Résumé in Motion: sensory self-awareness through movement

CAROL A. MULLEN, University of South Florida, Tampa, USA
MARY BETH CANCIENNE, Lesley University, Charlottesville, USA

ABSTRACT Can middle school serve as a site for educating students on how their bodies are essential for learning and embodying knowledge differently? This experimental work concerns the new learning that a movement intervention introduced in the context of a career unit of a language arts curriculum. The experiences and reflections of eighth graders from an American school are presented creatively as scripts and interpreted for their learning value. What young students learned about feeling, power, communication, and bodily learning is looked at from critical, feminist, and arts-based perspectives. Topics covered by this emergent analysis focus on the reform of sex education and career education, key concepts of embodiment, description of a movement curriculum, presentation of thematic results, and, finally, the benefits and challenges of body-based interventions more generally.

Introduction

A focus on the ‘body’ in the school curriculum is potentially useful for enabling sensory self-awareness through movement (Cancienne, 1999; Hoogland, 2000). In various arts-based contexts involving youth and adults, the body has performed as a vehicle for reflecting, informing, focusing, expressing, connecting, and dramatizing (Garoian, 1999). These processes of movement have produced a generative capacity for experimental groups to create a shared space for learning differently (Heath, 2001). Contemporary work produces alternatives to the masculinist dualisms that are seen by many as having had a powerful effect on schooling and societal practices (e.g. Grumet, 1992; Kincheloe, 1995; Oakes et al., 2000; Mullen with Kohan, 2002).

Long ago, Dewey (1916) argued against the use of dualisms for organizing education and the workforce but lost against powerful political forces. American curriculum theorists (e.g. Pinar et al., 1996; Oakes et al., 2000) propose that the artificial separation of mind and body, male and female, and thought and feeling has since forged a schooling system that is mostly bifurcated and discriminatory: Academic/vocational tracking and sex education have been cited as prominent, ongoing examples of undemocratic reform practice (e.g. Pinar et al., 1996; Oakes et al., 2000) [1]. Specifically, Polanyi (1962)
probably would have recognized the prevailing mind/body split in the curriculum and the inferior status ascribed to the body as a ‘false ideal’ (Preface, p. vii). Bodily learning certainly seems to carry the same stigma as its ‘cousins’, vocational education and the arts.

Reforming Sex Education

School curriculum has been known to relegate bodily learning and sex education to physical education, health, and science courses. In the USA, for example, sex education is a highly regulated and contested area of schooling over which Christian fundamentalist groups exert influence and objection. As depicted in Pinar and colleagues’ (1996) comprehensive text on the American curriculum, the emergence of health classes during the last half of the 20th century produced a ‘sexual scripting’, which, to this day, limits the information made available to students (p. 362).

Additionally, sex education has increasingly reflected a differentiation between males and females through stratified curricula and the transmission of conventional sex attitudes. Gender-based occupancy stereotypes and values that schools reinforce have been described as a hangover from Victorian times (Pinar et al., 1996). Civil rights advocates and academic critics, among them Sears (1992), propose that such controversial issues as AIDS education, gay studies, and same-sex parenting are essential to a modern-day sex curriculum. On the national front, California has been the leader of progressive curriculum reform while other states follow or resist change (Pinar et al., 1996). As Grumet (1992) attests, the historical, religious, and political dynamics of schooling have congealed, with the effect of excluding the body and healthy intimacy from educational learning. Sears (1992) adds that ‘gender, racial, and social class divisions’ are being reproduced within ‘the body politic’ (p. 5).

Accordingly, what we mean by sex education in this article extends beyond anatomy and physiology, or health. We refer to sensory self-awareness, including a student’s body concept, bodily learning and embodied knowing, experiences that are individual and shared, and nonverbal negotiations that become forged during relationship-based events. Sex education should, we believe, involve all aspects of interpersonal and social relationships that have to do with sex/gender. Teachers and students can learn about sensory reflexivity through movement, as illustrated in the scenarios we describe. Once students formulate learning based on bodily movement, they can become more integrated and capable of reflecting on or confronting issues involving power, gender, and sexuality.

