

**Moving Past Patriarchy: How Embracing Female Choreographers Can Transform the  
World of Ballet**

Lauren Wingenroth

Abstract: This paper focuses on the systematic way that women are discouraged to choreograph for ballet, considering both historical influences and current practices in the ballet world. I posit that the authoritarian pedagogical methods used in ballet, the larger competition for women in ballet companies, the larger demand for women in canonical works, the favoritism towards boys and men in ballet, and the way we approach craft are factors that exclude women from creative positions in the ballet field. I argue that it is essential to rethink ballet in a way that is inclusive of women creators, and that the inclusion of these new choreographic perspectives will push the ballet world forward immensely.

Despite George Balanchine's famous claim that "ballet is woman," women are vastly underrepresented in leadership positions in ballet.<sup>1</sup> Ballet is seen as a feminine art form and ballet companies are heavily dominated by women as performers, but women artistic directors and choreographers in elite companies are extremely rare. This paper will focus specifically on the lack of women choreographers in ballet, the system that creates this gender gap, and the potential solutions to this problem. I will argue that the factors excluding women from choreographing for ballet, such as the authoritarian pedagogical methods used in ballet, the larger competition for women in ballet companies, the larger demand for women in canonical ballet works, the favoritism toward boys and men in ballet, and the way we approach the craft of ballet, are all components of the institution of ballet that are not essential to the art form itself. In other words, it is possible and essential to rethink ballet in a way that encourages women to choreograph and advances the art form as a whole.

Of the 166 choreographers in the repertory of American Ballet Theatre, a company founded in 1940, only 32 of them (19 percent) are women.<sup>2</sup> Only eight percent are living women. Of the 79 choreographers in the repertory of New York City Ballet, a company founded in 1948, only 15 (19 percent) are women.<sup>3</sup> In the repertories of both companies, women choreographers tend to be represented by only one work. This gender breakdown is representative of ballet companies overall, but it also demonstrates how this problem persists given that these are among

---

<sup>1</sup> Ann Daly, "The Balanchine Woman: Of Hummingbirds and Channel Swimmers," *The Drama Review: TDR*, 31.1 (1987), 17.

<sup>2</sup> "American Ballet Theatre Archive," *American Ballet Theatre*.

<sup>3</sup> "New York City Ballet Repertory," *New York City Ballet*.

the world's largest ballet institutions and are located in a progressive city and international dance center. This phenomenon is deeply rooted in the history of ballet, a form that has experienced little change over the course of its existence in comparison to the changing role of women in society. Dance historian Lynn Garafola lists a few explanations for the historical lack of women choreographers in ballet.

One reason, it is said, is the codified movement vocabulary of ballet - its "stiff and commonplace gymnastics," in Isadora Duncan's words - which supposedly limits the play of the imagination. Another explanation is what Susan Manning has called ballet's 'sexual division of labor,' which 'defined choreography as a male task and performance as a female task.' Still another is the representational system of nineteenth-century ballet, which presented women as objects of male desire rather than as subjects in their own right.<sup>4</sup>

The lack of female artistic voices in ballet is a result of the form's history as a patriarchal institution, as Garafola explains. She outlines varying explanations for genesis of this problem, all explanations that cite ballet's history and longstanding beliefs about gender roles in society. Discourse on this topic lacks explanations that instead address why this problem matters today, and how we can be proactive about ending it. Conversations about the gender dynamics of ballet need to focus on the tangible barriers to developing a choreographic voice that women face within the institution of ballet today, and recognize that the lack of women creating ballet has become a factor perpetuating ballet's identity as patriarchal. The fact that this problem is deeply rooted in the history of ballet should not mean that it is not a fixable problem that allows us to see the potential for ballet to progress along with the world around it.

Rather than analyze the many historical influences that have shaped ballet into the sexist institution it is today, this paper instead seeks to take a more practical, hands-on look at how we

---

<sup>4</sup> Lynn Garafola, "Where are Ballet's Women Choreographers?" *Legacies of Twentieth-Century Dance*, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2005), 215.

can fix this institution. An immense but tangible system works to keep women in ballet companies as performers and exclude them from choreographic opportunities. Some of the factors comprising this system are paralleled in politics, where women are underrepresented in Congress, or in business, where there are relatively few female CEOs. But a large majority of this system is comprised of elements specific to ballet traditions and ballet's identity as an embodied art form. For this reason, I have attempted to identify the specific elements within the ballet world that create barriers for women choreographers, and suggest ways of eliminating them.

The problem of men dominating fields that are traditionally considered women's work is not unique to ballet. In *Still a Man's World: Men Who Do Women's Work*, Christine L. Williams discusses the "glass escalator" phenomenon that propels men to top positions in typically traditionally feminine fields such as nursing, teaching, librarianship, and social work.<sup>5</sup> She argues that while men benefit from "tokenization," the method by which they are made to "stand out from the dominant group and receive more than their fair share of attention," which they receive as a "numerical minority" in their field or organization, the opposite is true for the way that women are tokenized in traditionally masculine fields.<sup>6</sup> Where women are "subjected to stereotyping, role entrapment, and various other forms of marginalization"<sup>7</sup> through tokenization, men "receive preferential consideration in hiring; they are channeled into certain male-identified specialities; and they are pressured to perform specific job tasks that are identified as 'manly'"<sup>8</sup> when they occupy the numerical minority in a field. Though Williams does not mention ballet, her distinction between the way men and women are tokenized is applicable to the gender

---

<sup>5</sup> Christine L. Williams, *Still A Man's World: Men Who Do Women's Work* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1995.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

dynamics of the field. As the numerical minority among ballet performers, men benefit from the positive tokenization that propels them into choreographic opportunities. As the numerical minority within choreography, women suffer from the negative tokenization that emphasizes difference and otherness. Both positive and negative tokenization contribute to the system that discourages and disallows women from being choreographers.

Many of the steps that companies have taken to reduce the gender discrepancy in their repertoires have fallen into the trap of tokenizing women that Williams warns against. In 2012, Houston Ballet's *WOMEN@ART* program featured works by Azure Barton, Twyla Tharp, and Julia Adam.<sup>9</sup> In 2008, BalletX presented a program consisting solely of female choreographers, including Anabelle Lopez Ochoa, Helen Pickett, and Christine Cox,<sup>10</sup> and in 2012, Colorado Ballet presented *Tribute*<sup>11</sup> with work by Emery LeCrone, Jodi Gates, and Amy Seiwert.<sup>12</sup> Though praised as steps toward advancing women in the choreographic field, these programs, all presented by mid-size companies, do not seem to have left any mark, permanent or otherwise, on their repertoires. Additionally, these programs tokenized women by confining them all too often to one-night events and perpetuating the idea that a "female choreographer" is atypical and needs her own, separate space to present her work.<sup>13</sup> In order to normalize choreography by women, companies must make a commitment to integrating women's work into their regular programming.

