

Researching dance education post-2016: The global implications of Brexit and Trump on dance education

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The results of the 2016 British referendum on membership of the European Union and the presidential election in the United States of America initiated political changes that will arguably have resounding impacts, within and beyond the UK and the US for years to come. Much of the rhetoric accompanying these political victories appears to confront humanist ideals associated with inclusion, rationalism and transnational exchange. This article argues that these seismic political events in Europe and America will have an international impact on policies, practices and pedagogies associated with dance education, inevitably challenging those who seek to broaden meanings of socially, culturally, economically and politically inclusive arts education. We have gathered the queries of leading dance education researchers from around the world, to better understand how these political shifts are perceived, who feels they may be affected, how they feel it may affect them, and how research into dance education may respond to, and address, these effects. In doing so, we hope to provide a global snapshot of concerns felt by dance education academics in the aftermath of the 2016 British referendum and US Presidential election, and a research framework for investigating the implications of these events on dance education.

Keywords: arts, Brexit, dance, Donald Trump, education, policy

Freedom and flash-mob academia

“Freedom is indivisible, and when one man is enslaved all are not free”.

US President John F. Kennedy spoke these words in 1963, entreating the Soviet Union to remove the Berlin Wall (Dean 1991). Twenty-four years later, the call to “tear down this wall!” was repeated from across the US political divide, by US President Ronald Reagan (Schweizer 2000). Their demands for the free movement and exchange of people, along with the emergence and growth of the European Union, responded to the miseries of political isolationism, World

War II and the Cold War. Their calls to take down barriers reflected an era of unprecedented global exchange, facilitated by technological developments and international policies that value transnational peace, humanism, equality and the migration of people.

During the last seven decades liberal international policies, and the intercultural dialogues that they have fostered, have had a prodigious impact on research into dance education. This research has revealed cultural diversity, challenged ethnocentric hierarchies, and expanded our understandings of social inclusion. Modernist assumptions of arts and education have been deconstructed from multiple socio-cultural vantage points, as we have questioned and re-questioned who is learning to dance, how they are learning to dance, when/where they are learning to dance, what they are learning to dance, why they are learning to dance and the value of dance knowledge (Fraleigh & Hanstein 1999; Shapiro 1998; Risner & Stinson 2010). This deconstruction has been facilitated by dance education forums and publications that have actively encouraged transnational discourse (see for example: Antilla & Sansom 2012; Jackson & Shapiro-Phim 2010; Rowe, Buck & Martin 2014; Rowe, Buck & Phim 2016; Shapiro 2008; Svendler Nielsen & Burrige 2015).

While many of the policies of US Presidents Reagan and Kennedy may be critically questioned, their shared advocacy for freedom of movement stands in stark contrast to President Donald Trump's bellicose election-trail catchphrase "And who's going to pay for that wall?" (Miller 2016, para. 1). Like Britain's proposed exit from the European Union, Trump's call to build a wall and further separate the US from Mexico (at the expense of Mexico) appeals to an electoral malaise with multiculturalism and transnational integration. In what appears to be the starkest challenge to President Kennedy's proclamation of global citizenry at the Berlin Wall, the newly appointed Prime Minister of Britain Theresa May expressed "If you believe you're a citizen of the world, you're a citizen of nowhere. You don't understand what the word 'citizenship' means" (Werber 2016, para. 3). The idea that citizenry should extend beyond national borders has been forthrightly challenged.

This shift in political discourse on citizenship has followed an extended period in which the resources to develop critically reflective citizens through arts education have been diminished (Nussbaum 2010). Within this article, we acknowledge that arts education and politics are inextricably intertwined. We argue that these seismic political occurrences in the UK and the USA extend ripples across the globe and therefore have significant implications for dance educators everywhere. As two of the largest economies, cultural and educational exporters, and (formerly) the strongest advocates of open markets across the world, the UK and US remain powerful hegemony (Gross & Fidler 2016). Their 2016 election cycles revealed a popular disdain however, for social inclusion, cross-cultural exchange, and rational discourse. We believe that this disdain demands an inclusive, cross-cultural, rational response, and have

therefore sought understandings of these events from leading dance education scholars in Africa, Asia, Europe, North and South America, the Middle East and Oceania.

We commenced this investigation the morning after the US election, in what might be considered a process of flash-mob academia; we initiated a lively discussion, to gather attention and create space, inviting others to join us. We acknowledge that it is too early to assess the full impact of these elections and draw any conclusions about future governance, yet it is not too early to search for the significant queries that emerge from these political events. Relevant, critical lines of enquiry can frame future-focused dance education research, allowing us to more deeply examine the zone of dance, education, inclusion, multiculturalism and rationalism. Such collectivization in critical enquiry can be a catalyst for collective action (van Stekelenburg, Anikina, Pouw, Petrovic & Nederlof 2013). Sharing smart questions, in the wake of these electoral cycles, will help us as scholars to shift from being reactive to being proactive.