Embodying Career Education Differently

US-based career education in the early grades and high schools has been criticized on two grounds: (1) for depersonalizing learning and equating it with a technical, skill-building activity, and (2) for reproducing the dominant ideology that stratifies class, race, and gender in society (Bullough et al., 1984; see also Mullen with Kohan, 2002).

While on the surface the chance for practice within simulated ‘real world’ job contexts seems harmless, American career programs might be stale. Consider art educator Garoian’s (1999) unflattering description of ‘the career curriculum’ as ‘one that, although [concerned] with students’ learning and outcomes, [is] set within clearly defined learning objectives, linear development, fill-in-the-blank tests, authority’ (p. 134). An assumption of ours is that an objectified treatment of career education reifies technical, lock-step
learning at the expense of sensory self-awareness. The latter is needed in order for career education to be embodied differently and for transformative learning to occur.

The résumé, a key component of the career curriculum, has been critiqued. Hoogland (2000) views this particular document as ‘the printed words of writers but not their voices and bodily presence’ (p. 112) or as a disembodied text. A career curriculum typically teaches and measures skills in listening, responding, corresponding, and interviewing. While acquiring career skills may be necessary for competing in the job market, it is misleading to pretend that in life students will encounter ‘discretely organized units [that] isolate emotional responses from intellectual ones’ (Grumet, 1992, p. 31). Even our student participants sensed that the résumé had failed to capture their fuller embodiment (see script #4).

In the US public school system, career preparation has been tackled with missionary zeal. Even middle schools have incorporated the world of work into their academic programs (Blank, 1997). In fact, school-to-work reforms have been ‘topped’ only by the conversion of many secondary schools into career academies, which integrate academics with careers for all students (Mullen with Kohan, 2002). Given this intensification of work readiness training, one would naturally expect lessons to be modernized to fit current needs. Interpersonal encounters are vital to the success of job seekers, and so it follows that a premium should be placed on learning about bodily or non-linguistic communication through career programs. But then bodies and sensory learning ‘are unknown entities’, writes Hoogland (2000), who provocatively contrasts ‘bodies’ with ‘manageable texts’ (p. 112).

While we concur that the standard career curriculum is specialized to the point of disembodiment, in this article we agree on the generative aspects of a movement intervention. We sought connection to sensory self-awareness and bodily learning for a group of middle schoolers. Our analysis invites critique.

Key Concepts of Embodiment

We identify embodied knowing as a larger project of learning and life itself. Curriculum theorists place value on the integration of thought and being, a mode of constant reflection and reformulation, and living and learning (Grumet, 1992; Hoogland, 2000). Some performance artists, Charles Garoian (1999) among them, associate what we call embodied knowing with tacit messages concerning the ‘hidden curricular inscriptions on students’ bodies’ (p. 142). An individual’s capacity for this level of reflective engagement can be developed through movement, particularly within social spheres. We assume this premise. We also distinguish this deeper, fuller process from bodily learning, which equates with physical or expressive movement. This learning can be fostered within a relatively short time with children. The improvisational movement we feature in this paper was focused on improving students’ bodily learning. Bodily learning exercises can also establish the groundwork for embodied knowing.

The purpose of this article is to begin exploring how students engage bodily learning and construct embodied knowing through the possibilities of ‘soma’, a phenomenological process of learning. Somatics has been described as the ‘body as perceived from within by first-person perception’ and the soma, which is internally perceived, as ‘a sensory mode that provides unique data’ (Hanna, 1995, p. 341) to the self about the self. The sensory-motor function of the soma enables us to align, coordinate, and balance our bodies, as well as to receive vital information when attuned to the body’s messages.

In schools, embodied knowing can be made conscious through reflective processes.
Such learning is intended to counter the problem that everyday movements go unnoticed. During performance situations (e.g. mock interviews) our bodies tend to be jolted out of automated states, giving us the capability to realize what it means for us when we twitch, shake, or shudder. This awakedness is an essential step for reflecting on experience, alone and with others (Grumet, 1992). Notably, it provides a basis for paying attention to body/mind connections and for processing messages toward making any personal changes.

