

Dance Performance: Giving Voice to the Community

Simone Ferro and Meredith W. Watts
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

This project used oral history contributed by community story-tellers as source material for choreographic work performed in the community. The oral histories focused on four major areas: arrival (migration), social life, spirituality, and segregation/civil rights. Public performances took place at the university, local schools, and the community center in the neighborhood on which the choreographic narrative was based. The project involved processes for representing a multigenerational, multiracial community history while at the same time meeting the pre-professional educational needs of student dancers. These processes, some known in community theater and community dance projects, provide a basis for reflection on combining student and community goals in dance and other performing arts.

Traditional service-learning practices in dance are commonly based on providing pre-professional performance and teaching skills to student dancers. These may have such objectives as providing teaching opportunities in schools and community organizations, giving university dance students the opportunity to develop their own choreography for or with community participants, and performing in local schools and organizations. These are all vital elements in service-learning for university dance students. However, it is possible to broaden this range of practices by invoking some of the research tradition of dance studies and dance ethnography (Berg, 1999; Desmond, 1997; Foster, 1995; Fraleigh & Hanstein, 1999; Franko, 2006; Frosch, 1999; Koritz, 1996; Martin, 1998; Morris, 1996; 2009) to design a community-based performance. In the academic field of dance studies, ethnographic methods often are used to study dance as the object of research, or to study dance as a window on a particular culture. It is possible to invert this process by using research methods such as oral history and ethnography to produce raw material for the creation of new dance works. Doing so invokes processes known in community theater and in community-based dance projects. In both, dance (or drama) can serve as a form of narrative representation, providing an artistic voice for community members. However, dance has some distinctive features that derive from its use of movement as the primary modality of expression. This paper reflects on using service-learning as a vehicle for broadening pre-professional dance training to incorporate neighborhood stories in choreography and community performance.

The specific project to be described here employed oral history data to inform the choreography, but this was only possible as part of a much larger university-

community partnership. The overall community partnership between the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Walnut Way Conservation Corporation provided the broader organizational umbrella, student researchers in anthropology provided the raw material in the form of community oral history data, and dance provided the translation of these stories into choreography and community performance. From the community perspective, the dance researchers' role was to provide a performance-based voice to the community stories; from the university perspective, the goal was to provide pre-professional education and performance opportunities to student dancers. What evolved was a rich multigenerational, multiracial interaction between dancers and the community members whose stories were expressed through dance.

Service-Learning and Performance

As noted above, there are many ways to take university-based dance training and apprenticeship into the broader community. Most variations use some combination of (a) teaching and performance opportunities for student dancers, or (b) the use of dance as an activity designed for community schools and youth programs. Sometimes university dancers provide dance instruction in schools and community organizations, or university dancers give performances in local institutions (e.g., schools, senior homes, community organizations) that provide students an opportunity to perform.

Other models promote a deeper level of community involvement by basing their narrative content on material generated in the community; this may be performed by university students or may employ community members themselves as the performers.

In another variation, members of the community perform their own material with the assistance of university instructors and students; this provides for skill training of community members and may provide a higher level of authenticity in narrative representation. Cohen-Cruz (2006) describes the use of this approach in basing theater performance on community stories:

Community-based performance...is characterized by deep interaction between artists and constituents grounded in shared aspect of identity or circumstances. Professional artists, informed in some way by community participants, explore collectively meaningful themes and then develop and stage a piece that is by, for, and about a larger group of which those participants are a part ... Community-based activist art is as much about the process of involving local people in articulating their points-of-view as in a finished art project itself. (pp. 427-8)

This community theater approach gives priority to community participation in forming the narrative material. The combination of stories and community performers may provide a deeper identification of participants and audience with the artistic material. There are also programs in community-based dance that develop movement from, and for, community participants. Within the field of dance, for example, Lerman (2011) has developed movement with non-professional bodies that are older, less able, or untrained; in some cases the movement is created by dance professionals, while in others the participants play a larger role in generating the movement and narrative. Programs such as this can establish a full circle between the raw data (content and movement) provided by community input, the articulation of these data into choreography, and the performance in which the participants, content, and movement are intrinsically identified with those who provided the data.