---

<sup>9</sup> "Houston Ballet Launches 35th Anniversary Season with Women@Art," Houston Ballet, Press Release, 5 Sept. 2005.

<sup>10</sup> "BalletX Three Female Choreographers," *Youtube Channel: Ballet X*, Promotional Film, 25 July 2008. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QL-IL1SPNgY>>.

<sup>11</sup> Ray Mark Rinaldi, "Colorado Ballet Turns Spotlight on Women in Tribute to Founders," *The Denver Post*, 31 March 2012, 2.

<sup>12</sup> Kelsey Lauren Ottley discusses programs by Houston Ballet, BalletX, Charlotte Ballet, and Colorado Ballet in "Crossing the Threshold: Female Choreographers in Ballet," Thesis (M.F.A.), University of California, Irvine, 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Jenna Jones, "Sexism in the Ballet World: A Study of its Causes and Effects," Thesis (M.F.A.), Mills College, 2014.

The way that the choreographic work of women is critically discussed tokenizes them by emphasizing their otherness and holding them to a higher standard of excellence than men. In 2007, Claudia La Rocco wrote in the *New York Times*: “Since the first New York Choreographic Institute, where Mr. Martins serves as artistic director, was held in 2000, 12 of the 51 participating choreographers have been women, according to company data...Mr. Martins said, he was often unimpressed by the quality of submissions and sometimes accepted women despite reservations, to encourag[e] them.”<sup>14</sup> Two problems with this idea must be mentioned. First, New York City Ballet’s Choreographic Institute supposedly “promotes the development of choreographers and dancers involved in classical choreography by providing opportunities to develop their talents.”<sup>15</sup> The emphasis this description puts on fostering and developing skills implies that choreographers need not have extensive experience before entering the Institute – the point of the program is to gain experience in a safe, nurturing space. Where else would budding women choreographers interested in participating in the Institute have obtained the previous choreographic experience that would allow them to experiment, to fail? If the Institute is to be true to its mission, judgment of choreographers should be withheld until they are able to find their voice within the program. Second, Martins, who also serves as Ballet Master in Chief of New York City Ballet, ignores the fact that very few choreographers achieve excellence in their field when he articulates these high expectations for women choreographers. Of the 79 choreographers in the NYCB repertory, only a handful have multiple works.<sup>16</sup> Even fewer, such as Alexei Ratmansky and Christopher Wheeldon, have excited public and critical attention. The work of Peter Martins himself is often criticized – a review of New York City Ballet’s Fall 2012 gala by chief dance critic of the *New York Times*, Alastair Macaulay, ruthlessly criticizes the

---

<sup>14</sup> Claudia La Rocco, “Often on Point but Rarely in Charge,” *The New York Times*, 5 Aug. 2007, 29.

<sup>15</sup> “New York Choreographic Institute,” *New York City Ballet*.

<sup>16</sup> “New York City Ballet Repertory,” *New York City Ballet*.

three Martins ballets featured, and implies that Martins, who has many works in the NYCB repertory, possesses little talent as a choreographer.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, most new works presented on prominent stages do not receive positive critical feedback. The expectation that women choreographers should immediately produce excellent works ignores the trial-and-error period essential to developing a voice and the many mediocre ballets that men stage regularly.

A terminated American Ballet Theatre program sought to allow women this trial-and-error period, but failed to have any permanent impact. In 2008, ABT Artistic Director Kevin McKenzie announced a program specifically aimed at giving women choreographers time to develop their choreographic voice. No longer operating, “Voices and Visions: The Altria/ABT Women’s Choreography Project” chose an “emerging female choreographer” – Azure Barton in 2008 and Jodie Gates in 2009 – to create a piece for the ABT Studio Company.<sup>18</sup> This program succeeded in that it maintained a quota for the number of female works that the Studio Company performed – setting a minimum number of pieces choreographed by women per season is a positive step, even if this minimum is just one. However, these works were only performed by the ABT Studio Company, and tellingly, ABT’s mainstage repertory has not shifted in recent years to feature the work of more women.<sup>19</sup> The choreographic career of ABT principal dancer Marcelo Gomes puts this project into perspective. In 2011, Gomes was quoted in *Dance Magazine* as having “started getting the [choreographic] itch a couple of years ago. I’ve always listened to music and fooled around putting steps to it.”<sup>20</sup> Since then, Gomes premiered ballets at ABT’s Spring 2013 opening gala at the Metropolitan Opera House<sup>21</sup> and ABT’s Fall 2013

---

<sup>17</sup> Alastair Macaulay, “All This in the Name of Fashion,” *The New York Times*, 21 Sept. 2012, 1.

<sup>18</sup> “ABT Announces Voices and Visions: The Altria/ABT Women’s Choreography Project,” American Ballet Theatre, Press Release, Mar. 2008.

<sup>19</sup> “American Ballet Theatre Archive,” *American Ballet Theatre*.

<sup>20</sup> Kina Poon, “Quick Q&A: Marcelo Gomes,” *Dance Magazine*, Feb. 2012, 14.

<sup>21</sup> Jocelyn Noveck, “American Ballet Theatre Gala Brings Out the Chiffon and Sequins for Spring,” *The Huffington Post*, 14 May 2013.

opening gala at the David H. Koch Theater.<sup>22</sup> The latter piece, *Aftereffect*, was particularly poorly received, Alastair Macaulay noting that he disliked the piece even after trying to “indulge Mr. Gomes’s efforts as a choreographer.”<sup>23</sup> Gomes’s quick transition from performer to mainstage choreographer, fueled by only an “itch,” starkly contrasts the small-scale opportunity given to women choreographers through Altria, and demonstrates that ABT is willing to put the work of inexperienced choreographers on their mainstage, but have chosen not to include women in this risk-taking thus far. In addition to its small scale, Altria’s branding strategy, like those of the other companies attempting to embrace women choreographers, tokenized its participants by dwelling on their otherness. Video footage of a Works and Process showing at the Guggenheim featuring the 2009 Altria participants is simply entitled *Female Choreographers*, a title that would read as ridiculous were it to say “Male Choreographers.”<sup>24</sup> Though this portion of the Altria project was flawed in its tokenizing and lack of impact, it had potential to provide women choreographers with a space for choreographic experimentation.

