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TABLE OF CONTENTS
Mission Statement, Writing Style, And Copyright Statement

Editorial
Dr. Colleen Pinar

ARTICLES
“None Of Us Think About Being A Woman:” Performing Gender Without Norms
Dr. Yoko Suzuki

Seeking Solace In The Music Room: Normalized Physical Spaces In The Early Childhood Environment And
The Resulting Impact On Transgender Children
Dr. Ashley Sullivan

The Inheritance of Melinting Dance In The Wana Community of Melinting Sub-District In The Province Of
East Lampung
Dr. Yuliawan Kasmahidayat

Book Review
Katie Newcomb, MM
GEMS is a peer-reviewed, online journal that explores the myriad intersections between gender, education, music and society. Emphasis is on the ways in which music teaching and learning can be used to re-dress and eliminate inequalities brought about through ideologies of domination by creating an open-ness to the musical experience that promotes access to all (and thus by extension, also the ways in which music teaching and learning have not been transformative in the past). Gender will be approached, not as male or female, but as a continuum of possibilities sustained by socially and historically constructed notions of masculinity and femininity that interact in complex, often competing and contradictory ways. A wide variety of methodological (historical, ethnographic, philosophical, sociological, etc.) and inter-disciplinary orientations will be featured, with contributors encouraged to make use of the variety of creative options presented by the electronic medium.

Materials submitted to GEMS must conform to the current edition of one of the following writing style manuals: *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, or *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Articles and Book Reviews may not mix styles within a single manuscript. To allow for the identity of the author(s) to be transparent, it is requested that both first and last names be used when citing and when listed in the references.

For Text:
Roberta Lamb and Julia Koza brought feminist critiques of music education.

For References:

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Questions or comments? gems_editor@yahoo.com
Editorial

I would like to welcome readers to the February 2014 issue of GEMS. Queen’s University (houses GEM online) has just moved the OJS online system to the new host – Scholar’s Portal. The move began at the end of January 2014 and was completed during the first week of February. The people at Queen’s University took great care so that GEMS data stayed in-sync and that no information was lost. I was informed that the Scholar’s Portal would provide a more stable platform and would use the most current software. I was told that compared to the old system (I encountered a few technique glitches and some procedures that had to be manually manipulated by the OJS technical support people) the new system (Scholar’s Portal) will make the experience as editor more pleasant. Brock University and the University of Ottawa have previously moved their OJS installation to Scholars Portal with positive results. I am sure Queen’s University and GEMS will have similar results. In the past Queen’s University and the people at Queen’s University (Katie Legere, Sylvia Andrychuck and Sam Kalb) have been supportive to GEMS. I am very grateful for their continued work on the behalf of GEMS and look forward to learning how to navigate the new system at Scholar’s Portal.

The CrossRef service for GEMS has been renewed for 2014. CrossRef is the service that links scholarly and professional publications so that they are searchable online. To have the online journal GEMS, the articles and the book reviews published in GEMS linked on CrossRef is vital to all involved. Roberta Lamb has kindly agreed to pay for CrossRef for 2014. Melissa Natale-Abramo, Joe Abramo, and Monique Buzzarté have also paid for CrossRef in the past. Although I announced this in November 2013, the financial support of GEMS by these individuals warrants further acknowledgement.

I would like to post a call one more time for individuals who would consider taking an active role on GEMS’ editorial team. If you are interested, please contact the editor.

I also would like to post a call for individuals who would consider taking an active role as GEMS’ social media director. This person(s) will promote GEMS on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, and Pinterest. If you are interested, please contact the editor.

GEMS is actively seeking article and book reviews/book summary submissions. As editor, I have decided that authors of books relevant to GEMS readers can submit a summary of their own book -- if a book review of their book had not been already published in GEMS. Therefore, both book reviews and book summaries will be accepted along with articles. Submit your manuscripts to the editor at gems_editor@yahoo.com.

As always, I would like readers to support the authors whose articles and book reviews are included in the previous editions of GEMS. You can post your comments pertaining to individual articles published in GEMS on GEMS blog page at http://gendereducationmusicandsociety.blogspot.com/

In the February 2014 issue of GEMS, Dr. Yoko Suzuki in her article titled, “None Of Us Think About Being A Woman:” Performing Gender without Norms” discusses how female jazz instrumentalists perform gender. Suzuki also reveals how these performers talk about gender in the context of jazz.

Dr. Ashley Sullivan documents how some preschool and kindergarten classrooms have preestablished rules and play centers that subscribe to gender norms in her article titled: “Seeking Solace In The Music Room: Normalized Physical Spaces In The Early Childhood Environment And The Resulting Impact On Transgender Children.”

Yuliawan Kasmahidayat’s article, “The Inheritance of Melinting Dance In The Wana Community Of Melinting Sub-District In The Province Of East Lampung” provides an account of Melinting dance, as well as role of gender associated with the socio-cultural context of education in the Province of East Lampung.


Dr. Colleen Pinar, Editor        gems_editor@yahoo.com
“None Of Us Think About Being A Woman:” Performing Gender Without Norms

Dr. Yoko Suzuki

Abstract: This paper discusses how female jazz instrumentalists perform gender while talking about gender in the context of jazz. Drawing on Judith Butler’s notion of gender as a norm, I argue that these women’s different attitudes embody different types of gender performance. I am most interested in those women who insist that they never think of being a woman. I consider these women to be performing gender without norms. Further, I will explore why they choose to do this type of gender performance, which, I suggest, would keep the existing gender norms unchanged.
In a round-table discussion involving nine female jazz musicians on the topic of her Grammy winning The Mosaic Project that features an all-female ensemble, drummer Terri Lyne Carrington (b. 1965) said,

I would just like to make a suggestion that we shift to talking about music and not about women. I know that’s part of your thing, but none of us think about being a woman when we play. We already said that, but I’ll reiterate—none of us think about being a woman when we play or write songs or do all the other work that has to be done to organize even just a project like this. Nobody thinks about that part of it. If that makes other people attracted to it, that’s fine with me, but I think in the end we’re doing what we have to do. (Pellegrinelli, 2010)

Her rather strong statement shows her frustration with a moderator who tries to elicit the participants’ opinions about being women in jazz. I encountered similar reactions when I conducted fieldwork in New York City, interviewing female jazz saxophonists for my dissertation. Some women insisted that they never think of their gender or race when they play music, and they were uncomfortable with talking about gender in relation to jazz. One woman even refused to be interviewed when I told her that my project focuses on female saxophonists. In contrast, others had no problems talking about music in terms of gender. In addition, these different views sometimes coexisted within a single individual.

This paper discusses how female jazz instrumentalists perform gender while talking about gender in the context of jazz. Drawing on Judith Butler’s notion of gender as a norm, I argue that these women’s different attitudes embody different types of gender performance. I am most interested in those women who insist that they never think of being a woman. I consider these women to be performing gender without norms. Further, I will explore why they choose to do this type of gender performance, which, I suggest, would keep the existing gender norms unchanged.

In Undoing Gender, Judith Butler extends her notion of gender performativity by suggesting that gender is a norm. She writes, “Gender is the mechanism by which notions of masculine and feminine are produced and naturalized” (Butler, 2004, p. 42). Gender as a norm is constantly constructed and normalized by our performances as well as regulates our notions of masculine and feminine. These notions of masculine and feminine permeate things around us.

In other words, gender as a norm produces many gender norms in different areas of our lives including music. These gender norms, however, are so naturalized that we often are not aware of them. Yet, we are constantly performing gender based on these norms. When some female instrumentalists say that they never think of gender while playing or composing music, they are still performing gender by staying aloof from assumptions of the gender norms of people, music genre, and instrumentation.

For my dissertation project, I interviewed thirty female jazz saxophonists. Interviews, mostly conducted between July 2008 and October 2010 in New York City, were partially structured with open-ended questions. Although I had prepared a set of questions, conversations sometimes took unexpected directions, which resulted in adding, skipping, and modifying some questions. There were questions that did not directly address the issues of gender, such as, “How did you start playing the saxophone?” and “What do you wear when you perform publicly?” I also asked gender-related questions including, “Were there many girls playing the saxophone when you started to play?” and “What are some advantages and disadvantages of being a female jazz saxophonist?” These questions evoked a wide array of response.

In the initial stage of my dissertation project, I was more interested in how women play jazz saxophone—their sound, improvisation and delivery style, and choice of songs—and how they present themselves when they perform in public—their clothing, make-up, hair style, and stage demeanor—all of which are part of their gender performance. As the project progressed, however, I was intrigued by how my informants talked about music and gender, how they interacted with me, and how they made sense of their life as female jazz saxophonists, which highlighted multiple subjectivities in both of us. In the process of our conversation, they constructed and presented themselves to me, a Japanese woman, an ethnomusicologist and a jazz saxophonist living in the US. Therefore, their statements represented their
gender performances at that moment in a specific context. I felt that my subjectivities, being a female jazz musician and non-American, often positively worked while interacting with my informants, which brought out their candid feelings and ideas. My informants and I discussed gender, race, and jazz in many different contexts, and they expressed a wide variety of views.