In university-based service-learning, the more common approach in dance is to take instruction or performance into the community in a way that prioritizes the skill and competency needs of university students. This approach does not exclude the possibility of community-based input; however, a special effort must be made to shift the center of gravity of the work to balance the needs of student service-learners with the need for community participation in its own artistic representation. Combining the two approaches can bring together the pre-professional training needs of dance service-learners with authenticity of community portrayal. However, bringing these university and community goals together in dance performance can create special challenges.

One of the greatest challenges is the use of student performers to represent community story-tellers; that

is, to dance material derived from community oral histories even where there are significant differences in age or ethnicity. In the project reviewed in this article, the neighborhood stories worked as an historical tapestry with a distinct multigenerational character – most of the community story-tellers were older than fifty at the time the oral histories were collected, and one neighborhood member was over 100 years of age. Therefore, they could not represent themselves in dance performance, particularly when the story elements represented their youth decades earlier. Their stories necessarily would have to be portrayed by university student dancers, who would carry a special responsibility to identify with the story-tellers and accurately represent them in the narrative. A primary objective was to connect community and dancers, who were an ethnically diverse group of nine students – one of African-American heritage with roots in the neighborhood, one of part-Filipino descent, one Hispanic, and the remaining from white ethnic backgrounds who had mixed and generally limited contact with inner center geography and culture.

Oral History and Choreography: Background for the Dance Performance

The project proceeded in three phases. The first phase was the community development project which established a neighborhood organization working in partnership with the University. This was a broad-scale effort that included a neighborhood organization, political action, documentation, infrastructure improvement, and the recovery of neighborhood identity. The second phase was a joint project of the University and the neighborhood to develop oral history documentation, beginning with the early years of migration into the community in the 1950s. The third phase was the analysis of the oral history material and its translation into choreography to be performed at the university, in local and regional schools, and in several community settings.

To attain this last stage it was necessary to distill the story-telling into movement, and use the movement to bring the neighborhood story back to the community. The nature of the neighborhood and the partnership is described in more detail in “The Neighborhood Story” below, but synoptically, the dance project was part of a community-university partnership to reclaim the culture and stability of the neighborhood which had suffered serious decline due to urban renewal, unemployment, loss of the commercial base, and an increase in street crime and violence. The oral history phase was part of the joint community-university effort to document the stories of the early generations that built the community. The oral history project developed as one element of the

cultural reclamation process. These early phases of organizational development and oral history documentation led to the next phase – expansion of the artistic component of the partnership by incorporating visual and performance art to give a symbolic voice to that cultural reclamation. The partnership provided a broad framework for community development, while the university progressively involved more academic departments such as the social sciences, architecture, and the arts.

For dance to play a meaningful role in this process, the community and university partners imagined something beyond the common forms of student teaching and performance, and began discussions about a work that arose from the history of the community. For dance to play this role within the community it was important to articulate just how to ground choreography in community oral history. The approach in this project was to combine elements of pre-professional dance training and performance with the broader interests of dance research, connecting the two through their common interest in the connection between dance and “stories.” As Williams (2011), a dance researcher and trained anthropologist, posits:

Human beings begin their lives by being born into an ongoing “story.” What happens to a human child usually includes a ceremony or rite that marks the child’s inclusion into the story of the ethnicity into which it was born...We thus enter into the ongoing narrative of events that are, so to speak, “told” in a particular time in a particular language. This metaphorical narrative defines the import, even of our birth, in certain definite ways. ...We also perceive that we individually occupy a place that changes as we go along. It is at all times marked ...by inescapable facts. We begin (birth) and we end (death) both as individuals and as members of groups: peer groups, professional groups, age groups, political, economic, literary, historical, or religious groups. Embedded in the total story are other stories of like kind, and our individual stories intersect with many others ...(pp. 207-208)