The second component of the Altria project offered workshops for female company members to focus on “developing choreographic structure and the creative process.”<sup>25</sup> A voluntary program open to all the company’s women, the workshop attracted no more than 20%.<sup>26</sup> The voluntary aspect of the program is complex. Clearly, some dancers have little wish to explore their creative potential. However, the intense competition for women probably deters many from taking time away from training and rehearsals to pursue an optional creative endeavor. This may well explain why the participation numbers for this portion of Altria were

---

<sup>22</sup> “ABT’s Opening Night Fall Gala at David H. Koch Theater to Feature World Premiere of *The Tempest* by Alexei Ratmansky, Wednesday, October 30 at 6:30 P.M.,” American Ballet Theatre, Press Release, Sept. 2013.

<sup>23</sup> Alastair Macaulay, “Leaping into a New Home, With Poetry and Storms,” *The New York Times*, 31 Oct. 2013, 1.

<sup>24</sup> *American Ballet Theatre, Female Choreographers: Works & Process at the Guggenheim*, Produced by Mary Sharp Cronson, 73 min., 2009, Videodisc.

<sup>25</sup> “ABT Announces Voices and Visions,” Mar. 2008.

<sup>26</sup> Rachel S. Moore, interview by Lauren Wingenroth, New York, 20 Oct. 2014.



low. Regardless, Altria had potential by targeting female company members, as most ballet choreographers begin their careers as company performers. Though Altria only lasted for three years, the concept of developing choreographers within the company has lived on at ABT. As Altria came to an end, “some of the gentlemen [of the company] were feeling annoyed that the ladies were getting special coaching and opportunities,” according to ABT Executive Director Rachel S. Moore.<sup>27</sup> The Innovation Initiative, an alternative choreographic workshop program for company members, was born out of these sentiments. ABT seems to have forgotten about the problem it sought to solve with Altria by implementing a gender-neutral program in its stead, a common thread among efforts to lessen the gender gap in ballet choreography.

Like ABT’s program, most efforts to empower female choreographers have largely failed. Just as significantly, most of the literature on the gender gap in ballet choreography has failed to frame the issue correctly. Kelsey Lauren Ottley’s M.F.A. Thesis, “Crossing the Threshold: Female Choreographers in Ballet” exemplifies this problem.<sup>28</sup> Instead of looking at the expansive and complex system in place that discourages and keeps women from choreographing, Ottley suggests that women must just “try it”<sup>29</sup> and emphasizes that “the fear of choreography for many women holds them back from the idea of creating a work.”<sup>30</sup> Though these statements may be true, Ottley ignores the institutionalized factors that discourage women from “trying it” or the reasons women may be intimidated by this patriarchal pursuit. Another detrimental narrative – that women simply do not have the desire to choreograph – appears in an interview with choreographer Miriam Mahdaviyani by Jennifer Dunning in the *New York Times*: “When I’m lost in thought in rehearsals for my ballet, the women usually stand still, waiting. It’s

---

<sup>27</sup> Moore, interview by Lauren Wingenroth.

<sup>28</sup> Kelsey Lauren Ottley, “Crossing the Threshold: Female Choreographers in Ballet,” Thesis (M.F.A.), University of California, Irvine, 2012.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

the men who are trying out steps, and I know two of them want to choreograph. I'm aware of other people in the company who want to choreograph, and all of them are men.”<sup>31</sup> By using the language of fear or absence of desire to explain why women do not choreograph, these narratives ignore a system that socializes women to be silent. It is not a matter of an individual woman being afraid to speak up, but a cultural norm that allows the silencing of women to be acceptable.

By telling the stories of women as the above literature does, we not only ignore the active silencing that takes place in ballet, but we also further silence women by suppressing any choreographic desire or ability they may possess. Mary Beard's essay “The Public Voice of Women” analyzes the widespread silencing of women to demonstrate that public speech is a heavily masculinized privilege.<sup>32</sup> Though Beard speaks about the “voice” in a literal way, citing the way that we are socialized to perceive deeper voices as more powerful and men's suggestions as more expert, even when they are identical to women's, her essay is applicable to the silencing of the female creative voice. Beard distinguishes the public arena, where power is executed and men control dialogue, from the private one, where women are allowed to speak, though they are not widely heard. This distinction applies to art in a general way. The creation of art is a public act, and the underrepresentation of women as artistic creators parallels the underrepresentation of women in powerful positions that require an influential public voice. The silencing of women in dance, however, is a more complex phenomenon, since women are traditionally so visible in the public arena onstage and do possess some creative voice as interpreters of the choreography they are taught. It is important to distinguish, however, between interpretation and creation, and to acknowledge that creation is far superior to interpretation as far as the agency and individual expression it allows. Although women in ballet are allowed to interpret the voice of men in the

---

<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Jennifer Dunning, “Making Ballets, Just the Way Men Do,” *The New York Times*, 15 May 1994, 8.

<sup>32</sup> Mary Beard, “The Public Voice of Women,” *London Review of Books* (20 March 2014): 11-14.

public arena, they ultimately allow men to speak through their bodies. It is unlikely to see women being allowed to create in the public arena through ballet.

An “integral part of growing up, as a man,” Beard asserts, “is learning to take control of public utterance and to silence the female of the species.”<sup>33</sup> According to the experiences of an overwhelming number of narratives female ballet dancers have told about their training, this active silencing takes place in the classroom. For example, dance educator and feminist Jennifer Bolt recalls her relationship with her dance teacher, citing how her: “inquisitive nature, mainly born out of a growing interest to teach dance, was repeatedly scolded for questioning her [teacher’s] praxis. Quickly labeled as arrogant and aggressive, [her] daily existence became lessons in learning how to suppress the intellectual curiosity [she] had about the art form [she] loved so much.”<sup>34</sup> Bolt’s account of being silenced by a female teacher is a common one, for women are well-represented as teachers and rehearsal directors in the ballet field. This fact does not lessen Beard’s statement, however. When women teach ballet, they step into the symbolic masculine role of the silencer and draw on techniques and practices that have long been crafted by men to silence women. This silencing is one of several negative dynamics at work within the ballet technique class.