The politics of dance education

Dance education incorporates learning in, through and about dance. Research in dance education can therefore consider critical questions about the ways we learn to dance, what we learn about dance as a subject, and how dancing helps us to learn about other subjects (Bonbright, Bradley, Bucek, Faber, Gibb, Hagood, Koff & Press 2004; Risner 2010). As with all knowledge, dance education is deeply contextual, and subject to shifts in the political landscape. Art is not above politics, and dance education is not above policy.

The ways that nation states strategically manage such arts education has changed significantly since the Reich Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda (arguably the world's first national policy institute focused on arts education) was established in Nazi Germany in 1933 (Karina & Kant 2003). While the intentions of Goebbels may appear inconceivable within 21st century dance education, the Third Reich nevertheless provides a useful baseline from which to measure global shifts in dance education policies, and a vivid illustration that arts education is not inherently benign.

Within the UK, the value of arts and cultural education has changed radically in the last 75 years; shifting from an emphasis on national pride and the “civilizing effect” of the arts in the aftermath of World War Two, to a focus on the instrumental value of the arts, to a renewed interest in intrinsic value and quality judgements, to a recognition of art's role in engaging people and fostering social inclusion (Crossick & Kaszynska 2014, 15/16).

Within the USA, arts education policies have been similarly dynamic (Heilig, Cole & Aguilar 2010), with interests moving between intrinsic and instrumentalist functions of arts education (Fiske 1999). While tensions between arts educators and the National Endowment for the Arts have beset this history (Chapman 2000), it might be argued that pluralism, social

inclusion and civic responsibility have increasingly been valued as aspects of arts education within the US (Strom 2001; LeRoux & Bernadska 2014; Kuttner 2015).

At an international level, policy documents produced by UNESCO have increasingly emphasized the associations between arts education and broader socio-political concerns. The 2006 UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education makes reference to the UN (1948) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the UNESCO (2001) Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. Much of the Roadmap focuses on the instrumental capacity of arts to enhance creativity amongst young people, and to support learning in other subject areas within formal education. The Roadmap thus maintains an educational rationalism and an economic rationalism, identifying the potential of arts to contribute to learning *and* to the creative knowledge economies of the 21st century. This policy document does, however, predominantly draw on educational systems and economic outcomes as established within Western paradigms of formal education.

The subsequent UNESCO Seoul Agenda for Arts Education, adopted in 2011, sought to extend upon the Roadmap through specific objectives and action points that could be addressed at a national and regional level. The development of the Seoul Agenda involved a more globally diverse stakeholder consultation process however (UNESCO 2011), and as a result many of the objectives of the Seoul Agenda are more cognizant of diverse systems and rationales for arts education. Non-formal education is more clearly valued, as are learners of more diverse ages and with different learning imperatives, which include personal wellbeing and social cohesion. Rationalism has been emphasized and expanded, with calls for evidence-based research that can support greater logic in arts education advocacy (UNESCO 2011).

These policies have increasingly acknowledged the complexities of identity and acculturation (Anderson 2006; Berry 1980; 1997; Bhabha 1994; Chatterjee, 1993), the impact of cultural hegemony (Said 1993), the importance of difference and intercultural competence (Bennett 1986; Bourdieu & Passeron 1990; Derrida, 1982), the diverse locations and functions of education (Fanon 1986; Freire 1970; Vygotsky 1986/1962), the value of embodied knowledge and kinaesthetic reasoning (Gardner 2006; Gardner & Hatch, 1989), and the multiple roles of arts education (Eisner 2002; Robinson 1982). The values underpinning these policies can be felt through the pages of this journal and wider contemporary readings of research in dance education. They guide regional, national and local government strategies associated with arts education (e.g. Arts and Cultural Education at School in Europe 2009; The Pacific Culture and Education Strategy 2010-2015). They further find form in the curricula of formal dance education, the pedagogies of dance teachers, and the practices of their students around the world. Cultural exchange through dance education is celebrated (Ashley 2010, 2014), social inclusion through dance education is encouraged (Houston 2005; Sanderson 2008)

and rational choice-making through dance education is recognized (Bannon & Sanderson 2000; Warburton 2003). This takes place, however, within a very prescribed political environment.

Brexit and Trump

The year 2016 might be remembered for revealing deep schisms in that political environment, as concepts of cultural exchange, social inclusion and critical rationalism were forthrightly challenged.

