

**‘Becoming’ through Dance: Assemblages of young
girls’ dance practice in special character high
schools**

by

Harriet Boyle

A thesis submitted in requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in
Education

College of Education, Health and Human Development

2019

Abstract

This thesis explores the experiences of dance students in two specialised high schools in Christchurch, New Zealand. North and Chorus High School (pseudonyms), were established under special character legislation allowing them to focus on student directed learning. Students, with the guidance of parents and learning advisors, construct their own curriculums based on their interests. North High School offers a dance class as one of the available subjects and in which students choose the genre of dance studied. Chorus developed from North to provide students wanting to become professional ballet dancers with a more intensive ballet orientated curriculum by partnering with an external dance school. The Chorus students do a minimum of 20 hours dance training per week with their schoolwork negotiated around their dance commitments. Utilizing examples from focus group discussions and workshops with eight 11 to 17-year-old high school dance students at the two schools, I discuss how these participants ‘become’ dancers as an effect of different dance-based assemblages. This ‘becoming’ is explored through Deleuzo-Guattarian theorising of the assemblage and molar and molecular flows along with Foucault’s theorising of discourse and subjectivity. Rebecca Coleman argues, informed by Deleuzian and feminist theory, that girls’ engagement with images produces knowledges, understandings and experiences of bodies through an entangled process of becoming. This research informs my exploration of the ways the North and Chorus participants use images in their dance practices. This includes drawn representations of their choreography styles, audio-visual images of their performances, mirror reflections in the dance studio and photographic images of professional ballerinas. There is a growing area of research investigating the negotiations of young girls in relation to appearance, class, neoliberal selfhood, gender and sexualities. This research contributes to and extends these dialogues by considering how assemblages of images, professional dancers’ narratives, education contexts, classed connotations of dance genres and the dance students produce both limitations and possibilities in the becoming of dancers.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisors, Kathleen Quinlivan and Tiina Vares for your support and encouragement throughout this project. Kathleen, your passion for learning has been a vital source of inspiration and your consistent validation that my university journey has been worthwhile was invaluable. Tiina, you have kept me sane throughout this process with your thorough and thoughtful feedback and have brought the best out of me through understanding and adapting to my methods of learning. I will miss meeting with both of you.

I would also like to thank my friends and family for their constant encouragement and belief that I could achieve this. In particular, my mother Peta for enduring countless phone calls of self-doubt and my ‘masters buddy’ Katy for your empathy and weekly walks around Hagley Park when I needed a moan, a change of scene and some exercise. I would also like to thank Tyler for giving me unwavering support and security that I could accomplish this, being so kind and uncomplaining during my many panic days and providing me with a life outside of the thesis! – I could not have done it without you.

Lastly I would like to thank the participants of this project for setting aside the time to share your experiences with me. In particular to Anna and Nicole (pseudonyms) for collaborating with me so willingly and enthusiastically.

Contents

Chapter One

Introduction.....	p7
History of dance education in New Zealand.....	p9
Dance within school contexts.....	p14
‘Becoming’ in educational contexts.....	p19
Thesis outline.....	p21

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework.....	p24
Putting the theories to work in current research.....	p31
Conclusion.....	p36

Chapter Three

Methodology.....	p37
Refining the research and selection of schools/participants.....	p37
Data collection methods.....	p45
Focus groups.....	p46
Image-making/reflection sessions.....	p48
Semi-structured individual interviews.....	p49
Collecting the data.....	p50
Data collection reflections.....	p52
Reflections of the focus group.....	p53
Reflections of semi-structured individual interviews.....	p54
Analysing the data.....	p54
Conclusion.....	p57

Chapter Four

‘Reflections’ on dance genres and practices.....p59

“You have the potential to be ugly but beautiful”: Participants’ framing of different genres of dance.....p59

“I loved dancing it and I feel like it was just me”: Connecting to dance performance through video, the mirror and the stage.....p66

Conclusion.....p77

Chapter Five

Negotiating constructions of ‘the ballerina’.....p78

“You’ve got to have muscle but not like bulging”: Negotiating tensions of muscularity and femininity.....p78

‘It’s like hard [...] you’re all very much the same looking’: Appearance restrictions and constructions of femininities.....p88

Conclusion.....p93

Chapter Six

Conclusion.....p94

Notes.....p102

References.....p107

Appendix A: Student participant information form 1.....p115

Appendix B: Student participant consent form 1.....p117

Appendix C: Student participant (and parent/caregiver) information form 2.....p118

Appendix D: Student participant (and parent/caregiver) consent form 2.....p120

Appendix E: Parent information form 1.....p121

Appendix F: Parent consent form 1.....p124

Appendix G: School Director information form.....p125

Appendix H: School Director consent form.....	p127
Appendix I: Learning advisor information form.....	p128
Appendix J: Learning advisor consent form.....	p130
Appendix K: Student participant information pamphlet.....	p131

Chapter One

Introduction

“...[a] curriculum that offers choice based on children’s interests will enable children to select from a wide range of learning experiences...recognizing that dance could be one of those interests would be a significant factor in an empowering and holistic curriculum” (Sansom, 2011, p. 24).

“You can feel quite vulnerable...you’re not just sitting behind a desk like you are moving and you might all make mistakes and you might look like an idiot you know but you pick yourself up...I think that is a good way to grow and build confidence in yourself” (Nicole, individual interview, 10/12/2018).

“Dance...celebrates creativity, authenticity...and it tends to at times encourage dancers as artists... to challenge the status quo, to subvert meanings which are dominant in society... on the reverse side... some assumptions which are quite dominant aren’t challenged but are actually reinforced...it is an interesting thing how you see...contrasting messages...kind of in conflict with each other and you definitely see the kids themselves thinking about this contradiction sometimes”(Anna, individual interview, 17/10/2018).

Dance within education contexts in New Zealand has had a long and varied history. Within New Zealand high-schools, dance has predominantly been situated within the physical education subject area due to its perceived benefits of developing balance, coordination, general fitness and posture (Sansom, 2011). Despite attempts to shift dance to ‘the arts’ area of learning, its historical roots of being within physical education have remained. Within physical education, the degree to which dance is present is highly varied and often limited due to a lack of support, knowledge, passion and willingness of physical education teachers to engage with it.

In 1989 the education system was reformed under a neoliberal policy model. Ball (2003) describes neoliberalism as a “technology, a culture and a mode of regulation” (p. 216) which critiques and compares individuals and organisations through specific means of motivation based on both material and symbolic recognition, rewards and deterrents. Under this policy model, what is valued is rational, cognitive and measurable knowledge that can be translated to economic gain in a competitive, individually focussed culture. Among

significant changes to the education system as a result of this reform, under the Education Act 1989, section 156, designated character schools were able to be established. As part of neoliberal policy agendas, schools became more self-managing. This resulted in increased “competition, responsabilization and the transfer of risk from the state to individuals” (Davies & Bansel, 2007, p. 249). With this neoliberal agenda for competition and individualism within and across schooling, designated character schools were made possible due to their entrepreneurial nature. These schools have a ‘special character’ which distinguishes them from mainstream state schools and Kura Kaupapa Māori. Two such designated character schools, North and Chorus High School (pseudonyms), are the focus of this project. Their ‘special character’ or school ethos is to provide an education system that privileges student interest and student-directed learning. The schools were established following parental opinions of how they want their children to experience school education. Both North and Chorus offer dance education as a stand-alone subject as a result of the passion for and interest in dance voiced by the students.

In this thesis I explore the ways in which learning dance in high school enables and limits students ‘becoming’ dancers in a variety of complex and, as the extracts above suggest, at times contradictory ways. This includes attention to the assemblages between different dance genres with their different aesthetics, students’ bodily/physical capacities (such as height) and gendered, sexual and classed discourses of dance and adolescence in contemporary western contexts. The majority of participants were young women and a central focus of the thesis is on the complexities and tensions in becoming ‘dancer’ and becoming ‘girl’. I explore how classical ballet, for example, both restricts body shape and movement through adherence to the ‘idealised ballet body’ of the ‘ballerina’ (Pickard, 2013), while also extending the physical abilities and endurance of girls’ bodies in ways that highlight strength and technical prowess, generally not associated with normative adolescent femininity. Becoming ‘girl’ is also discussed in relation to the intersecting discourses of dance genre and class with classical ballet often positioned as a ‘posh’ and ‘high’ genre of dance while contemporary dance is discussed as ‘lower’ and less restrictive in terms of movement and physical appearance.

I begin this chapter with a review of significant historical trends and shifts of the positioning of dance within the New Zealand education system. This includes a discussion of the shift in the New Zealand qualification system from School Certificate to the National Certificate of Educational Achievement and the neoliberal reform that informed this. This

includes attention to how dance has been engaged with in educational contexts including the introduction of designated character schools. I then summarize literature which explores the limitations of positioning dance within the physical education subject area and highlight some scholars' suggestions for how dance could be better engaged with. I also explore literature that highlights intersecting discourses of gender, sexuality, dance genre and class. Lastly, I introduce the theoretical tool of 'becoming' in relation to bodies. I conclude the chapter by providing a thesis outline.

History of dance education in New Zealand

Dance education within the New Zealand school curriculum has had a diverse history. During the early 1900s, folk dancing and movement exercises to develop coordination and posture were the main forms or genres of dance within school contexts (Sansom, 2011). In 1939, Philip Ashton Smithells was appointed as 'Superintendent of Physical Education in the Department of Education' in Wellington, New Zealand. Smithells had moved from England specifically for this role at age 29. His education at Bedales, a liberal school in Hampshire, and his young age made him "youthfully enthusiastic, energetic and personable" (Stothart, 2000, para. 13). From his experience teaching and observing physical education practices in England, Sweden, Germany and other European countries, Smithells brought new ideas to the physical education curriculum. Two of these significant ideas were the inclusion of a humanistic approach (as opposed to a scientific approach) for the training of physical education advisers and recommending that girls wear rompers for physical education classes instead of dresses. In 1942, The Thomas Report established a collective secondary school curriculum which introduced the qualification system of School Certificate. School Certificate was awarded to students who achieved a set of examinations in year 11 or fifth form (students aged 15-16). This curriculum remained in place in New Zealand for fifty years and established physical education, English, social studies, science, mathematics, music and art as 'core' subjects that all students would participate in (Stothart, 2000). Smithells argued that physical education specialists and teachers should not be considered as inferior to any other subject teachers in terms of pay, standing, or chances of promotion. This advocacy, in part, led to the establishment of the School of Physical Education at the University of Otago. In 1953, Smithells invited Margaret Erlanger, a dancer and Fulbright scholar from America, to lecture and give practical classes at the School of Physical Education. While folk dancing

was already part of the physical education curriculum, Erlanger was a key figure in the introduction of modern dance with her Otago University teachings being promoted by Margaret Dunbar, who worked within the physical education branch of the Department of Education and Annette Golding who taught the ‘fundamentals of dance’ at Wellington Teachers College. Along with the introduction of ‘modern dance’ to the New Zealand physical education syllabus, in 1987 Smithells visited Māori schools and was fascinated by the different games and physical activities that took place. Following these visits, Te reo kori (the language of movement) became a key part of the New Zealand physical education curriculum where traditional Māori dance was learnt. Teachers of physical education celebrated Te reo kori as a significant part of dance education. In this same year (1987) the physical education document titled *Education: A guide for success* emphasised dance as a key subject to include alongside aquatics, athletics, ball activities, fitness, gymnastics and Te reo kori (Sansom, 2011). However, in 1999 during the development of the New Zealand Health and Physical Education curriculum statement, politicians were anxious about Te reo kori and therefore reduced its prominence in the curriculum. The reducing of Te reo kori also saw a reduction of dance in general with other physical education required activities taking precedence (Sansom, 2011). Sansom (2011) argues that this was largely due to the “New Zealand psyche” and culture which favoured, and continues to ‘nurture’, the “sports centred” and “rugged individual” (p. 12). Despite this, dance remained in the New Zealand curriculum within the subject of physical education. However, the degree to which dance was engaged with in this subject was largely dependent on the physical education teacher. As Sansom discusses, unless the teacher had a personal interest in dance, lessons tended to be positioned as ‘movement exercises’ rather than learning about “expression, exuberance, or actual understanding as to the purpose of dance” (p.14).

A significant shift in the presence and practice of dance education occurred following the New Zealand education reform in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1984-1990, the Labour party was elected to government. This initiated a neoliberal reform of all sectors within New Zealand including the education system. This resulted in a number of major changes to education including schools becoming more self-managing, placing education within the market as a commodity and changes to the performance and role of teachers. From this reformation, the 1993 *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* outlined seven essential areas of learning that must be engaged with by all learners within the first ten years of schooling (Sansom, 2011). These areas were: Language and Languages; Mathematics;

Science; Technology; Social Sciences; The Arts; and Health and Physical Well-being (Sansom, 2011). These areas each had a discipline-specific curriculum document to help provide guidance for practice. Within these curriculum documents, dance was no longer positioned within the physical education area, but became a key subject of learning within The Arts along with drama, music and visual arts. As a separate area of learning, this produced opportunities for dance to be studied “in its own right” (Sansom, 2011, p.16).

Distinct learning areas have continued through to the 2007 New Zealand Curriculum with dance remaining within ‘The Arts’ area of learning. Within this area, dance has had differing levels of success. In many high schools, its historical roots of being positioned within physical education has remained with teachers assuming the responsibility to engage with dance regardless of their knowledge or passion for it (Sansom, 2011). Within primary schools, dance ‘competes’ with more ‘valuable’ areas of learning such as literacy and numeracy with teachers often feeling ill-equipped to engage with an area of learning that is less definitive or controlled (Fitzgerald, 2012; Sansom, 2011). Again, this attitude is a product of neoliberalism where knowledge deemed as worth knowing tends to be rational, cognitive and easily measured making the inclusion of dance and the maintaining of creativity and individual expression within it a difficult task. This is a result of the devaluation of the arts as a knowledge domain under neoliberalism where resources are directed towards Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects which have a more direct vocational pathway (Fitzgerald, 2012; Shumway, 2017).

Within New Zealand secondary schools, School Certificate was replaced in 2002 by the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) which continues to be the qualification system in New Zealand today. NCEA is achieved via a point system where students receive points called ‘credits’ for the assessments they complete and pass. There are three levels of NCEA which are most often undertaken in years 11, 12 and 13 (age 15 to 18). Credits can be awarded at an achieved, merit or excellence level. The accumulation of merit or excellence credits allows a high-achieving student to have their NCEA certificate endorsed with merit or excellence. This can open opportunities to gain scholarships at Universities, for instance, the University of Canterbury offers a \$5000 scholarship to undergraduate students who receive an excellence endorsement at level two and level three of NCEA (University of Canterbury, 2019). Dance is a university approved subject and has a number of achievement standards towards the gaining of NCEA at all levels. These standards tend to involve students illustrating dance performance, dance choreography or dance perspectives (New Zealand

Qualifications Authority, 2019). This assessment of dance in the current neoliberal context makes it a more acceptable and therefore valuable subject due to the opportunities it offers for gaining credits. However, research suggests that dance is not always an option in mainstream high schools due to a lack of willing and experienced dance teachers (Dunkin, 2004; Fitzgerald, 2012; Sansom, 2011).

However, there are alternative schooling options in New Zealand that have a curriculum-in-action less based upon teacher knowledge, passion or willingness (McGee, 1997). This is illustrated by the ‘designated special character’ high schools that are the focus of this project. A designated character school is a school which has been established under the *Education Act 1989* as having a specific character that makes it different to ordinary state schools. During the 1989 neoliberal reform of the education sector, titled ‘Tomorrow’s Schools’, a key focus was on schools becoming more self-managing. This was achieved through elections of Boards of Trustees which are responsible for managing “personnel, curriculum, property, finance and administration” (New Zealand Schools Trustees Association, 2019, para 3). This emergence of self-governing schools allowed for the creation of ‘designated character schools’ which are set up based upon parental opinions of education that is considerably different from the education students would get at mainstream state schools. This emergence of the designated character schools legislation reflects the neoliberal context in which parents and students have become consumers of education while schools and teachers have become producers within a knowledge market (Davies & Bansel, 2007).

In 1998, the first designated character school (and the mother school to both North and Chorus) was formed by a group of parents, principals and businesspeople. This school contained a primary and secondary school in which the ethos was to give students the opportunity and freedom to construct their own curriculums based on their passions. This provided students with individual learning plans which offered possibilities of collaboration with the outside community. This initial school was run by a ‘director’ (who has similar responsibilities to a principal) and learning advisors (who are similar to teachers). The (re)naming of the different roles within the school was a purposeful choice to reduce traditional hierarchies of power between principals, teachers and students. The terminology of these roles was also chosen to reflect the student-centred curriculum and adaptable modes of teaching and learning to individualised curriculums. The primary school had one director while the secondary school had three co-directors. At the start of 2004, the primary school had 200 students with an expectation that by 2006 it would double this number. In 2014, the

primary and secondary school merged to become North High School. Within North High School, one of the learning advisors, Anna, noticed that students with outside dance commitments were missing out on school (both social and learning) activities. For example, Anna noticed that students who had dance commitments would leave during lunch times and group projects, a time she identified as when “the fun stuff would happen” (Anna, individual interview, 10/10/2018). Anna proposed the forming of a new school which allows dance students to arrange their schoolwork around dance commitments by incorporating both school and dance within one campus. This proposal was approved and in 2016 the first Chorus students were recruited with the Chorus High School programme beginning at the start of 2017.

As discussed, Chorus High School caters to full-time dance students with the curriculum consisting of a combination of NCEA standards and dance commitments. The school offers an array of training in different dance genres including, jazz, contemporary and ballet dance. However, most students are involved in classical ballet training as ballet experience appears to be a requirement in order to be hired by a dance company- a goal for most Chorus students once they finish high school. Students’ ballet training consists of a minimum of 20 hours per week with their schoolwork being organised around this. Their schoolwork, where possible, is made relevant to dance, for example, focussing on a dance film for a visual text assignment or for a physical education assignment doing a reflective project looking at the personal, interpersonal and societal influences on participation in dance (Fieldnotes, 20/03/2018).

North High School provides a less intensive dance programme. This programme was introduced after students communicated to Nicole, the physical education learning advisor at North, their passions for dance and their desire to have dance available as part of their school experiences. Nicole was an experienced dancer of ballet, jazz and contemporary dance and a dance teacher of junior levels prior to becoming a physical education teacher. This experience allowed Nicole to gain approval from the School Director to run a dance class option at North. Still informed by NCEA achievement standards, the dance class at North allows any student interested in dance to participate, regardless of age or ability. The genre of dance that is practiced and performed is dictated by the students and Nicole invites outside support for any genres she is unfamiliar with. However, the dominant genre practised at North High School tends to be contemporary dance.

Dance within school contexts

Dance in New Zealand education contexts has been historically positioned within physical education lessons despite recommendations that it be shifted to its own subject within The Arts area of learning. Research, internationally, has investigated dance within physical education classes. This research has often highlighted the “fordable” and “marginal” nature of positioning it within this area of schooling (Brennan, 1996; Gard, 2008, p. 93). A significant reason found for this is the uncertainty of physical education teachers who are anxious and questioning of the positioning of dance within their subject and how to teach it (Brennan, 1996; Gard, 2008; Goodwin, 2010; Hilsendager, 1990; Mattsson & Lundvall 2015). For instance, Brennan (1996) explores the Northern Ireland Curriculum in which dance is a compulsory subject until students reach 14 years of age. As with the reforms to the New Zealand curriculum, Brennan highlights debates within Northern Ireland which argue that dance should be placed within the arts curriculum. However, arguments for it continuing to appear in the physical education subject include its promotion of balance, student appreciation of “aesthetic qualities of movement” and the ‘protection’ it offers physical education from being defined as solely incorporating sport (Brennan, 1996, p. 494). Again, similar to the presence of dance within New Zealand mainstream high schools, Brennan highlights that within physical education, if the teacher does not have a passion, support or willingness to engage with dance its presence is limited. Hilsendager (1990), in her investigation of the presence of dance within physical in America also emphasises that the dance curriculum is “neither well-balanced nor complete” with the “frequency and extent” of dance education varying significantly from school to school and teacher to teacher (p. 47). Hilsendager also suggests that dance education within schools has fallen into a pattern of being an isolated lesson based solely on perfecting a prescribed technique. Like Brennan, Hilsendager advocates for a more ‘expansive’ approach whereby dance education is not only about experiencing different forms of movement but is connected to wider contexts of knowledge. She argues that this, in addition to developing student self-expression and perception, will enhance a “multicultural view of the world as demonstrated through the movement expression of human kind” and encourage students to engage with the arts within wider society (Hilsendager, 1990, p. 47).

As with some of the New Zealand-based research of dance education, there are international studies which highlight limitations of the current assessment focussed context of

education for engagement with dance. Mattsson and Lundvall (2015) discuss this in relation to the Swedish curricula for dance within physical education. Through a discourse analysis of physical education documents spanning from 1962 to 2011, Mattsson and Lundvall highlight that while dance has been consistently included within the physical education curriculum, this presence has tended to be based on dance's "investment value" (p. 867). Specifically they describe this value as the preservation of cultural values and the encouragement of physical activity. Through the highlighting of this value, Mattsson and Lundvall emphasise the lack of "artistic or aesthetic values" (p. 867) being encouraged within these dance curricula documents. Rather, they describe the presence and construction of dance education within these documents as a "highly disciplinary framework of social control" (p. 867). They conclude their exploration by emphasising that in the current era of increased "observation, assessment, measuring performance and viewing competence in terms of specially acquired skills", there has been a simultaneous decline in exploring "embodied capacities" and "how to use the body" through educational contexts (Mattsson & Lundvall, 2015, p. 867). This is reflective of the current neoliberal era in New Zealand in which rational, cognitive and easily measured knowledge is valued over artistic, bodily and emotional knowledges (Burke, 2017). As Burke (2017) articulates, within the current neoliberal era, "discussion or decision making" tends to "foreground rational thought and overshadow emotional, connective and/or personal responses" (p. 436).

Despite this devaluation or limited engagement with dance within physical education contexts, there is also literature which highlights the possibilities dance offers as an embodied way of knowing and being beyond physical education. For instance, Fitzgerald (2012) explores the ways in which teaching and learning in dance as a standalone subject may be beneficial for "personal expression, group and individual creativity" (p. 2) and the possibilities for constructing moves towards "different, integrated ways of being and knowing" (p. 2). She advocates that dance and music encompass a mode of embodied knowledge which delves into "the expressive being" (Fitzgerald, 2012, p. 4). This is similar to the argument by Stolz (2015) about embodied learning. He contends that embodied learning treats people as whole beings, thus allowing them to experience themselves as "holistic and synthesised acting, feeling, thinking being-in-the-world" (p. 475), as opposed to the separation of physical and mental qualities which do not intersect. Fitzgerald refers to the 2007 New Zealand Curriculum and argues that it provides opportunity to "advocate for the arts" (p. 2) and introduce teachers to the idea of embodied learning. However, she

acknowledges that dance as a legitimate form of knowledge is often diminished due to the devaluing of the arts in the current market-driven climate (Biesta, 2010). However, Fitzgerald argues that music and dance do adhere to neoliberal values under the guise of 21st century learning by fully integrating the cognitive, motor and affective domains through students having to think, move and feel concurrently. Her research design includes case-study and participatory research models where she worked with two primary school teachers who were willing to explore the pedagogical possibilities of embodied learning through dance. In her conclusions to the project, uncertainty was a prominent theme. Fitzgerald found that dance can deconstruct the traditional power relations of the teacher as an expert knower and, can not only tolerate, but welcome uncertainty which can allow for new possibilities and creativity to emerge for students. She provides a rationale for this inclusion in mainstream education being that students are living in a diverse and changing world and need to encounter uncertainty so that they can cope and thrive.

The specific context where dance takes place has also been found to produce gendered identities and experiences of the dancing body in particular ways. Austin (2016) illustrates this in her case study of a young Christian woman's dancing in different contexts. The research participant, Sarah, was a 17-year-old white woman who attended a secondary school in the UK. Sarah was part of a larger school-based study of 14 young-women exploring their experiences of sexuality and sexual pleasure. The research involved group discussions, object selection tasks and individual interviews. In the individual interviews, the participants were asked to bring an object which made them "feel good in their bodies" (p. 282). Sarah brought her smartphone which she uses for playing music for her to dance to and for filming herself while dancing. Through a Deleuzo-Guattarian approach, Austin highlighted the way the different environments where Sarah's dancing took place produced different modes of 'becoming' a dancer. For instance, Sarah comes from a highly religious home. Her family, through religious discourses, discourage Sarah from using her body in sexualised ways. Sarah considers her dancing as a sexual "part of her life" (p. 284). When in the context of her high school, dance enables Sarah to be disentangled from the religious restraints of her family background. When in the dance studio, Sarah is able to connect with other dancers through movements which make her feel 'sexy' but also 'safe' due to the controlled studio environment. In the context of her bedroom, Sarah discussed how it gave her pleasure to watch herself dancing in a private space, free from "judgement, control, and harassment" (p. 286). However, the shared family spaces and associated religious discourses

was not the only place Sarah felt discouraged from dancing. Within public settings, dominant discourses of sexuality “as something ‘dirty’” (p. 287) positioned Sarah’s dancing as ‘slutty’ and therefore this space discourages Sarah from dancing. Through Sarah’s experiences it is clear that dance contexts and genres are informed by different discourses of gender and sexuality which hold possibilities of ‘becoming’ dancers in relation to gendered and sexual identities. This case-study demonstrates how dance assemblages are also an important site for the construction and ‘becoming’ of gender and sexuality identities.

As with some of the contexts discussed by Sarah in Austin’s (2016) research, there is also a body of research which investigates the potentially normative dimensions of dance spaces. This research tends to focus on different dance genres and their positioning as ‘high’ or ‘low’ forms of art. For example, Atencio and Wright (2009) argue that western dance cultures are organised within a social scale of high and low dance forms. Within this, ballet is considered as the highest form of dance while “ethnic dance is at the lower rung” (p. 32). The forms of movement within ballet, with the focus on perfecting technique and discipline, significantly contribute to its positioning as a ‘high’ class art-form. In her research of body, power and pedagogical issues related to dance education in America, Green (2001) also found that dancer’s body perceptions, including race and class, were informed by the classical ballet dance world. One of Green’s participants communicated overlapping concerns surrounding her female body and African American dance student identity. Green highlighted examples of this including the African American students being “pushed to the back of the room and...physically displaced in class”, being ignored by teachers due to “racial tension” and a lack of encouragement to succeed due to “prejudged [...] failure based on [...] skin colour” (Green, 2001, p. 168). Pickard (2013) also explores, through a longitudinal, ethnographic study, how the ‘ideal ballet body’ is perceived and constructed by 12 young ballet dancers between the age of 10 and 15 years. She found that participants predominantly described the ideal female ballet body as “petite, elegant and weightless” with the ideal male body described as “slim, strong and muscular” (p. 16). Pickard’s study also revealed that this understanding is “engrained” (p. 16) and accepted from a young age with the youngest participants also drawing upon this ideal. Furthermore, Pickard highlights that the ballet world relies upon a ‘uniformity’ of bodies to achieve the “ballet aesthetic of perfection and idealised ballet body” (p. 16). This is similar to the participants in Atencio and Wright’s study who were excluded “via mechanisms of ballet” (p. 43) due to their association with “devalued form[s] of embodiment and movement” (p. 33). Again, genres of dance, and

classical ballet specifically, are informed by discourses of gender which are policed due to the aesthetic of the dance genre.

As Atencio and Wright (2009), Green (2001) and Pickard's (2013) studies highlight, within dance, and specifically the classical ballet genre of dance, there are key intersections with race, class and gender. In terms of gender, these studies are focussed mainly on female experiences of physical appearance and body restrictions. However, dance more generally and in relation to its positioning within physical education also has surrounding discourses relating to masculinity. In New Zealand, there are dominant discourses surrounding masculinity, particularly in relation to sports culture (Sansom, 2011). Connell (2008) and Gerdin (2017) specifically highlight physical education within New Zealand school contexts as having a long history of encouraging boys to practice the 'correct' and dominant forms of masculinity. Rugby specifically, as New Zealand's national sport, has been held up as a culture which is able to 'turn boys into men' (Gerdin, 2017). Therefore, it is perhaps unsurprising that the inclusion of dance as a compulsory area of learning is often shied away from by boys and men (Gard, 2008). In Gard and Meyenn's (2000) investigations of 15, 11 to 14-year-old boys' physical activity they liked and disliked, many of the boys described dance negatively. This was due to movements which signified the body as 'weird', 'pointless' or 'gay' which were determined in comparison to sport (Gard & Meyenn, 2000). For the boys who expressed interest in dance, they emphasised that physical education would be an uncomfortable place to experience dance due to male peers refusing to participate. Gard and Meyenn emphasise that these findings reflect the way people's perceptions of gender appropriate thoughts and feelings impact the ways they use their bodies.

While there is a large body of research which highlights the strict gendered physical restrictions due to the historical aesthetic of the classical ballet genre, there have also been explorations of this as a space where women can feel powerful and strong and thus challenge dominant discourses of femininity and feminine beauty. Aalten (2004), after observing bodily practices and listening to experiences of ballerinas, found that in performance the masculinity and femininity which is 'enacted' through the male and female ballet dancer's bodies 'reiterates' and 'reproduces' cultural norms. Specifically, "strength and independence" continues to be associated with men and masculinity while "weightlessness and passivity" is associated with women and femininity (Aalten, 2004, p. 270). Within western culture, physical strength and physical achievement are dominantly associated with masculinity (Aalten, 2004; Choi, 2000). In an exploration of the media coverage of women's sporting

events comparative to men's, Choi (2000) highlights that women's coverage is significantly less. Choi argues that this lack of visibility sends the message that women's physical achievements are far less important than their male counterparts and reinforces the notion that women are physically inferior. However, dance and the genre of classical ballet is in an interesting position in relation to discourses of women and physical strength. From the life stories of the dancers Aalten talked to, ballet was described as an opportunity where women are able to "excel physically" (p.272) without social discomforts of women challenging categorisations of femininity and masculinity. Ballerinas are able to perfect technique through strength and physical excellence while adhering to feminine beauty. While gendered restrictions are still apparent through the necessity of combining and negotiating masculine strength and feminine beauty, as Aalten highlights, ballet can 'counteract' stereotypes of gender through the "technical prowess and virtuosity of the ballerina" (p. 272). Again this highlights the potential intersections between dance genre and gender and the possibilities of negotiating dominant discourses of femininity in the 'becoming' of dancers from a Foucauldian theoretical sense.