Authoritarian teaching methods in the ballet classroom silence dancers and perpetuate an unnecessary hierarchy between teacher and student. Dance educator and scholar Robin Lakes analyzes the harmful power relationships that pedagogical techniques in the dance field perpetuate, asserting that:

The effects of the “hidden” curricular agendas in authoritarian classrooms and rehearsal rooms are great. These messages have the

---

<sup>33</sup> Beard, “The Public Voice of Women,” 11-14.

<sup>34</sup> Jennifer Bolt, “Silencing the Silent: A Feminist Analysis of Classical Ballet within a Canadian University Dance Program,” Paper presented at the Annual CORPS (Council for Organized Researchers of Pedagogical Studies) de Ballet International Conference, Aspen, CO, 16-20 July 2008, 10.

potential to create fear, anxiety, stress, or lack of affect in dancers, which does not foster an environment where deep learning can take place. Learners who are full of fear and intimidation are less able and willing to investigate, question, play, explore, and take risks.<sup>35</sup>

The “encoded pedagogical messages” of ballet teachings are that the teacher is the ultimate authority, there is only one right way of executing steps, and dancers are merely bodies to be shaped and transformed by the steps they are taught to learn and the choreography they are made to perform.<sup>36</sup> These messages are encoded in practices normalized in the ballet pedagogy such as directing harsh or derogatory language at students, setting a standard of bodily perfection, and using disciplinary tactics that discourage asking questions and speaking up. These methods do not foster the discovery of one’s voice or the desire to choreograph; in fact they socialize students to be silent in a way that surely permeates outside the classroom. The detrimental effects of authoritative teaching methods harm all students in the classroom, not just women. And yet, men still emerge with a creative voice much more frequently than women.

In “Critical Social Issues in Dance Education Research,” dance education scholar Doug Risner asserts that the ballet environment “produces passive followers, rather than active leaders and also may contribute to further gender bias in dance.”<sup>37</sup> Authoritative pedagogical methods are easily linked to the production of passivity, but why do they produce passive women and not passive men? Dance scholar Christy Adair articulates the reality of the issue: “ballet tends to uphold the dominant ideology. Consequently, many of the values and beliefs of the owning classes are reproduced within the ballet training institutions, the technique and the

---

<sup>35</sup> Robin Lakes, “The Message Behind the Methods: The Authoritarian Pedagogical Legacy in Western Concert Dance Technique Training and Rehearsals,” *Arts Education Policy Review* 106, no. 5 (2005): 16.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>37</sup> Doug Risner, “Critical Social Issues in Dance Education Research,” *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education* 16 (2007): 966.

choreography.”<sup>38</sup> The dominant ideology Adair refers to is what silences all women in the public sphere, as Beard explains.<sup>39</sup> In other words, though the techniques used to teach ballet may be detrimental to individuality and creativity in general, they produce passive women in particular because they are functioning as part of a larger cultural system that normalizes the silencing of women. Ballet need not uphold the dominant ideology, and has the potential to question, subvert, and complicate the ideologies it has previously perpetuated. For ballet to reach this potential, changes to the ballet tradition must start in the classroom.

In order to remove harmful cultural norms that silence women from the classroom, ballet educators must be conscious of these issues and how they may play out in their teaching methodologies. Gretchen Alterowitz is an example of a ballet educator who applies her feminist consciousness to the classroom and seeks to dismantle the dominant ideology by employing pedagogical methods that empower rather than silence students.<sup>40</sup> Alterowitz discusses some of the techniques she uses to deconstruct the power dynamics of the ballet classroom:

As I articulate a particular line with my body, I might say, “Ballet calls this beautiful because...and other forms have different aesthetics, so this might not be considered important elsewhere.”[...] Or, I initiate a discussion about how steps in ballet are often gendered as I am teaching one of those steps or series of movements. These discussions acknowledge that ballet is not a “true” form that exists above others [...] I prioritize self-discovery as a means of learning by building in time for experimentation with particular steps or short combinations of movement, with different imagery to guide movement motivation, and with small-group collaboration to explore the conceptual processing that comes with providing feedback to others.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Christy Adair, *Women and Dance: Sylphs and Sirens* (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 83.

<sup>39</sup> Beard, “The Public Voice of Women,” 11-14.

<sup>40</sup> Gretchen Alterowitz, “Toward a Feminist Ballet Pedagogy: Teaching Strategies for Ballet Technique Class in the Twenty-First Century,” *Journal of Dance Education*, 14:1: 8-17.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

Alterowitz demonstrates the possibility of making progressive changes in the ballet classroom while maintaining the structure and integrity of the class. Her innovations show that harmful teaching practices lie in subtle choices such as the language we use to speak about ballet movement and the way we give feedback. Though subtle changes can produce a more responsible classroom environment, as Alterowitz demonstrates, a firm commitment to moving forward the traditional language and structure of the ballet class is needed if the form is to achieve gender equality.

While the silencing of women in ballet may be encoded in teaching methodologies, the favoritism toward boys and men in ballet is unconcealed and is similarly detrimental to the choreographic prospects of women. Because the number of female ballet students has steadily increased in recent years and boys continue to be a rarity, male students from beginner to professional levels are coveted.<sup>42</sup> Risner finds that “U.S. data, primarily from the National Endowment for Arts, the American Dance Festival, and the National Corporate Fund for Dance, report that men in dance have benefited disproportionately in the areas of scholarships, grant funding, education, income, and employment.”<sup>43</sup> My own experience speaks to this point. The only male student at my ballet studio went on to dance with the Boston Ballet, while none of the many female students pursued ballet at a conservatory or professional level. This systematic favoritism of boys and men is paired with favoritism in the classroom, where boys receive additional praise and attention and are encouraged to pursue their study of dance. This positive reinforcement is essential to building the confidence in young dancers that will allow them to find their creative voice. Such reinforcement is withheld from female students, even though they

---

<sup>42</sup> Margaret Fuhrer, “Seen, Not Heard,” *Pointe Magazine*, Dec. 2012, 74-76.

<sup>43</sup> Risner, “Critical Social Issues,” 968.

are often more technically proficient than their male counterparts. While the latter are given the opportunities and confidence needed to pursue choreography, female students are not.