Both the US and UK elections revealed a casual disregard for rational debate, and in doing so the orchestrators of the electoral victories appeared to draw inspiration from each other. Admiring the primary campaign of Donald Trump, Brexit sponsor Arron Banks expressed, “[w]hat they said early on was ‘facts don’t work’ and that’s it. You have got to connect with people emotionally. It’s the Trump success” (Solon 2016, para. 20). The victorious politicians in these elections tapped into “...a tide of popular rage”, which sought very little substantiation to carry it through (The Economist 2016, para. 3). As French philosopher Bernard-Henri Levy expressed, “[t]he people listen less and less to policy and they even seem less concerned about whether the candidates are telling the truth or not. They are more interested in performance, in the theatrical quality of what is said than whether it is true” (Pasha Robinson 2016, para. 11).

Politicians abandoning rational discourse in favour of emotive sentiment might therefore be seen as a symptom of this political era, not its cause (Metta 2016). The political discourse in these elections moved beyond simply sentimentalism however, as the elections also favoured candidates displaying hyper-intimidating behaviour (Ramswell 2016). This has already had a prodigious influence on young people. Identifying what it calls “[t]he Trump Effect”, one of the first quantitative studies of the impact of the US election cycle on education (published before the final election result) discusses how children have emulated the bullying, name-calling, xenophobic behaviour of Donald Trump throughout the election campaign, whose success affirms a belief that might-is-right (Costello 2016). This Trump Effect is by no means limited to children, as regimes across the world observe Donald Trump’s ascent to power (Pasha Robinson 2016).

The irrational expressions of the protagonists therefore led political establishments in both the UK and the USA to challenge the logic of these electoral victories, attributing the populism to less-educated voters outside more cosmopolitan urban centres (Gross & Fidler 2016). This does not, however, mean that these electoral victories have no rational basis. As Frances Fukayama, Cornell West and Naomi Klein note, the citizens of the UK and USA have valid reasons for feeling disgruntled with the political establishment and neoliberal policies that

have fostered greater economic disparity, even if these reasons were not clearly articulated within these elections (Fukuyama 2016; Klein 2016; West 2016). So what are the dominant rationales emerging in this new political order emerging from these elections, and how might arts education policies and practices respond to them?

The victors in both of the elections also expressed intense xenophobia throughout their lengthy campaigns (Younge 2016), challenging ideals of transnational, cultural exchange and social inclusion. The rejection of international engagement, foreign nationals and cultural minorities was highly evocative, as the "...words immigrant, refugee, Muslim, walls and terrorism [...] ignited fear, hostility and division" (Wulfhorst & Malo 2016, para. 11). Donald Trump appealed to "people who feel threatened by globalization and growing ethnic minorities" (Gross & Fidler 2016, para. 11), and the Brexit campaigners pushed fears of immigration to the forefront of the EU referendum (Horton 2016). While arguments have been made that Brexit was victorious for diverse reasons and not simply a result of anti-immigrant rhetoric (e.g. Switzer & Hannan 2017), the ideals of cultural exclusion and national isolation were nevertheless central to the Brexit campaign argument (Woolfson 2016). The personal rationales for each individual voter may never be known, yet it is clear that both elections were buoyed by the growth of protectionist nationalism in diverse parts of the world (Corbett 2016; Green et al 2016). How does this political wave affect meanings of inclusion and exchange, and how might these meanings influence research into dance education?

These two election results have significant implications for many other important political issues. As Noam Chomsky argues, environmental policies designed to resist climate change are now in peril as President-elect Trump promotes energy usage that will send the world "...racing to the cliff as fast as possible" (Johnston 2016, para. 2). Donald Trump's advocacy for the privatization of prisons relies on "mass incarceration to be profitable" (Asher Schapiro 2016, para. 4), and privatization of healthcare threatens 20 million disadvantaged Americans (The Economist 2016). The outcome of the Brexit election instilled a sense of impending doom for "progressive and even humanitarian values in the UK" (Guardian 2016, para. 6). Such significant strategic shifts in policy may form a new socio-political landscape, presenting new challenges, agendas and goals for dance educators.

Addressing "[w]hat it means to be an artist in the time of Trump" (Frank & Brooks 2016, para. 1), artists have emphasized the importance of art to prompt critical questions and challenge the status quo, to allow for dialogue between different viewpoints, and to emphasize the creative contributions of minorities. There may be some distance between the values of artists and the broader populace however, as 96% of the members of the Creative Industries Federation supported the UK to remain within the European Union (Collier 2016). The results of the 2016 elections suggest that the advantages supposedly gained through greater global interconnectedness and inclusion either have not reached many people, or are not apparent to

them. While no research appears to have been published yet that specifically considers the impact of the US election and the Brexit referendum on arts education, the discourse presented above suggests that predominant understandings of rationalism, inclusion and cultural exchange within dance education will be challenged by these electoral results. How might these challenges therefore be addressed by research into dance education?