At the center of this connection between dance and community stories is a strongly corporal (“embodied”) sense of social practice – a view of both ethnographic research and dance as bodily expression. Oral history is a very accessible technique and often less formal than other ethnographic techniques, but it shares some of the broader goals of ethnography. Conquergood (1991) describes it as “an *embodied* practice; it is an intensely sensuous way of knowing. The embodied researcher is the instrument” (p. 180). Turner (1974) sees “humankind as *homo performans*, humanity as performer, a culture-inventing, social-performing, self-making and self-transforming crea-

ture” (p. 187). He describes the generative act as a kind of dance between researchers and the community to perform stories from the culture. Though Conquergood seemed to be using dance as a metaphor for the research process, this project went the next step in translating the research into actual movement – literally, to move from the metaphorical dance of research to the actual dance of the community stories.

As Buckland (2006) suggests, dance movement is “the performance of identity [and] serves the needs and aspirations of personal and communal identities” (p. 4). It becomes the “performance of memory” where the “human body is both the recipient and manifestation of a local history.” Research seeks to “construct and consolidate identities” that embody “cultural memory as performance” (pp. 15-16). The field of dance ethnography generally requires extensive training in research methods, but oral history can be conducted with less formality and theoretical rigor. It can even be done productively with young or modestly trained researchers (Ames & Diepstra, 2006; Armstrong, 2000; Briscoe, Keller, McClain, Best, & Mazza, 2009; Chin, 2004; Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Razza, 2009; Spivey, 2005; Waring, 2008). Oral history can provide a rich and accessible connection between students and a community and, because it seeks to understand a culture or community from inside, it is well suited as a technique for critical social analysis (Conquergood, 1991; Denzin, Lincoln, Smith, & Tuhiwai, 2008; Madison, 2005). It can also, as in this project, supply the narrative grounding for the artistic performance.

Although it might have been ideal to engage the dancers in the oral history phase of the project, this research was carried out at an earlier stage by university anthropology students. Directed by an anthropology professor, the students worked with the neighborhood organization to identify interviewees and schedule meetings with community members. The stories were gathered according to a semi-structured protocol designed by the university research team in cooperation with neighborhood leaders. The community organization itself articulated its primary values as “faith and the power of prayer, commitment and support for the family and community, and hard work and the importance of education” (Walnut Way, 2010 p. 3), and these were strongly reflected in the construction of the oral history project. In developing the interview protocol, community and university participants further articulated these values to emphasize the themes of *arrival* (residents’ migration into the community), *social life*, *spiritual life*, and *segregation/civil rights*.

As training in their field research course, the anthropology students helped construct the interview

protocol, received instruction in interview techniques, and conducted practice interviews that were captured on video and reviewed with the instructor. The actual interviews were then recorded and developed into project reports that took the form of condensed oral histories. While developing the oral histories, the student researchers discussed them with the story-tellers to insure accuracy. Student researchers and story-tellers then appeared together, in public forums at a school in the neighborhood and another held at the university, to read the stories and discuss the process of collaboration.

The resulting videos, student papers, and transcripts were available as raw material for the choreographic research phase. The oral history material provided the inspiration for the creation of dance movement, which was to be evocative of the stories without providing a literal interpretation of the community history (as might be attempted in a stylized historical "pageant"). Both the oral histories and the subsequent dance became vehicles for reviewing the historical memory of the community, bringing the remembered past into present space and time. Structurally, the performance of the dance was conceived as an event comprised of introductory lectures, followed by performance of the choreographic work, and concluded with discussions by neighborhood members, university researchers, and dancers. The personal experiences of the neighborhood history were the basis of the dance form and content, but the stories were also a personalized way to promote discussion of the broader neighborhood story. A brief sketch of that story will help place the project in perspective.