The scarcity of men in dance leads to a favoritism that encourages male choreographers while discouraging female ones. The large number of women in ballet constructs a separate but related set of barriers to female choreographers. One of these is the intense competition that women face at all levels of training that requires them to meet higher technical expectations than men. According to Ashley Tuttle, a former ABT principal dancer, a woman must have a perfect triple pirouette on pointe to gain entry to the corps de ballet of a major company, while a man who gains entry to one of these companies may not be able to execute a double tour, a staple of the male vocabulary.<sup>44</sup> The higher expectations women must meet to secure employment as a professional ballet dancer requires them to possess an aggressive determination to improve and dedicate many hours of class and attention to personal growth. As Jenna Jones points out in her M.F.A. Thesis, “Sexism in the Ballet World: A Study of its Causes and Effects,” “The more time that women spend on their dance training, the less time they have to focus on creative endeavors, such as choreography; their male counterparts may have extra time to experiment with such creative activities while their sisters are kept busy in the corps.”<sup>45</sup> Jones points to the need for emerging choreographers to play with choreography before they are able to pursue it on a larger scale, a privilege women in companies often do not have due to time constraints and the pressure of competition.

Not only does the extreme competition for women give them less time to experiment with choreography, it is likely that because they must put more hours, funds, and dedication into their training, they are less likely to leave a ballet company to pursue a choreographic career than

---

<sup>44</sup> Ashley Tuttle, interview by Lauren Wingenroth, New York, 20 Nov. 2014.

<sup>45</sup> Jones, “Sexism in the Ballet World,” 24.

a man who has probably invested less in working toward this goal. It must be acknowledged that boys pursuing ballet are often faced with bullying from their peers, and sometimes even disapproval from their families. Dealing with these negative experiences while remaining dedicated to ballet requires extreme emotional investment in the form. And yet, the fact remains that men and women invest vastly differing amounts of money and time into their ballet training. For example, boys ages six through fourteen are able to attend the School of American Ballet, the New York City Ballet's feeder school, tuition-free, not an uncommon practice among ballet schools,<sup>46</sup> and biologically, women must start their training earlier than men because of the form's extremely high technical requirements, including a fluent command of pointework.<sup>47</sup> Additionally, it is likely that the scholarship programs in place for men result in a wider range of class backgrounds being represented in male ballet dancers than in female ballet dancers. It is possible that someone from a less privileged background, in this case likely a man, might be more willing to stop dancing to pursue a higher paying career as a choreographer, whereas the prospect of a larger salary may not be enough to convince a woman from a privileged background to leave the company she has worked so hard to reach to pursue choreography.

Jenna Jones points to a second barrier to women choreographers: the need for large numbers of women to fill the corps de ballet of elite companies. This demand has its roots in the structure of nineteenth-century ballets as well as in works by Balanchine and other neoclassical choreographers such as Frederick Ashton that require large female ensembles. The presence of such works in the repertoires of companies today causes both the make-up of companies and the dancers seen onstage to be predominantly female. These two barriers may seem contradictory, since the increased need for women in dance should logically work to decrease competition for

---

<sup>46</sup> "Foundation Gifts," *The School of American Ballet at Lincoln Center*.

<sup>47</sup> Bolt, "Silencing the Silent," 8.



women. Unfortunately, this is not the case, for the large numbers of women in ballet overall promotes competition despite the fact that women comprise a majority of the dancers in the corps de ballet.<sup>48</sup> As Jones observes, women generally spend more time than men in rehearsal due to the increased need for their presence onstage, allowing them less time to pursue creative endeavors. Men in the corps de ballet, on the other hand, tend to dance character parts that allow them to spend less time in rehearsal and much unlike the corps parts choreographed for women, allow them to explore their individuality onstage.

Rehearsal time is not the only detriment to the creativity of corps women. The parts they dance demand precision and do not encourage individuality, creating a corps mentality that stifles creative thought. Jones addresses the psychological barriers that this corps mentality presents: “To have such a large group be in impeccable unison requires militant rehearsal, accuracy, drilling, and discipline. The corps de ballet is presented to audiences as a grand display of a mass group of women dancing with perfect unison - a result of being disciplined by men.”<sup>49</sup> She implies that the pedagogical techniques used in ballet classes are magnified in a room where the female corps is rehearsing, and that the sameness required by the corps suppresses individuality and creativity. The choreographer and former San Francisco Ballet principal Julia Adam articulates similar sentiments: “If you slip, the girl next to you is ready to step right in, and by the way, she looks exactly like you. You start thinking: What’s unique about me? Do I have anything important to say?”<sup>50</sup> Emery LeCrone, choreographer and former ballet dancer, goes so far as to say that: “what made me a good choreographer was what hindered me as a classical ballerina.”<sup>51</sup> These women highlight the pervasiveness of the corps mentality, and the way this

---

<sup>48</sup> Jones, “Sexism in the Ballet World,” 18.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>50</sup> Fuhrer, “Seen, Not Heard,” 75.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

mentality works in direct opposition to a creative mentality in which having something important to say is essential. The corps mentality is particularly relevant to the paucity of women choreographers in ballet because the path to becoming a ballet choreographer traditionally involves spending time dancing in a ballet company. For this reason, as long as this mentality persists in ballet companies, they will continue to stifle the development of women choreographers.

The corps mentality is particularly problematic when one considers the path that leads most choreographers to success in ballet. ABT Executive Director Rachel Moore outlines the advantages of starting one's choreographic career in an established company:

it actually gives people access to resources that most young choreographers don't have access to regardless of their field...Having studios, having music, having dancers of a caliber that you can work with is really a gift...in a company there's greater structure than trying to go at it alone. And especially with ballet, you really need the dancers who have the training and have the skill to dance ballet well, in order to make ballet choreography look good. And that's easier in a company than in a pick-up group.<sup>52</sup>

The smooth transition from dancer to choreographer within the structure of a company that Moore discusses has been a tried-and-true method among ballet choreographers. Jerome Robbins emerged from Ballet Theatre (now American Ballet Theatre) to become one of the most prolific choreographers on the NYCB repertory and eventually to direct the company.<sup>53</sup> Christopher Wheeldon<sup>54</sup> has followed a similar trajectory, beginning as a performer with England's Royal Ballet and subsequently with NYCB, as has Benjamin Millepied,<sup>55</sup> the recently appointed artistic director of the Paris Opera Ballet. Justin Peck, NYCB's new Resident Choreographer, emerged

---

<sup>52</sup> Moore, interview by Lauren Wingenroth.