Crowdsourcing queries

To explore this question, we identified dance education scholars situated in diverse parts of the world and sent each one a standard email, introducing the research and inviting participation. The researchers we identified were mostly colleagues that we had met at conferences, and postgraduate students conducting research in under represented parts of the world.

We sent fifty six invitations two days after the US presidential election, and most responded within a few days. Some expressed enthusiasm for the project but did not feel, for various reasons, that they could contribute at this time. Others shared our questions further with colleagues, and returned to us with a collective response. A week after the call out, we had received substantial responses to the research from 23 dance education scholars. We subsequently provided each respondent with a summary of how they would be identified and the quotations from their emails that would be shared in the article, for their approval before inclusion in the article. We did not share the full article before submission, so we should emphasize (given the highly political context) that these contributors do not bear any responsibility for the entire content of the article.

This collectivised process might be compared to crowdsourcing research methods that have been undertaken within quantitative studies (Behrend, Sharek, Meade & Wiebe 2011) and more latterly design research (Wu, Corney & Grant 2015). Such crowdsourcing is perhaps novel within qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln 2000), as through the diversity of our participants we have sought to reveal the complexity of ways in which these 2016 elections are perceived to affect dance education and, in tandem, research into dance education.

Our research used a socratic questioning process (Paul & Elder 2007), in the hope that we might initiate deeper inquiry and rationalization of the implications of these two political events on dance education. This involved asking the participants the following four questions:

- What effect do you think Brexit and the Trump election victory will have on the nexus of social, political and/or cultural inclusion and dance education?
- Who/which dance learners and teachers do you think will be particularly affected and how?

- What specific queries/areas might dance education researchers pursue in response?
- What dance/general literature might provide a key platform for such research?

Following Padesky (1993), our socratic aim was not to influence our participants' opinions, but to prompt their reflections into the research implications of these political events. From our respondents we sought nuanced contexts and concepts that might situate this line of questioning in particular parts of the world and philosophical domains. We should nevertheless acknowledge that the very nature of our inquiry, and the association of Trump with Brexit, inevitably presented an ideological framework that limited the participants' responses, and perhaps determined their decision whether or not to participate. That none of our participants responded with a sense of celebration about the electoral victories further suggests that our research approach did not manage to capture the perspectives of scholars who envisage opportunities blossoming from this election cycle.

Not all of the responses were aligned directly with the question format above, as some answered the questions directly and others provided a more free form response. Within our subsequent process of analysis we sought divergent and similar themes (Weiss 1995). We constructed the following discussion based on the emerging themes of inclusion, rationalism and cultural exchange, which the respondents identified as ideals that have been challenged by these electoral cycles. Space did not allow the inclusion of all of the respondents comments, and so we paraphrased overlapping ideas and captured quotations that expressed points of distinction. We position these comments and queries alongside literature that the respondents identified as relevant, in an attempt to construct viable platforms that might launch future-focused research journeys. Many of the responses flowed for several pages; we recognize the scholarly rigour that has contextualised their answers to our questions, and acknowledge that they deserve far greater attention. We hope that this process has instigated a reflective process that might spawn complete articles on the topic by contributors.

Inclusion

Many of the contributors to this research expressed concerns over how these election victories promoted social exclusion. As Vera Bergman, Secretary of the Dutch Society for Dance Research wrote, "populism, with Brexit and the election of Trump as exponents, is not only about economics. It is associated with sexism and racism and the exclusion of 'minorities'". Susan Koff, Director of Dance Education at NYU Steinhardt explains, such exclusion has direct and very personal implications "...for the young, the undocumented, the other, those who are different from the "norm", which in the Trump world is the heterosexual, white male". Cheryl Stock, Director of Graduate Studies and Head of Cultural Leadership at the National Institute of Dramatic Art in Australia, suggests how this may affect their inclusion within dance education,

Those who formerly participated in inclusive dance programs may become isolated and further marginalized – social justice programs may be radically altered or stopped altogether, in order to conform to the perceived new mainstream which is unlikely to support culturally, politically or economically disadvantaged groups.