There appears to be limited literature on the genre of contemporary dance in relation to education and bodies. Albright (1997) provides an exploration of contemporary choreography to illustrate how this genre is able to challenge and shift representations of bodies. For instance, she highlights how contemporary dance does not have a historically prescribed physical appearance aesthetic it is striving to achieve. Rather it is a space which celebrates difference but can also adhere to dominant and normative discourses such as gender. Albright's book also argues that contemporary choreography holds possibilities for engaging with socially and historically specific moral, political and artistic issues. This project aims to contribute to this lacking area of research by highlighting the impact of dance genre, including contemporary dance, on young people 'becoming' dancers within educational contexts.

'Becoming' in educational contexts

As with the dancer in Austin's (2016) project, there is research within educational contexts which uses Deleuze and Guattari's theorising of 'becomings' (Jackson, 2010; Quinlivan, 2018; Ringrose, 2011). Though there is limited research using this theoretical

framework that specifically looks at dance and the ‘becoming’ of dancers within educational contexts, it is useful to explore research which investigates the ‘becoming’ of bodies within educational contexts.

This theoretical framework emerged later in the research process of this project following shifts in my research questions. My initial research proposal was to explore how young people engage with and negotiate gender and sexuality within a special character high school. However, as I discuss in detail in Chapter Three, this focus resulted in a number of methodological difficulties. Despite the shift in my research questions, throughout my research journey there has been a remaining theme of exploring different modes of pedagogy in relation to bodies. As discussed further in Chapter Two, ‘becoming’ is a key term within Deleuzo-Guattarian theorising. The process of ‘becoming’ challenges the notion of stable identities through the highlighting of bodies and identities being continually transformative and produced through random, sporadic, non-linear lines to produce something other, new, and different. Jackson (2010), utilises this theorising in her exploration of cheerleading within an American school context. For instance, Jackson focusses on one cheerleader, Jesse, in her dressing and uniform (or ‘un-uniform’ as Jackson describes it), her behaviours during cheerleading practice and her body movements as processes for becoming other. Specifically, Jesse challenges dominant discourses and constructions of ‘the cheerleader’ by doing weight-lifting training with ‘the boys’, her muscular body “invading” her cheerleader uniform and her acrobatic body movements such as, ‘standing backflips’ as opposed to the ‘spinning’, ‘shaking of hips’ and dominant “sexual enticement” that the other cheerleader bodies are engaged in (Jackson, 2010, p.586). In Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion of ‘becoming’ they use a metaphor of an orchid and a wasp which both ‘become’ something other through their interactions. Austin (2016) also provides a useful example of the entangled process of ‘becoming’ between Sarah’s dancing body and the music. Austin highlights that Sarah ‘becomes’ an expression of the music she is listening to while the music ‘becomes’ a “catalyst” for her dancing body (p. 288). Therefore, both the music and Sarah’s body have become something new through the relationship with each other.

An exploration of images, in particular the mirror image, within dance spaces is a prominent theme within dance literature. As Aalten (2004) highlights dancer’s consider their bodies as “an object that exists in part separately from herself” (p. 269) that can be worked on and perfected. This is contributed to through the constant presence of the mirror image in which dancers watch their “body in the mirror all day long” (Aalten, 2004, p. 269). Research

suggests that a love/hate relationship with the mirror is common for dancers. On the one hand it can be a useful tool for correcting spacing and technique while also being a source of frustration due to the constant reminder of one's imperfections (Ehrenberg, 2010; Kirkland, 1992). Famous American ballerina, Gelsey Kirkland describes the mirror as her "nemesis" due to the fact it was "seductive" and 'addictive' while simultaneously "confronting [her with] a double who exposed all [her] flaws" (p. 79). Based on past research which emphasises the significance of the mirror, in both contemporary and classical ballet dance genres, understanding how people 'become' dancers through different images is a key area this project explores. Discussed in more detail in Chapter Two, Coleman (2008; 2009) argues that bodies and images are part of an entangled process of 'becoming'. I therefore draw upon this argument to explore the different images the participants engage with in their dance education contexts and highlight instances when/how they 'become' dancers through these images. This is paired with Foucauldian theorising of discourse and subjectivity to highlight how discourses surrounding gender, class and dance genre are constructed and negotiated in the participants 'becoming' as dancers. As discussed in Chapter Three, methodologically, images were explored during both focus groups and image-reflection workshops. In the latter, drawn representations of the students' choreography styles, audio-visual images of significant performances (as identified by the participants), and photographs of the participants' favourite professional dancers were engaged with. This was done to explore specific memories of the participants' significant dance experiences and to show how images contribute to their 'becoming' as dancers (Del Busso & Reavey, 2013).

Thesis outline

In the following chapter, I discuss the Foucauldian and Deleuzo-Guattarian theorizing which informs this thesis. I provide an overview of the specific conceptualizations on assemblages, the rhizomatic, molar and molecular flows and 'becoming'. Foucauldian theorising of discourse and subjectivity is also discussed. I then draw upon relevant literature to illustrate what this theoretical framework makes possible for methodological approaches of researching dance education.

Chapter Three presents the methodological considerations and procedures undertaken in this thesis. I begin with a detailed overview of the ethical considerations and other

contextual factors which made conducting research within schools difficult and the resulting shifts in my research questions. I then discuss details about the participants in this project and the data collection methods as well as a rationale for why these methods were chosen. In particular, I discuss the usefulness for using focus groups in research which is attempting to understand ‘student cultures’ (Kehily, 2002). I also draw upon research which utilises visual approaches of data collection in order to better engage with the students’ experiences of ‘becoming’ dancers (Del Busso & Reavey, 2013). This is followed by key reflections of my data collecting experiences. Lastly, I describe the movement between the Foucauldian informed thematic analytic method employed in analysing the data to the Deleuzo-Guattarian informed mapping of affective flows that occurred during the focus groups.

Chapters Four and Five are the data analysis chapters which map the micro-encounters and what they produced in relation to participants’ dancer identity constructions and negotiations. Chapter Four explores how the Chorus and North participants use different kinds of images in their dance practices. For this I draw upon Coleman’s (2009) research with teenage girls and images in which she argues images and bodies are part of an entangled process of ‘becoming’ other. By this, Coleman explores the ways bodies are made possible and impossible through their inseparable relations with images. I explore participants’ drawn representations of their choreography styles, video footage of their own dance performances and mirror images of themselves in rehearsal spaces. I discuss how these images both limit and extend ways of ‘becoming’ girls and dancers. This chapter also focusses on discourses that emerged in relation to participants’ understandings of different dance genres, particularly ballet and contemporary dance. This discussion includes an exploration of the discursive intersections between dance genre, class, gender and sexuality and an analysis of the participants’ talk in relation to the different genres being positioned within a hierarchy of ‘high’ and ‘low’ forms of art (Atencio and Wright, 2009).

In Chapter Five I continue to explore discursive tensions between femininity, gender and athleticism. This is located within literature focussed on women’s roller derby and women’s bodybuilding where discourses of muscularity and femininity are monitored and negotiated. This chapter has a more specific focus on the Chorus participants and their constructions of ‘the ballerina’. Images selected by the Chorus participants of their favourite professional dancers are analysed in relation to how they produce the bodies of the young girl participants. A key focus of this analysis and the chapter as a whole is the way participants

negotiate different femininities, categories of class and the assemblages that produce their understandings and becomings as dancers.

The final chapter of this thesis, Chapter Six, offers some concluding remarks about how images both limit and extend ways of ‘becoming’ girls and dancers for these special character high school participants. I draw upon Quinlivan’s (2018) argument that a ‘sideways’ approach to exploring issues of gender and sexuality (through using and making images) is necessary to allow participants to better verbalise what they consider to be important experiences and understandings.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework

For the theoretical framework of this thesis I bring together theorising from Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari to explore the experiences of high school students as they engage in molar and molecular flows to potentially ‘become’ other through dance. Though the concept of ‘becoming’ is mostly associated with Deleuze and Guattari, according to Cisney (2014) Foucault also describes ‘becoming’ within an “infinite oscillation of death and origin” (p. 54) whereby the continuous death and rebirth of the self takes place through language. He writes, “When language is revealed to be the reciprocal transparency of the origin and death, every single existence receives, through the simple assertion ‘I speak,’ the threatening promise of its own disappearance, its future appearance” (Michel Foucault, “The Thought of the Outside,” p.168 as cited by Cisney, 2014, p. 55). Therefore, Foucault’s understanding of becoming in relation to Deleuze and Guattari has a specific focus on language whereby normative discourses, and the forms of power which constitute them, inform understandings or ‘becomings’ of the self.

I take inspiration from Jackson and Mazzei’s (2012) Deleuzian informed “plugging in” (p.1) approach of applying different theoretical frameworks to the same data set. This approach aims to provide new ways of “thinking research and data” (p. 14) in order to use complementary theories to achieve an in-depth analysis of qualitative data (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 14). As Jackson and Mazzei suggest, ‘plugging’ the data into different theorists and concepts avoids a ‘closed system’ of making meaning. In this chapter, I discuss aspects of Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari’s theorising that have informed my research and analysis. Firstly, I discuss the different phases of Michel Foucault’s theorising and specifically focus on his conceptualizations of power, discourse and subjectivity. Secondly, I focus on Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts of the affectual assemblage, becoming and the rhizomatic, and the associated notions of the molar, molecular and lines of flight. I illustrate the usefulness of this theorising through a discussion of different academic writing and research projects on girlhood, sexuality and gender, and dance (Austin, 2016; Coleman, 2009; Jackson, 2010; Renold & Ringrose, 2011).

In a 1978 interview, Michel Foucault emphasised that he does not consider himself as a theoretician due to the non-uniformity of his work (Raffnsøe, Thaning, & Gudmand-Hoyer, 2016). Rather, Foucault argues that he is an experimenter saying that “what I’ve written is never prescriptive either for me or for others- at most it is instrumental and tentative”¹ (Raffnsøe et al., 2016, p. 80). Despite this non-uniformity and experimentality, Foucault’s work highlights how subjects are constructed through social relations and cultural practices. Often his writing is divided into three key phases, archaeological writings in the 1960s, genealogical writings in the 1970s, and ethical writings in the 1980s (Välikangas & Seeck, 2011). This phase division was not defined by Foucault himself who saw his work as “an indecipherable, disorganised, muddle” (Foucault & Gordon, 1980, p. 80). His archaeological phase was concerned with the systems of truth which define how human beings understand themselves and had a particular emphasis on scientific knowledge processes (Välikangas & Seeck, 2011). His genealogical phase included his famous writing of *Discipline and Punish* (1975) in which, rather than a focus on “epistemes of truth” (p. 4), punishment is analysed in changing social contexts to highlight the way shifts in power relations impact on punishment (Välikangas & Seeck, 2011). This phase also saw *History of Sexuality, Vol 1* (1990) in which Foucault argues against the notion of ‘natural’ drives and urges in relation to sex. Rather, he suggests that sex is produced through the ‘deployment of sexuality’ (Foucault, 1990). By this, he argues that the specific forms of sexual practice and desires that are taken for granted as normal/perverse are constituted through normative discourses and discursive practices. This genealogical work led to the final phase of his writing titled as the ethical phase. This phase included Foucault’s *History of Sexuality, Vol 2 and 3*. In this ethical phase, Foucault’s focus was on the position of the “active, ethical subject” (Välikangas & Seeck, 2011, p. 4). This involved his concern with the individual and care of the self with ‘subjectivity’ becoming a prominent focus. Thus this phase was focused on the ways individuals determine their own ways of being. It is the genealogical and ethical phases that are of most relevance to this project, in particular examining forms of resistance to dominant discourses and how this constitutes subjectivity.

Foucault was interested in the relationship between discourse, subjectivity and power/knowledge. He describes discourse as the social structures and processes where “language, social institutions, subjectivity, and power exist, intersect and produce competing ways of giving meaning to and constructing subjectivity” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 50). In other words, discourses do not simply describe the world, but construct it. Foucault argues

that meaning/reality is constituted through language and, therefore, language is always located within discourse (Foucault, 1972). Foucault emphasised the constructive potential of discourse in his argument that they are “practices that systemically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972, p. 49). Therefore, discourses organise available knowledges in relation to objects and events. There are always multiple and competing discourses which can challenge the way reality is constituted. Furthermore, discourses are context specific; the cultural and historical setting impacts on the meanings and subject positions which are available (Foucault 1972). Therefore, discourses determine the “type of knowledge that is considered legitimate and valid in that context” (Oliver, 2010, p. 28). Despite being multiple, there are certain discourses which tend to be taken as “common sense or truth” within a society and, as such, have a higher chance of being taken up by a subject (Burr, 1995, p. 15). These are socially, culturally and historically specific and are significant to the preservation of existing power relations (Burr, 1995). Thus, from a Foucauldian perspective, meanings that are made about the world and how people are understood are a function of power (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; Lynch, 2011). Discourses yield power through the restrictions they apply for what one can do and say in a given context (Taylor, 2011). Foucault notes that this perspective stresses discourse as being the principal sphere where power circulates.

Foucault argues that it is through a subjectification process whereby normative discourses, and the forms of power which constitute them, inform understandings of the self. Subjectivity is, therefore, unstable and constructed through relations with other people and everyday practices (Foucault, 1990; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Within a post-structuralist approach, subjectivities are understood as “the self as being a site of disunity and conflict that is always in process and produced within power relations” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 52). One’s subjectivity is unfixed and made alongside others during everyday life. From a Foucauldian perspective, the self is seen as the central unit of analysis which is constituted through socially and historically specific discourses (Townley, 1993). In other words, Foucault is interested in the processes of how an individual is “rendered knowledgeable” (Townley, 1993, p. 522). This is similar to Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of the assemblage which focusses on surrounding material and social factors that produce the self. In both theories the individual does not have an essential identity but is produced through interactions with the world. Foucault focusses on surrounding historical discourse while Deleuze and Guattari highlight the different social and material components that are ‘plugged into’ an assemblage (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). For Deleuze and Guattari, it is the assemblage of

material and social factors which produces the self. Though there are dominant discourses which have a higher likelihood of constituting one's subjectivity, these are not a done deal. As Foucault argues in his ethical phase of work, individuals are both positioned by discourse and can position themselves within discourses and therefore can challenge dominant meanings of the world (Välikangas & Seeck, 2011). A person's subjectivity is therefore informed by competing discourses which emerge within discursive fields (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). It is the "language and practices" of these discourses which inform an individual's "conflicting subjectivities" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 50).

As May (2005, 2014) highlights, the fundamental philosophy for Foucault is asking who we are and how we came to be that way. Deleuze's central question asks, 'how might we live?'. These questions reflect the different points of analysis with Foucault focussing on the self and Deleuze and Guattari focussing on assemblages. However, through these questions both Foucault and Deleuze aim to expose, challenge and break apart normative structures and categories that "produce and reproduce conformity" (May, 2005, p. 9). Despite this point of connection between their work, the two philosophers approach the question of 'how might we live?' in different ways. Foucault highlights normative and taken for granted constraints and challenges these by arguing that they are historically rooted and subject to change (May, 2005). Foucault therefore takes up the argument that constraints and divisions that appear to be "woven into the very fabric of human existence" and are in fact "neither natural nor inescapable" (May, 2005, p. 9). He discusses this in detail in relation to sexuality where he argues that the division between normal and abnormal sexuality is a historical division born out of surrounding political and religious structures (Foucault, 1990). Therefore, Foucault argues that without acknowledging the historical and social specificity of the way we give meaning to the world we are unable to "recognize the freedom before us" (p.11) and are inhibited in our answering of the question 'how might we live?' (May, 2005).

May (2005) argues that where Foucault and Deleuze's work differ is in relation to ontology. Foucault, through his focus on historical specificity, rejects the notion that we have an unchanging or natural essence. Therefore, when attempting to answer how might we live, Foucault resists accounts that solely focus on "what there is" or "what living consists in" (May, 2005, p. 23). This is due to Foucault's concern that this approach constrains formations of future possibilities. Deleuze, "approaches the question of how one might live not by abandoning ontology, but embracing it" (May, 2014, p.15). He argues that recognising what our living consists of equips us to better ask ourselves about future possibilities. This

grounding of Deleuze's work in ontology informs his theorising of the assemblage and what these groupings of social and material factors make possible for closing down and opening up opportunities to become other.

Deleuze himself stated that while he and Foucault never worked together, "there are a lot of parallels between our work (with Guattari) and his"² (Morar, 2016, p. 3). Deleuze suggests that despite these similarities, he and Foucault were prevented from working together (Morar, 2016). Both theorists are concerned with activism in contemporary politics and providing concepts which aim to challenge structuralism with 'assemblages', or as Foucault terms 'apparatuses' of heterogeneous components (Morar, 2016).

The conceptual tools of Gilles Deleuze, a French philosopher, and Félix Guattari, a French psychoanalyst and political activist, are focused on producing radical social change (Quinlivan, 2018). They aim to create perspectives through which to view social worlds which allow people to break free from conformity. Their notion of 'becoming', as will be discussed below, is illustrated by their famous metaphor of the orchid and the wasp:

The line of becoming that unites the wasp and the orchid produces a shared deterritorialization: of the wasp, in that it becomes a liberated piece of the orchid's reproductive system, but also of the orchid, in that it becomes the object of an orgasm in the wasp, also liberated from its own reproduction.

(Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 293)

Therefore, the wasp and orchid 'become' something other, and new, and are deterritorialised through their relationship with the other. Within the wasp/orchid assemblage, the wasp is part of the orchid's reproductive system, while the orchid becomes other through the imitating of the wasp. This metaphor effectively illustrates Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) desire to provide a framework which releases subjects from essential categories. This thesis thinks with Deleuze and Guattari to show the possibilities of the Chorus and North participants in some instances (also not in others) transforming against essentialised categories of 'dancer' and 'ballerina' and the discursive and material expectations of these categories in their dance education spaces to 'become' different (Jackson, 2010). This allows exploration of the tensions, differences and specificities of these dancers to show what "opens up and closes down" (p. 584) inside the "material and discursive molar machine" (p. 584) of different dance genres in New Zealand high schools (Jackson, 2010).

Deleuze and Guattari (1984) use 'affective assemblages' to describe the interaction of diverse social and material elements. Youdell (2011) uses Deleuze and Guattari's theorising

of the assemblage to explore the ‘educational assemblage’ which she argues is made up of “economy and politics, policy, organisational arrangements, knowledge, subjectivity, pedagogy, everyday practices and feelings” (p.14). Ringrose (2011) suggests that assemblages offer a way to view social entities as a whole whose properties appear through the interactions between the different assemblage elements. The different elements of an assemblage, such as the ones offered by Youdell above, may be detached and ‘plugged into’ a different assemblage (De Landa, 2006). This new ‘plugging in’ creates different interactions. The body also becomes a “machinic assemblage” whose “meaning” or “function” is dependent upon the bodies and machines it is plugged into an assemblage with (Ringrose, 2011, p. 601). As discussed in more detail below, Renold and Ringrose (2011) explore how girls both resist and are regulated by expectations that assume them to be agentic sexual subjects. Renold and Ringrose investigate this in a number of different contexts (for example, streets, schools, homes, cyberspace). In one case study, they locate Natalia’s (age 14) Bebo profile within a wider Bebo affective assemblage “where over 25,000 users had reference to ‘slut’ in the username or tagline” (p. 396). Natalia’s tagline was, ‘Hi Im Natalia And ii Like It UpThe Bum... Just Like Your Mum! And I Suck Dick for £5’. Through the use of Deleuze and Guattari, Renold and Ringrose locate Natalia’s construction of herself “as a series of holes” within heterosexualised/sexist discourses which operate in a “wider cultural porno-informed assemblage” (p.396). As with the example of Natalia, using Deleuze and Guattari’s theorising of the assemblage in this research provides a way of articulating the affective complexities of subjectivities within multiple and interconnecting dance education sites.

Assemblages consist of different “dimensions, lines and directions” (p. 86) which have the potential to both maintain and/or disrupt normative categories of thought surrounding identity (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983). This is dependent on three affective and habitually “entangled and circular lines” (Quinlivan, 2018, p. 118). Firstly, the molar lines and affective flows which limit, categorise, normalize and reterritorialize restricting spaces (Quinlivan, 2018). For example, classical ballet can be considered a molar form due to its existence within discursive and material fields of traditional femininity and classed art-forms. Specifically, classical ballet in western society is predominantly engaged in by white middle/upper-class families (Atencio & Wright, 2009; Green, 2001). The ideal classical ballerina is constituted through historical notions of the “respectable” feminine body which is “white, desexualised, disciplined and middle-class” (Atencio & Wright, 2009, p. 34).

Occurring at the same time as the molar flows are the affective molecular lines/flows. Molecular lines/flows may either strengthen the direction of the molar, or because of their elasticity, can contest the rigidities of the molar. The molecular is the effect of the breaking apart of the molar (Jackson, 2010). This ‘breaking apart’ leads to spaces of possibilities to produce lines of flight. Lines of flight are a shift away from the molar which can result in experimentation and change towards becoming other. These affective molar, molecular and lines of flight are contained within microsocial encounters, often at the same time (Quinlivan, 2018). This produces moments of tension, negotiation and possibility. These concepts are useful in this project to understand the circulating flows and intensities which are taken up by participants to inform their potential of becoming dancer.

An assemblage is the arrangement and process of a collection of ‘things’ which holds possibilities for moments of becoming other and also normalisation/ restriction (Coleman, 2009; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Becoming describes the “something else, the newness that is created- the movement through a unique event that produces experimentation and change” (Stagoll, 2005, p.21). This becoming can be both enabling and limiting. According to Jackson (2010), Deleuze’s work around ‘becoming’ is in response to western philosophy’s conceptualisation of becoming as a “transcendent, linear process...which relies upon a stable identity (or sameness)” (p. 580). Deleuze challenges this through his theory of becoming in which the orchid and wasp both remove something from their original purpose resulting in new ways of being (Jackson, 2010). Becoming always takes place within the world as it is (Jackson, 2010). Therefore, though it is directional in that it is a movement away from sameness, it is not an escape (Jackson, 2010). This concept is useful in mapping instances where both enabling and limiting ways of being/thinking/feeling emerge in relation to becoming dancer which can sometimes disrupt dominant and normative assumptions surrounding dancer subjectivities. With their theories rooted in resisting social identities within Cartesian thought and dualisms, Deleuzo-Guattarian theorising provides opportunities to sometimes show instances of the North and Chorus students transforming into new ways of being and thinking as dancer as an effect of their becoming.

Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) conceptual tool of the rhizomatic also interrupts linear and binary conceptualisations to provide possibilities for becoming other. In describing the rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari compare it to the roots of a tree. In contrast to trees or their roots, the rhizome “connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature” (Deleuze, Guattari, & Massumi, 2004, p. 23). Rather, the

rhizome functions by “variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots” on a map which is always “detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable” (Deleuze et al., 2004, p. 23). Deleuze et al. (2004) identify different values of the rhizome. These include its multiplicities in the unfixed lines, the possibilities and connections it produces; its lack of deep structure which allows creativity and openness; and its existence within an in-between space which allows action to take place (Deleuze et al., 2004). Rhizomes provide possibilities to configure differently human beings through a mapping of molar and molecular forces and affective flows, and an experimentation with the politics of becoming other (Quinlivan, 2018). Therefore, in my research project, the concept of the rhizome is useful in highlighting moments in the focus group discussions where the participants connect to broader components of their dance education assemblages which provide possibilities and constraints for their becoming as dancer. As a researcher, remaining open to the rhizomatic possibilities that may emerge in focus group discussions regarding identity involves “close analytic attention to the productive desiring forces and intensities” (p. 169) that manifest within research encounters (Quinlivan, 2018). This includes attending to the affective and deterritorializing molar and reterritorializing molecular flows which are constituted through these encounters and what they produce. Specifically looking at the gendered, classed and racial micro-politics within dancer assemblages enables me, as the researcher, to explore possibilities for both restrictions, and becoming other that can occur unexpectedly (Quinlivan, 2018). This is similar to the Cheerleader in Jackson’s (2010) work (discussed below) who exists within the molar machine of cheerleading which aims to sexualise and feminize through emphasis on “provocative pelvic thrusts, flirtatious eye-winking, seductive nodding” (p. 581) and other material elements of uniforms and makeup. However, as with this Cheerleader’s experiences Jackson explores, discussions with the North and Chorus participants also produced rhizomatic lines for molecular flows to emerge with participants finding inspiration in dancers who deterritorialised the idealised ballerina body (see Chapter Five).

Putting the theories to work in current research

Much of this thesis takes inspiration from Coleman’s (2009) feminist and Deleuzian informed research which investigates the relationship between bodies and images as

processes of becoming. Coleman uses Deleuze to understand bodies as “processes which are constantly moving rather than as discrete, autonomous entities” (p.1). She further develops this through the use of Deleuze to argue that bodies are not only in a constant state of motion, but that they are also in a constant state of “enfolding” (p.1). This is where the notion of ‘becoming’ is important. Coleman explores the becoming of bodies through their engagement and ‘enfolding’ with images. By this, she suggests that bodies are folded in images and vice versa and this produces different becomings. Through a series of focus groups, individual interviews and image-making sessions, Coleman aimed to highlight the becoming of “particular bodies through particular relations with particular aspects of the world” (p. 1-2). The participants of her project were thirteen, white, British 13 and 14-year-old girls with Coleman’s interest being in the relations between these girls’ bodies and the different image forms that the participants considered important. These image forms included mirror images, photographic images, brief images of oneself in shop windows, magazine images made into collages and images produced through dialogues with boys, peers, and parents. Coleman also utilises Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concept of molecular becomings to move beyond understandings of bodies as constituted through cause/effect, subject/object frameworks. Coleman wanted to ensure that bodies and images are not considered as distinct entities (subjects and objects) and therefore are not positioned as acting on each other in a (linear) cause and effect framework. Rather, through a Deleuzian theoretical lens, bodies and images are conceptualised as “inextricably intertwined and which become through each other” (Coleman, 2009, p. 3). This challenges the often taken for granted idea that girls are ‘effected’ by images, for example advertisements, often in negative ways. Within this ‘effects’ model girls have no agency and are seen to ‘absorb’ some message that is in the advertisement. Rather, bodies are “known, understood and experienced through images” (p.19). As previously discussed and highlighted by Coleman, Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) ‘molecular becomings’ concept is part of their attempt to challenge and upset dichotomies and dualisms such as the image ‘causing’ an ‘effect’ on the viewer. Becoming occurs through molecular flows which are the effect of the breaking apart of the molar (Jackson, 2010). Therefore, in the context of Coleman’s research, her interest is in the molecular flows which occur through images to produce becomings of bodies.

Coleman (2019) also uses the concept of the assemblage in her investigation of the becoming of teenage girls’ bodies through images. For Deleuze, this notion further replaces the dichotomy of the subject/object through the understanding of an assemblage as a

“multiplicity of a body and a moment at which a becoming transforms” (p. 32). This concept, therefore, challenges the notion that the body is a subject upon which power is exercised. Deleuze’s ‘molecular becomings’ aim to remove the subject from privileged positions and dispel the dichotomy of subject/object (Coleman, 2009). Thus, as Coleman indicates, Deleuzian bodies are “assemblages of connections of different things” (p. 49). The molecularity of these bodies means that these connections of things are not prescribed. In other words, Deleuze sees ‘bodies’ not strictly as human bodies. Rather, bodies are “capacities, are transforming and transformational, are becoming” (p. 49). For Coleman, and the participants in the current project, the bodies of the teenage participants are not a separate entity from images but are constituted through the relation or connection between the girl and the image and/or objects. Bodies and images are, therefore, part of an assemblage and can become through each other. For Coleman, this theoretical framework means that her research is not interested in what constitutes a “good and bad” (p. 50) image or what a “dissatisfying or unhealthy” (p.50) body is. Rather, the focus becomes centred on what “the relations between bodies and images limit or extend” (p. 50), for instance, exploring the understandings and experiences that images produce for bodies and the relations which determine specific forms of bodies and images (Coleman, 2009). Coleman also highlights that these relations between images and bodies, while they do not produce positive or negative effects on vulnerable bodies, may produce intense ‘affects’ that contribute to the limiting or extending of bodies. She provides an example of this such as a participant describing that an image makes them ‘feel bad’. Coleman argues that this is not part of the ‘media effects model’, but an example of an intense affect towards the limiting of becoming bodies. This approach informed both my research questions and analysis of data in being careful not to reproduce binaries of subject/object and cause/effect.

Renold and Ringrose (2011) also adopt the Deleuzian concepts of ‘becomings’, ‘assemblages’ and ‘schizoid subjectivities’ to explore teenage girls’ negotiations of increasingly sexualised cultures. As in Coleman’s study, Renold and Ringrose adopt a Deleuzian approach to resist and challenge sexual binaries and moral panics surrounding the ‘sexualisation of culture’. They combine Deleuzian concepts with discourse and subjectivity to respond to the problematic outcomes of relying on the ‘sexualisation of girls’ discourse³. They argue that this discourse “oversimplifies and obfuscates” associated concerns surrounding “girls, bodies, sex and sexuality” (Renold & Ringrose, 2011 p. 391). Thus, Renold and Ringrose aim to avoid binary framings of girls as either “objectified” and

“passive” or “knowable” and “savvy” (p. 391) in relation to sexual subjectivities. Their use of the concept ‘schizoid subjectivities’ is used to capture the “push and pulls” (p. 392) related to young girls’ sexual subjectivities. As Renold and Ringrose outline, schizoanalysis provides a means of “mapping complex embodied, relational, spatial, affective energies” within the often “contradictory” conditions surrounding people in a neoliberal context (p. 599). In other words, the ambiguity of the body is recognised in relation to both reproducing social norms while also being a site of production of potentially unexpected connections (Renold & Ringrose, 2011). These ‘push and pulls’ were evident in discussions with the North and Chorus participants who often struggled to articulate their experiences due to tensions of dominant discourses and molar flows surrounding being a dancer and desires to challenge these discursive restraints. As Quinlivan (2018) discusses, the notion of ‘desires’ is important within Deleuzo-Guattarian theorising of the experimental event of ‘becoming’ other. Rather than being understood as a ‘lack of’, desire is understood as “a productive capacity” which produces intensities in the interactions between bodies and other material artefacts (Quinlivan, 2018, p.119). Assemblages are, therefore, conceptualised as ‘desiring machines’. In a Deleuze and Guattari sense, ‘becoming’ other is used to emphasise femininity as a state of constant movement and transition and ‘assemblages’ highlight the social, cultural and material combinations through which sexual subjectivities are experienced (Renold & Ringrose, 2011). Renold and Ringrose also draw upon molar and molecular flows to unpack how their participants can be both regulated by and challenge dominant gender, class and race categorisations of sexuality.