I will first present some women who were not hesitant to talk about gender in the context of jazz performance. Their statements reveal gender norms in jazz even when they are not aware of these norms. For example, Carol Sudhalter (b. 1943) mentioned to me, “I didn’t even know that women could play saxophone” (Sudhalter, 2009). She started to play the flute while she was at Smith College majoring in botany. She chose the flute because she thought it would “be something lightweight that a woman could play” (Sudhalter, 2009). Thinking that her father would not have approved of her playing the saxophone, she would not pick up the tenor saxophone until after his death in 1975. She told the author W. Royal Stokes, “My feeling about the bari [saxophone] was that it expressed my female energy, where the tenor [saxophone] expressed my male energy” (Stokes, 2005, p. 31) When I asked her to elaborate this statement, Sudhalter told me that she feels like a man when she plays tenor saxophone although she emphasized that her feeling is personal and may not be shared by other female saxophonists. Her statements clearly show her notions of masculinity and femininity regarding jazz saxophone performance.

Several interviewees mentioned that middle school was one of the deciding points regarding what instrument one should play. For example, alto saxophonist Katja Endemann (b. 1974) commented on the subject from her experience as a jazz educator in high school:

When it comes to jazz, one big thing I notice with my students too is that…we have to take a big risk in a solo, women don’t like it too much, and they’re worried about messing up, they want to be neat and prepared, they’re comfortable when they have a written out music. (Endemann, 2009)

Alto saxophonist Tia Fuller (b. 1976), who did not have any problem talking about her views and experiences in relation to gender, also talked about improvisation. Fuller notices that men and women have different attitudes in improvising, which, she thinks, derive from the way boys and girls are raised.

When we were young children, outside, you’d always see the little boys playing in the dirt, you’d always see them lighting stuff on fire, experimenting, and really just being extremely spontaneous. But usually we’re in a house, playing with Barbies… being safer, unless we were tomboys. I really think that from that being ingrained in us subconsciously at an early age, that carries through our role as quote-unquote a woman or a “lady.” A “lady” is not supposed to set on fire, a “lady” is not supposed to be experimental, run up the tree, jump off, break a
leg, or whatever. It’s more accepted for a man. Then, in particular, dealing with jazz, you have this language that is extremely experimental. … And a lot of times, women are not supposed to do that or women are turned away from that. (Fuller, 2008)

Here, Fuller uses the word “experimenting,” referring to the experimental and spontaneous aspects of jazz improvisation. She attributes different behaviors of men and women to the society and culture in which we are raised. Fuller’s notion of “our role as a woman or a lady” strongly suggests a prevalent idea of gender roles in society. Gender roles can function as gender norms although they can also be gender stereotypes when they are based on ignorance. Elements involved in improvising—being experimental, spontaneous, and risky—are part of gender norms that are associated with masculinity.

Some women talked about expressive aspects of jazz performance in relation to gender. Alto saxophonist Sharel Cassity, in her early thirties, stated, “Women tend not to show their delicate side because it’s so stereotyped. Some people just hear you doing that and say; oh she’s weak or something” (Cassity, 2009). She explained how her fellow alto saxophonist Jaleel Shaw sounded gentle and delicate in his ballad playing at the performance with the Roy Haynes band she saw the night before the interview:

I would love to play like that, but someone would say, ‘Can you put a little more oomph behind it next time?’ ‘Can you try a little harder?’ I get that a lot from bandleaders. They always think I’m hesitant or afraid. A lot of times, I’d like to leave more space. I don’t like to dominate everything all the time. But they think that they need to push me to do that [play aggressively] because I’m a woman and I’m probably very timid. It’s like a funny thing. So when I show up on some gigs, even women bandleaders say, ‘I want more, I want more, come out the gate burning!’ I know I have to get up there and burn, play loud, and take over. It’s OK but in a perfect world, I can just show up and play like myself. I don’t think that it’s timid or bad to be feminine. I think that’s taken as a weakness. (Cassity, 2009)

Cassity’s statement demonstrates that she sometimes performs “masculinity” because of the expectation from bandleaders.

Similarly, alto saxophonist Karolina Strassmayer (b. 1971) thinks that women, including herself, tend to be uncomfortable with the “feminine” music making. She stated,

For me, it has been the issue how comfortable I am with soft side, with the lyrical and romantic side. I think it depends on how comfortable you are with going to that place that is more vulnerable, it may not be as impressive to people at first. So the more I become comfortable with who I am, the more I can go to that place, the more I can write something just pretty or lyrical. Being comfortable with more vulnerable approach to music is not about proving that you can do it, or just wanting to wow people. (Strassmayer, 2009)

Strassmayer suggests that “feminine” approaches to music are vulnerable because it would not impress people in the way “masculine,” virtuosic playing would do. She continued,

So I think, if I can make a general statement for women in jazz, we can be a lot more comfortable with the feminine side, we can expand a lot more in that direction. I think it would enrich the music, and it would enrich our personal lives, too. (Strassmayer, 2009)

Although the “feminine” can be considered negative in jazz performance, Strassmayer sees the positive in it and wants to embrace it.

Further, Tia Fuller attributes positive feminine qualities to women’s bodies. Discussing advantages of being a female jazz musician, Fuller said,

What is the most important of what I’ve experienced, because my quartet is all female, there’s a certain connection that playing with other women that are also accomplished. Like you can call it an innate connection, an internal connection we have with each other. It’s the same thing as Beyoncé’s band, we are connected in a very special way. It’s in a way that I’m not
really able to express, but I know what it is because I can feel it. I don’t know if it’s an ability to give birth. There is something that is extremely special that I really think it’s an advantage of being a woman because we are able to feel in different places, not to say that men can’t but I think we are very in tune with our bodies because we menstruate every month, our sexual organs are internal, and theirs are external, so it’s gonna be different. (Fuller, 2008)

Her positive interpretation of the female body in music performance is rather unique, and it resonates with cultural feminist ideas in which undervalued women’s attributes are revalidated (Alcoff, 1988, p. 407-410). Similar to what feminist writers Mary Daly and Adrienne Rich advocated in the late 1970s, Fuller values the female body without espousing biological essentialism.

On the other hand, some women I interviewed seemed to be uncomfortable when I raised issues of gender in the context of jazz. Alto saxophonist Lakecia Benjamin, in her late twenties, told me flat out at the beginning of the interview, “I don’t think it matters what gender or race you are.” Then she asserted, “I never even thought about I’m a woman. It wasn’t until I started getting gigs, [when] people are like, ‘I’ve never seen a woman play like that.’ I was like, kind of reminded, ‘Oh I guess I’m a woman.’ I didn’t really think about it. Growing up, there were a lot of Hispanics in my neighborhood in the Bronx. All the Hispanic girls were doing something else and all the friends I played music [with] were men, I just naturally was always with men, so I never even thought that I’m the only girl, it never occurred to me. I would just go to hang out at the clubs all night and play. It was probably my advantage that it never registered. I wasn’t raised in the way that women don’t go out. I was able to do whatever I wanted to do. My friends were already men. I didn’t feel uncomfortable. I’m always around men. It didn’t register until I got older. (Benjamin, 2009)

This statement demonstrates that Benjamin is now aware of the gender norms: typically, women do not play the saxophone so well and do not go out late at night and hang out with men at the clubs. However, she had comfortably situated herself where the norms do not exist because she grew up unaware of the norms. This worked in favor of her, as she mentioned, since she never felt uncomfortable with interacting with men.

Israeli-born tenor saxophonist/clarinetist Anat Cohen (b. 1976) constantly denied me, whenever I hinted at the association of musical elements with gender. For instance, responding to my question, “Have you felt that you are expected to play in a certain way to be accepted as a jazz musician?” she asserted, “Yes, [I’m expected to] play good. But if you are asking if I was expected to be playing like a man, then, no. I always want to play just what the music asks for.” Then she continued, “I am proud to be a woman who plays music. But when it comes to the music, I don’t think about it as gender” (Cohen, 2009). She seems to feel strongly that music is gender neutral, and she has never thought of gender when she performs music.

Alto and soprano saxophonist Sue Terry’s (b. 1959) attitude is also noteworthy. She never overtly expressed discomfort or disagreement when I associated music with gender. She calmly answered all my questions but skillfully avoided the association. For example, when I asked her about how she dresses for her public performances, she replied, “I don’t wear skirts when I perform. I know women who wear skirts when they perform, because they wear skirts, but I’m not a skirt wearer. I own two skirts” (Terry, 2008). While some women told me that they consciously choose to wear pants at their public jazz saxophone performances in order not to stand out on the bandstand, Terry seemed to be suggesting that her choice of pants has nothing to do with gender norms in jazz. In addition, answering my question, “Have you had any difficulties with other female instrumentalists?” she said, “No, I don’t have difficulties with other musicians” (Terry, 2008). By purposely omitting “female,” she demonstrates that performers’ gender is irrelevant to her in the context of jazz.