The Neighborhood Story

After World War II there was a significant migration of African-Americans into the city from other regions of the United States. Chicago and other Midwestern cities experienced earlier migration, but Milwaukee was in the industrial shadow of Chicago and was later to experience the wave of post-war migration. By the 1940s, there were new jobs and decent housing, both due in part to the movement of many earlier migrants out of the central city. The area gradually changed from a predominantly German and Jewish neighborhood to a largely African-American community. Residents report a transitional period where the new arrivals would work for observant Jews on the Jewish Sabbath; they often learned some Yiddish in the process and some even adopted the Jewish faith (a connection claimed by one of the project's dancers, an African-American male).

Like many such neighborhoods throughout the country, the area was informally called "Bronzeville," and became a center for urban African-American culture. Leading jazz and popular

musicians playing in Chicago would come to the neighborhood to play in the clubs, often after performing in predominantly white venues elsewhere in the city. The continuation of de facto segregation elsewhere in the city made the community both a refuge and a performance venue for African-American music culture (perhaps similar to many other urban areas, such as the post-World War II Fillmore district in San Francisco). This period of cultural and commercial growth was drastically altered by urban planning in the 1960s and beyond.

In the process of new city planning, the neighborhood was divided by freeway construction. Subsequently, the identity and commercial viability of the area declined drastically. Industrial restructuring and unemployment in the 1970s furthered the rapid decline in the neighborhood. The clubs, commercial establishments, as well as the jazz culture, disappeared. By the first decade of the 21st century, unemployment among African-American males in the city was reported to be around 50%. An increase in crime and violence further damaged the community. In fact, the building that now houses the Community Center (where our dance was performed) was, at the deepest point of neighborhood decline, occupied by a gang that used it for drug dealing and other crimes. The Community Center's rebuilding was an early and significant symbolic act in the reclamation of the neighborhood.

The current organizational base of the project began when, in 1998, leaders of the community founded the Walnut Way Conservation Corporation, naming it after the residents' name for the neighborhood. A few years later, in 2002, the university, led by an anthropologist specializing in community development, began the first stages of a partnership with the neighborhood organization (Walnut Way Corporation, 2010). Alongside the infrastructure and cultural projects, the "Oral Traditions" program was initiated to document the early history of the community. The resulting documentation provided the basis for the dance project reported in this article.

Developing and Performing the Dance

The oral history source material reflected the priorities of the community leadership and the story-tellers. Since the community wanted to document the years of neighborhood development, the community leaders and the oral history director selected residents who had played a role in that history. In general, this meant long-term residents who had participated in the life and development of the neighborhood. Age and health were sometimes factors, but virtually all the potential participants were available for interviews in their homes.

The values emphasized by the neighborhood orga-

nization (e.g., faith, spirituality, community commitment, hard work, and education) were developed, in consultation with the community leaders and the oral history director, into the dance themes of *arrival* (migration), *social life*, *spirituality*, and *segregation/civil rights*. The source material developed by the anthropology students and their community story-tellers was selected by the choreographer (in periodic consultation with community and oral history project leaders) according to both textual and thematic choreographic criteria. The textual criterion was the cogency of the original language, including its suitability for use as voice-over narratives in the performance. The thematic criterion was the evocation of situations that lent themselves to choreographic structures (for example, the linked oral histories of three sisters led to a trio danced by three young women). The final dance selections reflected a constant interplay between choreographic intent and the original values and content expressed by the community members in the oral history project.

The selection of audio material was pivotal in establishing a connection between dancers and story-tellers. After editing and rearranging the textual material provided in the oral transcripts, the texts were re-recorded in a studio using the dancers' voices. The result was a voice-over audio track to accompany portions of the dance work. This production element was designed to build a technically sophisticated sound track; but, more importantly, it induced the dancers to immerse themselves in the stories and characters they were to portray on the stage. Their work with photographs and videos also promoted a process of identification with the story-tellers with whom they interacted during the rehearsal and post-performance phases of the project.

Musical choices for the dance work were from the "golden period" (1950s-60s) of the neighborhood as a center of African-American musical culture. The sound tapestry that naturally supported the sense of historical period was the jazz idiom – music that would have been "in the air" during the period represented in the oral history stories. Another technique was the construction of scenic elements such as painted backdrops and specially designed stage props. Students in a University visual arts class painted a set of nearly mural-sized paintings to be used as stage scenery and later displayed in the neighborhood community center.