Jackson (2010) similarly uses Deleuze and Guattari to explore the subject formation of teenage girls. As mentioned above, she focusses specifically on Jesse, a senior cheerleader in southern USA who constantly participates in becoming other through her daily school experiences. Jackson combines concepts of ‘becoming’, ‘assemblages’, ‘molar’ and ‘molecular’ with discourse to highlight the moments where Jesse challenges dominant categorisations of the ‘cheerleader’ subjectivity to engage in becoming. Jackson provides a second-person narrative to represent “the girl as an event” (p. 582). Within this narrative, Jackson describes molar constraints for Jesse as the expectations of cheerleaders on game days to wear “your short skirt for the whole day, remove your nose ring...decorate the teams’ lockers” (p.584). However, Jesse ‘desires’ leaving this molarity behind. She engages in becoming through her “un-uniform” (p. 585), her engagement in molar-masculinity of weight-training with the boys and her “blowing apart of masculinity and femininity” (p. 586)

through the combination of a “muscled differentiated body invading a short skirt and halter top” (Jackson, 2010, p. 586). This second person account along with the Deleuzian approach allows Jackson to see “what opens up and what closes down” (p. 584) within the molar discourses and materialisations of cheerleading.

There has been some other relatively recent ‘plugging in’ of Deleuzo-Guattarian theory with Foucauldian concepts in relation to the dancing body. For example, Austin (2011) combines concepts of territorialisation and deterritorialization with Foucault’s concept of discourse to highlight moments where young women’s bodily experience of dance provides temporary escape from dominant sexual discourses. Austin’s longitudinal case study of Sarah, a 17-year-old dancer, utilises concepts of discourse, embodiment and becoming to explore possibilities that emerge through dance for creating pleasure. Through the use of assemblage-theory, Austin shows how different dance assemblages produce pleasure in different ways. She describes a number of dance contexts and the form and presence of pleasure within the resulting assemblages. In the Cuban dance studio, Sarah is plugged into an assemblage with other dancing bodies in a controlled environment. Within this setting, molar flows of young people’s sexuality as negative are disrupted to produce Sarah’s body as a site of “fun”, “sexy” and “pleasure” (p. 285). The use of Deleuze and Guattari also highlights instances where Sarah’s narrative remains within molar flows of dominant cultural conceptualisations of feminine sexuality. For example, Sarah discusses her enjoyment of the way Cuban dancing emphasises body parts (hips, legs, tummy) which inform discourses of “sexuality and female sassiness” (Austin, 2011, p. 285). Furthermore, Austin highlights the racialised and gendered discourses inherent in Sarah’s narrative of “flicking [her long straight, blonde] hair” (p. 285). This quote was in relation to Sarah’s Cuban dancing and highlights the wider cultural conceptualisations of female sexuality and particular dance cultures within Cuban dance. These elements combined to produce Sarah’s dancing body which emphasised particular body parts and movements that have close connections to dominant understandings of sexuality and “female sassiness” (Austin, 2011, p. 285). The dance studio element of an assemblage is thus identified as a crucial site for the production of both molar and molecular flows relating to pleasure and sexiness.

Conclusion

This thesis utilises theorising from Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari to explore and show moments where the participants of Chorus and North High School engage in affective molar and molecular flows to possibly ‘become’ other in relation to their dancer subjectivities. Specifically, Foucault’s writing is used to understand how meanings that are made by the participants in relation to their dance education experiences are a function of power which determines available discourses. Foucault’s understanding of the discourse is also used to highlight instances where dominant discourses, particularly in relation to gender and sexuality, are both strengthened and challenged in the participants’ narratives. Lastly, his theorising of subjectivity is used to show how competing discourses inform the students’ potentially conflicting subjectivities. Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘affective assemblage’ and its functions of the rhizome and molar and molecular flows is utilised to show social and material elements that participants engage with and, through this engagement, the enabling and limiting possibilities for becoming different. To explore how participants constitute subjectivities and possibilities for ‘becoming’ different through dance assemblages, I utilise a focus group methodology and image-engagement sessions, as discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design and methodological strategies used in this project. I begin by discussing how my initial research questions and strategies shifted to become the current study. Included in this is a discussion of the selection process of the schools and participants involved in this research. I then discuss the selection of the data collection methods used. Lastly, I provide an overview of the processes involved with conducting focus groups and interviews and finish with the procedures I used for analysing the data. In conducting these different methods of data collection and analysis I had to be aware of how my identity as a white, female, 24-year-old, post-graduate student could influence the participants' discussions. Throughout this chapter I discuss the methodological decisions I made and my reflections of these as an emergent researcher.

Refining the research and selection of schools/participants

When I first proposed this research project I wanted to investigate the way young people experience sexuality and gender through dance located within a high school context. Therefore, my overarching research question was 'Exploring how the everyday realities of young people's sexual and relational lives are engaged with through the arts subjects (film, literature and dance) they take at a special character high school'. This focus evolved for a number of reasons with the final project taking a much broader focus on the experiences of the participants in relation to their dance education assemblages. However, before this shift occurred, a large part of my experience conducting this research was overcoming my discomfort with explicitly researching sexuality within a school context.

Allen (2011) has talked extensively about the difficulties of doing research with human subjects in a school context involving topics relating to sexuality. She cautions that researching sexualities is not "for the faint hearted" (p. 20) and unpacks the issues that arose in her own research looking at young people's opinions of what the key debates of sexuality education are and should be (Allen, 2011). Many academics have discussed significant power

relations which govern school institutions and their willingness to include sexualities and relationships education as part of the curriculum-in-action (Allen, 2011; Kehily, 2002; McGee, 1997; Quinlivan, 2013). These power relations include teacher discomfort in talking about traditionally privatised content, the marketisation of education resulting in increased anxieties regarding school reputation, and conservative and consumer orientated parents and students who view education as a means to vocational ends and do not see the value in sexualities research or education (Allen, 2011; Crawshaw, 2014). These are not exclusive, but a selection of issues that have a potential influence on research methodologies, in particular, gaining access to schools and participants.

Foucault (1988) argues that discourses of sexualities are historically and culturally specific and are constituted through a vast array of social institutions. In the current western context, there are dominant discourses which frame sexualities education as private and inappropriate for explicit discussion with children (Allen, 2011; Gilbert, 2004). Therefore, researching sexualities in a public setting becomes difficult for schools and researchers to negotiate.

Furthermore, when reviewing previous literature relating to the gender and sexualities focussed version of the project, a clear theme was the teacher as an important mediating influence for learning about sexualities and relationships. In some instances, this mediating influence was positive in terms of the teacher being open to engagement with explicit learning around sexualities and relationships (Helmer, 2015; Kehily, 2002; Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2016). For example, the teacher in Martino and Cumming-Potvin's (2016) research used her own queer sexuality to help supplement learning about ways of presenting oneself beyond dominant discourses of femininity/masculinity. However, in most cases the studies that were reviewed emphasised discomfort, risk and avoidance when teachers were required to engage with sexuality and relationships education (Allen & Quinlivan, 2013; Athanases, 1996; Thein, 2013). Thein's (2013) research investigated potential reasons for language arts teachers resisting teaching LGBTQ themed texts. Of the 62 claims that Thein (2013) coded from interview data with teachers, 42 were classed as negative. The most common was around 'appropriateness' which questioned whether sexual issues should be in schools at all. Other common justifications included; teachers fearing disapproval from external parties such as parents, conservative communities, and students; fear of one's reputation or job being negatively impacted; making students feel uncomfortable or more susceptible to bullying if they do not identify as heterosexual; and concerns regarding

preparedness to have dialogues with students about these topics (Thein, 2013). Historically, education has privileged adult ways of knowing and it is the adult who provides the ‘correct’ and ‘accurate’ knowledge (Quinlivan, 2018; Robinson, 2013). These studies draw attention to the way the construction of the teacher as expert limit engagement with subjects which are unpredictable and emotional.

Following neoliberal reforms to the education system in New Zealand between 1987 to 1990, education has increasingly become commodified. Parents and students are positioned as consumers who ‘shop’ for particular outcomes- often economically advantageous vocational pathways- the school will provide. This consumer-driven approach and emphasis on achieving measurable outcomes has led to changes in the focus of teaching and created less variation in content and pedagogical styles across schools (Crawshaw, 2014). In New Zealand, the national level curriculum for sexuality education outlines key foundations for what should be included (McGee, 1997). The New Zealand Education Review Office (ERO) recommends 12-15 hours per year dedicated to sexuality education programs. However, this recommendation is rarely achieved (Quinlivan, 2018). One reason for this is the pressure schools are under for creating an image which portrays their academic prestige and promise to consumers that their students will be successful citizens within the highly competitive job market (Allen, 2011). It is largely due to this pressure that schools may want to avoid subjects and research which appears controversial and may attract parental concern (Allen, 2011). Therefore, finding schools who include sexuality and gender within their curriculum-in-action was difficult.

In the initial sexuality and gender focussed study, elements of these hurdles to collecting data became evident. My original research strategies included three-hour long participant observations of the Chorus participants’ dance and classroom spaces to get an understanding of how their schooling works and the relationships they have with each other and their learning advisors. I then planned to conduct an hour-long focus group with the Chorus dance students to hear about their experiences of their special character school and the different areas they learn about contemporary gender and sexuality politics. Following this focus group, I would offer the opportunity for participants to have individual interviews with me to elaborate further on ideas and discussions that may emerge from the focus group.

Once I had outlined the aims of the project in my research proposal, I applied to the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee (ERHEC) for ethical consent. This took

three separate submissions in which the committee identified ethical concerns I had to respond to with how I planned to anticipate or address these concerns. For instance, there was confusion about how the subject of English literature and use of film and novels related to gender and sexuality. Therefore, I had to provide a description of why I wanted to open discussion about each particular topic for example, ‘What literature and films they have studied within the English curriculum - this is to see how much of what they are engaging/engaged with includes themes around sexualities and relationships’. Once I had gained ethical approval, I contacted the Chorus School Director who consented to me conducting research within Chorus. I then contacted Anna, the academic learning advisor of the Chorus dance students. I had a prior relationship with Anna as I had interviewed her in 2017 for my honours project looking at how a teacher of English literature engages with young people in relation to contemporary sexuality and gender politics. I got her advice on how it was best to proceed with gaining access to the Chorus students.

The next step in the recruitment process was to talk to the students themselves and, through the students, provide information to their parents. One of the key hurdles I had to negotiate in this research was timing. By the time I had gained ethical approval from ERHEC and consent from the different Chorus High School parties, there was not enough time before the term two school holidays to recruit the student participants. Additionally, Anna was not going to be teaching for the first four weeks of term three. This meant that I had to arrange meeting the students with a substitute teacher who I had no relationship with and who did not know anything about the study. On the first week back of term three I arranged to go in and talk to year 11 and above students (as this was the age parameter of the ethical consent I had). Earlier in the year Anna had told me there were five students who met the age restriction criteria of my ethics approval. However, between the time of this conversation to the point of recruitment, two of the students had left Chorus High School. When I went into the school, the relief teacher had forgotten I was coming and I was confronted with the fact there were only three students who would be eligible to participate in the project. According to Taylor, Bogdan, and DeVault (2016), focus groups should have between five and ten people with the optimal number being six to eight. Based on this framework, even before I knew whether all three of the students would consider participating, there was the risk that I would not get enough data for a master’s thesis with just three students. Furthermore, one of the possible three students was absent the day that I came in to introduce the project. The two students I did talk to seemed receptive to the idea of participating so I gave them an information and

consent form and an extra one to pass on to the absent student. However, when I followed up with them a week later, the students did not want to participate. Two of them said that their parents were concerned about the possible interference to their dance and school commitments. This signalled to me just how time pressured these students are. It was also illustrative of Allen's (2011) discussion of the marketisation of education impacting consumer pressures around schools providing knowledge and opportunities which have a direct connection to end goals, in this case, being professional dancers.

Despite having had warnings about parental concern being a difficult hurdle to negotiate in gaining access to research, I was surprised at this outcome. The image that the school projects on its website is of an open, student focussed, progressive environment. However, I soon realised that I had made some assumptions about the nature of the students and their parents. I had not considered that such an interest-focussed environment and parent-centred ethos of the school might result in an even more 'means-to-ends' attitude in which the school's role is to teach its students to transform, adapt, reinvent and self-perfect in an effort towards "marketability and consumption" (McPhail & Palincsar, 2009; Ringrose, 2013, p. 4). I had come into the school expecting a drastic departure away from these neoliberal philosophies of learning (which in some areas it does achieve). However, it became apparent that the school assemblage largely strengthens neoliberal attitudes through its individualistic and competitive environment (Ball, 2003; Giroux & Cohen, 2014; McPhail & Palincsar, 2009).

With no participants, I contacted Anna to see if she had any ideas about the next best step. She suggested that if I was to open up the offer of participation to the younger years that this would significantly broaden the pool of participants. She also recommended I contact the North High School dance learning advisor, Nicole, and ask to access her students. Anna considered North to be much less time constrained and less concerned about the research interfering with NCEA or dance commitments. This required me to reapply to ERHEC in order to gain consent to recruit students under the age of 14 (which ERHEC defines as children). This required me sending a letter to ERHEC about my rationale for why I needed to include children along with any supporting documents (information and consent forms). I was nervous about applying to use younger students due to potential resistance informed by discourses of 'moral panics' surrounding premature sexualisation of children (Renold & Ringrose, 2011). However, gaining ethical consent turned out to be a surprisingly easy process and within a week I had arranged another day to talk to the whole of Anna's class.

Before talking to the students, I met with Anna to discuss the best way to approach them. She stressed the importance of reassuring the students about the small time it would involve, what confidentiality means and how it will be achieved and to give them some examples about what I will be asking so they are assured they won't be asked anything too intimidating or personal (Fieldnotes, 22/08/2018) (see Appendix A for information sheet) . I talked through the project in detail and gave 18 students the information and consent forms. I gave them a deadline of one week to return the forms. Of the 18, only five consented and got permission from their parents to be involved; Rosie, a year 12 student (16), Brooke, a year 10 student (15), Emily, a year 9 student (14), Alexis, a year 8 student (13) and Marysa, a year 6 student (11) (pseudonyms).

Initially I had some ethical and practical concerns around the range of the participants' ages. Firstly, that the age difference between older and younger students would prevent younger students feeling safe or free to express their views. However, I considered that the students were used to working with each other and that to change the focus group to individual interviews was inappropriate. The following week the focus group was arranged for 8am before school started. This time was arranged to ensure minimal interruption to their busy schedules.

For the recruitment of the North High School participants, I made some changes. Firstly, I emailed the dance learning advisor, Nicole, with a brief overview of the study and my intended data collection methods. She responded with interest and requested more information so I sent through a more detailed email of the study along with information and consent forms for her and an information pamphlet for students. The information pamphlet was one of the key changes I made to my recruitment process (see Appendix K). I realised that the information sheet I had used for students was quite intimidating as it was two pages of writing. I therefore decided to make a pamphlet style information sheet which was simplified into bullet points under key headings and had a collection of popular-cultural pictures related to the project. The decision to change to a pamphlet was inspired by the recruitment process Vares and Jackson (2015) used in their study of preteen girls' experiences of magazines and their negotiations of young feminine sexualities. In the pamphlet for the current project, the first page included images and a caption saying, "Social media, TV, movies, magazines, books, music, friends, teachers, family... learning about sexuality and relationships is everywhere....". After sending these to Nicole, I arranged to come in and talk to her senior level (year 11 and above) dance students and hand out the

information and consent forms. Again, I was unfortunate with my timing of the school holidays and had to wait for the term three holidays to be over before this was able to take place.

I went into the school on the first week of term 4 and talked through what would be involved for the students. Again, I asked for the forms to be returned in one week. When I had not heard back, I contacted Nicole to see if any forms had been returned. She replied saying that unfortunately only two students were vaguely open to participating but had not handed in their consent forms. This was another surprising outcome. Even after having trouble recruiting participants from Chorus, I had put that down to the specific nature of the school being heavily focussed on dance with little encouragement to be involved in extracurricular activities. At North High School, following Anna's recommendation, I thought recruitment of participants would be much easier. I speculated that the timing of doing the research was a significant factor in the lack of willing participants with the seniors' exam period coming up. This was again illustrative of how the assessment and measurability focus of education in a neoliberal era is contributing to what motivates students and can cause limitations for voluntary activities which do not directly contribute to their goals of gaining NCEA credits. Nicole touched on this in her discussion of the limitations of placing dance within an assessment and time-restricted environment:

Assessments should only be a snippet of what dance is anyway but a lot of students and, because of time frames, teachers and learning advisors kind of have to go quite directly into assessment um which is yeah really unfortunate [...]. We could do something [...] and it might not be assessment but the kids are driven by assessment so they're sort of like, 'well why are we doing this?' and then time frame you know like let's do that but then we move on to the assessment and they're like, 'why did we just waste *'waste'* four weeks on doing that?'

(Nicole, individual interview, 11/12/2018)

Following the failure to recruit participants, I decided to start familiarising myself with the data I had collected from Chorus High School. As I began 'reading and re-reading' the focus group transcripts, it became clear to both myself and my supervisors that I did not have the richness of data that would be necessary to answer my research questions and complete a master's thesis (Taylor et al., 2016). Around this same time I attended a symposium titled: 'Theories as Practice'. The keynote speaker was Anna Hickey-Moody, Professor of Media and Communications and an Australian Research Council Future Fellow 2017-2021. Part of the symposium involved Hickey-Moody sharing her 'Interfaith

Childhoods’¹ research project in which arts-based workshops are used to engage with complex social issues with children around belonging and identity. It was following this symposium that I realised I needed to find alternative or ‘sideways’ approaches of collecting data in order to address my research questions (Renold et al., 2016). I was inspired to try using artwork, photos and other material artefacts to unearth what matters most in students’ lives as a starting point to understanding how they experience gender, sexuality and relationships (Renold et al., 2016).

I decided to go back to both Anna and Nicole to brainstorm what might be possible for further data collection that could involve their presence. I decided that having Anna and Nicole running the workshops might make the students more comfortable and willing to engage and also allow me to observe some of Anna and Nicole’s pedagogical methods. Through these discussions, the original research question was changed so it was more general and less intimidating (for both me and the participants). After reading different arts and image-based approaches to doing qualitative research I came across Coleman’s (2008; 2009) research investigating the relations between images and girls’ bodies for ‘becoming’ other. Informed by Coleman, my theoretical framework shifted to include Deleuzo-Guattarian theorising of assemblages and becoming (see Chapter Two). This eventually informed my new overarching research question and aims of, ‘How do young people ‘become’ dancer through assemblages within special character high schools?’. As has been discussed, including the words gender, sexuality and relationships in the title of information and consent forms, ethics applications and in participant recruiting approaches tended to result in a confused or uncomfortable response due to the fact that is not the language which participants use themselves in everyday life (Ringrose, Renold & Egan, 2016). As the researcher I was also finding it difficult to ask directly about these topics. Changing the focus to a broader exploration of identity and ‘becoming’ allowed the project to encompass gender, sexuality and relationships if those subjects came up, but it took the pressure off myself and the participants if these topics were not discussed.

In order to address my research question investigating the assemblages of young girls’ dance practice, I continued to work with the students and learning advisors at Chorus and North High Schools. As discussed in Chapter One, Chorus and North High School were categorised by the New Zealand Ministry of Education under the 1989 Education Act as designated character schools. North High School was presented to the public and Ministry of Education before Chorus in 2000. The pedagogical philosophy of North High School is

informed by the policy model of neoliberalism with individualised and interest-based curriculums designed for each student (McPhail & Palincsar, 2009). Therefore, the traditionally prescribed, overarching curriculum is replaced with a focus on ‘discovery learning’ where students are encouraged to follow their interests and self-selected pathways that align with these interests. The subject of dance was made available at North after students expressed their interest to Nicole who was the North Physical Education learning advisor at the time.

Chorus High School collaborates with an external dance school to cater for students wanting to become professional dancers. It is this collaboration and catering to students’ specific dance needs that makes Chorus a special character school. Chorus High School was established from the special character nature of North High School which, as discussed, has a student directed approach to learning. This approach allows for individualised curriculums which are driven by student interest with parents and learning advisors providing support as opposed to deciding what is taught. Therefore, I continued my research with these schools due to the relationship they have with one another, their inclusion of dance, and their privileging of student interest.

In the Chorus High School group, the participants consisted of five girls aged between 11 and 16 and their academic learning advisor, Anna. The North High School participants consisted of two girls and one boy aged between 16 and 17 years and their dance learning advisor, Nicole.

Data collection methods

Following the refocusing of my research question looking at the experiences and dance assemblages of the North and Chorus participants, I utilised three significant methods of data collection. The main method was through a series of focus group discussions. Within these discussions I also utilised image-making and image-reflection workshops. Lastly, I conducted a semi-structured individual interview with Anna, the Chorus academic learning advisor, and Nicole, the dance learning advisor at North. I had planned to also conduct a series of participant observations, however due to time restraints, I decided the interviews

with the learning advisors were more important to gain their perspective on the students' dance education experiences.

Focus Groups

A focus group is an informal and open-ended group discussion among selected individuals organised to investigate people's views on a particular set of issues, topics and experiences (Liamputtong, 2011; Taylor et al., 2016). The aim of the focus group is not to come to a joint consensus on the topics being discussed. Rather it is designed to foster, through the help of a mediator to guide discussion, interactivity among participants in order to gain a variety of responses. This is to get a deep understanding of the range of attitudes, behaviours, opinions or perceptions of the group participants of the issues being discussed (Liamputtong, 2011).

Scholars who discuss different research methodologies suggest that focus groups provide a less intimidating space for participants to share their views and experiences (Barbour, 2007; Liamputtong, 2011). Responses may be challenged, supported and extended among the participants themselves which provides the researcher with a view of the way social interaction is fostered between this particular group of people. As my research aimed to privilege the views of the students on their experiences of dance education, using focus groups allowed the participants to lead the discussion about issues of importance to them and allowed me to capture affective flows that were produced in the focus group context.

Vaughn, Schumm, and Sinagub (1996) consider focus groups to be a useful methodology in educational research. They discuss some of the more practical advantages of a focus group method in qualitative research such as synergism and snowballing. Synergism is the notion that a group interaction will produce a more varied and broader data reserve (Vaughn et al., 1996). Having multiple participants all together, the researcher is able to collect a much larger amount of data in a shorter period of time. This was an important practical consideration as a master's thesis located within a school has specific timing boundaries. Using focus groups allowed me to gain rich data quickly which provided ample time for follow up interviews with the student participants and their learning advisors. In addition, focus groups also offer a snowballing effect where participants are able to react to each other thus creating a conversational and cumulative sharing of ideas (Vaughn et al., 1996).

In a post-structuralist approach, people's identities are in a constant state of development which is shaped by power relations, discourse and interactions with others (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Furthermore, this development is socially and historically specific. Kehily (2002) discusses 'student cultures' which are the peer group interactions in which young people negotiate what is appropriate or legitimate "realms of thought, words and actions" (p. 6). She describes these cultures as significant sites for identity formation where meanings are ascribed to specific events within particular social contexts (Kehily, 2002). Therefore, using focus groups enabled me to attend to the dancers' peer group assemblages and how these produce limiting and extending possibilities for 'becoming' other in relation to their dancer subjectivities.

Other behaviours such as laughing or reactions to particular remarks also become important data to see how knowledge is constructed within a social group setting (Allen, 2011). These behaviours are important as they can signal to a researcher when a topic of significance comes up. In this way, focus groups give researchers the opportunity to attend to affective assemblages in which "inchoate cluster of feelings" (p. 173) around the object of study are recognised (Amin, 2016). The non-verbal reactions and expressions of participants may assist in the understanding of how they are making meanings of themselves and others.

The decision to use focus groups in this research was also made from an ethical perspective. Asking the participants to take part in a different data collection method, such as an individual interview, may have been too intimidating due to the young age of participants and limited relationship with me. A focus group potentially helps to diminish this intimidation factor by providing safety in numbers. This will ideally cultivate an environment where younger participants are more likely to make individual contributions (Wilson, 1997). Though focus groups are a socially contrived method, a central feature of them is their interactive nature. This interactivity offers possibilities for understanding how respondents make meanings of concepts, whether these meanings can stand firm against questioning from other participants and how these meanings may be altered following discussions with their peers (Wilson, 1997).

Lastly, in qualitative research many writers stress the importance of avoiding researcher expectations and asking leading questions to fit data into prescribed outcomes (Ritchie, Lewis, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). However, from a Deleuzo-Guattarian perspective, the researcher is part of the focus group assemblage and therefore inevitably

contributes to the rhizomatic lines and molar/molecular flows being produced. Furthermore, because answering questions is a shared role in a focus group, a sense of spontaneity remains intact which helps to decrease traditional power dynamics between the researcher and participants (Vaughn et al., 1996).

Image-making/reflecting sessions

As this thesis investigates the lived experiences of dancers, I wanted research strategies which would allow me to go beyond *talk* about the body. There have been a number of studies which advocate for the use of image engagement/reflection as a powerful method for “triggering emotions and memories” (Del Busso & Reavey, 2013, p. 51).

Coleman’s (2008; 2009) Deleuzian informed research with teenage girls argues bodies and images are part of an entangled process of becoming. To understand her participants’ relationships with images, Coleman employed focus groups, individual interviews and image-making/reflecting sessions. In the first focus group, Coleman asked the participants (thirteen, 13 to 14-year-old British girls) to discuss their bodies in relation to photographic images of themselves they had brought with them. This discussion allowed rhizomatic possibilities to occur with participants discussing additional images of their bodies they consider important to them. Image forms that emerged which the girls’ considered important included “mirror images, photographic images, glimpses in shop or car windows, images produced through comments from boys, from friends, and from parents” (Coleman, 2008, p. 170). In the individual interviews, the girls were given opportunities to expand on the focus group discussions. During these interviews Coleman also asked the participants to think about and discuss how they imagine their bodies in the future in relation to images of their past and present bodies. Lastly, in the image-making sessions the girls were given “magazine images, a polaroid camera, make-up, food wrappers, craft materials, scissors, papers, pens, and glues” (p. 169) to create an image of their bodies. These different strategies were used by Coleman to “examine the *specific* bodily becomings that these different types of image make possible through the knowledges and understandings of and ways of living that they produce” (Coleman, 2009, p. 106). Furthermore, through the engagement with different image forms, Coleman highlights that ‘becoming’ is not confined temporally or spatially. For example, as her participants highlighted, the body in a past photograph continues to inform present and future experiences of the body. Del Busso and Reavey (2013) in their research of young women’s (between 21 and 35 years) embodied experiences of everyday life, argue that

‘visual languages’ are an important aspect within “the cultural basis of experience and embodied ways of being” (p. 51). As with Coleman (2008; 2009), Del Busso and Reavey specifically discuss photographs as a useful image form for recalling specific memories of the self within a particular event. They also argue that photographs are a representation of ourselves within a variety of temporal and spatial moments.

Therefore, informed by these image-based research methodologies, I collaborated with the learning advisors, Anna (Chorus) and Nicole (North) who ran an image-based focus group workshop. These involved participants reflecting on drawn, audio-visual and photographic images as well as discussions about the role of the mirror image in their dance practice (discussed further below).

Semi-structured individual interviews

In addition to the focus groups, the other main data collection method used in this project was a semi-structured individual narrative interview with learning advisors from each school, Anna (Chorus) and Nicole (North).

As I was interested in the experiences of young people’s learning through dance, I felt it was important to get their learning advisors’ perspectives and reflections. A semi structured, individual interview is a qualitative data collection method which involves the researcher/interviewer asking one participant a collection of pre-planned but open-ended questions (Given, 2008). I chose individual interviews with the learning advisors to allow them to share their views on learning through dance without being influenced by their students. This was with the hope of enabling an additional perspective and understanding of the advisors’ experiences of teaching dance. Furthermore, as the learning advisors are an integral part of the participants’ dance assemblages, I felt their perspectives and experiences were important. In this research, I had to consider the limited time to collect data and the realistic possibilities of doing multiple participant observations as well as focus groups. As mentioned, I decided to forgo observations in order to include individual interviews with the learning advisors.

Collecting the data

In the end, the project involved four stages of data collection over the course of 2018: the initial focus group discussion at Chorus High School, individual interviews with the learning advisors Anna and Nicole, a follow up focus group discussion with the Chorus participants, and an art-based/ image reflection workshop with both the Chorus and North participants exploring how they saw themselves as dancers, their experiences of dance and their goals for the kinds of dancers they wanted to be and become.

During the first focus group with the Chorus participants, the discussion guide involved four main ‘signposts’ to prompt discussion from participants (Taylor et al., 2016). The first signpost was introductions. I talked to the students about how a focus group works with encouragement to talk to each other throughout. I explained that I would be there to prompt or guide discussion. I introduced myself and gave the participants some personal details about myself in the hope that this would make them feel more comfortable and willing to equally share details about their own lives and experiences (Helmer, 2015). The next step was to ‘break the ice’ and get participants used to talking. I had brought some lollies which each had a simple question written on them, examples were ‘what was the last thing that made you laugh?’ and ‘what is your favourite ice cream flavour?’. Each of the participants took a lolly and before answering they had to say their name, their age and what year they were at school. This exercise got the participants laughing and used to talking to each other in front of me. After this I asked the first key question: ‘when did you decide you wanted to be a ballet dancer?’. The second part of the discussion guide was a drawing activity in which I asked the participants to draw the ‘ideal ballerina based on messages they have received’. I gave examples about where these messages may have come from including teachers, parents, friends, television, books and magazines, and let them draw for five to ten minutes. The third key topic was around the most important places they learn about sexuality, relationships and gender.

After a preliminary analysis of the focus group transcript, I made notes about points of interest that I felt needed more unpacking. These notes informed the questions I asked in the follow up focus group with the Chorus participants. For example, in the first focus group the participants mentioned a number of different locations where dance takes place including their homes, at school and onstage. It was not until I had transcribed the interview that I

realised it would be useful to know more about how the different locations influence the way the participants' experience dance and constitute their dance identities. This formed a discussion point for the follow up focus group around the participants' favourite places to dance and how the different locations influence the way they feel about dance. The follow-up focus group was in the same location at the Chorus High School campus and went for approximately 1 hour.