<sup>53</sup> Doris Hering, "Robbins, Jerome," *The International Encyclopedia of Dance*, 1998.

<sup>54</sup> Debra Craine and Judith Mackrell, "Wheeldon, Christopher," *The Oxford Dictionary of Dance*, 2010.

<sup>55</sup> Craine and Mackrell, "Millepied, Benjamin," *The Oxford Dictionary of Dance*, 2010.

from the corps of the company.<sup>56</sup> Alexei Ratmansky, ABT's Artist-in-Residence, served his time dancing in several European ballet companies before becoming a prominent choreographer.<sup>57</sup>

The few women who have choreographed for large ballet companies, with the exception of former NYCB dancer Melissa Barak,<sup>58</sup> tend to have taken alternate paths, such as obtaining a college degree before beginning to choreograph or experimenting in modern choreography before crossing over to ballet companies. The lack of women taking the straight, supported path from company to choreography is inextricably linked to the corps mentality that encourages sameness and silence in women in ballet companies.

The silencing of women in the classroom, the favoritism shown toward boys and men, the increased competition for women, and the corps mentality all intersect to comprise the system keeping women in ballet from choreographing. This same system has contributed to the narrative common in feminist discourse on ballet that the form is inherently and deeply rooted in the patriarchy. Dance writer Catherine Hale synthesizes this belief in "From Muse to Author: The Fate of Women Choreographers in Ballet?":

The consensus, among albeit varying shades of opinion, holds that ballet is literally the embodiment of patriarchal values. In the name of art, men – in the form of choreographers, ballet masters, and gentleman scholars who immortalised ballerinas with the stroke of their pen – fashioned through ballet a representation of 'woman' that shores up their own cultural supremacy. This was achieved by a draconic training regime that molds the body into idealised forms of femininity; by determining the interactions between the sexes through the pas de deux in which the male dancer conquers and the ballerina yields; and by establishing stereotypes of female weakness and passivity through the unattainable peasant girls mad with love and the unattainable sylphs of ballet narratives.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> "Justin Peck," *New York City Ballet*.

<sup>57</sup> Craine and Mackrell, "Ratmansky, Alexei," *The Oxford Dictionary of Dance*. 2010.

<sup>58</sup> "About Barak Ballet," *Barak Ballet*.

<sup>59</sup> Catherine Hale, "From Muse to Author: The Fate of Women as Choreographers in Ballet?" *Dance Theatre Journal*, 1 Jan. 2002: 30.

Hale alludes to the system previously outlined, but goes further to cite how the actual content of story ballets such as *La Sylphide* and *Giselle* contribute to the narrative that ballet is inescapably patriarchal. Not only are women conquered by the male choreographers and artistic directors who dictate their actions – they are conquered by the men accompanying them onstage. As Hale outlines, feminist responses to ballet commonly criticize the traditional gender roles perpetuated by story ballets, the conquering of women in the pas de deux, and the objectification of the female body within choreography, all elements of ballet that have been crafted by male choreographers.

An example of a feminist response to ballet is Ann Daly's "The Balanchine Woman: Of Hummingbirds and Channel Swimmers," in which she analyzes Balanchine's 1946 ballet *The Four Temperaments*.<sup>60</sup> The ballet is story-less, as most of Balanchine's ballets are, but is often discussed in terms of its gender roles. Daly argues that *The Four Temperaments* shows patterns of male domination, mainly citing only one section of the piece to make this claim. Though Daly analyzes the third theme's gender dynamics at great length, she delegitimizes her own argument by making the generalizing statement that "No matter what the specific steps, no matter what the choreographic style, the interaction style, point work, and movement style of classical ballet portrays women as objects of male desire rather than agents of their own desire."<sup>61</sup> Daly's argument robs ballerinas of the agency they possess, and does not allow for the possibility of a female choreographer to disrupt the power dynamics she claims to always be at work in ballet. Though Daly is much more extreme than most, she represents the common opinion that both the choreographic form of ballet and the organizations in which it exists are inescapably patriarchal.

---

<sup>60</sup> Daly, "The Balanchine Woman," 8-21.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

Despite the legitimacy of feminist claims that ballet is harmfully patriarchal, it seems inevitable that a form would reinforce patriarchal values if that form only allows for one perspective – that of men – to be voiced. Up until now, the experiences represented onstage through ballet have been primarily those of white men, who have used their beliefs about the world and their dominant position in the world to inform their approach to choreography. For this reason, I argue that ballet is not inherently patriarchal, and has the potential to transcend its patriarchal heritage if it allows for the perspective of women to be voiced. In order to achieve this transcendence, we must rethink what we believe to be the essential qualities of ballet. Must ballet be taught through a traditional technique class to be ballet? Must a pas de deux be between a man and a woman to be ballet? Must a ballet tell stories that perpetuate traditional gender roles to be a ballet? Must a corps of identical women be used to represent “everybody, the world,” as Balanchine once mandated, for a work to be ballet?<sup>62</sup> I believe the answers to these questions to be no, and that the artists who will push ballet past the patriarchal values it has reinforced since its inception will be women choreographers. The disruption of the system keeping women from having their voices heard in ballet is therefore an immediate and essential priority, for “it is the exposure to the female point of view that will, over time, begin to deconstruct and challenge the hegemonic gender codes that have been perpetuated in society and codified in classical ballet since its inception in the 16th century.”<sup>63</sup>

In order to free ballet from its patriarchal heritage, we must examine and dismantle the systems I have outlined that silence the choreographic voices of women. As a complete restructuring is a daunting if not impossible task, practical changes in the way we approach ballet may help to begin this process. First and foremost, we must change the way we think about the

---

<sup>62</sup> Quoted in Robert Greskovic, "Corps De Ballet Féminin," *Ballet 101: A Complete Guide to Learning and Loving the Ballet*, (New York: Hyperion, 1998), 176-77.