Leadership of the community and the oral history project periodically consulted with the artists during development of the scenery. The paintings were designed from the beginning to serve as stage sets, and thus needed to be consistent both with community values and the major themes of the dance. The community's feedback also was important in insuring

that the artwork would be meaningful to neighborhood viewers when it was later displayed in the community center.

Another technique adding to the overall performance was the use of projected visuals. Some were developed from contemporary photographs of story-tellers, and others were digitized from historical snapshots recovered during the restoration of the community center building. These historical photographs of early neighborhood residents were used at various points in the choreography to help maintain a visual link to the neighborhood stories. In the *arrival* scene, for example, sepia-toned photographs of story-tellers were "unpacked" from specially-constructed suitcases as the dancers portrayed arrival of the residents in the city. At other times, the dancers held the photographs in front of their faces as visual reminders of the story-tellers they were invoking.

Video material from the oral history project also was edited to fit the stage production. Footage of the interviewees, filmed during the oral history documentation, was projected in the set to connect the choreography with the thematic development of the work. Sometimes the videos were part of a more elaborate collage of still and video images accompanying the dance. Other production elements designed to evoke the historical era of the stories included period costumes, lighting to recreate period urban atmosphere, and the creation of new video based on archival and contemporary visual material.

The resulting choreographic work was performed in a variety of forms and venues. The first was on a University proscenium stage as a program-length (forty-five minute) dance work. This event initiated the first public feedback event that took the form of a post-performance discussion ("talk-back") between the audience and a joint panel of performers and neighborhood members. In a second format, excerpts from the dance piece were presented in local schools – including a charter elementary school, a middle school of the arts, a high school of the arts, and a regional high school. The first three schools were largely African-American in population and were generally contiguous with the neighborhood in the stories. The regional high school had an ethnically mixed, but predominantly white, student population and was a distance from the neighborhood portrayed. In each school, the dance excerpts were preceded by a lecture on the neighborhood and its history (conducted by the choreographer, the anthropologist who led the oral history research, and the dancers). In both the middle school and the high schools, the choreographer and the university dancers worked directly with the schools' pupils. As part of their service-learning course assignments, the university dancers conducted classes and taught excerpts of the original

choreography. They accompanied their instruction with a detailed explanation of the movements and the movements' connection with the neighborhood stories on which the dance was based. Another school-based format was the presentation of a shortened version of the dance piece performed by the high school of the arts' dancers as part of their school's annual public dance concert. The high school dancers learned the piece and were rehearsed by the university dance professor/choreographer and by the service-learner dancers.

Reflection and Evaluation

By the Community

"Community" is a convenient shorthand term. Yet "there is no [one] community in community service learning. Rather, each 'community' consists of arrays of multiple, intersecting, and overlapping interests" (Keene & Colligan, 2004, p. 10). In this project, the primary interests on the community side were the leadership of the neighborhood conservation corporation, the older neighborhood generation of storytellers, and dance pupils at a number of schools. A broader spectrum of community residents participated as spectators, audience, and conversation partners throughout the process; their participation was an essential part of the community, but they were less active in the creation of the dance project.

There were various stages of community involvement and discussion in the project – during the oral history phase, during the creation of dance and set design, at various previews or video showings of the development of the dance, talk-backs at performances, and post-performance interactions with dancers. These interactions were not systematically documented, but this community leader's statement about "vision and memory" in the project was representative of the kind of message we heard from many people:

We want to have a vision that is real—that has some basis to it. For me, elders telling their stories and new people coming into the community (telling) their stories, and people talking about work and transformation and social traditions was important to reweave this fabric. That was an extremely important step...It's just been incredible (Walnut Way Corporation, 2010, p. 24)

The neighborhood participants also expressed pride that "the residents of Walnut Way were co-teachers ... In sharing their stories of life in [the neighborhood], they taught students lessons they would never find in a book..." (Walnut Way Corporation, 2010, p. 24).