I arranged an individual narrative interview with Anna after the follow-up focus group with the Chorus participants. I used the focus-group transcripts to inform the discussion guide with Anna, however, I was careful not to divulge information that would compromise the Chorus participants' confidentiality. This interview took place in a private room away from the Chorus campus.

As previously mentioned, following discussions with my supervisors, the data I had collected was not rich enough to answer my research questions. Along with Anna's suggestion, I decided that having a comparative element between North and Chorus High School would be a useful addition to the project. Once I had made contact with the North learning advisor, Nicole, and recruited the participants I arranged a focus group workshop which would be predominantly run by Nicole. This took place after school in Nicole's classroom. The only instruction I gave Nicole for how I would like the workshop to be run was to explore the kind of dancers the participants want to be and become. I suggested that this exploration could include the use of videos, drawings, images and collaging. However, the ultimate running of the workshop was up to Nicole to allow for a more organic interaction between her and the students and to resist a rigid workshop plan which may limit the flow of discussion. The resulting workshop was run with two main activities. The first involved Nicole asking the students to show a video of a performance that was meaningful to them. This could be of themselves, their peers or a professional performance. Discussion around these videos included why this performance was meaningful and led to conversations around the participants' different choreography styles. Nicole used the discussion to prompt the second main activity which involved the participants creating drawings which represented their own and each other's choreography style. The students then took turns speaking to their illustrations. The workshop produced rhizomatic molar and molecular lines in relation to how students perceived their own and others' choreography style and how this contributed to their understanding of themselves as dancers (discussed in Chapter Four).

Similarly with Anna, I arranged an individual interview with Nicole to get some more information about her observations and experiences as the North dance learning advisor. This took place in a private office at the North High School campus and ran for an hour and a half.

I decided that it would be useful to repeat the workshop-style discussion with the Chorus participants. I thus gave Anna ideas for how it could be run but ultimately left it up to her. Anna's approach to the workshop revolved around three main tasks. The first involved her asking the students to bring in images of objects and artefacts meaningful to them as dancers. When the participants did not do this, Anna brought in a stack of images she had printed. She then asked the students to make two collages using the provided images. One collage was to represent the things the students love about dance and the other was to represent the challenges of being a dancer. This task was received enthusiastically by the participants however did have some limitations due to the images being selected by Anna. While this was necessary to allow the workshop to progress, the resulting collages were limited to the images Anna had selected rather than images participants brought in themselves (Fieldnotes, 28/11/2018). The second task Anna asked the group to do was to show a video of their favourite dance performance and talk about what they liked about it. Unfortunately the participants showed their videos all at the same time and only to each other in small groups which meant the discussion that followed was limited to one sentence from each person about what they liked. The final task involved the participants showing the group an image of their favourite professional dancer and discussing their selection. Again, discussion around the images was quite limited possibly due to Anna feeling time pressured to get through all of the planned exercises. However, this part of the workshop produced some interesting molar and molecular flows regarding body image (discussed in Chapter Five).

Data collection reflections

As discussed by Mauthner and Doucet (2003), "Feminist, postmodern, post-structural, hermeneutic, interpretive and critical discourses" (p. 416) argue that knowledges is socially and historically specific. Therefore, Mauthner and Doucet suggest that researchers, especially those working within these theoretical frameworks, should reflect on their interpretations of

data and how these interpretations are reached. As an emergent researcher, I had some key reflections of the different data collection methods which may have contributed to the discussions that emerged in focus groups and individual narrative interviews as well as the analysis of these discussions.

Reflections of the focus group

Using focus groups was an effective method for this project. The Chorus participants tended to be quite shy and reluctant to engage in discussion (Fieldnotes, 12/09/2018). However, having a group setting created a less intimidating space and quite often the participants would help to foster responses if they saw each other struggling to form words (Fieldnotes, 12/09/2018). Though largely positive, I also had some key learning experiences with regard to conducting focus groups.

During the very first focus group with the Chorus participants, Anna (their learning advisor) arranged for it to take place in an empty dance studio. There were some short seats and beanbags arranged in a circle and Anna brought me in a normal sized chair to be more comfortable (Fieldnotes, 12/09/2018). Although Anna intended to make me feel welcome and comfortable, the chair she gave me meant I sat much higher than the rest of the group which created or emphasised a power dynamic between me and the participants (Fieldnotes, 12/09/2018). Being physically higher than the rest of the group created more of a structured interview setting with me asking a question and the participants responding to me directly rather than an interactive conversation with the participants responding to each other. In follow-up focus groups I made sure that I was seated on the same level as the rest of the participants to avoid this physical power dynamic.

Secondly, though the Chorus participants were used to working altogether, the varied ages of the group made it difficult for me to encourage the younger participants to talk more. The older students tended to be the most forthcoming with discussion which may have intimidated the younger participants (Fieldnotes, 12/09/2018).

The last significant lesson I learnt from conducting focus groups was the importance of having an opening warm-up discussion rather than diving straight into prepared research questions. As discussed in the method section above, for the participants of this project I brought in lollies which had simple questions written on the packaging. These were crucial in providing an ice breaker and establishing a relationship with the participants as we were able to learn things about each other and laugh together in an easy way (Fieldnotes, 12/09/2018).

Reflections of semi-structured individual interviews

My main reflection on the individual interviews was the difference having a prior relationship with the participant makes. I had interviewed Anna for my honours project in 2017 and we had seen each other a few times after this interview at education conferences. This made a significant difference in my interview approach. She has always been enthusiastic about my research so I felt relaxed going into the interview which helped me stay present and focussed on what she was saying rather than panicking about what to ask next.

Analysing the data

My approach to analysing the data was a post-structural informed thematic analysis. For this I used the work of Clarke and Braun (2015) and Terry (2015). Prior to the shifts in my research question and aims, the project was predominantly informed by a Foucauldian theoretical framework. Therefore, in analysing the data the focus was on *how* the participants talked about their bodies, gender, sexuality and identities and the discourses they were drawing upon and positioning themselves within. From this I was able to highlight patterned meaning across the different data sets. While a Deleuzo-Guattarian theoretical framework is less applicable for a thematic analysis, after the data was organised into themes I was able to look at the affective, deterritorializing and reterritorializing flows that were enacted through the focus group assemblage and what they produced. However, this section focusses predominantly on the initial thematic data analysis process.

Clarke and Braun (2015) provide six key steps of a thematic analysis. The first is ‘data familiarisation’ which involves the “reading and re-reading” (p. 90) of data. This stage also involves making initial personal memos of potential analytic insights to be explored in later stages. I began the thematic analysis by making notes of initial insights on all of the transcripts. For example, I noted emphasis on negotiations of physical appearance for the students engaged in classical ballet. This highlighted the importance of exploring the different genres of dance and what these genres produce for the participants’ identities as dancers and teenagers.

‘Data coding’ is the second stage of Clarke and Braun’s thematic analytic steps. This involves labelling sections of data, either with one word or a short phrase, to capture the

analytic idea relating to the overarching research question. For example, I coded the extract below as ‘hire-ability awareness’:

- Brooke: Yeah like some companies like... will only have body types like Emily’s, whereas they would never have someone like me who is shorter and...
- Rosie: Yeah they are like really strict
- Alexis: Yeah your legs have to be a certain length
- Brooke: Yeah and they’ll like measure you and stuff
- Harriet: Wow that’s so specific. So do different companies look for different things?
- Alexis: Yeah
- Harriet: And is that a New Zealand company?
- Brooke: The Royal New Zealand Ballet is quite like chill about it I think
- Emily: They like shorter people

(Chorus focus group discussion, 12/09/2018)

Once the data is coded, Clarke and Braun suggest removing the data to test that the code successfully represents the meaning it is designed to capture. This stage also requires considering whether each section of data needs a new or existing code. Clarke and Braun also encourage coding the data more than once to ensure it is coded “comprehensively and consistently” (p. 92). For example, in the extract above on my second round of coding I decided that this section of data also fit into another existing code of ‘physical appearance restrictions in ballet’. Once satisfied with the initial coding, the data is organised within its corresponding code or codes.

The third stage is ‘searching for themes’. Clarke and Braun describe codes as signifiers for specific sections of data whereas themes represent “patterning of meaning” (p. 93) within the overarching data set. Before deciding on themes, all the codes are listed together and then categorised as relating to a specific idea. This categorisation provides ‘candidate themes’. After going through all of the codes from each data set, I came up with eight candidate themes. These were ‘tensions of dance in a schooling context’; ‘learning resulting from physicality of dance’; ‘special character school elements which impact dance experience’; ‘physical appearance and body image pressures associated with being a dancer’; ‘focus on professional goals’; ‘experiencing dance through NCEA’; ‘dance is a personal space’; and ‘different genres of dance create different possibilities of learning’. I placed each of these candidate themes within a table with associated codes, for example:

Candidate theme	Associated Codes
Different genres of dance create different possibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contemporary subverts the “beautiful” ballerina - Rules of ballet are deeply engrained and difficult to break away from - Contemporary is a more emotional genre - Ballet is both therapeutically and mundanely predictable - Hip Hop is the opposite to ballet - Contemporary offers surprising and subversive ways of moving - Ballet experiences make it difficult to try new ways of moving

Once all of the candidate themes were placed in tables, I applied Clarke and Braun’s questions for identifying a good theme:

1. “Is this candidate theme centrally relevant to answering my research question?”
2. “Is this candidate theme evident across more than one or two data items?”
3. “Can I easily identify a **central organising concept** for this candidate theme?”

(Clarke & Braun, 2015, p. 93)

This led to the next phase of the thematic analysis steps of ‘reviewing themes’. This involves the checking of candidate themes against the corresponding coded data and the data set as a whole. Following both the questions above and ensuring the candidate themes were representative of the data, I was able to collapse themes together and remove others entirely. For instance, the themes ‘experiencing dance through NCEA’ and ‘difficulties of negotiating dance in a schooling context’ were able to be collapsed together as many of the associated codes within these themes overlapped. This process resulted in the finalising of three significant themes; ‘physical appearance tensions and negotiations in dance’; ‘different genres of dance produce different outcomes’ and ‘impacts of experiencing dance within a school context’. Following this stage I was able to move on to the fifth step of ‘defining and naming themes’. This stage involves writing a brief definition of what the theme encompassed in order to test my “analytic clarity” (p. 97). It also involved the selection of data excerpts. For the theme ‘different genres of dance produce different outcomes’ I wrote the following definition:

A core theme in the analysis of data on high school dance students’ experiences is ‘different genres of dance produce different outcomes’. It became clear in both schools

that there are different frameworks of thought associated with different dance genres. In the interviews, genres of contemporary, jazz and hip-hop and the possibilities they offer tended to be positioned and contrasted against the possibilities of ballet. This theme enables discussion of the way the Chorus and North High School students understand contemporary dance as a genre which subverts the traditional dance conventions of ballet and the conceptualisation of ballet as a dance genre which relies upon the reproducing of recognisable rules and conventions.

The final step Clarke and Braun outline is ‘writing up thematic analysis’. This involved me bringing together relevant literature and data extracts under each of the identified themes. After writing sections for each of the themes, I decided that the content within the ‘impacts of experiencing dance within a school context’ theme was more relevant for an introduction rather than an analytic section. This resulted in the ‘physical appearance’ and ‘dance genre’ themes being developed into the final Chapter Four: ‘Reflections’ on Dance Genres and Practices and Chapter Five: Negotiating constructions of the ‘Ballerina’.

From these organised themes I moved to a Deleuzo-Guattarian focussed process of data analysis identifying affectual dance assemblages and mapping the affective molar and molecular flows they produced. Reconfiguring the focus group discussions and dance experiences of the participants as affective assemblages allowed me to highlight the historical, contemporary social and political realities that shape the students’ ‘becoming’ dancer. This also allowed me to explore the affective flows and intensities that are produced through different interactions, for instance with me, each other and the space. The mapping of these flows then allowed me to highlight the enabling and limiting possibilities of the dancers becoming other and the ways in which the focus group dance assemblage is a dynamic space where rhizomatic intensities for becoming other are in a constant state of flux.

Conclusion

This chapter details the shifts in this project often due to the methodological difficulties of researching topics of gender and sexuality within school contexts in neoliberal times. These difficulties included gaining ethical consent, recruiting participants, timing issues and student workload constraints. These challenges are illustrated by the changing titles of my project which started as ‘Exploring how the everyday realities of young people’s sexual and relational lives are engaged with through the arts subjects (film, literature and

dance) they take at a special character high school'. The approach and title of the resulting research is very different with the new title being, 'Becoming' through Dance: Assemblages of young girls' dance practice in special character high schools'. This change in title also illustrates the theoretical shifts and developments which occurred during the research process. The current title and focus on dance assemblages allowed the participants' to highlight what they considered important in relation to their dance education as opposed to the more prescriptive approach of focusing on their 'sexual and relational lives'. Observing the rhizomatic, molar (reterritorializing) and molecular (deterritorializing) flows and instances where the participants could 'become' provided a more complex analysis of both the challenges and possibilities for becoming other. It is clear in even seemingly 'progressive schools', that there remain underlying practical difficulties of explicitly researching gender and sexuality in a school context. Furthermore, neoliberal ideologies of efficiency contribute to the difficulties of doing this kind of research with students tending to be disinterested in engaging with opportunities that do not directly assist them in gaining credits for NCEA. The following chapter involves an exploration of how the Chorus and North participants utilise different images in their dance practices to constitute themselves as part of a broader dance assemblage, and what that produced.

Chapter Four

‘Reflections’ on dance genres and practices

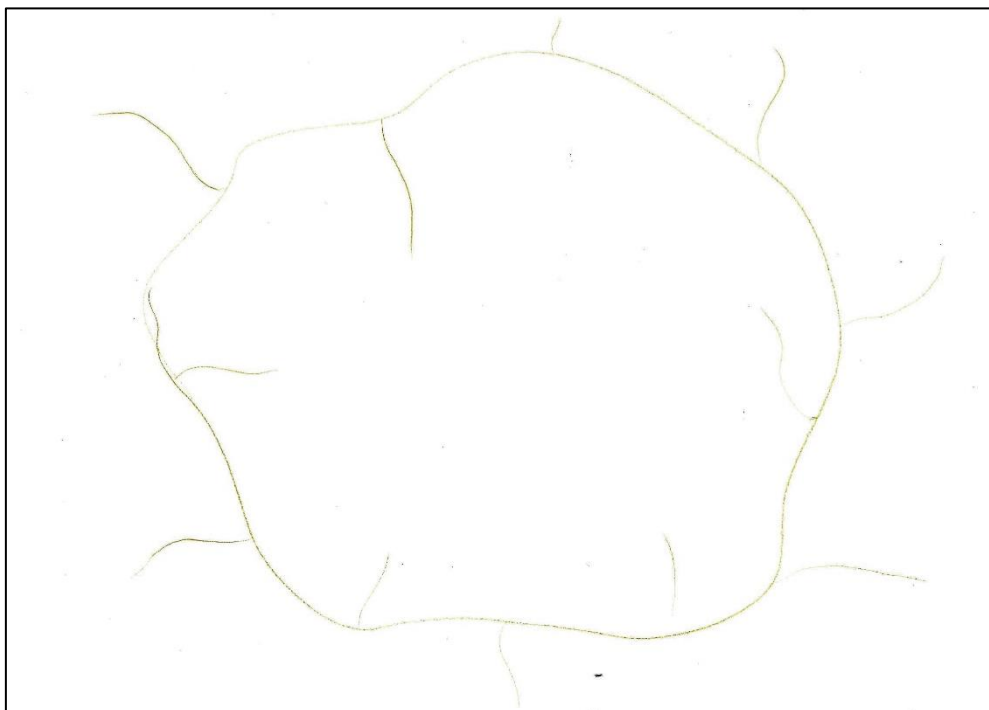
Coleman (2009), following focus group interviews and image-making sessions with teenage girls, argues that images and bodies are part of an ‘entangled’ process of becoming in a broader dance assemblage. I have found Coleman’s approach useful for understanding the talk of the participants in my study. Throughout the focus groups the participants talked about the ways in which they use images of themselves in their dance practice. These included drawings of their choreography styles, videos of their performances and mirror reflections in the dance studio (the focus of this chapter) and images of professional ballerinas (discussed in Chapter Five). I draw on Coleman’s argument that images don’t simply have an ‘effect’, but produce knowledge, understandings and experiences of bodies. In so doing, they can limit or extend the becoming of bodies in particular ways.

“You have the potential to be ugly but beautiful”: Participants framing of different genres of dance

Contemporary dance, unlike classical ballet, is difficult to define due to the genre being “unpredictable” (p. 44) and taking inspiration from an array of different art forms including modern, jazz, lyrical and ballet (Strauss & Nadel, 2012). However, some broad features of contemporary dance techniques include controlled legwork, significant use of the floor and sudden changes in the rhythm of movement (Albright, 1997; Strauss & Nadel, 2012). In their discussion of contemporary dance, the participants echoed these descriptions: “most of it’s done on the floor” and “you do a lot of standing, walking, stopping, turning, walking, stopping, turning” (Hannah, North focus group workshop, 28/11/2018); “you’re very connected and flowy but then you like extend like then you’ve got your like dynamic kind of changes” (Amy, North focus group workshop, 23/11/2018); “contemporary is all about being like loose” (Brooke, Chorus focus group interview, 17/10/2018); and “you have to be one with the ground” (Alexis, Chorus focus group interview, 17/10/2018). These descriptors highlight the significance of a particular use of space and movement which is in a

constant state of motion and transition, as features of the contemporary dance assemblage. The changeable nature of this genre was a focus of the North participants who argued that contemporary dance facilitates the expression of becoming other through personal dance styles.

The following extract from the students at North High School was in response to an artwork task around choreography style. Nicole (the North dance learning advisor) asked the students to “image-ise” each other’s and their own contemporary dance choreography styles and speak to the image. This prompted some consideration of the relationship between choreography and genre, as well as previous training or experience as part of the participants’ contemporary dance assemblage:



“Ugly but beautiful”, Amy’s representation of Hannah’s choreography style

- Amy: Okay well I feel like you’re very flow-like you’re very connected and flowy but then you like extend like then you’ve got your like dynamic kind of changes dynamic changes that create so I feel like, like you have the potential to be ugly but beautiful-
- Hannah: Pffft!-
- Amy: If that makes sense?
- Hannah: What does that mean?
- Amy: Okay if that makes sense-
- Hannah: I don’t understand
- Amy: You like, sometimes you’ll make cool shapes that could be like
- Nicole (LA): that are unique

Amy: Yeah, yeah
 Hannah: I'm not like looking to be nice, I'm deliberately not being a ballerina
 Amy: Yeah that's what I mean like ugly but beautiful like not ballerina, okay I feel like I worded that wrong
 (North focus group workshop, 23/11/2018)

Plugging themselves into the ballet assemblage, Hannah and Amy are exploring gendered embodiments of ballet and the beautiful ballerina. Hannah's "flowy" movements are recognised by Amy as reminiscent of a normative molar feminine ballerina which Amy describes as "beautiful". Hannah then pairs these "flowy" movements with "dynamic changes" which are not normally found in classical ballet movements. These changes produce molecular affective flows which open up possibilities for 'becoming' another less normative kind of ballerina. Hannah's assertion that this is a deliberate choice highlights her desire for using contemporary dance as a way to disrupt normative feminine embodiments of ballet. It instantiates a line of flight with the molecular movements producing what she describes as "cool shapes" and "unique" performances. Ballet remains as one of the 'highest' art forms which has come to represent movements recognised as 'beautiful' (Atencio & Wright, 2009; Pickard, 2013). Movements that are not recognised as typical for classical ballet are thus considered as 'other', "unique", and "ugly". However, Hannah's awareness of dominant understandings of "beautiful" movements inspires her choreography style in contemporary dance to be uncanny and challenging and, therefore, opens possibilities to become other for both herself as a dancer and audience members who are also deterritorialised through her movements.

Hannah and Amy's framing of choreography is a way of "rethinking [...] orientation" with respect to space and environment (Joy, 2014, p. 1). Joy discusses dance choreography as more than a form of artistic convention, but also a fundamentally "theoretical" and "critical" practice (p. 13). Her argument is based on her analysis of an interview with French contemporary choreographer Jérôme Bel who argues that choreography provides a structure within which "much more than dance is inscribed" (Bauer, 2008, p. 42). This is the case in Hannah's choreography experience which she uses as a means to convey new understandings of beauty through juxtaposing and jarring movements. Albright (1997) also explores the possibilities of contemporary choreography for disrupting taken for granted distinctions between bodies and cultural representations. She argues that dance, and contemporary dance especially, can be a tool for tracing negotiations between the body and identity (Albright, 1997). For example, a person's physical appearance with respect to gender and ethnicity, can

be read off the body which is then ascribed a particular meaning. Dancing may disrupt these physical appearance related assumptions through molecular flows in relation to the style of movement, performance situation (for example, costumes and lighting) and interaction with other bodies (Albright, 1997). This is apparent in Hannah's deliberate resistance to "not being a ballerina" where being a ballerina is about being "nice" and "beautiful". Rather, Hannah's choreography is about challenging the gendered norms of appearance and movement that inform the idea and image of the 'ballerina'. Yet she and Amy struggle to articulate what 'not being a ballerina' means. If being a ballerina is about 'being beautiful', then the opposite is 'ugly'. However, as Amy indicates this is 'worded wrong'. Ballet is accepted as the embodiment or epitome of feminine beauty which is determined through movements and appearance. Amy's framing is informed by dualistic thought⁴, in which a dancer not doing ballet and "deliberately not [wanting to be] a ballerina" can only become the opposite of beautiful which is "ugly". The girls also struggle with this dualistic framework because they know it is too simplistic, but do not have the language to describe it in another way. Hannah's struggle to articulate her preferred dance genre and movements outside of a dualistic framework continued in her attempt to be more specific about what she does not like about ballet:

- Harriet: You said before that you deliberately aren't trying to be a ballerina (Hannah laughs) can you talk a little bit more about that? Like-
- Hannah: Um well when I stopped ballet it's because I decided I did not want to be a ballerina. I was like I don't want to do that professionally, I don't want to do that and I was like thirteen and I was like nah! Not for me (laughs) but I still really liked dance and stuff but ballerina I just I don't. It's not that I don't like ballet but, like as a genre of dance, but I just kind of I feel like it's so limited like it's all pretty and all the same and they often do the same things side to side it'll be like a jete, par de deux and a jete and a da da da and-
- Nicole (LA): It's quite symmetrical-
- Hannah: It keeps doing that and I find it really annoying, it'll be like lots of twirls all around the room and I'm like can you just do something else now (laughs) yeah
- ...
- Hannah: I find contemporary is more emotional and I prefer being emotional
(North focus group workshop, 23/11/2018)

Hannah indicates that she experiences classical ballet as limiting in various ways. These limitations include the strong professional expectations associated with this dance genre, lack of opportunity for emotional expression and often repetitive movements. More specifically, Hannah highlights that the movements in classical ballet are "all pretty". Here Hannah draws

on the construction of classical ballet as the embodiment of femininity. She aims to disassociate from this molar co-construction through stating that her preferred genre is contemporary dance. However, Hannah struggles to articulate this beyond emphasising her dislike of “pretty” movements. This struggle appears to be between liking ballet but disliking the way it has come to represent movements which are graceful and elegant, “pretty and all the same”. For Hannah and Amy, contemporary dance, as a genre, offers molecular possibilities which disrupt normative femininities associated with classical ballet.

Secondly, Hannah justifies her preference for contemporary dance by asserting that the genre is “more emotional”. This highlights a further area of tension surrounding the construction of ballet as embodying normative femininity. Emotional expression has traditionally been associated with women and femininity. However, Hannah suggests that in the context of classical ballet, emotions tend to be contained/restrained. Contemporary dance offers her a space to explore her preference for “being emotional”. The opportunity for more emotional expression in the other dance genres also speaks to an intersection of class, dance genre and femininity. Atencio and Wright (2009) argue that there are “high and low forms of dance” (p.32) with ballet being atop this hierarchy. As a high form of dance, ballet values bodies which are “controlled, corrected and mastered” through practices of surveillance, exclusion and regulation (Atencio & Wright, 2009, p. 34). In other words, it is not just feminine appearance and controlled movements which constitute the molar ‘ballerina’, but also controlled emotions. The intersection of class, dance genre and gender in the broader dance assemblage is apparent here, with the molar construction of ballet as a ‘high form’ and the ballerina as pretty and restrained⁵.

At Chorus, participants also made regular comparisons between ballet and other dance genres. These comparisons were related to the differences in movement, body parts that are given emphasis, the music that is used and the way the physical environment and dance space is utilised:

Harriet:	Okay so you all do ballet and contemporary and jazz was it?
Alexis:	And lyrical
Harriet:	What are some of the main differences between them?
Rosie:	Jazz you get to move your hips!

(Group laughter)

Brooke:	just the energy
Alexis:	and the attitude

Harriet: Is that like a big no in ballet?
 All: Yeah
 Harriet: Oh! Okay!
 Brooke: Yeah well contemporary is all about being like loose and, well there's different types of contemporary
 Alexis: Being one with the ground
 Brooke: Yeah! You have to be one with the ground. Ballet is like upright,
 Alexis: Elegant
 Brooke: Elegant, professional
 Rosie: Not messy, I don't know
 Harriet: So what kind of things do you feel or like differences that you feel in each of those dances?
 Rosie: Jazz I don't feel like I have to think about technique so much whereas like with ballet you are focussing on everything
 Harriet: Technique, okay
 Rosie: But then jazz is like, I don't know like contemporary
 (Chorus focus group discussion, 17/10/2018)

Here the Chorus participants explore the embodied spatial differences between ballet and jazz/contemporary dance characterising the broader dance assemblage. Rosie points to the different body parts which are emphasised through movement in jazz such as the ability to “move your hips!”. This was further illustrated by the reactions of the girls laughing and enthusiastically agreeing when I asked if moving your hips is a “big no” in ballet (Fieldnotes, 12/09/2018). Molar affective flows were engaged in as they went on to explain that ballet is “upright”, “elegant” and “not messy”. Aalten (2004) also provides a discussion of ballet's beauty being created by the straight lines, extension of the body and the “illusion of weightlessness” that is emphasised (p. 267). This framing of ballet and the kinds of movements that are available are again informed by wider hierarchies of high/low forms of art (Atencio & Wright, 2009). Walkerdine (1986) effectively articulates hierarchies of art and culture with “the ‘cold’ aesthetic of high culture” being ‘appreciated’ on a “cerebral and intellectualized” level (p. 197). In contrast, she locates ‘low culture’ within “bodily and sensuous pleasures” (p. 197). The specific movements of ballet being “upright” and “elegant” have come to indicate a higher form of performance (Atencio & Wright, 2009). This is contrasted with other dance forms such as contemporary, hip-hop and ethnic dancing which signify power and energy but are seen to lack in technique and discipline which are the staples of the molar machine of classical ballet (Atencio & Wright, 2009; Mills, 1997). This framing of high and low forms of dance is further illustrated with jazz being understood as less technique focussed and having a wider margin for ‘getting it right’. This is indicated when Rosie comments that in ballet you have to “focus on everything”. The participants also indicate that jazz encourages the use of the ground and an exploration of different levels (or

vertical distance from the floor) whereas ballet tends to be predominantly “upright”, thus physically and symbolically representing the difference in the high and low dance forms.

These differences were explored further with comments made about the characterisation and facial expressions that are used in jazz:

- Alexis: I don't know maybe like for me jazz is all about like face as well and I'm not the best at doing like really sassy faces and
- Rosie: Yeah you are
- Brooke: Better than me!
- Alexis: but for jazz like you have to think about like what face you're doing next
- Rosie: But that's like the same for ballet as well
- Alexis: yeah but like if you really enjoy that it just naturally shows on your face anyways
- Brooke: and maybe because that's what you want to be when you're older, that's what's making you work harder
- Rosie: yeah
- Harriet: So Jazz is definitely more sassy?
- Rosie: Yeah!
- Harriet: Like in what ways? What do you mean by that?
- Brooke: like your movements have to be a lot stronger
- Rosie: And sharper
- Brooke: yeah
- Alexis: Maybe the certain songs that they pick to do dancing to?
- Rosie: Yeah
- ...
- Alexis: Pop songs
- Rosie: Yeah just like the radio
- Brooke: Like real sassy like we were going to do a jazz to a sassy drag queen song
- Alexis: but then we found out it had lots of bad words-
- Brooke: swear words so we had to change.

(Chorus focus group discussion, 17/10/2018)

For Alexis, jazz is associated with being “sassy” and having lots of facial expression. She finds it difficult to transition from the “elegant” ballet genre to the highly expressive and “sassy” jazz genre. The participants from Chorus are all aspiring classical ballerinas with their experiences of jazz and contemporary considered more as hobbies. During a brainstorming session in which the Chorus participants constructed the ideal ballerina, they discussed the importance of having “a good attitude” (Brooke, Chorus focus group discussion, 12/09/2018), “self-discipline” (Marysa, Chorus focus group discussion, 17/10/2018) and “not talking back” (Alexis, Chorus focus group discussion, 12/09/2018) “towards your teacher[...]even if you think they are wrong” (Rosie, Chorus focus group discussion, 12/09/2018). This expectation of submission combined with western

constructions of ballet as “the pinnacle of the dance world” (p.32) informs participants’ understandings and experiences of jazz and contemporary dance. They see these genres as enabling with respect to movements being ‘loose’, energetic and “sassy”. In one definition, sassy is described as being “disrespectful in a lively, confident way” (Collins English Dictionary, 2018). The use of this word thus seems to capture the ‘disrespectful’, challenging and molecular nature of contemporary dance and jazz with respect to ballet. As mentioned in the extract above during the discussion of the differences between classical ballet and jazz/contemporary dance, Rosie exclaimed that in the latter, “you get to move your hips!”. Following this, the Chorus participants discussed the desirable identity in a jazz and contemporary dance context being the “sassy” girl who expresses herself through strong and sharp movements, music, and facial expressions. In contrast, the desirable femininity discussed by the Chorus participants in relation to ballet was the “effortless”, “light”, “proper” and “neat” girl. While the “sassy” girl is part of the molar machine of jazz and contemporary dance, when discussed in relation to classical ballet, ‘sassiness’ is part of a molecular flow due to the way it disrupts the ‘proper’ and ‘self-disciplined’ ballerina within the molar machine of classical ballet.

