthy-Brown, 2014; Risner and Stinson, 2010), and views inclusion and equity policies in dance education as problematically reinforcing cultural hegemony (Risner and Stinson, 2010; Walker, 2019).

New paradigms emerging out of Black dance studies offer “methods and approaches that speak to twenty-first-century manifestations of embodied, kinetic Black knowledge” (DeFrantz and Willis, 2016, p. 1). These debates prompt us to question cultural appropriation of African diasporic dances (Pérez, 2015) and the racial stereotyping of urban Black dance styles (Rose et al., 2020). It also directs us to the ways in which Black social dance becomes a place for resistance to gender conformity (DeFrantz, 2016) and where male dancers push the conceptualization of masculinity in dance, in addition to the labeling of “Black dance,” into territories of experimentalism (Willis, 2016).

The male dancing body negotiates the boundaries offset by intersecting factors of identity, gender, race, socioeconomic class, and ability and disability. Respectively, these socially demarcated and embodied categories of identity influence and shape professional career trajectories for dancers. Beccy Watson and Ian Rodley (2015) found that for young boys, the context of a working-class, urbanized status was linked to regional ethnicity as well as significant to their sense of self as dancers and their decision to dance. Hence, the locality where the boys lived and attended school (including whether they attended school regularly or not), in addition to their family circumstances and neighborhood views about their dancing, were collectively influential factors. Their social class position made them both invisible and hyper-visible as they established acceptance in feminine terrain, particularly when participating in cheerdance. Martin Ashley (2009) explored the ways in which “the lads” in his study were young men who “dared” to be different by their participation in dance; their involvement was a form of solidarity that allowed for different ways of doing masculinity. Thinking intersectionally about masculinity is a means by which

we can examine young men's routes into dance and the significance of social class locations as they interconnect with gender and race. Notably, the stakes can be higher for boys who dare to dance when they do not possess or have access to economic security in their households and families.

ENGAGING INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality was developed as a theoretical and methodological framework to account for multiple and complex inequalities that are experienced every day, shaped by patriarchy, capitalism, ableism, and heteronormativity (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Hill Collins and Bilge, 2016). Dance education has begun to engage more explicitly with intersectionality (Risner and Pickard, 2020); sociologies of leisure and sport, including engagement with recreational dance, highlight its significance in addressing spatial and embodied contexts of marginalization (Watson, 2018; Watson and Scraton, 2013).

Critical dance pedagogy acknowledges intersecting identity categories (Risner, 2021; Risner & Barr, 2014; Risner and Pickard, 2020; Risner and Schupp, 2020b; Risner and Stinson, 2010) and conceptually, intersectionality helps us think about sociocultural and economic status and the extent to which this might additionally influence the entry into and retention of boys within dance. The body, in dance, has been acknowledged as intersectional in form and articulation, highlighting, for instance, how racialized identities are central to meaning making and performance (see, e.g., Villa, 2011 on tango). Christine Caldwell and Lucy Leighton (2016, p. 283) applied an intersectional approach to “advocate for greater inclusion of ‘body equity’ in social discourse and policy.” More recently, Karen Schupp (2020) has used intersectionality to “reveal the interplay of capitalism, privilege, and education in dance competition culture that leads to the performance of whiteness on stage” (p. 210).

Integral to Risner and Watson's interest as editors of this collection is attending to how masculinity and dance are theorized. This is, by necessity, a work in progress, observing identity in and through dance as unfinished, though not unattainable. As indicated in the title of the collection, we seek to engage directly with intersectionality, presenting both opportunities and challenges for the development of this volume focused on exploring masculinities in dance. Conscious of this, we have not demanded or expected all contributors to directly engage with intersectionality, as that would arguably limit the rich scope of work that is incorporated. We