‘Your Résumé in Motion’, a Curriculum That Moves

With these assumptions guiding her curricular orientation, Mary Beth Cancienne, a movement specialist, led a language arts class in Virginia, USA. During this semester-long, experiential encounter, the middle schoolers were guided to focus on their movements and gestures, and to connect these to their thoughts while temporarily suspending judgment of the work-in-process. With this intervention, the teacher sought to complement the existing curricular objectives of this eighth-grade class while also introducing participants to the value of movement to new learning. This goal translated into a focus on somatic or first person, kinesthetic awareness, particularly in career-related, interpersonal scenarios.

Mary Beth first observed the class and then guided the new learning through bodily and reflective writing activities. Four days of body-based improvisational instruction were planned; exercises included looking one’s partner in the eye, interpreting facial expression, creating body sculpture based on themes associated with job interviews, and generating wordless skits [2]. By various means (i.e. observations of mock interviews, class discussion, one-on-one interviews, written reflections), Mary Beth explored with the students how and what they were learning.

Fifteen students, mostly females from lower-income families of African-American and Euro-American descent, experienced ‘Your Résumé in Motion’. During the body-based instruction the classroom teacher observed, except when demonstrating activities. Over the weeks, students would ‘move’ differently while creating imaginary businesses, selecting career options, preparing interview questions, conducting mock interviews, and preparing résumés. For example, the group interviewed as applicants for jobs ‘staged’ by peers in another eighth-grade language arts classroom, later reversing roles [3].

Data Sources and Collection

For this study, the discourse exchanges with the entire class and three one-on-one interviews with students were audio taped and transcribed. Similar questions were asked during all of these occasions to enable systematic treatment of the data and to provide deepened opportunities for student talk. Interviews (transcribed records), on-site observations (research notes taken during the movement intervention and mock interviews), and student writing (responses to questions after students completed the movement exercises) were all compiled and reconstructed for this narrative analysis.

Data Interpretation and Scripts

Using an interpretive approach, the researchers identified patterns within and among the students’ responses to the movement exercises, the on-site observations, and the four interviews. All data were triangulated to verify assertions. We conducted a separate
Thematic Results: scripts as alternative meaning-making

For each dialogue, the characters featured are Maria, Karen, Charles, and Laura [5]. The scripts represent the student talk that occurred within social contexts. These dialogues were elicited through a series of open-ended prompts, focusing on what was learned during the movement intervention.

The creative methods we use for displaying the data feature verbatim quotation from the students. Laura, unlike the other three characters, was ‘created’ as a device serving both practical and expressive functions. First, this aesthetic strategy helped us in a pragmatic way to represent the entire class that made many of the same comments. ‘Laura’ is thus a composite that embodies the collective voice of a peer group. Consequently, our solution for communicating thick data and within abbreviated spaces eliminated the need for extensive individual quotation and on redundant points.

The second function, the expressive, enabled us to actively compose by synthesizing and analyzing volumes of data. This provided a means for turning abundant data into salient issues presented as scripts. Curriculum theorist Jacques Daignault has advocated this particular technique. We concur that the taken-for-granted approach normally assumed for representing the subject, curriculum, and the self in research needs to be disturbed (cited in Pinar et al., 1996, pp. 480–485). Arts-based educational researcher Tom Barone (2003) agrees with this position, asserting qualitative interpretation is supported by ‘an alternative epistemology’ that seeks ‘not truth claims’ but different meanings. While not writing fiction in the usual sense of that term, our creation of Laura pursues a creative research aim that keeps meaning open and ambiguous.

We appreciate that our strategy is controversial, even within qualitative circles although not within those that are arts-based. Aesthetic inquiry directs attention to the constructed quality of human experience through such creative modalities as Readers Theater and script writing. But as Barone (2003) reminds us, creative readings must nonetheless embody a rationality of their own. For us, this means having generated scripts founded upon on a corroborated analysis of the data; creating scripts that embody the primary results and student learning; ‘staging’ voices that belong to the individual student and the collective; and providing open-ended interpretations of the dialogues.