The dance students echoed these sentiments in the empathy they developed with the story-tellers. As one of the dancers (a white female, 19-years old at

the time of the project) said in a recent interview, "It was so fantastic performing these roles and getting to know the people themselves...they would come up to us after the performance and were so excited that we were dancing their stories..." (Personal interview, 2012). She said it was her first role performing "real people" and getting to know their community. Since performing in the Walnut Way project this dancer has graduated from the dance program, formed her own studio, and is developing ways to make it a community center.

By the Service-Learning Students

Dance performance and teaching. In commenting on the performance training students received in their service-learning, most dancers reacted to the rigors of being in a "travelling company." They felt challenged by having to appear at inconvenient times and in diverse (often difficult) settings. It was difficult to constantly orient their personal and academic schedules to the demands of travel and performance. The students perceived these experiences as a lesson in the way dance performance affects other areas of life.

These challenges are important for pre-professional, dance service-learners to insure quality interaction and effectiveness with the community and a quality final product. For example, the young dance graduate discussed above who founded her own studio and decided to focus it on community did so because the quality of her community experience outweighed the challenges of performing and interrupting her other university work.

The dance service-learners were able to work directly with several age groups of ethnically diverse pupils in community schools; this helped them reflect on their enthusiasm for teaching, the public school environment, and engagement with pupils of diverse ages and ethnic backgrounds. They also became familiar with the issues and complexities of a variety of community schools (e.g., African-American charter academies, conventional high schools, middle-and high schools of the arts). Travelling to community venues became an intrinsic part of the community experience for the service-learners and, as some of the comments in the next section suggest, provided an essential link between them and young community members through the practice of dance.

Understanding the community. One of the dancers, a 22 year-old white female senior said:

I was impressed that the people of Walnut Way took a stand to clean it up, get rid of the gangs, and show their pride in their community. ... I learned a lot about Milwaukee's past and how one neighborhood is rebuilding their community. Now let's analyze how one could make simi-

lar improvements to surrounding neighborhoods and what might be preventing those changes.

Another dancer, a 21 year-old female senior of part-Filipino heritage said:

I feel that I learned a little more about [the city] and its community. Before this project, I didn't even know [this community] existed. This was a great way for me to get out and experience something new; something that has shaped this city.

It is probably fair to say that these and similar statements from the student dancers represent an early stage of understanding of inner city neighborhoods. However, most of the students wished to have more depth and nuance in their experience with the community. They expressed a desire to have more time with community members and to have a more structured introduction to inner city culture and history. This was combined with a belief that they had the beginnings of a new perspective. Referring to her experience teaching middle school and high school students, the same student quoted above commented further:

... [This is] a diverse university and this outreach experience helped broaden my view of [the city] ... I believe it made me more mature and enabled me to be more open-minded. The experience also helped me to pay more attention to detail in class and to the way I learn personally – this stemmed from my teaching experiences during the outreach and finding out how the kids reacted to my teaching style.

These and similar student comments raise an important question about the emphasis of a service-learning arts project – whether the objective should be to develop students' critical awareness of ethnic and social differentiation in a city, or whether it should be to emphasize the unifying potential of the arts in promoting positive community values. The best answer is that a project can do both, but in this case, the overall emphasis was on the role of the arts in communicating positive community values. The community organization's articulation of positive community goals discussed earlier set the tone for the oral history project, the dance performance, and the interactions of service-learners with story-tellers and other community members. The community organization participated actively throughout the process and maintained the project's grounding in the organization's original statements of positive community values.

The service-learners also experienced mostly positive interactions in making and teaching dance. In one dancer's words they learned "how strong a community [Walnut Way] is..." and "learned about their struggles and how they are trying to turn things around in that area." In fact, these were the experi-

ences that the community leaders and members wanted expressed in the oral histories and the subsequent dance work. We think the experience might have been designed to further foreground the students' understanding of differential privilege, inequity, and ethnic disadvantage; some of this occurred, but perhaps more could have been done.