Ann Kipling Brown, Professor Emerita in Arts Education at the University of Regina, explains how this can, in turn, “...negate the comprehensive dance programs, which focus on cultural understanding, open-mindedness, reflection, caring and responsibility”. The political trend towards social exclusion may not always be overt. As Kipling Brown suggests, “[t]eachers and dance learners will be affected by both new explicit and implicit curricula”. Reflecting on existing research (e.g. Chappell, Craft, Rolfe & Jobbins 2009; McCarthy-Brown, 2009; Risner 2010) Naomi Jackson, Associate Professor, and Jessica Rajko and Karen Schupp, Assistant Professors, at the School of Film, Dance and Theatre at Arizona State University, prompt collectivized approaches to research that may speak back to government directives, with the following questions,

How can we mobilize to gather the research/data necessary to make arguments for increased access and inclusivity in dance education, and how do we advocate for continued policy changes at the state and national levels?

How can we mobilize more effectively in collaborative ways to address the conditions in dance education that hinder currently marginalized students from achieving access to dance education and ensuring a successful career broadly defined - everything from recruitment strategies to curriculum design to student support services, retention and humane interaction?

Noting the strictures of exclusion imposed by formal education systems, Kerry Chappell, Senior Lecturer in Dance Education at the University of Exeter, indicates “...dance educators are turning to look at schemes/activity that are out of schools”. To address such trends, Kipling Brown advocates that further dance education research needs to focus on “[d]ance as community development and social cohesion”, a comment supported by the work of Green (2000) and Houston (2005). As Scheila Macaneiro, Assistant Professor of Dance at Parana State University in Brazil suggests, such research needs to emphasize the ways in which dance education is

...working in a participatory manner with civil society; discussing themes involving dance and politics, dance and social relations, dance and educational environments, and everything related to human environments and ways of living.

These critical intersections between dance and civil society can take on a heightened relevance in contexts in which government structures are also promoting exclusion. Urmimala Sarkar, Associate Professor in Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, identifies,

There is a turn towards conservatism- where politics of ethnocentricism and of identities have become the focus of propaganda [...] In India the far-right government with its conservative fundamentalist Hindu agenda has started its open patronage of performances that propagate certain forms of cultural practices in the name of traditional practice... [Through] direct government patronage to art, funding has the ability to effect pedagogical structures as it forces dance makers and dance teachers to choose survival over freedom.

Such a trend can emphasize dominant and exclusive histories and traditions, marginalizing differences (Shay 1999). Urmimala Sarkar notes that research into identity construction and its impact on learners can require "...critical historiographies of dance and well researched critiques of the mytho-histories propagated by the older coffee-table publications." The dance 'traditions' created by colonial era and early national dance research can continue to exert a powerful influence (Rowe 2011). Nadra Assaf, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair of the Departments of Humanities and Communication Arts at the Lebanese American University, reflects on how the return to simplified traditional national identities means "we might see a movement towards more burlesque style belly dance". She suggests,

Lebanon strongly emulates the USA. I worry that the Lebanese government will no longer work towards issues of women's rights and refugee situations... We are a patriarchal nation that has a large movement of both Feminist and LGBT groups [but] we will slide backwards as some of our 'male' leaders consider Trump to be a hero.

To attend to such concerns, Nadra Assaf suggests that dance education research investigates "...areas of gender/political bodies/inclusion". Siri Rama, Adjunct Faculty at Singapore Management University and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, considers that these processes of exclusion emerge from a cultural emphasis on competition between, rather than a resolution of, differences. As she explains,

Trump's win legitimizes the view held by patriarchal societies and the aggressive corporate culture, which says that it doesn't matter how one talks about or objectifies women, but as long as one has an image of being successful by corporate standards, then all 'sins are forgiven'. So win at any cost seems to be the general message.

These heightened tensions between what would appear to be liberal and conservative agendas span the globe. So how might liberal dance educators not simply perpetuate the competition noted above, through the exclusion of those whose voices may be labeled conservative? The

concept of political conservatism is complex and multifaceted, and can conflate contrasting ideals and identities extending from indigenous, colonial, traditional, religious and modernist worldviews. Challenging conservatism can therefore appear to be a liberal agenda that inevitably fosters exclusion (Gross 2013; Hibbing, Smith & Alford 2015).

The concerns expressed by the respondents above suggest that exclusion is not simply a by-product of conservatism, but is fostered by other values that are both pervasive and popular in diverse cultures around the world, such as competitiveness, identity-construction and the continuation of traditional social practices. Dance education researchers may need therefore to explore how educators can shift away from practices of exclusion, without necessarily alienating those who value competition, identity and conservation.

Addressing such concerns through research might begin with investigations into how exclusion is currently hidden within Anglo-Saxon curricula. Ugandan lecturer Alfdaniels Mabingo from the University of Makere suggests that dance education researchers should,

...carry out studies on how the surging Euro-American and Australasian nationalism (Ang & Stratton 1996; Harrison 2003) manifests itself in dance courses, dance programs, dance knowledge and research outputs.