Finally, we do not pretend to represent the whole of the movement intervention. Conceptualizing within and between the scripts here, our narrative analysis has been stitched together from fragments. Talburt (1999) says that the very portrayal of fragments carries the powerful message that a ‘whole experience’ is beyond reach and that parts will not always fit neatly together. With our ‘sewedness’ showing, then, we have made ‘the in-between’ the place of our work and of the reader’s reformulation.
Script #1: feeling faces that talk

‘Did the nonverbal movement activities help prepare you for the interviewing process and, if so, how?’ students were asked. The group was also invited to reflect on the ‘facial expression’ and the ‘stare at your partner in the eye’ exercise.

Laura: I learned that feelings are expressed with your face in an interview. So the facial expression exercise helped me the most.

Karen: ‘Staring at your partner in the eye’ helped me the most for the interviews because usually, when you start to laugh, you can’t keep a straight face. But during an interview you have to be serious. This exercise helped me to be serious even though I wanted to laugh.

Laura: I almost started to laugh, too, during the interview and then I remembered my partner’s expressions when we did the face exercise.

Karen: The exercise that we did when you had to stare at your partner in the eye helped me the most because I don’t usually like to talk to people that are all up in [too close to] my face.

Laura: The facial expression exercise helped because when I was interviewed I could tell what the employers [student actors] thought about me by their body language.

This interchange suggests that the students viewed facial expression as that which needs to be managed in order to ‘get the job’, on the one hand, and as a vehicle for self-articulation, on the other hand. In the area of self-control, the monitoring (even suppression) of one’s laughter predominates as an example. In contrast, self-articulation is connoted through the examples of learning to talk to people who are standing close (Karen) and gauging one’s communication through the reactions of another (Laura).

The opportunity to experience just such a dialectic and at a conscious level raises a few complex issues. For one thing, personal boundaries can become renegotiated. Karen ‘confessed’ that the facial exercises increased her comfort with direct eye contact and close proximity to another, a crucial interview and life skill. One message here seems to be about trust, how it is established nonverbally and deepened as one’s boundaries are adjusted. Another may be that interpersonal readings unfold without dependency on verbal cues: We ‘read’ the other and the self through the other.

These depth processes have been called the ‘space of relation’ (Appelbaum, 2000, p. 47). Curriculum as relationship alerts us to how we occupy shared, non-linguistic space. The students perhaps intuited what feminist writers have known—that there is, within, untapped ‘wisdom of the body’ (Hoogland, p. 112). Physical and reflective strategies can enable one’s untapped wisdom to germinate.

Script #2: interviewers as powerful some/bodies

The prompt, ‘Describe your experience as an interviewer’, provided the basis for what follows.

Charles: I felt powerful! I had the power to ask questions, and the power to choose who would be the best one for the job.

Maria: I felt powerful too. It scares me to think that I could get out of control and do anything I wanted. I like the fact that I could say things that I want to as the interviewer.

Karen: I felt really great. I was somebody.
Charles: When I was interviewing, some kids moved around their legs and tapped their pens. They played with their papers and fidgeted. If they had done that the whole time, it would have made them look bad.

Maria: I already knew what it was like to be interviewed so I tried to remember that. I tried not to ask hard questions. I asked good ones that really needed to be answered.

Charles: When I was interviewing I was more relaxed because the spotlight wasn’t on me. When the applicant didn’t understand the question, I helped to explain it better.

Because values, interests, and habits are all embodied, the body is rarely a neutral site. The students disclosed having felt power in their (simulated) ‘boss’ roles. The power they alluded to was multifaceted: Maria and Charles saw power as something to be handled carefully; for them, evaluation of another should be an assistive, non-authoritative process. Empathy also seems present: Maria had relied on her experience as an interviewee for making adjustments to the interviewer role. Charles had similarly made this transference to the more ‘powerful’ role, knowing that the ‘spotlight’ can create discomfort.