<sup>63</sup> Jones, “Sexism in the Ballet World,” 3.

craft of ballet choreography. In most other artistic disciplines, craft is formally taught. This is the case with painting, photography, playwriting, musical composition, and filmmaking. Though dance educational institutions do teach dance composition courses alongside their modern dance courses, and often these courses do not specify the genre in which dances are to be choreographed, they almost never include ballet vocabulary. In fact, in my experience, movement in the ballet vocabulary has been discouraged in these courses, as it is not seen as capable of the risk-taking and experimentation that these courses promote. The exclusion of ballet from dance composition courses stems from the belief that the very nature of dance composition, of teaching the craft of choreography, is incompatible with ballet. Several attempts to teach the craft of ballet, such as the Carlisle Project founded by Barbara Weisberger in 1984, have ended. Weisberger lamented the missing craft of ballet in 2006: “Why are we the only art form that says there’s no craft? Of course there’s a craft. It isn’t stymieing anybody’s gift. It’s about nurturing.”<sup>64</sup> The Carlisle Project, a process-oriented training program for ballet choreographers, evolved into New York City Ballet’s New York Choreographic Institute. However, unlike Weisberger, the latter “maintains that ballet [choreography] cannot be formally taught.”<sup>65</sup> The idea that there is no craft to ballet choreography and that choreography cannot be taught must be done away with to create a space in ballet that is inclusive of women’s choreographic voices.

If we consider ballet to be a craft-less form, we revert back to stereotypes such as artists produce great work when they are struck with inspiration; artists are born with talent and don’t have to work to hone their craft; and artists are “geniuses,” special people selected to dedicate their life to their work. The stereotype of the “genius” is culturally associated with men – a 2014

---

<sup>64</sup> Quoted by Gia Kourlas, “‘My Smart Ballerina,’ Balanchine Said, ‘You Must Do It.’ She Did,” *The New York Times*, 3 Sept. 2006, 20.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

study showed that the Google search term “Is my son a genius?” has 123% more queries than “Is my daughter a genius?”<sup>66</sup> Where we tend to see the achievements of men as stemming from raw, natural talent and ability, we see those of women as stemming from hard work and diligence. These two ways of thinking about ability can be tied to the work of Carol Dweck, who has developed the terms “fixed mindset” and “growth mindset” to talk about abilities:

In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort. They’re wrong. In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.<sup>67</sup>

Concepts aligning with the fixed mindset, such as natural talent, permeate the language we use to speak about art and great artists, but in reality, the attention to craft, trial and error, and intellectual resilience is most applicable to creativity and successful art making.

The perceived genderedness of Dweck’s mindsets influences the gender gaps existing in real world fields. Sarah-Jane Leslie, Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University, took Dweck’s mindset theory and applied it to gender gaps in academic disciplines.<sup>68</sup> She found that beliefs about whether a discipline requires either raw talent or hard work predict female representation across all disciplines and that gender gaps are larger in fields where raw talent is thought to be required.<sup>69</sup> Leslie’s findings can be applied to the underrepresentation of women as artists in general due to stereotypes about artists having fixed mindsets, and to the barriers

---

<sup>66</sup> Seth Stephens-Davidowitz, “Google, Tell Me. Is My Son a Genius?” *The New York Times*, 18 Jan. 2014, 6.

<sup>67</sup> “What is Mindset,” *Mindset Online*.

<sup>68</sup> Sarah-Jane Leslie, “You Have to be a Genius to Succeed: Why Some Academic Disciplines have Large Gender Gaps,” lecture, Athena Center Leadership Council Meeting, New York, 27 Oct. 2014.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

keeping women from ballet choreography specifically because of the way we approach the craft of ballet. The fixed mindset is particularly prominent in ballet: not only do we think of choreographers as having raw, natural talent, but we refuse to talk about and recognize the craft of ballet choreography.

Leslie suggests that in order to lessen the gender gaps caused by beliefs about abilities, we must start by changing our language.<sup>70</sup> We should avoid saying words like “brilliant,” “genius,” and “gifted.” We should emphasize the importance of working hard and talk about struggles and mistakes. We should challenge others when they emphasize natural gifts as the key to success. Linking a growth mindset to success through language will not only create more opportunities for women, but will help fields succeed overall – a growth mindset leads to better performance and an ability to learn from failure. How do these mindsets and the gender gaps they cause apply to the craft of ballet? The fixed mindset aligns with the way the ballet world currently approaches choreography: one is either a talented choreographer or not, and no lessons in the craft of the form can change this. In this framework, a choreographer must be a “genius,” and therefore implicitly male. The growth mindset is the way the ballet world should approach choreography, offering a much more inclusive, process-oriented framework for choreographic development. Approaching ballet from a growth mindset, a step that is inextricably linked to embracing the craft of ballet, will not only open the field up to women, but it will improve the quality of work being produced.

The modern dance world can teach the ballet world how to approach craft from a growth mindset. Composition in modern dance is widely taught, and many workshops and classes exist that teach specific tools for choreographic development. Often, the process of choreographing a

---

<sup>70</sup> Leslie, “You Have to be a Genius to Succeed.”



modern dance work is collaborative and involves the dancers, empowering them with the ability to not just interpret, but to create. In modern dance, this model has proven to be more inclusive of women – modern dance has a long legacy of prominent female innovators including Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Martha Graham, and many women are currently finding success as modern dance choreographers.<sup>71</sup> Why can't the ballet world embrace this choreographic model? The practical answer is a financial and logistical one – ballet companies tend to spend much less time rehearsing works than modern dance companies do.<sup>72</sup> Aside from this practicality, there is nothing inherent to the tradition of ballet that dictates the process by which it is created, and no reason why two forms that result in extremely varying products can't share a similar choreographic process. In a 1985 *New York Times* article documenting the first season of Barbara Weisberger's Carlisle Project, an unnamed New York City Ballet apprentice participating in the project said that she wanted the chance to "dance in bare feet."<sup>73</sup> Almost thirty years later, ballet dancers still must take off their slippers to participate in the experimental and workshop-based process that this young dancer seems to be referring to. This shouldn't be the case, and when ballet companies open up to new models of choreographic development that focus on craft they will dismantle the stereotype of the male genius choreographer and invite women to participate.

Programs like ABT's defunct Altria that target women in ballet companies and embrace the idea that the craft of ballet choreography can be taught are essential to empowering women with the tools they need to confront the barriers keeping them from choreographing. It is the incumbent upon ballet companies to tackle the diversity problem they face in this way, and to commit to performing the work of female choreographers who have already established

---

<sup>71</sup> Roger Copeland, "Why Women Dominate Modern Dance," *The New York Times*, 18 April 1982, 1.

<sup>72</sup> Tuttle, interview by Lauren Wingenroth.