There was ambivalence in the service-learners' understanding of race in the city. As in previous comments, they often had a sense of developing a new perspective and knowledge, but were at an early stage of knowing what to do with this experience. We think this came from the project's emphasis on honoring the positive aspects of the community. Dancers often expressed their respect for the older community members (often comparing them to members of their own families); as some students pointed out, being able to see their stories by studying and recording their words (for the performance audio track) gave the dance students the feeling of seeing through the story-tellers' eyes. Performing in a community center that had once been a drug house gave them a sense of the turbulence of the neighborhood; however, their experience of contemporary racial issues in the city was also placed in a positive light by their contact with middle- and high school dance students in the community. As one said, "Teaching is my biggest passion and I was so grateful to be able to teach in those schools. We were all there to dance together ... we were connected by dance." (Personal interview, 2012)

Program improvement. The dance service-learners also were asked about how to improve the program. Understandably, they had comments about travel, logistics, and conflicts with their academic and personal life, issues commonly raised by service-learners. However, while the dancers found these practical matters to be a challenge, they also expressed the need for a deeper and more extensive cultural experience with the neighborhood. In short, many of the dance service-learners wanted what the anthropology students experienced in their phase of the project – a deeper interaction with the neighborhood members and a more structured introduction to the community and its history.

By the Instructors

Artistic choices in dance and community performance. There are some special issues involved in taking artistic performance into the community as a brief comparison with community theater makes clear. Where theatre production draws from rich use of text, dance relies on the evocative nature of movement. For this choreographic work, it was essential that movement be complemented with text and visual materials. No doubt other performance projects would find a different balance between movement

and text, but dance performance typically prioritizes movement. This project attempted to integrate textual and visual elements to keep the narrative context present while not losing its basic character as dance performance.

The balance between evocative movement, on one hand, and discourse, on the other, is a shifting one. In this case, the dancers showed an interest in more structured conceptualization, at least in the preparatory stages of community immersion. This indicated that the process of developing empathy and learning to take the roles of story-tellers stimulated the dancers' need to conceptualize and verbalize their own cultural awareness. Adding more discursive elements in the performance would bring the work closer to "dance theater," and cooperative performance with other performing arts such as theater would be an alternative approach. No doubt any given artistic project of this sort would be faced with these choices (e.g., more anthropological research, more theatrical elements) and would have to weigh them against the already complex logistics of performance training and the core educational needs of the service-learners. There is always a challenge in harmonizing the competing demands of "artistic" and "academic" preparation, of research versus performance, abstract versus narrative movement, and balancing strong artistic production values with the need to create an accessible performance experience for the community. Although the specific artistic decisions will be unique to each project, we found a general need for a deeper cultural grounding of the experience.

Program trajectory choices. The intensive project of setting a performance has its own logistic and artistic requirements. A service-learning project that included more research and cultural depth would very likely require more rehearsal and academic lecture time. In this project, there was already a significant investment in the recording and transcription of oral history material, concept discussion, choreographic development and rehearsal, and performance adaptation for each individual setting or venue. A similar project in the future could devote more attention to increasing the dancers' research and cultural skills, but that would very likely require a sequence of two or more semesters of course work. In fact, sequencing happened in the current project, except that the service-learners were different in each semester; the anthropology and the dance service-learners played separate but significant successive roles in the project. To provide both experiences to the dancers would require an additional period of research training. Building the requisite skills with dance students and having them conduct the community research would require an exciting, but lengthy,

period of gestation.

Though social scientists would generally take for granted this need for structured cultural immersion, the more common use of service-learning in dance is placement in teaching roles with schools and other organizations. This practice flows directly from the need to promote technical competency in university dancers and provide them with pedagogical tools for a possible teaching future. Therefore, this project attempted to meet those pre-professional goals in the context of a performance and teaching project that also met community goals of self-expression and oral history preservation. Within these goals the project developed a certain set of procedures and production techniques. Yet there are alternatives that provide other means of involving the community.