Noting that ongoing cultural hegemony from the West continues to pervade arts education around the globe (Rowe 2008), Marelize Marx, lecturer in dance education at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, suggests that dance education practitioners themselves might investigate,

How can dance education reduce power relations and hegemony within the classroom?

How can dance education promote nationalism without devaluing the Other?

How can dance education diminish fear of the Other and promote a sense of belonging within a global society?

How can dance education cultivate the soft skills that instill a sense of belonging in individuals, and enable others to feel they belong?

These queries would appear to extend upon theories of *differance* (Derrida 1968, 1982); of valuing difference as a basis for social bonding, rather than valuing conformity. Within highly polarized political contexts, this process of celebrating difference can, however, appear increasingly threatening. Noting a concurrent rise in ultra-nationalism in Australian politics, Cheryl Stock suggests, “[i]n an increasing climate of anxiety and fear, binaries are prevalent, with nuanced arguments almost entirely absent”. Excluding dissenting voices can have a

spiraling effect in dance education, as Maria Speth, teacher at the Dance Academy of Fontys University and the Maastricht Academy of Music, Zuyd University, suggests,

...polarization will increase division between people; this reduces the chances for inclusion [and] decreasing funding for inclusive attitude development through dance education... teachers/learners will find fewer possibilities to participate [and will] narrow their world and stick to dance that is familiar.

In seeking to promote a more inclusive society, dance education researchers may therefore seek to critically reflect on how diverse and well-meaning socio-political agendas in existing 'inclusive' dance education practices may actually extend exclusion within the dance class. This would align with wider political reflections that recognize when Hillary Clinton dismissed Trump supporters as "deplorables", she emphasized a perception of liberal exclusivity (Wight 2016, para. 3). Acknowledging that ideological divisions do not reflect measures of empathy and compassion (Haidt 2008), and thus the inclusion of 'conservative' voices, can therefore be central to advancing the ideal of inclusion through dance education research.

Creating spaces in which diverse perspectives are shared, illustrated and reflected upon is not easy however, and requires clear parameters for rationale discourse in dance. How then, might such rationale discourse be understood in a post-Brexit and Trump world?

Rationalism

The concept of rationalism emerged as a relevant and contested theme amongst our respondents, with numerous observations that the 2016 elections in the UK and USA engaged in relatively limited critical debate. Susan Koff extends this concern, identifying the responsibility of dance education to address this absence of rationalism, "...we need to focus on education for all that promotes critical thinking and global awareness." Such dance education research may be framed by research queries that ask, in the words of Marelize Marx,

Which soft skills should be cultivated in the dance education classroom to enable critical thinking?

Research into the development of critical skills through dance education might therefore be guided by Maria Speth's qualifying questions,

Can this research demonstrate that dance education promotes development of an open mind?

Is this open mind based on development of skills concerning communicative exchange with others with differing opinions, creative problem-solving skills, as well as skills in sharing and cooperating with others?

Such positive social change, suggests Marx, "...relies upon the personal transformation of every individual" (Delport 2009; Friedkin 2004; Oloyede 2009). This can require facilitation and forums that are sensitive to the process of transformation. As Marx continues, such research may employ the following enquiries,

How can dance education enable individuals to undergo a personal transformation?

How can dance education promote both the individual and the collective as valuable?

When effectively guided, critical thinking through dance classes can allow learners to make associations between deeply personal and overtly public spheres. Within the context of the 2016 elections, a critical association between rational global discourse and more intimate, somatic reflection within dance education research is made by Sylvie Fortin and Warwick Long, Professors at the Département de Danse de l'Université du Québec à Montréal and Concordia University,

Trump's views fragilise our planet and the human beings inhabiting it in all dimensions (social, financial, environmental, etc.). As somatic educators, we believe that people voting for and against the Brexit and Donald Trump ... is a somatic reaction (a confusion of intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, social dissatisfaction and agency). And from this intimate place, larger dialogue and action might grow. We feel in our gut that the connection and collaboration between different tissues of our body is healthy, as the connection and collaboration between different people and their points of view is also healthy. We therefore encourage students to feel the resonance of these political changes in themselves as the basis to act on a large scale.

Cynthia Roses-Thema, Senior Lecturer Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University, continues this view that through embodied learning, students can more effectively rationalize political choices and actions, as "...being able to articulate the experience of embodied change leads to taking embodied action towards political and social change". This leads her to propose the research query,

How might we better equip dancers to articulate the embodied experience, so that by becoming more proficient in expressing the experience of change, we might better be able to see opportunities to activate change in policies/procedures?