The participants from both Chorus High School and North High School considered the different genres of dance as distinctly separate, with their own boundaries and possibilities for what can be produced. Contemporary, jazz and hip-hop dance were often positioned in opposition to or challenging the rules and conventions of classical ballet. The music, characterisation and expression, use of the space, and body movements that are facilitated in contemporary and jazz dance produce molecular flows which challenge the molar controlled, classical and elegant nature of the ‘beautiful ballerina’.

“I loved dancing it and I feel like it was just me”: Connecting to dance performance through video, the mirror and the stage

Regardless of the genre of dance being performed, the way the Chorus and North participants talked about their experiences of dance indicated that it is an emotional art form. Throughout the discussions at both schools, emotion was described as an important part of being a successful dancer and as a key element to enjoying dance. This included both the emotion that was felt while dancing, and as part of the process of overcoming challenges in

dance. However, both groups of participants often described emotional expression as clashing with notions of control and critical reflection on their dance practice.

This was illustrated by Amy as she talked about how her “relationship” with dance had changed. During the North High School workshop, Nicole (the learning advisor) asked the participants to show a video clip of a performance which was meaningful to them. Amy selected one of herself performing a contemporary dance duet. She explained that it was a dance for NCEA level 3 and was performed during an end of year showcase. Watching the video clip rhizomatically produced molecular affective flows as Amy felt upset and started crying while she was watching. When the focus group took place, Amy was one year out of high school and had been training at a ballet school, Rose Dance School⁶. She described this School as being a much less supportive and creative place to learn, “as soon as I started Rose I was told I couldn’t choreograph to music...I was just told a lot of no’s...I’ve had to learn other ways to create” (Amy, North focus group workshop). This recent experience of dance impacted on the way she read the image of herself in the video:

- Harriet: Are you okay? Did you need to stop or...?
 Amy: Yeah, no it’s all good it’s just
 Hannah: Bringing back memories?
 Amy: Yeah...like it’s funny watching it because I have the worst technique, and everything but I feel like that’s, that whole just that performance is like dancing it was real like I enjoyed dancing it and I loved dancing it and I feel like it was just me
 ...
 Amy: but no, yeah. It’s just hard to watch but it’s good to watch like I feel like yeah that piece is like I just remember making it and just like enjoying it...it’s just and like not really caring which was real nice
 ...
 Harriet: Do you feel like that’s not something you’re getting now like is that why your emotional?
 Amy: Yeah I don’t have the same relationship with dance as I used to
 Harriet: Yep
 Amy: Which is just kind of hard like yeah that’s okay
 (North focus group workshop, 23/11/2018)

Amy indicates that despite her technique being “the worst”, she loved that particular performance. She attributes this to the enjoyment she felt while dancing it and the way she felt like “it was just me”. Even though the dance was part of an assessment for NCEA level 3, Amy enjoyed it because she was not caring or worrying about it. Furthermore, in this extract Amy is responding to seeing herself in an audio-visual form. For Amy, the image of herself in the video reminds her of the way that despite ‘poor technique’, dance can make her happy.

The image rhizomatically produces both a cache of positive (and negative) dance affective flows, and a symbol of comparison to Amy's current experience of dance. She compared the way she felt in this assessed performance to her more recent experiences of dance:

- Amy: Yeah I feel like dance is always from an emotional place and I think like whenever you do like I personally whenever I would choreograph something I want it to say something like I want it to mean something, I don't want to just be dancing because I have to you know like
- Nicole (LA): Yeah
- Amy: and I think that's where it's like hard because it's like I'm dancing but what am I, like everyone anyone can do this like you can be trained and you could be a dancer but you don't say anything and that's where it's yeah I like
- ...
- Amy: yeah it's just kind of like it's not, I just don't feel as attached to the pieces you know like I feel like it's more of somebody else's choreography that I'm dancing but I've choreographed it, yeah
- Hannah: like it's separate from yourself?
- Amy: Yeah, yeah it's not like yeah
- (North focus group workshop, 23/11/2018)

In the extracts above, Amy talks about not feeling (emotionally) attached to pieces others have choreographed. However, as a dancer this will be much of what she does. The participants often struggled to articulate what they meant. In part, this may be due to age and life stage, as well as the research context. However, it also seems to be about the contradictions and ambiguities they experience as dancers, and the strongly affective flows produced through dance. In this instance, it is about the difference between the enjoyment of dancing their own creations and those of others. This informed further probing into where attachment to dance comes from. Timothy emphasised that sometimes he can be more attached to someone else's choreography than his own:

- Harriet: So choreography is like a really huge part of your connection to the dance I guess?
- Amy: mmm?
- Timothy: Sometimes
- Hannah: Ha!
- Timothy: I say sometimes just because there are dances that I've done by other people that I feel really connected to and I guess, I guess it's choreography related. But I don't feel like it necessarily is like um like that choreography isn't mine um but you find like the access into someone else's work sometimes and when that happens it can kind of when that happens it can sometimes be more amazing than when you connect to your own choreography, because all of a sudden you're like

in someone else's space and you're just there when it works and it's just that's rare, that doesn't happen very much but when it does it's cool.
(North, focus group workshop, 23/11/2018)

Though he acknowledges this is “rare”, Timothy argues that connection to a dance does not have to come from one's own choreography. In fact, finding a connection to someone else's vision can be “more amazing” than having a connection to your own work. Although Amy's contribution to this discussion was limited, when I first posed the question she did not definitively say yes or no and her body language suggested an ambivalence about answering (Fieldnotes, 23/11/2018). This indicates, perhaps, that her reflections about her (lack of) emotional connection towards dance are not solely about dancing pieces that others have choreographed. Rather, the extracts above highlight the importance of a personal connection for Amy's enjoyment of dance regardless of the choreographer. In these examples, emotion is constructed in two distinct ways. Firstly, there is the emotional response that Amy experiences from watching herself and remembering how she felt when doing a particular performance that she enjoyed. The second way is the emotional connection and inspiration that Amy highlights is the foundation of her choreography. In her current dance education at Rose Dance School, Amy's dance experiences hold little meaning for her and she desires it to “mean something”. This results in Amy experiencing a sense of separation in herself during her performances. In watching back the video of herself, Amy recognises and reconnects the image of the dancer with herself.

In response to Amy's discussion around her finding dance difficult without an emotional connection, Nicole, the North learning advisor, highlighted a tension in the arts between needing to be emotional in order to perform and create meaningful pieces, while also needing to have a “thick skin” due to the “cutthroat” neoliberal nature of the performing arts:

- Nicole (LA): Yep it's pretty cutthroat, yeah... I was probably similar to you at your age to be honest, just like yeah carrying too much emotion in the arts is um it's like while I think it's good because if you actually care and you show who you are it's-
- Hannah: It's your passion for it
- Timothy: It makes it tougher for you
- Nicole (LA): Yeah it makes it hard for you, yeah
- Hannah: It's the reason- if you don't have any emotion in it then why are you, you're not, why are you doing it -
- Timothy: Yeah why are you doing it-
- Hannah: Yeah it's like that's the whole point of it
- Amy: Yeah I think it's like learning how to let that emotion be a thing and

Nicole (LA): being in control
 Amy: and controlling it and being like (changes to sing-song voice) it don't matter right now but yeah
 (North focus group workshop, 23/11/2018)

Nicole says that while it is important to express emotion in the arts, it also “makes it hard”. Timothy and Hannah agree with this but claim that without emotion there is no point being a dancer. Yet Amy recognises that she needs to have more control over her emotion so that she can still use it to inform choreography and performance while also avoiding disappointment if her dances do not hold significant meaning. The above discussion highlights the way the participants intra-actively⁷ build upon each other's discussion as they struggle to make meaning of the paradoxes between emotion and control characterising the broader dance assemblage. Control is discussed as necessary over particular forms of emotional expression. For instance, emotion in the form of “passion” is vital but letting it get out of control makes the dancer vulnerable to a “tougher” dance experience in a competitive and individualistic neoliberal world. Emotion is therefore framed by the participants as something to be managed and made distinct from one's passion. For Amy, being at Rose Dance School means less opportunity for doing her own choreography or doing it in a way that seems creatively natural for her. This conversation about dancing at North provides a context to explore wider tensions of control and emotion that characterise the contemporary dance assemblage and rhizomatically experiment with them in ways that can enable becoming other.

Art is commonly understood as emotional and creative. However, Nicole's assertion that “carrying too much emotion in the arts” makes the artist's experience harder, illustrates the necessity of controlling one's emotion due to the “cut-throat” nature of the industry. However, based on the participants' discussion of their experiences at North High School, there are contexts of dance which allow for well “supported” creativity⁸. The different contexts where the performing arts take place also appear to contribute to the hierarchy of high/low art forms. The combination of the classroom culture fostered by Nicole and the predominance of contemporary and jazz genres of dance allow dancers to enact/perform emotion in ways that fit within broader contemporary dance assemblages. In comparison, the Rose Dance School Amy currently attends, with a predominance of ballet, is considered a high art context and therefore not a place for ‘uncontrolled’ bodies and emotions.

Through discussions of emotion and control, the participants indicate that there are two key parts to being a dancer. Firstly, in performance contexts where “emotions exist” and the participants are able to “live in” performances. The second is being critical of oneself which is integral to one’s development as a dancer. While these two parts are clearly distinguished, the participants also discussed the notion of reflecting on images of themselves through audio-visual forms and the mirror. Seeing images of themselves in different forms are discussed as a productive and important part of their becoming dancers. These images – often critiqued by the participants- are vital for developing technique:

- Hannah: I’m critiquing it a lot because I’m a choreographer and so, also we don’t have mirrors here so I’m critiquing while I’m watching the video like that’s how I sort of see myself so I’m more doing that rather than actually experiencing the performance which is, sometimes I feel like I’m missing out on but often, often I’m watching myself on video and it’s part of the process it’s like the things not finished so it’s not really watching a performance but yeah I don’t know
- Timothy: Yeah I’m a very critical viewer of myself as well and I think that’s just kind of something that I’ve learnt to be like I, I let -
- Hannah: yeah I know from ballet teaches you that, you’re literally looking in the mirror the whole time, critiquing every movement
- Timothy: yeah um yeah like I let my emotions exist like in the performance but afterwards I’m always like I’ll just sit there and I’ll be like this is what I need to work on next time and I’ve found that really beneficial in terms of being able to exist on stage uh because then I’m not critiquing myself onstage, like I can live in it onstage because I’ve done that in advance or I know I’m going to do it later um yeah
- Hannah: I’m performing it on stage so I’m trying to put as much emotion as possible into it so the audience can gain as much from it so I’m not critiquing it either.

(North, focus group workshop, 23/11/2018)

Coleman (2009) asks how the bodies of her teenage girl participants are experienced through images. Rather than attempting to define what a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ image is, or what a dissatisfying or unhealthy body is, her research focusses on what the relations between bodies and images limit or extend. She argues that this research “attempted to attend to the relations that images are involved in and the ways in which experiences produced through one kind of image might complement or contradict experiences produced through other kinds of images” (p. 170). By this, Coleman contends that one’s engagement with different images produces different affect or emotions and, therefore, ways of becoming. Hannah illustrates this

becoming through images in her discussion of watching back performances in an audio-visual form as a vital part of the performance process. Watching herself involves a critical engagement with the image in order to develop her technique and performance. Therefore, this process of critique is more than simply “watching a performance” but an important part of ‘becoming’ a dancer.

For Coleman, images and bodies are not separate entities but always in “relations of change and transformation” (2009, p. 24). She describes the mirror as a tool for capturing the “changing and changeable present” (p. 93). The participants in her study understood the mirror image as different to a photograph in its ability to be changed. While a photograph can produce different meanings depending on who is looking, it does not change. The mirror image, however, is from the reflected subject’s perspective, whereas a photo is not usually seen by the subject until after it is taken. For Coleman’s participants the mirror is not a tool to fulfil “narcissistic self-admiration” (p.97). Rather, the assumption is that one’s body does “not look alright” (p. 98) and therefore needs to be checked. In this way, Coleman argues that mirrors provide a coping mechanism for living through bodily concerns such as being unaware of something wrong with one’s appearance. However, she also points out, “a mirror cannot be guaranteed to protect a body from not looking alright... it does not ensure that a bird does not shit [...] on a body but instead may confirm that they do” (p. 99). The mirror therefore offers a mode through which one can critique themselves, however it does not prevent the reflection being undesirable to the looker. Similarly in dance, the participants of the present research used the mirror as a means of critique. It is there to point out the flaws in a dancer’s body positioning and to perfect group formations. Additionally, participants in both my and Coleman’s research frame the mirror image as separate from the body. For Hannah, when she is in front of the mirror, it is impossible for her to resist “critiquing every movement”. Once away from the mirror, there are more opportunities to be emotional. As Timothy explains, without the reflection of himself when he is doing final performances he is “not critiquing myself onstage, like I can live in it onstage”. Within these accounts, the mirror is constructed as an agentic participant which often limits the participants by producing them as imperfect objects to be ‘critiqued’ rather than subjects. It also limits the enjoyment of performance for the participants due to representing what is wrong or what could be improved in relation to dance technique.

In both the Chorus and North focus groups, the participants never discussed the mirror as a means to admire themselves or their progress. Rather, as in Coleman’s study, the

participants used the mirror to see flaws in their dancing and how they may improve. The Chorus participants also discussed how they avoid looking in the mirror due to it being more distracting than helpful:

- Harriet: Okay so most of you don't really like watching your own performances back, what about just in the mirror? Do you enjoy watching yourself in practice?
- (Rosie shakes head and grimaces)
- Harriet: (laughs) Oh that's a no
- Alexis: Well for me when I'm looking in the mirror and I'm practising- I don't know I think I either- it depends on my mood
- Brooke: yeah
- Alexis: like sometimes I take it too seriously and then get too frustrated with myself
- Rosie: Yeah
- Alexis: Or like if I'm unfocussed I guess I just start dancing around everywhere
- Harriet: Oh okay
- Alexis: I don't really have an in-between like at the moment
- Harriet: So it's either too serious or too unfocussed?
- Brooke: Like I'll look at myself while I'm making shapes like an arabesque but when we're dancing we're told to try and not look in the mirror just pretend there's like an audience there
- Alexis: Otherwise when we go on stage
- Rosie: Or to look like over the mirror
- Brooke: Yeah because if we go on stage there won't be a mirror
- Alexis: So like we'll be too freaked out if we keep on looking at the mirror
- Rosie: If you like practice, if you practice looking at yourself, you would expect that on stage and then when you're on stage like the audience are nowhere but like it's good for like group dances because you can see like
- Brooke: Formations
- Rosie: Yeah
- Harriet: So is that the main reason you have mirrors in studios?
- Rosie: Yeah just to see
- Alexis: Just to see like patterns and shapes most of the time
- Harriet: Right. (To Emily) And you were saying no you don't like watching yourself in the mirror either?
- Emily: No, not a lot of the time
- Harriet: Why is that? The same as the others?
- Emily: I'm not sure, I just, like when I'm making shapes yeah, but like not when I'm...it's just distracting like because...it keeps my eye line down so I need to look up

(Chorus focus group discussion, 17/10/2018)

For the Chorus participants, the mirror is useful for seeing particular body shapes and group formations. As with the North participants, the mirror as a tool of evaluation fits within

neoliberal ideologies of competition and improvement. Beyond this, the mirror image is considered a distraction and unhelpful. Alexis highlights that she is either frustrated when she becomes too focussed on the mirror image that is produced, or she is distracted by seeing herself. The participants also indicate that becoming too accustomed to the mirror is unhelpful for final performances. When dancers no longer have the security of the mirror reflection, they become “too freaked out”. Lastly, Emily indicates that the mirror actually worsens her attempts at perfecting her body movements as it brings her eye line down. In these examples, looking at oneself in the mirror is a temptation the Chorus participants must avoid in order to be more prepared for final performances, avoid distraction from obsessing over the reflection and achieve a perfected ballerina body by keeping the eye line upward. In the Chorus participants’ experience the mirror image is both enabling and limiting. It is enabling in terms of the production of the ballet dancer body through a focus on correcting movements and technique. However, the mirror image is also limiting in its lack of presence in final performances and in consequences of disappointment or frustration when dancers are dissatisfied with the image before them. Therefore, through this engagement with the mirror image, ‘checking bodies’ are produced which avoid self-admiration while making possible the participants’ abilities to “live with” (p. 99) being a ballerina in performance assemblages (Coleman, 2009).

As with the North participants, the Chorus participants also talked about the embodied distinction between being ‘emotional’ in performance and ‘critical’ in rehearsal:

- Alexis: And also like once you get to like go out into the audience and talk to people and sometimes your family members are there then they like tell you what they thought about it which makes you feel so much better
- Rosie: Like your family watching and being really proud of you is really cool
- Harriet: And how does it feel, if you can try to like articulate, how does it feel when you’re on stage and you’re dancing after all the work and you’re there, what’s going through your mind? Is anything going through your mind? Like how does it feel?
- Alexis: Like first you like can’t believe it and like, ‘oh my god is this real’, and then after that I’m just like enjoying it because like by then we are supposed to have the dance memorised in our body memory so like all you need to do is like perform
- Rosie: like not worrying about like what’s coming next because like it’s it should be in your muscle memory
- Brooke: I like the hype that you get backstage like the energy you’re like oh yeah I’m about to go on and stuff. When I’m onstage I’m not thinking about like audience or like I’m just thinking about like what I need to do with my face but like making sure I express to the audience you know?

(Chorus focus group discussion, 17/10/2018)

Getting positive feedback and getting to the final performance is an emotional process for the Chorus participants. Aalten's (2004) study of embodied experiences in ballet found that there was a common theme among her participants that they dance for "that moment when it all comes together" (p. 273). Both Alexis and Rosie discuss their dances eventually becoming part of their "body memory" and "muscle memory". This allows them to no longer worry about "what's coming next" and enjoy performing without thinking. In ballet it is often assumed that the "mind controls the body" (Aalten, 2004, p. 274). However, there are also moments where "physicality, willpower and emotionality" (p. 274) are experienced in synchrony (Aalten, 2004). While Aalten sees the disruption of the mind/body dualism as sporadic, Alexis and Rosie with their talk on 'body' and 'muscle memory' challenge the mind/body dualism through framing the body as a site of knowledge and experience.

Nicole, the North High School learning advisor, also discussed the mind/body relation:

I guess with dance it's actually [...] the connection between your brain and your body [...] whereas like if you just go for a run you can generally just shut your brain off and go into auto pilot um whereas dance has got quite a lot of connection [...] like who you are, who you are dancing so who you're portraying not necessarily a character but the emotion behind it um yeah the choreography just um if you're dancing with other dancers like your I guess um movement you know like knowing you're in the right place at the right time um yeah.

(Nicole, individual interview, 10/12/2018)

Although she is still engaging in a molar flow of the mind/body dualism, Nicole argues that dance provides a space where the distinction is disrupted. Nicole compares dance to running which she says does not need the mind which can go "into auto pilot". Dance on the other hand requires both the mind and the body in order to be emotional while ensuring the movements represent "who you are". Therefore, Nicole highlights circulating molar and molecular flows in relation to the mind/body dualism as she both draws on and challenges this dualism in relation to dance which she suggests creates a 'connection' between the mind and body. This 'connection' between the mind and body was also touched on by Anna, the Chorus learning advisor, when discussing her observations of the differences between dancers and non-dancers:

[The dancers] have developed this real awareness of themselves as embodied people and they, almost you can see that their minds and their bodies are more connected than someone else and yeah other people have kind of, other teachers I have heard say, not in these exact same words, but say, ‘wow those dancers, they stand out’. [...] It strikes me when I move where I work all day everyday around these kids and when I go to the other school I immediately sense that I’m working with kids who are [...] less confident, who are more awkward, who have more difficulty communicating their feelings and things or putting themselves forward because they haven’t, they don’t know, they haven’t quite got a sense of how to use their bodies with confidence, so yeah.

(Anna, individual interview, 17/10/2018)

Here, Anna also draws on a mind/body dualism and simultaneously disrupts it through the notion of “connection”. Anna describes dancers as “embodied people” due to them having a better connection between their minds and bodies which is visible beyond dance contexts. This connection is illustrated when dancers are mixing with non-dance students who are unaware “how to use their bodies with confidence”. This construction of the confident body as desirable relates to Blood’s (2005) exploration and critique of ‘body image research’. Blood (2005) argues that body image research is informed by a fundamental assumption of the western mind/body dualism whereby the body becomes an “object of [the mind’s] knowledge” (p. 24). Through this construction, having control and resultant satisfaction over the body is privileged. Japanese philosopher, Ichikawa Hiroshi critiques the mind/body dualism by arguing that “human beings *are* physical existence” and therefore it is impossible to be separate from the “lived body” (Ozawa-de Silva, 2002, p. 24). Yuasa Yasuo also argues that there is no “ontological distinction” between the mind and body (Ozawa-de Silva, 2002, p. 30). Therefore, in the Japanese tradition, mind/body theories are concerned with “how a disciplined practice allows one to attain mind-body unity” (Ozawa-de Silva, 2002, p. 35). Throughout this project a mind/body dualism framework is drawn upon by the dancers themselves, their teachers and me as a researcher. However, this is done in interesting ways through the argument that dance challenges the molar mind/body split. While there remains a molar understanding of the mind and body as separate entities, dance is argued as a site of possibility for ‘connecting’ the mind and body together. Therefore, rather than dance collapsing the western distinction that the mind is separate from the body, it produces molecular flows through the notion of ‘body memory’ whereby the mind and body becomes connected.

Conclusion

Both the Chorus and North participants' engagement with different image forms connects to broader ballet and contemporary dance assemblages to produce their dance identities in interesting ways. Following reflections on a drawing exercise, Amy's struggle to articulate movement outside of a binary of ugly/beautiful highlights that the genre of ballet continues to represent a high art-form. Reviewing audio-visual images resulted in an exploration of the place and form of emotion in different dance contexts. This led to a discussion of the mirror image which produces the dancers as critical of themselves. As Coleman (2009) argues, engagement with images have the ability to limit and extend the knowledges, understandings and experiences of people and their bodies. For the Chorus and North participants their bodies are experienced through engagement with drawings, audio-visual images and the mirror which inform their understandings of movements, the place of emotion and understanding the mind and body relation. Furthermore, their becoming through images is not confined temporality or spatially (Coleman, 2009). For instance, the 'past' body of Amy in the video image continues to produce present and future understandings of the body. The 'present' mirror image of the body can be understood as a separate object. The drawn expression of the bodies 'past' movement can enable new understandings of what the movement represents and challenges. These experiences of the body through images are also understood in relation to the dance school assemblages including the genre of dance predominantly engaged in, the interactions with other participants and the learning advisors.

Chapter Five

Negotiating constructions of ‘the ballerina’

In the previous chapter I explored how participants’ experience their bodies through different kinds of images and dance education assemblages. This chapter continues this exploration, however, with a more specific focus on the Chorus high school participants’ experiences of classical ballet and the molar and molecular flows produced through these experiences. The construction of ballet is positioned as one of the ‘highest’ forms of dance and is informed by discourses of class (Atencio and Wright 2009). This works to regulate the kinds of bodies that are seen as acceptable within the molar machine of classical ballet.

During discussions with the Chorus participants in relation to the ‘ideal’ ballerina, discursive tensions emerged between traditional femininity and athleticism. To understand this tension, I draw upon literatures on women’s roller derby and women’s bodybuilding in which sportswomen negotiate constructions of muscularity and femininity. I then explore participants’ engagement with images of professional dancers by drawing upon Coleman’s (2009) argument that images produce knowledge, understandings and experiences of bodies. This facilitates an analysis of the selected images and highlights how the relation between the girls and images produce molar and molecular affectual flows in the participants’ ‘becoming’ of bodies and identities as dancers and teenage girls. This includes an exploration of the intersection between discourses surrounding bodies, femininities, class and gender.

“You’ve got to have muscle but not like bulging”: Negotiating tensions of muscularity and femininity

It was clear in the Chorus focus group discussions that the participants had a shared understanding of what the ideal ballerina looks like:

- Brooke: Yeah you never see it like it’s kind of like the proper looking thing-
you’ll never see a ballet dancer with big biceps you know like I don’t
know or quads that stick out
- Alexis: Yeah you have to look light

- Brooke: You're often told like you shouldn't be doing certain exercises because your quads will get bigger and start going outwards and outwards
- Rosie: Like holding the muscle, like when you Développé⁹ your leg you can't really like-
- Alexis: You can't lift it from here because otherwise you'll start getting muscles
(Chorus focus group discussion, 12/09/2018)

Looking “light” and avoiding large muscles is communicated as a requirement for ballet dancers. Brooke says that students are explicitly taught to avoid particular exercises which develop leg muscles. This is because the “proper” ballerina must not have any muscles that “stick out”. This “proper” look/body is achieved via the careful monitoring of the kinds of exercises being practised, by both teachers and students. In her ethnographic study with twelve school-based ballet dancers in South England, Pickard (2013) also argues that the cultural activity of ballet is maintained by the dominant expectations of “uniformity of body size and shape in order to meet the demand for a ballet body physique, the ballet aesthetic of perfection and the idealised ballet body” (p.16). The Chorus participants were very aware of the body physique they need to have to be accepted as a classical ballerina. They accept that they must be able to exist within the molar machine of ballet which includes physical demands without gaining large muscles that are not in keeping with culturally produced images of the “light” ballerina.

The tension between femininity and muscularity plays out across a number of sports that women participate in, for example, ice hockey, women's boxing, and women's bodybuilding (Boyle, 2005; Krane, Choi, Baird, Aimar, & Kauer, 2004; Tajrobehkar, 2016). In these examples, women face tensions between adhering to traditional western ideals of the feminine body and achieving an athletic body necessary for their chosen sport. However, drawing such connections with respect to ballet is fraught, as one runs into the debate around whether ballet can be categorised as a sport or an art-form. Kolb and Kalogeropoulou (2012) attempt to define which category ballet fits into. They highlight that while it is not intrinsically competitive in the same way as sport, competition is present in dance contests, syllabus exams and being hired by dance companies. Where dance is not directly competitive, dancers still feel pride when they do a performance which is “difficult to equal” (p. 118). However, a common argument for ballet as an art-form, which is also made by the learning advisors in this project (see Chapter Four), is that ballet is ‘intellectual’. Sport, such as running or gym classes, are framed as “mindless and unimaginative” (Kolb & Kalogeropoulou, 2012, p. 119). In contrast, ballet, despite its repetitiveness, is seen as

intellectually stimulating due to the simultaneous exercising of the brain and the body (Kolb & Kalogeropoulou, 2012). Edmonds, Wood, Fehling, and DiPasquale (2018) define dance as both an art and a sport due to the concurrent expression of emotion while performing physical movements that “require stamina, strength and flexibility” (p. 1). Furthermore, they attribute stress and anxiety to be an inherent element of competitive sports which are similarly present for dancers¹⁰. In a similar way, Koutedakis and Jamurtas (2004) position dance as both an art and sport. They describe dancers as “performing athletes” who must be masters of the specific aesthetic and technique of ballet, psychologically able to cope with stress, avoid injury and be “physically fit” (p. 652). It is the latter point which defines dance as a sport with dance fitness depending on ones capacity “to work under aerobic and anaerobic conditions” (p. 652). Koutedakis and Jamurtas further argue for dance fitting within the category of sport due to the necessary ability of dancers to “develop high levels of muscle tension, [...] muscle strength [...] Joint mobility/muscle flexibility and body composition” (p. 652).

The problematic nature of the relationship between femininity and masculinity/muscularity in sport is explored by Boyle (2005) with female bodybuilding. Though ballet and bodybuilding are not often paired together, both are sites which attempt to regulate the amount of visible muscle on the women who participate, although the amounts differ significantly. The sport of bodybuilding celebrates traditional ideals of masculinity such as strength and exaggerated muscular bodies. Therefore, bodybuilding is a masculine sport which women have entered. Ballet differs, as it is predominantly a feminine sport/art. Female bodybuilders aim to build visible muscle while ballet dancers do not. However, female participants in both sports find they have to regulate the visible muscle they develop/show. In other words, both are regulated by gendered discourses in which muscularity is associated with masculinity. The scale differs but the regulation of women's bodies to look ‘feminine’ occurs in both sports.

Despite the success and celebration of female bodybuilding throughout the 80s and 90s, the “gender-bending” (Boyle, 2005, p.134) that takes place has increasingly become a subject of criticism and has resulted in a significant decrease in spectatorship and media coverage. Boyle interviewed six Canadian-based female bodybuilders who described a boundary between being legitimised athletes and having gone “too far” (p.134). This is informed by discourses of the “mannish” female body which are used to police female muscularity (Boyle, 2005, p.134). Boyle's participants argued that physiques deemed as too “extreme” (p. 134)

have led to a lack of marketability resulting in a push for women to reign in their muscular development in order to remain adequately feminine. Similarly, the “proper” ballerina must monitor herself to look light and avoid having a body which reveals the effort which goes into her practice. Though developing muscularity is the goal in bodybuilding, in classical ballet dancers must adhere to specific restrictions around muscular development. As the participants above discuss, developing strength is necessary, while visible muscle is regulated through the avoidance of particular exercises.

Felshin (1974) argues that women engage in a discourse of “apologetics” (p.36) which allows their continued sport involvement despite resultant social unacceptability. Felshin goes on to discuss how “the woman athlete” must present the “validity of her womanhood within the cultural connotations of femininity” (p. 37). In bodybuilding and ballet, the apologetic is presented through a focus on one’s appearance adhering to traditional femininity. However, there have also been critiques of this ‘apologetic femininity’ in particular sporting contexts. For instance, Beaver (2016), through Foucauldian theorising of discourse and Judith Butler’s notion of ‘doing/undoing gender’, explores women’s roller derby as an example of “emphasized femininity” (p. 642) which is not ‘apologetic’. He argues that women who do hyper-femininity as roller girls “are disrupting the gender binary that equates athleticism (toughness) with masculinity, that is, they are ‘undoing gender’” (2016, p. 640). Thus, Beaver argues that performances of normative femininity in some sporting contexts disrupts the gender binary of masculine/feminine. Therefore, the roller derby women who wear feminine and sexualised clothing while simultaneously ‘doing’ toughness are framed as undoing gender (Beaver, 2016). While, roller-derby is a ‘new’ sport, done primarily by women who set the ‘rules’ and choose what they wear, ballet is highly regulated by companies and schools where the underemphasized muscles and the tutus reproduce normative femininity. However, both the roller girls and ballerinas, through a Deleuzo-Guattarian reading, produce molecular flows by displaying *both* emphasised femininity *and* strength and thus ‘undo’ gender. For instance, ballet dancers do hyper-femininity through their clothing, stage-makeup and certain dance movements. However, they also ‘do’ strength through their development of muscle and performance of difficult dance technique. Therefore, like Beaver’s roller girls, ballerinas through their pairing of femininity and strength, produce molecular flows which hold possibilities for ‘undoing’ gender and thus ‘becoming’ other.