Paradoxically, Charles seemed almost boastful of the power afforded him. Not only did he enjoy the opportunity to ask questions and choose the candidate but also the very opportunity to feel ‘powerful’. The directness of young Charles’ comment shines a critical light on the presumed egalitarianism that many persons in power like to believe they possess. Maria’s developing conscience provides support for the notion that (having) power can be scary and that those with power can ‘get out of control’, and, presumably, make harmful decisions. This student’s words could be underscoring the moral decision making process of those in control and how self-monitoring is, consequently, necessary.

Dynamics of dominance and empathy may have surfaced through the mock interviews. These provided a performance medium for experiencing superior and subordinate positions, alternative scripts within these parameters, and associated feelings. Sharing emotionally, the students expressed having felt confident as ‘interviewer’, not as ‘interviewee’. Such revealment seems evocative of bodily awareness [6].

**Script #3: non-directed bodily messages**

Here, students were asked, ‘What was your experience like as an interviewee?’ For this scenario, the focus is on the issue of non-directed or subliminal bodily messages in the data.

Maria: When I was being interviewed I was nervous at first because I didn’t know what to expect. You had to think of good answers if you wanted to get hired or you would have to take the final exam.

Laura: When I was interviewed I was hot [physically, feeling embarrassed and awkward]. I was like ‘Oh, God, why did I say that?’

Maria: My hands twitched the whole time and I kept crossing my legs and moving my feet.

Charles: I was aware of my body but not as much as the need to answer the questions. I know I did fidget a little but it’s natural when you’re nervous. I kept thinking to myself, ‘Stop! Stop!, try to keep your hands together’. I don’t think it’s important to use your hands in an
interview, just enough to say that you know what you’re talking about.

Laura: I hate it when you answer the best you can and the people look at you like you’re stupid. They give you that look—‘Sad answer, but I guess we’ll have to take it’.

Charles: I was by myself in the interview, on my own exhaust, with no one to back me up.

Laura: It was hard to answer the interviewer’s questions and also communicate well with my body. I was so nervous that I couldn’t hold my pen when I was asked to write something.

Charles: Trying to be aware of my body movements while answering questions came at me too fast, like a speeding bullet.

Laura: When my friends came out of the interviews I rushed up to them and said, ‘What kind of questions did they ask?’ and ‘What did you say?’

Implicit in Charles’ experience as an interviewee is the notion that the body creates a setting for reflection. Feminist writer Hoogland (2000) describes this very process: ‘Our arms intuitively punctuate, and … our voices shape, inflect tone and convey meaning. We learn to read bodies for their suggestions and information’ (p. 116). Importantly, the students seem to have intuited that physical movement is not politically neutral. Learning spaces can be restrictive in ways that feel unnatural and even threatening. The image of constricted space was evoked by the allusion to a final exam—the consequence of an applicant’s weak performance (Maria); the experience of time rushing, resembling ‘a speeding bullet’ in evaluative contexts (Charles), feelings of unmanageable nervousness when being judged (Karen); and, finally, strong emotions (i.e. embarrassment), unleashed when self-control feels lost (Laura).

Although the job interviewing process had introduced the group to those normative expectations associated with new roles in the ‘real world’, the exam default for poor performances carried an altogether different connotation. The final exam conjured up a picture at odds with ‘associative freedom: leaps of thought and imagination as well as physical movement’ (Hoogland, p. 111). Feelings associated with surveillance and punishment seemed evident.

This is not to say that spaces of discomfort undermine bodily learning. Notably, while anticipating the mock interviews, everyone nervously waited while names were called out. One by one students were escorted into another classroom, the interview space. The waiting period may have ‘forced’ their development as reflective beings. This became nuanced when students, spontaneously gathered around those emerging from the interview space, eagerly inquired: ‘What kind of questions did they ask?’ and ‘What did you say?’ Even when this group felt consumed with worry, the experience of listening to the body (i.e. bodily learning) may have been cultivated, even if only as a beginning.

Script #4: body as résumé in motion

For this scenario, reflection was elicited around the theme of the movement intervention. Students were asked: ‘What does ‘your body is your résumé in motion’ mean to you at this time? And, what have you learned from the career unit that relates to this theme?’