<sup>73</sup> Jennifer Dunning, "A Ballet Experiment Ends Its First Season," *The New York Times*, 14 Aug. 1985, 17.

themselves. These changes should be paired with a new approach to the choreographic process, one that embraces craft and applies tools that have been useful for the modern dance world, such as workshopping and collaboration, to the ballet vocabulary. A new approach to ballet should also begin to transform pedagogical methods, so that from an early age dancers are empowered, not silenced in the classroom. Just as the barriers that keep women from choreographing are multiple yet tangible, in order to move toward solving this problem, the ballet world must make tangible changes in many of its operations. Only with deliberate changes on these multiple fronts can ballet leave behind its patriarchal heritage and allow the voices of women to be heard in all their richness and diversity.

## Bibliography

“About Barak Ballet.” *Barak Ballet*.

“ABT Announces Voices and Visions: The Altria/ABT Women’s Choreography Project.” American Ballet Theatre, Press Release, Mar. 2008.

“ABT’s Opening Night Fall Gala at David H. Koch Theater to Feature World Premiere of *The Tempest* by Alexei Ratmansky, Wednesday, October 30 at 6:30 P.M.” American Ballet Theatre, Press Release, Sept. 2013.

Adair, Christy. *Women and Dance: Sylphs and Sirens*. New York: New York University Press, 1992.

Alterowitz, Gretchen. “Toward a Feminist Ballet Pedagogy: Teaching Strategies for Ballet Technique Class in the Twenty-First Century.” *Journal of Dance Education*. 14:1(2014): 8-17.

“American Ballet Theatre Archive,” *American Ballet Theatre*.

*American Ballet Theatre, Female Choreographers: Works & Process at the Guggenheim*. Produced by Mary Sharp Cronson, 73 min., 2009, Videodisc.

“BalletX Three Female Choreographers.” *Youtube Channel: Ballet X*. Promotional Film. 25 July 2008. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QL-IL1SPNgY>>.

Beard, Mary. "The Public Voice of Women." *London Review of Books*, 20 March 2014: 11-14.

Bolt, Jennifer. “Silencing the Silent: A Feminist Analysis of Classical Ballet within a Canadian University Dance Program.” Paper presented at the Annual CORPS (Council for Organized Researchers of Pedagogical Studies) de Ballet International Conference, Aspen, CO, 16-20 July 2008.

Copeland, Roger. “Why Women Dominate Modern Dance.” *The New York Times*, 18 April 1982, 1.

Craine, Debra, and Judith Mackrell. "Millepied, Benjamin." *The Oxford Dictionary of Dance*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, 305.

---. "Ratmansky, Alexei." *The Oxford Dictionary of Dance*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, 367.

---. "Wheeldon, Christopher." *The Oxford Dictionary of Dance*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, 485.

Daly, Ann. “The Balanchine Woman: Of Hummingbirds and Channel Swimmers.” *The Drama Review: TDR*, 31.1 (1987), 8-21.

Dunning, Jennifer. "Making Ballets, Just the Way Men Do." *The New York Times*, 15 May 1994, 8.

--. "A Ballet Experiment Ends Its First Season." *The New York Times*, 14 Aug. 1985, 17.

"Foundation Gifts." *The School of American Ballet at Lincoln Center*.

Fuhrer, Margaret. "Seen, Not Heard." *Pointe Magazine*, Dec. 2012, 74-76.

Garafola, Lynn. "Where are Ballet's Women Choreographers?" *Legacies of Twentieth-Century Dance*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2005, 215-228.

Greskovic, Robert. "Corps De Ballet Féminin." *Ballet 101: A Complete Guide to Learning and Loving the Ballet*. New York: Hyperion, 1998, 176-180.

Hale, Catherine. "From Muse to Author: The Fate of Women as Choreographers in Ballet?" *Dance Theatre Journal*, 1 Jan. 2002: 30-35.

Hering, Doris. "Robbins, Jerome." In *The International Encyclopedia of Dance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

"Houston Ballet Launches 35th Anniversary Season with *Women@Art*." Houston Ballet, Press Release, 5 Sept. 2005.

Jones, Jenna. "Sexism in the Ballet World: A Study of its Causes and Effects." Thesis (M.F.A.), Mills College, 2014.

"Justin Peck." *New York City Ballet*.

Kourlas, Gia. "'My Smart Ballerina,' Balanchine Said, 'You Must Do It.' She Did." *The New York Times*, 3 Sept. 2006, 20.

Lakes, Robin. "The Message Behind the Methods: The Authoritarian Pedagogical Legacy in Western Concert Dance Technique Training and Rehearsals." *Arts Education Policy Review* 106, no. 5 (2005): 3-18.

La Rocco, Claudia. "Often on Point but Rarely in Charge." *The New York Times*, 5 Aug. 2007, 29.

Leslie, Sarah- Jane. "You Have to be a Genius to Succeed: Why Some Academic Disciplines have Large Gender Gaps." Lecture, Athena Center Leadership Council Meeting, New York, 27 Oct. 2014.

Macaulay, Alastair. "All This in the Name of Fashion." *The New York Times*, 21 Sept. 2012, 1.

--. "Leaping into a New Home, With Poetry and Storms." *The New York Times*, 31 Oct. 2013, 1.

Moore, Rachel S. Interview by Lauren Wingenroth. New York, 20 Oct. 2014.

"New York Choreographic Institute." *New York City Ballet*.

"New York City Ballet Repertory." *New York City Ballet*.

Noveck, Jocelyn. "American Ballet Theatre Gala Brings Out the Chiffon and Sequins for Spring." *The Huffington Post*, 14 May 2013.

Ottley, Kelsey Lauren. "Crossing the Threshold: Female Choreographers in Ballet." Thesis (M.F.A.), University of California, Irvine, 2012.

Poon, Kina. "Quick Q&A: Marcelo Gomes." *Dance Magazine*, Feb. 2012, 14.

Rinaldi, Ray Mark. "Colorado Ballet Turns Spotlight on Women in Tribute to Founders." *The Denver Post*, 31 March 2012, 2.

Risner, Doug. "Critical Social Issues in Dance Education Research." *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education* 16 (2007): 965-82.

Stephens-Davidowitz, Seth. "Google, Tell Me. Is My Son a Genius?" *The New York Times*, 18 Jan. 2014, 6.

Tuttle, Ashley. Interview by Lauren Wingenroth. New York, 20 November 2014.

"What is Mindset." *Mindset Online*.

Williams, Christine L. *Still A Man's World: Men Who Do Women's Work*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.