The Chorus participants continued to explore this tension between athleticism and “proper” femininity and how this informs particular exercises and muscle development:

Emily: ...um I said like no muscle because I feel like a lot of society thinks like we know we are...
 Alexis: Not too much muscle
 Rosie: Like bulk
 Brooke: You’ve got to have muscle but not like bulging
 ...
 Brooke: You can’t do certain things
 Rosie: You can’t really try not to work on it
 Emily: You can’t lift any extra weight, it’s just like lifting your own weight I guess

(Chorus, focus group discussion, 12/09/2018)

Here, Emily highlights that ballerinas need to present the illusion that they are light and unmuscular to be in keeping with a particular aesthetic. Rosie and Brooke clarify that muscles are necessary but “bulk” and “bulging” bodies need to be avoided. The Chorus ballerinas work to highlight their femininity by not building muscle. If they don’t meet this requirement they are likely to risk selection by a dance company. As dancers, they are aware of the necessary strength and physical ability that is required to become a professional ballerina. Muscles need to be present but not seen in order to adhere to the “proper” feminine bodies that are valued in classical ballet. In western societies, the feminine body is often contrasted with the athletic body which results in sportswomen being positioned within two distinct cultures; sports culture and their wider social culture (Krane et al., 2004). Sport is located within a masculine domain which creates a paradoxical space for women who, in order to be successful athletes, must develop attributes and subjectivities associated with masculinity such as strength, assertiveness, independence and competitiveness which conflict with normative discourses of femininity. However, as Beaver (2014) argues, there are sports spaces where the combination of femininity and strength is celebrated and potentially able to disrupt or ‘undo gender’.

During a workshop exploring the kinds of dancers the Chorus participants' want to be and become run by their academic learning advisor, Anna, the participants were asked to show the group an image of their favourite dancer and provide some explanation for their choice. The images below are the ones that the participants selected for this task:



Emily's selection, Sara Michelle Murawski



Rosie's selection, Svetlana Zakharova

In the two images above, the dancers represent the traditional classical ballerina. Their leg and arm positions form an arabesque¹¹ which is one of the major body positions in classical ballet. They are wearing traditional costumes with Svetlana Zakharova wearing the white swan princess costume from the famous ballet, *Swan Lake*. Both dancers have stage makeup to outline and exaggerate their facial features and their hair is tied neatly.

The images above can be contrasted with Alexis, Brooke and Marysa's selections:



Alexis and Brooke's selection, Isabella Boylston



Marysa's selection, Misty Copeland

The above images of Isabella Boylston and Misty Copeland have some characteristics which set them apart from the more traditional classical ballerina. The hand movements are not in a classical ballet position with Copeland's held casually above her head. Boylston's are softly clasped over one another against her chest which is juxtaposed with the strength and full engagement of her leg muscles. She has a calm but sly smile which, in combination with her body positioning, communicates a feisty athleticism. In the previous chapter, I analysed the use of the word "sassy" as it was used by Alexis, a Chorus participant. During the focus group, the 'sassy girl' was attributed to contemporary and jazz dancing contexts and discussed in comparison to the "proper" and "neat" classical ballerina. However, Alexis's image choice of Isabella Boylston suggests that ballet is not a homogenous genre. Rather, there are new styles/forms that dancers are performing, some of which emphasise the strength and physicality required by ballet dancers. The muscles in these images suggest that these

dancers are not at all ‘apologetic’ for doing alternative femininities which highlight strength and toughness (Beaver, 2016; Felshin, 1974). Boylston’s body positioning is strong and open. Rather than an object to be looked at by audiences, her gaze is directly down the camera lens, looking back with a knowing pride. Furthermore, Boylston and Copeland both wear a simple black leotard with no attached tutu so their physical strength and muscles are on full display while at the same time appearing effortless. Their faces appear free of any makeup and Boylston’s hair hangs loosely around her shoulders. Ballet dance and dancers in the past have been centred around a “denial of the physicality of the highly trained female body” (Lindner, 2011, p. 2). The above images, particularly Boylston and Copeland, are indicative of a molecular shift away from this ideal to an alternative femininity which celebrates strength, power and athletic excellence. Following her selection, Brooke explained that she chose Isabella Boylston due to her body depicting both traditional ideas of femininity while also being “strong”:

Brooke: Okay so mine is Isabella Boylston because she’s like really good at every stuff she does, like for some variations you have to do like soft and stuff and she’s really good at doing that but then like other variations are stronger and she can just like become strong like you know and it’s just really good.

(Chorus focus group workshop, 28/11/2018)

The ability to be both strong and soft was also discussed by Marysa in relation to Misty Copeland: “she’s good at like different like strong and like soft, she can do both” (Marysa, Chorus focus group workshop, 28/11/2018). As with Beaver’s (2016) roller derby girls who do both femininity and toughness, it is this ‘both/and’ that is important for Marysa. Beaver argues that the combination of sexualised and hyper-feminised uniforms with a contact sport “reject[s] the notion that athleticism and toughness are masculine traits” (p. 654). Misty Copeland’s ability to be both ‘strong and soft’ disrupts norms of femininity and gender more broadly by presenting a body and movements which demonstrates both masculine associated ‘strength’ and feminine associated ‘softness’. Rosie also described Svetlana Zakharova in similar terms of encompassing both ‘strength’ and ‘elegance’:

Rosie: Svetlana? I think that’s how you say it um she just inspires me because she’s very elegant but like she has so much strength when she dances and like so much energy and she’s really tall like me so I like yeah.

(Chorus, focus group workshop, 28/11/2018)

The combination of elegance and softness with strength and energy is clearly communicated as a desirable feature of classical ballerinas today. These narratives, in

addition to the differences across the above images, provide a way of understanding desirable femininities for the Chorus participants. Through the selected images above, the participants illustrate the ways in which the ‘ideal ballerina’ is a transitional or liminal figure. The ideal ballerina body is not static. Furthermore, the girls’ readings of the ‘traditional’ ballerina images focus less on the particular image and more on their engagement with the published life stories of their chosen ballerinas.

In this project, the images of the professional dancers are not necessarily the most significant part of why the participants chose them. Rather the participants interacted with the images and, specifically, the life stories of the selected dancers to produce meaning and desires (Coleman, 2009). For instance, Rosie comments that Svetlana inspires her because “she is tall like me”. Additionally, Emily selected Sara Michelle Murawski largely due to her experience of being a tall dancer who was able to overcome adversity related to her height. Therefore, what draws the girls to the dancers/images, while classical, is more about the dancers’ experiences:

- Emily: um I’ve got Sara Murawski um she’s a really tall dancer and um she got fired from a company because she’s too tall
- Rosie: Oh yeah!
- Emily: but um she kept going and now she dances in the American national ballet um and she’s really um just a really amazing dancer in the way she moves and yeah
- Anna (LA): Cool and what is it about her that is most important to you?
- Emily: Um...I think ah that she’s tall like and she um kept going even though she was like fired and um yeah.

(Chorus focus group workshop, 28/11/2018)

Sara Michelle Murawski was fired from Pennsylvania Ballet company because of her height. However she persevered with her dancing and was accepted into another professional dance company. For Emily, this experience of height discrimination is crucial in her selection of Murawski as her favourite dancer. Murawski represents ways of being in the world that challenge normative femininity and the physical restrictions of being a professional ballerina. This creates possibilities for becoming other as a young ballerina for Emily. In other parts of the Chorus interviews, Emily identified herself as a taller than average dancer. Emily is aware of her body and the potential difficulties she may experience because of her height. She finds inspiration in Murawski who she sees as both a “really amazing dancer” who did not give up on her dancing goals despite her body being different to most classical ballerinas¹². Although previous conversations indicate the Chorus participants have a shared and molar ideal of what

a ballerina ‘should’ look like, the professional dancers who inspire them produce molecular flows in their disruption of norms in terms of muscularity, height and body shape.

Marysa’s choice of Misty Copeland also has a backstory of struggle. Copeland currently dances for the internationally renowned American Ballet Theatre company. She is the first female African American principal dancer at the American Ballet Theatre and has had a significant role in highlighting ballet companies’ racial representation (Collins & Karyn, 2015). Studies of African American students in a classical ballet dance contexts have highlighted the way ‘black’ dance students are sometimes reprimanded for “having a big butt” and discouraged from success due to being African American (Atencio & Wright, 2009; Green, 2001, p. 168). Copeland experienced similar difficulties in relation to, what Atencio and Wright (2009) describe as the stereotypical “‘fat’ ‘black’ female bodies” (p. 39). They argue that this stereotype stems from constructions of black female bodies as being “‘excessive’, ‘fat’, ‘primitive’, and ‘hyper-sexual’” (Atencio & Wright, 2009, p. 35). At age 19, Copeland took a break from dance due to a stress fracture and during this time she also had a delayed onset of puberty. When she returned to dance she had gained 10 pounds and went from a B cup bra size to a DD. This led to struggle and insecurity with her body being different to the other dancers’ (Copeland & Bried, 2014). This insecurity was brought to the forefront when the company directors told her to “lengthen” which she describes as a polite way of telling someone they need to lose weight (Copeland & Bried, 2014, para.2). Since then she has managed to lose a few pounds but “kept my full breasts and hips” which have become an important part of Copeland’s identity as a dancer and helped to “change minds” about what the perfect ballerina looks like (Copeland & Bried, 2014, para. 12). Her first big role was as a soloist in a ballet called *The Firebird*. Copeland describes the first time she saw herself on a billboard advertising this show:

I was in profile, wearing a red leotard, with my chest and back arched so you could see my full, feminine breasts and my round butt. It was everything that people don't expect in a ballerina. I stood completely still for five minutes, just crying. It was beauty. It was power. It was a woman. It was me

(Copeland & Bried, 2014, para. 13).

The choice of photos from the Chorus students and this narrative from Copeland highlights a shift in the bodies considered as desirable for classical ballerinas. Historically, words used to describe classical ballerinas’ bodies and dancing included petite, light, elegant,

weightless and effortless (Pickard, 2013). These words appeared frequently during the Chorus focus groups: “she looks light when she does the jumps” (Marysa, Chorus focus group workshop, 28/11/2018), “they all look quite light[...]yeah and effortless” (Brooke, Chorus focus group workshop, 28/11/2018). The images of the professional dancers produced both limiting and enabling processes of becoming. Though the ‘light’ ballerina was reinforced through praise of the professional dancers’ abilities to look ‘light’ and ‘effortless’, narratives of struggle and challenges to traditional ways of being a ballerina were also apparent. For instance, some of the participants’ experienced their bodies through the images of Sarah Murawski and Misty Copeland who are celebrated for overcoming adversity and disrupting dominant understandings of the ballerina through their height, race and weight. Therefore, the engagement with these images contributes to their ‘becoming dancer’ through extending and producing their understandings of desirable bodies and the kinds of dancers they want to become (Coleman, 2009). The images produced molecular affective flows and lines of flight whereby physical strength, diversity in appearance and resilience became part of the idealised ballerina.

‘It’s like hard [...] you’re all very much the same looking’: Appearance restrictions and constructions of femininities

Part of the discussion around physical appearance pressures also involved the way adhering to the aesthetic ballet body and appearance impacts on the participants’ lives outside of the dance/school space:

Brooke: ...you’ve got to look proper, I don’t know how I said it- like explain it but you’ve got to have like neat, you’ve got to be neat and tidy looking so like you couldn’t have like bright orange-bright yellow hair-bright blue hair, I don’t know, and like no small or massive like sleeve tattoos

Rosie: like piercings

Brooke: Yeah piercings and all this

Harriet: Why do you think that is?

Rosie: It kinda looks messy, like I think it like as a ballet dancer you probably wouldn’t want to see like tattoos on stage or something

Brooke: Yeah I guess people would think it looks really messy, yeah because you’re so used to everyone being clean and just like classy whereas like having bright blue hair might not be respected by society as much as a ballet dancer, like in ballet society.

Alexis: Yeah because it’s quite like a posh...

Rosie: Yeah because as well you probably wouldn't be able to kinda like portray the character if you had bright blue hair or something, I don't know.

(Chorus focus group discussion, 17/10/2018)

Here, participants' discussion of what constitutes a "proper" ballerina consists of what a ballerina does *not* look like. They suggest that having bright coloured hair, tattoos and piercings are inappropriate for ballerinas. When asked why these restrictions are in place the participants discussed the ballet aesthetic as a "classy" and "clean" space. Having different hair colours and tattoos would be considered "messy". Rosie also suggests that having distinguishable features like "bright blue hair" would limit the degree to which a person could portray different characters. The discussion above is informed by intersecting discourses of class and femininity within the ballet space. As classical ballet is a historically rooted art-form which aims to celebrate and maintain traditional dance aesthetics, audience expectations have a large role in influencing performances and the bodies doing the performing (Pickard, 2013). In western culture the dominant construction of femininity is within a "white, heterosexual and class-based structure" (Atencio & Wright, 2009; Boyle, 2005; Krane et al., 2004, p. 316) and according to Pickard (2013), ballet audiences tend to be white, middle-class women. Boyle's (2005) analysis of women's bodybuilding also highlights the historical construction of femininity upon structures of "whiteness, middle-class morality and heterosexuality" with alternative bodies positioned as "deviant" (p. 137). In this way, as discussed in the previous chapter, ballet becomes a classed space striving to meet the expectations of middle-class audiences. Furthermore, as Alexis alludes to in her remark that ballet is "quite like posh", there are high and low forms of art that determine which bodies and femininities are considered as desirable in this context.

While the students highlight the intersection of gender and class in their discussion of acceptable appearance, Anna, the Chorus learning advisor, raises another aspect of this intersection:

Now one thing about dance is- again a generalisation but there's quite a bit of truth to it- is that it does tend to exclude[...]well it is kind of accessible to a certain demographic. It's very expensive, it does require a huge amount of commitment and support from families so it needs a very stable family background. So what I'm saying is basically if you look at the dancers, by far the majority of them come from upper middle class, to upper class, wealthy, mostly white families okay. So that, in my opinion, and again I must stress this, this is just my impression here, creates a more kind of constraining, conservative culture than I was used to. There was less acknowledgement or celebration of diversity.

(Anna, individual interview, 17/10/2018)

Here, Anna suggests that classical ballet is more accessible to upper middle-class people due its expensive nature. Furthermore, this prevalence of ‘wealthy’ mostly ‘white’ dancers creates a more “conservative culture” in which diversity is not valued or “celebrated”. Dimaggio and Useem (1978) make a similar argument that one’s class experiences significantly influence one’s artistic preferences. These preferences are passed on between generations by families and education systems which may result in certain cultural forms being exclusive to the upper class (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978). This leads to the consumption of art forms “vary[ing] sharply by class” (p. 144). Dimaggio and Useem suggest that the ‘high arts’ of opera, ballet, and classical music, are more likely to be consumed by upper-middle- and upper-class members. Ballet is therefore re-produced as a ‘high’ art form by both audiences and the families who encourage their children to enrol in classical ballet. It is this reproduction of classed and gendered discourses that limits the diversity seen among classical ballet dancers. Though the dance images above, particularly Misty Copeland, suggest molecular shifts in diversity, Copeland is famous and newsworthy due to her difference. Therefore, she remains as an exception to the molar traditional white, thin and upper-class ballerina.

Although the Chorus participants adhere to the ‘high’ class aesthetic of “posh” femininity, which is prominent in classical ballet spaces, they are also aware of the ways this produces limitations both as dancers and in other areas of their lives. In the extract below, the participants discuss aspects of physical expression that they must compromise as classical ballerinas:

Brooke: Yeah I guess it’s like hard to like you’re all very much the same looking
 Rosie: Yeah
 Brooke: You don’t stick out as any different from anyone else so yeah I don’t know if I would but maybe like a small tiny tattoo or something
 Rosie: Yeah it’s hard because maybe your friends might get like a tattoo but you won’t be able to because you’re a dancer

(laughter from group)

Alexis: But sometimes even like painting your nails, like we aren’t even allowed to do that. You have to like, if it’s a birthday party you have to take it off straight away because you have ballet the next day and stuff like that.
 (Chorus focus group discussion, 12/09/2018)

When asked about how they felt about conforming to appearance restrictions, the participants admitted they found it difficult to negotiate. Specifically they highlight that it is

“hard” that they can’t have individual expression when it comes to their appearance and that they need to remain “the same looking”. They then indicate how this impacts on their participation in social activities. Rosie’s comment about not being able to get a tattoo with friends suggests that she has already considered the long-term compromises that she will have to make if she remains in pursuit of being a professional dancer. Even a less-permanent physical alteration of painting nails is not allowed and Alexis’s mention of birthday parties is a reminder of her young age (13 years old) and the social activities she is already compromising because of her ballet commitments. Furthermore, Rosie and Alexis’s discussions indicate the way physical appearance pressures and being a committed ballerina impacts on dancers’ lives outside of dance assemblages. The type of desirable femininity that is described by the Chorus participants is around being the “same looking” to the other dancers. Individualising attributes are not encouraged in ballet culture rather it is the “respectable” feminine body which is “white, desexualised, disciplined and middle-class” (Atencio & Wright, 2009, p. 34). Though the image workshop above produced molecular affective flows whereby ballerinas were celebrated for their lack of homogeneity, evidenced by the inclusion of ballerinas who disrupt norms of height, ethnicity and body shape, the uniform ballerina remains predominant. As Brooke says, looking the same is “hard” for these participants. This may be another reason why the dancers above were chosen. In some way, each of the selected dancers stands out due to her challenge to the ideal ballerina. Therefore through these images molecular affective flows are produced whereby participants appear to find this departure from homogeneity an outlet and inspiration. The success of dancers like Copeland, Boylston, Murawski and Zakharova suggest that “sticking out as different” is not impossible and illustrates challenges to the molar machine of classical ballet.

While Alexis argues that she is unable to paint her nails due to ballet restrictions, in other parts of the focus group she criticizes nail painting due to its ‘girly girl’ connotations:

- | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alexis: | I’ve got like these group of friends who are really girly girl and then these other groups who don’t care about what others think and just do what they want and like that yeah and when I go to the girly girl parties and stuff they always do their nails, hair, always worried about their appearance whereas the other girls, I don’t know, they’re having fun, they don’t care about anything else. |
| Harriet: | Yep. And is there a group that you feel more comfortable with or... |
| Alexis: | Probably the non-girly girlies |
| Harriet: | And why is that? |

Alexis: It's just, I don't know, it's just funner being able to play around and not care about what anybody else thinks and just being yourself
(Chorus focus group discussion, 12/09/2018)

Here, Alexis labels her different friendship groups. She has the “girly girl” friends who are concerned with their appearance and the friends who “don’t care” about anything other than having fun. For Alexis, her disassociation from the “girly girl” could be due to her desire to depart from the molar ballet machine which is intensely focussed on appearance. Despite her previous laments about nail painting, in the extract above Alexis negatively associates this activity with ‘girly-girls’ who are highly appearance focussed. In their UK based study exploring tom-boy identities, Holland and Harpin (2015) found that the girly-girl is a “powerful cultural figure” (p. 295) who is both “sexualised and objectified” while also representing an undesirable hyper-femininity. Therefore, the girly-girl discourse involves the embodiment or “exaggerated performance” (p. 298) of femininity (Holland & Harpin, 2015). Holland and Harpin also pay attention to the current post-feminist and neo-liberal context which encourages a juggling act for girls to be “heterosexually desirable, whilst maintaining their ‘respectability’ and at the same time being independent and sexy” (p. 299). This creates an “impossible space” (p. 299) to successfully exist for girls (Holland & Harpin, 2015). Alexis articulates this negotiation in her desire to engage in traditionally feminine activities of nail painting and ballet, while also being cautious of the girlie-girl label associated with an excessive concern with appearance. Alexis critiques the feminized appearance focus of girly-girls but also seems to want the choice of wearing nail-polish for longer than just one party. Perhaps it is the lack of choice which annoys Alexis rather than the specific desire to have painted nails. In other words, it is the freedom of choice surrounding appearance that constitutes a ‘non-girlie girl’ that appeals to Alexis.

In relation to physical appearance, the Chorus participants’ discussed the molar machine of class characterising the classical ballet genre. The ‘posh’ connotations of classical ballet require dancers to be ‘neat’ and ‘all the same’ to achieve this aesthetic. This is compared to other dance genres which the participants describe as ‘messy’ informed by ‘low’ or working-class discourses. Anna further highlighted the molar flows of class and race in her observations of classical ballet being ‘accessible to a certain demographic’ of ‘wealthy’ and ‘white’ families. These molar flows were challenged through participants’ engagement with professional dancers and Alexis and Rosie’s considerations of the way they would like to have individual self-expression through tattoos and nail polish. Alexis connects this to

different femininities with her describing her desire to make choices about her physical appearance without being labelled as a 'girly girl'.

Conclusion

Classical ballet has a long history of representing a proper and highly disciplined form of dominant femininity. Traditionally, the athletic nature of dance has been something understated by dancers with the term 'effortless' commonly appearing in descriptions of the desired ballet aesthetic. While this image of a ballerina remains as dominantly idealised, there are molecular flows of alternative femininities appearing in classical ballet assemblages.

During the focus group discussions with the Chorus High School participants, contrasting representations of the ideal ballerina were discussed. Femininity and muscularity were discussed as tensions for the participants within classical ballet with the avoidance of 'bulging' muscles being repeatedly communicated. However, when images were presented of the participants' favourite dancers, molecular affective flows were produced with challenges to body norms and overcoming struggle as prominent themes. While the molar traditional ballerina machine, with stage makeup, tutu costume and a petite body, was apparent in the presentation of images, there also appeared to be intra-active molecular flows produced between the images and the participants enabling a becoming other which celebrates power and strength. Furthermore, the chosen dancers' experiences, which disrupted norms of height, ethnicity and body shape, also emerged. This indicated that for the participants the life stories of the dancers were more important than solely reading the image alone. Engagement with images of the professional dancers led to rhizomatic discussions about desires to become other in ways that moved beyond the classical ballerina machine.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

This project explores how young people ‘become’ dancers within school-based contexts. The special character nature of North and Chorus High School, with their strong focus on student-directed learning, offers students new opportunities for learning dance/becoming dancers as a high school subject.. Specifically this thesis highlights the assemblages of dance genre and associated aesthetics, the dancers’ physical and bodily capacities, and the gendered, sexual and classed discourses of dance and adolescence within contemporary western educational contexts and maps the possibilities these assemblages produce for ‘becoming’ other.

Within the current neoliberal context of New Zealand education, engagement with subject areas that are not easily measured or directly applicable to an economically successful pathway have become limited or co-opted to fit within neoliberal ideals. While North and Chorus High School appear to be born out of this neoliberal era with their emphasis on individuality and choice, these school assemblages can also simultaneously challenge neoliberal ideals in their inclusion and valuing of dance which engages with emotion, bodies and creativity. Previous literature investigating the presence of dance within mainstream state schools has highlighted the common positioning of dance within the physical education subject area (Brennan, 1996; Gard, 2008; Sansom, 2011). This positioning has been critiqued due to physical education teachers often avoiding engagement with dance due to a lack of willingness, support or knowledge (Brennan, 1996; Gard, 2008; Goodwin, 2010; Hilsendager, 1990; Mattsson & Lundvall 2015). Furthermore, dance, along with arts subjects in general, has become devalued and reformed due to the current emphasis on rational and cognitive knowledges (Davies & Bansel, 2007; Fitzgerald, 2012). North and Chorus High School illustrate possibilities for how to engage with dance within this neoliberal era. This project maps how the schools and students are ‘plugged into’ broader dance assemblages, and the limitations and possibilities this produces.

Utilizing focus groups and image-reflection workshops, I explored the experiences of eight dance students ‘becoming’ dancers within two special character New Zealand high schools. I also conducted individual interviews with Nicole and Anna, the North and Chorus

learning advisors (respectively). The different sets of data that were produced, were analysed using a Foucauldian thematic analysis and a Deleuzo-Guattarian informed mapping of affective flows. Utilizing Foucault's theorising of discourse and subjectivity, I was able to contextualize the participants' discussions of their dancing experiences within discourses of dance genre, gender and class. The Deleuzo-Guattarian theorising of the affectual assemblage and becoming, allowed me to highlight instances where molar and molecular flows were produced towards a process of 'becoming' dancer.

However, before this data collection or analysis took place, one of the most significant 'take home messages' for me as an emergent researcher, was learning and experiencing the difficulty of conducting research which explicitly aims to explore gender and sexuality within school-based contexts. My initial research proposal and overarching question was 'Exploring how the everyday realities of young people's sexual and relational lives are engaged with through the arts subjects (film, literature and dance) they take at a special character high school'. While I was warned by previous literature, in particular Allen's (2011) research, of the challenges in undertaking sexualities research within school contexts, it was not until I was struggling to gain ethics approval and recruit willing participants that I realised the pervasiveness of moral panics in relation to positioning school and sexualities together. While this was frustrating from a methodological and practical standpoint, this experience also provided me with interesting insights regarding the current context of New Zealand schooling. I attributed the difficulties of doing this research largely to the current era of neoliberalism whereby rational, cognitive and measurable knowledge is valued. As gender and sexuality experiences are emotional, diverse and, as Gilbert (2004) articulates, "exhilarating, passionate and devastating" (p. 233), the current neoliberal informed education system is inadequate to engage with this kind of education. Though the inclusion of sexualities education in schools has historically been difficult due to public/private divides, the current neoliberal era has strengthened this difficulty with formal gender and sexuality education that engages with the lived experiences of young people being scarce. This is illustrated by the New Zealand 2007 Education Review Office (ERO) report which noted that formal sexuality education programs in schools tend to be significantly below the recommended 12-15 hours per year dedicated to this subject area (Quinlivan, 2018).

In addition to discomforts surrounding school and sexuality, my difficulties in recruiting participants was also due to the current 'credit'-motivated nature of learning. In my

first, and unsuccessful, round of recruiting participants, the main reason given for not wanting to participate was due to concerns around interference in the students' busy school schedules. Again, this reflected neoliberal informed views of education which emphasise valuable educational experiences as ones that can be translated to the gaining of credits towards the New Zealand Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA). As this research project does not directly align with assessment, students and their parents were unwilling to give up three hours (split into one-hour sessions) of time that was not directly relevant to completing NCEA based schoolwork.

Furthermore, in the first focus group discussion, asking students directly about their experiences and understandings of gender and sexuality politics did not facilitate much discussion. Direct questions were often met with silence or nervous glances between participants as they did not relate to this framing or language (Fieldnotes, 12/09/2019). Ivinson and Renold (2013, as cited by Quinlivan, 2018) argue that 'coming in sideways' is necessary in the experimentation of young people's conceptualisations of sexuality and gender politics to avoid the "instrumental facts-based approaches underpinned by bio-medical discourses" (p. 89). Quinlivan's (2018) suggestion to explore emotional and potentially 'contested' issues through a 'sideways' approach is to use visual images as these resist cooperative and simple answers. Rather, visual images may produce deterritorialising molecular flows which hold possibilities for 'other' understandings and engagement with young people's experiences of gender and sexuality politics. Once I 'came in sideways' by incorporating the image workshops as part of my research strategies, molar and molecular flows were produced in relation to gender. This highlighted what the participants considered as significant experiences rather than answering practised responses to closed and direct questions. This experience brings to attention some potentially significant pedagogical suggestions, particularly for sexuality educators and researchers. Within formal sexuality education, Cameron-Lewis and Allen (2013) highlight that where there is a lack of relevance to young people's lives, the chances of formal sexuality education messages being mobilised by students is significantly diminished. Despite this finding, formal curriculums which involve discussions around sexuality and gender tend to be based on adult agendas of what is deemed appropriate rather than catering to the direct interests and lives of young people (Cameron-Lewis & Allen, 2013). Perhaps taking a 'sideways' approach to formal sexuality education, for instance by engaging with images, would allow messages to be mobilised and validate students' experiences as important.

These challenges of researching sexuality in schools, a need for ‘coming in sideways’, and time restraints led to changes in my research questions and strategies, for example, using images to understand the students’ experiences of ‘becoming’ dancers. This methodological and theoretical shift resulted in me recruiting five participants from Chorus High School and three from North High School. Coleman’s (2008; 2009) argument that images and bodies are part of an entangled process of ‘becoming other’ informed the image-reflection focus group workshops. These workshops involved the participants engaging with and reflecting on drawn representations of their choreography styles, audio-visual images of dance performances the participants identified as significant to them, discussions surrounding the role of the mirror image in dance practice, and reflections of photographic images of the participants’ favourite dancers. From these sessions, discourses of femininity, class and dance genre were produced through the interactions between the participants and through their engagement with different images. These discussions also produced molar and molecular affectual flows which sometimes resulted in opportunities for ‘becoming’ other. For instance, Chapter Four mapped the rhizomatic intensity that was produced in relation to a choreography drawing exercise with the North High School participants. During this exercise a molecular flow was produced whereby Hannah realised she uses the traditional movement conventions of ballet and pairs these with dynamic changes to challenge molar ideals of beauty in relation to dance and movement. This molar flow of Hannah describing ballet as the ‘highest’ form of dance and representative of ‘beautiful’ movements produced her choreography as ‘ugly’ and disruptive. Her realisation that she intentionally choreographs dances which have elements of classical ballet technique as well as ‘dynamic’ departures from this produced a molecular flow whereby Hannah developed new understandings of her discomfort of ballet due to its ‘repetitive’, and ‘pretty’ aesthetic. Dance genre was also discussed by the Chorus High School participants who described ballet as being a ‘higher’ art form than contemporary dance due to the ‘posh-ness’ of the genre and the physical and metaphorical ‘uprightness’ of the ballet technique. These examples highlight the constant circulation of molar and molecular flows within dance assemblages and draws attention to what they produce. Hannah utilised her knowledge of molar understandings of ‘beautiful’ movements and challenged these through her molecular choreography producing moments for ‘becoming’ other for herself and audiences who feel challenged by her disruptions to classical ballet technique. The Chorus High School ballerinas intra-actively produced molar flows in relation to dance genre and class, however, molecular flows were also produced through photographs of diverse ballerinas who had life stories of struggle. These photographs

and life stories held moments for ‘becoming’ other where the participants valued diverse body types and perseverance as opposed to the molar petite, uniform and submissive ballerina.