Maria: I think that interviewing is important because your personality has a lot to do with it. It lets people know what you can withstand under pressure.
Laura: The interview is important because the résumé doesn’t show any movement and it doesn’t express attitude and feeling.

Charles: Your résumé is just a piece of paper that describes you but your body describes you if you’re nervous. It shows what you are doing. It shows action. If you didn’t have an interview, then the interviewer wouldn’t know if you were a good speaker or if you were outgoing.

Maria: It is easy to lie on your résumé. If they can see you in person they can tell by your personality whether lies were told on your résumé.

Laura: You can write just about anything about yourself and it won’t matter—no one will know the truth. But if they can see you, it becomes more likely to tell if you’ve been lying. Interviewers probably know when you are lying. When I was interviewing, I could tell when the applicants were lying. Interviewers can watch your body to see if you fidget on certain questions, and then they may believe you are exaggerating or avoiding telling the truth.

Charles: What I’ve learned from this career unit is that you have to fill out the application truthfully. If they call your references and they say something that [contradicts] what’s on your résumé, then you’d be in big trouble.

Mock interviews show ‘true’ movement and expression, the students all agreed. Because the body is a barometer of truth, the body cannot, logically speaking, lie. Or, put differently, when bodies do lie, they give themselves away. As Charles shared, ‘… your body describes you if you’re nervous’, and, as Laura declared, ‘When I was interviewing, I could tell when the applicants were lying’. For this group of students, movement in space expresses bodily truth, literally—but the maxim ‘the body never lies’ is believed by many, not just (these) students. Notably, Martha Graham (1991), a pioneer of contemporary American dance, declared this axiom to be self-evident.

The students believed they had the capacity to read bodies as a way of revealing truth and lies, perhaps not unlike a clairvoyant. Job interviews expose the ‘real’ person, they asserted. This thinking implies a literal notion of bodily performance, failing to account for its constructed nature. Absent from the students’ articulation is an understanding of how the job interview is a particular social context in which specific kinds of bodily performances are evoked, depending on power, gender, and sexuality. Performances (e.g. interviews) are not the ‘truth’ about a person, although they were understood to be.

The idea that meaning making involves active construction is a developmentally sophisticated concept that will take time to form. The program goal focused on exposure to bodily learning and its relationship to sensory self-awareness within performance (e.g. employment) contexts. A follow-up study could build on bodily learning to nurture an understanding of embodied knowing with this group.

**Script #5: embodied knowing as life’s teacher**

Students were also invited to react in a more evaluative mode, as evidenced by the question, ‘Would you like to engage in more movement activities as a way of learning?’

Karen: Teachers should do more of the hands-on stuff and acting with us so that school can teach you for life.

Laura: I wish we did more movement activities in class. We usually copy
down pages from the book and study them for tests on Friday. We don’t get to do a lot of oral stuff with each other.

**Karen:** We never have a class where the teacher says, ‘Think of a skit without words’. I only do fun stuff like this in art class during the summer.

**Laura:** I think the movement activities would help people to learn better. They are more of a hands-on experience, instead of just copying other people’s experiences.

**Karen:** The activities should be used as a stepping-stone because not everyone is good at them. The teacher can’t grade you on a skill if everyone’s so different at performing it. Besides, people would think that all we did was have fun. What about the learning?

The movement curriculum has the potential for, as students put it, ‘teach[ing] you for life’. It involves learning that is associated with application and enjoyment. In contrast, textbook rote memorization was deemed low-level intellectual activity. A dilemma of schooling is that ‘hands-on experience’ (e.g. physical movement and role-playing) is treated as marginally relevant, not unlike the optional summer art class taught at this school. Yet, one ‘core’ competency that schools are expected to enable is that of critical reflection. Students need encouragement to ask about what is being implicitly taught and what alternatives exist. Children have the potential to ‘gain agency [if they] learn to challenge and get involved in the ideological politics that school represents’ (Garoian, 1999, p. 66).