Gender performances vary in contexts and change in time. For example, although at one point during our conversation she happily shared her marketing strategy as a female jazz instrumentalist,
Erica von Kleist (b. 1982) does not think about her gender when she is “on the bandstand” and believes gender to be irrelevant in music performance. Meanwhile when interviewed by Ted Panken in 1999, baritone saxophonist Claire Daly (b. 1958) said, “A saxophonist friend recently paid me the ultimate compliment. He said, ‘You sound like an old guy!’ I said, ‘Man, that’s the nicest thing anybody has ever said to me’” (Panken, 1999, p. 50). Her comment suggests the association of good jazz performances with old men. In contrast, during the interview in 2009, answering my question, “Do you think jazz performance has masculine or feminine sides?” Daly stated, “I don’t think actual music itself has a gender or race, or anything else. I think it’s audio. I don’t know about all that stuff” (Daly, 2009). Her attitude toward gender—her gender performance—clearly differs at these two moments. There are various factors or combination of these to explain this: her experience in ten years may have changed her views on gender and race; she may have reacted differently due to the nature of these two interviews (one is journalistic, the other is academic); the interviewer’s identity (one is white, American, male, journalist, the other is Asian, non-American, female, saxophonist/researcher) may have brought a different reaction out of her. In her response to me, Daly completely dismissed music’s association with gender and race, as well as to negated music to be part of gender norms.

Why do these women perform gender without norms? Some might claim that it is simply because music has no gender. Their performance of ignoring gender norms is obviously a reflection of their belief that music is gender neutral. Admittedly, musical sound itself has no gender, and I am not suggesting that gender is a set of attributes of men and women that naturally emerges in their musical performance. Instead, gender is a norm that constantly shapes and regulates notions of femininity and masculinity within musical performance. Of course, these women’s gender performances shown above are diverse, and their intentions can vary.

Performing gender without norms can be one way of their rejection to being categorized into “women” in the context of jazz. This is clearly seen in the case of a round table discussion I quoted at the beginning of this paper. Moderated by NPR reporter Lara Pellegrinelli, they discussed Terri Lyne Carrington’s all-female project as well as gender stereotyping, role models, and the participants’ experiences as female jazz musicians. The transcription of the discussion shows that Carrington made the quoted statement when the moderator asked these women’s opinions about structured organizations, competitions, and festivals as well as informal networks to help female musicians and offer them the opportunities to be heard. It seems that Carrington did not want her all female project to be understood as a typical “women in jazz” project that she and some female jazz instrumentalists had avoided. For example, trumpeter Ingrid Jensen (b. 1966), one of the collaborators of Carrington’s Mosaic Project stated in the round table discussion:

> When Terri emailed me I was glad that I was free to do this. Which is very rare. If anyone knows me, they know that I avoid all women groups like the plague because I’ve had enough experiences where the weakest links overpower the integrity of the music. … So in this situation, when I saw all of the names of the people involved and Terri said in the email that she really wanted me to be a part of it, I knew right away that it was going to be something very, very important and special. (Pellegrinelli, 2010)

This statement demonstrates that Jensen considers this project is different from other all-female bands because of these specific women involved. In other words, she feels that the women on this recording are exceptionally good jazz musicians unlike the women in most other all women groups. These “exceptional” women want to be labeled as jazz musicians instead of as “female” jazz musicians. They want to belong to the professional jazz scene instead of the “women in jazz” scene. It seems as though for some women, the association with the “women in jazz” scene would diminish their achievement and success as a jazz musician.

Their attitude of refusing the category of women in jazz resonates with a post-feminist view Angela McRobbie explains in regards to recent popular and political culture. She states,

> Under this new gender regime, popular and political discourse is repeatedly framed along the
lines of female individualization. Rather than stressing collectivity or the concerns of women per se, this replaces feminism with competition, ambition, meritocracy, and the rise of the ‘alpha girl.’ (McRobbie, 2011, p. 181)

Like some contemporary young women who do not identify themselves as feminists, these female jazz instrumentalists disassociate themselves from the separate category of “women in jazz” and want to be recognized for their individual talent and merit.

Of course, their gender performance without norms can be closely related to their actual music performance experiences. Here, James Currie’s idea of “music’s potential indifference” (Currie, p. 167) in his analysis of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra with which Edward Said and Daniel Barenboim were involved in 1999 may shed light on these female instrumentalists’ attitude. The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra consisted of young musicians from Syria, Jordan, the Palestinian territories, Israel, Egypt, and Lebanon. Despite the initial tensions among them over their ethnic identities regarding music as well as international politics at the time they became a uniform orchestra in ten days as Said describes, “one set of identities was superseded by another set” (Barenboim & Said, 2002, p. 9). Commenting on this situation, Currie suggests,

...they had to interrupt the normal functioning of their political and cultural inscriptions, and to a degree, let the clothing by which they are usually identified drop to the floor in order to adopt a certain uniform(ity). (Currie, 2012, p. 164)

Citing some other examples, Currie demonstrates that intensely focused musical performance can produce indifference that is not simple avoidance. The intense engagement with musical performance can create a state of indifference to musicians’ “episteme (who they conceived themselves to be)” (ibid.). Like the young musicians in the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, female jazz instrumentalists would become jazz instrumentalists, as some women claimed, while deeply engaging in musical performance. However, as Currie suggests, “their epistemic identity is not permanently erased” (ibid.), their other sets of identities including gender cannot be completely neglected.

In some cases, performing gender without norms can be their survival strategy. In other words, it shows their conviction that gender should have no effects on their life as a jazz musician. Therefore, they consciously or unconsciously neglect or avoid thinking about gender norms in jazz and choose not to talk about them. Some women also feel that not talking about gender and not paying attention to a performer’s gender at all would improve the situation. During the roundtable discussion mentioned above, Dutch saxophonist Tineke Postma (b. 1978) stated,

As long as the media keeps on emphasizing the female thing, you keep on putting a stamp on it. If we just emphasize the person, then maybe it will get less special, being a female artist. Then you’re just an artist. (Pellegrinelli, 2010)

Similarly, a number of women I interviewed lamented that most of the interviews focus more on their gender than on their music. Does focusing on music and completely ignoring issues of gender help to deconstruct gender norms in jazz? I would suggest otherwise. It would bury the norms and preserve them unexamined, conforming to the longstanding masculinist discourse. Therefore, contrary to their intentions, these women’s gender performance without norms would result in keeping the existing gender norms intact. In such a situation, the gender norms within jazz are unchanged, and a small number of talented and successful female instrumentalists remain “exceptional women,” who are better than most other women confined to the realm of “women in jazz.” I suggest that recognizing and critically examining gender norms instead of ignoring them can help to deconstruct the separate category of “women in jazz” as well as gender norms in the jazz world.

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Abstract: All young children (preschool through third grade) attending public, private, or charter schools in the United States exist inside the social, economic, and political environments of the education system. Many preschool and kindergarten classrooms have preestablished rules and play centers that subscribe to gender norms. Currently, there is a gap in the literature about how these power relations influences transgender children. This study explored the early childhood education experiences of ten transsexual adults.
Introduction

The smell of a freshly open jar of paste, the sight of a new red crayon drawing a long thin mark across a piece of lined white paper, the sound of a radiator’s pop and hiss, the feeling as you slide into your very own desk for the very first time, the taste of cafeteria mashed potatoes; some memories stay with us for a lifetime. Many are associated with important places. Our senses help us experience new surroundings. As we spend seemingly countless days in the same location, it becomes familiar. When we leave it, even years later, we may be able to close our eyes and recall the designs on the circle time mat, the exact locations of peeling green paint on the walls, and the dreaded fear that fills your belly at the sound of a teacher’s heels on linoleum floor. Twenty years after we have left a place, a wafting smell, unique and recognizable, can rush us back to a time when our bodies were small and our hearts were alive with possibility. This is true for many adult persons; including those who were born into a body whose physical sex characteristics do not match their gender identity. Perhaps, these memories of early schooling may be even more salient for transgender individuals, as the experience of navigating normalized spaces can be both frightening and restrictive.

Problem

Many preschool and kindergarten classrooms have preestablished rules and play centers that subscribe to gender norms. Such a social environment can be stressful and restrictive to transgender students (Frankfurt, 2000; Quinn, 2002). For example, it is common in U.S. elementary schools for teachers to establish rituals that reinforce gender segregation— including lining up girls and boys separately and alternating between males and females when releasing children at the conclusion of story time (McMurray, 1998). In addition, many preschools offer a “housekeeping” or dramatic play area (containing baby dolls and cooking equipment) and a construction site (including blocks and toy power tools) (McMurray, 1998; Paley, 1986). It is frequent for children as young as three to label these divisions as the “girls’ spot” and the “boy’s spot” (Paley, 1986). These sexist practices are also heterosexist, body normative, and gender normative.

The early childhood education profession has a commitment to establishing a safe, healthy, supportive and enriching environment for all children, including little ones who bring a rainbow of diversity and culture. Unfortunately, such an educational climate is not always achieved. Policymakers, administrators and educators are often miseducated regarding the needs and strengths of transgender children. As an educational researcher, I am concerned about the social experiences of those children who do not fit gender molds in early childhood education settings. My passion for advocacy of the needs of these young human beings has led to the development of my research questions.