One such alternative is the possibility of increasing community involvement in the construction of the performance itself. One such example can be found in community theater work (Cohen-Cruz, 2006), and another in dance projects that involve story-tellers and community members in the scripting and performance (Lerman, 2011). The questions to be answered in a specific project concern whether (1) the performance is for the community (e.g., presented to them), (2) about the community (based on their narrative content), or (3) from the community (with community members supplying both content and physical participation).

The easiest path to a performance is to present a show that was developed previously, whether or not it has much to do with the community. Constructing a performance in interaction with the community requires a much more sophisticated process. The program reported here required the harmonization of community and curricular goals, the logistics of performance in diverse sites, and the maintenance of its focus as a service-learning project. Although it had a high level of logistical, institutional, and cultural challenges, its central focus was held together by its continued interaction with community members. The fact that students in this course were interested in a stronger cultural component points to the value of performance practice as a way of engaging service-learners in the arts. The question is how to deepen the cultural dimension of a performance project. The goal is to merge research and performance roles, and organize the social/cultural portion of the training at a level matching that of the performance component.

The first might be to make performers of the social scientists, in this case the anthropology students. This might be possible, especially if the performance were more like the community theater approach; the community theater model is flexible and can accommodate a wide range of professional

and non-professional participation. Making dancers of the social scientists might be another matter.

The second approach would be to make better social scientists of the dancers. Oral history is an accessible technique for non-specialists and would be a useful entry point. Additional instruction in journaling, utilizing community documents (including photos), taking field notes, and techniques for guided reflection would also be valuable training, particularly if taught by an experienced social scientist. The goal would be to develop a more effective orientation to the community and a greater ability to observe and reflect on their interactions with community participants.

Integrating the artistic and social science training would improve the articulation and evaluation of the outcomes. Ideally this would be a joint effort with some division of labor between the performance/training components and the evaluation components. The artists who deal with the endless detail of performance and dance creation (and the later challenges of logistics) can benefit from having a watchful external eye to maintain attention to the evaluation elements of the project. Those experienced in evaluation could also develop their skill and understanding of artistic outcomes and contribute to improving measurement in the arts.

These suggestions would almost inevitably extend the time required to design and conduct service-learning projects in dance. Because of the range of skills and effort required, more faculty and staff might be required. This would be more costly, but would provide a firmer foundation for the joint teaching of both social/community goals and performance goals. These objectives could be articulated in a special course jointly taught by artists and social scientists – perhaps with a format evoking performance in the community, or “public art.” This could be the vehicle for providing a deeper structure for dancer involvement in the community while at the same time satisfying dancers’ pre-professional goals.

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Authors

SIMONE FERRO (sferro@uwm.edu) is associate professor of Dance at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and chair of the Department of Dance. A native of Brazil, she had an extensive professional career in classical ballet and modern dance in Brazil and Europe. She has choreographed for the Milwaukee Ballet, the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, the Florentine Opera, and received awards from the UW-Milwaukee Graduate School and the Wisconsin Arts Board for her work. She has directed outreach programs in dance and directed service-learning dancers in Milwaukee and New Orleans, and has produced a body of socially-grounded and community-based choreography. She also directs a continuing research program on Brazilian popular dance that has been supported by grants from the UW-Milwaukee Graduate School, the Center for Caribbean and Latin American Studies, the Peck School of the Arts, and the College of Letters and Science. She has incorporated undergraduate researchers in the Brazil project and has helped them

develop their own visual documentation and choreography based on the experience.

MEREDITH W. WATTS (meredith@uwm.edu) is professor emeritus of Political Science, and for several years co-taught a course for dance service-learners preparing to work with community agencies. He has been a senior Fulbright scholar and published extensively on subjects of political behavior in Europe and the United States. He and Ferro have a continuing program of visual documentation and publication on Brazilian popular culture, and they regularly take undergraduate students to study Afro-Brazilian culture in northeast Brazil.