As these respondents emphasize, dance education can be a location to enhance critical reflection, analysis, judgment and ultimately advocacy. This critical thinking process is politically complex however, and can require an awareness of diverse global understandings of criticality. Critical thinking can be a very ambiguous concept within Anglo-Saxon educational contexts, often conflating broader uses of reflective logic with Marxist-driven challenges to existing knowledge and social order (Vendermensbrugghe 2004). Such rebellious, modernist approaches to critical thinking can contrast with the way dance knowledge is constructed in diverse parts of the world (Rowe 2009). Alfdaniels Mabingo suggests that research into the development of critical dispositions through dance might begin by first unpacking how the ...psychological and social anxieties behind Brexitism and Trumpism (economic disenfranchisement and debauchery of western rationality) have manifested themselves in dance education?

The hegemonic ways in which critical discourse can be defined by Anglo-Saxon academia is one area that deserves further reflection. Alfdaniels Mabingo extends this concern over how non-western dance knowledge is currently located and managed within dance education research, and the implications of the 2016 elections on this. He suggests,

African dance knowledge, skills, ideas, and experts are still treated as just a footnote in Western dance academia. Dance education canons from Western modernity are still the gold standard. There is an attitude that view African dance as a basket of emptiness and nothingness, and a pollutant to Western knowledge and intellectual values and standards. Brexitism and Trumpism will only coalesce this “silent academic majority” and systematic rejection of African dance episteme.

To address this disparity, Susan Koff suggests that research into critical thinking in dance education should involve a re-articulation of dance knowledge, and a

...definition of dance education that moves beyond the stereotypical definition of training in Western dance forms. This line of enquiry is now more important than ever.

As Teuila Hughes suggests, such an unpacking of a dominant rationalism can require investigations into “Who decides what cultural knowledge is valuable within the context of Pacific dance education?”. Advocating for a “...research methodology investigating universal peace based on indigenous pedagogy”, Naomi Faik-Simet, dance researcher with the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, proposes research enquiries that

...relate to the possession and acquisition of knowledge in dance. How can knowledge be accessed to develop systems of pedagogy in Papua New Guinea and promote global inclusion for dance? How can this knowledge generate social peace amongst learners?

This would seem to require reflective sharings by all involved in a dance context, but to achieve the goals of social peace may require a move away from arbitrary approaches to critical discussion. Forums for critical discourse on dance education may therefore need to expand and further incorporate alternative ontologies and epistemologies, for all involved to feel that their critical contributions are valued. Fostering inclusion through dance education can therefore require deconstructing and rationalizing perceptions of identity. Tia Rehana, graduate teacher at the University of Auckland, continues this idea, noting the complexity of critical analysis and identity construction within the context of dance education,

...definitions of self, that establish unrealistic and essentialist overtones of identity are problematic for young people who are left to work out generational traumas of racism, bigotry and ignorance set by those of us before and currently in *'power'*. Unspoken thoughts, or uncharted emotions, can be troublesome for young people when culture and identity are paramount. Students being able to speak openly, argue and talk back to current contexts of societal circumstance is important.

Tia Rehana further suggests,

...a Kaupapa Māori, transformative praxis (Smith 2003) encourages culturally relevant pedagogy that is specific to environment and people, is therefore responsive to personal aspirations that are culturally situated, is inherently connected to immediate and extended communities of the learners, and values an inclusive vision within the lived experience. ... the authenticity of expression, in a safe environment, is consequential to the wellbeing of self and others.

Extending rationalism through dance education might therefore require further research into how critical thinking is currently defined, limited and managed within current forums, and how it may be expanded. As suggested by the cultural positions of the respondents above, this can require energized and ongoing sites of cultural exchange.

Exchange

As noted at the start of this article, current scholarship on dance education has emerged from an unprecedented period of international exchange of dance education knowledge. To continue advancing global perspectives on inclusion and rationalism in dance education, researchers need to, as Urmimala Sarkar suggests, “generate cross-border and cross-cultural dialogues”. Tia Rehana explains that this can require research into how transnational dance exchanges can provide students, teachers and researchers with effective

...opportunities to communicate self, the self in relation to community, and, community in a global context... to hear, listen and respond to distinct voices...[to] put into practice what it means to have to work alongside, against and in response to one another.

Such forums for exchange become increasingly problematic however, in a context in which such transnational mobility is impeded. As Alfdaniels Mabingo suggests,

Both Trumpism and Brexitism exude a brand of national purity that is resistant to changing demography, free flow of ideas and resources, and mobility of people. This protectionism and insularity is only going to alienate diverse/nonwestern dance education ideas, knowledge and expertise.... African scholars, learners, educators and researchers from the developing countries are silently being instructed to “go back home” or “stay home”: keep their dances to themselves and their non-western communities.