All young children (preschool through third grade) attending public, private, or charter schools in the United States exist inside the social, economic, and political environments of the education system. Since the inception of this system, it has been influenced by, shaped around, and embedded within dominant U.S. societal morals, beliefs, and goals. Curriculum, nutrition, health, and assessment practices are directly linked to the political consciousness of those in power. The standardized assessment procedures implemented during the administration of George W. Bush directly reflect the educational “needs” of our nation’s students only as they are perceived by the majority groups of our society. The most blatant example of this is the No Child Left Behind Act, a federal education policy signed into law by former president George W. Bush at the beginning of the century (US. Department of Education, 2001). Health education programs offered to students are careful to encourage strictly defined moral beliefs and methods of conduct, which assume heterosexuality, have no consideration for varying genders, and only teach material which has been ruled as being appropriate by those in power (You, 2002). Foucault explores this concept in his discussion of governmentality. “His micro-analysis of power clearly place(s) the school and its practices into a complex power/knowledge web in which power is exerted over children, whether or not it is in their (best) interests. Clearly not all power influences are ‘bad’ in Foucault’s view, but those which involve power/knowledge, and ‘knowledge’ from the human sciences, which can lead to subjection and the imposition of identity, are [problematic],” (Marshall, 1996, p. 129). In the U.S. education system, the
academic practices experienced by and imparted upon young children typically reflect the values of the white, high socio-economic status, male, Christian, and Eurocentric majority.

Currently, there is a gap in the literature about how these power relations influences transgender children. Consequently, this study was proposed as a means to explore the educational experiences of early childhood aged (three-eight year old) children in school. During the initial development stages of this project, one method of data collection was considered. This process would have involved thorough, in-depth interviews with members of the population of interest. However, such a study is ethically troublesome on several fronts. Firstly, transgender children existing within heteronormative spaces may be situated within positions of vulnerability. In addition, as the power relationships between children and adults are already grossly unbalanced, the prospect of interviewing children who frequently work to please adults is worrisome. It would also have proven quite difficult to locate enough parents and children who would offer consent for a study of such personal issues. The resolution for these quandaries was found in interviews with adult transgender persons reflecting upon their early childhood experiences.

The educational experiences that the partners recalled for this study existed within the physical space of the school and its grounds. Certain places (whether classroom closet or tree root) represented solace or fear, entertainment or boredom, freedom or restriction, happiness or grief, or rather some variety of these multifaceted emotions. Many were tied to specific experiences with peers or adults, resulting in lifelong associations of places with feelings. As we explore these spaces, particularly in relationship to safety and empowerment, we are granted increased awareness, a real and raw look into the world of our children as they experience it. Educators might ask themselves- how do my students exist within and interact with physical spaces? What role do I play in these relationships? How can I improve the way in which my young children encounter the school environment? How can they improve it for one another?

Transgender Children In Early Childhood Education - An Overview Of The Literature

Most children develop a gender identity at the age of two or three (Cohen-Kettenis, 1997). During this time period some children insist strongly that they belong to a gender opposite from their biological sex (Mallon, 2006). These children are identified as being transgender.

Because people widely assume a ‘natural’ relationship between sex and gender, children who question their birth-assigned gender are pathologized and labeled as ‘gender dysphoric’. (Mallon, 2006, p. 218-219)

Aside from receiving a psychological label of mental illness, transgender children face other struggles. Young human beings who deviate from the socially prescribed behavioral norms are often scolded, corrected, and punished by parental figures. This is frequently confusing to children because behaviors, mannerisms, and play that appear to be gender nonconforming to a parent can “feel perfectly normal to a child” (Mallon, 2006, p. 219). Transgender children may prefer to play with children of the opposite gender and frequently state that they wish to obtain the genitals or physical characteristics of the opposite gender (Tuerk, 2003).

This issue deeply affects human beings that are aged 3-6 years. In the U.S. this age group typically enters school for the first time (either pre-school or kindergarten). In addition to markers, glue, and scissors, transgender children in early childhood settings bring to school struggles related to gender identity. In addition, gender will affect the manner in which children interpret what is taught. Gender is one of many cultural lenses through which all human beings interpret learning. There are countless studies that suggest differences in the ways girls and boys respond to education. Thus, transgender children and their schooling experiences are issues critical to the profession of early childhood education.

School Climate

Institutional heterosexism. is the “unconscious or conscious exclusion of non-heterosexual individuals and their realities” (Blackburn, 2004, p. 103). Although heterosexism does not by definition describe
oppression of transgender individuals, it is a very important concept to explore in relation to this population. One reason for the link is that transgender people are often mistaken as being gay or lesbian (which they may or may not be). A heterosexist school climate would thus place transgender human beings at a disadvantage. United States “schools are typically heterosexist and homophobic institutions,” (Blackburn, 2004, p. 103). Another reason why heterosexism applies is that, as transgender individuals are struggling with gender identity, many may struggle with sexual orientation as well. In addition, institutions that hold heterosexuality as the norm and as a result force sexual normative values on students may be more likely to force gender norms on children as well. Heterosexism and transphobia are inextricably linked. When transphobia and homophobia are transformed into discriminatory language, they can be magnified by teacher apathy regarding the behavior. Such a laissez-faire attitude greatly shapes the school climate. Ignoring remarks like, “that’s so gay,” “you’re so gay,” or “you’re a fag” places value on homophobic remarks that are of the same gravity of comments such as “that’s so stupid” or “you’re so stupid” (Markow, 2005).

Unit Of Analysis

Persons interviewed for this study were viewed fully as “partners” in the research and not “participants” or “subjects” (Pole, Mizen, & Bolton, 1999; Pillow, 2002). They are referred to as such throughout this paper. Although eligibility requirements for transgender research partners included an eighteen year age minimum, the “true” unit of study was transgender children in early childhood academic settings. I sought to study body normalization in the classroom as a means to gain greater insight into the lived experiences of this underprivileged, underrepresented group (Foucault, 1995 [1975]). As the field of education offers limited literature in relation to this topic, I grounded my research in an extensively studied theory, Foucault’s normalization of the body. I examined the concept of normalization from micro, mezzo, and macro levels of social interaction, influence, and decision-making (Foucault, 1995 [1975]).

Ten research partners were interviewed for this study. All of these individuals identified as transgender or transsexual. The partners ranged in age, race, gender identity, socio-economic status, location of origin, and type of early childhood education (public, private, or home) attended. Some of the children were shy, others were outgoing; some liked to play with toys, while others used their imaginations to create games using natural materials. Several of the partners performed well in school while others struggled. Some had a supportive adult/family member, though this was not the case for all.

Research Question

1) What are the narratives transgender adults have to share about their early childhood education experiences?

2) How can these reflections guide our understandings regarding the propagation and preservation of normalized social and physical early childhood spaces?

Design

My study followed a qualitative process steeped in grounded theory (Creswell, 1998). This proved to be the best method to explore the extent of gender normalization within the early childhood education system and the effect that such messages have on transgender students (Jaggar & Bordo, 1989). As I am an active part of the LGBTQ community, I have several transgender friends (including two of the partners) who over the years have discussed their educational experiences with me (Johnson, 2007). As a result of these conversations and my extensive research on the subject, several themes arose that begged for further investigation (Creswell, 1998). These included social interactions, experienced curriculum and physical environment (including layout of the classroom, available books, and aesthetics). Four interview questions emerged from these themes (Creswell, 1998). They were broad and open ended and once utilized, allowed for the facilitation of hours of narratives propelled forward with occasional requests to elaborate. These questions appear in the appendix of this study (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Research Partners

All of the research partners were currently residing in Arizona; however they had grown up in a
variety of U.S. states. Two had also attended schools outside of the United States during part of their educational career (in Mexico and Germany). Three of the partners were African American, two were Hispanic, one was Native American, and four were white. Those who were interviewed included a cardiologist, two persons living in a halfway house who were unemployed, two Master’s students, two community workers, a writer, a graphic designer, and a law student. The partners ranged in age from 21-years-old to 62-years-old.

Data Collection

Through in person interviews with ten transsexual adults, I addressed my research questions regarding external methods of body normalization and the internalizing effects of this process. The interviews focused around preestablished questions with the opportunity for follow up questions (Creswell & Miller, 2000). As the IRB determined this study to be “exempt,” each partner received a letter of information specifically detailing all of their rights and protections as an interviewee. All who participated in the study were asked to complete a demographic information sheet prior to interview commencement. The interviews took place over one or more occasions, depending on the availability of the partners (Gubrium & Holstein 2001). In some cases, the interview questions created in-depth discussions and time did not permit responses to each of them in a single session. All of the interviews were audio recorded. The sessions were held in a quiet location of the partners’ choosing (Gubrium & Holstein 2001).

Data Analysis

Grounded theory was utilized as the primary method of data analysis (Creswell, 1998). Patterns of response from the interviews were categorized through a system of layering. An initial coding process was conducted, at which time major themes were identified. A second round of analysis uncovered sub-themes in the data. Critical methodologies (particularly queer theory and post-structural theory) guided the entire research process, particularly during the data analysis stage. Though themes emerged, I remained especially cognizant of the power dynamics operating within the social environment of the educational system (Creswell, 1998).

None of the research partners who were asked to participate chose to decline. The partners were located through snowball sampling (Noy, 2008). Many volunteered, unfortunately more than my study could accommodate. Throughout the analysis process, ongoing communication was held with the partners. They made suggestions for inclusion or exclusion of certain elements, added new stories they had forgotten during the initial interviews, and offered opinions regarding interpretation (Johnson, 2007). As I am quite concerned about the ethical implications of conducting interviews, I minimized some of my fears as the partners held the power to determine the manner in which their thoughts and experiences were documented (Pole, Mizen, & Bolton, 1999).