The students seemed to think that it is beneficial for them to participate in movement curricula. Voiced by ‘Laura’, it was collectively thought that this ‘would help people to learn better’. While we realize that a more proactively progressive curriculum could have been enacted, learning about the value of body/mind connections can nonetheless make a difference. The new learning—that of reflecting and naming their own bodily messages during mock interviews—is one way in which these students can build upon their somatic awareness. We recommend for further research the study of how students construct embodiment of power, gender, and sexuality through a sex education or career program, or any other.

**Discussion: an outer movement**

In this exercise, students improvised body-based activities and were asked to notice their own bodily learning and that of others. The major goal of the movement intervention—gaining insight into how students understand embodiment from their own point of view—was met. The seeds were planted through a series of bodily, discursive, and writing exercises. At minimum, students had access to reflection that was potentially transformative and that directly involved their own sensory self-awareness.

The view we provide is, in part, one of an integrated approach to the curriculum. Sex education (e.g. bodily learning, body image and perception, gender-related issues, nonverbal negotiations), physical education (e.g. movement activities, movement awareness, somatic learning), and career education (mock interviewing, career decision making, document preparation, and writing) were all combined into an innovative hybrid. Results suggest that students can, to some extent, be articulate in making connections between sensory self-awareness and bodily performance. However, this assessment depends on what the expectations and parameters are for judging articulation.
In our case, the middle schoolers excelled at naming their nonverbal messages such as facial expressions, gesticulation, and body movements but have much to learn about how bodies are constructed sexually, socially, and politically. Granted, our movement intervention did not focus on these aspects even though they were present.

Movement interventions can inspire the message that the body and pedagogy co-exist (Grumet, 1992). As socialized beings, we use our bodies as instruments for gathering information about the roles we are to play in life. But we are generally not aware of how our bodies work (and do not work) for us, and how we can better learn from our bodies. Students can become empowered to use bodily learning more reflectively, just as they appeared to have done through this new experience. It is worth noting that another group could have had a very different experience of this curriculum, depending upon the context, finding it to be imposing and self-surveilling. Foucault (1995) leads one to ponder such a possibility.

**Benefits of a Movement Curriculum**

A movement curriculum offers many positive, generative advantages to teachers and schools. As one significant benefit, students can gain first person, kinesthetic awareness in everyday life. This capacity extends to performative scenarios related to career (e.g. job application, interviewing, and entering the workforce), including other evaluative contexts throughout life. A nonverbal, embodied repertoire can promote a more integrated self. Bodily learning can be used intelligently to heighten sensory self-awareness of performance-related situations, such as mock interviews.

As a second benefit, through physical movement students can become attuned to deep messages about their bodies, and the embodied nature of curricula. They can learn about cultural messages and the hidden curriculum that implicitly reinforces gender, sexual and ethnic roles, limiting options for individuals and groups. The physical movement component of a standard curriculum can help learners to recognize and even change the covert, oppressive messages that many schools tolerate (Sears, 1992). Students who gain bodily awareness of their internalized states can develop agency for coping with political situations.

As a third benefit, students who are disadvantaged in some way can make gains through a progressive sex education curriculum. Those linguistically challenged will need opportunities for expressing themselves in a mode that feels more natural. Bodily learning and embodied knowing are developmentally adjustable to grade/age level. Through the movement intervention used in this study, learning primarily took place through the senses. Words became important during the writing and interviewing activities. Accordingly, Mansilla and Gardner (1997) view the kinesthetic as supportive of the non-traditional student as well as a good ‘entry point’ for learning within inclusive settings.

Finally, as a fourth benefit, standard school curricula can be re-vitalized by integrating sex education in a way that brings together non-linguistic and linguistic processes, movement and reflection.

**Challenges to a Movement Curriculum**

Curriculum that is fragmented and specialized continues to privilege cognition as the primary mode of learning. Disembodied knowing leads to a value placed not on discovery learning that is shared but on glory for only a few. Although the mock
interviews we presented were not ‘standardized’ in the usual sense, they nonetheless resulted in success (get the job) or failure (take the exam). Foucault (1977) has warned that standardized curricula normalize student growth through reward-and-punishment tactics. But some young people resist: Our participants expressed discomfort with being judged as winners or losers, and some did not enjoy making these determinations about others. We learned this about them.