While the legal, economic and military frameworks that control the flow of people and ideas across national borders may be beyond the control of dance education scholars, understanding the impact of these frameworks and exploring philosophic alternatives is not. This can require research that investigates how all parties in the dance exchange are valued, so that the knowledge exchanged is not simply patronised, appropriated or hegemonised. As Naomi Jackson, Jessica Rajko and Karen Schupp ask, “How do we move beyond inclusion to a situation in which there is genuine equity in dance education?”

Fostering such equity can involve shifting perceptions that ‘others’ are culturally homogenous (Bennet 1986). Teuila Hughes, graduate teacher in Dance Studies at the University of Auckland, notes how the 2016 election cycles have encouraged

...the idea of ‘ethnic lumping’ that neglects cultural distinctiveness (Espiritu 1992; Hereniko 1999)... Teachers of Pacific dance will be challenged as they try to articulate, rationalize and negotiate both the connections between Pacific cultures enforced by ethnic lumping and the cultural distinctions that challenge the existing stereotypical perceptions of Pacific dance (Hau’ofa 1994, 1998; Simati 2011).

This leads Hughes to propose dance education research that investigates,

How does ethnic lumping and homogenous perception of Pacific peoples and their practices affect their relationships with each other and Pacific dance education?

This attitude of ethnic lumping, along with growing limitations for the flow of ideas between the world and the UK/USA can present both immediate challenges and long term opportunities. Emily Akuno, Professor in the department of Music and Performing Arts at the Technical University of Kenya, acknowledges the financial patronage of USAID and British Council in regions like east Africa, identifying how

We may be denied access, thus cutting us from the expertise that these countries have, [but] if educators want to pursue things threatened by Brexit/Trump phenomena, they have alternatives, like using intra-Africa collaboration, China with whom we already have a lot of cultural exchange and financial engagement, the Arab world, Canada etc.

In this regard, the impact of Trump and Brexit may lead to greater diversification of cultural knowledge systems in the long term, as the UK and the USA retreat their influence. The cultural isolation of the USA and the UK (as leading global exporters of culture) may also result in processes of cultural exchange that are not founded in cultural imperialism, economic subjugation and donor-culture exchange models (Bereson; Pick; Said 1978). More genuine intellectual and aesthetic curiosity about the cultural perspectives and practices of other groups may reshape how exchange forums are designed and managed.

In the short term however, international students and programmes involved in transnational exchange may require more immediate research responses. With concerns for student mobility in the current context, Li Wang, a graduate of the Beijing Dance Academy, asks,

How can educational institutes supply inclusive policies (Williams, Berger & McClendon 2005), to widen participation in education and develop cultural communication as a bridge?

How can academic staff use culturally responsive teaching philosophies and strategies, and particularly Freire's Humanizing pedagogy (Chappell 2008; del Carmen Salazar 2013), to influence their student's academic engagement and performance?

These questions open discussion on the significant economic threat that Brexit and Trump presents to all Anglo-Saxon educational institutes. Throughout the 20th century, the dominance of the UK and the USA in promoting globalization has resulted in English gaining an international value as the language of transnational exchange (Grin 2004; Phillipson 2012). This has led to an exponential growth in international students financing educational institutes in Anglophone countries, as a qualification from an English-speaking institute carries both qualification in the subject area and qualification in the language (Vandermensbrugghe 2004). If the UK and USA now retreat from the world stage and English becomes (over time) a less

valued language for transnational exchange, will international students retreat from Anglophone institutes? If so, how might dance education in such tertiary institutes need to adapt to maintain their attraction and compete with more regionally relevant alternative institutes? These queries emphasize the urgency and potency of research into cultural exchange for dance education institutes.

Exiting the Trump Effect

Dance education is not politically neutral as, in the words of Bernard Henri Levy, “a fascist can put on a very successful performance” (Pasha Robinson 2016). So what does Brexit and the election of Donald Trump tell us about issues pertinent to dance education? What impact will these political decisions have on domestic and foreign policies and programmes associated with dance education? How might ‘the Trump effect’ ripple into other regions, bringing shifts in the political contexts of dance education across the world?

As the scholars who contributed to this article have suggested, such speculative questioning has become more important than ever. Critical, nuanced inquiries will not change the outcomes of the 2016 US presidential election or the British referendum to leave the EU. Pursuing these questions will, however, provide a means of understanding the issues of inclusion, rationalism and exchange associated with these elections, of mediating discussion on these election outcomes, and of sustaining the relevance of dance education research into 2017 and beyond.

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