Pseudonyms

All interviewees were assigned pseudonyms of their choosing. This is due to the fact that the research partners could potentially face negative social and/or professional consequences as a result of participating in this study. Many of the people who participated in the project are visible in the local and online communities and thus are easily identifiable.

Research Findings

Primary Classroom

As a means of aiding the partners in recalling their early childhood environments, those who participated in the study were asked to draw the first classroom or childcare room that they could remember. To draw something from such a distant time requires that a person mentally put themselves back in that place. What colors were in the room? What did it smell like? Where did I sit? Who was in the room with me and how did I feel about them? The purpose of this activity was the process and not the product. However, some of the pictures were striking. As the partners drew, they described the environments. Certain elements were particularly memorable for a variety of reasons.

Aidan had few positive interactions with his first early childhood classroom. Aside from the corner and the coat closet, there were not places in the environment that he liked. Because he was often teased, “I didn’t like any place where there was a lot of people. Aidan’s story and corresponding picture are striking. He found solace in the coat closet, one of the
only places in school where he could free himself from an onslaught of ridicule. This should not be the experience of our children in early childhood:

The funny thing about kindergarten, first and second grade is I don’t remember the classrooms. I remember the little locker rooms where we hung our bags. I used to always hang out in the locker room; hang out with bags in the corner ‘cause there was no one else in there, and I could play with my little GI Joe in the corner, and not be like beat up or picked on. When they used force me to go out on the playground, I would, there was this one tree root I used to just sit on the entire recess.

Erin (Aidan’s fiancé) explained that Aidan spent so much time sitting on this tree root in his youth that as an adult, “he actually took me and showed me the tree root.”

Figure 4. Aidan’s Classroom Drawing

Mike enjoyed a lot of things about his classroom. “We had desks that were for us and we put our stuff in there: things like clay and paper, all that sort of stuff. I remember, because it was the first time we got to have our own stuff, like a pencil box. It was a lot of fun, actually. I still love school supplies a lot. I was really excited about pencil boxes and things.” He loved getting a new box of crayons. “You got to pick the one you wanted, with all the colors you liked. And, this was the sink; and a cabinet that had a whole bunch of other stuff in it. We had a listening station with headphones and, probably, a record player at that time, because I’m that old! What else? A door was over here. And, we had a piano, actually! I just remembered that because she used to play it! We had a piano up here. She used to be a performer, so she would play the piano. So, that gives you an idea and what it was.”

Figure 2. Mike’s Classroom Drawing

Lluvy Rae recalls the color coded system that existed in her preschool. Everything was divided into, “Blue and pink and I always wanted pink. I never liked blue and there were a few times that I would switch stickers. I would switch stickers so I had a pink one. And I would get in trouble for that too.”

Figure 3. Lluvy Rae’s Classroom Drawing

Mary felt a sense of security in the classroom. “I remember it was a very safe environment. It was very clean. There were lots of tables, lots of sunlight, lots of books; all kinds of books. There was a bookcase and I would love to go and start a quasi-high by the
bookcase and if I could sit there, at the bookcase. I could be hidden and read Lorna Dune, my favorite. It was always about female heroines, poems. I was always involved in, ‘I don’t want people to know what I’m reading, because if they know what I’m reading, they’re going to hurt my feelings.’ But yet, I could make conversation with a number of people about the books: ‘Well how did you know that?’ And it made me feel good that I had read that, and I was a part of that conversation. And these people didn’t know anything. They were shallow and narrow-minded. So even though we were the same age, I felt like, ‘You’re leaving them behind. They’ll have to catch up with you.’ And that was okay.” Mary felt extremely safe:

By the bookcase, by the books. I guess I’ve always been a drama queen. So I knew in this bookcase, there was Jane Eyre. I knew in this bookcase there was Lorna Dune, Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, all kinds of female heroines in these books. There was also baseball books, I wasn’t interested in that; The Rookie of the Year and all that. I wanted to see the heroines, the strong women do things. They were a part of society. It was exciting for me to read about these strong women that were making a difference and questioning, ‘why?’ And it made me feel important, like, ‘I’m a part of this.’

Because when I went home and sat, I only saw a few strong women. I saw women that were broken.

Margo experienced a sense of safety when she was sitting at her desk. She dichotomized between in-desk occurrences and out-of-desk occurrences:

You know, ‘cause you had activities where the teacher would sometimes put you in a circle or have you line up on the walls, and that’s when kids would do things like poke you with a pencil or trip you or start teasing you or popping you when the teacher doesn’t look. And sometimes you’d have a teacher, if you reported that somebody was doing something to you, they would reprimand the person doing it. Other teachers would reprimand you ‘cause I remember she, she and this other teacher Ms. Mason, both of them, if I would tell on someone picking on me, they would humiliate me in front of the class and say, ‘Oh Mike is such a little tattletale, what do you think class?’ ‘Do you think we should pin a tail on him that says tattletale?’ I mean man, it was like standard issue. It seems like every teacher would say, ‘I’m going to pin a tale on you for tattling,’ and then other students would say, ‘You get to take names,’ and that person did no wrong.

Unlike Mary, Lluvy Rae felt generally unsafe at school.

I didn’t want to be there just because I liked staying home. But I knew it was something I had to do. I knew it was something I had to do. I knew it was something I had to do. I knew it just wouldn’t be able to stay at home because I knew I had to go to school.

Margo felt empowered:

In my chair, again it, like any other time you can screw up, because there were times when you would come up to the front of the class, and that was the place you would feel less secure. You’d get called on to solve a problem and have to go up to the blackboard and everyone looking at you. And the teacher would give you something to do and if you didn’t do it well, that was the worst place to be because the class would laugh at you if you screwed up, or the teacher would reprimand you if you were not doing it right. And so you did not want to be up there, it always came down to, if you could just sit at your desk all day and be left alone, you had a good day.

Playground

Early childhood aged children in the United States often spend a bit of time on the playground. Most schools house one on the premises and the children are expected to play on it during recess. Throughout the interviews, the playground was mentioned by the partners. This was either a place of entertainment or a location of contention. Aidan avoided this area as a means of protection. Maria “liked to play in it when I was in elementary, that was fun. ‘Cause when I was in elementary you know, it was more innocent like.” Lluvy Rae felt empowered on the playground, “because I drew all the girls to me
and I would be able to tell them all what to do and they would follow and I knew I could get away with saying let’s do this or that.” Erin was empowered in, “the play area ’cause no one used to screw with me. So, I kind of played by myself.” Mike was accepted by peers on the playground:

Until we got to that puberty stage. Until we hit that stage, it didn’t matter. I just related to them in ways they related to each other. I’ve never had much of an easy time relating to girls or women. I just see the world differently, so I don’t understand.

Beth described the playground as her least favorite place in school:

I was probably the only kid in school who couldn’t wait for recess to be over. The playground was very unforgiving because kids would play basketball. Of all the sports, I did enjoy basketball, (but) I didn’t get the chance. They would knock you down on the court. I hated football. They would run right at you and knock you down and was just part of how they played the game, sort of like rugby. I might of enjoyed baseball and softball, but all the skilled boys would get all of the fun positions. The rest of us got stuck in the outfield and of course, we couldn’t judge where the ball was and it would fall to the ground.

She did not try to play with the “other boys” because:

I didn’t throw very well. I didn’t try (to play with the boys). And then sometimes on the playground we couldn’t go over to the girls’ side. The playground was very large. We had the monkey bars, the jungle gym, and the ladder that goes above your head that you could climb, swings and slides. I remember going down the slide one time and instead of sitting up I was almost on my back. When I hit the end my back hit it and knocked the wind out of me and I was scared because I couldn’t breathe.

Lluvy Rae explained that she felt secure on the playground.

I think it was like that because I was able to be myself. I could play with who I wanted, getting in line (boy, girl, boy, girl). So that’s the only time I felt free and not get in trouble for it.

**Specials Classrooms**

**Music**

Several of the students played musical instruments. All who participated in this activity enjoyed it immensely. The music room was Beth’s favorite place in school:

Because we, even in elementary school we had musical instruments like the drums, the woodblock. In the 5th grade we had something called the harmonica band, which was really cool. We would have these little Horner harmonicas that were not chromatic. They were just a single scale but we could play in the key of C and of course, I had a solo. It was called Arkansas Trapper. Some of the other kids thought I was a smart because I had a solo.

Lana has fond memories of her interactions with musical instruments:

School was fun. Once they found out what was wrong with me in third grade I started playing music because I think they thought it would challenge me. I started out playing trombone that didn’t work. It was too loud. Saxophone chapped my lips. But I stuck with the viola for a few years which was good ‘cause no one really played the viola. And my teacher Mr. Walsh, I will never forget him. He was a really good teacher. He had actually come from a music school to teach us. So he was really awesome. Now that was a really interesting opportunity I had there.

She continued to explain that:

I was in the school orchestra. I sat in first chair as violinist and the first chair as clarinet, and played the clarinet. I really enjoyed that, but my mother could not afford to keep me in that class. You had to rent an instrument every month and she couldn’t afford to do that. So that was my last
passion. Everybody was nice to me. I guess musicians are like artists, very eccentric people. They are very accepting and you know, not concerned about my sexuality or anything. But that was my last passion and after that I pretty much gave it up on continuing to live a life that I was living.