In addition to drawn representations, discussions of video and mirror images amongst the participants produced reflections about the place of emotion in different genres of dance and the importance of being critical of one’s body in order to ‘become’ a dancer. For instance, the mirror image was discussed by the Chorus ballet participants as both a source of distraction and disappointment. Whereas, for the North participants, intra-actively reviewing themselves through the mirror and video images was a vital step in the critique and improvement of dance form. Video images also produced affective flows for the North participants due to happy memories of how they felt during specific dance performances. Mapping these dance assemblages indicates that ‘becoming’ dancers through these different images is not confined spatially or temporally. Rather, the images, although snapshots of the past, continue to inform knowledges of bodies and dance experiences through desiring affective flows of the kinds of dancers the participants want to be and become. I mapped Amy’s (North student) reaction to seeing a past video of her early dancing experience where she began to cry and recognise that she does not feel connected or satisfied by her current dancing experiences in contrast to how she remembers feeling in the video performance. Her engagement with this audio-visual image continues to shape how she understands her current experience of dance and therefore Hannah ‘becomes’ other by recognizing her desire to ‘get back to’ how she remembers feeling in the video performance.

Chapter Five detailed how the ballet genre of dance appeared to have strong physical restrictions for the Chorus participants with their negotiations of femininity and masculinity in relation to muscle size. Ballerinas must regulate their muscle size in order to remain within the ballet aesthetic of being ‘light’, ‘petite’ and ‘effortless’. The mapping of the Chorus and ballet dance assemblage highlighted a desiring flow of the regulated ballerina. However, the participants discussed that ballerinas must also be fit and strong enough to perform the technique. I mapped how the Chorus participants’ negotiations are regulated through specific embodied exercises and instruction from their dance teachers. Despite this strengthening of the molar desiring ballerina machine, molecular lines were also produced intra-actively in response to images of the participants’ favourite dancers. These images challenged traditional discourses of the ballerina in the participants’ valuing of strength and power, producing what it means to be a ballerina differently. The lived backstory of the dancers provided an

important rationale for why those particular images were chosen. Many of the professional dancers faced adversity in relation to their unconventional bodies before becoming successful dancers. This resonated with a number of the participants and gave them inspiration to persevere in the highly competitive professional ballet world. The participants also challenged dominant discourses and molar understandings of the uniform and ‘girly’ ballerina in the sharing of their desires to be individually expressive through tattoos and nail polish. While this challenged the uniform ballerina, this desire for individuality is potentially informed by molar neoliberal ideals which emphasise individuality and competition.

In this thesis I have demonstrated how the intra-active desiring relations between the dancers’ bodies and images (drawn, audio-visual, photographic and mirror) both limit and extend the possibilities of becoming other through constant circulation and production of molar (reterritorialising) and molecular (deterritorialising) flows in relation to their dancer subjectivities and negotiations of genre, gender and class, and what these flows produce. For instance, while desiring molar flows of the traditionally middle-class, white, feminine, light, effortless and petite ballerina are present, desiring molecular flows are also produced in the celebration of ballerinas who are strong, powerful and diverse in their ethnicity and height. While the molar binary of the mind/body dualism is drawn upon, molecular flows simultaneously challenge this through assertions that dance is a place where these are connected. The dancers’ bodies are not an effect of the different images but, rather, are constituted through their intra-active *relations* with the images (Coleman, 2009). Becoming dancers through these relations with different images is not spatially or temporally static but can continue to produce molar and molecular flows of becoming other. For instance, in the drawn representations of choreography style, the images produced new understandings for the participants of why they value and select particular movements. Discussions of the mirror image highlighted its shifting role and intra-active relations with it being distracting, a useful source of critique and correction, or disappointing due to the reflection not fitting with how the dancer imagines themselves to look. The audio-visual images triggered memories of satisfaction in embodied performance which was compared to the disconnect and lack of enjoyment in current dance experiences. Lastly, the photographic images of the participants’ favourite dancers intra-actively produced desiring affective flows of the idealised ballerina who is valued for her effortlessness, lightness and mastery of technique, *and* her strength, power and perseverance. Therefore the images intra-actively work with the participants to produce affective knowledges of the embodied dancer as challenging conventions of molar

ballerina beauty through movement, negotiating femininity and masculinity divides, strengthening classed discourses in relation to dance genre and also challenging traditional ballerina bodies through the valuing of strength and power. Thus, the desiring dance assemblages within these two special character schools are charged with constantly circulating molar and molecular flows which produce the participants and their understandings of genre, gender and class in both limiting and challenging ways which hold possibilities for both normalisation and ‘becoming’ other. One possibility for furthering this research would be to invite discussion with the parents of these special character school students. Discussions with both the students and the learning advisors included parental opinions of education. Including this perspective would allow for a deeper understanding of parental desires for special character education and how these desires contribute to their children’s understandings and potential ‘becomings’ in terms of identities and valued forms of knowledge.

Through a thematic analysis of the data, informed by a Foucauldian emphasis on how the participants talked about their bodies, gender and identities, I was able to draw attention to the patterned discourses across the different data sets. Using Foucauldian theorising allowed me to examine forms of resistance to dominant discourse and how this constitutes subjectivity. This theorising also allowed me to attend to the specific socio-historic context within which discourses are constructed. For instance, the neoliberal context within which North and Chorus High School are situated and how this contributes to individual, self-critical and competitive subjects.

Central to the Deleuzo-Guattarian conceptual tools is the rhizome. ‘Becoming’ other through dance assemblages is positioned within the Deleuzo-Guattarian notion of the rhizome which offers different possibilities of thought through its sporadic, various and changeable nature. The rhizome is a useful concept for qualitative researchers, especially emergent researchers, as it prompts following unexpected and multiple lines of thought that emerge within micro-social encounters. This tracking of emergent rhizomatic lines allows for recognition and exploration of desiring molecular affectual flows and resultant possibilities of ‘becoming’ other. As Quinlivan (2018) highlights, this conceptual tool may also be useful pedagogically for teachers, particularly of emotional topics such as sexuality education, as the “rhizomatic offers an invitation to experiment with the potentialities that are already present” (p. 145). North and Chorus High School are possibly aspiring to rhizomatic learning experiences in their emphasis of student-directed learning. However, as these schools are

situated within the assessment-focused era of neoliberalism and, for the Chorus participants, the historically rooted and competitive desiring machine of classical ballet, there is room for further destabilisation of traditional learning environments. Exploring dance assemblages as rhizomatic encounters made up of numerous desiring lines that can result in molar and molecular flows and possible ‘becomings’ produces open and experimental research contexts. To foster these contexts, researchers must remain open to the unexpected flows that are produced. This will allow for a better understanding of how participants construct knowledges, in this case, about their dancer subjectivities including gender and class and how the desiring machine of dance genre assemblages informs these different elements of their dancer subjectivities.

Research which continues to privilege the voices of young people within schooling contexts and which remains experimental and open to unexpected lines of discussion will allow for deeper understandings of how young people construct their identities through school-based assemblages. Furthermore, this ‘open’ approach avoids judgements about current systems and practices. Rather, it focusses on *what* these systems are producing in terms of the construction of identities and instances where young people may ‘become’ other through their daily intra-actions with material, spatial and social factors.

Notes

1. "Entretien avec Michel Foucault" [1980], DE IV: 42/"interview with Michel Foucault," p. 240
2. Gilles Deleuze, "Fendre les choses, fendre les mots" [1986], in *Pourparlers* (Paris: Minuit, 1990), 117, translated as "Breaking Things Open, Breaking Words Open," in *Negotiations, 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 85.
3. The sexualisation of girls discourse is described by Renold and Ringrose (2011) as the public and private panics regarding the premature sexualisation of young girls. They emphasise the historically rooted nature of this discourse with recent intensification of the "paedophilic gaze- that is the highly lucrative market of the eroticized girl child" (p. 390). These anxieties have also emerged due to the mainstreaming of innocence and sexuality as "inextricably connected" (p. 390). Renold and Ringrose highlight common critiques surrounding the sexualisation of girls discourse. These critiques include, but are not limited to, the 'elasticity' of the discourse interpreting any sexual expression as an effect of sexualisation, failure to analyse how girls themselves experience the media with a tendency to only focus on harmful media exposure effects, a neglect of girls' sexual agency and experience of pleasure and the strengthening of dualistic frameworks of male sexuality as 'predatory' against the 'passive' female sexuality.
4. Philosopher Rene' Descartes is largely credited with the idea of the mind/body dualism. His famous phrase 'I think therefore I am' refers to the mind or soul of a person as separate from the body and therefore, understanding humans as 'thinking things'.
5. The participants within this project are often informed by binaristic constructions of feminine appearance. These binaries include the beautiful/ugly girl and feminine/sexual or good/bad girl distinctions. Skeggs (1997) investigates how women live and produce themselves through social and cultural relations. She argues that class, race, age and nationality are significant for creating differences in "being, becoming, practising and doing femininity" (p. 98). Skeggs defines femininity as the process "through which women are gendered and become specific sorts of women" (p. 98). She argues that the end of the nineteenth century saw a shift in femininity becoming connected with class. Middle-class women were seen to 'own' femininity through the proving of respectability in their "appearance and conduct" (p. 99). The achieved idealised 'respectable' femininity provided admission for these women to "limited status and moral superiority" (p. 99). Working-class women were in contrast, positioned against femininity within categories of the sexual. This intersection between femininity and class is reflected in the different genres of dance. As the participants discuss, ballet is associated with a respectable femininity situated within the upper and middle class. Other genres of dance, such as contemporary dance, is a lower form of art due to its less restrictive nature in relation to the movements that are performed and the variance of bodies doing the performing
6. For the recruitment of the North High School participants I initially talked to current year 11 students with the hope of having similar age participants across both school groups. However, after getting no responses from this group I relied on Nicole (the North School learning advisor) to talk to students she had a close relationship with about participating. She came back with three participants; Hannah and Timothy who were still current North students and Amy who was recently graduated but still in close

contact with Nicole and the other participants. See Chapter Three for more information about the recruitment process and decisions of this project.

7. Taguchi (2009) describes intra-activity, as it is discussed by Deleuze and Guattari and Karen Barad, as a way of viewing relationships between “all living organisms and the material environment such as things and artefacts, spaces and places that we occupy and use in our daily practices” (p. xiv). Through the theorising of intra-activity, material entities are understood as holding agency to produce power and change “in an intertwined relationship” with other material objects or humans (Taguchi, 2009, p. xiv). She provides an example of this through highlighting the way chairs and the ground feels and sounds will impact on our relationships with them.
8. The participants from both Chorus and North High School frequently mentioned their learning advisors as a significant influence on their dance experiences. For the North participants, they emphasised their relationship with Nicole and the classroom environment she fosters. This was made particularly clear when the participants compared Nicole to the substitute teacher they had while Nicole was on maternity leave:

Amy:	Um I think with the dance because I think we lost a lot of the like thing when you [Nicole] went away to have your little baby you know to do your life...yeah because I think you had such a like before we did the hip hop, we had a solid group that
Hannah:	we felt more supported by you, like I felt lack of support from the other [teacher] in dance in general like she just wasn't as willing to do things or whatever
Amy:	yeah I just think it changed the vibe like she was just more -less open to new things which was fine but the kids that have gone through that I feel like are now like “whaaat? You’re allowed to do everything?” like that transition there

(North focus group workshop, 23/11/2018)

Here, the participants describe Nicole as supportive and open-minded to trying new things. After Nicole left for an extended period, the “vibe” of the dance classroom changed which the participants communicate as having a significant impact on the way students perceive dance education at North High School now. The students who have been introduced to dance through the substitute teacher have a different attitude towards what can be achieved in the dance space. This is illustrated by Amy’s observation of their surprised responses to Nicole’s open-mindedness. Kehily’s (2002) ethnographic research with young people and teachers, on how young people gain sexual knowledge, found that informal teacher-student relations were important for mediating the official curriculum and school policy. The North High School participants’ closeness to Nicole and their feeling of support from her impacts on the possibilities for what can be achieved in the dance classroom setting.

9. A développé is a classical ballet position involving the raising of one leg which is then fully extended out and held (Grant, 1982)
10. Competition was discussed as a prominent part of the dance experiences by the Chorus participants. This was in relation to getting parts and the resulting jealousy, parent anxieties of their child not

succeeding and in getting hired by a professional company. Anna, the Chorus learning advisor, discussed her observations of competition within parent cultures:

It's almost as if every type of competition is treated as a symbol of your value [...] I've seen parents in tears, parents devastated because their child didn't get placed in one of the dance competitions or something, quite irrational responses you know but they're desperate for their kids to be seen as successful

(Anna, individual interview, 17/10/2018)

Here, Anna discusses parents' behaviours in the context of dance competitions as illustrative of their "desperation" for their child to be successful. Competition outcomes say more than merely what placing a dancer gets. Rather, as Anna says, competition outcomes come to represent a person's "value". This again points to the intersection of dance with class. A person's engagement in the classical ballet genre of dance positions them within a 'high' class culture. Parents of prospective ballet dancers are "desperate" for their child to be successful in this domain due to the high-class connotations. The highly competitive culture of ballet may also contribute to the high-class culture of ballet with limited opportunities to be successful giving those who do 'make it' a higher status.

Competition and jealousy were also referenced by the Chorus student participants. This occurred during a discussion surrounding the presence of 'drama' at the Chorus High School campus:

Brooke: Yea definitely some jealousy
 Rosie: Like friends
 Brooke: And especially when it comes to like getting parts I think girls can get really jealous if they think they did well but they don't get the part
 Rosie: For like a performance
 Brooke: And their friend who they don't think is as good as them gets it
 Alexis: and sometimes it's just like who suits the role best not like who's better
 Harriet: So have you ever felt jealousy about not getting the part
 Brooke: I haven't because I'm just like a chill person
 Rosie: Yeah (laughs)
 Brooke: But yeah
 Alexis: I think I did like once when Daisy and Louise got to be like Pedestrian and that was like such a cool dance and I was like oh I want to be in that one but it was like I was also really proud for them for getting in I don't know it was like a really real jealousy

(Chorus focus group discussion, 12/09/2018)

Here the participants acknowledge their feelings of jealousy when they miss out on parts. This highlights the competition that exists between dancers to be chosen by their dancing teachers/directors/choreographers for a principal role. McEwen and Young (2011) interviewed 15 aspiring professional ballet dancers in Western Canada in order to explore the relationship between ballet and 'risk' behaviours. Similarly to the Chorus participants, the "competitive atmospheres" (p. 156) of the ballet world were frequently referred to. McEwen and Young argue that competition exists alongside "hierarchical power structures [and] the drive to achieve perfection" (p.156) which contribute

to the way dancers understand pain and injury. By this, McEwen and Young refer to the way the “hyper competitive setting” led to dancers ignoring injury and continually “abus[ing] their bodies” (McEwen & Young, 2011, p. 167). While the Chorus participants did not discuss competition and injury together, as Brooke suggests the disappointment of missing out on a part can have negative impacts on a dancers self-esteem resulting in feelings of jealousy.

11. An arabesque involves one leg supporting the body while the other leg is extended up, behind the body. The arms are also in an extended position. This aims to create the longest possible line between the toes and fingertips. There are many variations of the arabesque. See Grant (1982) for a more detailed glossary of classical ballet terms.
12. The appeal of Sara Murawski to some of the Chorus participants was her taller than average height for a classical ballerina and resulting challenge to body norms of classical ballerinas. This was also discussed in relation to hire-ability:

Brooke: Yeah like some companies...will only have body types like Emily's, whereas they would never have someone like me who is shorter and...

Rosie: Yeah they are like really strict

Alexis: Yeah your legs have to be a certain length

Brooke: Yeah and they'll like measure you and stuff

Harriet: Wow that's so specific. So do different companies look for different things?

Alexis: Yeah

Lottie: Yeah

Harriet: And is that a New Zealand company?

Brooke: The Royal New Zealand Ballet is quite like chill about it I think

Emily: They like shorter people

Brooke: Yeah they tend to like shorter people, but they have some tall people (laughs)

(Chorus focus group discussion, 12/09/2018)

Company specific body-type restrictions is something the participants are acutely aware of. Brooke (15 years old) communicates that her body will not be accepted in certain companies due to being too short and, before she was cut off by Rosie, she seemed to indicate she felt she was also not slim enough (Fieldnotes, 12/09/2018). The way they discussed the hiring process was in a matter-of-fact manner suggesting that this treatment of their bodies being measured and categorised is something they perceive as an inevitability. McEwen and Young (2011) discuss that ballet masters, teachers and artistic directors often reinforce restrictions and requirements around body shape and therefore are the “gatekeepers of the profession” (p. 165). This ‘gatekeeping’ position is strengthened by the dancers themselves having an “over-conforming willingness” (p. 165) to have the idealised ballerina body. Brooke illustrates this in her acceptance that she is not the right shape or height for certain companies, yet she remains as a Chorus student as she works towards professional outcomes. The dancers in McEwen and Young's study describe the pedagogical methods employed by their dance teachers as

being grounded in a “you-obey-me” (p. 156) strategy creating an environment of “unquestioned adherence” (Jones, Glimtmeier, & McKenzie, 2005; McEwen & Young, 2011, p. 156). Aspiring professional dancers want to adopt the ‘good dancer’ subjectivity which leads to self-disciplining and monitoring of their bodies and attitudes (McEwen & Young, 2011). This may be what is occurring for the Chorus participants who are aware of their own body types and the companies which they are eligible to audition for.

Again, this commodification of the body may be compounded by the current neoliberal era in which the “teaching of dissatisfaction and relentless self-monitoring” (p. 320) is emphasised under the framing of choice and “taking charge of one’s life” (p. 320) in order to create subjects willing to be moulded into idealised commodities (Gill & Kanai, 2018). The special character framing of Chorus High School with the emphasis on choice and student direction creates subjects who are relentlessly regulating themselves to become commodities in the marketplace of professional ballet.

References

- Aalten, A. (2004). The Moment When it All Comes Together: Embodied Experiences in Ballet. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 11(3), 263-276.
doi:10.1177/1350506804044462
- Albright, A. C. (1997). *Choreographing difference: the body and identity in contemporary dance*. Hanover, NH;Middletown, Conn.:: Wesleyan University Press.
- Allen, L. (2011). *Young people and sexuality education: rethinking key debates*. Basingstoke;New York:: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Allen, L., Rasmussen, M. L., & Quinlivan, K. (2013). *The Politics of Pleasure in Sexuality Education*. Florence, UNKNOWN: Taylor and Francis.
- Amin, K. (2016). Haunted by the 1990s: Queer Theory's Affective Histories. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 44(3/4), 173-189.
- Atencio, M., & Wright, J. (2009). 'Ballet it's too whitey': discursive hierarchies of high school dance spaces and the constitution of embodied feminine subjectivities. *Gender and Education*, 21(1), 31-46. doi:10.1080/09540250802213123
- Athanases, S. Z. (1996). A gay-themed lesson in an ethnic literature curriculum: Tenth graders' responses to "Dear Anita". *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(2), 231-255.
- Austin, J. I. (2016). Dancing sexual pleasures: exploring teenage women's experiences of sexuality and pleasure beyond 'sex'. *Sex Education*, 16(3), 279.
doi:10.1080/14681811.2015.1087838
- Ball, S. J. (2003). The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, 18(2), 215-228. doi:10.1080/0268093022000043065
- Barbour, R. (2007). *Doing focus groups* (1 ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.
- Bauer, U. (2008). Jérôme Bel : An Interview. *Performance Research*, 13(1), 42-48.
doi:10.1080/13528160802465516
- Beaver, T. D. (2016). Roller derby uniforms: The pleasures and dilemmas of sexualized attire. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 51(6), 639-657.
doi:10.1177/1012690214549060
- Biesta, G. (2010). *Good education in an age of measurement: ethics, politics, democracy*. Boulder, Colo: Paradigm Publishers.
- Blood, S. K. (2005). *Body work: the social construction of women's body image*. London;New York:: Routledge.

- Boyle, L. (2005). Flexing the Tensions of Female Muscularity: How Female Bodybuilders Negotiate Normative Femininity in Competitive Bodybuilding. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 33(1/2), 134-149.
- Brennan, D. (1996). Dance in the Northern Ireland physical education curriculum: A farsighted policy or an unrealistic innovation? *Women's Studies International Forum*, 19(5), 493-503. doi:10.1016/0277-5395(96)00050-7
- Burke, P. J. (2017). Difference in higher education pedagogies: gender, emotion and shame. *Gender and Education*, 29(4), 430-444. doi:10.1080/09540253.2017.1308471
- Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. New York;London;: Routledge.
- Cameron-Lewis, V., & Allen, L. (2013). Teaching pleasure and danger in sexuality education. *Sex Education*, 13(2), 121-132. doi:10.1080/14681811.2012.697440
- Choi, P. Y. L. (2000). *Femininity and the physically active woman*. London;New York;: Routledge.
- Cisney, V. W. (2014). Becoming-Other: Foucault, Deleuze, and the political nature of thought. *Foucault Studies*, 17(1).
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2015). Thematic Analysis. In E. C. Lyons, Adrian (Ed.), *Analysing Qualitative Data in Psychology* (Second ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Coleman, R. (2008). The Becoming of Bodies: Girls, media effects, and body image. *Feminist Media Studies*, 8(2), 163-179. doi:10.1080/14680770801980547
- Coleman, R. (2009). *The becoming of bodies: girls, images, experience*. New York;Manchester, UK;: Manchester University Press.
- Collins English Dictionary*. (2018). (13 ed.). Glasgow: HarperCollins.
- Collins, K., & Karyn, D. C. (2015). The Misty Copeland Effect. *Dance magazine*, 89(10).
- Connell, R. (2008). Masculinity construction and sports in boys' education: a framework for thinking about the issue. *Sport, Education and Society*, 13(2), 131-145. doi:10.1080/13573320801957053
- Copeland, M., & Bried, E. (2014). Stretching Beauty: Ballerina Misty Copeland on Her Body Struggles. *Self*.
- Crawshaw, M. (2014). Neo-Liberalism in New Zealand Education: a critique. . *Resisting The Neoliberal University*, 7-19.
- Davies, B., & Bansel, P. (2007). Neoliberalism and education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 20(3), 247-259. doi:10.1080/09518390701281751

- Del Busso, L. A., & Reavey, P. (2013). Moving beyond the surface: a poststructuralist phenomenology of young women's embodied experiences in everyday life. *Psychology & Sexuality*, 4(1), 46-61. doi:10.1080/19419899.2011.589866
- De Landa, M. (2006). *A new philosophy of society: Assemblage theory and social complexity*. London;New York;: Continuum.
- Deleuze, G., Guattari, F., & Massumi, B. (2004). *EPZ Thousand Plateaus*: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Deleuze, G., and Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. Trans. B. Massumi. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press
- Dimaggio, P., & Useem, M. (1978). Social Class and Arts Consumption: The Origins and Consequences of Class Differences in Exposure to the Arts in America. *Theory and Society*, 5(2), 141-161. doi:10.1007/BF01702159
- Dunkin, A. (2004). Gliding Glissade Not Grand Jeté: Elementary Classroom Teachers Teaching Dance Notes. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 105(3), 23-30. doi:10.3200/AEPR.105.3.23-30
- Edmonds, R., Wood, M., Fehling, P., & DiPasquale, S. (2018). The Impact of a Ballet and Modern Dance Performance on Heart Rate Variability in Collegiate Dancers. *Sports (Basel, Switzerland)*, 7(1), 3. doi:10.3390/sports7010003
- Ehrenberg, S. (2010). Reflections on reflections: mirror use in a university dance training environment. *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training*, 1(2), 172-184. doi:10.1080/19443927.2010.505001
- Felshin, J. (1974). The Triple Option . For Women in Sport. *Quest*, 21(1), 36-40. doi:10.1080/00336297.1974.10519789
- Fitzgerald, K. (2012). The contribution of embodied ways of knowing in reconceptualising dance in the New Zealand Curriculum: A grounded pathway for the twenty-first century. *Teaching & Learning Research Initiative*.
- Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge ; and, The discourse on language*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, M. (1988). *The history of sexuality* (Vintage Books ed.). New York: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M. (1990). *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- Foucault, M., & Gordon, C. (1980). *Power/knowledge: selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977*. Brighton: Harvester Press.

- Gard, M. (2008). When a boy's gotta dance: new masculinities, old pleasures. *Sport, Education and Society*, 13(2), 181-193. doi:10.1080/13573320801957087
- Gard, M., & Meyenn, R. (2000). Boys, Bodies, Pleasure and Pain: Interrogating Contact Sports in Schools. *Sport, Education and Society*, 5(1), 19-34. doi:10.1080/135733200114415
- Gerdin, G., Institutionen för idrottsvetenskap (ID), Linnéuniversitetet, & Fakulteten för samhällsvetenskap (FSV). (2017). 'it's not like you are less of a man just because you don't play rugby'-boys' problematisation of gender during secondary school physical education lessons in new zealand. *Sport, Education and Society*, 22(8), 890-904. doi:10.1080/13573322.2015.1112781
- Gilbert, J. (2004). Literature as sex education. *Changing English*, 11(2), 233-241. doi:10.1080/09540250042000252677
- Gill, R., & Kanai, A. (2018). Mediating Neoliberal Capitalism: Affect, Subjectivity and Inequality. *Journal of Communication*, 68(2), 318-326. doi:10.1093/joc/jqy002
- Giroux, H. A., & Cohen, R. (2014). *Neoliberalism's war on higher education*. Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books.
- Given, L. M. (2008). *The sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles, Calif: Sage Publications.
- Goodwin, B. (2010). Dance is not a dirty word. *Strategies*, 24(1), 10-12. doi:10.1080/08924562.2010.10590906
- Grant, G. (1982). *Technical Manual and Dictionary of Classical Ballet*: Dover Publications.
- Green, J. (2001). Socially Constructed Bodies in American Dance Classrooms. *Research in Dance Education*, 2(2), 155-173. doi:10.1080/14647890120100782
- Helmer, K. (2015). "Everyone Needs a Class Like This": High School Students' Perspectives on a Gay and Lesbian Literature Course. *The Educational Forum*, 79(4), 408-420. doi:10.1080/00131725.2015.1068421
- Hilsendager, S. (1990). In Transition-American Dance Education. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 61(2), 47-51. doi:10.1080/07303084.1990.10606446
- Holland, S., & Harpin, J. (2015). Who is the 'girly' girl? Tomboys, hyper-femininity and gender. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 24(3), 293-309. doi:10.1080/09589236.2013.841570
- Jackson, A. Y. (2010). Deleuze and the girl. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 23(5), 579-587. doi:10.1080/09518398.2010.500630

- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: viewing data across multiple perspectives* (1st ed.). Abingdon, Oxon;New York, NY;: Routledge.
- Jones, R. L., Glimtmeier, N., & McKenzie, A. (2005). Slim Bodies, Eating Disorders and the Coach-Athlete Relationship: A Tale of Identity Creation and Disruption. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 40(3), 377-391. doi:10.1177/1012690205060231
- Joy, J. (2014). *The choreographic*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Kehily, M. J. (2002). *Sexuality, gender and schooling: shifting agendas in social learning*. London: Routledge.
- Kirkland, G. (1992). *Dancing on My Grave*: Berkley Books.
- Kolb, A., & Kalogeropoulou, S. (2012). In Defence of Ballet: Women, Agency and the Philosophy of Pleasure. *Dance Research*, 30(2), 107-125. doi:10.3366/drs.2012.0042
- Koutedakis, Y., & Jamurtas, A. (2004). The Dancer as a Performing Athlete: Physiological Considerations. *Sports Medicine*, 34(10), 651-661. doi:10.2165/00007256-200434100-00003
- Krane, V., Choi, P. Y. L., Baird, S. M., Aimar, C. M., & Kauer, K. J. (2004). Living the Paradox: Female Athletes Negotiate Femininity and Muscularity. *Sex Roles*, 50(5), 315-329. doi:10.1023/B:SERS.0000018888.48437.4f
- Liamputtong, P. (2011). *Focus group methodology: principles and practices* (1 ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Lindner, K. (2011). Spectacular (Dis-) Embodiments: The Female Dancer on Film. *Scope: An Online Journal of Film and TV Studies*(20).
- Lynch, R. A. (2011). Michel Foucault: Key Concepts. In D. Taylor (Ed.). Durham;Montreal;: Acumen Publishing, Limited.
- Martino, W., & Cumming-Potvin, W. (2016). Teaching about sexual minorities and "princess boys": a queer and trans-infused approach to investigating LGBTQ-themed texts in the elementary school classroom. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 37(6), 807-827. doi:10.1080/01596306.2014.940239
- Mattsson, T., Lundvall, S., Forskningsgruppen för pedagogik, i. o. f., Gymnastik- och idrottshögskolan, G. I. H., & Institutionen för idrotts- och, h. (2015). The position of dance in physical education. *Sport, Education and Society*, 20(7), 855-871. doi:10.1080/13573322.2013.837044

- Mauthner, N. S., & Doucet, A. (2003). Reflexive Accounts and Accounts of Reflexivity in Qualitative Data Analysis. *Sociology*, 37(3), 413-431.
doi:10.1177/00380385030373002
- May, T. (2005). *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*: Cambridge University Press.
- May, T. (2014). *The Philosophy of Foucault*: Taylor & Francis.
- McEwen, K., & Young, K. (2011). Ballet and pain: reflections on a risk-dance culture. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 3(2), 152-173.
doi:10.1080/2159676X.2011.572181
- McGee, C. (1997). *Teachers and curriculum decision-making*. Palmerston North, N.Z: Dunmore Press.
- McPhail, J. C., & Palincsar, A. S. (2009). Discovery Meets Inquiry. In K. A. Quinlivan, R. Boyask, & P. D. Baljit Kaur (Eds.), *Educational enactments in a globalised world: intercultural conversations* (Vol. 38.;38;). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Mills, G. Y. (1997). Is It Is or Is It Ain't: The Impact of Selective Perception on the Image Making of Traditional African Dance. *Journal of Black Studies*, 28(2), 139-156.
doi:10.1177/002193479702800201
- Morar, N. (2016). *Between Deleuze and Foucault*: Edinburgh University Press.
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority. (2019). Dance subject resources. Retrieved from <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/dance/levels/>
- New Zealand Schools Trustees Association. (2019). *Board of Trustees*. Retrieved from <https://www.nzsta.org.nz/trustee-elections-and-appendix-2/board-of-trustees/>
- Oliver, P. (2010). *Foucault - the key ideas*. London: Teach Yourself.
- Ozawa-de Silva, C. (2002). Beyond the body/mind? Japanese contemporary thinkers on alternative sociologies of the body. *Body & Society*, 8(2), 21-38
- Pickard, A. (2013). Ballet body belief: Perceptions of an ideal ballet body from young ballet dancers. *Research in Dance Education*, 14(1), 3-19.
doi:10.1080/14647893.2012.712106
- Quinlivan, K. (2013). The methodological im/possibilities of researching sexuality education in schools: working queer conundrums. *Sex Education*, 13(sup1), S56-S69.
doi:10.1080/14681811.2013.796288
- Quinlivan, K. A. (2018). *Exploring contemporary issues in sexuality education with young people: theories in practice*. United Kindom: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Raffnsøe, S., Thaning, M. S., & Gudmand-Hoyer, M. (2016). *Michel Foucault: A Research Companion*: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

- Renold, E., & Ringrose, J. (2011). Schizoid subjectivities?: Re-theorizing teen girls' sexual cultures in an era of 'sexualization'. *Journal of Sociology*, 47(4), 389-409.
doi:10.1177/1440783311420792
- Renold, E., Ringrose, J., & Egan, R. D. (2016). *Children, Sexuality and Sexualization*: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Ringrose, J. (2011). Beyond Discourse? Using Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis to explore affective assemblages, heterosexually striated space, and lines of flight online and at school. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 43(6), 598-618.
doi:10.1111/j.1469-5812.2009.00601.x
- Ringrose, J. (2013). *Postfeminist Education?: Girls and the Sexual Politics of Schooling*: Routledge.
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Lewis, P. S. P. J., Nicholls, C. M. N., & Ormston, R. (2013). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*: SAGE Publications.
- Sansom, A. N. (2011). CHAPTER TWO: The Development of Dance Education in New Zealand. *Counterpoints*, 407, 11-24.
- Shumway, D. (2017). The University, Neoliberalism, and the Humanities: A History. *Humanities*, 6(4), 83. doi:10.3390/h6040083
- Skeggs, B. (1997). *Formations of class and gender: becoming respectable*. London;Thousand Oaks, Calif;: SAGE.
- Stagoll, C. (2005). Becoming. In *The Deleuze dictionary*, ed. A. Parr, 20–2. New York: Columbia University Press
- Stolz, S. A. (2015). Embodied Learning. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 47(5), 474-487. doi:10.1080/00131857.2013.879694
- Stothart, B. (2000). Pegs in the ground: Landmarks in the history of New Zealand physical education. (Undetermined). *Physical Educator - Journal of Physical Education New Zealand*, 33(2), 5-5.
- Strauss, M., & Nadel, M. (2012). *Looking at Contemporary Dance : A Guide for the Internet Age*. Hightstown, UNITED STATES: Princeton Book Company.
- Taguchi, H. L. (2009). *Going beyond the theory/practice divide in early childhood education: Introducing an intra-active pedagogy*. Routledge.