Another challenge to a movement curriculum, one that has been integrated within a standard curriculum, involves compromise in goals, values, and technique. Consider the students’ criticisms about the traditional pedagogy that persisted. Grades and textbook teaching, they implied, marginalize the role of bodily knowing and the arts in learning. Competition, seemingly unhealthy and alienating, was built into the intervention from the outset: Only a few students would be ‘offered’ the imaginary jobs—the rest would have to take an exam. About this non-democratic arrangement, one student quietly proclaimed: ‘This isn’t fair. They will punish us for not getting the job even though we tried’.

Gender colonization is a pervasive challenge for schools. In the classroom we studied, the students’ options were at times constrained by gender-biased classifications. A simple but telling example involved the implicit expectations for appropriate business dress, which differed for the boys and the girls. But young people need opportunities for reconstructing their identities. This way, they can become empowered to experiment with form and ‘present strong social critique’ (Heath, 2001, p. 15).

Certain gender roles are expected in schools and the workplace, such as female-as-caretaker. Bodies get domesticated from an early age (Cancienne, 1999). Consider how the females chose domestic careers for their mock interviews, a mirror of what society reinforces. For the job openings, the class selected those of salon hairdresser, daycare assistant, nurse’s assistant, and disk jockey. A critique of this final selection was not undertaken. This could have stimulated new thinking about sex stereotyping in support of expanded role-playing for the movement curriculum, a form of democratic learning.

A Final Movement

Educators who encourage movement that is sensory and transformative will be working against the norm. For, as Appelbaum (2000) contends, the student’s body tends to be ignored, silenced, and even discouraged from spatial articulation, despite being ‘something which is always there and always experienced’ (p. 35). Because bodily expression exists as a ‘natural’ resource, this awaits translation into powerful pedagogy. But concerns are also paramount: Bodies have been inappropriately managed and handled as well as stereotyped, judged, and critiqued, even if unwittingly. Finally, teacher development and student critique will need to be built into any bodily instruction. Put differently, the more ‘body’ in the curriculum, the better.

Correspondence: Carol A. Mullen, Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, University of South Florida, 4202 East Fowler Avenue, EDU 162, Tampa, FL 33620-5650, USA. Tel: (813) 974 0040; Fax: (813) 974 5423; e-mail: cmullen@coedu.usf.edu
NOTES

We thank the participants for their special contributions. Formal permissions for this study were granted; non-identifiers have been used for all involved. We also thank the reviewers who provided very helpful, detailed feedback; the guest editors coordinated this effort and guided the revision with care.

[1] One might ask, what exactly is wrong with a split between embodied learning and cognitive learning within the context of our own project? In response, we believe that one consequence of a dualistic perspective is that it shuts out alternatives. Dualistic conceptualizations of the curriculum reduce possibilities for learning about the value of integrating bodily awareness with objective material.

[2] Arts-based career activities were adapted, from resource books for teachers and actors, for use with the class. A description of the actual movement activities is not provided here; reference is made for the purpose of establishing context.

[3] The other class was not exposed to the movement intervention or trained as actors; any differences in the level of performance between the two groups lies outside the scope of this discussion.

[4] Mary Beth’s collaboration with curriculum arts theorist Carol Mullen, whose expertise is also in career education, enabled an ‘objective’ reading of the data along with a balanced focus on career education, sex education, and curriculum theory.

[5] Maria, Karen, and Charles are all quoted directly; Laura is the only character for whom the written texts were incorporated and from the entire class.

[6] A future step for this class could involve connecting the feelings that were identified to the students’ value systems and then to the larger social issue of power.

REFERENCES


Author Query Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal Acronym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume and issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript No. (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AUTHOR:** The following queries have arisen during the editing of your manuscript. Please answer the queries by marking necessary corrections at the appropriate positions on the PROOFS. Do not answer the queries on the query sheet itself. Please also return a copy of the query sheet with your corrected proofs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUERY NO.</th>
<th>QUERY DETAILS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Barone (2003) -- published yet?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>