Gym
Unlike music class, physical education was often detested by the participants. Mike recalled that:

It was really embarrassing in the locker room, and really painful. I would always change in the stalls. I would walk into the locker room and my face would be red, immediately. I would just shove my head in the locker, ‘okay, grab your clothes and change and get out of here.’ It was always really uncomfortable. I spent a lot of time in the locker room, but I certainly spent the least amount of time of anyone, probably. I just wanted to get out of here. It just, always, felt wrong. It just really felt uncomfortable and it just wasn’t a good experience.

Lady Gazelle similarly disliked changing for gym class. The locker room was her least favorite place in school… “cause I had to take my clothes off, you know. And people treated me like I had a disease. And there is no supervision in that locker room.”

Mary hated gym because of dodge ball.

The boys appeared to want to hurt me. And I thought, ‘You wanna hurt me? I’ll show you hurt.’ So it made me even more aggressive, especially in dodge ball. I just chose not to wrestle. I didn’t want to wrestle, so I would sit out. Swimming? Oh, I hated it. Because the boys swam nude, and I just did not want to show my genitalia. So I failed swimming, and yet I can swim. When teachers embraced my modern dance, I came alive. I taught them different steps, and I was involved. (The teacher) taught me how to tap, taught me ballet, taught me pivots. I was a quick study. I was there to be the teacher’s pet, and to be a part of, ‘Okay we’re going to do it now. David, please show us how to do this. Come do this with me.’ Yes, so, yes, I was very much so involved in that.

Art
Although Mary disliked “mechanical drawing,” the art room was often an enjoyable place for the participants. Lana explained that in many ways:

I think I received special treatment because I was transgender. In a good way though, believe it or not. Like I was in a lot of art classes and things like that, to develop those skills and it worked. And I won national competitions in pottery and sculpting and painting and all that type stuff and it paid off. And then I published twice for poetry and so all of that was in the special stuff they did for me and started me into around that age.

Her most beloved location in the school was:

Anywhere that I was doing art. Probably the art room though because I got to do pottery, which I love, in the potter’s room. Once I learned the
pottery world I was just like, that’s was it, so it would probably be the art room.

Larger School Environment

During out of classroom experiences, the students had the opportunity to interact with different types of spaces as well as a variety of teachers and staff members and children of multiple age groups. Certain locations seemed to pose a higher state of discomfort than others. Although not exclusively, the interviewees tended to reflect on bathrooms and the cafeteria as being places of contention while the library and the auditorium were enjoyed.

Interestingly, the locations in the school that were criticized were places of maximum control. When discussing the cafeteria, several of the partners explained that they were unable to choose where they sat or the food they consumed. These feelings of constriction and lack of control over one’s own body created discouraging discourses with physical spaces defined by confinement. Highly regimented places in the school were described on multiple occasions as being akin to prison life where one is continuously monitored and reprimanded for behavior that violates a code the “prisoners” did not themselves create.

Bathrooms

While discussing school bathrooms, Mike exclaimed:

Oh, god, I hated restrooms up until I started using men’s rooms. It was just such a horrible experience, especially as I got older.” He recalled the bathrooms he used in first and second grade. “I do remember them and trying to find bathrooms that were empty, just because I didn’t like the crowds in bathrooms, ever; really uncomfortable.

Beth has a detailed memory of the bathrooms from her early childhood:

Elementary school, that was a three-story brick building that was built around the turn of the 20th century and therefore was 50 years old by the time we occupied it. The plumbing was in the basement and the top two floors did not have running water. If you wanted to use the bathroom, the local shorthand for that was, ‘we want to go to basement.’ Of course they had the girls’ on the east end and the boys’ on the west end. They would have the girl in the circle on the door. Boys’ bathroom stank and they were always making all these toilet jokes. It was not someplace I enjoyed and of course I hated standing up to urinate anyway. The thing when you stand up would be looking around noticing you, you’re tiny. And so they would make fun of me for that. Whenever I could I tried to go inside the stall and act like I was going number two.

Lluvy Rae’s least favorite location in the school was the bathroom.

I would get harassed in the boys’ bathroom. They would call me names, ‘sissy,’ and say that I acted like a girl so I should use the girls’ bathroom. Just stuff like that, probably the only place in the building that I felt uncomfortable. Didn’t want to be in there, but I had to.

When the teachers overheard these interactions, they would tell them to ‘stop’ or they would tell them, ‘it’s not nice to say that.’ But they continued to do it. It was addressed but it wasn’t addressed as often as it should have been.

Cafeteria

Of the participants who spoke of the cafeteria, Maria and Margo held fond memories of the experience. Maria’s favorite location in the school building was, “lunch ‘cause lunch was you know, I was with my friends and I was socializing and eating.” Maria and Margo had drastically different cafeteria experiences. They were both social, but Maria felt included while Margo recognized that the lunch room was yet another place where social disparities were reinforced. On Margo’s first day at school she explained:

Elementary school, that was a three-story brick building that was built around the turn of the 20th century and therefore was 50 years old by the time we occupied it. The plumbing was in the basement and the top two floors did not have running water. If you wanted to use the bathroom, the local shorthand for that was, ‘we want to go to basement.’ Of course they had the girls’ on the east end and the boys’ on the west end. They would have the girl in the circle on the door. Boys’ bathroom stank and they were always making all these toilet jokes. It was not someplace I enjoyed and of course I hated standing up to urinate anyway. The thing when you stand up would be looking around noticing you, you’re tiny. And so they would make fun of me for that. Whenever I could I tried to go inside the stall and act like I was going number two.

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best thing in the world ‘cause I could not eat that shit. But I learned my first lesson- don’t put ice in a coke-a-cola in a thermos. It is a bad idea. Then I also learned, don’t let faculty know that you’re bringing in a coke-a-cola to school. Bringing a Coca-Cola to school was taboo. I mean, you might as well be bringing drugs to school. So I was always trying to outsmart the system, like sneak food in. Like I would mix carnation instant breakfast into my milk ‘cause I wanted chocolate milk. It was weird ‘cause when you’re a little kid, they give you chocolate milk in school. And then when you go to a higher grade, then they give you like prison food. It looks like prison food, plop, plop, plop. And then the kids in school would mix their food and try to gross each other out.

Beth explained that:

We were very regimented in lines to go to lunch. You had certain tables you could sit in. It kept things under control. The only choice you had was either sweet milk or chocolate milk.

Sweet milk is just white milk. It was whole milk as opposed to buttermilk. Mississippi loved their buttermilk. Although there were strict rules, the lunchroom wasn’t a bad place.

Mike’ least favorite place in school was lunch.

I didn’t like lunch very much. A lot of social pressure during lunchtime, you know, in the cafeteria- where you sit, who you sit with. Especially as we got older, that felt really intense for me. So, when I was older, I would eat lunch in the library because I didn’t want to deal with that, a lot of those things are tied to gender norms and being accepted by whatever group.

Library

The interviewees tended to enjoy the library because it offered a greater amount of freedom.

Margo’s favorite educational spots were the:

The cafeteria and the library. ‘Cause when you go to lunch you could sit with whoever you wanted to. When you are in the classroom you had to sit in assigned seating, you had to sit where the teacher told you to sit. But when you went to the library or to the lunch room, you could pretty much sit down anywhere you wanted to sit. You had someone who was in charge of the place, it was hard for them to micro manage you on the same level the teacher micro manages you in the classroom. ‘Cause when you’re in a library, you’re not the only class in the library, so you pretty much were getting left alone. And so I liked the library because, that was the one place I was allowed to choose what I wanted to do. And if I wanted to read a book on a certain subject then I could choose it, whereas the classroom you had to do whatever the teacher wanted you to do.

Mary’s most preferred educational location was the library because it was quiet:

I could go to a small or intimate corner and sit. My back would be against the wall. No one could come behind me. I could sit there and concentrate. I could sit there and escape. I had all of this knowledge around me. It was a reference center for anything I wanted. And the librarian was very knowledgeable. She would direct me and show me how to use the reference books, the index cards. She was a woman. There was light, stained glass, and James and I would go there and read.

Auditorium

Although not discussed extensively by the partners, Lady Gazelle’s recollections of the auditorium are worth noting. This was her:

Favorite place ‘cause I was in the school orchestra. I was safe there. It was in an environment and in a world that amazed me and excited me. And I can’t ever remember having one bad experience in the school auditorium and that why it sticks out the most to me.
Principal’s Office

As with most elementary school aged students, trips to the principal’s office are often unenjoyable. Lana spent a great deal of time in this location:

‘Cause I always got in trouble. I had to sit in this little itty bitty room, I remember. And they had this small square window with this little fixed looking thing over the front of it. And when you got in trouble you had to sit there with it at this desk and this filing cabinet. And it had a little bed there I felt like I was in prison. So I didn’t like that. I remember, so there was a bed on this side of the room and a little desk and a filing cabinet. And it was plain, there was no pictures. There was nothing, just the little squares. And I was not tall enough to see out of the squares. You could see people go past, but (you were forced to stay and) be miserable. And like, ‘here I am in detention again.’