- Tajrobehkar, B. (2016). Flirting With the Judges: Bikini Fitness Competitors' Negotiations of Femininity in Bodybuilding Competitions. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 33(4), 294-304. doi:10.1123/ssj.2015-0152
- Taylor, S. J., Bogdan, R., & DeVault, M. L. (2016). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: a guidebook and resource* (Vol. Fourth;4;4th;). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Terry, G. (2015). Doing Thematic Analysis. In E. Lyons & A. Coyle (Eds.), *Analysing Qualitative Data in Psychology* (Second ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Thein, A. H. (2013). Language Arts Teachers' Resistance to Teaching LGBT Literature and Issues. *Language Arts*, 90(3), 169-180.
- Townley, B. (1993). Foucault, Power/Knowledge, and its relevance for human resource management. *The Academy of Management Review*, 18(3), 518-545. doi:10.2307/258907
- University of Canterbury, 2019. *UC Excel*. Retrieved from <https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/get-started/scholarships/types/uc-excel/>
- Välikangas, A., & Seeck, H. (2011). Exploring the Foucauldian interpretation of power and subject in organizations. *Journal of management & organization*, 17(6), 812-827.
- Vares, T., & Jackson, S. (2015). Preteen girls, magazines, and the negotiation of young sexual femininity. *Gender and Education*, 27(6), 700-713. doi:10.1080/09540253.2015.1078453
- Vaughn, S., Schumm, J. S., & Sinagub, J. M. (1996). *Focus group interviews in education and psychology*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Walkerdine, Valerie (1986) 'Video Replay: Families, Films and Fantasy', in Victor Burgin, James Donald and Cora Kaplan (eds) *Formations of Fantasy*, New York: Methuen
- Wilson, V. (1997). Focus Groups: a useful qualitative method for educational research? *British Educational Research Journal*, 23(2), 209-224. doi:10.1080/0141192970230207
- Youdell, D. (2011). *School trouble: identity, power and politics in education*. Abingdon, Oxon;New York, NY;: Routledge.

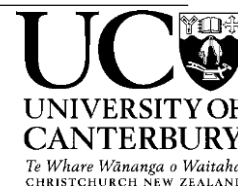
Appendix A: Student participant information form 1

Department: College of Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

27/08/2018



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Information Sheet for student participants

My name is Harriet Boyle and I am a Masters student at the University of Canterbury in the College of Education, Health and Human Development. This project is aiming to explore your perspective and experiences of formal and informal sexuality education in your unique high school setting. I will be working under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Marie Vares at the University of Canterbury.

Requirements for the student participant

If both you and your parent/guardian agree to take part in this study, your involvement will include:

- Five, separate, hour-long observations of you and your dance peers during class time
- One (or possibly two), 45 to 60-minute focus group discussion(s) during class time (or at a time convenient to you) with your dance peers

Participant observations:

During these, I will be sitting in on your lessons, taking notes of what I observe. This will not require anything of you- the less you react to my presence, the better.

Focus group discussion

I will sit with you and the other dance students and facilitate discussion around your experiences of schooling. With your permission, I will audio record this discussion so that I can transcribe the discussion to analyse at a later date. The kinds of topics I would like to discuss with you will be around:

- Your decision to come to a special character school and how you are finding it
- The places and activities where you learn about sexualities and relationships in and out of school
- The sites/people you consider to be most important for your sexuality education
- Your experiences as dance students

The focus group questions will not be asking you to share information about your private lives. You may choose not to answer a question without fear of consequences. This will take place at your school during school hours arranged with your learning advisor or at a convenient time outside of these hours. Depending on the former focus group, I may invite you to participate in a follow up group.

Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw before the 1/11/2018. After this date it will be difficult for me to remove data relating to you. The thesis will be handed in on the 1/03/2019. After this date I will not be able to make any edits. If you withdraw before the 1/03/2019, I will attempt to remove all information relating to you. You may ask for your raw data to be returned to you or destroyed at any point. If you do not wish to participate at all, any data relating to you will be removed from the project.

In order to protect privacy, the information gathered will be presented in such a way that you will not be identifiable. You will be given a pseudonym (fake name) so that data remains confidential. Data will be stored on a password protected computer or in a locked filing cabinet and will only be accessible by myself and my supervisors.

Potential risks of participating

- Because of the uniqueness of your high school, there is a possibility that your school and, therefore, you will be identified.
- Because responses in a focus group are said in the presence of peers you may feel self-conscious.

Minimisation of risks:

- I will do my utmost to disguise identifying features of the school, teachers and students.
- It is important to understand the focus group is a respectful space where people should feel safe to express their opinions without fear of consequence.
- There is an option in the Consent Sheet to indicate to the researcher whether you would like a copy of the interview transcript (a typed copy of what was discussed) or summary of the project results. Upon reflection of these you have the option to change or remove anything you have said in the interview.
- You do not have to answer anything you feel uncomfortable answering and the questions will be age appropriate and not invasive on your personal lives.
- If during the focus group you or one of the other participants become emotionally distressed I will stop the interview, have a break and ask you/the student if you/they would like to continue. If not, you/they are free to go without consequence.

A thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library. You are free to contact myself or my supervisors with any questions about the study at any stage. Our contact details are:

- Harriet Boyle - harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz
- Associate Professor, Kathleen Quinlivan - kathleen.quinlivan@canterbury.ac.nz
- Dr Tiina Vares - tiina.vares@canterbury.ac.nz.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you agree to participate in the study, you and your parent/guardian are asked to complete the consent forms and return them by Monday 2nd September

I will repeat what is required of you verbally before each part of the research

Appendix B: Student participant consent form 1

Department: Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Consent Form for student participants

- ☐ I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- ☐ I understand what is required of me if I agree to take part in the research.
- ☐ I understand that participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time before the 1/03/2019 without penalty. Withdrawal of participation will also include the withdrawal of any information I have provided should this remain practically achievable.
- ☐ I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and research supervisors and that any published or reported results will not identify the participants or school. I understand that a thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library.
- ☐ I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and/or in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after five years.
- ☐ I understand the risks associated with taking part and how they will be managed.
- ☐ I understand that in the focus group I will respect the opinions and discussions of others and expect respect towards my responses in return.
- ☐ I understand I will be given a copy of the interview transcript (a typed copy of what was discussed) and an opportunity to change or add to anything I have said during the focus group discussion or one on one interview
- ☐ I understand that I can contact the researcher or supervisors for further information.
- ☐ If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- ☐ I would like a summary of the results of the project.
- ☐ By signing below, I agree to participate

Name of student: _____ Signature of student: _____

Date: _____ Email address (*for report of findings, if applicable*): _____

Please return this form to by Monday 2nd September

Appendix C: Student participant (and Parent/Caregiver) information form 2

Department: College of Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

27/08/2018



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Information Sheet for parents/caregivers

My name is Harriet Boyle and I am a Masters student at the University of Canterbury in the College of Education, Health and Human Development. This project is aiming to explore young people's experiences of formal and informal sexuality education in a unique high school setting. I will be working under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Marie Vares at the University of Canterbury.

Requirements for the student participant:

I am interested in investigating the experiences of the dance students in year 11 to year 13 under the supervision of Sarah Burnett. If you and your child/tama/tamahine agree to take part in this study, involvement will include:

Focus group discussion: Consenting students will participate in a 45 to 60-minute focus group discussion. I would like to audio record this discussion so that I can transcribe it to analyse at a later date. The time and place of this discussion will be arranged with consenting students and will work around their commitments. The prompts for discussion will include:

- Their decision to come to a special character school and how they are finding it
- The places and activities where they learn about sexualities and relationships in and out of school
- The sites/people they consider to be most important for their sexuality education
- Their experiences as dance students

You may be assured that I will not be asking participants to talk about anything they consider to be private information. There will be no consequences to a participant choosing not to answer a question. Depending on the former focus group, I may invite students to participate in a follow up focus group. This will take place at a convenient time and place for students.

Participation is voluntary and your child/tama/tamahine has the right to withdraw before the 1/11/2018 with no penalty. After this date it will be difficult for me to remove data relating to your child. The submission date for this thesis is the 1/03/2019. It will be impossible for me to make changes after this date. If withdrawal occurs before the 1/03/2019, I will do my best to remove any information relating to your child/tama/tamahine, provided this is practically achievable.

In order to protect privacy, the information will be presented in such a way that the school will not be identifiable. The school and all participants will be given pseudonyms so that data remains confidential. Data will be stored on a password protected computer or locked filing cabinet and will only be accessible by myself and my supervisors. It will be disposed of after five years. I will not be at liberty to disclose material to anyone except my supervisor.

Potential risks:

- Due to the uniqueness of the school, there is the potential for the teacher of the class and participants to be identified.
- The confidentiality of the discussion content is dependent on the commitment of the other participants to respect this

Minimisation of risks:

- I will do my utmost to disguise identifying features of the school, teachers and students.
- I will have a discussion with the teacher and principal about issues of confidentiality
- I will emphasise to students that their participation is voluntary
- Students will get an opportunity to review and make changes to the focus group transcripts
- Before the focus group discussion begins I will encourage the students not to repeat what is discussed. I will also emphasise that the focus group discussion is a respectful space where people should feel safe to express their opinions without fear of consequence.
- If during the focus group or one-to-one interview participants become emotionally distressed I will stop the interview, have a break and ask the student if they would like to continue. If not, they are free to go without consequence.

A thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library. Please indicate to the researcher on the consent form if you would like a copy of the summary of results of the project.

You and your child may contact myself and my supervisors if you have any questions about the study at any stage. We will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about your child's/tama/tamahine participation in the project. Contact details are as follows:

- Harriet Boyle- harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz
- Associate Professor, Kathleen Quinlivan - kathleen.quinlivan@canterbury.ac.nz
- Dr Tiina Vares - tiina.vares@canterbury.ac.nz

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you understand and agree to allow your child/tama/tamahine to be part of the study, you are asked to complete the consent form below and return it by 17th of October.

Appendix D: Student participant consent form 2

Department: Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Consent Form for student participants

- ☐ I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- ☐ I understand what is required of me if I agree to take part in the research.
- ☐ I understand that participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time before the 1/03/2019 without penalty. Withdrawal of participation will also include the withdrawal of any information I have provided should this remain practically achievable.
- ☐ I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and research supervisors and that any published or reported results will not identify the participants or school. I understand that a thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library.
- ☐ I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and/or in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after five years.
- ☐ I understand the risks associated with taking part and how they will be managed.
- ☐ I understand that in the focus group I will respect the opinions and discussions of others and expect respect towards my responses in return.
- ☐ I understand I will be given a copy of the interview transcript (a typed copy of what was discussed) and an opportunity to change or add to anything I have said during the focus group discussion or one on one interview
- ☐ I understand that I can contact the researcher or supervisors for further information.
- ☐ If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- ☐ I would like a summary of the results of the project.
- ☐ By signing below, I agree to participate

Name of student: _____ Signature of student: _____

Date: _____ Email address (*for report of findings, if applicable*): _____

Please return this form by 17th October

Appendix E: Parent information form 1

Department: College of Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

27/08/2018



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Information Sheet for parents/caregivers

My name is Harriet Boyle and I am a Masters student at the University of Canterbury in the College of Education, Health and Human Development. This project is aiming to explore young people's experiences of formal and informal sexuality education in a unique high school setting. I will be working under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Marie Vares at the University of Canterbury.

Requirements for the student participant:

I am interested in investigating the experiences of the dance students in year seven to year 12 under the supervision of learning advisor, Natalie Woods. If you and your child/tama/tamahine agree to take part in this study, involvement will include:

Participant observations: A participant observation is a data collection method which involves me sitting in and taking notes regarding the everyday school-routines of your children/tamariki. It will not interrupt their schoolwork – the less they react to my presence, the better. I would like to do five of these observations. Each will be an hour in length and will be done during class time. This will not require anything of your child/tama/tamahine. If they do not wish to participate, I will remove any data relating to them taken during these observations

Focus group discussion: Consenting students will also participate in a 45 to 60-minute focus group discussion. I would like to audio record this discussion so that I can transcribe it to analyse at a later date. The time and place of this discussion will be arranged with consenting students and will work around their commitments. The prompts for discussion will include:

- Their decision to come to a special character school and how they are finding it
- The places and activities where they learn about sexualities and relationships in and out of school
- The sites/people they consider to be most important for their sexuality education
- Their experiences as dance students

You may be assured that I will not be asking participants to talk about anything they consider to be private information. There will be no consequences to a participant choosing not to answer a question.

Depending on the former focus group and participant observations, I may invite students to participate in a follow up focus group. This will take place at a convenient time and place for students.

Participation is voluntary and your child/tama/tamahine has the right to withdraw before the 1/11/2018 with no penalty. After this date it will be difficult for me to remove data relating to your child. The submission date for this thesis is the 1/03/2019. It will be impossible for me to make changes after this date. If withdrawal occurs before the 1/03/2019, I will do my best to remove any information relating to your child/tama/tamahine, provided this is practically achievable.

In order to protect privacy, the information will be presented in such a way that the school will not be identifiable. The school and all participants will be given pseudonyms so that data remains confidential. Data will be stored on a password protected computer or locked filing cabinet and will only be accessible by myself and my supervisors. It will be disposed of after five years. I will not be at liberty to disclose material to anyone except my supervisor.

Potential risks:

- Due to the uniqueness of the school, there is the potential for the teacher of the class and participants to be identified.
- The confidentiality of the discussion content is dependent on the commitment of the other participants to respect this

Minimisation of risks:

- I will do my utmost to disguise identifying features of the school, teachers and students.
- I will have a discussion with the teacher and principal about issues of confidentiality
- I will emphasise to students that their participation is voluntary
- If there are students who are not wanting to participate, I will try to arrange data collection sessions during times where they are either not present or when they will not be inconvenienced.
- Students will get an opportunity to review and make changes to the focus group transcripts
- Before the focus group discussion begins I will encourage the students not to repeat what is discussed. I will also emphasise that the focus group discussion is a respectful space where people should feel safe to express their opinions without fear of consequence.
- If during the focus group or one-to-one interview participants become emotionally distressed I will stop the interview, have a break and ask the student if they would like to continue. If not, they are free to go without consequence.

A thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library. Please indicate to the researcher on the consent form if you would like a copy of the summary of results of the project.

You and your child may contact myself and my supervisors if you have any questions about the study at any stage. We will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about your child's/tama/tamahine participation in the project. Contact details are as follows:

- Harriet Boyle- harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz
- Associate Professor, Kathleen Quinlivan - kathleen.quinlivan@canterbury.ac.nz
- Dr Tiina Vares - tiina.vares@canterbury.ac.nz

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you understand and agree to allow your child/tama/tamahine to be part of the study, you are asked to complete the consent form below and return it by September 2nd.

Appendix F: Parent consent form 1

Department: Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Consent Form for parents/caregivers

- ☐ I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- ☐ I understand what is required of my child/tama/tamahine if they consent to take part in the research. I also understand that data collection will take place during class time at the school.
- ☐ I understand that my child/tama/tamahine will have the option to review interview transcripts and add or change anything they have said
- ☐ I understand that participation is voluntary and my child/tama/tamahine may withdraw at any time before 1/03/2019 without penalty. Withdrawal of participation will also include the withdrawal of any information my child/tama/tamahine has provided should this remain practically achievable.
- ☐ I understand that any information or opinions my child/tama/tamahine provides will be kept confidential to the researcher and research supervisor, and that any published or reported results will not identify the participants.
- ☐ I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after five years.
- ☐ I understand the risks associated with my child/tama/tamahine taking part and how they will be managed.
- ☐ I understand that I can contact the researcher, Harriet Boyle, or research supervisors, Associate Professor Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Vares, for further information.
- ☐ If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- ☐ I would like a summary of the results of the project.
- ☐ By signing below, I consent to my child/tama/tamahine taking part in this research project

Your Name _____ Name of child/tama/tamahine: _____

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Email address (for report of findings): _____

Please return this form by the 2nd of September

Appendix G: School Director information form

Department: Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Information Sheet for School Director

My name is Harriet Boyle and I am a Masters student at the University of Canterbury in the College of Education, Health and Human Development. This project is exploring young people's experiences of formal and informal sexuality education in a unique high school setting. I will be working under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Marie Vares at the University of Canterbury.

I am interested in investigating the experiences of the full-time dance students in year seven to year 12 under the supervision of learning advisor, Natalie Woods. With the school's/kura's permission, I would like to conduct five, one-hour-long participant observations, and one (or possibly two) 45 to 60-minute focus group sessions. Following your consent, each of these data collection sessions would ideally take place at the school during school hours, however, I will be giving the students the option for the focus group to take place outside of these hours.

A participant observation is a data collection method which involves me sitting in and taking notes regarding the everyday school-routines of students. It will not interrupt their schoolwork – the less they react to my presence, the better. Each observation will be an hour in length and will be done during class time. This will not require anything of the students or their learning advisor. If a student does not wish to participate, I will remove any data relating to them taken during these observations

Following the observations, I would like to invite students to participate in a 45 to 60-minute focus group discussion. Following consent from the school/kura, I would like to audio record this discussion so that I can transcribe it to analyse at a later date. Because the focus group is semi-structured I won't know in advance what will come up, however, the prompts for discussion will include:

- Their decision to come to a special character school and how they are finding it
- The places and activities where they learn about sexualities and relationships in and out of school
- The sites/people they consider to be most important for their sexuality education
- Their experiences as dance students

Depending on the former focus group and participant observations, I may invite students to participate in a follow up focus group. This would also ideally take place at the school during school hours.

Participation is voluntary and students have the right to withdraw at any stage before the 1/03/2019 with no penalty. It will be impossible for me to make edits after this date as the thesis will have been submitted. Changes after the 1/11/2018 will be difficult as the writing of the thesis will be well underway. If withdrawal occurs before 1/03/2019, I will do my best to remove any information relating to the students, provided this is practically achievable.

Though the utmost care will be taken to ensure confidentiality, as the education circle in New Zealand society is quite small and as your high school is unique, there is the potential for your school, learning advisor or students to be identified.

In order to protect privacy, the information gathered will be presented in such a way that the school/kura will not be identifiable. The school/kura and all participants will be given pseudonyms (fictitious names) so that data remains confidential. Data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet or on a password protected computer and will only be accessible by myself and my supervisors, Associate Professor Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Marie Vares. It will be disposed of after five years. I will not be at liberty to disclose material to anyone except my supervisor.

The results of the project may be published, but you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation. A thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library. Please indicate to the researcher on the consent form if you would like to receive a copy of the summary of results of the project.

The project is being carried out as a requirement for a Masters thesis by Harriet Boyle under the supervision of Associate Professor, Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Vares. You are free to contact us if you have any questions about the study at any stage. The contact details are as follows:

- Harriet Boyle - harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz
- Associate Professor, Kathleen Quinlivan - kathleen.quinlivan@canterbury.ac.nz
- Dr Tiina Vares - tiina.vares@canterbury.ac.nz

We will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about the project.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you agree to allow the study to take place at your school/kura, you are asked to complete the consent form below and return it to Harriet Boyle by scanning and emailing it to harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz.

Appendix H: School Director consent form

Department: Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Consent Form for School Director

- ☐ I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- ☐ I understand what is required of me and the research participants if I consent to the research taking part in my school/kura
- ☐ I understand that participation of the school/kura is voluntary and may withdraw at any time before the 1/03/2019 without penalty. Withdrawal of participation will also include the withdrawal of any information relating to the school/kura.
- ☐ I understand that any information or opinions participants provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and research supervisor, and that any published or reported results will not identify the participants.
- ☐ I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after five years.
- ☐ I understand the risks associated with the research being conducted in my school and how they will be managed.
- ☐ I understand that I can contact the researcher, Harriet Boyle, or research supervisors, Kathleen Quinlivan and Tiina Vares, for further information.
- ☐ If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- ☐ I would like a summary of the results of the project.
- ☐ By signing below, I consent to this research being conducted in my school

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Email address or postal address (*for report of findings, if applicable*):

Please scan and email this form to harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

Appendix I: Learning advisor information form

Department: College of Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

23/06/2018



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Information Sheet for Learning Advisor

My name is Harriet Boyle and I am a Masters student at the University of Canterbury in the College of Education, Health and Human Development. For my Master's degree I am wanting to explore young people's experiences of formal and informal sexuality education. I will be working under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Marie Vares at the University of Canterbury.

If you consent, your involvement will include permitting me to carry out five, one-hour long participant observations of you and your dance students, who have also consented to be part of the research. A participant observation is a data collection method which involves me sitting in and taking notes regarding the everyday school-routines of your students. It will not interrupt their schoolwork – the less they react to my presence, the better.

Consenting students will also participate in a 45 to 60-minute focus group discussion. This will involve me sitting with the students and facilitating discussion around their experiences of schooling. To limit any outside influence on the student responses, you will not be able to be present for the focus group discussion. With your permission, I will give participants the option of this taking place at your school during school hours at a convenient time for both yourself and students.

Depending on the former focus group and participant observations, I may invite students to participate in a follow up focus group. With your consent, this may also be conducted during school hours.

Lastly, as this project stems from my 2017 honours research, it is likely aspects of the interview I conducted with you will be useful to draw upon. With your permission, I will use your interview to supplement the data that I collect from your students.

Your Participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw before the 1/03/2019 without penalty. It will be impossible for me to make edits after this date as the thesis will have been submitted. It will be difficult for me to remove data relating to you after the 1/11/2018 as the writing of the thesis will be well underway. However, if you withdraw before the 1/03/2019, I will do my best to remove all information relating to you.

In order to protect privacy, the information gathered will be presented in such a way that you will not be identifiable. The data will be analysed and the raw data will be confidential. You, the students and your school will be given a pseudonym (fictitious name) so that data remains confidential. Data will be stored on a password protected computer and will only be accessible by myself and my supervisors, Associate Professor Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Marie Vares. It will be disposed of after five years. I will not be at liberty to disclose material to anyone except my supervisor.

Though the utmost care will be taken to ensure confidentiality, as the education circle in New Zealand society is quite small and as your high school is uniquely distinctive, there is the potential for your school to be identified. Furthermore, though the study is focused primarily on the students your identity as a transgender learning advisor may feature in some of their narratives and therefore I will not be able to remove this from my study.

The results of the project may be published, but you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation. A thesis is a public document and will be available through the UCLibrary.

Please indicate to the researcher on the consent form if you would like to receive a copy of the summary of results of the project.

The project is being carried out as a requirement for a Masters thesis by Harriet Boyle under the supervision of Associate Professor, Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tiina Vares. You are free to contact us if you have any questions about the study at any stage. The contact details are as follows:

- Harriet Boyle - harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz
- Associate Professor, Kathleen Quinlivan - kathleen.quinlivan@canterbury.ac.nz
- Dr Tiina Vares - tiina.vares@canterbury.ac.nz.

We will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about your participation in the project.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you agree to participate in the study, you are asked to complete the consent form below and return it to Harriet Boyle.

Appendix J: Learning advisor consent form

Department: Education, Health and Human Development

Telephone (Kathleen Quinlivan): +64 336 95619

Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school students at a special character school

Consent Form for Learning Advisor

- ☐ I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- ☐ I understand what is required of me if I agree to take part in the research.
- ☐ I understand that participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time before the 1/03/2019 without penalty. Withdrawal of participation will also include the withdrawal of any information I have provided should this remain practically achievable.
- ☐ I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and research supervisor, and that any published or reported results will not identify the participants.
- ☐ I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after five years.
- ☐ I understand the risks associated with taking part and how they will be managed.
- ☐ I understand that I can contact the researcher, Harriet Boyle, or research supervisors, Kathleen Quinlivan and Tiina Vares, for further information.
- ☐ If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- ☐ I would like a summary of the results of the project.
- ☐ By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Email address (for report of findings, if applicable): _____

Please sign and return this form to:

Harriet Boyle

College of Education, Health and Human Development

harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

Appendix K: Student information pamphlet

- If your parents/caregivers agree they need to sign the consent form
- Bring both your own and your parents consent form back to school and hand it in to your dance teacher.

Researcher contact details:

If you have any questions or concerns about this project at any stage, please contact:

Harriet Boyle (Researcher)
Masters Student
Email: harriet.boyle@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

Kathleen Quinlivan (Research Supervisor)
Associate Professor
Email: Kathleen.quinlivan@canterbury.ac.nz

Tina Vares (Research Supervisor)
Senior Lecturer
Email: tina.vares@canterbury.ac.nz

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).



If it is everywhere, how is it being covered in school?

Research shows that formal sexuality education in mainstream school tends to focus on biology, health and risk prevention which, although helpful, doesn't engage with young people's daily experiences and negotiations of sexuality and relationships.

So is there another way to do this which is more relevant to young people? I am interested in learning about your experiences of sexuality and relationship education, both in and out of this special character school.

If you want to take part in this project this is everything you need to know about your participation....

Who is doing the research?

This project is for a masters thesis by Harriet Boyle. She is being supervised by Associate Professor, Kathleen Quinlivan and Dr Tina Vares.

What would be involved of you?

One (or possibly two) 60min focus group discussions. During these I will sit with you and your peers and facilitate discussion around your experiences of schooling. This would be audio recorded.

These would take place at your school, during school hours (or at a time convenient to you).



What kinds of questions will you be asked?

A focus group is all about you and what you want to talk about!

However, the prompts for discussion will be around:

- Your decision to come to Unlimited
- The places and activities where you learn about sexualities and relationships in and out of school
- The sites/people you consider to be most important for your sexuality education
- Your experiences of dance

Can I change my mind about being involved?

Absolutely! Your involvement is completely voluntary and you can pull out of the research at any stage. However, because of the nature of the group discussion it won't be possible to withdraw your information once the focus group is underway.

Privacy & Confidentiality

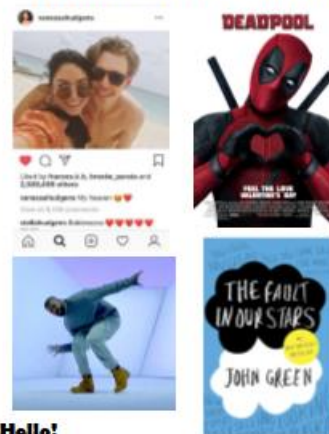
You and the school will be given fake names and any distinguishing features will be disguised.

I am the only one who will have access to the recording and will give you a typed version of the interview so that you can add to or change anything you have said.

All data will be kept on a password protected computer or a locked filing cabinet. I am the only one with access to the data.



Exploring the formal and informal sexuality education experiences of high school dance students



Hello!

This brochure is to tell you about a research project so you can decide whether you would like to take part.

The Research

Social media, TV, movies, magazines, books, music, friends, teachers, family... learning about sexuality and relationships is everywhere....

Are there any risks of participating?

1. Because New Zealand is quite small and you are in a unique school, there is the possibility that you may be identified.
2. You may be nervous talking in front of your peers.

How will these risks be minimized?

1. I will do my utmost to disguise distinguishing features of you and the school.
2. The focus group will be a respectful space where people are free to express themselves. If you do become emotionally distressed, I will stop the interview and offer a break if you do not want to continue you are free to go.

What happens to the thesis?

A thesis is a public document which will be available through the UC Library.

What do you do if you want to take part?

- Take home an Information and consent form
- Talk about the project with your parents/caregiver