Lana was occasionally sent to the principal’s office for fighting, but:

A lot the times I used to get into trouble with the teachers because they would want me (to do it their way), especially in math. I would figure out a way to do my math work, but I would not use the formula they gave me. I would make up my own formulas. The answers were right, but they wanted me to show my work. Well if I could do it in my head, why would I do that? And that was all the way in through school. And I remember that starting, probably in first grade. And they were like, ‘You have to do this,’ and I was like, ‘Well I don’t want to do this. I just want to show my answers. So why do I need to do this.’ ‘Well, it’s important.’ ‘Well, it’s not important to me. So if the answers are right,’ and my parents went back and forth with that for year. ‘Cause the teachers, I don’t know. And they felt that was the reason. They felt that I didn’t understand what they were telling me and I don’t think they understood what I was telling them. It’s right, so what’s wrong? So what is the problem?

Summary

In this article, the partners described their interactions with and within normalized education spaces. Most felt unsafe at school due to bullying and restrictions of gender expression. They found a variety of ways to cope with the lack of security, including keeping close proximity to friends and teachers. For many, particular locations in the school represented the highest levels of safety, as reflected in both their narratives and their drawings of early classroom memories. The partners discussed Specials Classrooms and the larger school environment. Although all had unique experiences, themes arose that categorized art class, music class, and the library as favored places while the gymnasium, cafeteria, bathrooms, and principals office were often locations of contention.

Conclusion

This study explored the early childhood education experiences of ten transsexual adults. They shared their social interactions with friends, peers and teachers. The implications of bullying and violence were discussed, sometimes resulting in retaliation and other times isolation. The interviewees critiqued pedagogy, racism, parent interactions, and gender norms. They opened up regarding interactions with physical spaces - the playground, specials classes, and the larger school environment. They talked about where they felt safe and where they felt empowered. The interviewees illuminated the manner in which transgender children navigate social and physical educational spaces.

The findings of this study are not intended to be generalizable, to answer the question, “How do all transgender children experience school.” They are meant rather, to ask questions, questions of ourselves as educators and members of the US society. And so I pose this to you the reader, where do we go from here? There is clearly still much to be done. What can you do in your own classroom to make transgender children feel safe and supported? How can you create an environment ideal for all to learn? What can you do in your family, school, and community to educate others about what transgender children need and have to offer? There is no one right answer to any of these inquiries. Every child and every school is situated among social and political contexts that must be given thorough consideration.
References
The Inheritance of Melinting Dance In The Wana Community Of Melinting Sub-District In The Province Of East Lampung

Dr. Yuliawan Kasmahidayat

Abstract: This study is an effort to preserve traditional arts and especially the Melinting dance placement in the middle of the rural rolling communities in the Wana district of East Lampung, so as to achieve national integration and social harmony, as well as the elaborate system of behavior patterned as a socio-cultural context of national education. Each ethnic dance from each existing in Indonesian territory has its own characteristics that distinguish one form of dance with other dance forms from each region.
Introduction

The issue of inheritance has led to the questioning of the position and function of traditional art within the Indonesian society. Indonesia, being a pluralistic society culture, can serve two functions: either constructive or destructive. Traditional dance is one aspect of Indonesian culture that may lead to unity if properly organized and managed. However, the current dilemma is the limited research on the existing traditional art forms. There is no proper conceptualization on Indonesian art, and inadequate accurate data about traditional art. For Indonesia to grow into a strong community that upholds to the principle of diversity in unity, this requires the different aspects, which may include the development of tradition art, which can help to strengthen the bond of unity and integration.

Indonesian society is still in the transition stage to integration. It still requires appropriate measures to create a strong sustaining unity and integration. The conflicts that occur within the Indonesian communities call for several approaches, which include traditional art to help put a stop to the disintegration of the society. The diversity in ethnicity, religion, cultures, artistic traditions, and social stratification has led to a variety of social groups and institutions.

Inheritance study of traditional art with depth analysis on various aspects contained in it is an important thing to do, as the data collection effort will ultimately realize the integration and social harmony. It is an effort to avoid conflicts that allegedly came to the surface, the intensity and the implications of the recognition of the traditional art as cultural treasures of the local area, which eventually became the nation’s cultural treasures.

Melingting dance is one of the dances that was started and developed around the 16th century in the village of Wana, in the Lampung Province. This dance was started as a royal dance under the rule of Prince Panembahan Mas (II). At first, the dance was accompanied by a combination of drums (as musical instruments) which were influenced by the Javanese gamelan, which were brought from Java by Prince Panembahan Mas. In the beginning, this dance was conducted at all Gawi events (cultural ceremonies), and it reflected excitement by the stakeholders of any ceremony.

According to the above brief introduction, this study aimed to answer following questions:

1) What is the instruction model in the inheritance of Melinting dance in the Wana community of East Lampung?

2) What is the meaning and values contained in the music symbols and movements made during Melinting dance?

3) What is the community perspective towards the transformation function of Melinting dance performances?

4) What is the traditional art influence the country’s education, seen from a socio-cultural perspective?

Theoretical Review

This study is an effort to preserve traditional arts and especially the Melinting dance placement in the middle of the rural rolling communities in the Wana district of East Lampung, so as to achieve national integration and social harmony, as well as the elaborate system of behavior patterned as a socio-cultural context of national education. The context of national education is based on cultural education that is applied in a variety of ethnicities, especially in learning the art of traditional inheritance. In the process of inheriting, the tradition of art is inseparable from the presence and participation of artists, from the heir to the traditions of art. A culturally-learned artist will turn their child or grandchild into an artist as well. Or, children and grandchildren will culturally follow in the footsteps of their grandfathers or fathers, continuing their family art skills. There are a lot of examples of how grandfathers teach their children and grandchildren to become artists. Or conversely, how an artist traces his knowledge to his father, grandfather, and even his great-grandfather. This is consistent with the view of Alwasilah, Suryadi, & Karyono (2009), which states that ethno pedagogic educational practices are based on local wisdom in various domains, as well as emphasizing knowledge or local knowledge as a source of innovation and skills. Indigenous education is related to how knowledge is
produced, stored, applied, maintained and passed on, to achieve the welfare of the community.

The depth of the meaning of symbols in motion and costumes, as well as the functions contained in the rolling dance, can only be understood by members of the community where the dance was born and developed, based on the applicable values in the social system. This is in accordance with the opinion of Clifford Geertz (1973, p.12), who defines culture as a system of meaning and order of symbols, which are symbols with meaning, individuals define their world, and make their judgments. Characteristics of the values contained in the rolling dance will establish national integration.

Integration is an effort to build a closer inter-defense between the parts or elements of society, so as to create a harmonious state, which allows the establishment of mutually agreed goals. Integration refers to the unity among different social units, but it does not eliminate the unitary social identity of each. It can also be referred to as a mutual process, because there are balances on certain social groups realizing the closeness of social relationships, economic, and political relations. The social unit was realized on the basis of religion, ethnicity, race, and occupation. According to some sociologists thought, integration is not interpreted as a function that is absolutely free of conflict. On the contrary, there is a conflict, called pluralism that is functional, and eventually leads to integration.

Pluralism means the presence of the diversity in the community, according to ethnic, religious and other groups. The real hallmark of diversity is a strong tendency of each tribe to preserve their identity. This is the dominant orientation into its own faction, giving an indication of the relationship between their groups of workers in a society, so that every citizen identifies himself on a characteristic that is shared by citizens of other social groups. At first glance, people will always look to be united for the common individual, and divided as interests of individuals, or as a group who wants to appear more prominent than others, in facilities associated with the interests of life, economic resources, employment, health, and education. Such circumstances will more often appear when the nature and tribal society is very heterogeneous.

Integration is a model of the relationships of a system, which is based, on the one hand, how they act collectively in such a way, to avoid stirring system and make it possible to maintain stability, and how the other parties to work together to improve its function as a whole. If society or social life in general should be viewed as a social system, the overall elements that are strung as a whole work together to realize the goal, and conceptual problems faced by the social system are combined (integrated) with the social elements, so as to work together to achieve the aspired goals.

The results of this study tried to offer thoughts toward solving the problem formulation that includes three things:

1) The options action in the form of documentation of traditional arts in the form of textbooks,

2) a thorough understanding of the form and character of the rolling village community of Wana, in the East Lampung District, which is a traditional art setting, particularly in the research area, and

3) action formulas that can happen as an entry point for starting a business; problem-solving both short term and long term, through a real effort of inheritance (enculturation) using local arts, particularly the rolling dance tradition.

Implications of the provisions of the National Education Act is a reference in the elaborate system of patterned behavior of the study's findings as a sociocultural context of national education, which is the final part of this study, contains an analysis of the various possibilities that are available or can be formulated to solve the problem systematically. The end discussion of this research is the conclusion, containing the various aspects of dance, rolled into the depth of analysis generated in this study.

Findings and Discussion

Instruction Model

Of the various models of learning that we know, roll dance inheritance models are applied especially in the formal school located in the village of Wana rolling East Lampung District, using the model of imitation or demonstration conducted by a teacher or coach who mastered rolling dance. This is within a
specified time (usually within one week of training, at least one time during the 1X60 minutes). But if it will face a certain event (e.g., a grand welcoming ceremony, or local cultural festivals with dance competitions creations rolling stalk), an intensive workout schedule is done, either using formal time (while learning), as well as extra-curricular activities time (such as school holidays or other day of the week). At the time when the second phase of the study was conducted (on June 10th to 12th, 2013), the schedule of exercises performed by students from each school was intensive, because each school had the opportunity to participate in annual, local traditional arts festivals.

Based on observations from instruments distributed to the teachers or coaches, it seemed every student in each school was very excited for the event. Dance performances rolling a control group (between four to six pairs of male dancers and female) were packed in such a way so as to form a pattern of presentation was varied and contain a high aesthetic value. Some of the obstacles encountered in the process of the exercise were the motion control of arms and legs, which had its own characteristics, as it did not allow control or rolling a dance musical training because relativism took a long time, as well as the basic ability to play a musical instrument for every dancer. Therefore, when activities took place, every appearance was accommodated by the original musicians from royal rolling.

**Meaning And Values**

Each ethnic dance from each existing in Indonesian territory has its own characteristics that distinguish one form of dance with other dance forms from each region. Differences in the character can be seen at a depth of meaning and symbols of motion as well as costumes worn in satua dance. In the range of motion of rolling, a dance performed between dancers and male behavior describes the behavior of the association or form of communication between Muley and menghanay (bachelor-man and girl-woman Lampung). A Marwansyah citizen (one of the local dance choreographer Lampung) explains the outline of the meaning contained in the rolling motion of the dance, also reflect a variety of daily activities including square lapah motion (slow), Surung sekapan (push and open the shutters), ngiyau bias (washing rice), kenui drift (movement while flying eagle hovering), as well as the ponds cak motion (movement jump).

The variety motion sequence is present in a variety of motion planning on rolling a good dance for male dancers and dancer partner (female dancers), coupled with a variety of movements performed by male dancers such as motion mammang cottonwoods (meaning courage and great spirit in maintaining the dignity of the family), lago quail (quail fighting), babar fan (symbolizing valor and readiness to seek good luck and happiness for the welfare of living). Meanwhile, some other kinds of motion performed by female dancers in motion are kenui drift (symbolizing freedom and independence to be creative to establish identity), and range of motion obeisance (bow in a standing position) performed by male and female dancers. Variety motion symbolizes respect for the Queen, Indigenous people, and the guests of honor present in the front (results of the interviews with the Queen Idil Sultan Muhammad IV Tihang IGAMA, June 2013).

The symbols contained in the rolling dance costumes mean the following: glove fabric filter (a type of traditional crafts Lampung, the environment and the life of the Creator), scarves and junks laden middle white cloth (symbolizing the element of beauty and her majesty Lampung), white kerimbung (symbolizes purity), belts bebiting (a reflection of the greatness and luxury elements of the image of a girl and a flunky Lampung), siger rolling (reflection seven mountains, seven villages, under Keratuan rolling and fasted seven days), gold pandan (a reflection of the prosperity of Lampung), bracelet ruwi (reflecting the degree of existing clan or descent in Lampung), buturan five stacking (the beauty and majesty of Lampung girl), fan (a tool to maintain the sanctity of the relationship between men and women).

**Community Perspective**

Based on the results of the data obtained by the research instrument, the deployment of rolling dance serves as a means of a welcoming ceremony for noble guests, wedding ceremonies, circumcisions, and entertainment functions in performing various events. In the beginning of its existence (in the XVI century) this dance could only be danced by the family or descendants of royal rolling. The show is only allowed
In enclosed places (in the custom house or hall misguided). In the development of dance born of rolling packaging, it is performed at various ceremonies such as weddings, circumcisions, or any festivity salvation. The music that accompanies the dance creations still uses the beat rolling kolintang consisting of eight pieces kelintang, two pieces Piang, petuk one fruit, one piece cymbals, two pieces gone (big and small gong), and one piece ketapak/redep/drum. As many as six musicians are used, in accordance with the number of musical instruments to accompany dance rolling.

**Influence Of Traditional Art To National Education**

Rolling dance reflects the dynamic characteristics of the people, and upholds the respect of the cultural and historical perspective. Inheritance is a matter that absolutely must be done so that the characteristics contained in the dance of rolling, can enrich the culture of the archipelago. Patent filing efforts were undertaken for the royal rolling with the competent authority, a form of community care for the preservation of the village. Filing of patent rights were in December 2012, and signed by the Queen to roll into the 17th Sultan Muhammad Idil Queen Tihang IGAMA IV and by the Head of Culture and Tourism of East Lampung District, Drs. Sudarsono, M.Sc.

To further reinforce the efforts that have been made above, periodically (once a year) rolling dance competitions are held in the form of activities at the Culture Festival in the East Lampung district. One of the goals of the implementation of these activities is to cultivate students’ interest in the local culture. Direct support was given by the Regent of East Lampung, and East Lampung regency. At the festival in 2013, it was also proposed that the mandatory dance lesson be rolled into matter Arts among middle and high school students, especially in the District of rolling.

Rolling dance, that was born and developed in the village of Wana Melinting district of East Lampung, is one of many forms of dance that we can find in the various regions of Indonesia. As a traditional local dance, it also has a good depth of meaning and symbol in motion, costumes, properties, and uses of accompaniment. Depth of the content and the meaning of the symbols are expressed in a specific order of motion and motion transition, form costumes, accessories as well as the property that became one of the fan characteristic properties used in rolling dance.

Concrete efforts have been made to require roll dance lessons as a compulsory subject in cultural arts courses among students in elementary, middle, and high school. In a broader scope, teachers also use the rolling dance as lecture material among students majoring in Dance Education Faculty of Languages and Arts Education (FPBS) at Indonesia Education University (UPI). Use of impersonation are to date deemed an appropriate method in teaching the inheritance process both within the elementary, junior high, high school, as well as among other students.

Shift function experienced by rolling dance, is something that cannot be avoided, due to the advancement of technology in today's society. Influence of acculturation has been encroaching on the existence of rolling in the form of creation or composition, which is presented each year at the rolling dance contest.

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Katie E. Newcomb, MM

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In her well-researched book, Band of Sisters, Jill Sullivan presents the unique and widely unknown history of women’s military bands throughout World War II. Her diligent research traces the history of these ensembles from all branches of the military, including interviews with several women that participated in the ensembles. Sullivan begins her story with an introduction that is both exciting and interesting, painting a vibrant picture of what is to come in future chapters. As the chapters unfold, a very detailed portrait of this time period is depicted along with the process of each military branch allowing women to join up and participate in what many considered one of the greatest experiences of their lives.

Chapters two through five describe the Women’s Army Corps (WAC’s), the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES), the SPARs (named for their motto semper paratus, always ready), and the Marine Corps Women’s Reserve. Chapter two describes the 400th,
401st, 402nd, 403rd, and 404th WAC Bands, and spends considerable time describing where each band was started, how they were organized, who led them, and so on. Each chapter gives considerable attention and detail to the ensembles formation, its leadership, and its duties throughout the war, with a smattering of short anecdotes and quotes from former band members about their time in the ensemble.

One notable point of discussion is that of the 404th WAC Band, which happened to be the only band created for black women in the Army. While the army practiced segregation, they also followed the motto that “there would be no discrimination in the types of duties that black women could perform.” This ensemble is discussed in great length, as it differed from some of the other military bands in which the women chosen already had strong musical backgrounds. Many of the women in the 404th had little to no experience playing an instrument, and they learned while in the military. Sullivan does an excellent job of describing the struggles and triumphs of this ensemble during a time period when women and people of color faced serious discrimination and unequal treatment.

While Sullivan’s first four chapters tend to be fact-oriented, a narrative shift occurs in her fifth chapter in which her storytelling approach becomes more lively and intriguing. Chapters two through four include stories from the women who were interviewed; however, in many cases those stories are brief and limited to a few lines. Chapter five reads more like a narrative, incorporating specific quotes and stories throughout the pages to back up the factual details that tell the story of the bands formation, duties, leadership, etc.

The strength of the book is in the details and factual information gathered by Sullivan. Her accounts of the bands are as detail-oriented as one could get when doing research of this nature. The numbers of interviews, both in person and over the phone, as well as the gathering of multiple documents, pictures, and recordings paint a picture of extreme dedication on the part of Jill Sullivan to the work she was completing. Each chapter not only provides multiple direct quotes from those involved within the ensembles, but also numerous dates and locations, lists of music and songs performed, as well as detailed explanations of who formed, conducted, and led the bands throughout the time they existed. It is obvious through reading Band of Sisters that each sentence was written with great care to be as factual as possible. The uses of acronyms are understandable in this context, but at times, they can be somewhat overwhelming.

Band of Sisters is labeled as “Music - Women’s Studies,” indicating its appeal to both followers of music history as well as gender issues. This book will make a wonderful reference for those doing research on similar topics, and could be a great resource in any band classroom for students who want to better understand the history of our nation’s marching bands.

Much of the book closely resembles a textbook with lists of facts, rather than the collection of engaging stories that the reader might expect after the introduction. Nonetheless, the information collected depicts a very true and informative history of these women, providing both insights into their daily lives as well as a descriptive portrayal of the many distinct ensembles and military branches. Sullivan’s book does provide an accurate and important account of women’s history in marching bands.

Reference